



science & innovation  
Department:  
Science and Innovation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



# **INTERN AND HOST INSTITUTION INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK 2021-2023**



A word cloud featuring various terms related to internships and career development. The words are arranged in a horizontal, cloud-like shape. The most prominent words are 'internships' in large blue font and 'career plan' in large purple font. Other significant words include 'networking' in orange, 'stepping stone' in red, 'personal development' in pink, 'training' in dark red, 'confidence' in teal, 'cv boost' in dark blue, 'initiative' in green, 'project management' in light green, 'team working' in blue, 'interview ideas' in orange, 'great opportunity' in orange, 'responsibility' in pink, 'inspiring experience' in teal, 'employability skills' in orange, 'liaising' in green, 'interpersonal skills' in orange, 'engagement' in purple, 'exceptionally useful' in blue, 'independence' in green, and 'decision making' in purple. The words are of varying sizes and colors, creating a vibrant and dynamic visual.

networking  
engagement independence  
exceptionally useful  
interpersonal skills  
communicating  
internships  
personal development  
stepping stone  
decision making  
training  
confidence  
cv boost  
project management  
career development  
team working  
interview ideas  
great opportunity  
responsibility  
inspiring experience  
employability skills  
liaising  
career plan  
inspiring experience

## CONTENTS

<b>WELCOME LETTER .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 THE PROBLEM? .....	3
1.2 DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND INNOVATION RESPONSE.....	3
<b>2 THE HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3 HSRC INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES.....</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1 PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAMME .....	4
3.2 PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES.....	4
3.3 DSI-HSRC INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS .....	5
3.4 KEY DESIGN FEATURES OF THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME .....	5
<b>4 MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMME .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>5 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME.....</b>	<b>2</b>
5.1 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT.....	2
5.1.1 <i>Definition of Capacity Development</i> .....	2
5.1.2 <i>Objectives of the Capacity Development Plan</i> .....	2
5.1.3 <i>Principles informing Capacity Development Interventions</i> .....	2
5.1.4 <i>Capacity Development Interventions Approach</i> .....	3
<b>6 INTERN ASSUMPTION OF DUTY.....</b>	<b>3</b>
6.1 VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION.....	3
6.2 CONTRACTING .....	4
6.3 REMUNERATION OF INTERNS .....	4
6.4 DSI-HSRC INTERNSHIP MANAGEMENT ONLINE PLATFORM .....	4
6.5 INTERN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.....	5
6.5.1 <i>Annual Goal Setting and Workplan</i> .....	5
6.5.2 <i>Intern Performance Review and Progress Assessment Form</i> .....	5
<b>7 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT .....</b>	<b>5</b>
7.1 CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT.....	5
<b>8 ANNEXURES .....</b>	<b>6</b>

9	CONTACT DETAILS .....	6
---	-----------------------	---

# List of Tables

Table 1: Key Design Features of the Internship Programme .....5

# List of Figures

Figure 1: Mapping Pathways to Impact .....1

Figure 2:The DSI-HSRC internship Programme evidence-based policymaking and implementation cycle.....1

## Acronyms/Abbreviations

<i><b>Abbrev</b></i>	<i><b>Description</b></i>
BCOS	Basic Conditions of Employment
DSI	Department of Science and Innovations
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
NSI	National System of Innovation
PMU	Programme Management Unit
RDI	Research, Development and Innovation
SA	South Africa
ToC	Theory of Change

## WELCOME LETTER

*Dear Host Institution Administrators, Mentors and Interns,*

Welcome to the DSI-HSRC Internship Programme 2021-2023. We are pleased that you made the decision to participate in the DSI-HSRC Internship Programme.

The DSI funded Internship Programme, previously run by the National Research Foundation (NRF), has been a flagship programme aimed at providing unemployed graduates with an opportunity to develop relevant work experience and thereby enhance their access to labour market opportunities.

The Internship Programme migrated to the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in June 2021 and we deeply honoured and committed to take on this responsibility and to maintain the high standards set by the NRF and to build on its successes.

Drawing on the analogy of the African three-legged pot, the internships foundation are three legs that it stands on the **Intern**, the **Host Institution and Mentor** and the **Coordinating Institution** (HSRC supported by DSI). Their commitments are equal and crucial and without the optimal contribution of any of them the foundation will be weakened, a broken three-legged pot, unable to realise the desired outcomes of the programme. Working together we can make this a successful internship programme with benefits accruing to interns, host institutions and to our economy and society.

