

ELECTORAL CODE OF CONDUCT

1. PURPOSE

This electoral code of conduct is derived and transcribed from schedule 2 of the Electoral Act No. 73 of 1998, as amended. This code of conduct seeks to advance the values espoused in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the values of integrity and dignity in diversity as enshrined in UNISA's Strategic Plan 2016/30, as well as the aspirations purported in the SRC Constitution and Electoral Policy for a Student Representative Council.

To this end, this code of conduct seeks to make provision for an environment, which is conducive to free and fair SRC elections through:

- a) tolerance of democratic political, cultural and academic activity,
- b) free campaigning and open public debate.

2. STATUS

This code is meant to enable the smooth implementation of the SRC Constitution and Electoral Policy for a Student Representative Council. This code is subordinate to the university's rules, and more specifically, the student disciplinary code of UNISA.

3. APPLICATION AND COMPLIANCE

- 3.1 This code is applicable whenever SRC elections are being held. All activities undertaken by student organisations or candidates acting in their own capacity or on behalf of their student organisations connected to SRC elections are subject to this code and applicable institutional rules.
- 3.2 Every student organisation and every candidate registered for purposes of the SRC election is bound by this code and must:
 - a) comply with this code
 - b) in the case of a student organisation: urge its members to support the purposes of this code and uphold the SRC Constitution and Electoral Policy for a Student Representative Council
 - c) in the case of candidates: act with a great sense of responsibility to advance the purpose of this code and undertake all measures reasonably possible to uphold the SRC Constitution and Electoral Policy for a Student Representative Council
 - d) endeavour to educate other students who are supporters of the organisation and its candidates regarding the aspiration of this code, the SRC Constitution and Electoral Policy for a Student Representative Council.

4. DECLARATION

- 4.1 When registering with the IEC for the purpose of participating in the SRC elections at UNISA, every student organisation must sign a declaration openly acknowledging that every student or student organisation has a right to:
- a) express their academic perspectives and political opinions freely
 - b) challenge and debate the academic perspectives and political opinion held by others
 - c) publish and distribute election and campaign materials, including notices and advertisements (according to the relevant policies of the university) that are not derogatory to any other student, student organisation as well as the university or its officials
 - d) lawfully erect banners, billboards, placards and posters and circulate such through electronic platforms according to the relevant policies of the university;
 - e) undertake reasonable and acceptable means, which are not disruptive to university operations, to canvass support for the preferred student organisation or its candidate;
 - f) recruit students to become members of a particular student organisation
 - g) hold public meetings on the university's premises, having followed institutional rules and obtained prior approval from the relevant authorities
 - h) attend student meetings and campaign activities held within the university having followed institutional rules and obtained prior approval from the relevant authorities.
- 4.2 Every student organisation registered for elections or its candidate, must openly condemn any action that might undermine the principle of free and fair election.
- 4.3 Every student organisation registered for elections must accept the results of the elections or may challenge the results through its designated representatives who must be UNISA students registered with the Independent Election Tribunal in line with paragraph 12 of the Electoral Policy for a Student Representative Council.

5. COOPERATION

In the spirit of cooperation, representatives of student organisations and its candidates must take all means practically possible to ensure proper planning of activities in a manner that averts conflict and contestation over facilities on the university premises. Prior booking and approval needs to be obtained with the relevant university authorities to enable equal access and usage of venues and related institutional infrastructure.

6. WOMEN AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Every student organisation and its candidates must:

- a) undertake all measures reasonably possible to ensure that the rights of women and students with disabilities are not violated during its electioneering activities
- b) reasonably facilitate equal opportunities for women and students with disabilities to engage with its activities and candidates
- c) ensure access its meetings and election activities for women and students with disabilities and ascertain their right to posit their academic perspectives and political views.

7. MISCONDUCT

7.1 Any student organisation registered for SRC elections, its members or candidates committing or attempting to commit any of the following acts of misconduct is subject to automatic disqualification by the IEC from further participation in the SRC elections:

- a) Usage of derogatory language or acting in a manner that may provoke violence or seek to intimidate other student organisations, its candidates, members, general students, IEC officials and its staff as well as university employees or any service provider in the process of elections
- b) Publishing of false or defamatory allegations in connection with SRC elections in respect to a student organisation, its candidates, representatives or members as well as university management or its officials
- c) Plagiarising the symbols, acronyms or material substantively attributed to other registered student organisation for purposes of elections
- d) Discriminating on the grounds of race, ethnicity, sex, gender, class or religion in connection with the SRC election
- e) Offering a reward or inducement to other students, such as:
 - (i) to vote or not to vote in any particular manner
 - (ii) to refuse nomination as a candidate or withdraw as a candidate, or
 - (iii) to attend or not to attend a meeting or activity of a student organisation registered for the SRC elections
- f) Manipulating the voting system in any manner to give undue advantage to a particular student organisation
- g) Meddling with the student system to obtain student numbers and codes to vote on behalf of other students
- h) Purposely disrupting activities of other student organisations or its candidates as well as acting in a manner that prevents students access to IEC activities, collection of signatures by other student organisations and its campaigns

i) Defacing or unlawfully removing or destroying the placards, posters or any election materials of a party or candidates.

7.2 Any other form of behaviour which is disruptive to and constrains the optimal functioning of the IEC, a service provider or university officials in implementing and concluding the SRC election project in any manner, is regarded as misconduct and may result in individual candidates or student organisations on whose behalf they act being disqualified by the IEC.

7.3 With specific reference to an individual student who commits or attempts to commit the above or other unmentioned forms of misconduct, such students shall be subject to the disciplinary process as stipulated in paragraph 11.2 of the SRC Constitution and any other action the IEC might institute.

8. ROLE OF INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION

The role of the IEC is as stipulated in the approved Electoral Policy for a Student Representative Council. All registered student organisations, its candidates and supporters must recognise and observe the authority of the IEC in the conduct of the elections.

9. ROLE OF INDEPENDENT ELECTION TRIBUNAL

The role of the Independent Election Tribunal is as stipulated in the approved Electoral Policy for a Student Representative Council.

10. IMPLEMENTATION

This code of conduct is implementable immediately upon approval by Council.

