



STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL  
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# SRC 2021/22 TERMREPORT 2 TSRC CHAIRPERSON

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## VHUDI RAVHUTSI – TSRC CHAIRPERSON - [TSRCHAIR@SUN.AC.ZA](mailto:TSRCHAIR@SUN.AC.ZA)

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## Constitutional Responsibilities

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As a general member of the Students' Representative Council, there is a minimum standard of expectation to comply with and contribute towards the Students' Representative Council fulfilling its core functions as per the Student Constitution. These include; acting in the best interest of students and actively promoting students' rights under CHAPTER 2, representing students at The University Council, The Senate, The Institutional Forum, other committees, structures, and functionaries of the University, National and international student structures, evaluating the University policy and giving input in the formulation thereof, formulating and maintaining policy to ensure that the SRC performs its functions and duties effectively, facilitating projects and initiatives to the benefit of students, and informing students continuously, and obtaining feedback, about its activities.

Further to this, I am expected to comply with the provisions of the Student Constitution and the policies and regulations of the SRC, attend meetings, submit a complete report regarding my representative responsibilities and other activities to the Secretary after every academic term, not later than one (1) week after the start of the following term, present the position of the SRC at other bodies and consult the SRC on any important decisions to be taken by said bodies, and comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the SRC.

As a member of the Executive Committee, I am expected to aid the Executive committee to fulfil its duties and powers which include setting the agenda for SRC meetings, managing the day-to-day matters of the SRC, excluding any power or duty granted to the SRC by the Student Constitution, fulfilling any duty that the SRC delegates to it, fulfilling any other function that the Student Constitution assigns to it, compiling and amending thereafter, the SRC budget, making important decisions in urgent cases where it is not practically feasible to convene the SRC, deciding on the portfolio allocation of the SRC, excluding the compulsory portfolios, and appointing the Election Commissioners in terms of s18(6) of the Student Constitution.

As the Chairperson of the Tygerberg Student Representative Council, I am required to represent the interests of all students of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, in my capacity, at the SRC and the University management, and advise the SRC to actively promote the rights of students of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences contained in CHAPTER 2, and strive to protect and further the interests of all students.



## Portfolio Overview

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The Tygerberg Student Representative Council Chairperson serves as the highest institutionalized representative of the Tygerberg Student Union. The TSRC Chairperson, as the CEO of the Tygerberg Student Representative Council, similarly chairs the executive committee of the TSRC. The TSRC chairperson also forms part of the Stellenbosch Student Representative Council as an ex-officio member.

In my capacity as TSRC Chairperson, I serve on the FMHS Faculty Board, the Dean's Advisory Committee on Transformation (DACT), Strategic Committee on Recruitment, Selection and Admission (SCORSA), and the Advisory committee for Tygerberg Student affairs (ACTSA). I also represent the needs of the Tygerberg students at Dean's Management Team (DMT) or Rectorate meetings.

Further to this, I was nominated to serve on the Honorary Degrees Nomination Committee and SAC Selections Committee on behalf of the SRC.

As part of my year plan, my portfolio objectives include:

- To amplify the voice of Tygerberg Students across the institution by working closely with the SRC, Dean's Management Team (DMT) and Rectorate.
- To empower all members of the TSRC to infiltrate spaces within the university's management and to increase their circle of influence, to advocate for Tygerberg Students to the best of their capability.
- To improve the visibility of the TSRC on campus by working with other student leadership bodies as well as non-positional leaders.
- To promote transparent and accountable governance.
- To improve the relationship between the SRC and the TSR.
- To be a proponent of social justice on campus as well as within my circle of influence in society at

large

According to the Strategic Planning document, it is expected of the Tygerberg Student Representative Council to:

- Ensure that the SRC's proposed decisions are informed on the Tygerberg campus context.
- Ensure that there is coordination between portfolio holders on the TSR and SRC.
- Delegate matters to the Tygerberg campus leadership structures where applicable.
- Ensure that Tygerberg campus issues reach the SRC.
- Ensure that SRC decisions and actions are implemented and developed on the Tygerberg campus.
- Responsible for the SRC's visibility on the Tygerberg campus

Based on previous reports, it is evident that the TSRC Chairperson is pivotal in coordinating coherence between the issues of the SRC and TSRC. It is through the TSRC Chairperson that the SRC receives issues of Tygerberg students, is informed of the Tygerberg context in decision-making, decisions of the SRC are translated down to the leadership network on Tygerberg, these decisions are implemented efficiently,

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and that feedback is relayed back to the SRC. According to previous reports, agreement and understanding between the SRC and the TSRC Chairperson has always been delicate and needs to be cultivated and nurtured as far as possible for the betterment of the student body.

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## Committees/Task Teams

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### Committees

#### 1. Dean's Management Team (DMT)

- The Tygerberg Students' Representative Council (TSRC) Executive Committee (EC) meets the Dean's Management Team 8-weekly to discuss high level issues brought forth by the TSRC or the DMT. These issues usually are generally concerning management or fall directly under responsibility centres of the DMT members.
- On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February, we met the DMT where we engaged notably on FMHS's Response to the TSRC Memorandum on Academic Exclusion and Academic Empowerment (see addendum 2) that I had addressed to the Office of the Deputy Registrar: Tygerberg Campus (see addendum 1). This led to discussions around optimization of the readmissions process and efforts to increase academic support to Tygerberg students. Other matters discussed include the Laptop Loan program headed by the TSRC Student Community Needs Officer in collaboration with the Manager: Tygerberg Student Affairs, TSRC-TAAC Vaccine Task Team feedback, TSRC representation on Official FMHS events and visits, and feedback on DMT activities.

