



**Stellenbosch**

UNIVERSITY  
IYUNIVESITHI  
UNIVERSITEIT

**SRC**

Students' Representative Council  
Ibhunga elimele abafundi  
Studenteraad



## SRC TERM I REPORT

### SRC VICE-CHAIRPERSON



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## William Sezoe – SRC Vice-Chairperson – sezoe@sun.ac.za

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### Foreword

Hello fellow Maties,

I would firstly like to thank you for being active citizens by participating in the 2022 SRC Elections. The Election season was quite a tough one and you made sure to ask candidates the most difficult and uncomfortable questions.

Coming into Office in the 4<sup>th</sup> term of the 2022 academic year was quite challenging, having to balance this new role with all my other roles and at the same time my academics, but save to say I survived. However, as you would know, this was one of the most challenging terms for Stellenbosch University and specifically for the SRC. We had another two urination incidents during this term and I can tell you, it had us on our toes.

While all of these different challenges occurred, the SRC however still had to put its plans in place for their term in Office, and we thus had to juggle a lot during this term. I am however very happy to say that this SRC committed itself to,

“achieve sustainable impact and experiential transformation through promoting intentional student servitude underpinned by mindfulness, transparency, and accountability in the spirit of Ubuntu.”

With that being said, our doors are always open. We are here to assist all Maties to ensure that everyone experience a transformative student experience.

I further want to implore you to keep us accountable whilst in Office. Any complaints against SRC Representatives can be lodged to me at [sezoe@sun.ac.za](mailto:sezoe@sun.ac.za) or [sr@sun.ac.za](mailto:sr@sun.ac.za) or to Student Parliament at [studpar@sun.ac.za](mailto:studpar@sun.ac.za)

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## Constitutional Responsibilities

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

- 1) Responsible for supporting the Chairperson in all administrative roles and fulfilling any or all of the duties of the Chairperson should the Chairperson be incapacitated or unavailable.
- 2) Responsible for the internal monitoring and evaluation of the SRC.
- 3) Responsible for the internal monitoring of internal relations and discipline of the SRC.
- 4) Appoints the SRC Managers, with the consent of the SRC.

My responsibilities are however not limited to what is outlined in our student constitution. As an SRC Member I'm binding to all other additional duties such as what is outlined in sections 27 and 32, and that is to always:

- act in the best interests of all Stellenbosch University Students firmly
- uphold the Student Constitution and to protect the rights and freedoms of all Stellenbosch University Students,
- and to act transparent in everything I do on behalf of the SRC.
- represent students on various institutional committees.
- evaluate and give input on institutional policies.
- to plan and facilitate projects that will advance a transformative student experience for all.
- to formulate internal policies to help support and guide the SRC to execute their functionaries to the best possible standards.

As a member of the Executive Committee of the SRC I also have other constitutional duties imposed on me as per sections 41 and 42 of the Student Constitution. The Executive Committee of the SRC runs the day-to-day business of the house and is ultimately responsible for setting the agenda for SRC Meetings. This committee also decides on the budget of the SRC and must ensure that the SRC executes its functionaries accordingly.

Finally, the Vice-Chairperson's (VC) main responsibility is to ensure that the house is in order. The VC takes care of all the Internal Matters of the SRC such as monitoring and evaluating the performance of SRC Members and SRC Managers. The VC is also in charge of Internal Discipline.

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## Portfolio Overview

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The Vice-chairperson shares the role of overseeing the SRC with the Chairperson. Key responsibilities of this portfolio include:

- Maintaining the internal relations in the team
- Overseeing and enforcing discipline in the team
- Coordinating the SRC's representation on institutional committees
- Ensuring there are teambuilding
- Promoting leadership development within the team
- Monitoring and evaluating the team's performance
- Appoint Managers

## Committees/Task Teams

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I serve on the following Committees and or Task Teams:

### 1) Council Language Committee

This Committee has not yet sat since I came into Office, but the Committee is one established by the University Council and its purpose is to:

do oversight and supervising of the Institution's language policy. It advises Council on language-related matters, advises Management on language implementation and sensitive/urgent/or contentious language matters, and inspects and reports on Senate's language reports.

