



RULES ON ACADEMIC ENTITIES WITHIN AND ALONGSIDE DEPARTMENTS (OR EQUIVALENT FACULTY-BASED STRUCTURES) AND FACULTIES, 2018

Type of Document:	Rules
Purpose:	To provide a framework for the establishment and functioning of academic entities located within and alongside departments (or equivalent faculty-based structures) and faculties, namely centres, institutes and schools (CIS)
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Policy Curator²:	Registrar
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Validity:	In case of differences in interpretation the English version of this policy will be regarded as the valid version.

SU Policies are available at www.sun.ac.za/policies

¹ Policy Owner: Head(s) of Responsibility Centre(s) in which the policy functions.

² Policy Curator: Administrative head of the division responsible for the implementation and maintenance of the policy

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

RULES ON ACADEMIC ENTITIES WITHIN AND ALONGSIDE DEPARTMENTS (OR EQUIVALENT FACULTY-BASED STRUCTURES) AND FACULTIES, 2018

Reference number of this document	TK01
Aim	To provide a framework for the establishment and functioning of academic entities located within and alongside departments (or equivalent faculty-based structures) and faculties, namely centres, institutes and schools (CIS)
Type of document	Rules
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Institutional functionary (curator) responsible for these rules	Registrar
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1. INTRODUCTION

In order to promote the effectiveness and impact of Stellenbosch University (SU), it is necessary to establish academic entities in specific strategic focus areas. Such entities allow for academic innovation within disciplines as well as the formation of formal collaborative partnerships across different departments (or equivalent faculty-based structures) and faculties. At SU, these entities are named ‘centres’, ‘institutes’ or ‘schools’ (collectively referred to as ‘academic entities’ or ‘CIS entities’ for the purpose of these rules).

Such entities are generally established to extend the academic mission of universities. Their establishment is perceived to be important because of the organisational flexibility they afford, and they can take multiple and various forms.¹ At SU, these entities are established within or alongside academic departments (or equivalent faculty-based structures) and faculties as complementary structures with clearly defined purposes. They

¹ Sá, C.M. 2008. University-based research centres: Characteristics, organization and administrative implications. *The Journal of Research Administration*, 39(1):32–40.

serve to enhance academic excellence in areas of strategic importance to SU and often enable access to external research funding opportunities. Such entities are generally, although not exclusively, interdisciplinary in nature.

Only academic entities functioning under the auspices of Senate are contemplated in these rules, and not professional academic support service (PASS) entities. This means that, although the name 'centre' is also used for entities in the PASS environment, those centres are not established or governed in terms of the stipulations in these rules. These rules will also not govern faculty-based service-oriented or programme management-oriented entities that are not primarily established for an academic purpose.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF RULES

- 2.1 These rules apply to all members of the University (see 5.3.3 below for the definition of 'member').
- 2.2 These rules must be read in conjunction with all other related SU policies and procedures, including those specifically mentioned in these rules.
- 2.3 These rules are intended for internal use only and do not confer any rights or privileges to any third party.
- 2.4 These rules replace all previous versions of policies and procedures regarding the establishment of centres, bureaux, institutes and schools at SU.
- 2.5 These rules will not affect the status or nomenclature used for existing entities (established prior to its implementation date) under the previous policy (SU Centres, Bureaus and Institutions Policy of 2010). All academic entities will however be included in the quality assurance processes of SU in order to assess their continued viability.

3. PURPOSE OF THESE RULES

In order to promote SU's unique institutional character and competitive advantage and to maximise the impact of the University's scholarly activities, it is necessary to establish academic entities such as centres, institutes and schools. The purpose of these rules is to provide the framework in terms of which these entities are established and function, with reference to and in distinction from academic departments (or equivalent faculty-based structures) and faculties.

