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Stellenbosch Thuthuka bursary fund programme

Background & Timeline

Thuthuka is a transformation initiative of the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) aimed at encouraging previously disadvantaged learners in schools to pursue a career in the Chartered Accountancy (CA) field. "Thuthuka" is a Zulu word which means "to develop" and it aims to transform South Africa's business leadership. Thuthuka consists of a number of education-related and community-based programmes. The Thuthuka bursary fund (TBF) is aimed at increasing the number of African and Coloured students in this field of Financial Accounting and improving the pass rates by means of financial and other support.

Stellenbosch University is one of the Thuthuka accredited Universities. The Stellenbosch TBF programme was launched in 2007 and grew to an established and well recognised programme with students studying at all levels from first year through to PGDA/Honours. These BAcc students receive comprehensive academic and non-academic support from the Stellenbosch TBF programme. The students take part in various interactive life-skills and workplace readiness workshops. They are expected to take part in vacation work as well as in a community service project of their choice. The bursary package covers tuition, accommodation, food and textbooks.

During 2021 a total of 80 students were part of the Stellenbosch TBF programme. 38 undergraduate students retained the bursary (indicating that they passed all their modules satisfactorily) and 21 students graduated.

Partnerships

The Thuthuka bursary fund is a national project. The School of Accountancy has partnered with SAICA and firms in accountancy profession as external partners. The Stellenbosch University also provides valuable support through the following divisions:

- Bursary and loans
- Centre for Student Communities
- Centre for Student Counselling and Development
- Faculty Administrator: Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences

The Stellenbosch TBF programme is run by academic and admin staff of the School of Accountancy:

Designation	Name	Email address	Telephone
Senior project manager	Sybil Smit	smits2@sun.ac.za	021 808 3473
Project manager	Amber de Laan	amber@sun.ac.za	021 808 2342
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Administrative co-ordinator	Fayrouz Khan	fayrouz@sun.ac.za	021 808 3400

All other staff of the School of Accountancy are also involved in the TBF programme, either providing administrative support when needed or as lecturer mentors to bursary holders.

Outcomes

The Stellenbosch TBF programme has the following outcomes:

1. The bursary fund is aimed at increasing the entry numbers and improving the pass rates of African and Coloured university students following the CA(SA) path by providing them with financial support and addressing their needs through comprehensive support programmes.
2. The objective of the Stellenbosch TBF programme is to assist students during their studies to complete their studies successfully in order to make a valuable contribution to the society as qualified chartered accountants. The programme supports the student with respect to his / her psychological, social and academic needs.

The Stellenbosch TBF programme has three main components that focus on the student:

- Academic support during the student's study career
- Life skills that are taught in the residence, workshops and practical work experience at auditing firms.
- Serving as part of community service projects in the School of Accountancy and Matie Community Service.

Outcomes of the initiative are linked to the following SDG(s):

SDG1: No Poverty & SDG10: Reduced inequalities

- Stellenbosch TBF programme, in conjunction with SAICA, recruit students from under-represented groups. All TBF holders must meet the NSFAS requirements and the fund requirements.
- The support is funded by the SAICA and NSFAS.
- The applications for the bursary is available at: [Thuthuka Applications \(sun.ac.za\)](https://www.sun.ac.za/thuthuka)

Figure: Extract from access requirements 2021

In order to qualify for the Stellenbosch Thuthuka Bursary Fund programme, students must meet at least the following requirements:

- Apply to the Thuthuka Bursary Fund and hand in all the required documentation;
- Be an African or Coloured South African citizen;
- Meet the requirements of SAICA before the student can be considered by the Stellenbosch project management team;
- Apply to study BAccounting at Stellenbosch University and be accepted for the program (therefore students must meet the minimum requirements and apply in time);
- Apply for accommodation in residence on campus (it is a requirement of the bursary for students to stay in University residence on campus);
- Students have to take Accounting at school level;
- Students' final mark for mathematics for grade 12 must be above 80%;
- Students have to write all three NBT tests; *(not applicable in 2021)*
- All three of the NBT test results must be above 45 *(not applicable in 2021)*.

- Stellenbosch TBF programme provides comprehensive financial support (e.g. class fees, books, food, housing and allowance) for students from low-income families to enable them to complete university.

Figure: Extract from documentation: Financial information 2021

The Thuthuka bursary fund functions as follows during the 2021 year:

- Approximately R155 000 per annum (or other amount as determined by SAICA) is provided
- 50% of that allocation is a bursary from SAICA and 50% a NSFAS bursary.

The Thuthuka bursary covers the following:

- Tuition fee
- Textbooks
- Calculator (first years)
- Residence fees (accommodation and house fees)
- Meals in residence
- Quarterly allowance (including once off contribution towards house dance, first year's house fees and one student card) (see details of allowance below)

The following academic expenses have an annual limit, any expenses above these limits need to be paid by the student:

- Photocopies R200 (2021);
- Printing R1 500 (2021);
- Network registration R400 (2021);
- Washing R2 000 (2021).

Any amounts that exceed the above limits will be regarded as a personal expense.

- Stellenbosch TBF programme provides wrap-around support to bursary holders. The support includes academic support, life skills in the form of workshops, community service, emotional well-being, mentoring (by senior students and academic staff) and counselling:

Academic support

The programme specifically addresses the gaps and disparities in our educational/life experiences. Throughout the academic year, the students are required to participate in various transformation and support initiatives. Students are expected to attend all the additional support, practical and tutorial classes.

Life Skills

In addition to academic support, students are expected to participate in various interactive life skills and workplace readiness workshops.

Service delivery

Students are required to do vacation work during at least one of the university holidays, as well as take part in a community involvement project of their choice.

Monitoring and mentoring

To be part of this programme means that the student's progress is monitored; they have regular contact with the project managers (or delegated staff) and is provided with the necessary attention, either academically or in other regards. The project managers also gets feedback from the mentors in order to monitor the students' progress.

In cooperation with the project managers, appointed lecturers are also available in the support programs within the School of Accountancy. Close collaboration also exists with other support initiatives within the University.

- More information about the programme can be found at: [*Thuthuka News*](http://thuthuka.news.sun.ac.za) ([*sun.ac.za*](http://sun.ac.za))