

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

CHAPTER 1

We, the students of the University of South Africa, recognise the imbalances of the higher education landscape of our past, commit ourselves to a non racial and non sexist democratic higher education system and a democratic spirit as espoused in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

We are committed in moving beyond the traditional distance education to comprehensive distance education, committed to the development and improvement of quality education for all.

We therefore through our freely and democratic elected representatives adopt this Constitution which is subjected to the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 and the Institutional Statute.

We establish the Student Representative Council which will through a democratic process derive its powers and legitimacy for the student body it serves and honour those who suffered for the democratic transformation of our institution.

1.1 DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Alternate	refers to a student who contested elections and attained a lower number of votes than those of competitors in the college constituency and a student who is low ranked in the preference list of his/her organisation;
Elections	refer to a process in which students contest as candidates to serve on the student parliament, SRC or any structures of student governance created by this constitution. The process takes place in a cycle of two years and is conducted through this constitution and electoral policy or applicable bylaws approved by the University;
Executive	refers to a structure of student governance with executive powers delegated to it by the student parliament which is an ultimate upper structure and the National SRC (NSRC) which is an upper structure to the National Working Committee of the SRC and regional SRC (RSRC);
Ex officio	means by virtue of his/her office;
Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)	is a body appointed by the university to conduct the elections;
ISRC	means the Interim Student Representative Council;

NSRC	means the National Student Representative Council;
RSRC	means the Regional Student Representative Council;
Student	is any person registered at UNISA for any undergraduate or postgraduate qualification;
SRC	means the Student Representative Council which in context of this constitution it refers to the NSRC and RSRC taken together as one whole or a unit;
Simple majority	means 50% plus one constituting members of a specific meeting;
Statute	refers to the Institutional Statute of the University of South Africa formulated in terms section 32 of Higher Education Act 101 of 1997;
Student organisations and structures	are organisations and structures established by UNISA students, being faith based, political, recreational or academic recognised by the SRC through its applicable policy;
Student governance structures	refer to all structures of student representation in the university including the student parliament, the SRC composed of NSRC and RSRC as well as student organisations and structures;
SRC member	refers to a person who is first a registered student of UNISA and is thereafter elected into SRC office for a specified function.

1.2 NAME

The name of the body is the Student Representative Council of the University of South Africa.

1.3 PURPOSE

The purpose of this constitution is to provide for a structure and procedure for student governance at UNISA.

1.4 STATUS OF CONSTITUTION

This Constitution is subject to the Constitution of South Africa, the Higher Education Act (Act 101 of 1997), as amended, the UNISA Institutional Statute and the authority in respect of student affairs and student governance at the University.

This Constitution binds the SRC and all structures of student governance, e.g. subcommittees and student societies. This constitution is a supreme document in respect of all student governance structures at UNISA. Any act or conduct which is contrary to the provisions of this Constitution is a contravention of the constitution.

1.5 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 1.5.1 Commitment to student representation in all decision making platforms of the university with great devotion and honesty.
- 1.5.2 Acknowledgement that the SRC is a statutory body whose membership is voluntary subject to prescribed minimum eligibility requirements and therefore those elected to it have no expectation of remuneration or are seeking financial and resource gratification from either the university or the students.
- 1.5.3 Understanding and acceptance academic activism as a precursor in the business of the SRC and its resolution to fight against any form of academic and financial exclusion of students.
- 1.5.4 Commitment to championing for equal access to technological infrastructure for all students in view of the ODL character of the university as well as its teaching and learning methods.
- 1.5.5 No tolerance to any form of discrimination, racism, exclusion and more so unethical conduct and behaviour.
- 1.5.6 Commitment to democratic practices and demonstration of such in all decision making processes within student governance structures.

1.6 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF STUDENT GOVERNANCE

National Congress
National Student Parliament
National Student Representative Council
Regional Inaugural Congress
Regional Student Parliament
Regional Student Representative Council
Student organisations and structures



CHAPTER 2

STUDENT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES COMPOSITION, STRUCTURES AND GENERAL PROVISIONS

2.1 COMPOSITION

- 2.1.1 The student governance structures of the UNISA consist of the national congress, national student parliament, NSRC, regional inaugural congress, regional student parliament, RSRC as well as student organisations, structures and formations recognised in accordance with this constitution and prescribed policies.
- 2.1.2 The national congress composition and election is outlined in chapter 3 and is the highest structure in student governance.
- 2.1.3 The national student parliament composition and election is outlined in chapter 3 and is the highest structure in student governance.

2.2 AUTHORITY

- 2.2.1 The national congress, national student parliament and SRC have authority over student matters assigned to them by the University Council or other university authorities as set out in the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997, as amended, the UNISA Institutional Statute and university regulations and policies.
- 2.2.2 The student parliament and SRC maintain channels of communication through which UNISA students may provide input regarding, and stay informed of significant institutional decisions. The SRC may advise university governance structures and committees on issues including institutional policies affecting students.

2.3 ELIGIBILITY TO VOTE

All students of the university registered for any formal undergraduate or postgraduate qualification except those registered for short learning programmes, are eligible to vote. Students whose rights have been limited as a result of a disciplinary action taken against them by a duly authorized body of the university are ineligible to vote.

2.4 ELIGIBILITY TO SERVE ON THE STUDENT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

- 2.4.1 A student qualifies a candidate for the SRC if:
 - a) he/she has been registered for a formal undergraduate or postgraduate qualification in any of UNISA's colleges for at least two semesters prior the commencement of the his/her term of office;
 - b) as an undergraduate student, he/she has passed a minimum of ten modules towards a diploma or degree for which he/she is enrolled at the time of his/her nomination or is included in a preference list of the student organisation contesting elections;
 - c) he/she has not been found guilty by a duly authorised body of the university for violation of student code of conduct or any of other rules and regulations of the university.

2.4.2 All students who are candidates for the national student parliament, regional students parliament and SRC must be available to attend regularly scheduled meetings of the student governance structures, institutional governance structures and committees to which they have been elected.