4. OBJECTIVE OF THE RULES

The objective of these rules is to provide a framework for the establishment of academic centres, institutes or schools. These entities serve some or all of the following purposes:

- a) To enhance the status and academic profile of SU, both nationally and internationally
- b) To promote interdisciplinary research and student education and training across departments (or equivalent faculty-based structures) and faculties and encourage the formation of strong teams
- c) To promote excellence in our academic activities
- d) To support academic outputs and impact (including social impact) in areas that the University identifies as strategic focus areas
- e) To promote access to external income streams to strengthen the University's academic endeavours

- f) To provide consulting services to clients of SU
- g) To facilitate the development of collaborative teams within and across disciplines at all levels, and where applicable in collaboration with other institutions
- h) To facilitate the effective promotion of the University's academic strengths.

These rules allows for three different types of academic entities to be established. The different types of entities report to departments (or equivalent faculty-based structures), faculties or at institutional level. A change in entity type will be approved via a new application process. Entities established prior to the implementation date of these rules may retain their existing names and status.

5. DEFINITIONS

5.1 Types of academic entities at SU

- 5.1.1 A **Type 1** academic entity reports to and is located within one academic department (or equivalent faculty-based structure). The nomenclature used for a Type 1 entity is restricted to 'centre'.
- 5.1.2 A **Type 2** academic entity reports to a single faculty, even if it sometimes involves collaboration between researchers from different faculties. Such an entity can be established if its activities are significantly interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary in nature, and usually requires the involvement of more than one academic department (or equivalent faculty-based structure). A Type 2 entity may use the nomenclature of 'centre', 'institute' or 'school' and has a primary link to a single host faculty.
- 5.1.3 A **Type 3** academic entity reports at institutional level, and is a research-intensive interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary institutional academic entity that has strong academic footprints in more than one faculty. A Type 3 entity may use the nomenclature 'institute' or 'school'.

5.2 Definitions of the names used for academic entities within and alongside SU departments (or equivalent faculty-based structures) and faculties

- 5.2.1 **Centre/institute:** Technically, there is no difference between the terms 'centre' and 'institute'. Both typically involve a faculty, students and staff from various subject areas, whose work together provides added value over and above their individual academic activities and who benefit from the University's official recognition of that collaboration. In practice and for the specific purpose of SU's rules in this regard, the term 'institute' would typically refer to an entity with a broader scope than an entity called a 'centre'. An institute may therefore create centres as separate units within its administrative structure. Centres, on the other hand, cannot create institutes as part of their administrative structure.
- 5.2.2 The term '**school**' typically refers to an academic entity with a strong interdisciplinary research as well as an under- and postgraduate teaching and learning focus, usually involving a large number of interdepartmental and possibly interfaculty collaborations. A school may create centres or institutes as separate units within its administrative structure.
- 5.2.3 Entities called 'units' and 'bureaus' are not regarded as discrete entities under these rules. Such entities can be situated within a department (or equivalent faculty-based structure), but can also be a sub-section of a centre, institute or school. A unit or bureau may have its own cost centre, but not its own organisational unit (OU) code.

5.3 General definitions

5.3.1 **Interdisciplinary** means combining or involving two or more academic disciplines or fields of study that are usually considered distinct.

5.3.2 **Transdisciplinary** means crossing many disciplinary boundaries to create a holistic approach to solving research questions. According to the Belmont Forum (<http://www.belmontforum.org>), a transdisciplinary approach enables inputs and scoping across scientific and non-scientific stakeholder communities and facilitates a systemic way of addressing a challenge.

5.3.3 **Member of the University** refers to any person permanently employed or under contract to SU, registered students and any others engaged in academic activities falling under the jurisdiction of the University; joint staff (employed, for example, in partnership with the Western Cape Department of Health); and also any person formerly in any of the aforementioned categories whose work remains associated with the name of SU.

6. ATTRIBUTES OF THE THREE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ENTITIES

6.1 SU differentiates between three types of academic entities (other than faculties or departments and equivalent faculty-based structures): Type 1, 2 or 3. The attributes of the three types are set out below.