### 2) Senate Library Committee

This Committee has not yet sat since I came into Office, but the Committee is one established by the University Senate to:

advise the Senate on the academic activities of the Library and Information Service, about strategy and policy regarding the provision of library and information material, as well as the appropriate infrastructure for access to and use of the information material, to staff members and students.

### 3) Naming Committee

This Committee has not yet sat since I came into Office, but the purpose of the Committee is to:

review the names of Stellenbosch Universities buildings, residences, and other facilities to ensure that these names are in line with the Institutions Vision and Mission (specifically in terms of its commitment transformation). Furthermore, the Committee is also in charge of facilitating/heading the process of any name changes to buildings, residences, and other facilities.

### 4) NSFAS Cap Contingency Committee (New Committee)

This is a new Committee established on an urgent basis by the Rectorate in February 2023. The role and purpose of this Committee is to urgently look at the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) CAP on Residence allowances of R45 000,00 introduced in the beginning of 2023.

So far, the Committee has laid out the different challenges, of which the biggest is the accommodation crisis, and the other food insecurity.

What have we found:

- NSFAS Students who used to live in private accommodation spaces are now finding it difficult to return to these spaces due to this cap. They either have to sign an acknowledgment of debt form and pay the shortfall of over R20 000,00 for the year or look for spaces that falls within the cap.
- The Committee together with Placements Office and the SRC found that all the private accommodation spaces that falls within the cap are already full.
- The Committee then released a form to the Student Body where students could apply for assistance in terms of the Shortfall.
- The budget made available by the University was about R1 Million rand and the students that applied for the first round of shortfall assistance came to over R5 Million rand.
- In the second round about 700 students applied, and the amount of money needed to cover in this round was over 12 million rand of which the University made 6.6 million rand available.
- The SRC Commitment to this Committee is to provide their ideas and possible solutions to this problem. The biggest and main one being lobbying, activism and advocacy against the cap.
- In relation to that, the SRC held a small peaceful protest on Friday the 10 of February at the NSFAS Offices while the Minister of the Department of Higher Education and Training were being briefed on the Readiness of NSFAS by its Management.
- The SRC succeeded in its protest and agreements were made with the Management of NSFAS, which led to an urgent meeting with all stakeholders at the University on Monday the 13<sup>th</sup> of February 2023.

- We currently await the responses of NSFAS, and the Committee continues to work as hard as we can to help fix this problem.
- In terms of food insecurity because the cap, the committee is currently looking at interventions and the Development and Alumni Relations will play a big role in this regard.

## 5) Supporting the Student Debt Working Group Committee

I sit on this committee on a supporting capacity to help assist in speeding the workings of the committee. There were quite a few challenges with this committee that needs to be clarified with you as the students but I would advise that the term report of the SRC Treasurer be looked at for an in-depth report on the issue.

What I however can report on is the issue around the budget and its limitations. In a SRC Executive Meeting with the University Management we asked the Management whether R 1.4 Million rand that was a leftover amount from the previous year will be transferred to the Committee. The response on this was positive and the Committee received the R 1.4 million rand.

The Executive then also asked the Management if the Committee will be receiving an extra budget/new budget upon which we were told that the money that goes to Student Debt does not come from the University but from Private Donors via the Development and Alumni Relations Office (DAR). We were then advise by Management to ask DAR for additional funds.

DAR in response said that they do not have any other funds to the R 1.4 Million rand that was transferred to the Committee. The SRC thereafter made another request to DAR to still look at the matter as R1.4 million would not be able to assist all the students meeting the criteria. At the same time the Committee also made contact with DAR for additional funding. Within days DAR came back with an extra R 2 Million to help with Student Debt, bringing the total amount to R3.4 Million rand.

