



# PDBY Article

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Student Forum is a quarterly platform to hold the Student Representative Council, and the entire elected leadership of Students, accountable. As in any democratic system, the Student Body deserves to hold its elected Leaders to account, via a robust and constructive engagement. This is not only beneficial, it is absolutely integral to ensure that Student Leaders consistently remain representatives of the Student Body, and advocate for our Students in every space of governance, policy and leadership.

Therefore, the SRC absolutely and completely welcomes such a platform. Additionally, the SRC encourages every single Student to be present in such an engagement, in order to a) voice out their concerns and support, b) hear and support the issues faced by their fellow Students and c) hear what the SRC, Faculty Houses, Residence Houses, Key Committees and Special programs have done to mitigate any negative implications for any situation faced by the Students.

The Student Forum, as mentioned, is a quarterly event, whereby the SRC submits a report to the Student Body. In this report, the activity of every SRC Member is detailed, with the exception of the First Student Forum, for which a task team report is provided. Following the publishing of the report, Students are given the opportunity to Submit questions on the actions of the SRC which will be answered at the Student Forum. The preceding officer is the Chief Justice, and Constitutional tribunal precedes over the event. This procedure is of utmost importance, in order to ensure that every concern by every Student is addressed.



Which brings us to the next point; the Quarter 1 Student Forum. Initially, the Student Forum was postponed due to a number of reasons, some of which include the Quarter 1 Report not being published 2 weeks prior to the date. Rather than working around this Constitutional requirement, the SRC saw it fit to postpone the Forum to afford Student the 2 weeks in order to engage with the report before Student Forum. Therefore, Quarter 1 Student Forum was held on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022 in Sanlam Auditorium on Main Campus. The Forum was largely successful in that the SRC was able to account on certain issues. The University of Pretoria saw the 1<sup>st</sup> Student Forum held in-person over the past 3 years, conclude successfully and completely. Given that the SRC does acknowledge that all matters were not able to be deliberated on as in detail as the SRC would like, the SRC does apologise to its Student Body, and continues to encourage those Students who were unable to ask Questions or raise points of Concern to engage even outside of the Student Forum platform. The SRC would like to see the following issues raised from our Student Body, as the SRC has worked to address the issues: issues around Students accessing Mobile Data, issues faced by our Students in Private Accredited Accommodation, and NSFAS-related queries, amongst multiple others. Additionally, the SRC has noted that, due to the disruptive behaviour of certain individuals in the crowd, many Students and Student Leaders felt unsafe. For this, the SRC once again does apologise, and reassures the Student Body that the matter is being looked into. The SRC, and Student Leadership at large, continues to strive for a space of governance that is conducive to every idea that is progressive, inclusive and representative, free from selfish motives, harassment, misogyny and discrimination. We, as the UP Student Body must not normalise a Governance Culture of threats, insults and personal attacks of any Student, Student Leader or the greater collective Student Body.

The SRC therefore sees fit to act proactively and has since already began working on and planning the Quarter 2 Student Forum, in order to reassure our Students that the SRC will continue to represent them without fear or favour.



That being stated, the SRC is more than willing to engage with any and all Students on Student Forum, or Governance in general. The SRC looks forward to a Student Body that is more involved in its own well-being and the well-being of others. The SRC, therefore, encourages every Student to look out for the Quarter 2 Student Forum, and to attend to hold the SRC and all Student Leaders accountable!

*A Luta Continua!*

