



# SRC 2020/2021 Term I Report

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## Constitutional Responsibilities

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

As an SRC Member, sections 21 and 26 impose the prevalent duties. Accordingly, I must always act in the best interest of students and to actively promote their constitutionally provided rights. Other specific duties include to represent students on institutional committees, to evaluate and give input on institutional policies, to facilitate projects to the benefit of students and finally to formulate policy in order for the SRC to perform their duties effectively. Section 26 further obligates me to submit a termly report of all my activities during the academic term to the Secretary. Finally, according to section 38 I have to attend an SRC meeting every two weeks during the academic term.

As an Executive Committee member, section 35 and 36 imposes additional obligations. This includes setting the agenda for SRC meetings, managing the day-to-day activities of the SRC, compiling the SRC budget and deciding on portfolio allocations. Finally, I am required to attend weekly meetings.

As the Treasurer I am constitutionally mandated to perform certain policy and administrative duties. This includes developing financial policies for the SRC to ensure the transparent and responsible use of the financial resources and acting to ensure that these policies are adhered to. Practically this translates into the responsibility of approving all expenditure to be in line with pre-determined criteria.





## Portfolio Overview

The Treasurer's portfolio duties are not set out in detail within the Student Constitution. As such the exact functioning and duties of the portfolio have developed to fit into the traditional workings of an SRC and the overarching structure enforced by Student Governance. Within this context and my personal experience over the past term, the current portfolio duties can be distinguished into 5 broad categories.

Firstly, this portfolio is responsible for the SRC's budget. Although the power to approve and amend the budget lies within the executive committee's discretion- the Treasurer is delegated to perform the actual compilation. This includes all preceding procedures for the initial compilation and keeping the budget updated as amendments are made.

Secondly, this portfolio must develop policies to ensure that the financial resources are spent in a transparent and responsible manner. This would require drafting policies to regulate the internal financial affairs of the SRC within the broader institutional policy framework. The treasurer must then present these policies for approval at an SRC meeting as well as explain their working.

Thirdly, the Treasurer must assist other portfolio holders with the financial aspects of their portfolio duties. This educational role requires the Treasurer to support other SRC members with financial processing and navigating the labyrinth that is often called the Division Finance. In practice this would include publishing guides, offering training and answering queries. For portfolio holders not managing their own cost centres, the Treasurer will take on the role of managing their expenses on their behalf.

Fourthly, the Treasurer plays an administrative role in approving all expenses made. This is not a discretionary role but one of ensuring all expenses incurred are in fact in compliance with the pre-determined policies and reflects on the approved portfolio budgets.

Finally, this portfolio is ultimately responsible for the financial reporting of the SRC. Although this duty has been duly overlooked in past terms- it is intrinsically part of the Treasurer's duties in ensuring transparent usage of financial resources.





## Committees / Task Teams

Outside of the abovementioned portfolio duties, I served on the following committees:

### Institutional Committees:

#### Senate

The Senate is responsible for the academic and research functions of the Institution and reports to the Council. Its composition is by and large professors of the Institution with some members of the senior management also represented. Its functions can be found in section 19 of the Stellenbosch University Statute and can be summarised as regulating all learning, teaching, research and academic support functions at the Institution. It is further responsible for forwarding recommendations to Council on policies that affect academic matters.

The majority of functions performed by Senate is fulfilled by its statutory and ad hoc committees. This is largely due to the inefficiency in Senate meetings where naturally 2.5 million members cannot really have robust discussions. This means that Senate sittings are in fact just an information session where we may ask questions on reports presented and vote on matters that must be voted in by a full senate. Due to the lack of engagement at this level, the latter issue is not really prevalent as any proposal made by a committee will always be voted in successfully. A final point of criticism is that the SRC members only received the agenda and supporting documentation (well over 800 pages) at 19:30 on the evening before the meeting. This translated into no student representative being confident to really raise questions for fear of being dismissed for not being intimately aware of the issues being dealt with. Since the meeting documentation was supplied in the form of a sharepoint link- this will hopefully not be the case for subsequent meetings.