The committee then looked at the number of students that applied for debt assistance and we found that the debt is over R20 Million rand in total. The Centre for Bursaries and Loans then decided to release some of the pressure of the committee by looking at funds available in their reserved funds. The CBL then made the decision to cover all students that meet the criteria with debt below R45 000. We then saw over 100 students falling in this category, releasing a huge amount of pressure from us as a committee.

Currently the committee has asked the University Management to support us in our work as we released that even the 3.4 million together with the assistance from CBL won't be able to assist all the students meeting the criteria set by the committee.

## Term I Overview

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During my first term in office, I executed the following:

### The 2022/2023 Mandate

Just after the SRC Executive Committee Members were elected, I met up with the Chairperson of the SRC to start mapping out the road ahead for us as members of the Office of the Chair. We also had many engagements on how we would help ourselves and the rest of the SRC to integrate and connect with each other to ultimately come to one mandate for the SRC.

It was on this premise that we organised a Strategic Planning Weekend for the SRC so that we could go through the different expectations, and different obligations, including constitutional obligations expect of us. As previously stated, the SRC then committed itself to the following mission statement:

“achieve sustainable impact and experiential transformation through promoting intentional student servitude underpinned by mindfulness, transparency, and accountability in the spirit of Ubuntu.”

### SRC Managers

The Vice-Chairperson also carries the role of appointing SRC Managers as outlined in the Student Constitution. It is perhaps important to first give a short brief on portfolios this term and some changes to it. The SRC Chairperson proposed that some portfolios in the SRC be merged, and these portfolios are as follows;

1. Marketing and Branding became SRC Visibility.
2. Social Impact and Sustainability
3. Leadership Development and Student Wellness

After discussion with the Innovation Portfolio Holder, we have decided to combine Project Liaison with Innovation thus these two are now also merged.

The SRC also established a new portfolio [Research and Data Analyst] to help us gather data and information which can be used to strengthen our fight for a more transformative student experience for all Maties.

The SRC had the following vacancies after SRC Members choose their various portfolios.

1. KuKo
2. Transformation
3. SRC Visibility
4. WAQE

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5. Safety and Security
6. Research and Data Analyst
7. Special Needs
8. Communications

The vacancies were advertised from the Office of the Vice-Chairperson. A summary report can be requested via [sezoe@sun.ac.za](mailto:sezoe@sun.ac.za)

## **SRC CAMP**

The SRC camp was planned together with colleagues on the SRC Executive. The purpose of the camp was for teambuilding and for integration between the elected SRC Members and SRC Managers. Opportunities were also made to focus on some important issues and reflections on pertinent issues such as the urination incidents that occurred on campus as well as the release of the Justice Khampepe Report on Racism at SU.

*[Kindly note that the SRC is currently still reviewing this report and will be releasing thoughts, suggestions, and action plans once the review is complete.]*

Unfortunately, not all SRC Representatives could attend the Camp which was scheduled for 18-20 November 2022 at Saldanha Bay, but I think it was a good opportunity for the SRC to bond, as well as engage on various challenges at the institution. It was also a good opportunity to engage with our colleagues at the Military Academy Campus Student Council.

A program of the Camp can be requested via the Secretary of the SRC via [sr@sun.ac.za](mailto:sr@sun.ac.za)

## **SRC Handovers and SRC Job Descriptions**

There were several challenges that we faced the moment we got in the office, with the biggest one relating to handovers and specifically handover reports from the previous SRC. Firstly, we only received handover reports weeks after being in Office, and secondly, some reports were not submitted, and some reports had gaps in information.

Handover reports for the following items and or portfolios were not submitted to my office are as follows:

1. Transformation Handover Report
2. Secretary General Handover Report
3. Student Financial Access Handover Report
4. Handover Report for the Naming Committee
5. Handover Report for the Student Fees Committee.
6. Student Captain Handover Report

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7. Sustainability Handover Report
8. Leadership Development Handover Report

Now this was of course very concerning because this made the transition process quite longer than anticipated for some of my colleagues. It is also quite disheartening that there was no proper accountability for the failures of the specific portfolios' holders in this regard.

