

Stellenbosch University

in cooperation with

South African National Defence Force

Military Academy

Faculty of Military Science

Teaching, Learning & Assessment Committee

Terms of Reference

09 June 2025

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TERMS OF REFERENCE

FACULTY OF MILITARY SCIENCE (FMS) TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT (TLA) COMMITTEE

RECORD OF REVISIONS

| Ser No | Config No & Date | Coordinator(s) | Versions, Revisions & Changes |
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| 1 | Ver 1 dd 09 Jun 2025 | Dr I. Henrico/TLA Committee | Draft |
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INTRODUCTION

1. The Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (TLA) Committee of the Faculty of Military Science (FMS), Stellenbosch University (SU), operates under the broader SU policy framework, aligning with the institutional teaching, learning, assessment and other relevant policies and strategic guidelines. The TLA Committee ensures the effective implementation, monitoring, and enhancement of teaching, learning, and assessment practices within the faculty.

PURPOSE

2. The Committee is tasked with overseeing, guiding, and enhancing the quality and effectiveness of teaching, learning, and assessment across all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes within the Faculty of Military Science.

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

3. The FMS TLA Committee consists of the following core members:

- a. Chairperson (Vice-Dean for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment)
- b. Vice-Chairperson
- c. Secretary
- d. Representatives from each academic division within the faculty

- e. Representative from the Programme Leaders Working Group (PLWG), comprising all undergraduate and postgraduate programme leaders.
 - f. Representative from the College Coordinators Working Group (CCWG), comprising the following three coordinators:
 - i. Defence College
 - ii. War College
 - iii. SA Army College
 - g. Representative for the Special Interest Working Groups (SIWGs).
 - h. Representative from the Faculty Ethics Committee (ad hoc)
 - a. Chief Faculty Administrator (*ex officio*, ad hoc).
 - b. Faculty Part-Time Studies Administrator (*ex officio*, ad hoc).
4. Members are appointed for a term of three years, automatically renewable until formal resignation or replacement occurs.
5. In addition to the core members, the Committee may, at its discretion, approve the permanent inclusion of additional Faculty members whose roles or expertise are deemed essential to advancing the TLA mandate of the faculty. These individuals, once approved, serve as full voting members. The total membership of the TLA Committee shall not exceed 18 members at any given time.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

6. The appointment, nomination, and election of members to the FMS TLA Committee are governed by the following principles to ensure inclusive representation, continuity, and alignment with SU's governance standards:
7. Appointment and Nomination Process
- a. The Vice-Dean for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment serves as the Chairperson of the TLA Committee by virtue of their position.
 - b. The Vice-Chairperson and Secretary are nominated and appointed from among the existing Committee members, but cannot be an *ex officio* member.

- c. Each division within the faculty nominates a representative(s) to serve on the TLA Committee; nominations are approved by the FMS TLA Committee.
- d. The PCWG and the CCWG nominates one representative each to serve on the TLA Committee.
- e. One committee member shall serve as the permanently appointed representative to the SIWG. When a Temporary SIWG (Temp-SIWG) or Semi-Permanent SIWG (SP-SIWG) is established, appropriate representatives shall be nominated to serve on these groups as required.
- f. *Ex officio* and ad hoc members, such as the Faculty Ethics Committee representative and Faculty Administrators, are appointed to the TLA Committee by virtue of their roles or relevant expertise, and at the discretion of the TLA Committee.

8. Term of Service and Election Procedures

- a. An appointed Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary may be reselected for additional terms of service until they voluntarily resign, or a suitable candidate is elected to succeed them.
- b. The election procedure for the Chair is as follows:
 - i. When the Chair's position becomes vacant (due to resignation or expiry of term), the sitting Chair will issue a Call for Nominations for the position to all Faculty members.
 - ii. If only one nomination is received, the sitting Chair will present the nomination at the next TLA Committee meeting for consideration and ratification.
 - iii. If multiple nominations are received, a vote will be conducted at the next scheduled TLA Committee meeting.
 - iv. The elected nominee's name will be submitted to the Faculty Executive Committee (EXCOM) and Faculty Board for final approval.

9. Members, excluding core members, wishing to serve on the TLA Committee must submit their interest in writing (letter or email) to the TLA Chair. These requests will be considered at the next scheduled TLA Committee meeting.

