



By-laws of the North-West University Student Women Economic Empowerment Programme (SWEEP)

Reference number:	
Document owner:	Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences
Responsible department:	bhive Enterprise Development Centre
Status:	
Date of approval:	
Date of amendments	

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BY-LAWS OF THE NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY STUDENT WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME (SWEEP)

1 Background and introduction

In a world where gender equality and women's empowerment are increasingly recognised as crucial for social progress and sustainable development, it is imperative to focus on empowering young women to reach their full potential. The Student Women Economic Empowerment Programme (SWEEP) stands as a testament to this vision, aiming to uplift and support female students in their pursuit of economic independence, professional growth, and leadership.

The By-laws of SWEEP (SWEEP By-laws) serve as a framework that reflects an unwavering commitment to fostering an inclusive and empowering environment for young women at the North-West University (NWU). It outlines the principles, values, and objectives that underpin our collective effort to address the systemic barriers hindering women's economic empowerment in educational institutions and beyond.

2 Interpretation

The SWEEP By-laws are interpreted and applied in a manner that is consistent with the:

- 2.1 Statute of the North-West University, as published from time to time;
- 2.2 Transformation Charter of the North-West University (2021);
- 2.3 Any other relevant rules, policies and procedures of the NWU relevant to the functioning of NWU-SWEEP.

3 Establishment and limitation

The **North-West University Student Women Economic Empowerment Programmes (NWU SWEEP)** is established as a student group within the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences. The NWU SWEEP is accountable to the NWU bhive Enterprise Development Centre. Consequently, NWU SWEEP functions under the guidance and support of the NWU bhive Enterprise Development Centre.

Although comprised of students of the NWU, the NWU SWEEP is **not** established as a student leadership structure as contemplated in the Institutional Rules on Student Governance or Constitution of the Students' Representative Council of the NWU.

4 Purpose

- i. The purpose of NWU SWEEP is to empower female students by fostering their economic independence, professional growth, and leadership skills.
- ii. The programme seeks to address the systemic barriers hindering women's economic empowerment in educational institutions and beyond.
- iii. NWU SWEEP aims to create a supportive and inclusive environment where female students can develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and networks to excel in traditionally male-dominated fields.
- iv. The programme strives to promote gender equality, inclusivity, and diversity, ensuring that all participants have equal opportunities to thrive and contribute to society.
- v. NWU SWEEP is committed to providing mentorship, skill-building opportunities and networking platforms to empower young women in their educational and professional pursuits.
- vi. The programme collaborates with other higher education institutions, community organisations, and relevant stakeholders to advocate for policies and practices that support women's economic empowerment.
- vii. NWU SWEEP seeks to inspire and equip female students to become leaders and change makers, promoting a more equitable and sustainable future for themselves and their communities.

5 Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles underpin the implementation of SWEEP:

Gender equality:	Promoting equal rights, opportunities, and treatment for all participants.
Inclusivity:	Embracing diversity in all its forms and ensuring an inclusive environment for all students, regardless of their backgrounds
Empowerment:	Equipping female students with the necessary skills, resources, and support to achieve economic independence and success.
Collaboration:	Fostering partnerships and collaboration among educational institutions, community organisations, and stakeholders to maximise the impact of the Program.
Accountability:	Ensuring transparency, responsibility, and continuous improvement in the implementation of SWEEP.

6 Objectives

The following objectives inform the functions and programmes of NWU SWEEP:

- i. Provide new and focused activities aimed at the economic empowerment of NWU student women, including but not limited to mentorship programmes, workshops, seminars, and training sessions.
- ii. Support NWU student women in creating a stable socio-economic environment for themselves through entrepreneurial activity, encouraging the development of innovative business ideas, fostering entrepreneurial skills, and facilitating access to financial resources.
- iii. Increase the participation of NWU student women equipped for economic participation by promoting awareness, education, and advocacy for gender equality, and by creating an enabling environment that facilitates their active involvement in economic sectors.
- iv. Foster a sense of community and peer support among NWU student women, encouraging networking, collaboration, and knowledge sharing to enhance their economic empowerment journey.
- v. Conduct research and gather data to identify barriers and challenges faced by NWU student women in pursuing economic empowerment and use the findings to inform program development and policy advocacy.