#### 2. Strategic Committee on Recruitment, Selection and Admission (SCORSA)

- The establishment of this strategic recruitment, selection and admission committee for the FMHS was proposed, to provide overall direction for selection and admission to the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. This includes developing undergraduate and postgraduate minimum admission requirements and guidelines for selection. That takes into account the approved Admissions Policy of the University, enrolment planning as well as diversity targets, amongst others. It is guided by a number of principles which could include enrolment planning in terms of DoHET and partner employers, requirements of the Admissions Policy of Stellenbosch University, Faculty strategic direction in terms of driving both diversity and transformation, increasing access i.e. reviewing the extended degree programmes, as well as the numbers of students required in terms of the HPCSA and other statutory bodies and Human Resources for Health (HRH) strategies.
- Matters of this committee are widely confidential. Some mentionable issues discussed when this committee met are update to the 2023-intake selection guidelines, Reports on the implementation of the Situational Judgement Test (SJT) for 2022-intake, Work Psychology Group Evaluation Report for Stellenbosch University SJT 2021, Selection Office feedback report, Undergraduate selection and registration statistics, SU undergraduate Open Day, FMHS Recruitment Plan, and update on Rector's Discretionary Placement numbers and process.



### 3. Advisory committee for Tygerberg Student affairs (ACTSA)

- This committee was established to advise and inform the function and operation of the Tygerberg Student Affairs. It serves to gather and align student input and ensure throughput of this input to decision-making of Tygerberg Student Affairs.
- The team met to discuss Matters raised by Faculty programme representatives (Nursing & Midwifery, SLHT, Dietetics, MBChB, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy), Centre for Student Leadership, Experiential Education and Citizenship's Leadership Development online training and offerings, issues raised by the TSR, TPSC, TAAC, TSC, and TSP, The impact of COVID in the residences, food-related matters, Centre for Student Counselling & Development (Developments and trends during lockdown, Food security, feedback on the Mental Health Plan and Substance Abuse Policy development, Campus/Res Life and Culture Review, and Communication regarding interruptions and hospitalisations of students.

### 4. FMHS Faculty Board

- FMHS Faculty Board is a standing committee of the Senate for the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. Faculty Board makes proposals and recommendations to the Senate in respect of academic programmes and activities in the faculty, and advise the Senate on any matter, and perform any function, referred to it by Senate.
- Matters of this committee are largely confidential. Mentionable points from the meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> of February 2022 include report on Final Consultation Work Policy, Dean's Management Report, and reports by committees (Centre for Undergraduate Teaching, Centre for Postgraduate Teaching, and Centre for Postgraduate Research).

### 5. DSAf Charter Sub-committee

- This committee was established to plan the launch of the new DSAf Transformation Charter at the annual DSAf Transformation Summit.
- This committee met regularly to discuss issues such as the date of the summit, venue, marketing, format of the summit, translation of the charter, and unveiling of the charter.

### 6. Welcoming Committee (FMHS and SU)

- This committee was established to plan and organize the welcoming program.
- All meetings served to develop the welcoming program and coordinate coherence between the SU welcoming program, FMHS Welcoming program and the residences welcoming programs.



## Task Teams

### 1. SRC Task Team for creating Student Parliament Rules

- This Task Team was established to develop a constitution for Student Parliament, rules for the Student Assembly and Student Imbizo, and submit the constitution and both sets of rules to Student Court for approval.
- The task team had its first meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March 2022 to divide the team to focus on the two bicameral bodies and come up with provisions for suggested rules and regulations.
- The work of this task team is still ongoing.

### 2. TSRC E-wasting and Recycling Task Team

- This Task Team was established to aid the TSRC Office Proposal. The function of this task team is to renew the TSRC spaces by discarding, recycling and e-wasting equipment in the office using green and sustainable means to make the office space more usable. Further to this, the Task Team is responsible for conserving institutional memory at the FMHS Faculty Archive.
- The task team has been meeting and organizing with different stakeholders like IT, the TSS Recycling centre, Student Governance and the Office of the Deputy registrar: Tygerberg to fulfil the above-mentioned duties.





## Term Overview

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### SRC Executive and General Meetings

