



Office of the Chief Financial Officer

2026 REGISTRATION GUIDELINES TO STUDENTS AND STAFF – FINANCE RELATED MATTERS

INTRODUCTION

This communique explains and guides the registration process, to improve understanding and ensure seamless execution.

1. PURPOSE OF THIS COMMUNIQUE

- a) To guide you on the basic principles and practices during the 2026 registration process. The document is informed by past practices during registration, the University's strategic plan and will be used as reference point in future.
- b) To strengthen internal controls by minimizing discretion amongst SMU staff involved in the registration process.
- a) To reiterate the role of the now well-established **Student Debt Appeals Committee (SDAC)** as set up by the Executive Management Committee (EMC) of the University.
- b) To emphasize that the Guidelines are not a CFO document, but rather a management document.
- c) To reiterate the role of the now well-established **Student Debt Appeals Committee (SDAC)** as set up by the Executive Management Committee (EMC) of the University.

2. BACKGROUND

These are the important dates regarding opening and registration in 2026:

- The university reopens on **05 January 2026**.
- Registration for **all returning students** starts on **05 January 2026**.
- Commencement of the 2026 academic year for returning students is **06 January 2026**.
- Registration for **all FTENS** commences from **21 to 30 January 2026**.
- In summary registration will start on the **05 January 2025** and end on **30 January 2026**.

3. GUIDELINES AND LIMITATIONS

3.1 FIRST YEAR REGISTRATION

- a) Every student who has been granted space or accepted to study at the University for the first time as a first year entering or a continuing student will be expected to **pay an initial minimum registration fee of R4500.**
- b) Students who have received bursaries as evidenced by confirmation letters from either NSFAS or Public Sector sponsors or listed verified sponsors are ordinarily not expected to pay registration fees, hence unblocked automatically.
- c) Students who applied for any bursary still awaiting the outcome are expected to pay full registration fees.
- d) Any other special case, as determined by staff, should be directed to Student Appeals Committee Secretariat, the CFO or delegated official.

3.2 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

All international students, as defined in the student fee policy, must settle their fees in full upon registration. This includes prior year, if any fees are outstanding.

All necessary international clearance documents must be submitted to International Affairs Office (Ms E. Modiba) . The International Office can be contacted on 012-521 5834 and emails should be sent to : eunice.modiba@smu.ac.za ,she will be located at Sport Complex for duration of registration period.



NB. This requirement is not negotiable it is in line with provisions of the Student Fee policy as approved by Council.

3.3 RETURNING STUDENTS

- **STUDENTS WITH BURSARIES**

- d) All students who are bursary holders, who are promoted to the next study level and do not owe the University will be expected to produce a letter from the sponsor confirming sponsorship for 2026 academic year or must appear on the list provided by the said sponsor.
- e) Students who are not owing and have a credit of R4500 or more will be automatically unblocked for registration.
- f) Students who are promoted but owe a certain amount will be subjected to the threshold as determined below.
- g) All students with outstanding amounts must:
 - a) Sign Acknowledgement of Debt (AOD) forms where the debt is less than R150 000 in line with the payment plan as approved by the CFO or the delegated office.
 - b) Any amounts above this threshold shall be handled by the Student Debt Appeals Committee. Students in this category are encouraged to apply since non-application may lead to financial exclusion. The Committee shall consider the following before clearing up a student:
 - i. Academic progress of the student.
 - ii. That the student cannot indeed afford through supporting documents such as Department of Social Welfare documents.
 - iii. Those debtors who owe more than R50 000 will not be allowed to register for postgraduate studies.
 - iv. The students must show evidence of having applied for concessionary loans currently being provided by Standard Bank and/or Fundi or any other financial institution.

NB. The Committee may request additional information on a case-by-case basis and *no individual member has discretion to discuss or vary the resolutions of the student debt appeals committee.*

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3.4 NON-BURSARY HOLDERS (Self-funded students not listed on verified sponsors)

- a) They will be expected to pay minimum registration fee as stated above.
- b) They will be expected to complete an Acknowledgment of Debt form, a payment plan would have to be agreed thereafter based on this form;
- c) They must sign Acknowledgement of Debt (AoD) forms and preferably attach a loan agreement with a registered financial institution to support the payment plan.

4. PAYMENT MECHANICS

- Where outstanding amounts are R10 000 or less, the University will ask for the entire balance to be cleared before registration.
- Where student owes between R10 001 and R40 000; the student is expected to pay the first R10 000 and half (50%) of the balance, as well as make good on the registration fees. Acknowledgment of debt is a pre-condition for any debt owed.
- Where student owes between **R40 001 and R130 000**, a minimum of **R20 000** is expected, plus the necessary registration fees. An acknowledgement of debt must be signed for the balance.
- Students with outstanding debts will be blocked. Such matters should be escalated as follows:
 - a) Owing less than or equal to R100 000 – Deputy Director: Revenue & Receivables.
 - b) Owing over R100 000 and less than R150 000 – Chief Financial Officer
 - c) Owing R150 000 and more – Will be referred to a Student Debt Appeals Committee.