2.5 ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND ELIGIBILITY TO REMAIN IN OFFICE

2.5.1 To entrench the principle of academic progress, all members of the national student parliament, regional student parliament and SRC will be required to pass at least fifty per cent of the registered modules per academic year.

2.5.2 Compliance to paragraph 2.5.1 above will be enforced by the Directorate of Student Development through an annual student record audit of an individual member of student parliament and SRC.

2.6 TERM OF OFFICE

2.6.1 The term of office is two years from inauguration consequent to the sitting of the national congress.

2.6.2 Students may only serve on the national student parliament, regional student parliament and the SRC for a maximum of two terms, either consecutively or differently.



CHAPTER 3

NATIONAL CONGRESS

3.1 NATIONAL CONGRESS

3.1.1 The national congress is composed of:

- a) elected members of RSRC from all regions;
- b) NSRC members elect delegated by the respective student organisation in accordance with the number of seats won and determined by the proportional percentage representation;
- c) outgoing members NSRC;
- d) one representative per student formation that participated in the national elections.
- e) members of the IEC and;
- f) representatives of university authorities and delegated officials.

3.1.2 Voting in the national congress is limited to RSRC and NSRC members elect.

3.1.3 Voting for the allocation of NSRC portfolios is conducted by secret ballot.

3.1.4 Voting on resolutions or other motions may take place in a manner agreed by national congress.

3.1.5 All participants in the national congress, being they RSRC, NSRC elect and representatives of student formations that participated in the elections must comply with the provisions of paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4 of this constitution.

3.1.6 No dispute or eventuality pertaining to the participation or withdrawal of any individual or organisation precludes the national congress from being legally constituted. The national congress fulfils its responsibilities and executes its functions as described in this constitution with or without affected individuals, organisations or constituencies.

3.2 RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS

3.2.1 Is the highest decision making body of the SRC.

3.2.2 Adopts recommendations for amendments of the constitution and policies.

3.2.3 Elects office bearers by secret ballot to portfolios as indicated in paragraph 4.4.1, and the nine NSRC members as elected and presented by organisations as per paragraph 5.3.1 of this constitution.

3.2.4 Elects the speaker and deputy speaker from amongst representatives of student organisations that participated in the elections as office bearers of the national student parliament.

- 3.2.5 Has a power to appoint commissions, committees or an individual and assign specific tasks and duties to such commission, committee or individual as the case may be.
- 3.2.6 Has the power to confer honors or awards on the members, organisations or individuals in appreciation or recognition of their role in the work of the SRC.



CHAPTER 4

NATIONAL STUDENT PARLIAMENT

4.1 COMPOSITION AND VOTING

- 4.1.1 The national student parliament is composed of:
- a) elected members of the RSRC from all regions
 - b) one representative per formation that participated in national elections, and
 - c) representatives of university authorities and delegated officials.
- 4.1.2 Voting in the national student parliament is limited to elected members of the RSRC and NSRC.
- 4.1.3 Voting to fill vacant NSRC portfolios and office bearers of the national student parliament is conducted by secret ballot.
- 4.1.4 Voting on resolutions or other motions may take place in a manner agreed by the national student parliament during the specific sitting.
- 4.1.5 Students who are subsequently elected to serve on the NSRC retain membership on the national student parliament.
- 4.1.6 No dispute or eventuality pertaining to the participation or withdrawal of any individual, organisation or constituency precludes the national student parliament from being legally constituted. The national student parliament fulfils its responsibilities and executes its functions as described in this constitution with or without affected individuals, organisations or constituencies.

4.2 RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY OF THE NATIONAL STUDENT PARLIAMENT

- 4.2.1 The national student parliament is the highest decision-making body when national congress is not in session.
- 4.2.2 It considers the constitutions of student organisations and structures and considers its alignment with the SRC constitution.
- 4.2.3 The national student parliament will:
- (a) receive and discuss reports of the NSRC and determine the way forward on any matter brought to its attention;
 - (b) receive and discuss reports from members elected to represent students on college boards and institutional committees;

- (c) make policy proposals on any matter related to teaching, learning and research as well as community engagement at the university;
- (d) identify and decide on the broader agenda of the SRC and mandate the NSRC in any manner within the jurisdiction of student governance structures;
- (e) monitor and evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the NSRC collectively or individual members serving on the aforesaid structure.

4.2.4 The national student parliament may:

- a) with a two-thirds majority of voting, decide to reshuffle portfolios on the NSRC and;
- b) with the support of two-thirds of its total membership, pass a motion of no confidence in the NSRC as a collective or any individual portfolio holder in the NSRC provided that:
 - i) the motion is thoroughly motivated and submitted to the deputy speaker of the national student parliament at least a month before the sitting of the national student parliament.
 - ii) at least two weeks before the sitting of the national student parliament the deputy speaker notifies speakers of regional student parliament, the secretary general of the NSRC who in turn notifies secretaries of RSRCs of a motion, and if the motion is against a specific member of the NSRC, such member is also notified.
 - iii) the NSRC or the member of the NSRC, as the case may be, should be afforded an opportunity to respond to a motion during the meeting of the national student parliament.
 - iv) once the motion is passed and voted for by two-thirds of the total members of the national student parliament, the NSRC or its member against whom the motion is passed, accepts the decision and accordingly vacates his/her office.
- c) in an event of a vacancy being created in any portfolio of the NSRC, the national student parliament nominates the alternate forwarded by an organisation which is entitled to that specific seat to any of the NSRC portfolios.

4.2.5 General resolutions of the national student parliament are adopted by a simple majority vote, except decisions or resolutions on passing a vote for a motion of no confidence, as well as on policies or a recommendation for an amendment of the constitution, in which case a two-thirds majority vote is required.

4.3 MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL STUDENT PARLIAMENT

4.3.1 The first meeting of the national student parliament is convened by the elected speaker in consultation with deputy speaker and representatives of organisations that participated in the elections not more than three months after the date of the national congress to consider and approve the SRC program of action and budget and decide on committees required to assist the NSRC and its RSRCs.