For **interns** the value is through gaining coveted work experience, enhance their employability, possibly a foot in the door of a prospective employer, develop and hone professional skills and build their confidence. For **Host Institutions** internships offer unique advantages such as enabling them to acquire the right talent without investing in extensive hiring processes, reduces training costs, creates smoother transitions into the workplace and may contribute to boosting productivity levels. For our **economy** internships contribute to a skilled, capable and competent workforce, reduction in unemployment, inequality and poverty, economic and social development of the country and this will contribute to a capable state.

Finally dear Interns, we trust that you will embrace this internship opportunity fully by through active participation, and through the experience you are exposed to new personal and professional challenges that will help you grow and develop.

We look forward to working together over the next two years.

The DSI-HSRC Programme Management Unit

*Shirin Motala, Stewart Ngandu, Bongani Moni, Sello Raseruthe, Mbalenhle Nxumalo*

# The DSI-HSRC Internship Programme

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Problem?

Despite South Africa's positive growth in its graduate labour force, youth graduate unemployment has risen with the overall unemployment rate. The increased level of unemployment for youth with university degrees, from 29,000 in 2009 to 90,000 in 2019 and the unemployment rate for graduates (15-24years) which far exceeds that of other graduate age cohorts with the lowest absorption and labour participation rates. This is a particularly concerning trend, given that these individuals pursue higher education with the expectation that these qualifications will improve their odds of finding employment (DHET, 2020). Furthermore, the unemployment rate for graduates (15-24) far exceeds other graduates age cohorts with the lowest absorption and labour participation rates.

In recognition of this challenge the South African government in 2002 approved the Human Resources Development (HRD) Strategy for the Public Service with an Internship Framework for the establishment of effective Internship Programmes in the public service.

### 1.2 Department of Science and Innovation Response

In response to the above policy imperative the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI), formerly known as the Department of Science and Technology (DST), established the DSI-NRF Internship Programme, in 2005. The Programme places unemployed graduates in Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) disciplines as well as those in Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) disciplines at various research performing (research policy) institutions throughout the country.

The Internship Programme was effectively implemented by the National Research Foundation (NRF) from 2007 to 2021 on behalf of the DST and during this period. Since its inception to date, over 100 institutions have participated by hosting interns and +6000 interns have benefited in the Programme. The NRF, as the managing agency of the Programme, was responsible for the full administration of the programme, while the DSI was responsible for the provision of funds for the full running costs of the Programme, and these were transferred annually to the NRF through a contract.

In June 2021, the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation formally transferred the programme to the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), and it is known as the DSI-HSRC Internship Programme.



## 2 THE HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL

The HSRC's mission is to produce leading and evidence-based policy research, through engaged scholarship, to utilise in understanding and explaining social conditions and informing social change for inclusive growth in communities. Its mission aligns with the intent of the Internship Programme which is meant to produce a trained and skilled workforce who will in turn produce outcomes that will contribute to transformation in the Research, (RDI) and National System of Innovation (NSI) in South Africa.

A Profile of the HSRC can be found in **Annexure 1**.

## 3 HSRC INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The DSI-HSRC Internship Programme is underpinned by the construction of a Theory of Change, which charts the causal pathways through which the intended outcomes of the programme will be realized.

### 3.1 Purpose of the Programme

The purpose of the Internship Programme as articulated by the DSI is to provide work experience for unemployed graduates through placing them in RDI & NSI institutions and other relevant institutions in both the public and private sectors.

### 3.2 Programme Objectives

- To establish and increase the pool of capable human resources for the public sector, science councils, national research institutions, and industry;
- To provide graduates with work relevant experience in their field, in order to increase their chances of employment;
- To expose interns to research, development and innovation (RDI) Programmes where applicable that are critical to the National System of Innovation (NSI),
- To build capacity and capability in research management at higher education and research institutions throughout the country and to improve equitable access to marginalized groups;
- To contribute to (i) life-long learning e.g., furthering formal qualifications and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) where applicable, and/or (ii) workplace dynamics capacity enhancement; and
- To design, implement, measure and document a Post-Graduate Internship Model for the research and innovation sectors in South Africa

### 3.3 DSI-HSRC Internship Programme Outcomes and Impacts

The overarching outcomes and impacts are illustrated in **Figure 1: Mapping Pathways to Impact of DSI-HSRC Internship Programme**.