5. FEES INCREASE

The fee increases for 2026, is proposed at 7% on tuition and 8% on university owned accommodation. Off-campus residence will be charged at full recovery, this means the University will charge the student exactly what the service provider charges the university, and the same applies to transportation costs.

6. TRANSPORT

All students residing in on-campus or off-campus university, owned or leased residence are liable for transport charge.



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The table below shall be used as guideline for students with debt due to the University

Scales/ Thresholds (examples)	
0 - R 10 000,00	Students are expected to pay the amount owed plus registration fee
	$R\ 10\ 000,00 + R\ 4500,00 = R\ 14500,00$
R 10 000,00 - R 40 000,00	These students are expected to pay as follows (NB where R40 000 is owing)
	$R\ 10\ 000,00 + (R\ 40\ 000,00 - R\ 10\ 000,00) \times 50\% + \text{Registration}$
	R29 500,00
R 40 000,00 - R 100 000,00	These students are expected to pay as follows:
	R 25 000 + registration fees (R 4500)
	These students will be expected to complete a payment agreement plan
R 100 000,00 - above	These students will be blocked and will be dealt with on an individual basis

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7. MERIT AWARDS

7.1 FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

- a) Subject to University budgetary limitations, a student who obtains an average mark of **80%** and above in **Grade 12** final examination will qualify for the **tuition merit award**. The average is calculated by adding the (marks achieved) percentages of the six best subjects (excluding Life Orientation) and divided by six. 50% discount on tuition equates to the waiver
- b) A first- year student qualifies to receive a tuition merit award if he/she is studying towards the first degree for the first time after Grade 12 (FTENs).
- c) A student who has studied at another institution before SMU **does not** qualify.
- d) Funded students only qualifies for R5000.

7.2 CONTINUING SENIOR STUDENTS

These merits are awarded to full-time senior students:

- a) **Sponsored** students who achieved an overall pass of **80% and** above from the previous year/level of study on the first attempt, provided that the full curriculum was taken and passed. The student shall qualify to **receive R5,000 tuition waiver, subject to sponsor rules**.
- b) Self-funded students who achieved an overall pass average of **80-100%** from the previous year/level of study **on the first attempt**, provided that the full curriculum was taken and passed. The student shall qualify to **receive 50% waiver of full tuition fees**.

If a student is eligible for the tuition fees merit and receives a bursary that does not cover the full cost of study, the tuition fee shall be limited to the difference between the full tuition payable and the bursary received by the student. Qualifying students are not required to complete the application form.

NO refund is allowed on university tuition fee bursary.

7.3 POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

- a) To facilitate maximum postgraduate enrollment, students who achieve average **65%** on their prior year result shall qualify to apply for **Post Graduate Bursary** from the University. (Students may download the application form from the website or get it from Financial Aid Office or Postgraduate Office).
- b) Students will still be responsible for paying **registration fees of R4500**, residence fees and all other expenses.
- c) **No refund** is allowed on university postgraduate tuition fee bursaries, any credit arising from this bursary shall be transferred back to the University without the student consent. In line with the student fee policy, the bursaries are applicable where the student is not a beneficiary of another bursary or sponsorship.

Students to note the following criteria applicable to the University postgraduate tuition fee bursaries for 2026:

- Students who receive external bursaries e.g. (NRF, CSIR, SAMRC, PRF, etc.) do not qualify for a postgraduate tuition fee bursary from the University.
- A student who qualifies for the postgraduate tuition fee bursary and receives a bursary that does not cover the full cost of study, the postgraduate tuition fee bursary shall be limited to the difference between the full tuition payable and the bursary received by the student.
- Eligible students who fail to successfully complete their studies within the stipulated period, do not qualify for the postgraduate bursary from the University.
- The bursary excludes the employed students.
- The bursary is awarded once for study program.

NB. Bursaries are applied for, through the Postgraduate and Research Office, and are not automatic. They are also subject to budget availability. All information is available from the University Financial Aid Office at the "One stop centre".

8. DISCOUNTS

To encourage prompt payment of tuition fees, the University offers a discount of **3%** where all applicable fees are paid in full by 31 May 2026. This means the account must be fully settled to qualify. (The discount is only applicable to Self-funded students).

Mahlatholle Masha

Mr Mahlatholle Masha
Acting Chief Financial Officer
Date: 26 November 2026

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