



NWU POLICY AND RULES ON GATHERINGS, DEMONSTRATIONS, MARCHES AND PICKETING

Reference number	1P_1.1.13
Accountable executive manager	Registrar
Policy Owner	Registrar
Responsible division	Registrar
Status	Approved
Approved by	Council
Date of approval	19 November 2025
Review date	2028

NWU POLICY AND RULES ON GATHERINGS, DEMONSTRATIONS, MARCHES AND PICKETING

Against the background of the vision to discover new frontiers and opportunities that benefit society, advancing our relevance and impact, the council of the North-West University (“NWU”, “university”) has in terms of paragraph 8(1)(c) of the Statute, adopted this policy and rules on gatherings, demonstrations, marches and picketing on 19 November 2025.

1 Interpretation and application

This policy and set of rules must be interpreted and applied in a manner consistent with the -

- 1.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
- 1.2 Regulation of Gatherings Act, 205 of 1993
- 1.3 Control of Access to Public Premises and Vehicles Act, 53 of 1985
- 1.4 Intimidation Act, 72 of 1982
- 1.5 Firearms Control Act, 60 of 2000
- 1.6 Liquor Act, 59 of 2003
- 1.7 Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 3 of 2000
- 1.8 Safety at Sports and Recreational Events Act, 2 of 2010
- 1.9 Statute of the North-West University
- 1.10 NWU Protection Services Security Policy
- 1.11 1.11 NWU Policy and Manual on Student Discipline

2 Definitions

In this policy and rules any word or phrase has the meaning ascribed thereto by Act 205 of 1993 unless the context indicates otherwise, and –

“**an NWU organisation**” means any registered student structure affiliated to the Students' Campus Committee of any campus of the NWU, or a trade union recognised by the NWU;

“**a protest**” refers to a statement of objection, approval or disapproval by an assembly of employees or students of the university, including a demonstration, gathering, and picket;

“**convenor**” means any employee or student who convenes a protest event either acting of their own accord or on behalf of an NWU organisation;

“**demonstration**” means a meeting of fewer than 15 (fifteen) persons held to bring to the attention of the NWU their views in regard to some specific cause;

“**gathering**” includes a meeting, demonstration, march or picket line on or in proximity to any property of the university, consisting of more than 15 (fifteen) persons held to participate, as a means to bring to the attention of the NWU their views in regard to a specific cause;

“**marshal**” means a person appointed by the convenor for a specific protest event to control the participants in a protest to ensure that a protest proceeds peacefully at all times, and who must at all times be clearly distinguishable as a marshal;

“**picketing**” means a protest where participants carry placards, chant slogans and sing and dance in a peaceful, unarmed and lawful manner, and

“**Protection Services**” refers to a department at the NWU that operates across all campuses of the NWU and whose mandate is to provide efficient and effective response to security incidents and client needs.

3 Purpose

In accordance with the constitutional right to assemble, demonstrate, picket, and present petitions, this policy aims to ensure a fair, transparent, and consistent process for managing gatherings, demonstrations, marches, and picketing by NWU employees and students, and provides rules and guidelines applicable to the organisation and conduct of public gatherings in a manner that is both effective and safe.

4 Policy statement

It is the policy of the NWU to –

- 4.1 recognise, subject to the limitations of the law, the constitutional right of all employees and students of the NWU to assemble peacefully on or in proximity to any property of the university in order to express their views on any matter;
- 4.2 provide such protection as may be within the power of the university to employees and students assembled as contemplated in 4.1, and to employees and students not participating in such assembly;
- 4.3 outline the roles and responsibilities of all role-players involved in the governance and management of gatherings, demonstrations, marches and picketing to be performed in accordance with this policy, and to
- 4.4 provide for rules in accordance with which this policy must be implemented.

5 Limitations

This policy and rules do not cover spontaneous or unplanned acts of protest, which must be governed and managed in terms of the NWU Protection Services Security Policy.

6 Roles and responsibilities

6.1 NWU Council

The NWU Council as governing body must ensure that it is possible to exercise the right to peaceful demonstration at the NWU in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution.

6.2 University Management Committee (UMC)

The UMC must provide a management environment conducive to the fostering of open communication and dialogue.

6.3 Registrar

The registrar is responsible for receiving notifications from NWU organisations of intended gatherings, demonstrations, marches and instances of picketing and is the point of liaison between an NWU organisation and internal role-players in accordance with the rules set out in paragraph 7.

6.4 Protection Services

Protection Services must ensure the safety and the security of the NWU community and its infrastructure across all campuses in accordance with the rules set out in paragraph 7.