4.3.2 Ordinary meetings of the national student parliament must take place every eight months and are constituted as per paragraph 4.1.1 of this constitution.

- 4.3.3 Special meetings of the national student parliament must be held on the written request of a member. The request must be accompanied by an agenda for such a proposed meeting and is supported in writing by at least fifty plus one of the national student parliament's total membership. The deputy speaker must notify all other members of the national student parliament at least one month in advance of such a proposed meeting.
- 4.3.4 The deputy speaker distributes the minutes of the national student parliament to the NSRC and to the Director of Student Development as well as the Manager of Student Governance and Leadership within seven working days of the meeting. Unless otherwise specifically stated, minutes of the national student parliament are public information and may be posted on the SRC website and *myUnisa*.
- 4.3.5 The national student parliament must develop and adopt its own procedural arrangements regarding time allocated to a member to speak in order to enable balanced and democratic debate as well as to ensure that members are allowed a fair and equal opportunity to register their points.
- 4.3.6 The required quorum for all meetings of the national student parliament including special meetings is a simple majority of total membership of the national student parliament.

4.4 OFFICE BEARERS OF NATIONAL STUDENT PARLIAMENT

- 4.4.1 The national congress elects the speaker and deputy speaker from amongst representatives of organisations that participated elections as its office bearers of the national student parliament.
- 4.4.2 Elected office bearers of the national student parliament cease to be members of the SRC at all levels and are replaced by following a procedure on filling of vacancies outlined in this constitution.
- 4.4.3 The office bearers attend all meetings of the national student parliament and must communicate their absence in advance among themselves to enable the national student parliament to make interim arrangements, including assigning from among its membership a person to assist with recording the proceedings.

4.5 DUTIES OF NATIONAL STUDENT PARLIAMENT OFFICE BEARERS

4.5.1 **Speaker**

- (a) Presides over meetings of the national student parliament.
- (b) Ensures that the debates in the national student parliament are progressive by facilitating the flow of debate in an orderly manner.
- (c) Preserves integrity and sanity through decisive ruling on debates and demonstrates unbiased conduct.
- (d) In consultation with the deputy speaker and representatives of organisations that participated in the elections, convenes the national student parliament.
- (e) Together with the deputy speaker, is responsible for coordinating the activities of the national student parliament and liaises with the accounts administrator on the allocation and administration of the budget allocated to the national student parliament.

- (f) Ensures that each member of the national student parliament is allowed reasonable time to raise his/her views and leads debates.
- (g) Ensures that members of the national student parliament are allowed reasonable time to hold the NSRC and members of the college board members accountable.
- (h) Condemns and takes reasonable measures against any member whose conduct is disruptive or intimidating towards other members of the national student parliament. Such measures include requesting a member to apologise for his/her behaviour or requesting a member to leave the house given the seriousness of his/her disruptive action.
- (i) Ensures democratic voting on all motions raised at the national student parliament.
- (j) Together with the deputy speaker, considers special requests and invitations from students, employees or other external guests to attend particular sessions of the national student parliament.

4.5.2 Deputy Speaker

In addition to performing duties delegated to him/her by the speaker including but not limited to presiding over meetings of the national student parliament or part thereof, the deputy speaker is responsible for:

- (a) recording the minutes of the national student parliament and distributing the minutes to the secretary general of the NSRC and Directorate of Student Development within seven days of after the meeting;
- (b) ensuring that minutes of the national student parliament are updated on the SRC website and *myUnisa*;
- (c) assisting the Directorate of Student Development with the logistic arrangements for the meetings of the national student parliament;
- (d) giving notices of meetings of the national student parliament;
- (e) together with the speaker, managing special requests and invitations from students, employees or other external guests to attend particular sessions of the national student parliament, and;
- (f) together with the deputy speaker, coordinating the activities of the national student parliament and liaises with the accounts administrator on the allocation and administration of the budget allocated to the national student parliament.



CHAPTER 5

NATIONAL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

5.1 ELECTION OF NATIONAL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

5.1.1 The Student Representative Council is composed of two tiers, that is, National Student Representative Council and the Regional Student Representative Council.

5.1.2 The national congress should when electing the NSRC, endeavour to be broadly representative of the demographics of UNISA's student composition and advance gender parity.

5.2 AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NATIONAL STUDENTS REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

5.2.1 To exercise authority within its jurisdiction as an executive body of the SRC in entirety, the NSRC has a duty to:

- (a) exercise effectively and efficiently those powers delegated to it by the national congress and national student parliament;
- (b) maintain channels of communication through which UNISA students may provide input regarding, and stay informed of significant institutional decisions;
- (c) effectively and efficiently develop and implement policy relating to student affairs and student governance, taking into account the recommendations and views expressed by the student body;
- (d) drive the implementation of the agenda developed and approved by the national congress and national student parliament;
- (e) establish sub-committees to provide strategic support to ensure efficiency in the work of the NSRC;
- (f) meet quarterly;
- (g) consider all means and measures possible to ascertain student opinion on a particular institutional decision;
- (h) represent students in institutional structures such as council, senate and institutional forum as well as other committees and platforms of decision making;
- (i) make itself available either collectively or individually to attend to student concerns and queries as well as to represent, when required, students at university disciplinary hearings;
- (j) in cooperation with the Division of Student Governance and Leadership, administer and account for the budget allocated to it by the university and consistently report to the national student parliament and national congress;

- (k) exercise control and leadership over student organizations or structures within its control and ensure accountability of such organisations and structures;
- (l) coordinate and monitor the work of the RSRCs;
- (m) in cooperation with the Directorate of Student Development ensure that all RSRCs are adequately supported.
- (n) ensure accountability of RSRCs on the utilisation of financial and physical resources allocated to them;
- (o) identify and communicate any shortcomings in respect of this constitution and associated policies to the Dean of Students, the Director of Student Development and Manager of Student Governance and Leadership;
- (p) make itself as a collective and its members available to answer to the questions of the national student parliament from time to time;
- (q) may recommend suspension of any member of the SRC and student organisation to the national student parliament,
- (r) do whatever is practical and reasonably possible to implement the decisions of the national student parliament, and;
- (s) report to the national student parliament about the concerns raised by students during mass meetings.