Academic entity	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3
Operational framework	Reports to and is located within one SU department (or equivalent faculty-based structure)	Reports to and is located within a faculty, similar to an academic department (or equivalent faculty-based structure)	Reports at an institutional level and stands alongside the faculties, but does not confer its own degrees; brings additional value and does not compete with faculties
Purpose	Strengthening scholarly outputs of a department (or equivalent faculty-based structure)	Strengthening scholarly outputs of a faculty via interdisciplinary collaboration	Strengthening collaborative interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research and student education and training across faculty boundaries, <i>inter alia</i> facilitated via external grant income
Line management	Departmental chair (or equivalent position)	Faculty dean	Vice-Rector (via an interfaculty steering committee)
Offer undergraduate degree programmes	No	No	No, but may contribute modules to undergraduate degrees conferred via one of the partner faculties
Offer postgraduate degree programmes	No	Yes (degrees conferred via host faculty)	No, but may contribute to postgraduate degrees conferred via one of the partner faculties
Research projects/programmes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Consulting/contract research	Yes	Yes	Yes
Social impact activities	Yes	Yes	Yes
Short courses	Yes	Yes	Yes
Allowed nomenclature	Centre	Centre/institute/school	Institute/school
Approved by	Faculty board, Academic Planning Committee (APC) and Senate	Faculty board, APC and Senate	Faculty boards of partner faculties, APC, Rectorate, Research Committee and Senate

Quality assurance process	Quality assurance evaluation as part of host department (or equivalent faculty-based structure), via SU's normal quality assurance process; reviewed every five years	Own quality assurance evaluation, at five-year intervals, via SU's normal quality assurance process (unless a similar external evaluation is enforced by the relevant funding body)	Own quality assurance evaluation, at five-year intervals, via SU's normal quality assurance process (unless a similar external evaluation is enforced by the relevant funding body)
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6.2 Type 1 entity

A Type 1 entity reports to and is located within one academic department (or equivalent faculty-based structure):

- a) A Type 1 entity does not offer teaching programmes under its own auspices. It may be involved in teaching programmes, but supervision of such programmes remains the responsibility of the department (or equivalent faculty-based structure) to which the relevant entity is linked.
- b) Staff appointed to the Type 1 entity are members of the department (or equivalent faculty-based structure) to which the entity is linked.
- c) The activities of a Type 1 entity may include research, consultation, social impact initiatives and short courses.
- d) A Type 1 entity must have its own OU code. The time of full-time equivalent staff, publications and social impact activities are shared by the department (or equivalent faculty-based structure) and the Type 1 entity. The information is kept and reported differentially (on the institutional dashboard) in order to enable quality assurance of the Type 1 entity. When departments (or equivalent faculty-based structures) are evaluated, the Type 1 entity is evaluated as part of the department (or equivalent faculty-based structure) and included in the calculation of the core statistics. The Type 1 entity and departmental (or equivalent) information must however be maintained and reported in a differentiated system (on the institutional dashboard) to allow for quality assurance of the Type 1 entity's own performance.
- e) A Type 1 entity will be established for an initial five-year period based on an approved constitution. A formal review of its performance must be conducted as part of the normal Quality Assurance process of the relevant academic department, which will determine its renewal for further cycles.
- f) A Type 1 entity may only use the nomenclature 'centre'.
- g) The institutional application and approval and review/renewal process is as outlined in ANNEXURE A. (Aspects regarding Type 3 are still to be confirmed.)

6.3 Type 2 entity

A Type 2 entity reports to and is located within one faculty:

- a) An entity can be established as Type 2 if its activities are interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary in nature and if it cannot be accommodated within a normal departmental (or equivalent faculty-based) structure. A Type 2 entity normally involves collaboration between staff from more than one academic department (or equivalent faculty-based structure).
- b) The scope of activities may include research, consultation, social impact initiatives, short courses and postgraduate education and training.

- c) A Type 2 entity may present under its own auspices postgraduate programmes or modules thereof that lead to official SU qualifications, provided that:
 - there is sufficient evidence that the entity is viable and sustainable, before Senate (upon recommendation by its APC) may grant permission for an entity to present programmes that lead to official SU qualifications; and
 - the postgraduates degrees are conferred by the host faculty.
- d) A Type 2 entity must have its own OU code.
- e) A Type 2 entity will function in some respects like an academic department (or equivalent faculty-based structure), in particular regarding staff, finances, reporting within a faculty, the manner in which information about the entity is maintained and reported, and external evaluation, unless an equivalent external evaluation is enforced by the relevant external funding body, where applicable.
- f) A Type 2 entity will be established for an initial five-year period based on an approved constitution. Within this five-year period, it should be formally reviewed via SU's quality assurance process against the objectives set out in the business plan before potentially being renewed for further cycles. In cases where an external funding body requires an equivalent external evaluation, the results of such an evaluation may be utilised.
- g) A Type 2 entity may use the nomenclature 'centre', 'institute' or 'school'.
- h) The institutional application and approval process is as outlined in ANNEXURE A.