The only Senate meeting of this term took place on 27 November 2020. In this meeting, the vice-rectors for Social Impact and Strategy & Internationalization were re-appointed by a simple majority vote. The Rector, Vice Rector for Learning and Teaching and the Chief Operating Officer presented management reports to Senate in which members could raise questions. It was however made clear that these reports are not delivered as an accountability mechanism and that these senior management officials do not report to Senate but that this is merely a presentation of the Institution's current standing. Outside of general rule amendments proposed by various committees- there were amendments made to the Disciplinary code of the Institution specifically with regards to what constitutes academic misconduct and in what instances legal representation may be sought by a student.

#### Naming Committee

The Naming Committee was established in terms of the Institution's Policy on the naming of Buildings, Venues and other Facilities/Premises in order to propose a new name for the former Wilcocks building to the Rectorate Management Team. This committee was chaired by the Registrar and included 5 staff members, a representative from the alumni relations, an historian and 2 student representatives.

Two meetings were held during this term to finalise the recommendation/(s). The committee's function has thereby been completed and the committee dissolved thereafter. This committee's





internal discussions, procedures and conclusions were deemed to be confidential by the chair and as such no information on that can be shared in this report.

### Quality Committee (QC)

The QC was established in 1993 to ensure all departments in this institution are following the appropriate procedure for assessing the quality of their 'services.' This committee does not itself assess the quality but assists the departments to set their own criteria and reviews their internal procedures. The QC aims to assess all departments over a 5-year cycle. Departments include all faculties and administrative departments of the Institution. The QC is chaired by the Vice-rector Learning and Teaching and the secretary is the senior adviser of the Academic Planning and Quality Assurance division. The SRC holds 2 seats on this committee.

During the QC meeting for this term, 3 departments were reviewed in varying phases of the process. The specific departments were the Finance Division, Campus Health Services and the Division for Research development with specific focus on the pending review of doctoral qualifications.

### Student Debt Working Group (SDWG)

This working group was established in 2018 with the sole purpose of providing in-debt students financial access to register for their studies. Historically this working group was referred to as the 'historic debt task team' but due to the misperceptions that this working group aims to assist with all historic debt the name was changed. As it now stands the main criteria that the SDWG uses is whether a student intends to register for studies in this year but is barred from doing so by their debt due to the Institution. It is important to understand that this is not an institutional committee with a set budget but merely a working group of staff and students that aim to divert and direct students to appropriate channels and find funding to assist them to clear their debt in order to register. As it stands, the SDWG consists of 3 staff members from the Undergraduate and Postgraduate funding offices as well as a member from Student Accounts. The student section consists of two SRC members.

At the time of this report, the working group has only met once to set out its internal procedures and start setting the criteria that will be used during the process.

### Senate Library Committee

This sub-committee of Senate reports to Senate on the academic activities of the Library and Information Service. Practically this entails developing policies, reviewing existing policies and giving strategic input from an academic perspective on the activities and functioning of the Library and Information Service. The scope of this committee's review and report powers covers all 6 SU libraries as well as the infrastructure utilised to provide access of the information material to students and staff of the Institution. The committee is chaired by the Vice-Rector for Research, Innovation and postgraduate studies and include other senior staff members such as the Vice-Rector for Learning and Teaching, the Dean of Students, the Senior Director: Library and Information Services and the Chairperson of the department of Information Science. The remainder of the committee consists of 7 members of Senate and 2 SRC members which alternate attending meetings. This Committee currently only meets twice in a calendar year.

The first meeting of our term will be in May, which will be attended by my colleague Ms Wilkinson and I will only attend a meeting in August.





## SRC Committees

### SRC Executive Committee

The SRC Executive Committee is established by section 34 of the Student Constitution and I serve thereon by virtue of being the Treasurer. This committee is given additional powers and duties for the proper administration of the SRC's functions. Such duties are set out in above under constitutional responsibilities. Above and beyond those powers, the executive committee has been delegated additional duties and powers by institutional structures that have not been directly delegated unto them in terms of section 35(1)(c). The powers below do have not have direct constitutional authorisation but have been developed through custom. This includes meetings solely between the RMT (Rectorate Management Team) and the executive committee on a regular basis; meetings solely between the senior management of DSAF (Division for Student Affairs) and the executive committee; appointing SRC Managers; and making important decision, which are not urgent, but whilst the SRC is in recess.