- The SRC Executive met every Monday, and the general council met every Wednesday according to agenda points submitted, notwithstanding special circumstances. Further to this, the SRC (EC) also met with DSAf and Rectorate. As part of the vision to increase the SRC visibility on Tygerberg campus, we agreed to hold the Executive meetings on Tygerberg every other week and the general council meetings once every term. This mind-set made it possible for us to mandate intrinsic consideration of Tygerberg campus in the planning and execution of each SRC portfolio. From December through to January, we invested time into attacking the welcoming and registration period in SRC Executive Meetings by using a workstream approach, where the team was divided into workstreams given mandates to fulfil in order to enrich the functioning of the SRC through the welcoming and registration period. My main role during the planning and execution of said workstream approach was informing the SRC Executive of the Tygerberg context and integrating the TSRC into the various workstreams to make sure the Tygerberg context is considered. In February, we engaged on issues like remedial action to support students who applied for readmission, unfair readmission procedures, NSFAS, etc. and also report on these issues at a mass meeting. In March, we engaged on matters such as venue usage costs which formed the basis of the Tygerberg Societies Council (TSC) Report and memorandum (see addendum 3).
- These meetings made it possible for us to direct the functioning of the SRC and I took this opportunity to inform the SRC of the Tygerberg perspective for consideration in this functioning intrinsically and not as an after-thought.
- Intentional visibility of the SRC on Tygerberg campus aligns with the vision of the TSRC. We have strived and managed to uphold a healthy and working relationship between the TSRC and the SRC which positively impacts on the livelihood of the TSU, fosters inclusion of Tygerberg at the greater University level and promotes accountability of the SRC to the TSU.
- Key players: SRC Executive Committee and SRC.
- **Date of event/ task:** SRC Executive meetings occur every Monday and SRC General Meetings occur every Wednesday notwithstanding special circumstances.
- **What went wrong:** It is not at all easy to be travelling to Stellenbosch every Monday and Wednesday after a workday for meetings. A different campus means an entirely different context so it necessitated a learning curve to adapt to the functioning of Stellenbosch campus so I could apply myself in addition to my Tygerberg experience in order to marry the two.
- **What went well:** Tygerberg campus was successfully considered in the planning and execution of each portfolio and properly budgeted for. The relationship between the SRC and TSRC has drastically improved and this has made a significant impact for the benefit of the TSU and the extended student body as a whole.

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- **Overall feedback of how event or activity panned out:** I have enjoyed this SRC journey, it is packed with a lot of learning and involvement in key issues shaping the student experience. I really see the impact it has made on the relationship between the two representative student bodies and it continues to be carry potential for an amazing working environment for the benefit of the student. I think this is also well-received by the members of the two representative bodies with a lot of collaboration between them occurring and being enabled.
- **Project feasibility:** I am actually of the opinion that the TSRC should have a set seat on the SRC Executive based on the amount of successes I have seen just by being the SRC Executive. It allows for a two-way street feedback loop between the bodies and the benefits are vivid. The Tygerberg context is clearly understood and the SRC benefits with direction on how to apply themselves for the Tygerberg Student. This makes it possible for the SRC to fully achieve their mandate. No budget is required, travelling costs are covered by the SRC.

### TSRC Office proposal

- The working document (see addendum 4) submitted to the Deputy Vice Chancellor: T&L has been extensively engaged on and formed a basis of engagement for a number of issues including TSRC Office, Osler Hub, ER24 services, Food services, etc. Some of these issues were engaged on successfully to their completion, whereas the remaining are being engaged on.
- The TSRC aims to approach issues in a solutions-based way, we engaged intellectually with all relevant stakeholders offering pertinent solutions along every step which promotes the TSRC vision. We communicated this with the TSU to foster transparency and accountability.
- **Key players:** DVC: Teaching and Learning – Primary custodian of working document, Senior Director: Student Affairs, Manager: Student Governance, Tygerberg Coordinator: Student Governance, Tygerberg Manager: Student Affairs.
- **Date of event/ task:** The visit was on the 11th of October 2021 with subsequent submission of the proposal and the working document.
- **What went wrong:** A big problem that remains apparent is finding a solution for the Osler Hub issue. Full renovations of the TSRC cannot roll out without this problem being sold. Osler does not have a space to temporarily or permanently relocate.
- **What went well:** The whole engagement process with Student Governance, DSAF and DVC: T&L went smoothly and according to plan. I recommend an objective and assertive approach with a bit of lobbying in handling any similar matter.
- **Overall feedback of how event or activity panned out:** I think the proposal and the working document was received well. The para-engagement was also productive. I think the TSRC was received well in our plea.
- **Project feasibility:** Engagement of this issue should definitely be continued to ensure things do not come to how they are currently. Maintenance plans should be made and responsibility cast to



different stakeholders to ensure the upkeep of the TSRC office. No budget required operationally from the TSRC. We used the reserve funds without an upper limit.

### Student Assistant Librarian Project

- This project was successfully completed. The engagement yielded the proposed result seeing reinstated library hours via a cohort of hired students to act as student assistant librarians after hours. This project has been well-received and will continue to be explored and optimized further to best benefit the Tygerberg students.
- Key players: Tygerberg Library Manager, DVC: Teaching and Learning – Primary custodian of working document.
- **Date of event/ task:** Advertisement, shortlisting, interviews and selections occurred through the term and project officially was operational from 22<sup>nd</sup> of March 2022.
- **What went wrong:** We are aiming for a Library that is open 24/7 but the main problem to this is funding. We ended up settling for a compromise in the meanwhile but commit to engage on this further.
- **What went well:** We got the program re-initiated and that was met by quite positive engagement with stakeholders involved.
- **Overall feedback of how event or activity panned out:** The Library issue remains a pertinent issue which deserves a lot of attention, but I think so far things are moving in the right direction. This issue is bothersome in the sense that the main hindrance is funds to run a proper program for staff. The stakeholders involved were very receptive of engagement.
- **Project feasibility:** This project should be continued and explored further to fit the Tygerberg Context as much as possible and establish a 24/7 Library. Budget not required.

### Miscellaneous

- I gave a welcoming speech to the newcomers at the Dean's Welcoming in my capacity as TSRC Chairperson.
- I attended the DSAf Transformation Summit.
- I shot a production video for SU Open Day in my capacity as TSRC Chairperson.
- I attended the first term house meetings of the Tygerberg residences after the TSRC Feedback forum to engage with the communities.
- I attended SRC EC & SU Management meetings in my capacity as TSRC Chairperson and SRC (EC).
- I attended the Dean's Open conversation.