10. Any TLA Committee member may resign at any time by submitting a written resignation to the TLA Committee Chair, copying the FMS Dean for informational purposes. Resignations take immediate effect upon receipt.

11. Members of the TLA Committee not actively participating or are absent from three consecutive meetings without formal apology will be automatically removed as a member of the TLA Committee, through written confirmation from the Chair.

FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

12. Operating within Stellenbosch University's (SU) broader policies, strategies, and ethical frameworks, the Faculty of Military Science Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (FMS TLA) Committee is mandated to regulate and adapt teaching, learning, and assessment (TLA) practices within the faculty's unique academic environment. The Committee ensures alignment with institutional quality standards while responding to the faculty's context. Its core responsibilities are:

- a. Policy Implementation and Quality Assurance: The Committee implements and monitors SU's institutional policies and frameworks related to TLA, including the SU Assessment Policy, SU Assessment Rules, and Faculty Assessment Rules – available on the Faculty of Military Science Website, at the following link: <http://www.sun.ac.za/english/faculty/milscience/fms-committees/fms-teaching-and-learning-committee>. It ensures quality assurance through adherence to principles such as validity, reliability, academic integrity, fairness, transparency, and learning-centred feedback.
- b. Curriculum Renewal and Programme Evaluation: The Committee facilitates ongoing academic renewal through the regular review, redesign, and evaluation of programmes and modules. This includes ensuring alignment with SU's graduate attributes and national standards, as well as promoting coherence, academic rigour, and relevance in the faculty's academic offerings.
- c. Academic Professional Development and Innovation: The Committee supports academic staff development in effective TLA practices, informed by both formal and informal student feedback. It promotes innovative, inclusive, and future-focused pedagogical approaches, encouraging the use of emerging technologies, transformative learning practices, and flexible delivery modes (e.g., hybrid, online).
- d. Oversight of Assessment and Moderation Practices: The Committee ensures that assessment practices adhere to SU's principles for effective assessment and supports the implementation of internal and external moderation in line with SU's regulations – available on the Faculty of Military Science Website, at the following link: <http://www.sun.ac.za/english/faculty/milscience/fms-committees/fms-teaching-and-learning-committee>. It fosters academic integrity, accountability, and transparency in all assessment-related activities.
- e. Ethical Oversight and Responsible Practice: In collaboration with the Faculty Ethics Committee, the TLA Committee promotes ethical standards in teaching, learning, and assessment, including responsible use of AI tools. It ensures compliance with institutional

ethics policies and supports academic staff in navigating ethical challenges in the TLA environment.

- f. Student Engagement and Support: The Committee serves as a formal platform for dialogue on student-related TLA matters. This includes input from relevant stakeholders (e.g., psychologists or student affairs representatives), and the use of tools such as SU's electronic feedback system and informal Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs). The Committee also ensures that students are informed about procedures for academic queries, complaints, and grievances.
- g. Advisory and Strategic Role: The Committee advises the Faculty Board on innovations, improvements, and strategic changes in TLA, including new modes of delivery, student success initiatives, and institutional trends. It monitors the alignment of programmes with SU's educational goals and graduate outcomes.
- h. College-Specific Coordination: The Committee engages with college coordinators responsible for the academic matters of each of the South African National Defence College, War College, and Army College to address college-specific academic matters. The Committee and college-coordinators will keep the college business coordinator abreast of decisions and requirements to ensure the execution of the decision is coordinated at the respective colleges. It ensures consistency and quality in academic offerings across all military education programmes.

WORKING GROUPS

13. In support of the faculty's teaching, learning, and assessment activities, two dedicated Working Groups operate alongside the TLA Committee in addition to the opportunity to create a special interest group if the need arises. Each dedicated Working Group is responsible for operational and programme-specific matters and reports formally to the TLA Committee through an appointed representative.

- a. Programme Leaders Working Group (PLWG): The FMS Programme Leaders Working Group consists of all programme leaders responsible for FMS undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. The responsibilities of this Working Group are as follows:
 - i. Operational Management and Programme Oversight. The Group manages the operational aspects of programme-specific teaching, learning, and assessment practices, ensuring alignment with institutional standards.
 - ii. Curriculum and Assessment Coordination. Members collaborate to ensure continuous academic renewal, strategic curriculum development, and the consistent application of assessment policies across programmes.