Nonetheless, this SRC could of course not make this an excuse for failure, and we thus took it upon ourselves to figure everything out as we journeyed. I did however raise my concerns with the Governance Structure under which the SRC falls, Student Governance about the issue. The following resolutions were made to reinstall proper functioning, integrity, accountability, and transparency.

1. In the past, Student Governance would play a bigger role in the transition process and would in fact create and host opportunities for outgoing and incoming SRC Members for proper handovers.
2. In the past, Student Governance would make sure that full and complete handover reports are submitted from the outgoing SRCs to the incoming SRCs.
3. If the above did not occur accordingly, Student Governance would take accountability steps where needed.

With that being said, it was decided upon between my Office and that of Student Governance to reinstate this procedure so that the SRCs in future do not have to sit with the same difficulties we had to sit with.

As a start, Student Governance shared a folder with portfolio job descriptions with my office and requested that the documents be updated. Currently this is still in process and will be shared back to Student Governance after its completion. My office might also release a summary report on it and might make it available on the SRC Website.

## **Guidelines for Managers**

Coming into Office, and whilst having interviews with candidates who applied for Managerial Positions on the SRC, I had numerous engagements with outgoing SRC Managers. The intention was to get a sense how relations were with SRC Members and SRC Managers in the previous year, and what they think should be looked at to make sure that the voices of SRC Managers are heard in the space.

From the conversations I had, it became clear that there were a lot of division between SRC Managers and SRC Members in the previous year, and that clarity to SRC Managers would hopefully help to make it a good and positive environment for all.

My Office then engaged with the Office of the SRC Policy Officer, to come up with a Guideline Document for SRC Managers to give them that clarity. Currently the Office of the SRC Policy Officer is

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still busy with the draft document, but I made the following items known to the Policy Officer which he must look at;

1. SRC Managers Remuneration.
2. SRC Managers Voting Rights [Internal Relations such as suggestions for a camp as an example VS Voting for a stance on an issue or VS voting rights in SRC Meetings (refer to Student Constitution in that regard of course.)]
3. Expectations [SRC Meetings, Kitchen Duty, Door Duty etc.]
4. Breakdown of the Role and Purpose of SRC Managers

Once this document has been drafted by the Policy Officer, it will be tabled at a meeting with the SRC to amend and approve the document. This guideline document will help SRC Managers to know the expectations from them and the different rights and responsibilities that they carry.

## **SRC Boardroom**

The Office of the Vice-Chairperson is also carrying the responsibility of managing the SRC Boardroom; the access thereof, bookings, access to cleaning staff, access to maintenance staff etc. it was however very shocking to learn that there was a break in at the SRC Boardroom, which led to us not being able to use the SRC Boardroom at the start of our term. It was also quite worrying that the previous SRC made no effort to go to the South African Police Station (SAPS) to make a case so that the insurance could replace the stolen items.

From what I know, the SRC's video conferencing system was stolen, which now leaves us as the new SRC without one. Nonetheless, I raised my concerns around this with Student Governance as well, and it was decided to get card reader-machines for the SRC Boardroom, which will help to monitor who enters the venue and would then serve as an accountability measure.

Currently we are still waiting on maintenance services together with IT to install these devices. It is my hope that this SRC and those still to come will make sure to take care of their spaces, and that accountability for negligence is nonnegotiable.

## **SRC Office**

There were quite a number of things with regards to the SRC Offices that needed some attention, and that was addressed and/or still in the process of being addressed.

1. Computers in the SRC Offices; were in a very bad state and haven't had any updates and upgrades since it was "donated" by Humarga to the SRC. We had IT come in to fix and update the computers.
2. The boiler in the SRC Kitchen had a major leakage and was addressed.
3. The SRC entrance door handle was broken and was addressed.

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4. The roofing of the SRC Office is one of the biggest concerns and we are waiting on maintenance to fix it.

