



STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL (SRC) POLICY

Policy Code: E4
Version: 4
Approved by: Senate
Approval Date: 23/02/2021
Decision No.: SEN42/2020

Date Reviewed	Version History
30/01/2015	V1
01/06/2016	V2
18/02/2018	V2 (a)
19/04/2018	V3
04/07/2018	V3 (a)
21/01/2021	V4

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Da Vinci Institute is an accredited private higher distance education provider offering qualifications on NQF levels five to ten, which are registered on the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF). This policy forms part of the institutional Integrated Quality Management System and details the principles for ensuring that programme offerings adhere to required academic standards and empower students to contribute to the transformation of their communities, society, and the economy of the future. This approach is underpinned by the Business- and Community-based Action Learning discourse on the co-creation and distribution of relevant knowledge.

The following sections of the *Higher Education Act* provide for Student representation in The Institute's governance structures:

- Section 28, subsection 2(f)
"The senate of a public higher education institution must consist of...(f) members of the students' representative council"
- Section 31, subsection 2(f)
"The institutional forum of a public higher education institution must consist of a representative or representatives of...(f) the students"

In light of the above, The Institute's Senate has approved Student Representation on the following Da Vinci Governance structures:

- I. Senate
- II. Research and Ethics Committee
- III. Assessment Committee
- IV. Institutional Forum
- V. Disciplinary Committee (ad hoc)

The Institute regards the various portfolios within the SRC as key student leadership positions. An SRC member forms a pivotal link between the student body and The Institute's Management and relevant stakeholders.

2. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Committee	A group of people officially delegated to perform a function, such as investigating, considering, reporting, or acting on a matter
Ethics code	Behaviour conducted according to The Institute's Code of Conduct Policy (E1)
Ethics	The principles that govern The Institute's staff and students' behaviour and the appropriateness of specified conduct
Resolution	A formal expression of opinion or intention agreed on by a legislative body, committee, or other formal meeting
Student body	Individuals who are registered for any of the learning programmes offered by The Institute
Student Representative Council	Elected student leaders representing the student body of The Institute

3. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This policy is benchmarked against, and should be read in the context of the relevant legislation underpinning the principles against which institutional policies and procedures are developed, implemented and maintained. These include:

- A. Relevant legislation
 - I. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (No 108 of 1996)
 - II. Criteria for Programme Accreditation (CHE, 2004)
 - III. Distance Higher Education Programmes in a Digital Era: Good Practice Guide (CHE)
 - IV. Higher Education Act (Act 101 of 1997)
 - V. National Qualification Framework Act (No. 67 of 2008)
- B. Applicable Da Vinci documents
 - I. E1 - Code of Conduct Policy
 - II. Student Contract.

4. SCOPE

- a) Student Representatives
- b) Students

This Policy should be read in conjunction with The Institute's policies available on the various online platforms.

5. PURPOSE

The Student Representatives, as part of the Da Vinci Governance structures, should strive to:

- a) Cultivate a healthy student culture that enriches student life, supports quality of education and promotes the participation of every Da Vinci student
- b) Embrace the vision, mission and strategic plan of The Institute, through, amongst others, the development of plans and goals by the students they represent
- c) Embrace the Code of Conduct and values of The Institute
- d) Respect differences that arise due to socio-economic status, sponsors, race, gender, culture, religion, age and politics. Refer to the comprehensive list set out in clause 9(3) (entitled "Equality") of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 108 of 1996 and the Employment Equity Act
- e) Commit to exemplary student leadership, aim to encourage academic excellence and promote equality of opportunities through efficient and transparent governance.

6. SRC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In line with the definition of Governance, the roles and responsibilities of the student representative at The Institute are listed as follows:

- a) Participate in institutional governing structures
- b) Contribute to the efficient functioning of The Institute through Governance structures
- c) Provide representation for students as required
- d) Encourage and support active participation among students with regards to institutional events and activities
- e) Support staff with regards to institutional events, such as open days and graduations.
- f) Advise and provide support towards the delivery of effective and efficient student support services
- g) Advise on student learning experiences
- h) Garner and express opinions on relevant student matters

- i) Represent students in all institutional matters affecting them both as individuals and as a group and to serve the student body
- j) Act as a channel of communication between:
 - I. Students and their class representatives
 - II. Administration
 - III. Staff
 - IV. Governance structures of The Institute
 - V. Other stakeholders.
- k) Report back to students on the outcomes of relevant meetings attended
- l) Adopt and advocate The Institute's Code of Conduct
- m) Foster an institutional culture that promotes fundamental human rights and creates a conducive environment for teaching and learning
- n) Promote healthy social engagements and lead by example
- o) Serve as brand ambassadors
- p) Any other activities that would enhance the student experience and student engagement with The Institute.