- iii. Independent Meetings. The Group convenes its own meetings independently of the TLA Committee and meets at regular intervals, ensuring that at least one meeting is held prior to each scheduled TLA Committee meeting to facilitate timely reporting.
 - iv. Reporting to the TLA Committee. The Working Group nominates one representative from among its members to serve on the TLA Committee. This representative is responsible for reporting on programme-related developments, challenges, and strategic initiatives discussed within the Working Group.
- b. College Coordinators Working Group (CCWG). The College Coordinators Working Group consists of the designated academic coordinators for the following colleges: South African National Defence College, War College, and Army College. The responsibilities of this Working Group are as follows:
- i. Coordination of College-specific TLA Matters. The Group addresses all teaching, learning, and assessment matters specific to their respective colleges, ensuring that academic programmes delivered to college cohorts meet institutional standards.
 - ii. Operational Alignment and Quality Assurance. The Group ensures that college programmes are responsive to both military operational requirements and the academic benchmarks set by SU.
 - v. Independent Meetings. The Group convenes its own meetings independently of the TLA Committee and meets at regular intervals, ensuring that at least one meeting is held prior to each scheduled TLA Committee meeting to facilitate timely reporting.
 - iii. Reporting to the TLA Committee. The Working Group nominates one representative from among its members to serve on the TLA Committee. This representative is responsible for communicating college-specific academic matters to the TLA Committee and ensuring that feedback and decisions are relayed back to the College Coordinators Working Group.
 - iv. Administrative Support and Liaison. The operational execution of academic engagements with the colleges, including liaison, scheduling, handling of assessment scripts, and general administrative coordination, is the responsibility of the Senior Faculty Administrator (currently Mr Nick Olivier). College coordinators are expected to work in close collaboration with the Senior Faculty Administrator and designated college representatives to ensure smooth communication, accurate planning, and timely execution of academic responsibilities related to college cohorts.

14. In addition to the above-mentioned permanent working groups the chair of the FMS TLA committee may recommend the establishment of Special Interest Working Groups (SIWGs) as the need arises. The

purpose of the SIWGs is to capacitate the TLA Committee to delegate a specific task on topics of interest to the TLC Committee to members of the FMS on a temporary or semi-permanent basis, under the leadership of a delegated member of the TLA committee, to report back to the Chair of the TLA Committee. A Temporary SIWG (Temp-SIWG) is formed to produce a specific output and is then disbanded once the output has been presented and been accepted as completed by the Chair of the TLA Committee. A Semi-Permanent SIWG (SP-SIWG) acts like a Temp-SIWG but does not disband until it has served its purpose. The operation of the SIWGs are follows:

- a. Temp-SIWG. To perform a specific task for a pre-determined period on behalf of the TLA Committee. The Chair will authorise a TLA Committee member or elect a member of the FMS to the TLA Committee (by virtue of their expertise in the task at hand), to lead a group of FMS members to research a specific topic that is relevant to the charter of the TLA Committee. The leader of the Temp-SIWG will report back to the Chair of the TLA Committee in writing, and present to the TLA Committee directly, on the outcome of the Temp-SIWG's output. Extensions on the period necessary to conduct this work can be entertained, but once the Temp-SIWG submits its final report it is automatically disbanded.
- b. SP-SIWG. Operate like Temp-SIWGs, with the exception that they are not automatically disbanded. A SP-SIWG can be disbanded by the Chair of the TLA Committee if insufficient progress is made or if the quality of the output is below expectation. A new SP-SIWG will be formed to continue this work if it is still required. If there is an overlap in the focus of the SP-SIWG and an existing FMS committee (e.g., roster, ethics, etc.) then this task should be delegated to that FMS committee. A member of the TLA Committee, or the chair of the existing FMS committee will serve as the SP-SIWG leader as deemed fit by the Chair of the TLA Committee.

FACULTY ADMINISTRATION REPRESENTATION

15. The Faculty Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (TLA) Committee acknowledges the critical role of administrative support in ensuring the effective functioning of academic processes. For this reason, two key administrative representatives are appointed as ad hoc members to the Committee:

- a. Chief Faculty Administrator (Mrs M. Basson). Mrs Basson is appointed as an *ex officio* ad hoc member of the Committee due to her in-depth institutional knowledge of SU's teaching, learning, and assessment frameworks. She serves as a vital liaison between the faculty and central academic administrative structures. Her role includes advising the Committee on compliance with institutional procedures, guiding the appropriate handling of academic matters, and offering strategic input to ensure the smooth implementation and alignment of TLA activities within the faculty. Her experience and institutional insight are essential to the Committee's decision-making processes.

