



# SRC 2020/2021 Annual Report

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## Constitutional Responsibilities

Though the Student Constitution does not specifically mention the responsibilities of the Women and Queer Empowerment portfolio, it does state that the core functions of the SRC, and by extension, WAQE include:

- (1) to act in the best interest of students and to actively promote students' rights under (11).
- (3) to evaluate the University policy and give input in the formulation thereof;
- (5) to facilitate projects and initiatives to the benefit of students;
- (6) to inform students continuously, and obtain feedback, about its activities; and

Specific responsibilities to be set out for the WAQE Council Member include, but are not limited to:

- empower the women and queer bodies of Stellenbosch university (Empowerment must be all encompassing and as such should occur on a policy, educational, engagement, and social level and take place on both a staff and student level within the institution).
- Empowering the leaders of the institution to create a safe and inclusive space for these individuals.
- Wellness needs to be an integral part of the empowerment of women and queer bodies and wellness includes a physically safe and inclusive environment, that allows for the physical and mental health of these bodies to be catered for.
- Intersectionality must be considered throughout all processes. Certain groups within the women and queer communities alike are more vulnerable and should therefore be specifically and purposefully empowered.

In terms of meeting the constitutional responsibilities of the WAQE portfolio, the portfolio has met its constitutional mandate in terms of the points above. Promoting of student's rights and evaluating (and providing input on) University Policy often went hand in hand throughout this year where input was required on various committees for university policies involving Women and Queer students needs. Facilitation of projects and initiatives took place in the form of events, and obtaining feedback was done through the feedback process of the Anti-GBV SU memorandums as well as during Student Parliament.

## Portfolio Overview

This SRC term has been the first term that WAQE has served as a portfolio on the SRC, as opposed to being a managerial position. Given the groundwork that was started last year part of the vision of this portfolio is to continue to lay this foundation for the leaders and students to come. It must also be recognised that women and queer people have been largely neglected by staff and student leadership alike since the establishment of this institution and thus this portfolio serves to increase inclusion and visibility of both communities in the space.

Women and queer bodies have been the subject of many types of discriminations throughout the world and Stellenbosch University is no exception. This discrimination often leads to students being excluded, has a negative impact on their mental health and ultimately leads to a fractured student community. The purpose of this portfolio is to actively combat this discrimination where it exists on

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a managerial, policy, staff, and student level and to create a university community that truly reflects our values of Stellenbosch University.

## Committees / Task Teams

### Stellenbosch Council

Served with: Xola Njengele

The Stellenbosch Council meets once a term. The role of the council is to discuss and decide on pertinent issues of the university, it governs over the assets of the university, determines conditions of service of staff determines amongst others the university's admissions and language policies. Meetings required a full day commitment.

### Student Fees Committee

Served with: Unathi Ngumbela

This committee meets once a term. The student fees Committee discusses and decides on issues pertaining to student costs and fees payable to the university, including international and refugee student fees.

### SU Campus/Residence Life and Culture Review: LGBTQIAP+ community working group

Head of committee: Fanele Ndebele (fanele@sun.ac.za)

My presence on this committee included a commitment to attend and contribute to weekly meetings for this term. Pertinent topics that were discussed included:

- The heteronormative, cisnormative and often patriarchal culture of residences
- Lack Gender Neutral residences and bathrooms on campus
- University policies including residence placement policy, student disciplinary code and the SU Management's response to the Anti-GBV memorandum as well as the discrepancy between university policies and their implementation.
- Representation at the Equality Unit for LGBT+ community (and its affiliation with the HIV+ office)
- Mental Health and support for the LGBT+ support

This term, the committee hosted a roundtable event to discuss the above points with the broader student and staff community.

### Review of Residence Head Appointment

Head of Committee: Riana Engelbrecht (rianae@sun.ac.za)

This committee interrogated the process by which residence heads are selected. This included a review of:

- Residence Head Role description in residence heads' manual
- Advertising for a residence head position
- Appointment process and contentious issues around the application process (eg. Applications being for specific communities or not disclosing specific community on application)
- Terms of service (maximum time of being a residence head for a specific community)
- Competencies, skills and requirements for appointment
- The future role of the residence head and its evolution
- Accommodation for residence heads and standardisation thereof

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This committee was concluded this term.