6.5 Convenors of gatherings, demonstrations, marches and instances of picketing

- 6.5.1 A convenor is responsible to make all the necessary arrangements for a gathering, demonstration or instance of picketing in accordance with the rules set out in paragraph 7, must ensure the completeness of the paperwork to be submitted to the registrar, and must be present at the protest event.
- 6.5.2 A convenor who fails to comply with the prescripts of this policy and rules is liable to disciplinary measures.

7 Rules for gatherings, demonstrations, MARCHES and picketing

7.1 Notice and application for approval of a protest

- 7.1.1 A convenor must, at least seven days prior to an intended protest, give written notice of the intention to convene a protest at any owned or controlled property of or within the proximity of the university to the registrar by completing and submitting the application form prescribed by the registrar (available in downloadable format annexed to this policy).
- 7.1.2 The registrar must consider an application in consultation with the DVC Campus Operations concerned or their delegate and must respond to such request within 48 hours.
- 7.1.3 The registrar may refuse permission to hold a protest on justifiable and reasonable grounds, including –
- 7.1.3.1 a foreseeable risk of injury to any person;
 - 7.1.3.2 potential for damage to private or university property;
 - 7.1.3.3 the likelihood of disruption of academic activities;
 - 7.1.3.4 threats to institutional discipline or the maintenance of good order, and
 - 7.1.3.5 a reasonable expectation of disruptive involvement by external persons or organisations not associated with the university.
- 7.1.4 In the event of refusal of permission to hold a protest, the registrar must inform the convenor in writing and provide the reasons for the refusal.
- 7.1.5 On approval of an application and prior to the planned gathering, demonstration, march or picket, a written agreement in the form prescribed by the registrar must be entered into between the convenor and the university.

7.2 Nature of and conduct during a gathering, demonstration or picket

- 7.2.1 The convenor must in the agreement contemplated in 7.1.5 –
- confirm the nature of the planned protest event, namely a gathering, picket, march, demonstration;
 - give notice of the time and place of commencement;
 - give reasons for the protest event;
 - indicate the number of marshals to be appointed;
 - request access to facilities of the university required for purposes other than but related to the event such as toilets.
- 7.2.2 Regarding conduct during the protest event, the convenor must –
- at all times have a copy of the agreement entered into with the university and the list of appointed and present marshals, at hand;
 - ensure that marshals are identified with full particulars (name, surname, ID number, as well as student or employee number);
 - ensure that marshals monitoring the protest are wearing an identifiable uniform;
 - require marshals to ensure that the rights of others are not infringed by the protest.

7.3 Transgressions

Transgressions by a convenor or participant in a protest event whereby the transgressor is exposed to disciplinary measures taken by the university include the following:

- deviation from the agreement contemplated in 7.1.5;
- disruption of academic activities;
- barring of access to university buildings;
- physically preventing employees, students and members of the public from gaining access to or leaving the university;
- intimidation of fellow students or employees;

- damage to any property;
- dumping of rubbish;
- sit-in and hostage-taking;
- use of rude and abusive language or offensive gestures;
- unauthorised protests;
- any contravention of a university rule during a protest;
- the wearing of a disguise or a mask or any apparel or item that may obscure the facial features and prevents identification;
- the carrying of any dangerous weapon;
- the commission of a crime or delict during a protest;
- false or unreasonable comments or public pronouncements that may be detrimental to the good name, order, discipline, and reputation of the NWU;
- violation of the name, honour and dignity of the North-West University, or any of its office bearers, whether in their private or professional capacities;
- any misconduct as provided for in the NWU Policy and Manual on Student Discipline or harassment in accordance with the NWU Behavioural Manual.

7.4 Planning, monitoring and liability

- 7.4.1 As part of the process contemplated in 7.1.5, the registrar is responsible for assisting a convenor in the planning of an approved protest in cooperation with the DVC Campus Operations concerned, the Campus Chief Director of the campus concerned, and the Director Protection Services or their delegate, including particulars on the venue, route and destination.
- 7.4.2 Protection Services at a particular campus is responsible for monitoring and assessing security risks before and during an approved protest and to liaise with public order policing services where necessary.
- 7.4.3 The registrar liaises with the Director Protection Services to facilitate co-ordination with the relevant authorities, including the municipal authorities and departments and SAPS regarding the allocation, arrangement and facilitation of all procedures regarding an approved protest.
- 7.4.4 Any violation of the agreement in terms of 7.1.5 by registered students, recognised trade unions employees or organisations must be referred to Protection Services for investigation to be dealt with in accordance with the rules of the university.

Original details: (10225676) C:\Users\User\NWUNextcloud\Finale beleide vir web\Gatherings, demonstrations\1P_1.1.13Policy and Rules on Gatherings, Demonstrations, Marches and Picketing.docm
19 November 2025

File reference: 1P_1.1.13