



**Stellenbosch**

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**SRC**

Students' Representative Council  
Ibhunga elimele abafundi  
Studenteraad



## SRC TERM II REPORT

SRC International – Dylan Schmidt



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*saam vorentoe · masiye phambili · forward together*

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**Dylan Schmidt – SRC  
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## Foreword

Hey Maties!

The first semester is finished, leaving us with a long break to recover. This last term was relatively short, having been followed up by the examination period which I hope was a great success for everyone!

In this previous term, issues such as tygerburg transport, international registration and student budget allocations arose and were addressed through the SRC team and the international department. A great step forward was the start of the CIRCoRe which will look to drive institutional change against the negative practices which preside within our university, and often nation as a whole.

As the international portfolio holder it also meant saying goodbye to a number of our exchange students, and we hope they had an incredible time. We now look forward to the next group of students who will arrive at the start of the next semester.

With this next term being the last term before the leadership handover this year, I encourage everyone to reach out to various leaders and enquire about what it takes to fill up such a position. Leadership will teach many valuable lessons and can leave the world in a better place.

As always, those in need of any assistance are free to email me at [Schmidt@sun.ac.za](mailto:Schmidt@sun.ac.za) or any other SRC member, and we will try our best to help as much as possible. Thank you for your ongoing support in the SRC, and I hope we can continue to successfully represent you all!

## Constitutional Responsibilities

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According to the student constitution my constitutional responsibilities are the following:

As the SRC international portfolio holder, my constitutional responsibilities can be split between the duties imposed on me as an SRC member, a member of the SRC Executive Committee and my portfolio specific duties.

As an SRC Member, sections 27 and 32 impose the prevalent duties. Accordingly, I must always act in the best interest of students and to actively promote their constitutionally provided rights. Other specific duties include to represent students on institutional committees. Section 32 further obligates me to submit a termly report of all my activities during the academic term to the Secretary. Finally, according to section 44 I have to attend an SRC meeting every two weeks during the academic term.

As an Executive Committee member, section 41 and 42 imposes additional obligations. This includes setting the agenda for SRC meetings, managing the day-to-day activities of the SRC, compiling the SRC budget and deciding on portfolio allocations. Finally, I am required to attend weekly meetings.

## Portfolio Overview

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The role of the SU International portfolio head is to ensure accessibility of information and documentation related to being an International Student. We are the point of contact for all concerns raised by international students and liaise with the International Office for matters. Our role is to facilitate projects to increase the wellbeing of International Students on campuses, as well as to facilitate engagement between various International Students. We ensure equality of offerings for all international students and promote pride of identities for international students.

The holder of the SRC international portfolio is to prioritise all students, with further consideration being given to international students, in decision making. This entails finding ways to ease the lives of students including providing easier access to relevant documents and increasing the collaboration between international students.

The role can be highlighted as the following:

- Acting as a point of call for International Students when required.
- Assisting the International Department in spreading relevant information to international students.
- Act as a key liaison between the international department and the international students.
- Facilitate International Student ideas and initiatives.
- Be present at relevant international events.
- Uphold the necessary standards of the SRC in representing the best interests of the students.

## Committees/Task Teams

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I serve on the following Committees or Task Teams:

**Institutional advisory committee on internationalization:** A representative committee on internationalisation from across the faculties and support environments. After facilitating the implementation of a member of the Tygerberg Student representatives for Internationals onto this committee last term, we have now met with the committee in early May. In this meeting I gave feedback from an SRC side on the process for international students throughout orientation, as well as informing them about the idea to undergo a number of student surveys about how to improve student life for our international scholars. More so, we addressed the possibilities for our leaders to engage internationally with other universities which was a project we took up with the department of student affairs.

**USKOF:** Stellenbosch University's Co-Curricular Support Fund (SUCSF/USKOF) is administered by the Division Student Affairs and is a student bursary fund for national, international, and online co-curricular events and courses. This committee has met a number of times now and we have approved a number of student bursaries for co-curricular events and courses throughout the year. This committee meets regularly to discuss the various applications, most of which are accepted. Students are encouraged to apply for bursaries through this to further their education.

**Student achievement committee:** This committee is formed to reward students for significant achievements such as the rector's awards. The Student Achievement Committee is chaired by the Vice-Rector (Learning & Teaching). The Senior Director: Student Affairs, Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the SRC, the SRC member responsible for the Rector's Award for Excellent Achievement and the Senior Director: Communication and Liaison form the core committee with the Chairperson. This committee has not met this term.

## Term 3 Overview

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During my second term in office, I Executed the following:

### **International student feedback:**

Over this term I began a series of student questionnaires to allow international students the opportunity to make suggestions for the improvement of their well-being and overall experience at the university. The responses were limited but a couple unique response were recorded and will be taken up with the international department throughout the following term, as more questionnaires also follow, allowing a continuous engagement with the international students and department.

### **Expanding the international opportunities for our leaders:**

Towards the end of the term, I engaged with both the international department and the department of student affairs in order to explore the possibilities of expanding the international opportunities available for our student leaders. This dialog included looking at benchmarking with fellow African universities as well as attendance at international conferences which our university staff regularly attend. A number of our students were included again in this year Umoja conference in Nigeria, and we hope that next year's leadership team will be able to have greater international opportunities now that some foundations have taken place through conversation.

### **Executive meetings:**

This term has seen a number of successful Executive meetings between us, allowing us to successfully drive the SRC as well as taking relevant issues to the rectorate, such as load-shedding problems, food insecurity and Tygerberg transport.

### **CIRCoRe:**

This term we had the first meeting of the Committee for the Institutional response on the Commission's Recommendations (Referring to the Khampepe report). This initial meeting was fruitful and allowed the beginnings of greater change to the long-lasting issues which remain throughout the university. As a member of the SRC I was invited to participate as a part of the Institutional culture workstream and was joined by a number of long serving staff members of various institutions who offered valuable insight into negative practices in universities and South Africa throughout recent decades. In this meeting we began highlighting target areas for improvement. One such observation was the difference in opinions in staff to students, with a number of solutions from staff members being within faculties and in reference to various other staff members and structure, whereas the student insight allowed focus to also be put on student communities and practices which will hopefully allow fewer negative incidents to occur in the future, both on a staff and student level.

## Plans for Next Term

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With the next semester looming, it brings great excitement. With it being our last semester in this position, I hope to make the most of the opportunities available and benefit the student community at large. A new group of international semester exchanges will be joining, and I hope to make their transition to our university as seamless as possible. I will be attending numerous events throughout the term in the international portfolio and continue to represent the students through the SRC executive and at a rectorate level.

There are a number of institutional committee meetings this term, such as USKOF on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August and the meetings for the upcoming rectors' awards. I will provide feedback for these in the next term report.

Additionally, I hope to complete my series of questionnaires to the international students and report its findings to the international department and advocate for certain improvements. I will also attempt to fund more student initiatives throughout the term as per necessity, knowing however that there exists number of international events already, and thus aim to support and advertise those too.

Ultimately, I hope in this last term to continue in the efforts for assisting student in making their general lives at the university better, with more inclusion and equal opportunities for all.