## **SRC Relations with other Stakeholders**

### **- Neelsie Centre Management**

I am a leader who believes in collaborative leadership, and since I came into Office I tried to rebuild relations which the SRC preciously had but somehow just died out. One of which is the relations between the Neelsie Centre Management and the SRC.

After reestablishing these relations, I'm happy to say that we were able to make use of their spaces such as the VV Hall for Meetings on short notice. We were also able to make use of their chairs and tables wherever and whenever needed.

Another thing I am immensely grateful for is the renovation of the SRC Couch just in front of our Office. For years the couch has been deteriorating and nothing was done about it. After a conversation with the Manager of the Neelsie, he pledged to fix the couch which cost over R12 000.

I think another victory from this relationship is the SRC Members with their portfolios and contact details that are being featured on the SRC big screen, this helps to increase the visibility of the SRC, and I think is a recommendation I will be making for the next SRC – to continue building on such relationships.

## **Registration and Welcoming**

This has been the most daunting and perhaps most traumatizing experience of my life and leadership journey. I was leading the Registration Working Group for the SRC, and together with volunteers from societies such as SASCO and the EFFSC we were able to complete a very successful registration period.

I will not elaborate much on the various challenges here, but a full report from the SRC will be released before the end of this academic term. This report will take a holistic view and reflection of registration in general, but also the various challenges we faced as an institution and particularly as an SRC.

What I will say though is that there are way too many responsibilities on the SRC during this period, and it can't be that Admin A staffers send all and every student to the SRC Offices for assistance. Now yes, I do recognize that we serve students, but it is very unfortunate that staffers think we have the capacity and resources to for example help students with placements, readmission, food etc.

We have as I have previously stated, committed ourselves to support the University in creating a transformative student experience for all, but it can't be that the SRC carries the biggest responsibility in the process thereof.

I have asked the SRC Executive to support my request in drafting a full report on Registration and once this report is complete, we will share it with the student body, but also to the University Management for their urgent attention.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation of SRC Portfolios**

This is one of the most important responsibilities of my Office, to ensure that SRC Managers and Members fulfill their constitutional and other imposed obligations to the best of their abilities, and to make sure that those actions are in alignment with the mandate which we have set for ourselves.

At this stage I am very happy with the overall performance and progress of the SRC, and the specific portfolios. The student body can look forward to projects, initiatives and support from the SRC that is linked to the mission and the vision of the SRC.

I am however concerned about some SRC members and their performances, but a process will be followed whereby their term reports will be reviewed matched with the mandate set by the SRC. The outcomes of such processes will be transparent and shared with the student body in an appropriate manner.

## **Updating the SRC Code of Conduct**

Together with the ACC Chairperson and fellow SRC Executive Member, Emma Bowers-Swart, we decided to update the SRC Code of Conduct. The Amendments were approved and adopted by the SRC at an internal meeting. Every SRC Representative received an e-version and were made aware of hardcopies that are available for them, this includes the Student Constitution.

## **Updating SRC Term Report Template**

During the December Holidays, I took some time to update the SRC Term Report Template, this template was then shared with the Office of the Secretary to amend and approve the template, thereafter the approved template was shared with the SRC to start drafting their reports.

## **Moral Boosters**

The Office of the Vice-Chairperson hosted at least three dinners throughout the term to boost the moral of SRC Representatives, but this also served as opportunities for bonding.

## Plans for Next Term

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I plan on doing the following:

- Coaching Sessions for the SRC; preparation for this already started during the December Holidays.
- Liaise with the Centre for Student Counselling and Development for developmental programs for the SRC.
- To create more spaces for bonding and teambuilding.
- Host more monitoring and evaluation sessions with SRC Representatives.
- To monitor SRC Code of Conduct compliance and evaluate next steps with regards to that.
- Appoint a Manager for Sport.
- Appoint Electoral Commissioner.
- Joint bonding sessions/trainings with TSRC and MASC.
- Provide more training opportunities for SRC Representatives where needed.