## Year Overview

### Term 1

The main activities of term one included handover meetings, trainings and planning for the year ahead.

1. **Transgender Task Team:** It was my intention to open a task team to tackle transgender issues at the university, and during this term I met with stakeholders to lay the foundation for this opening.
2. **Leadership Training Development:** The purpose of this training was to equip campus leaders with the skills and knowledge that is necessary to deal with emergencies that may arise with regards to cases of GBV or hate crimes. During this term all administration for this initiative was completed.
3. **House Committee Support:** The purpose of this initiative was to provide support for Residences and PSOs HC members with regards to how they can continue to promote inclusivity and combat GBV in their communities. House Committees of all Residence and PSO spaces have been reached out to and have been invited to join a centralised platform for all HC members in charge of portfolios involved in either women or queer empowerment. This is a platform where resources, events, and ideas can be shared easily to other communities. These members of House Committees have also been reached out to, to engage on the difficulties being faced by each community in terms of Women and Queer Empowerment, as well as to engage on the progress that has been made within the communities since the signing of the Anti-GBV memorandums and ascertain where assistance can be given to communities.

### Term 2

1. **Task Team:** During the second term, completed the application process for the Task Team and have formed the Task Team. I had begun meeting with my task team when it came to my attention that there had been a formation of a working group with possibly overlapping objectives. The working group mentioned was the 'Campus and Residence Life and culture review: LGBT+ community Working Group'. By the end of the second term, I was still in conversations with both my task team and the Chairperson of the working group about a way forward for both groups.
2. **Anti-GBV Protest:** The portfolio was approached to organise transport for students who wanted to attend an Anti-GBV protest taking place in Cape Town. Two 10-seaters were booked, and the arrangements ran smoothly. Please see Term report for more comprehensive details.
3. **House Committee Check-Ins:** The purpose of this initiative was to provide support for Residences and PSOs HC members with regards to how they can continue to promote inclusivity and combat GBV in their communities. This is vital for the safety of the women and queer people within these spaces. A check-in form was sent out to communities to engage on the progress that the communities have made since the Anti-GBV memorandum of 2019. Unfortunately, the response from the communities was minimal with only three of the communities engaging. The process was therefore reviewed.
4. **Pride Week:** Planning for Pride week also took place during this term.

### Term 3

1. **Pride Week:**
  - a. **Safe Space:** There is a need for marginalised bodies at Stellenbosch University to have safe spaces to connect with persons experiencing similar issues in our country and

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institution. The setting up of the safe space was as to promote some support for mental health within the community, for which being discriminated against is often a contributing factor for deteriorated mental health. The safe space was also aimed at providing a respite from judgment, unsolicited opinions, and having to explain yourself. It also allows people to feel supported and respected and allows access to the community.

- b. **Pride Stall:** The purpose of the Pride stall was two-fold. The first was to promote the events taking place throughout Pride week to the students of the Tygerberg Campus. The second was to create visibility for the LGBT+ community on the Tygerberg Campus and to create a platform for the dissemination of information.
- c. **Sex Talk:** The purpose of this event was to fill the gap left in our education system in terms of sex education. Given that most students sex education has mainly been driven by the ineffective promotion of celibacy in a purely heteronormative and cis-normative manner, this event was organised to provide inclusive sex education through a sex positive lens.
- d. **Pride Wall Unveiling**

## Term 4

- I. **Women's Month:** Collaborative events with Sustainability managers of the SRC and TSR
  - a. **Women in Leadership Panel Discussion:** Given that leadership spaces in South Africa in the corporate, political, and social spheres are still cis-gendered men dominated, the purpose of this event was to show-case women in leadership and provide a platform for students to ask questions to the speakers. The planning for this event included contacting potential guest speakers, creating a poster and advertising for the event, and creating a Microsoft teams meeting. The final speakers for the event included Elmi Muller (Newly appointed Dean at the Faculty of Medicine and health sciences at Stellenbosch University, Head of General Surgery Division and the Organ Transplant Unit at Groote Schuur Hospital), Koleka Mlisana (executive manager of Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance at the NHLS, co-author of over 130 peer-reviewed journal articles, and member of the ministerial advisory committee on anti-microbial resistance), and Shivani Padayachy (Risk consultant and Actuary). See contact details below.