5.2.2 The NSRC must as a collective develop an operational plan based on the strategic goals approved by the national student parliament for the entire term of its office. The operational plan must be aligned to the NSRC portfolios outlined in paragraph 5.3.1 as accountable or co-accountable for the implementation of the plan which should be budgeted for.

5.2.3 All members of the NSRC and its RSRCs as well as office bearers of the national and regional student parliaments must undergo a mandatory training immediately after inauguration.

5.2.4 The Director of Student Development together with the Manager of Student Governance and Leadership must compile a SRC training plan.

5.3 COMPOSITION OF NATIONAL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

5.3.1 The NSRC is composed of the:

- (a) President
- (b) Deputy President
- (c) Secretary General
- (d) Deputy Secretary General
- (e) Treasurer General
- (f) Education and Training Officer

- (g) Sports and Cultural Officer
- (h) National Postgraduate Studies Officer
- (i) National Undergraduate Studies Officer

5.4 PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITIES OF NSRC MEMBERS

5.4.1 The President

- a) The President is the head and chief executive officer of the SRC in entirety.
- b) The President:
 - i) convenes and presides over meetings of the NSRC as well as national mass meetings provided that the president and deputy president make arrangements that a meeting or part thereof may be presided over by the deputy president,
 - ii) oversees the implementation of the programme of action the SRC at national and regional level;
 - iii) together with the secretary general represents the students on the Council of the university;
 - iv) in consultation with the secretary general develops an agenda for all NSRC meetings;
 - v) liaises on a consistent basis with university structures including the management of the university;
 - vi) addresses the national student parliament at all times during its scheduled meetings in terms of progress made on implementation of the programme of action;
 - vii) observes the necessary procedural and policy arrangements before issuing statements in his/her official capacity or on behalf of the NSRC;
 - viii) is responsible for setting a tone of sound corporate governance and sustainability as well as embeds ethical conduct in the NSRC,
 - ix) attempts to do whatever is practical and reasonably possible to preserve and protect the reputation and integrity of the NSRC, and;
 - x) together with the secretary general or treasurer general, acts as a signatory to NSRC transactions in accordance with the SRC finance policy.

5.4.2 Deputy President

The Deputy President:

- (a) deputises the president and assists the president in executing his/her functions and fulfils such functions as may be assigned to him/her from time to time by the NSRC or the national student parliament.

- (b) drives the development and consultations on policy matters for the student governance structures in general,
- (c) advises the SRC on matters in respect to international students.
- (d) establishes and maintains effective liaison and information sharing platforms with international students.
- (e) together with the education and training officer, represents students on the Institutional Forum of the university.

5.4.3 Secretary General

The Secretary General, as the chief administrator of the NSRC:

- (a) is the secretary of the NSRC at its meetings and is responsible for regular minute taking and distribution of agenda and minutes of the previous meeting to members of NSRC, the national student parliament and relevant university authorities as specified in this constitution;
- (b) is responsible for correspondence of the NSRC and maintains records thereof;
- (c) is responsible for facilitating accountability to national student parliament on the state of the SRC;
- (d) liaises with secretaries of the RSRCs, members elected by the national student parliament to represent students in various institutional governing structures or committees and college boards for purposes of consolidating the SRC report to the national student parliament;
- (e) supports the president in execution of his/her duties;
- (f) together with the president represents students on the Council of the university;
- (g) works together with the SRC Administrator to coordinate all logistical arrangements for meetings and functions of the NSRC;
- (h) in consultation with the president and having followed procedural arrangements on communication, may issue statements on behalf of the SRC,
- i) is responsible for liaising consistently with the SRC Administrator to ensure effective day to day operations of the SRC, and
- j) together with the president or treasurer general, acts as signatory to NSRC transactions in accordance with the SRC finance policy.

5.4.4 Deputy Secretary General

The Deputy Secretary General:

- (a) deputises the secretary general's office in executing its functions.
- (b) keeps records and all recordings of NSRC meetings, and

- (a) consolidates reports of all SRC representatives on university committees.

5.4.5 Treasurer General

The Treasurer General:

- (a) initiates and coordinates projects of the NSRC;
- (b) is responsible for consolidating a programme of action for the entire SRC;
- (c) presents the budget to the national student parliament for final approval;
- (d) presents a report on financial activities of the SRC
- (e) liaises consistently with the accounts administrator to monitor the financial activities of the SRC,
- (f) receives regular statements of financial activities from the accounts administrator and reports to the NSRC and the national student parliament.
- (g) together with the president or secretary general, acts as a signatory to NSRC transactions in accordance to SRC finance policy.

5.4.6 Education and Training Officer

The Education and Training Officer:

- (a) is responsible for the coordination of student academic and structures recognised by the SRC within the university;
- (b) is responsible for coordination of research on behalf of the SRC;
- (c) advances equity and transformation in all forums of the SRC and organises mass meetings to that effect;
- (d) is responsible for the assessment of the quality of service rendered to students by support departments of the university and develops campaigns and other awareness creation strategies to overcome identified deficiencies, and;
- (e) together with the deputy president, represents the students on the Institutional Forum of the university

5.4.7 Sports and Cultural Officer

The Sports and Cultural Officer:

- (a) coordinates all sports and cultural forums of the SRC.
- (b) represents the SRC in all sports and cultural forums.
- (c) enhances the recreational level on both provincial and national level of the SRC.

- (d) together with the treasurer general, coordinates and obtains sponsorship from outside organisations to support recreational activities in accordance with the sponsorship rules of the university, and
- (e) performs all functions required by the SRC in respect of recreational activities.