During the past term I attended 10 of the 11 executive committee meetings. The matters discussed and decisions made in these meetings have been properly minuted and can be found in the meeting minutes distributed to SRC members after the meetings.

### SRC Disciplinary Committee

The SRC Disciplinary Committee is a sub-committee established by the Vice-Chairperson by virtue of their responsibility to manage the internal relations and discipline in the SRC. This committee takes the responsibility to amend the code of conduct that is then presented to the SRC to adopt in terms of section 29 of the Constitution. This committee then utilises the procedures in the adopted code of conduct to discipline SRC members when appropriate. The composition of this committee is established by the code of conduct and includes the Vice-Chairperson as the ex officio chair, 1 additional SRC member elected by the SRC, and 3 other students appointed by the Vice-Chairperson.

This Committee met 2 times during this term and in both cases only dealt with finalising the code of conduct that was then subsequently adopted by the SRC. The process that was followed included presenting amendments to the SRC to scrutinise as well as allowing for amendment submissions by SRC members.

### RegisterAll Task Team

The RegisterAll Task Team runs the annual SRC project that assists students with registering. This assistance is both informational and financial in nature. The Task Team's functioning is determined each year by the incoming SRC and therefore massive changes have been made from prior years. Key characteristics this year included a complete migration to online processes, extensive advertising to the student body, parallel processes for Tygerberg and Main Campus, and personalised application forms utilising SunSurvey. The implementation required the consultation with and approvals from Student Accounts, Undergraduate Bursaries and Loans, Postgraduate Office, and the Registrar's Office. The other procedures and membership to the task team has extensively been reported on can be requested on request from the Task Team. The general process can however be summarised as following: planning and consultation, advertise, receive requests, send applications and instalment forms, assist with breaking payment into instalments, review applications, submit names to Registrar's office and inform students of outcome.





This Task Team is in fact 2 different task teams for both campuses although the core members of the task teams are the same individuals. At the time of this report, the Task Team is in the phase of reviewing currently received applications and sending them on to the Registrar's office once concluded.

### Honoraria Review Committee

This committee was established by the Executive Committee of the SRC to investigate the current regulations, levels, and monetary value of honoraria across leadership structures at the Institution. The objective is to present the Executive Committee with a comprehensive report, including proposals, by the end of 2020. This report is then to be proposed to DSAF and a consultative process be commenced to amend the current honoraria rules across the institution.

By the time of this report, the deadline was not met. The process has finalised the proposals for the different levels but has not yet decided on the monetary values after the 4 meetings held thus far. This delay can be ascribed to an underestimate of how much work was needed to be put into this proposal as well as a recess being taken during December and January. The current work done included extensive consultation with all leadership structures feeding into the SRC, deciding on the groupings of different structures to be on the same level and re-ordering the levels to be appropriate given our established criteria. Student Parliament was requested to join this process but the SPC did not get back to me during last year and the Treasurer there has not responded to a proposed consultation this year (although it was a request that came from them).

### Constitutional Review Committee

This committee was established by the Policy Officer in order to comply with the constitutional requirement to review the Student Constitution in 2021. The committee members were individually selected by the Policy Officer based on policy and constitutional experience. It consists of 4 members plus the Policy Officer acting as the chairperson.

This committee has met 5 times thus far. 5 Chapters have been dealt with as of yet and extensive consultative sessions have been hosted with students with expertise on the structures being amended. This committee is well on track to finalise proposals so that the official amendment procedures may commence during the first semester.

### Other Committees

#### Treasurer's Forum

The Student Parliament Constitution obligates their executive treasurer to convene a Treasurer's forum consisting of treasurers across leadership structures as set out in that provision. The SRC is not bound by this task team but I would in any case be willing to voluntarily sit on such a forum. At the time of this report, being 5 months after the SPC's appointment, this forum has to my knowledge not yet been convened. The Executive Treasurer for Student Parliament has however requested me to meet and discuss my budget, presumably based on his powers delegated by this provision, but upon my positive response he has not made any contact again since. As of now I do not see this forum as having any benefits based on the glaring failure to convene it at a stage where I and other Treasurers were still able to make changes to our budgets and programs.