The core outputs of the programme will be effectively **mentored and trained DSI-HSRC interns**, and **the applied and occupational competencies** acquired will potentiate post programme exposure with respect to **efficient labour market transitions**. If these are sustained, they will eventually contribute to **broad transformation in RDI & NSI related sectors**.

These impacts will, spill over into long-term **social impacts** around **reduction in unemployment, inequality and poverty, and increased skills development** for previously disadvantaged populations.

### 3.4 Key Design Features of the Internship Programme

The design features of the programme draw on a wealth of research evidence generated globally and locally including those by HSRC researchers in respect of targeting, capacity development and articulating a theory of change to inform the planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

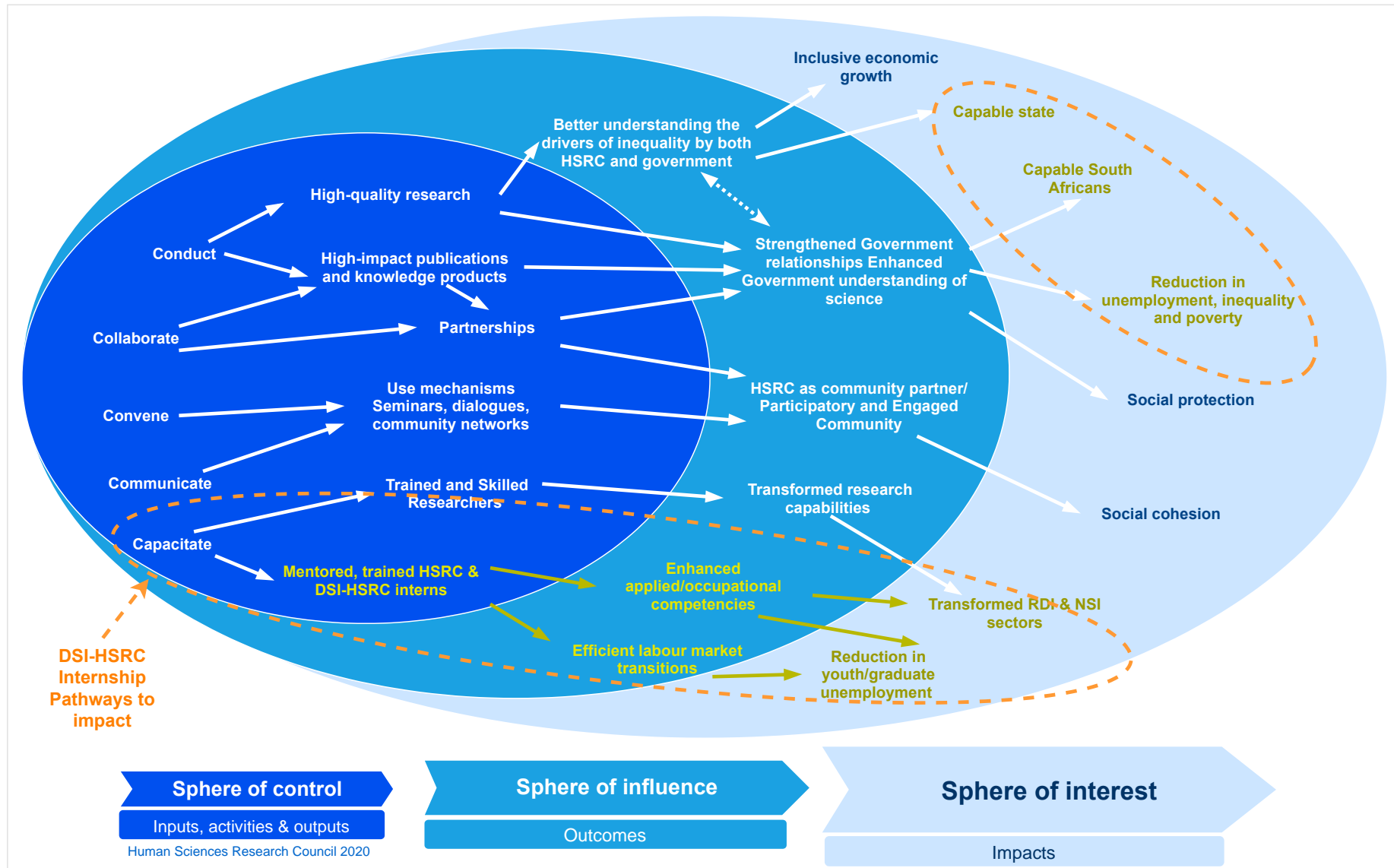
**Table 1: Key Design Features of the Internship Programme**