5.4.8 National Postgraduate Studies Officer

The National Postgraduate Studies Officer:

- (a) is responsible for all academic matters affecting postgraduate students nationally;
- (b) initiates a national platform to obtain opinions on the challenges related to postgraduate students;
- (c) works with the alumni office to identify members of the university alumni or convocation to mentor members of the SRC, and;
- (d) together with the national undergraduate studies officer, represents students on the Senate of the university and its committees including the Senate Library Committee as well as the Student Funding Committee.

5.4.9 National Undergraduate Studies Officer

The National Undergraduate Studies Officer:

- (a) is responsible for all tuition and learning matters affecting undergraduate students nationally;
- (b) works with the regional undergraduate studies officers to ascertain best tuition and learning support and facilities for undergraduate students, and;
- (c) together with the postgraduate studies officer, represents students on the Senate of the university including the Senate Library Committee as well as the Student Funding Committee.

5.5 MEETINGS OF NATIONAL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

- 5.5.1 In accordance with paragraph 5.2.1(f) of this constitution, the NSRC meets at least quarterly.
- 5.5.2 The president, together with the secretary general, determines the meeting schedule for the entire academic year and the method by which each meeting will be conducted. This schedule is presented to the NSRC by the secretary general.
- 5.5.3 An agenda of each meeting is prepared by the president in consultation with the secretary general at least seven days prior to the meeting.
- 5.5.4 Special meetings are held at the written request of fifty per cent plus one of the elected members of the NSRC. Such a request must be accompanied by a written agenda, and the secretary general must give notice to all members seven days prior the meeting.

- 5.5.5 The quorum is constituted by a simple majority of members of the NSRC. The chairpersons and secretaries of the RSRCs attend all meetings of the NSRC in an *ex officio* capacity without voting rights and thus do not affect the quorum of the meetings.
- 5.5.6 The SRC Administrator attends all meetings to provide administrative support and guidance on policy matters.
- 5.5.7 Meetings of the NSRC are not opened to the public. However the designated Vice Principal or Registrar, the Dean of Students, the Director of Student Development, the Manager of Student Governance and Leadership and any other university official so delegated may attend the NSRC meeting as an observer by invitation or request.
- 5.5.8 The NSRC may invite any student, UNISA employee or any external entity to make a presentation or provide expert input on a specific matter during open sessions of the meeting.
- 5.5.9 Decisions and resolutions are made by consensus. Where no consensus is achieved, a decision or resolution may be taken by a simple majority of voting members.
- 5.5.10 Resolutions of meetings are public documents and any member of the university community has a right to inspect them subject to procedural arrangements having been made with the Secretary General. Resolutions are made available to NSRC members, RSRC's, the Dean of Students, the Director of Student Development, the Manager of Student Governance and Leadership and the speaker of the national student parliament at least one week after the meeting.



CHAPTER 6

6.1 National Working Committee

6.1.1 Composition

- (a) President,
- (b) Deputy President,
- (c) Secretary General,
- (d) Deputy Secretary General,
- (e) Treasurer General,

6.1.2 Duties

The NWC:

- (a) is an administrative structure of NSRC and may take decisions related to the day-to-day functioning of NSRC, excluding decisions with constitutional or policy implications.
- (b) exercises efficiently and effectively those powers delegated to it by the NSRC and national student parliament.
- (c) reports regularly to the NSRC on its activities and provides the NSRC promptly with minutes of all NWC meetings and attends to institutional meetings and events on behalf of the NSRC.



CHAPTER 7

REGIONAL INAUGURAL CONGRESS

7.1 REGIONAL INAUGURAL CONGRESS COMPOSITION AND VOTING

- 7.1.1 Regional inaugural congresses are held within two weeks after the announcement of SRC election results.
- 7.1.2 The regional inaugural congresses are presided over by the designated IEC official, who oversees all processes including the completion of elections for regional student parliament office bearers and members of the RSRC
- 7.1.3 The regional inaugural congresses are composed of:
- a) RSRC members elect delegated by respective student organisation in accordance to number of seats won determined by proportional percentage representation;
 - b) one representatives per student formation that participated in regional elections;
 - c) members of the IEC, and;
 - d) representatives of University authorities and delegated officials.
- 7.1.4 Voting is limited to RSRC members elect who are delegated by the respective student organisation.
- 7.1.5 Voting for office bearers of RSRC portfolios is conducted by secret ballot.

7.2 RESPONSIBILITY OF THE REGIONAL INAUGURAL CONGRESS

- 7.2.1 The regional inaugural congress elects office bearers of the RSRC portfolios by secret ballot, and;
- 7.2.2 elects the speaker and deputy speaker from amongst representative of student organisations that participated in the elections as office bearers of the regional student parliament.



CHAPTER 8

REGIONAL STUDENT PARLIAMENT

8.1 COMPOSITION

8.1.1 The regional student parliaments are composed of:

- a) members delegated by respective student organisation in accordance with the number of seats won in the organisation constituency determined by proportional percentage representation.
- b) one representatives from each of the student organisations and structures which contested regional student elections;
- c) one representative per recognised student organisation or society in the region, verification will be conducted in collaboration with designated official of the Directorate of Student Development, and;
- d) representatives of university authorities and delegated officials.

8.1.2 Voting at the regional student parliament is limited to elected RSRC members and representatives of student organisations that have participated in the elections at the region as per the provision of 8.1.1 (b).

8.2 RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY OF THE REGIONAL STUDENT PARLIAMENT

8.2.1 The regional student parliament is the highest decision-making body in respect of student governance matters at the region when the regional inaugural congress is not in session. Its decisions may only be reviewed by the national student parliament to which the regional student parliament is subordinate.