## Term Overview

Outside of the committee's that I served on and the activities listed above- the following is an overview of my activities as an SRC member during the first term. I will divide this overview into 3 parts, being my activities as Treasurer, an Executive Committee member, and as an SRC member in general.

### Treasurer Overview

The majority of my SRC activities during this term fall within this category. My term as Treasurer commenced about a month after being elected to the SRC when we elected our executive committee. After that I had a month to finalise and present a budget to the SRC which would then be released to the student populace.

The budgeting process commenced when I drafted and distributed both a budgeting and expense guide to the SRC members. After these documents were released, each portfolio holder had to submit a proposed budget to me. These budgets had to set out their planned projects and costs related thereto in any format the member was comfortable with. Prior to receiving the submission, an excel workbook was created to standardise, set out and summarise all the portfolio budgets. During the time preceding the submissions, I also drafted 6 SRC Financial Policies to further regulate our internal financial procedures which were all subsequently passed at an SRC meeting. Upon receiving the submissions, I compiled a standardised initial Budget Proposal with my workbook template. At this point the Managers were barely appointed and as such a staggered approach were taken going forward. An Executive Committee meeting was then organised where I went through each portfolio budget and allowed any member to flag any amount or expense, they felt were problematic or in need of more information. Based on those flags and my own queries, I emailed each member to request either additional information to specific queries or request a meeting to discuss the matters. Before these responses were received and the meetings took place, the SRC Managers submitted their budgets which was subsequently incorporated into the Budget Proposal. All SRC Managers were informed that there would be a budget discussion with them the day after submissions were made- due to the short timeline this took place without initial flagging by the Executive Committee. At these meetings, compromises were made to reduce expenses and determine exactly how each project cost was calculated. Armed with the email and meeting responses, I headed into an Executive Committee meeting where we aimed to finalize the budget. Representations made by the members were then advanced by me to address queries and concerns raised in the meeting. Utilising the recently passed financial policies and SRC Vision & Mission, the Budget Proposal was worked on and decisions were reached on projects still in question. Once a budget was reached that everyone could vote for, it was approved by the Executive Committee and presented to the SRC at the subsequent meeting where they were allowed to raise queries on the finalised SRC Budget. This then concluded the budgeting process. All subsequent re-allocations were then discussed and voted in at Executive Committee meetings and presented to the SRC thereafter.

After the budgeting process was concluded, my general functions of approving expenses and reporting on them commenced. This is mainly administrative tasks since the policies enacted clearly dictate when I am obliged or restricted from approving expenses.







A considerable part of my first term was spent on educating myself on the role I am fulfilling. This is due to the unique nature of the SRC's Treasurer as opposed to other structures. I did not receive any more training than the foundational training provided to society treasurers and as such had to arrange meetings with Student Governance staff members to try and understand the nuances to this role. This nuance can mostly be ascribed to the way that I function within the oversight of Student Governance, the different cost centres that I oversee, the way our funding is dependent on Institutional budgets and customs, and the unwritten powers and duties of the Treasurer in this environment. Additional consultations with senior members of DSAF, Financial Services, Purchases division, and legal services were therefore held to ensure that I fully understand the SRC's financial processes and am now able to explain and assist any SRC member with any possible transaction required.

Except for the interesting work, I also performed certain administrative tasks to ready the incoming SRC for our term in office. This included collecting and submitting bank detail forms for SRC members and managers in order for them to receive their honoraria during their term in office. Due to a massive change in Student Governance policy, the SRC of 2020/21 will also be the first one to have direct access to their cost centres. Therefore, I was tasked with getting all portfolio holders access to their portfolio cost centres. Due to this being new, I had to assist Financial Services with creating a new System Access form tailored for SRC members. I distributed and then collected the filled forms to submit at Financial Services. Once submitted, an automated process is initiated whereby each member receives an email with a temporary password to gain access to the financial system. Naturally, we were all at our homes and no other members had the necessary software to log in at that time. I therefore waited for the new year to start and then distributed a guide that I drafted on how to remotely install the necessary software and gain access to the financial system.