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## Plans for next term

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SRC (EC) and General Meetings, Rectorate Meetings, TSRC Office Proposal, Shuttle proposal, and Visual Redress, will be taking place and continuing in the next term.

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## Addenda

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# TYGERBERG STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEMO TO THE DEPUTY REGISTRAR: TYGERBERG CAMPUS CONCERNING ACADEMIC EXCLUSION AND READMISSION

**Inclusive. Innovative. Future-focused**

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## Preamble

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This document is written by the Tygerberg Student Representative Council (TSRC) to the Office of the Deputy Registrar: Tygerberg campus. The main purpose of this document is to expound on the issue of Academic exclusion and the process of applying for readmission and engage the office of the Deputy Registrar: Tygerberg campus on solutions to said issue and process.

## Context

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According to the [General University Calendar](#), any student whose academic record does not comply with the requirements for readmission to the University for the following year will be informed via sms and at his SU e-mail address before 24 December of the current year, and then shall have the opportunity to lodge a typed appeal with the University, accompanied by substantiated documentation, until 11 January, in which he explains why the University should consider allowing him to resume his studies.

Separate provisions for FMHS are alluded to and are said to be highlighted in the [FMHS Calendar](#). The General University Calendar states that where a student fails to qualify for further admission on the grounds referred to above, a written appeal by him with closing date 15 January of the year concerned (with the exception of students in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences [6 January], the Faculty of Science, the Faculty of AgriSciences and the Faculty of Engineering [8 January] and Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences [varying, will be supplied in letter]) shall be considered by the Readmission Appeals Committee.

The above-mentioned letter was sent to a cohort of students on Thursday 13 January 2022 in the late afternoon and highlighted that the students concerned were to apply before Monday 17 January 2022, essentially giving the students one (1) university day and two (2) weekend days to compile a fully comprehensive and substantial application for readmission to the readmission committee. This is in contrast to the eighteen (18) days highlighted in the General University Calendar as a means of comparison. This arrangement was highlighted by the Deputy Registrar: Tygerberg Campus to be a practical operational arrangement and thus was not developed based on any policy, in extension, besides provisions highlighted in the General University Calendar and the FMHS Calendar.

This process led to twenty-five (25) out of thirty-seven (37) applications being unsuccessful (a 32.4% success rate). On engagement with the Tygerberg Academic Affairs Council (TAAC), the Deputy Registrar: Tygerberg Campus highlighted that the time given to the students to apply was short because supplementary papers were spread out more this year to afford the students more time to study, not oblivious to the consequence of reducing the amount of time available to potential applicants to the readmission committee to apply for readmission.



## Academic Exclusion and Academic empowerment

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Given the above context, the Tygerberg Student Representative Council is of the belief that the office of the Deputy Registrar: Tygerberg Campus did not act bona fida and that the process undertaken to handle academic exclusion and readmission was procedurally unfair. This disadvantaged the students who had to apply for readmission and reduced the opportunity for their cases to be judged on merit. Given the circumstances the students are in during this process, with the expectation of the students to have full confidence in the Readmission committee, having to relive their associated traumas and mental and personal issues, it is unfair to expect a fully substantiated application within that timeframe.

The Tygerberg Student Representative Council (TSRC) acknowledges the institutional process to maintain fulfilment of the requirements of higher education but frowns on the use of academic exclusion as a means of maintaining academic integrity. The office of the Deputy Registrar: Tygerberg campus has significant recruitment methods aimed at reaching prospective students from disadvantaged backgrounds and diversifying the faculty in an attempt to reflect the South African demographics of university-qualifying prospective students. An example of this would be the Recruitment Camp.

The TSRC is of the belief that recruitment efforts should be matched with efforts to academically empower these students and should not be oblivious to the deficiency in competencies of said students to compete at the same level as students from well-resourced backgrounds. There is a significant mismatch between the dynamic consideration of recruited students and their multi-factorial personhood and the programs and efforts to significantly empower these students to competently achieve and thrive, lest the same students end up being the ones appealing for readmission, through a system that disadvantages them.

The TSRC made efforts in 2021, approaching exam season, to try and fund the SST Summer School program in partnership with the TAAC with an amount of approximately R21 000 in order for students to get tutoring and academic support, but it was not well-received. This is an example of the deficiencies that exist that need to be rectified in order to academically empower students. FMHS Policy documents highlight and encourage the active learning process of giving feedback after assessments, but in practice, this is not done. Students do self-directed learning for majority of their modules, write assessments, receive their marks, and move on to the next module with little engagement in the assessments and efforts to rectify where they went wrong. This encourages a passive learning process and again shows the deficiency in academic empowerment of students.

## Conclusion

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In conclusion, the Tygerberg Student Representative Council makes the following requests:

- An engagement on the 2022 Readmission process and solutions for excluded students.

- A review of the Readmission process, safeguard and support mechanisms for future readmission cycles.
- A commitment to increase the Readmission application success rate through detailed points of academic empowerment and a plan of implementation.
- A commitment to engage on the feedback on assessment policy and a plan of implementation to promote active learning.

Yours in Transparent Student Leadership and Governance,

Vhudi Ravhutsi | TSRC Chairperson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vhudi Ravhutsi', with a horizontal line extending to the right.