8.2.2 The regional student parliament will:

- a) receive and discuss reports of the RSRC and determine the way forward on any matter brought to its attention;
- b) approve the regional programme of action and the budget;
- c) make policy proposals to the NSRC and national student parliament on any matter related to teaching, learning and research as well as community engagement at the university;
- d) identify and decide on the broader agenda of the RSRC and mandate the RSRC in any manner deemed possible.
- e) monitor and evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the RSRC collectively or individual members serving on the aforesaid structure;

- 8.2.3 The regional student parliament may:
- a) with a two-thirds majority of voting, decide to reshuffle portfolios on the RSRC and;
 - b) with the support of two-thirds of its total membership, pass a motion of no confidence in the RSRC as a collective or any individual portfolio holder in the RSRC provided that:
 - i) the motion is thoroughly motivated and submitted to the deputy speaker of the regional student parliament at least a month before the sitting of the regional student parliament.
 - ii) at least two weeks before the sitting of the regional student parliament the deputy speaker must notify the RSRC secretary of a motion and a member against whom the motion is contemplated.
 - iii) the RSRC or the member against whom the motion is contemplated, as the case may be, should be afforded an opportunity to respond to a motion during the meeting of the regional student parliament.
 - iv) once the motion is passed and voted on by two-thirds of the total members of the regional student parliament, the RSRC or a member against whom the motion is passed, accepts the decision and accordingly vacates his/her office.
- 8.2.4 General resolutions of the regional student parliament are adopted by a simple majority vote, except decisions or resolutions on passing a vote for a motion of no confidence, as well as on a recommendation for amendment of the constitution and policies, in which case a two-thirds majority vote is required.

8.3 MEETINGS OF THE REGIONAL STUDENT PARLIAMENT

- 8.3.1 The first meeting of the regional student parliament, must be held within two month after the date of the inaugural congress to approve the RSRC program of action.
- 8.3.2 Ordinary meetings of the regional student parliament must take place every six months.
- 8.3.3 Special meetings of the regional student parliament must be held on the written request of a member. The request must be accompanied by an agenda for such a proposed meeting and is supported in writing by at least fifty plus one of the regional student parliament's total memberships. The deputy speaker must notify all other members of the regional student parliament at least one month in advance of such a proposed meeting. In case of a special meeting, prior notification must be forwarded to the NSRC and the Division of Student Governance and Leadership to ascertain and authenticate the procedure followed.
- 8.3.4 The regional student parliament must develop and adopt its own procedural arrangements regarding time allocated to a member to speak in order to enable balanced and democratic debate as well as to ensure that members are allowed a fair and equal opportunity to register their points.
- 8.3.5 The required quorum for all meetings of the student parliament including special meetings is a simple majority of total membership of the student parliament.

8.4 OFFICE BEARERS OF REGIONAL STUDENT PARLIAMENT

- 8.4.1 The speaker and deputy speaker are responsible for the orderly functioning of the regional student parliament as stipulated in this constitution.
- 8.4.2 Elected office bearers of the regional student parliament ~~office bearers~~ may not hold any position in the RSRC.

8.5 DUTIES OF REGIONAL STUDENT PARLIAMENT OFFICE BEARERS

8.5.1 Speaker

- a) Presides over meetings of the regional student parliament.
- b) Together with the deputy speaker, is responsible for coordinating the activities of ordinary members of the regional student parliament and liaises with the designated regional administrator on the allocation and administration of the budget allocated to the regional student parliament.
- c) Ensures that each member of the regional student parliament is allowed reasonable time to raise his/her views and leads debates.
- d) Ensures that members of the regional student parliament are allowed reasonable time to hold the RSRC as well as members of the College Board accountable.
- e) Condemns and takes reasonable measures against any member whose conduct is disruptive or intimidating towards other members of the regional student parliament. Such measures include requesting a member to apologise for his/her behaviour or requesting a member to leave the house given the seriousness of his/her disruptive action.
- f) Ensures democratic voting on all motions raised at the regional student parliament.

8.5.2 Deputy Speaker

In addition to performing duties delegated to him/her by the speaker including but not limited to presiding over meetings of the regional student parliament or part thereof, the deputy speaker is responsible for:

- a) recording the minutes of the regional student parliament and distributing the minutes to the RSRC secretary and deputy speaker of national student parliament within seven days of after the meeting.
- b) assist the designated regional administrator with the logistic arrangements for the meetings of the regional student parliament.
- c) giving notices of meetings of the regional student parliament.

- d) together with the speaker, coordinating the activities of ordinary members of the regional student parliament and liaising with the designated regional administrator on the allocation and administration of the budget allocated to the regional student parliament.



CHAPTER 9

REGIONAL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCILS

9.1 ELECTION OF REGIONAL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

- 9.1.1 The regional inaugural congresses elect the RSRC members.
- 9.1.2 Regional inaugural congresses are presided over by a duly delegated member of the IEC.
- 9.1.3 Voting is limited to representatives of student organisations that are allocated seat through proportional percentage representation. The IEC is responsible for the verification of eligibility to vote.
- 9.1.4 RSRC elect office bearers from among themselves to portfolios of the RSRC as stipulated in 9.3 of this constitution.

9.2 AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF REGIONAL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

- 9.2.1 The RSRC exercises its authority and functions within a region as per the demarcations of the university.
- 9.2.2 In exercising its authority and functions under its jurisdiction, the RSRC has a duty to:
 - a) coordinate and implement students activities and programmes within a region
 - b) support student organisations and structures and recommend the recognition or non-recognition of those organisations or structures to regional student parliament;
 - c) optimally utilise student organisations or structures to implement programmes;
 - d) ensure that student organisations and structures are well resourced and capacitated to execute programmes;
 - e) may assign portfolios to four additional members of the RSRC by taking into account the unique circumstances of the region;
 - f) ensure effectiveness of tuition and learning support programmes, as well as the quality of infrastructure at sites of learning within the region;
 - g) cooperate with regional management to assess the quality of service rendered to students;
 - h) be available to answer the questions and concerns of students within the region, and;
 - i) report to the NSRC on a monthly basis through the office of the secretary general.
- 9.2.3 The RSRCs are subject to decisions of the national student parliament and the regional student parliament.