7. ELIGIBILITY TO SERVE AS A SRC REPRESENTATIVE

In order to qualify SRC candidates must:

- a) Be registered for a Da Vinci undergraduate or postgraduate qualification during the year of nomination
- b) Be available to attend regularly scheduled meetings of the governing bodies and any other required meetings
- c) Be in good standing in terms of study fees and academic performance at the time of nomination and during the term of office
- d) Has not been found guilty by a duly authorised body of The Institute for violation of the student Code of Conduct or any other rules and regulations of The Institute.

8. THE STUDENT BODY

8.1. SRC Membership and Voting Rights

- a) All registered students are voting members of the Student Body
- b) Membership on the SRC is for one year and runs from 1 March to 31 March of the following year. This includes a one month overlap period for handover to the incoming SRC member
- c) Current SRC members, who would like to serve another year on the SRC, will be subject to the same election process as other students
- d) An SRC member may serve a maximum of three years either consecutively or non-consecutively

- e) In November of each year a request for nominations is sent out to the Student Body via various channels
- f) The SRC should have a minimum of four (4) members but no more than six (6)
- g) The Institute will allocate elected members to serve on the following governance structures:
 - I. Senate
 - II. Research and Ethics Committee
 - III. Assessment Committee
 - IV. Institutional Forum
 - V. Disciplinary Committee (*ad hoc*)
- h) The SRC must include at least two postgraduate students, who will be allocated to serve on Senate and the Research and Ethics committee respectively. The president of the SRC will serve on Senate and the vice-president on the Research and Ethics Committee.
- i) SRC nominees must submit both a Curriculum Vitae and a profile to The Institute and be approved by the Registrar according to the criteria under section 6 above, before voting commences
- j) The Nominee profiles are sent to the student body to vote for their preferred candidates
- k) Nominees with the majority votes will be confirmed. Where there is a tie a re-election process will take place
- l) Successful candidates must sign both an acceptance letter and the SRC policy confirming their election
- m) The names of the successful candidates are presented to Senate together with their CVs in May for notification.

8.2. Composition of the SRC

The SRC is composed of a President, Vice President, Secretariat and those members voted onto the SRC by the student body of The Institute.

8.2.1. President

- a) The President of the SRC will be represented on The Da Vinci Senate
- b) The President is the convener of the SRC meetings and is responsible for overseeing the responsibilities and tasks of SRC members and making sure that their responsibilities and tasks are completed timeously
- c) The President is responsible for planning the yearly calendar/activities in collaboration with the other SRC members and making sure that responsibilities are equally shared between SRC members
- d) The President of the SRC must liaise with The Institute's Secretariat on roles and responsibilities of SRC members at Graduation.

8.2.2. Vice-President

- a) The function of the Vice-President is primarily to support the President in the execution of allocated duties
- b) This portfolio will also serve as a proxy in the absence of the President. In addition, the President and Vice-President share the direct management of all core SRC functions
- c) The Vice-President of the SRC will serve on the Research and Ethics Committee.

8.2.3. Secretariat

- a) The secretariat supports the SRC in fulfilling administrative functions as needed, including but not limited to the distribution of the agenda and the keeping of minutes.

The SRC may establish task groups (members only) and working groups (SRC members and non-SRC persons) as required.

9. SRC MEETINGS

- a) There has to be a minimum of four (4) meetings per year (one per quarter). At the first meeting the President, Vice-president and Secretariat of the SRC are elected
- b) The SRC will ensure that the Secretariat or, in their absence, a designated person shall keep minutes of the proceedings of each general meeting
- c) The minutes of all meetings must be filed with the Secretariat of The Institute who will present the minutes to the Senate
- d) If an SRC member misses three (3) or more meetings, including the governing body meetings, their position on the SRC will be re-evaluated by the remaining members
- e) Disputes will be resolved in consultation with the Registrar when members cannot resolve these internally
- f) Any additional meetings can be called by the President of the SRC as required.

10. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- a) In the event that a member wishes to resign from the SRC, notice must be given two (2) months in advance, unless exceptional circumstances apply
- b) Where the student's account falls into arrears and this has not been rectified within a mutually agreed timeframe, the student's membership will be terminated
- c) As a student representative the member is expected to abide by The Institute's Code of Conduct and any violation thereof could result in the member being withdrawn from the SRC following a disciplinary procedure. Refer to the disciplinary procedures in E1 – Code of Conduct Policy
- d) The vacant position will be filled through a similar voting process upon notice of the vacancy.

11. REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

Regular review and amendment of this policy will be done in line with the approved institutional policies and regulatory requirements. This will take place in consultation with the relevant quality assurance structures at departmental and institutional level, under the auspices of the official custodian of this policy, namely the Registrar.