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Mr Vhudi Ravhutsi  
Chairperson: Tygerberg Student Representative Council  
Tygerberg Campus  
Stellenbosch University

8 February 2022

**RE: Memorandum Concerning Academic Exclusion and Readmission of Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences Students**

Dear Mr Ravhutsi

On behalf of the Dean, Prof Elmi Muller, the Chairperson of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences' (FMHS) Readmission Appeals Committee, I hereby respond to the Tygerberg Student Representative Council (TSRC) memorandum dated, 3 February 2022, in my capacity as the committee's secretary. We thank you for the engaging and constructive enquiries and feedback contained in the memorandum.

Please find the responses to the relevant sections of the memorandum as well as the recommendations of the TSRC on the way forward below:

**Responses to memorandum context:**

**Paragraph 1:**

“According to the [General University Calendar](#), any student whose academic record does not comply with the requirements for readmission to the University for the following year will be informed via sms and at his SU e-mail address before 24 December of the current year, and then shall have the opportunity to lodge a typed appeal with the University, accompanied by substantiated documentation, until 11 January, in which he explains why the University should consider allowing him to resume his studies.”

**Response to paragraph 1:**

- The above is only relevant to students who have completed the full academic load in 2021.
- 27 FMHS students were identified as academically excluded after the November/December assessments and were contacted telephonically and by email of the requirement to apply for readmission if they wished to continue with the programme.
- These students received notice of the requirement to apply for readmission before 15 December 2021 and were required to submit their application by 5 January 2022.

### Paragraph 3:

“The above-mentioned letter was sent to a cohort of students on Thursday 13 January 2022 in the late afternoon and highlighted that the students concerned were to apply before Monday 17 January 2022, essentially giving the students one (1) university day and two (2) weekend days to compile a fully comprehensive and substantial application for readmission to the readmission committee. This is in contrast to the eighteen (18) days highlighted in the General University Calendar as a means of comparison. This arrangement was highlighted by the Deputy Registrar: Tygerberg Campus to be a practical operational arrangement and thus was not developed based on any policy, in extension, besides provisions highlighted in the General University Calendar and the FMHS Calendar.

### Response to paragraph 3:

- It has been common practice for several years that the faculty offers student re-evaluations over the first two weeks in January, with the Readmission Appeals Committee sitting in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> week of January.
- It is only possible to identify the details of students who are academically excluded after the conclusion of the relevant assessments.
- 2 students were identified as academically excluded and informed of the requirement to apply for readmission on 4 January 2022. They were required to submit their application forms by 14 January 2022.
- 11 students were identified as academically excluded and informed of the requirement to apply for readmission on 13 January 2022. They were required to submit their application forms by 12:00 on 17 January 2022.
- There is no fixed timeline required for students to be provided to apply for readmission.
- The readmission appeals committee date is set in mid to late January to ensure that students are afforded a reasonable time to gather information and to submit their documentation in the correct format.
- It is also held in mid to late January to allow readmitted students to proceed with the academic programme as soon as possible after the commencement of the academic year; and
- to allow excluded students an opportunity to apply to other universities for late admission in order to prove themselves academically should they wish to apply for readmission to the FMHS again in future

### Paragraph 4:

“This process led to twenty-five (25) out of thirty-seven (37) applications being unsuccessful (a 32.4% success rate). On engagement with the Tygerberg Academic Affairs Council (TAAC), the Deputy Registrar: Tygerberg Campus highlighted that the time given to the students to apply was short because supplementary papers were spread out more this year to afford the students more time to study, not oblivious to the consequence of reducing the amount of time available to potential applicants to the readmission committee to apply for readmission.”

### Response to Paragraph 4:

- 40 FMHS students registered in 2021 were identified to apply for readmission for the 2022 academic year. Of this group, 34 applied for readmission along with 3 previous FMHS students who were excluded from SU prior to 2020 – bringing the total number of readmission applicants to 37.
- 12 of the 37 (32.4%) applicants were successful in their applications for readmission and all of these successfully readmitted students were registered FMHS students in 2021. 25 (67.6%) of readmission applicants were therefore unsuccessful in their appeals.

- In the context of all undergraduate students of the FMHS who were registered in 2021, only 22 out of 2651 students who were registered for an FMHS undergraduate programme in 2021 were not readmitted to their respective programme for the 2022 academic year. This amounts to a dropout of 0.83% of 2021 FMHS students.
- As noted above, it is common practice to inform students immediately after their January assessment results are made available that they should apply for readmission.
- The Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences makes use of supplementary or re-evaluation assessments in January every year since the start of the academic year is as early as 3 January in some programmes and programmes usually finalize assessments late in November and early in December leaving little time to offer additional assessments thereafter.
- These January assessments have always been spread out over the first two weeks of the academic year; however, it was the intention in 2022 that these January assessments (specifically for the MBChB programme) be limited to the first week in January to allow senior FMHS students to commence with the required academic activities from the second week of the year to
  - Avoid having students start with classes or clinical activities while they are completing supplementary or re-evaluation assessments; and
  - to ensure that their results are processed and released sooner so that they may commence with their registration or with their application for readmission.
- Unfortunately, this revised practical January assessment arrangement did not realize in 2022 but will be implemented for the 2023 academic year. The Deputy Registrar's office has already engaged with the MBChB programme in this regard.

#### **Paragraph 5:**

“Given the above context, the Tygerberg Student Representative Council is of the belief that the office of the Deputy Registrar: Tygerberg Campus did not act bona fida and that the process undertaken to handle academic exclusion and readmission was procedurally unfair. This disadvantaged the students who had to apply for readmission and reduced the opportunity for their cases to be judged on merit. Given the circumstances the students are in during this process, with the expectation of the students to have full confidence in the Readmission committee, having to relive their associated traumas and mental and personal issues, it is unfair to expect a fully substantiated application within that timeframe.”