6.4 Type 3 entity

A Type 3 entity reports at institutional level, similar to a faculty, and involves collaboration between two or more faculties.

- a) An entity can be established as Type 3 if its activities involve interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary research as well as student education and training. The academic activities of a Type 3 entity will have strong footprints in more than one faculty and cannot be accommodated within a single faculty structure.
- b) The establishment of a Type 3 entity will require consensus by the deans of all faculties involved and endorsement by the Rectorate prior to the full academic decision-making process. The decision-making process involves recommendations by the faculty boards, the APC, the Research Committee, and the Executive Committee (Senate) to Senate where a consolidated version will serve for recommendation to Council for final approval.
- c) The scope of activities may include research, undergraduate and postgraduate student education and training, consultation, social impact initiatives and short courses. Type 3 entities will however typically focus strongly on research and postgraduate student education and training and will aim to develop unique niche areas of research excellence at SU.
- d) The entity may develop and present undergraduate modules contributing to degrees being conferred by one or more of SU's faculties, as agreed with the relevant faculty deans and upon approval by the faculty board of the partner faculties. The quality assurance processes involved in these undergraduate modules will remain the responsibility of the relevant faculty.
- e) A Type 3 entity may also develop and present postgraduate modules and contribute to postgraduate supervision, in consultation with the partner faculties, but the offering and awarding of postgraduate qualifications as well as the quality assurance thereof remain the responsibility of the appropriate participating faculty.
- f) The entity must have its own OU code.
- g) The entity will function in some respects like a faculty, but it will not confer its own degrees.

Consensus between all the relevant deans and their faculty boards is required regarding a Type 3 entity's staffing, finances, managerial reporting lines, governance structures, the manner in which information about the entity is maintained and reported as well as external evaluation of the entity.

- h) A Type 3 entity could be accommodated within the University's budget model, where it would share in the main budgets' allocation. Its budget allocation would be related to the entity's contribution to main budget income (subsidy, student fees and indirect cost recovery) and would have to be determined as part of the University's budget process, including agreements with the associated faculties. A Type 3 entity will furthermore typically demonstrate a strong potential for attracting significant external grant income to promote its sustainability.
- i) A Type 3 entity will be established for an initial five-year period based on an approved business plan. Within this five-year cycle, it should be formally reviewed via SU's existing quality assurance process against the objectives set out in the business plan before potentially being renewed for further cycles. In cases where an external funding body requires an equivalent external evaluation, the results of such an evaluation may be utilised.
- j) A Type 3 entity may use the nomenclature 'institute' or 'school'.
- k) The institutional application and approval process is as outlined in ANNEXURE A.

7. MOTIVATION AND GOVERNANCE

7.1 The motivation for creating a Type 1, 2 or 3 entity must include a clear description of:

- a) how the entity's activities are linked to a focus area or focus areas of specialisation or subject area;
- b) its alignment with the overarching SU strategy and goals;
- c) why the entity needs its own separate identity and operational unit;
- d) the interdisciplinary nature of the entity's activities (if it is a Type 2 or 3 entity); and
- e) factors and budgetary considerations that will ensure the viability and sustainability of the proposed CIS entity.

7.2 All new proposals must include a constitution, which must *inter alia* provide for the following in accordance with the guidelines for drafting rules for CIS entities (available from the Registrar):

- a) A statement of the entity's objectives as well as its vision, mission and core activities
- b) The staff structure of the entity
- c) How the entity will use existing academic expertise beyond its own environment
- d) Why the planned activities cannot be performed within existing academic structures (academic department or its equivalent structure, or faculty)
- e) The governing structures of the entity, including the governing board, management committee and director or co-directors
- f) The functioning of governing structures at the entity
- g) The entity's financial viability and management
- h) The entity's quality assurance
- i) The management of research, publications and intellectual property
- j) An indication regarding jurisdiction
- k) Requirements for amending the rules
- l) Conflict-handling procedures.