- vi. Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including educational institutions, government bodies, non-profit organisations, and private sectors, to create strategic partnerships and leverage resources to support the economic empowerment of NWU student women.
- vii. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of program activities, ensuring that they are aligned with the objectives of SWEEP and making necessary adjustments to maximise impact and achieve desired outcomes.

7 Support and guidance provided by NWU bhive Enterprise Development Centre

To enable NWU SWEEP to reach its objectives, the NWU bhive Enterprise Development Centre provides the following support:

- i. Providing training and capacity-building programmes that enhance entrepreneurial skills, financial literacy, leadership, and personal development.
- ii. Establishing mentorship programmes that connect NWU student women with experienced professionals who can provide guidance, support, and industry insights.
- iii. Organising networking events, conferences, and forums that facilitate the exchange of ideas, knowledge sharing, and collaboration among NWU student women.
- iv. Developing partnerships with local businesses, organisations, and institutions to create internship opportunities, job placements, and mentorship programs that enhance NWU student women's employability and professional growth.
- v. Conducting awareness campaigns and advocacy initiatives to promote gender equality, challenge societal norms, and eliminate gender-based discrimination and bias in economic sectors.
- vi. Regularly assessing the impact and effectiveness of program activities through monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and utilising the findings to inform program improvements and strategic decision-making.

8 NWU SWEEP Student Committee

8.1 Establishment

To enable NWU SWEEP to reach its purpose and objectives, a NWU SWEEP Student Committee (also referred to as *the committee*) is annually appointed by the bhive Enterprise Development Centre, within the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences.

8.2 Composition

- 8.2.1 The NWU SWEEP Student Committee is comprised of a chairperson, deputy-chairperson and four (04) ordinary committee members.
- 8.2.2 Informed by the strategic plan of NWU SWEEP, the bhive Enterprise Development Centre annually determines the composition and portfolios required for the four (04) ordinary committee members.
- 8.2.3 The portfolios of secretary and treasurer must annually be assigned to ordinary members of the committee.
- 8.2.4 Additional portfolios may be assigned to members of the committee, as determined by the committee in collaboration with the employee Coordinator.
- 8.2.5 The committee is comprised of students from each of the three campuses of the North-West University.

8.3 Eligibility criteria

8.3.1 To be eligible for appointment as a member of the NWU SWEEP Student Committee, a student must:

i.	Be a registered full-time contact student of the North-West University for a programme leading to a qualification.
ii.	Be a female student.
iii.	Have an average of 60% for all modules registered in the previous year of study, as well as an average of 60% for all semester modules registered for in the first semester of the current year.. In the event of a first-year student applying for membership to the NWU SWEEP Student Committee, the student must have obtained an average of 60% for all semester modules registered for in the first semester of the current year.

8.3.2 To be eligible for appointment as the chairperson of the NWU SWEEP Student Committee, the candidate must be in their second-year, or longer, of study at the NWU.

8.3.3 First-year students may not be appointed as the chairperson of the NWU SWEEP Student Committee.

8.4 Appointment process

8.4.1 The annual appointment process of the NWU SWEEP Student Committee is coordinated and overseen by the employee Coordinator appointed by the bhive Enterprise Development Centre.

8.4.2 The application process and administration is annually determined by the bhive Enterprise Development Centre.

8.4.3 The employee Coordinator responsible for the NWU SWEEP Student Committee annually establishes a panel who conducts interviews with prospective candidates and appoints suitably qualified candidates to the student committee.

8.4.4 Based on the applications received by the bhive Enterprise Development Centre, the appointed interview panel conducts interviews with shortlisted candidates, thereafter, appointing the requisite number of members to the NWU SWEEP Student Committee.