Areas for improvement: Attendance at the event was unfortunately poor. An area for improvement would be to increase attendance by introducing giveaways at the event.

- b. **Menstrual Health Webinar:** The purpose of this event was two-fold. The first was to provide students with information regarding menstrual health, what is normal, abnormal and when they should seek help for menstrual abnormalities. The second was to equip students with the knowledge and incentive to start using reusable sanitary products. Originally, an organisation committed to attending and hosting the webinar, but they untimeously pulled out of the event. The Webinar was then put together and presented by myself and the TSR sustainability manager. The Planning for this included researching menstrual health and formulating a presentation, making a poster, and advertising and making an online event.

Areas for improvement: The only addition I would make to this event, is acquiring menstrual cups as giveaways for attendees.

- c. **GBV Safe Space:** The purpose of the Safe Space was to provide a space where people could share their experiencing in a non-judgemental supportive space. The panning of this event was finding a facilitator, creating a poster and an online event. Unfortunately,

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only one student attended the safe space. As an area of improvement I would suggest sharing GBV safe Spaces with the Anti-GBV SU movement as they have a further reach within the Anti-GBV community of Stellenbosch University.

2. Uyinene Mrwetyana Foundation Initiative 'Post-Office to Parliament': The WAQE portfolio was approached by the Uyinene Foundation regarding this initiative which entailed collecting letters regarding GBV from students and handing them over at Parliament. The role of WAQE in this initiative was to communicate with the SRC as well as the SRC Office Manager to organise a space for letters for students to drop off. The Transformation Officer (Viwe Kobokana) and Wellness Portfolio (Maki Kaseke) agreed to oversee the dropping off letters. Responsibilities of WAQE also included creating a poster advertising the initiative to students, as well as receiving letters from students via email and passing them along to the Foundation.
3. Anti-GBV Memorandum Feedback: At the second Official Student Parliament Sitting it was raised that student leadership is not doing enough to combat Gender Based Violence. As a part of remedying this, it was requested that the residences and PSOs provide feedback on the progress that they have made since the signing of the Anti-GBV Memorandums of 2019. A feedback form was distributed to all the communities via the Prim Committee as a rectification of the previous method of feedback. Unfortunately, still less than half of the communities provided feedback, however this was a great improvement from previous attempts at feedback. A review of the feedback provided by communities is currently being collated to identify common themes and gaps.
4. Critical Engagement Manual: A common struggle amongst House Committee Critical Engagement members is the identification of themes, issues as well as resources. As a result, the WAQE Portfolio is finalising a handbook that can be given to incoming House Committee members to assist them.

## Year

## Budget

### Budget & Reasoning

The WAQE budget underwent review at the beginning of term 3 due to unforeseen events needing to be budgeted for as well as certain events having to be moved online due to the raised lockdown level during this term.

This review and amendments are explained below.

### Amendments to existing projects

Initial Event	Initial budget	Reviewed event	Reason for change	Final allocation
Panel Discussion	R1 100	This was replaced by a COVID-19 friendly stall on the Tygerberg campus to promote visibility and support for	There was a change in the COVID19 alert level the week before Pride week was to begin and as a result the panel discussion (which was initially meant to discuss different gender identities and sexual orientations) was	R200 for printing of pamphlets and decorations.

