




## RESEARCH POLICY

DOCUMENT REF:	COO/SPR/001/2022
VERSION NO:	001/2022
POLICY OWNER:	SKILLS PLANNING AND RESEARCH
DATE COMPILED:	04 JANUARY 2022
ORIGINAL EFFECTIVE DATE	01 APRIL 2016
LAST REVISION DATE:	01 SEPTEMBER 2020
NEXT REVISION DATE:	01 MARCH 2025
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DATE OF APPROVAL	2022/02/28
EFFECTIVE DATE	2022/03/01

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA) is mandated to develop and annually update a five-year Sector Skills Plan (SSP). The SSP is the key research output of PSETA and is the foundation upon which the PSETA Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plan are developed. The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) Framework and Requirement (2011-2017) requires that SSP's conform to the following standards:
- 1.1.1. Authoritative and focused research on the state of the skills in the labour market and in particular within the Public Service sector;
  - 1.1.2. Production of skills intelligence to support growth and development;
  - 1.1.3. Consistent, rich and comparable understanding within different economic sectors;
  - 1.1.4. Participation by stakeholders in the developmental process;
  - 1.1.5. Evidence-based research; and
  - 1.1.6. Actionable interventions that make a difference to skills planning.
- 1.2. Research is a key component in providing evidence to inform decision making, policy review and strategy formulation and to improve upon systems and services within the SETA. For the purposes of the Research Policy, the term "research" is taken to mean rigorous and systematic enquiry, analysis and reporting, sharing, publishing and dissemination. Such research may be empirical or theoretical, quantitative or qualitative and applied or basic.
- 1.3. PSETA will support a range of research approaches, including in-house research, joint research, and commissioned research. Thus, all research conducted or commissioned by PSETA is intended to feed into the SSP for Strategic Planning that outlines key strategic interventions to address identified skills needs and constraints to effective recruitment, utilisation and development of skills.

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## 2. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the policy is to provide a policy framework within PSETA to pursue its mandate with regard to research, in order to address the skills development and planning requirements of the PSETA and the sector. It further aims to;

- 2.1. Define the research approach of the PSETA;
- 2.2. Outline the standards of research conduct, practice and procedure that must be followed by research agents; and
- 2.3. Define roles and responsibilities for conducting and managing research.

The objectives of the Research Policy are to:

- 2.4. Encourage quality research at PSETA by providing an enabling environment to conduct sector research;
- 2.5. Increase research knowledge and understanding of stakeholders and staff of PSETA;
- 2.6. Provide for enhanced collaboration amongst sector experts, policymakers, researchers and all stakeholders in the sector in achieving a skilled workforce for a sustainable future through joint skills development initiatives guided by the SSP and the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP);
- 2.7. To create new knowledge and strengthen existing knowledge to ensure that research makes an impact;
- 2.8. To encourage that the research produced is put into practice in the sector.
- 2.9. Commission, manage and oversee various projects; and
- 2.10. Make provisions for the Research Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), the purpose of which is to ensure that research conducted by and/or on behalf of PSETA is reliable, replicable and valid; and that the research output is of high standard and allows PSETA to improve and realign its strategic objectives for improved sector skills planning; the research findings thereof further assist the sector to achieve skills development goals, objectives and priorities identified in the NSDP.



### 3. ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATION	DESCRIPTION
AA	Accounting Authority
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COO	Chief Operations Officer
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
NSDP	National Skills Development Plan
PSETA	Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act
SDA	Skills Development Act
SLDA	Skills Development Levies Act
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SSP	Sector Skills Plan

### 4. DEFINITIONS

WORD	DEFINITION
<b>Ethics</b>	The rules or standards governing the conduct of a person or the members of a profession.
<b>Research</b>	Rigorous and systematic enquiry, analysis, and reporting, sharing, publishing and dissemination. Such research may be empirical or theoretical, quantitative or qualitative and applied or basic.
<b>Research agents</b>	Refers to PSETA researchers, employees conducting detailed research work, and external research partners.
<b>Sector</b>	Refers to the Public Service sector which comprises of national and provincial departments, legislatures and parliament and public entities.

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## 5. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy applies to all Research agents (PSETA researchers, employees conducting detailed research work, and external research partners) that:

- 5.1 Conduct research by and/or on PSETA's behalf, or wishing to propose and conduct research in the PSETA sector utilising PSETA funding or co-funding; and
- 5.2 Requestors of research and data.