8.5 Duration of appointment

8.5.1 The NWU SWEEP Student Committee is annually appointed for a term of one-year.

8.5.2 The term may be extended or shortened by the bhive Enterprise Development Centre.

8.6 Termination of membership

8.6.1 The membership of a NWU SWEEP Student Committee member ceases when:

- i. The student resigns in writing to the employee Coordinator overseeing the committee.
- ii. The student ceases to be a registered full-time contact student of the NWU, registered for a programme leading to a qualification.
- iii. The student is found guilty of misconduct in terms of paragraph 12 of the Manual on Student Discipline.
- iv. The student is found guilty of academic misconduct as contemplated in the Manual on Student Discipline.
- v. A conflict of interest or of commitment arises, which cannot reasonably be managed as determined by the Deputy Dean: Teaching and Learning of the Faculty of Management and Economic Sciences, in consultation with the employee Coordinator overseeing the NWU SWEEP Student Committee.
- vi. A member fails to attend three (3) consecutive ordinary meetings of the NWU SWEEP Student Committee without submitting the requisite apologies prior to the meetings.
- vii. A member fails to perform the roles, duties and responsibilities assigned to them which reasonably impacts on the effective and efficient functioning of the NWU SWEEP Student Committee, as determined by the Deputy Dean: Teaching and Learning of the Faculty of Management and Economic Sciences, in consultation with the employee Coordinator overseeing the NWU SWEEP Student Committee.

8.7 Roles and Responsibilities

8.7.1 Members of NWU SWEEP Student Committee perform the following roles, whereby they:

- i. Participate in SWEEP activities, including workshops, training sessions, networking events, and other initiatives organised by the Program.
- ii. Utilise the resources, information, and support provided by the bhive Enterprise Development Centre to enhance their entrepreneurship skills and economic empowerment.
- iii. Contribute to, and coordinate programme activities and events hosted in collaboration with the bhive Enterprise Development Centre.

8.7.2 Members of NWU SWEEP Student Committee have the following responsibilities whereby they must:

- i. Uphold the values and objectives of NWU SWEEP, which include promoting economic empowerment, entrepreneurship, gender equality, and a supportive community.
- ii. Actively contribute to the activities and initiatives of NWU SWEEP, fostering a collaborative and engaged community that supports the economic empowerment of all NWU student women.
- iii. Respect and support fellow members, fostering an inclusive and respectful environment that values diversity, equality, and the sharing of knowledge and experiences.

8.7.3 The following specific roles and responsibilities are assigned to the portfolios of the NWU SWEEP Student Committee:

Chairperson:	The chairperson shall provide overall leadership and direction to the NWU SWEEP Student Committee, ensuring the implementation of program objectives, overseeing the activities of the committee, and representing NWU SWEEP Student Committee in external engagements.
Deputy-Chairperson:	The deputy-chairperson supports the chairperson in their responsibilities and assume their duties in their absence. They may also take on specific tasks or initiatives as delegated by the chairperson or determined by the committee.
Secretary:	The secretary is responsible for maintaining accurate records of NWU SWEEP Student Committee meetings, managing correspondence, and ensuring effective communication among members and stakeholders. They may also assist in coordinating NWU SWEEP Student Committee events and activities.
Treasurer:	The treasurer oversees the NWU SWEEP Student Committee financial matters under the guidance of the employee Coordinator. This includes budgeting, financial reporting, and ensuring the proper management of funds.

8.8 Meeting arrangements

8.8.1 The following meeting arrangements guide the functioning of the NWU SWEEP Student Committee:

- i. The committee holds regular meetings to discuss and make decisions regarding NWU SWEEP's activities, initiatives, and financial matters. The frequency of these meetings is determined by the committee in consultation with the employee Coordinator, ensuring sufficient time for effective planning, coordination, and decision-making.
- ii. Meetings may be conducted in person, virtually, or through any other appropriate means of communication, as determined by the committee. Minutes of the meetings shall be maintained and made available to the members upon request.
- iii. The committee may also call for general meetings or special meetings involving SWEEP members to discuss matters related to the functioning of NWU SWEEP.

9 NWU SWEEP Employee Coordinator

The NWU SWEEP employee Coordinator, appointed by the bhive Enterprise Development Centre, acts as the primary point of contact and guidance for the committee. The Coordinator facilitates communication between the committee and the EDHE SWEEP national office, providing support and guidance to ensure the effective functioning of SWEEP. The Employee Coordinator assists the SWEEP student committee in aligning their activities with the overall vision and mission of SWEEP and ensures coordination of efforts between members.

10 Review and amendment

The by-laws of the NWU SWEEP Student Committee are approved by the bhive Enterprise Development Centre. The review and amendment may be done as frequently as required but should at least occur once every three years.