- b. Faculty Part-Time Studies Administrator (Mr N. Khumalo). Mr Khumalo is appointed as an *ex officio* ad hoc member in recognition of his pivotal role in coordinating and administering the Faculty's part-time academic programmes. While academic responsibility for part-time programmes remains with the lecturing staff, Mr Khumalo co-manages the administrative component of modules in close collaboration with them, and is responsible for the operations associated with part-time studies offered to the rest of the DOD. His participation on the Committee ensures that part-time programme administration is synchronised with faculty-wide academic planning and that part-time students receive consistent and well-organised academic support. His responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
- i. Communicating academic timelines and deadlines to lecturing staff;
 - ii. Drafting and processing the Part-Time Order;
 - iii. Coordinates assessments in lieu of the annual academic programme and liaises with the roster committee to schedule contact sessions for part-time students during contact weeks, including alignment with the initial academic contact session.
 - iv. Supports the Chief faculty Administrator in the logistics for academic opening sessions
 - v. Responsible for the logistics and administration for contact sessions of part-time students during contact week;
 - vi. Liaising with off-site delivery units as well as review of compliance to host assessments;
 - vii. Collecting, managing, and forwarding assessment scripts.

MEETINGS

16. The FMS TLA Committee convenes quarterly, scheduled at least one week prior to each Faculty Board meeting, typically in February, May, August, and November. These quarterly meetings serve as the primary platform for addressing faculty-wide teaching, learning, and assessment matters and for consolidating reports received from the working groups.

17. In addition to the quarterly meetings, monthly ad hoc meetings are scheduled to address operational issues, programme developments, and any time-sensitive TLA-related matters that arise between the formal quarterly sessions. Extraordinary meetings may also be convened by the Chair as necessary.

18. A quorum for all meetings consists of 50 per cent of the appointed members plus one. Decisions are made by consensus wherever possible; where consensus cannot be reached, decisions are made by a majority vote. In the case of a tie, the Chair holds the casting vote.

19. The TLA Committee Secretary is responsible for compiling the agendas and minutes of meetings. Agendas and relevant supporting documents must be made available to TLA Committee members at least three working days prior to a scheduled meeting via the designated shared folder or communication platform. The standard meeting procedures of the FMS apply.

FINANCE

20. The TLA Committee receives an annual operational allocation from the central FMS budget, as determined by the Dean and managed under **SUNFin Cost Centre # 6006**. This budget is administered by the TLA Chair in accordance with institutional financial guidelines and in collaboration with the FMS Director to ensure prudent and strategic use of funds. Funding is available to support the following categories:

| FMS TLA Committee Funding | Transaction IDs (CC # 6006) |
|--|---|
| National Benchmark tests | >0601 |
| School Evaluations | >0602 |
| Learning & Teaching mobility | >0603 |
| Learning & Teaching development | >0604 |
| Undergraduate reading and writing course | >0605 |
| Operations TLA Committee | >0605 |
| Grants, allocations and Central Campus funding | Unique project number created for each allocation |

21. The FMS TLA Committee budget allocations are reviewed and communicated during the first TLA Committee meeting of each calendar year.

22. Funding Support and Eligibility. Funding support will be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the strategic priorities of the FMS and SU's TLA policies. All academic and academic support staff members affiliated with the faculty may apply for TLA-related funding, subject to the availability of funds and the merit of the request. Applications for support may include, but are not limited to:

- Attendance or participation in mobility or exchange opportunities related to TLA;
- Hosting or participating in school evaluations or curriculum/programme reviews;
- Capacity development initiatives for academic staff focused on TLA enhancement;

- d. Resource development for undergraduate literacy and foundational skills.