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		the LGBT+ community.	changed to the out-door pride stall which instead handed out pamphlets conveying the information.	
Buses to Cape Town Pride	R4 000	Handing out of flags and Pride walk on campus.	The reason for this change was that there was no longer a Cape Town Pride due to COVID-19. As a result, there was instead a collaboration between the Transformation and WAQE portfolio to arrange pride flags for the communities on campus and do a pride walk to promote visibility and encourage the celebration of the LGBT+ community.	R2 000 was allocated to the purchasing of Pride flags.
SexPose	R1 500	Let's Talk about SEX (online)	This event was moved online due to the change in the COVID-19 regulations. The funds for this event were initially allocated to the purchasing of gifts and catering for the events. Instead these were reallocated to giveaways (3 book vouchers as well as 2 sex toys).	R1500
Critical Engagement	4×R400	Critical Engagement (reduced number)	I decided to reduce the number of Critical Engagement sessions to 2, to free up more of my time to host different events such as panel discussions and webinars. This decision was also made because I felt that there was less of a gap in terms of Critical Engagement sessions as the House Committees already host a substantial amount of this type of event. Instead, I felt it would be more useful and appropriate to amend this plan.	2×R200

### Projects where funding was no longer required

Project	Amount originally allocated	Reason for funding cancellation

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Slut Walk	R1 200	The slut walk was meant to be the main event of Women's Month, but I was then approached by the Sustainability portfolio of both the TSR and the SRC who pitched a collaboration of Women's months events instead. Though the planning took place in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> term, the events themselves took place in the final term and will be discussed in more detailed in that report.
Safe Spaces	R2 682,50	The safe spaces were moved completely online and as a result the funding for refreshments and transport was no longer required.
Task Team	R11 040	These meetings originally required funding due to them being planned to take place in person. Unfortunately, due to my own personal delays and then institutional delays, no in person meetings took place. These meetings were moved completely online and no longer require the funding initially requested.

### Projects where additional funding was required

Project	Amount requested	Reason for additional funds
Transport to Anti-GBV protest in Cape Town	R2 000	There was a request that was brought to the SRC to arrange transport to an anti-GBV protest that was taking place in Cape Town. As the WAQE representative on the SRC, I requested funds and organised the transport.

### Expenditure so far

Items/Services purchased	Amount
Transport for students to Anti-GBV Protest	R2 000
3×R250 Exclusive Books vouchers	R750
Sex Toy Giveaways	R610

### Recommendations to improve portfolio

1. Plans for events should be planned online until COVID19 is no longer a factor at all. The constant changing of regulations caused extra strain and a significant wastage of time on double planning.
2. Students need incentive to attend an event whether it be online or in person. Often times the incentive at in person events is free food and social interaction, but this is taken away at online events. Incentives that work well at online events, include giveaways (relevant to the event), exclusive books vouchers as well as Takealot vouchers.
3. Timeously advertising for events is essential. Ensure that events are advertised at minimum a week in advance, to ensure good feedback. Send reminders to your team to share posters and links for the event.
4. The WAQE Portfolio is one which is essential to open a committee. There is a lot of extra administration that is expected of the WAQE portfolio that is difficult for a single person to keep up with. A committee can assist with the upkeep of the social media pages, can assist with advertising, can provide input and assistance on events.

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## Important Contacts:

### General:

Anele Mdepa: [anelemdepa@sun.ac.za](mailto:anelemdepa@sun.ac.za)

Vuyokazi Hlawatika (SRC Training): [vuyoh@sun.ac.za](mailto:vuyoh@sun.ac.za)

Adri (TSS manager): Cell nr-0827799009 email address- [a3b@sun.ac.za](mailto:a3b@sun.ac.za)

### Women in Leadership Panel:

Elmi Muller: [elmi.muller@uct.ac.za](mailto:elmi.muller@uct.ac.za)

Koleka Mlisana: [koleka.mlisana@nhls.ac.za](mailto:koleka.mlisana@nhls.ac.za)

Shivani Padayachy: [shivspadayachy@gmail.com](mailto:shivspadayachy@gmail.com)

### Sex Talk:

Dr Anastacia Tomson (Transgender rights activist and Medical Doctor): [doc.tomson@gmail.com](mailto:doc.tomson@gmail.com)

Kaylon Weppelman (Equality Unit facilitator): [kaylon@sunac.za](mailto:kaylon@sunac.za)

Sari Cohen (Allure Sensuality Emporium): [sari@alluresensuality.co.za](mailto:sari@alluresensuality.co.za)

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