#### **Response to paragraph 5:**

- As indicated above the process to inform applicants who had taken January assessments in January for a January RAC meeting is common practice in the FMHS.
- 11 students submitted their RAC application on 17 January 2022. 3 were readmitted = 27.2%.
- Students were required to provide a motivation for and evidence of circumstance beyond their control that caused them to underperform academically. In instances where applicants had provided a strong motivation but were unable to obtain supporting documentation and noted this in their application, the RAC may have utilized the opportunity to postpone the discussion of these applicants to a later date to allow them to submit the substantiating documentation.
- The RAC however concluded that requesting additional information was not necessary as additional substantiating documents would not change the motivations already provided by these students.

#### **Paragraph 6:**

“The Tygerberg Student Representative Council (TSRC) acknowledges the institutional process to maintain fulfilment of the requirements of higher education but frowns on the use of academic exclusion as a means of maintaining academic integrity. The office of the Deputy Registrar: Tygerberg campus has significant recruitment methods aimed at reaching prospective students from disadvantaged backgrounds and diversifying the faculty in an attempt to reflect the

South African demographics of university-qualifying prospective students. An example of this would be the Recruitment Camp.”

#### **Response to paragraph 6:**

- The FMHS dropout rate of a dropout of 0.83% (i.e., 22 out of 2651 students registered in 2021) at the undergraduate level indicates that the faculty has in fact managed to not only support all students but students from previously disadvantaged backgrounds. This dropout rate is exceptionally low for Stellenbosch University as well as nationally.

#### **Paragraph 7:**

“The TSRC is of the belief that recruitment efforts should be matched with efforts to academically empower these students and should not be oblivious to the deficiency in competencies of said students to compete at the same level as students from well-resourced backgrounds. There is a significant mismatch between the dynamic consideration of recruited students and their multi-factorial personhood and the programs and efforts to significantly empower these students to competently achieve and thrive, lest the same students end up being the ones appealing for readmission, through a system that disadvantages them.”

#### **Response to paragraph 7:**

The faculty employed the services of a full-time academic advisor, who is a registered Educational Psychologist, in 2020, to support all undergraduate programmes in identifying and supporting students experiencing academic challenges. The Tutor-Mentor programme was also moved from the office of Student Affairs (Tygerberg) to the Office of the academic advisor to ensure that Tutor-Mentors and subject-specific tutors are directly linked to the work of the academic advisor allowing at risk students to be identified and referred to appropriate avenues of support early.

#### **Paragraph 8:**

“The TSRC made efforts in 2021, approaching exam season, to try and fund the SST Summer School program in partnership with the TAAC with an amount of approximately R21 000 in order for students to get tutoring and academic support, but it was not well-received. This is an example of the deficiencies that exist that need to be rectified in order to academically empower students. FMHS Policy documents highlight and encourage the active learning process of giving feedback after assessments, but in practice, this is not done. Students do self-directed learning for majority of their modules, write assessments, receive their marks, and move on to the next module with little engagement in the assessments and efforts to rectify where they went wrong. This encourages a passive learning process and again shows the deficiency in academic empowerment of students.”

#### **Response to paragraph 8:**

- This is noted and the TAAC are requested to take the matter of the SST Summer school and the guideline document on feedback after an assessment and its practical implementation up with the Vice Dean: Learning and Teaching under whose portfolio these matters reside.

#### **Tygerberg Student Representative Council requests**

- I. **An engagement on the 2022 Readmission process and solutions for excluded students.**

#### **Response:**

The TSRC are welcome to set up a meeting with the Dean, Vice Dean: learning and Teaching and the Deputy Registrar. Please note that such a meeting will not change the outcome of the Faculty's RAC.

**2. A review of the Readmission process, safeguard and support mechanisms for future readmission cycles.**

**Response:**

An institutional review of the readmission appeals process has already been initiated in 2020 under the leadership of the Registrar.

**3. A commitment to increase the Readmission application success rate through detailed points of academic empowerment and a plan of implementation.**

**Response:**

Each application can only be judged on the merits of the application submitted to the Faculty's RAC. The Deputy Registrar has developed a readmission FAQ to send to all excluded students in future and will engage with all undergraduate programmes to facilitate the early identification of potential readmission applicants to allow them to be guided on the application process in advance of their final assessments or reevaluation.

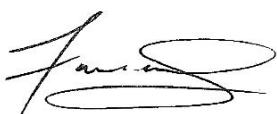
**4. A commitment to engage on the feedback on assessment policy and a plan of implementation to promote active learning.**

**Response:**

The faculty do not have an assessment policy but a provision document related to feedback after assessments available [here](#). The Faculty commits to continuous engagement with students and academic staff on this matter for the benefit of the educational experience of FMHS students.

Thank you for allowing these responses. Any further engagements on this matter can be facilitated at the suggested meeting with the Dean, Vice Dean: Learning and Teaching and Deputy Registrar.

Kind regards



**Farah Fredericks**  
**Secretary: Readmission Appeals Committee**  
**Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences**



# *MSA REPORT AND MEMO*

Tygerberg Societies Council



**Report Of The MSA Scenario**  
**TSC Chairperson: Marizanne van Dyk**  
**Background Information**

On 9 March 2022, I (Marizanne van Dyk) was contacted by the secretary of the MSA society. "Hey Marizanne apologies for messaging so late you can obviously reply tomorrow.