8. BRANDING

- 8.1 CIS entities must ensure that their branding meets the requirements of SU's Corporate Identity Policy.
- 8.2 All material intended for external liaison and all publicity material (e.g. letterheads, business cards, advertisements and websites) must comply with the requirements of SU's Corporate Identity Policy.

9 FINANCE

The following rules apply to the different types of CIS entities:

- 9.1 A Type 1 entity must comply with the regular terms that apply to the academic department (or equivalent faculty-based structure) to which it is linked.
- 9.2 A Type 2 entity must comply with the regular terms that apply to academic departments (or equivalent structures) and the faculty to which it is linked.
- 9.3 A Type 3 entity must comply with the regular terms that apply to academic faculties.
- 9.4 SU's Financial Policy applies to all financial transactions by entities of all three types, irrespective of the source of their funding.

10 HUMAN RESOURCES

- 10.1 The University's operative rules regarding human resource management (as regards recruitment, appointments, performance management, employment equity and corrective measures) apply to all CIS entities.
- 10.2 CIS directors or co-directors (whether full-time or part-time) must be SU staff members or jointly appointed SU staff members.
- 10.3 Permission for external work is subject to the University's rules and regulations

11 CONTRACTS

- 11.1 In cases where a contract is concluded in circumstances where the interests of members of the CIS entity and those of the other contracting party might conflict, the potential conflict must be disclosed to the governing committee and managed strictly according to SU's Conflict of Interest Policy.
- 11.2 When a CIS entity negotiates contracts, it will use SU as the relevant legal entity and therefore all operative SU procedures regarding contracts, in particular the terms of the SU Financial Policy, must be adhered to.
- 11.3 The SU policies on research contract management, the recovery of indirect cost on third-stream income and the full costing of research projects apply to research and research-related contracts negotiated by all CIS entities. Clearance must be obtained from SU's Division for Research Development before research and research-related contracts are submitted for approval.
- 11.4 For all other contracts, clearance must be obtained from the SU Legal Services Division before they may be submitted to the relevant line manager or committee for approval.

12 CIS REGISTER

- 12.1 The Registrar shall maintain a register of all academic CIS entities and their constitutions.
- 12.2 The register and constitutions must be available from the general SU portal.
- 12.3 The University's full and updated list of academic entities must be published on SU's electronic dashboard managed by the Division for Information Governance. This information must also be available on SU's OU structure, which is updated regularly.
- 12.4 Departments (or equivalent faculty-based structures) are responsible for updating the information in the SU Calendar Part 1 about the Type 1 academic entities that resort under them.
- 12.5 Academic entities of Type 2 and 3 are responsible for updating the information about themselves in the SU Calendar Part 1.

13 GOVERNANCE

The rules are approved by Senate. The co-owners of the rules are the Vice-Rector: Learning and Teaching and the Vice-Rector: Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Studies. The curator of the rules is the Registrar, who serves as secretariat of the APC and who will keep official record of these entities. The owners may appoint an implementation team to assist the Registrar's Office in its curatorship of the rules.

14 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Item no.	Name of document	Status (identified, in process, approved, etc.)
	SU's Vision and Institutional Strategic Framework	Approved by SU Council in June 2018

15 RELATED DOCUMENTS

Item no.	Name of document	Status (identified, in process, approved, etc.)
	Quality Assurance Policy	Under revision
	Policy on Contract Research at Stellenbosch University	October 2009
	Policy on Conflict of Interest	April 2013
	Policy for Costing and Pricing of Research and Research Related Contracts	August 2010

Item no.	Name of document	Status (identified, in process, approved, etc.)
	Policy in Respect of the Indirect Cost Recovery Rate (ICRR) with Regard to Third-stream Income at Stellenbosch University	October 2013
	Financial and HR policies of SU	

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