

Dear student,

Student Governance Enhancements

Following a consultation process, the Wits Council in December 2017 approved a range of amendments to the student governance framework. The amendments were approved in line with the university's endeavours to:

1. Ensure greater participation in student governance elections by providing for online elections (already implemented in 2017 but access to the voting platform to be broadened);
2. Ensure greater representation of students, particularly to increase the number of postgraduate students on the SRC, and to make provision for international students, students with disabilities, and day students on the SRC;
3. Affirm our commitment to academic excellence, and thus include an academic requirement for SRC membership. This we hope will assist in eliminating academic exclusions often faced by SRC members;
4. Ensuring that the SRC is the primary student governance structure, in line with the Higher Education Act.

We are thus pleased to inform you that the following amendments to the SRC constitution and the student governance framework will be applicable to the elections this year:

1. MEMBERSHIP OF THE SRC

The SRC consists of the following 22 members all of whom have the right to vote:

- 1.1 10 general representatives elected online by the student body in the manner prescribed by the Electoral Rules;
- 1.2 Two representatives of the All Residence Sub-Council (one undergraduate and one postgraduate).
- 1.3 Two representative of the Wits Sports Sub-Council; (one undergraduate and one postgraduate).
- 1.4 One representative of the Faculty Sub-Council;
- 1.5 Two representatives from the International students Sub-Council (one undergraduate and one postgraduate).
- 1.6 Two representative from the Postgraduate Association (PGA)
- 1.7 One representative from the Disabled Constituency
- 1.8 Two day students (one undergraduate and one postgraduate)

2. ELIGIBILITY OF VOTERS, AND CANDIDATES AND OBSERVERS

To be eligible for nomination as a candidate for the SRC in any SRC Election for either the Elective Portfolios or the Ex Officio Portfolios, a candidate must meet all of the following requirements. The candidate must:

- 1.1 Be a full-time student
- 1.2 Be registered for a degree or a postgraduate qualification;
- 1.3 In the case of an undergraduate student, must be at least registered in the second year of study at the University when s/he takes office and have attained an average of sixty percent (60%) for the semester preceding the elections.
- 1.4 In the case of a Student enrolled for a coursework postgraduate qualification have obtained a sixty percent (65%) average in the semester preceding the election;
- 1.5 In the case of a postgraduate Student who is registered for a research degree present written confirmation by the Faculty administration of the Faculty in which s/he is registered that sufficient progress has been made for the Student to complete the degree or diploma within the prescribed minimum period;
- 1.6 Not have been found guilty by a disciplinary committee of the University for transgression of the Disciplinary Committee.
- 1.7 Once elected to office participate in such mandatory training as required by the Vice-Chancellor, in consultation with the SRC-elect

3. ELECTRONIC ELECTIONS

Voting will take place on a Wits Integrated online system accessible through an electronic device. Services of an auditing firm will be secured for auditing purposes should there be a need.

4. FILLING OF VACANCIES

4.1 In the event of a vacancy arising before 15 April in any year for whatever reason in any of the Elective Portfolios during the SRC's term of office the Dean of Student Affairs must appoint the next available runner-up candidate (in line with the Eligibility Requirements) for SRC Elections.

4.2 If no suitable candidate can be found in terms of Section 6 the functions of the vacant portfolio must be reallocated by the SRC amongst the remaining SRC members holding Elective Portfolios for the remainder of the SRC term.

4.3 In the event of a vacancy arising for whatever reason in any of the Ex Officio Portfolios, the relevant Constituency or Council to which the vacant Ex Officio Portfolio relates, must as soon as possible following the occurrence of the vacancy, elect a replacing SRC Member, meeting the Eligibility Requirements, for the vacant Ex Officio Portfolio for the remainder of the SRC Term and the Chief Electoral Officer must appoint this candidate for the specific vacant Ex Officio Portfolio.

5. DISSONANCE BETWEEN THE ALL RESIDENCE COUNCIL, WITS SPORTS COUNCIL, POSTGRADUATE ASSOCIATION AND THE STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

5.1 All the Councils and Association should be changed to Sub-Councils with the exception of the PGA.

5.2 The SRC should be the only recognized highest student governing body in line with the provision of the Higher Education Act, 1997 as amended.

5.3 Sub-Councils and Associations must be under the jurisdiction and authority of the SRC.

We are confident that these changes will usher in renewed energy in student governance at Wits, and that these measures will assist in ensuring a coherent model with increased student representation, and on the foundation of academic excellence.

Should you have any questions/ queries/ comments in respect of these changes, please contact Ms Jabu Mashinini, Manager: Student Governance in the Division of Student Affairs. You can reach her at the Student Governance Office, second floor of the Matrix, or via email at: jabu.mashinini@wits.ac.za

Warm regards,

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Dean of Students