23. Funding Application Process. Applications for TLA-related financial support may be submitted on a rolling basis throughout the year, using the designated TLA Financial Service Request Form, hosted on Microsoft Forms (available on the FMS website). The process is as follows:

- a. Submission and Format. Applicants may submit funding requests at any time by completing the official TLA Financial Service Request Form (Microsoft Forms). Applications must include all supporting documentation such as motivation letters, event or project outlines, cost breakdowns, and evidence of alignment with TLA priorities or the faculty's strategic goals.
- b. Ad Hoc Evaluation. Upon receipt, the Chair of the TLA Committee will circulate the application to committee members for consideration via email or an agreed platform. This process occurs on an ad hoc basis and is not limited to scheduled committee meetings. Members will be given a specified timeframe to review and approve or decline the request.
- c. Decision and Communication. Funding decisions are made by consensus of the TLA Committee. The outcome will be communicated directly to the applicant via email, and the relevant documentation will be forwarded to the FMS Financial Office.
- d. Ratification and Record-Keeping. All approved funding applications will be formally ratified at the next scheduled TLA Committee meeting. For transparency and accountability, details of each funding decision will be captured in the meeting minutes.
- e. Calls for Financial Support. In addition to the rolling application process, the TLA Committee may issue a formal Call for TLA Financial Support (TLA CFS) four times annually (February, May, August, and November) to prompt submissions and ensure budget utilisation across the academic year.
- f. Post-Approval Responsibility. Once a request is approved, the applicant is responsible for processing the funding through the SUNFin system (if required) and ensuring the completion of all reconciliation procedures. If applicable, the applicant must also liaise directly with the relevant business support staff (Office of the Dean) to initiate the creation of purchase orders (POs) and to finalise any associated payments.

24. Financial Management and Transparency. Funds are managed in consultation with the FMS Director and must remain within the allocated threshold for each financial year. Unused funds are returned to the faculty main budget at the end of every financial year. Any open commitment (i.e. purchase order or expense authorisations) will be reviewed by the chair and secretary on merit to decide its closure or continued commitment. All expense authorisations must be used within a financial year and closed, but purchase orders may be carried over. On confirmation of the carry over and continued commitment, funding will be allocated to the 6006B cost centre for TLA to carry those commitments. Those purchase

order form the previous financial year identified for carry over and commitment must be closed and replaced with a new purchase order against the funding allocated on 6006B. The list of carry over purchase orders and amounts required must be submitted to Director Faculty Management for processing and allocation. All allocations and expenditures are tracked and reported to the TLA Committee and FMS ExCom.

REPORTING STRUCTURE

25. The Vice-Dean for Teaching, Learning, and Research, in their capacity as Chair of the TLA Committee, is responsible for reporting on all teaching, learning, and assessment matters to the FMS ExCom for consideration and endorsement. Following ExCom's review, all matters are submitted to the Faculty Board FB for formal approval. The TLA Committee provides regular updates and reports to the Faculty Board on the following areas:

- a. Outcomes and key initiatives related to teaching, learning, and assessment driven by faculty members.
- b. Compliance with SU's institutional TLA policies, strategies, and governance frameworks.
- c. Recommendations for strategic improvements and innovations in teaching, learning, assessment practices, and curriculum renewal.

REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE

26. The Terms of Reference shall be reviewed every two years, or sooner if significant institutional or policy changes occur. Minor editorial or formatting changes that do not affect the substance of the document may be made at any time, subject to the approval of the FMS TLA Committee. Major changes or substantive amendments shall be drafted by the Chair, submitted to the Faculty Executive Committee (ExCom), and presented for approval by the Faculty Board.

REFERENCES AND POLICY ALIGNMENTS

27. The operations of the TLA Committee are guided by the following policies and guidelines:

- a. Stellenbosch University Teaching-Learning Policy (2025).
- b. Stellenbosch University Assessment Policy (2021).
- c. Stellenbosch University Teaching and Learning Strategy (2017–2021, under review).
- d. SU Assessment Terminology Guidelines (2023).

- e. Applicable Assessment Rules and Regulations from the SU General Calendar Part 1.
- f. FMS Assessment Rules and Regulations from the Military Science Yearbook Part 13.
- g. Policy for Quality Assurance and Enhancement at Stellenbosch University (2019).
- h. Student Feedback on Modules, Lecturers and Programmes Policy (review date 2013).
- i. Regulation for Internal and External Moderation (2024).
- j. Guidelines for Programme Committee Chairs and Programme Leaders (2018).
- k. Disciplinary Code for Students of Stellenbosch University (2020).
- l. SU Graduate Attributes and Profile (in draft 2023).

28. This Terms of Reference document serves to clarify roles, responsibilities, and operational guidelines to foster a cohesive, inclusive, and effective teaching, learning, and assessment environment within the FMS.