As mentioned above, the current SRC will be the first one that will be able to access and process transactions on their own from their cost centres. Due to no other members having had experience with the financial system and the training we received being tailor made for societies, I decided to draft an SRC Financial Processing Guide. This guide incorporated the SRC financial policies, the institutional financial policies, the procedures for using the financial system, and some well-intended humour to give all members an easy-to-understand reference document tailor made for their financial needs. This guide was finalised in December and distributed to the SRC in early January.

My final preparatory task during this term was to allocate the SRC's funds to the relevant Cost Centres. Once the institutional year-end journals were finalised, our budget allocation was transferred to our cost centre. Based on the approved SRC Budget, I drafted a journal requisition to transfer the funds to each cost centre. This process has been completed successfully and all SRC cost centres are currently reflecting the amount they were budgeted to receive. This is however qualified to the extent that, firstly, certain portfolios have already spent from their budgets and secondly, there is an outstanding dilemma created by the prior Treasurer's negligence that has led to 3 cost centres being overspent before their funds were allocated. The latter issue is however being addressed and will be resolved within the next few weeks.

#### Executive Committee member overview

My duties on the Executive Committee have sufficiently been dealt with under my committee duties above.





### SRC Member overview

Outside of a global pandemic, this term was quite uneventful as an SRC member. Once elected, a race against time commenced to make all the necessary appointments, host leadership elections, and publish the required documentation as we are constitutionally mandated to do. Thereafter, we were bombarded with training provided by Student Governance. Although this training is heavily in need of review and updating, some it proved interesting. After this training, we were subjected to guess what? ...more training. This time it was financial systems and policy training hosted by the Financial Services department. This training was however wholly inadequate due firstly to being based on societies and residences and not at all tailored to the differing procedures of the SRC, and secondly for only providing a bare outline and not at all explaining the nuances to transactions and the accompanying policies. Beyond training, the SRC met a few times in ordinary meetings and discussed matters as can be found in the SRC Meeting minutes that are publicly available.

The only pure SRC project that I worked on during this term was the awareness initiative which was aimed at bettering the SRC's understanding and knowledge of student issues during our term. This consisted of 3 independent projects of which one was abandoned due to overlapping with the functions of Student Parliament. The other 2 projects will be to create an electronic platform whereby students may directly raise complaints to the SRC and secondly to implement the Friend of a Cluster program. The latter aims to open direct lines of communication between the Cluster Convenors and an allocated SRC Member.





## Term I Financial Report

Due to the current health crisis we all find ourselves in, the conventional projects and expenses did not take place as is usually the case for a fourth academic term. Below is, however, an exposition of how the SRC did incur expenses since my appointment until the time of this report.

### Expense by portfolio:

<b>SRC Expenses</b>	R27 062
<b>Subsidies</b>	R173 292,99
<b>Transformation</b>	R7 031,27
<b>Branding &amp; Marketing</b>	R4 500
	<b>R211 886,26</b>

### Notes:

- The Subsidies constitute the full amount allocated from the SRC to the ex officio structures as per the SRC Budget. Since they act financially independent, the full amount is transferred at the beginning of the year.
- SRC Expenses include all expenses incurred for the functioning of the SRC but which are not attributable to a specific portfolio.

### Expense by Category:

<b>Transport</b>	R7 763,27
<b>Food &amp; Drinks</b>	R540
<b>Photography</b>	R4 500
<b>Compensation</b>	R17 962
<b>Internet &amp; Telecommunication</b>	R328
<b>Donations</b>	R7 500
<b>Subsidies</b>	R173 292,99
	<b>R211 886,26</b>

### Notes:

- The Compensation relates to the payment of SRC Managers which are paid for from the SRC's funds.
- The Subsidies are recognised purely as subsidies since the ex officio structure has autonomy over their expenditure and are required to compile their own financial reports with how these funds are utilised.