9.3 COMPOSITION OF RSRC

RSRCs are composed of:

- (a) Chairperson
- (b) Deputy Chairperson
- (c) Secretary
- (d) Deputy Secretary
- (e) Treasurer
- (f) Education and Training Officer
- (g) Sports and Cultural Officer
- (h) Regional Postgraduate Studies Officer
- (i) Regional Undergraduate Studies Officer

9.4 PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITIES OF REGIONAL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS

9.4.1 Chairperson

The Chairperson:

- (a) presides over all meetings of the RSRC
- (b) acts as a convenor of the RSRC meetings.
- (c) oversees the implementation of programmes as decided by the regional student parliament and NSRC.
- (d) is responsible for establishing and maintaining good relations with the regional or sub - regional management.
- (e) prepares the agenda of all meetings of the RSRC.
- (f) is a senior representative of the SRC in a region or sub–region and is accountable to the students in the region through the regional student parliament.
- (g) in consultation with the president and secretary general is responsible for convening student regional mass meetings to ascertain opinions of students.
- (h) together with the secretary is an *ex officio* member of the NSRC.
- (i) together with the secretary or treasurer, acts as a signatory to RSRC transactions in accordance to SRC finance policy.

9.4.2 Deputy Chairperson

The Deputy Chairperson:

- (a) deputises the chairperson and fulfils other functions delegated to him/her.
- (b) on arrangement with the chairperson, presides over meetings or part thereof of the RSRC and regional mass meetings.

9.4.3 Secretary

The Secretary:

- (a) acts as secretary of the RSRC during its meeting and is responsible for regular minute taking.
- (b) distributes the agenda and minutes of meetings among members of the RSRC.
- (c) is responsible for keeping records and the correspondence of the RSRC.
- (d) is responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the RSRC.
- (e) is responsible for the coordination of activities of the RSRC and its structures.
- (f) ensures that recognised student organisations and structures fulfil their respective mandate and comply with this constitution.
- (g) together with the chairperson is an *ex-officio* member of the NSRC.
- (h) together with the chairperson or treasurer, acts as a signatory to RSRC transactions in accordance to SRC finance policy.

9.4.4 Treasurer

The Treasurer:

- a) initiates and coordinates projects of the RSRC.
- b) is responsible for consolidating a programme of action for the RSRC.
- c) is responsible for formulation of the budget of the RSRC and its recognised student organisations and structures.
- d) presents the budget to the regional student parliament for approval at regional level.
- e) presents the regional report on financial activities of the RSRC and its recognised student organisations and structure.
- f) liaises regularly with the national projects and finance officer to monitor the financial activities of the SRC.
- g) together with the chairperson or regional finance and projects officer, acts as a signatory to RSRC transactions in accordance to SRC finance policy

9.4.5 Education and Training Officer

The Education and Training Officer:

- a) is responsible for the coordination of student academic and structures recognised by the SRC within the university;
- b) is responsible for coordination of research on behalf of the SRC;

- c) advances equity and transformation in all forums of the SRC and organises mass meetings to that effect;
- d) is responsible for the assessment of the quality of service rendered to students by support departments of the university and develops campaigns and other awareness creation strategies to overcome identified deficiencies, and;
- e) together with the deputy president, represents the students on the Institutional Forum of the university.

9.4.6 Sports and Cultural Officer

The Sports and Cultural Officer:

- a) coordinates all sports and cultural forums of the SRC.
- b) represents the SRC in all sports and cultural forums.
- c) enhances the recreational level on both provincial and national level of the SRC
- d) together with the treasurer general, coordinates and obtains sponsorship from outside organisations to support recreational activities in accordance with the sponsorship rules of the University, and
- e) performs all functions required by the SRC in respect of recreational activities.

9.4.7 Regional Postgraduate Studies Officer

The Postgraduate Studies Officer:

- a) is responsible for identifying academic and administrative support needs of postgraduate students at regional level.
- b) works with the national postgraduate studies officer to ascertain the opinion of postgraduate students on institutional decisions pertaining to teaching, research and community engagement.

9.4.8 Regional Undergraduate Studies Officer

The Undergraduate Studies Officer:

- (a) is responsible for identifying academic and administrative support needs of undergraduate students at regional level.
- (b) works with the national undergraduate studies officer to ascertain the best tuition and learning support and facilities for undergraduate students.

9.5 MEETINGS OF REGIONAL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

9.5.1 The RSRC must meet at least once in a month.

9.5.2 During the first ordinary meeting of the RSRC, the RSRCs must assign portfolios or delegate some of the responsibilities to additional members.

- 9.5.3 The chairperson, together with the secretary, sets the meeting schedule for the entire academic year and determines the method by which each meeting will be conducted.
- 9.5.4 A quorum for a meeting of the RSRC is formed by fifty per cent plus one of the members.
- 9.5.5 Meetings of the RSRC are not open to the public. However officials designated by the regional directors and the Dean of Students may on request attend meetings of the RSRC as observers.
- 9.5.6 Decisions and resolutions are made by consensus. Where no consensus is achieved, a decision or resolution may be taken by a simple majority of voting members.



CHAPTER 10

TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP AND FILLING OF VACANCIES

10.1 TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

10.1.1 A member of any of the student governance structures ceases to be a member immediately and accordingly vacate his/her position when he/she:

- a) is found guilty of transgression in terms of the Student Code of Conduct and is subjected to particular sentence determined by the university Council or a designated structure;
- b) is found guilty for a criminal offence and is convicted or subjected to a particular sentence by a South African court of law;
- c) ceases to be a registered student at the university for whatever reason including having graduated for the his/her qualification.
- d) fails to comply with the provisions of paragraph 2.5 of this constitution;
- e) is absent from three consecutive meetings without an acceptable written apology to the secretary general if he/she is a member of the NSRC, to the regional secretary of the RSRC if he/she is a member in a particular region or sub-region and to the speaker if he/she is an ordinary member of national student parliament.
- f) resigns in writing to the secretary general if he/she is a member of the NSRC and to the concerned regional secretary if he/she is an RSRC member.
- g) is recalled by the student organisation which he/she represent subsequent to an organisation having provided the university with a declaration that a recall complies with its own internal procedures.