Basically ever since we (MSA Tygerberg) have had Friday prayers on campus in the sports hall we've never had to pay any fee because it's our right as per constitution to be able to perform Friday prayers. This was obviously suspended during Covid but now that we got the go-ahead from Adri have Friday prayers again in the sports hall we were told that there is a fee attached (reduced from R240 to R100). I'm messaging as the Secretary of the committee because this is extremely unfair. Friday prayers aren't an "event" that we book the hall out for - it is a weekly commitment and prayer facility that we offer all the muslim students, staff, dr's and even sometimes even students from UWC. We have waited months on end to receive the go ahead to have the friday prayer and now that we have received it - there is suddenly a fee attached. Keep in mind that the friday prayer happens every week from 12-1:30 and with the MSA being an NPO we simply don't have the funds or resources to be paying to be able to pray? I messaged Queren about this who said I should message you." Ilyaas Mannan

Dear Saalig

Hope all is well.

Your application to use the Sports Hall Fridays starting from the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022 from 12h45 until 14h00 has been approved. In the event of a big function that run over a full day or a few days we will unfortunately have to cancel the venue for your Friday meeting.

Our rate for the use of the Sports Hall is as follows:

**Student tariff: R280 per day**

**Discount rate: R150 per day**

**We will charge you a monthly tariff (R150 x 4 days)**

**Please confirm if you accept the above amount whereafter I will issue our formal quotation.**

See the rules of the Sports Hall, Tygerberg Student Centre below:

- Preparation before the event as well as the cleaning afterwards are the responsibility of the user of the hall. That includes the corridors, toilets, and stairs.
- The user is responsible for his/her own cleaning equipment.
- No pulling of chairs / tables or any other equipment on the floors.
- Should the user need assistance before and after, it will be for his/her own account.

Extra costs:

§ loose chairs (250)

§ sound system

§ projector screen

- all your COVID protocols must strictly be adhered to as set out in your application
- ushers need to be 1 for every 25 people in the venue to assist the COVID officer
- the main door (where you open with your card) will be used for entrance and the other door for exit
- windows not to be opened fully – birds come in and mess
- toilets (2015 and 2016) in the corridor will be clean, stocked and opened for the duration of the event
- the air vent to be switched on for the duration of the event
- bins are there for your use – no eating in the hall unless communicated and discussed before

After event:

§ The last group of students will pack up the

After event:

§ The last group of students will pack up the chairs

§ Leave the hall and rest of the venue **the way you found it**

§ Switch off all lights and air vent

§ Close all windows (leave one open in case of birds in the venue) and ensure all doors are closed properly and cannot be opened from the outside

§ Big amounts of garbage need to be bagged (black bags) and closed properly and taken to designated area at the back of the TSS

Contact either myself or Adri Brits if you have any queries or concerns.

Vriendelike groete / Kind regards

**Nicky Adams**

Kommersie Verhuring- en Promosiebeampte / Commercial Rentals and Promotions Officer

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I then asked on the TSRC WhatsApp group whether or not we have ever needed to pay to use the venue. I also contacted Ms Adri Brits about this situation on 9 March 2022 at 00:16 and got a reply the same day saying that the Societies council on main campus also have to pay for venue hire. I also contacted Tamara Wicomb (the Stellenbosch Societies Council Chairperson who did confirm that they have the same problems). She said in a VN that she and Philip Visage met with SunCom who said that the venue hire is worked out per square meter and with Covid-19 there are additional expenses such as sanitiser and Covid-19 Compliance officers that does raise the price. She indicated that she was going to meet the next week with the Prim Committee to arrange to use the residence spaces for her societies.

I contacted the MSA Chairperson (Fayyaadh Jaffer) who indicated that this is not a feasible solution since the spaces in our residences are not conducive for their needs. Vhudi Ravhutsi did indicate that he will bring this problem to the SRC executive committee's attention since they were already engaging about this policy.

On 14 March 2022, I met with my own executive committee to try and find an interim solution. We came to the conclusion that the TSC will have to pay for this as no society should be expected to pay to pray. We then decided that we will create a criteria that will determine how we go about financial support for our societies.

Fayyaadh reached out again to me on 15 March 2022, saying that they are still facing the same problem and that they truly cannot afford this. I indicated that the SRC is already busy engaging and then I consulted with Vhudi Ravhutsi who indicated that we needed to ensure that the MSA society can pray and that we find out how societies are being charged and delve into the policy.

I contacted both Student Governance (Mr Anele Mdepa) and the Financial Manager of Letting Spaces in SUNCom who then invited Mr Hein Swanepoel into the conversation as well as Ms Foflonker (DSAf Manager on Tygerberg Campus). [Please see Email Stream 1] He indicated that they will not be waiving the fee, furthermore in one of his emails he even referred to mosques as churches which is culturally insensitive. We indicated that students on our campus face a different environment than on main campus since they have to travel in an unsafe environment, have hospital and doctors and professors also attend this prayer. When Mr Ravhutsi tried to argue the policy itself and that MSA should be excluded due to religious practices and this does not qualify as a short-term rental [See email Stream 3], he was once again shot down.

In the meantime, we instituted our own criteria to ensure that the TSC or if we cannot afford to do so, the TSRC will financially support the MSA and other societies facing the same predicament.

On Friday 18 March, Mr Mdepa informed me that he met with Mr Hein Swanepoel and negotiated for a 50% fee from non-profit societies. I would like to state that no society has ever existed for profit and most of our societies have an extremely small signup fee ranging from R0-R150 to cover costs such as travel expenses or other operational fees but that it is not enough to cover venue hire.