Noteworthy expenses:

- ❖ An amount of R7 500,00 was used to acquire 30 books. This is a book compiled by an SU law student consisting of essays from prominent South Africans. It is recognised as a donation since the proceeds will be donated to social justice causes including the Action4Inclusion project.
- ❖ R4 500 was spent on a videographer to create a promotional video for the SRC. Although this was already budgeted for as an initiative- it has subsequently become a compulsory requirement imposed on the SRC due to the online nature of Welcoming.

Out of budget expenditure

The following expenditure was made during our first term from our funds although it was not budgeted for. The reasoning why it was not in the budget is explained below. For some of these expenses, my successor must take note of as they will have to include it in their budget. The laptops were bought as asset replacements for the SRC from the prior SRC's leftover balances and therefore take place before our budgeting. The rest fell through the cracks due to Student Governance ("SG") processing expenses without informing nor requesting approval from the SRC Executive Committee.

<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>REASON FOR NON- INCLUSION</b>	<b>QTY</b>	<b>UNIT PRICE</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
<b>EMAIL LEVIES</b>	Automatic deduction	14	277	R3 878
<b>TV LICENSE</b>	Automatic deduction	1	299,57	R299,57
<b>LAPTOPS</b>	Old assets replaced from leftover balances	4	12 880	R51 520
<b>SRC GOLF SHIRTS</b>	SRC not informed that we pay for it, unilateral payment by SG	24	167,81	R4 027,44
<b>CONFERENCE IN DURBAN</b>	Bookings made unilaterally by SG	1	17 324,76	R17 324,76
<b>ACCOMMODATION AT SALDANHA</b>	SG informed the SRC that they will book them to stay the night after a training session there	1	4 735,57	R4 735,57
				<b>R81 785,34</b>





## Plans for next term

As the Treasurer, I do not have conventional projects planned during the year. As such my plans for the next term will mostly constitute continuing with my portfolio duties as set out above in my Portfolio Overview. Outside of this general and ongoing duties, I will continue with the duties required by the different committees on which I serve as set out above.

Specific plans that I do have, include the following:

### Engage with DSAF on the monetary allocations to student structures

In my personal opinion, the current allocation of funds received for distribution by Student Governance is not the optimal allocation. Feedback received from the Dean of Students indicates that this is supposed to be a standing allocation and as such not up for annual reconsideration. It has however been stated that it could be a once-of discussion and as such I will be meeting with the Dean to discuss the reasoning and propose improvements to the current model.

### Write a policy in coordination with DSAF on the use of the SRC's Reserve Fund

With the successful push to gain direct access to our Reserve Fund, we need to implement a procedure on how the funds may be utilised. As such I will draft such a policy and present to the SRC for approval.

### Write a policy on requesting the SRC for financial assistance

The SRC needs to have a set procedure when students or student organisations may approach us for financial assistance. I will write such a policy and present it to the SRC for approval.

### Write a report on the RegisterAll project

The exact processes that were followed will be reported on. This will take the form of both feedback to the SRC as well as a guiding document to future SRCs. As such, recommendations and critique on this year's process will be included.

### Implement the Friend of a Cluster initiative

This initiative was accepted by the SRC and aims to link an SRC member to each cluster. The roles are mostly to maintain open lines of communication but may include mutual assistance with initiatives. I will work with the Cluster Executives to pair the SRC members with clusters as well as report on the progress to measure whether this is a worthy initiative to continue with.

### Work with Student Governance to create a system for Financial documentation to be effectively passed between SRC's

I will work with Student Governance and/or the Centre for Student Leadership, Experiential Education and Citizenship to implement a standing guideline on how financial policies, guides and information can be handed over to subsequent SRCs. This guide will strive to explain the nuances of being an SRC treasurer as well as to what extent prior SRCs' decisions and policies may bind subsequent treasurers. It will furthermore give a roadmap to the initial days after being appointed including both mandatory processes and recommended steps to be taken to ensure an efficient commencement of term.





## Recommendations to improve portfolio

Although recommendations are normally included in term reports, the nature of this portfolio has led me to decide to not do this. After my term, I will be able to thoroughly investigate all I have done and the changes I have implemented. As such I would rather submit recommendations at once during my annual report. Let us then hope that I am therefore not impeached until then before I made some recommendations. But then again, If I am impeached there is most likely no reason to consider my proposed recommendations...