10.1.2 A member of any of the student governance structures ceases to be a member immediately and accordingly vacate his/her position when:

- a) the national student parliament in accordance to paragraph 3.3.4 passes a motion of no confidence on the NSRC or any individual who is its member;
- b) the regional student parliament in accordance with paragraph 6.2.3(b) passes a motion of no confidence in the RSRSC or any individual who is its member.

10.1.3 The offices of the secretary general and speaker of the national student parliament must be notified, the Dean of Students, the Director of Student Development and the Manager of Student Governance and Leadership of the changes within the student governance structures as a result of a termination of membership within a week of occurrence.

10.2 FILLING OF VACANCIES

Vacant positions must be filled according to the following procedure:

- 10.2.1 If the positions of the speaker and deputy speaker of the national student parliament fall vacant, the national student parliament in its first ordinary meeting after the position became vacant, fills the position from its ranks.
- 10.2.2 If a vacancy occurs in any of the positions of the NSRC, the student organisation which is entitled to the seat sends an alternate who in the interim fulfils the responsibility assigned to a vacant portfolio until the first sitting of the national student parliament after the vacancy having occurred for rectification.
- 10.2.3 If the positions of the speaker and deputy speaker of the regional student parliament fall vacant, the regional student parliament in its first ordinary meeting after the position became vacant, fills the position from its ranks.
- 10.2.4 If a vacancy occurs in any of the position of the RSRC, the student organisation which is entitled to the seat sends an alternate who in the interim fulfils the responsibility assigned to a vacant portfolio until the first sitting of the regional student parliament after the vacancy having occurred for rectification



CHAPTER 11

MASS MEETINGS, RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SRC AND STUDENT STRUCTURES AND ORGANISATIONS AND FUNDING

11.1 MASS MEETINGS

11.1.1 In order to ascertain and gauge the opinion of the student body on a specific pressing matter as well as to disseminate information to students, the NSRC must convene.

11.1.2 Mass meetings may be requested by a student in the following manner:

- a) The student submits a petition outlining all issues that he/she wishes the SRC to attend to or answer. This petition must be supported by a minimum of three hundred students who must sign the petition and indicate their student number;
- b) The petition is sent to the RSRC secretary, who in turn forward it to the SRC Administrator to authenticate the requester as well as the supporters of the petition in order to establish if they are registered students of UNISA. The requesting student must be afforded time to rectify the defects should some be discovered during authentication.

11.1.3 The RSRC chairperson presides over the mass meetings.

11.2 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SRC AND STUDENT STRUCTURES AND ORGANISATIONS

11.2.1 The Bill of Rights in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa provides for freedom of association. As such students may establish organisations and structures. Without detracting from the variety of student organisations and structures that may be formed, this may include student organisations and structures of political, academic, social, cultural and religious nature.

11.2.2 Student organisations and structures exist in accordance to their constitutions. These constitutions may not be in contravention to the SRC constitution and other university policies.

11.2.3 The powers of the SRC in relation to the student organisations and structures are outlined in the directive on recognition of student organisations and structures.

11.3 FUNDING

11.3.1 The SRC establishes a committee on finances in order to ensure thorough oversight on the administration of finances of the SRC.

11.3.2 The SRC Policy on Finance and Resources Administration outlines a procedure on budget distribution amongst structures of student governance as well as a process of completing requisitions.



CHAPTER 12

DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND DISCIPLINE

12.1 PROCEDURE ON DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- 12.1.1 Any dispute that arises amongst members of the NSRC or a particular RSRC regarding its functions and operations will be resolved by a simple majority vote of the NSRC or RSRC membership.
- 12.1.2 Should the NSRC or RSRC be unable to resolve the dispute by a simple majority vote, the dispute will be referred to the national or regional student parliament for resolution by a simple majority vote of its membership.
- 12.1.3 If the regional student parliament fails to resolve the dispute, the matter should be referred to the national student parliament for final decision.
- 12.1.4 If the national student parliament fails to resolve the dispute, the matter should be referred to the Dean of Students for conciliation.
- 12.1.5 If conciliation attempts by the Dean of Students fail, the Dean of Students should refer the matter to the university Management Committee for resolution.
- 12.1.6 Attempts should be made to resolve disputes within thirty day period to ensure that no depute or impasse derails the SRC from fulfilling its mandate.
- 12.1.7 No member or party within student governance structures of UNISA may opt for court litigation on the basis of a dispute in the functions or execution thereof of by the SRC or impasse in relation to operation or interpretation of this constitution without having exhausted the aforesaid procedure.
- 12.1.8 If the dispute is amongst members of the student parliament and has consequently weakened all structures of student governance the university Council may dissolve the student governance structures and in accordance with provisions made in chapter 13 of this constitution.

12.2 DISCIPLINE

- 12.2.1 All students whose conduct during the election process or in the operations of any structures of student governance including national and regional student parliament and the SRC are destructive or obstructive, are guilty of misconduct and will be subject to the Student Disciplinary Code.
- 12.2.2 All acts of misconducts within the ranks of student governance structures must be submitted to the Registrar who is responsible student disciplinary matters at the university through the Dean of Students. The Registrar must in turn determine the applicable forms of misconduct in accordance with the Student Disciplinary Code.



CHAPTER 13

DISSOLUTION

- 13.1 In there are reasons to believe that the student governance structures including the national student parliament and SRC, are ineffective and incapable to discharge its duties, the Council of the university may dissolve all structures of student governance and must:
- 13.1.1 mandate the Management Committee to appoint an interim SRC which should be constituted by students who comply with provisions as set out in paragraphs 2.4 and 2.5 of this constitution.
 - 13.1.2 call for early elections and put the process in place to elect the new SRC within six months.