## 6. LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY PRESCRIPTS

- 6.1. National Skills Development Plan
- 6.2. National Qualification Framework Act of 2008
- 6.3. White Paper for Post School Education and Training 2014
- 6.4. Skills Development Act, No. 97 of 1998, as amended (SDA)
- 6.5. Skills Development Levies Act, Act 9 of 1999 (SDLA)
- 6.6. National Skills Development Plan
- 6.7. Public Finance Management Act of 1999 (PFMA)
- 6.8. Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013
- 6.9. Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000
- 6.10. SETA Grant Regulations regarding monies received by SETA and related matters, Published in Government Notice R. 990 in Government Gazette No. 35940 of 3 December 2012, as amended.

## 7. POLICY PROVISIONS AND CONTENT

### 7.1. Roles and responsibilities

- 7.1.1. The Accounting Authority (AA) grants approval of this policy to be implemented and exercises its fiduciary duties of provisions of the policy and Delegations of Authority.
- 7.1.2. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), assisted by the Chief Operations Officer (COO) is accountable for establishing and maintaining systems to manage skills planning.

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- 7.1.3. The Skills Planning and Research Manager within PSETA is accountable and will be responsible for implementation of this Policy.
- 7.1.4. All research reports must be approved by the CEO.
- 7.1.5. All data and information which forms the source of the research must be kept for audit purposes.

## 7.2. Criteria to be followed

- 7.2.1 The PSETA will ensure that the transmission of knowledge and conduct of inquiry are core functions of research agents. These functions can be carried out effectively if research agents are guaranteed certain freedoms and accept corresponding responsibilities. The following principles concerning research should be considered:
  - a. Research agents should be guided by the PSETA to select the subject matter of their research, to seek support from any source of their work, and to form their own findings and conclusions.
  - b. Research agents must collect, use and maintain data in compliance with the PSETA POPI Policy and the provisions of the POPI Act.
  - c. Research techniques should not violate established professional ethics pertaining to the safety, privacy, and other personal rights of human beings or to the infliction of injury or pain on animals. Furthermore, fairness and equity for the research participants should always be maintained.
  - d. If the need for collaborative research arises, research agents should be encouraged to undertake such research in the form of partnership with external researchers or organisations that wish to collaborate with the PSETA. At all times, both parties involved should comply with professional ethics and follow research principles depicted in this policy and guidelines.

## 7.3. Process flow

PSETA is not obliged to provide information to any stakeholders for research or other purposes except to PSETA formal stakeholders (these include but are not limited to

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the DHET, South African Qualifications Authority, the Department of Public Service and Administration, National departments, Provincial departments, Legislatures, Parliament and Public Entities). The requests received from formal stakeholders must be in line with the SDA, the SDLA, the PFMA, POPI Act, Memoranda of Understanding and other applicable legislation. Requests from other parties may not be considered for, amongst others, the following reasons:

- 7.3.1 The rights of employers, learners and others would be violated if individual databases are released.
- 7.3.2 Non compliance with the provisions of the PSETA POPI Policy or POPI Act.
- 7.3.3 The impact on PSETA resources and capacity would be limiting.
- 7.3.4 PSETA is not obliged to conduct additional research for organisations that are not official stakeholders as designated in terms of the SDA and other applicable legislation.
- 7.3.5 This policy does not include provision of information in terms of the Promotion of Access to Information Act in terms of Section 14.


## **8. NON-COMPLIANCE**

- 8.1. Non-compliance with this Policy or any applicable regulatory requirements through any deliberate or negligent act or omission, including allowing any staff, either expressly or impliedly, not to comply with this Policy or any applicable regulatory requirements, will be considered serious and be dealt with in terms of PSETA's disciplinary policies and procedures.
- 8.2. Non-compliance with this Policy or any applicable regulatory requirements through any deliberate or negligent act or omission by external research partners, will be considered serious and be dealt with in terms of the contractual agreement between PSETA and the external research party.

## **9. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

This Policy comes into effect on the date of signature and the relevant owner shall ensure that it is communicated to staff using various modes, not limited to email,



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intranet, workshops, etc. However, this shall not have any bearing on the effective date for implementation.

#### **10. MONITORING, REVIEW AND UPDATING OF THE POLICY**

This Policy has to be reviewed and the outcome of such process may either require the author to maintain the status quo or update/amend it.

#### **11. APPROVAL OF THE POLICY**

The Policy shall be approved by the AA and signed by the Chairperson subsequent to the Resolution taken.