We will continue to support our societies by assisting them with paying for venue hire since we cannot only pay for one society, we have created a breakdown and started consulting with our chairpersons to see how often they use venues that require a venue hire fee and will actively support them. Unfortunately, as someone who has been part of the TSC for 3 years now and has always been actively involved in the operational side of it, we cannot afford it in the long run. The only solution would then be for our societies to increase their sign-up fees which would make societies exclusive to people who are financial advantaged and that is not what the TSC is about not our vision. We want to be able to support our societies to serve the whole campus and without this

policy being revoked, we will have to disband the TSC and no society will be able to function on our campus. I have seen tremendous growth throughout my 3 years with the TSC and our chairpersons are extremely passionate about what they do, we have chairpersons that represent Stellenbosch on International Societies through their own society such as SUSS and Ms Jessica Davies. This will not be possible should the TSC not be able to function or exists. We hope that you understand the true importance of the societies in creating well-rounded individuals as we have societies for every single person on our campus. It plays an important role in supporting Mental Health on our campus by creating religious communities for support, academic societies for support as well as social impact organisations. We hope you understand that should the Policy not be changed; societies will not exist.

#### The Discrimination Problem:

The problem that Catherine Bern (TSRC Student Wellness) and I identified was that there seems to be inconsistencies to the application of the policy and more-so-over, the MSA society has been the only society who has had to pay an exorbitant amount while other societies have had to pay less or nothing at all to use the venue.

On 15 March 2022, I contacted my 33 chairpersons to find out who has to pay for venue hire. The only society that has to pay for venue hire so far was the SUMO (Stellenbosch University Medical Orchestra Society) who has to pay R50 to use the music room. According to the price list Mr Swanepoel sent me, the music room can be hired out from R150-R500. Please see attached price list. So they are able to receive a R100 discount.

I spoke to the Chairperson of the society on 21 March 2022 who indicated that only 15 people have signed up so far for their society and they are expecting 30 people to sign up. The problem they foresee is that their conductor used to have to be paid R10 000 prior to Covid-19 and during Covid-19 they have agreed to R4000. The further problem is that they will deplete their funds just with venue hire and the conductor fee and will not be able to function as their finances simply does not allow it.

The other society who recently hired the TSS for their own purposes was Shofar, our Christian society. They booked the TSS front entrance for the 14<sup>th</sup> of February for their Sökkie/Shofar Meet-and-Greet function. This was not a religious event. They were not expected to pay. Please also find attached a statement from the Shofar Society Chairperson, Nina Meyer.

The MSA society is expected to pay to pray yet another Christian society does not have to pay for a social event and the Orchestra society has been given a discount for their venue hire. The MSA society have throughout this whole booking system received various quotes and then was told that the discount is not valid anymore. They were initially quoted for R150 per day, then quoted for R100 for a day and then they received a phone call saying that the discount was invalid, and they have to now pay R280 by the end of the working day and going forward. This just shows that nowhere throughout this process the MSA society was treated within the policy/pricelist and furthermore if they exception could have been made for the other 2 societies, why not for this society for something more than an event, for something such as a basic human right.

Please find attached the quotes and short-term rental policy as received by the Chairperson of the MSA society.

Furthermore, we met with Ms Foflonker and the Equality Unit on 17 March 2022 and have opened a case on behalf of MSA. I believe that throughout this unfortunate situation the students' and doctors' basic human right was violated and furthermore they were discriminated against. Please also find

attached some statements of support from doctors who were quite distressed that this has happened.

With this Said, we therefore request the following:

- MSA to be wavered from paying venue cost fees
- No venue hire costs should be required from societies that are for religious purposes
- No venue hire costs should be required from societies that are for academic purposes
- 50% reduction of venue hire costs for societies that do not charge sign-up fees
- No venue hire costs should be required from societies that are for social impact

## **Addendums**

Addendum 1: TSC Chairperson communication with Ms Adri Brits

Addendum 2: MSA Chairperson communication with Ms Adri Brits

Addendum 3: Email to Mr Mdepa

Addendum 4: Email stream 1 with Mr Swanepoel, Mr Mdepa and Mr Ravhutsi

Addendum 5: Email stream 2 with Student Governance

Addendum 6: Email stream 3 with Mr Swanepoel and Mr Ravhutsi

Addendum 7: Price List of the TSS from SUNCOM

Addendum 8: Email stream with Nicky Adams

Addendum 9: Short-Term Rental Policy Contract with MSA

Addendum 10: Quote

Addendum 11: List of Societies and Sign-up fees

Addendum 12: Criteria for financial assistance

Addendum 13: Ms Nina Meyer (Shofar Chairperson) Statement

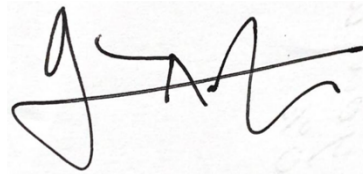
Addendum 14: Ms Kayla Lourens (SUMO Chairperson) Statement

Addendum 15: Doctors and Professors that have indicated their distress with regards to this.



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Marizanne van Dyk  
TSC Chairperson 2021/2022  
22 March 2022



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Fayyadh Jaffer  
MSA Chairperson 2021/2022



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Mr Vhudı Ravhutsi  
TSRC Chairperson 2021/2022



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Ms Viwe Kobokana  
SRC Chairperson 2021/2022