Design Feature	DSI-HSRC
<b>Programme Management</b>	Dedicated management in place to provide strategic leadership and ensure the effective implementation of the Programme.
<b>Implementation approach</b>	Informed by the construction of a DSI – HSRC Internship Theory of Change which will map the causal pathways from inputs to activities in order to achieve the outputs and bring about change (outcomes) towards the realisation of the programme goals (impacts). The ToC will contribute to the development of a programme Results Logframe disaggregated to define programme success in terms of implementation success and strategic success.
<b>Purpose</b>	The programme is aimed at bridging the gap between academic study and competent performance in the workplace by offering structured internship opportunities to unemployed graduates.
<b>Focus</b>	Workplace skills focused on <i>the development of <b>applied and occupational competencies</b> as well as on the <b>development of transversal skills</b> which serve as building blocks for the development of hard skills</i>
<b>Targeted Beneficiaries</b>	Unemployed Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) graduates and postgraduates, (including those in Social Sciences and Humanities) <b>with a focus on recruiting black females and graduates with disabilities</b> as primary beneficiaries of the programme. Interns with disabilities and/or the respective host institutions will be provided with <b>disability employment reasonable</b>

Design Feature	DSI-HSRC
	<b>accommodation support grant</b> to facilitate workplace adjustments where required.
<b>Targeted Host Institutions</b>	Public and Private Research Development & Innovation Institutions, Higher Education and Research Institutions in the RDI and NSI sectors, including those who have not previously served as hosts institutions and to encourage hosting of interns with disabilities.
<b>Recruitment and Contract signing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Bi-annual</b> Invitation of both host institutions and prospective interns;</li> <li>• Recruitment strategy <b>focused on DSI &amp; White Paper on STI paper targets</b> in respect of female and disability equity targets being met;</li> <li>• <b>Expansion of host institution categories</b> for hosts in the Innovation discipline.</li> <li>• <b>Annual vacancy replacements</b> undertaken;</li> <li>• Contracts signed with interns, host institutions and with individual mentors in respect of their responsibilities.</li> </ul>
<b>Orientation &amp; Induction of Interns, Host Institutions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orientation/induction Programme implemented for Interns and Host Institutions</li> <li>• Dedicated Mentor Induction and Mentorship Capacity Strengthening Programme</li> <li>• Dedicated disability intern accommodation requirement support provision</li> </ul>
<b>Supervision &amp; Mentorship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intern works under an expert in a relevant field;</li> <li>• Annual Workplan Submitted;</li> <li>• Quarterly Progress Reports submitted;</li> <li>• <i>Workplan templates redesigned to collect information on indicators relating to measurement of Programme outcomes</i></li> </ul>
<b>Capacity Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baseline assessment of reported capacity strengthening needs as identified by both interns and mentors through a baseline survey;</li> <li>• Participation in Capacity Development Interventions provided to all interns with attendance being made mandatory;</li> <li>• Mentor capacity strengthening interventions;</li> <li>• Pre and post training assessments conducted;</li> <li>• Portfolio of evidence of skills, competencies and knowledge developed to be presented annually through an <b>intern colloquium</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence based M&amp;E informed by the Programmes <b>theory of change</b></li> <li>• <b>Programme Log-frame</b> with key indicators and assumptions</li> <li>• Stronger emphasis on the collection of <b>baseline indicators</b></li> <li>• <b>Baseline data</b> on each intern collected via online platform.</li> <li>• <b>Host institution biennial perception survey conducted at cohort exit</b></li> <li>• Quarterly Monitoring Reporting</li> <li>• Annual Evaluation Report developed tracking progress on Implementation and Outcome Indicators.</li> </ul>

Design Feature	DSI-HSRC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of <b><i>track and trace studies</i></b> to understand the Programmes impact on post intern transitions into the labour market. This will include qualitative and quantitative data collection methods</li> <li>• 3 yearly Impact evaluation study conducted.</li> <li>• Production and dissemination of knowledge briefs on design and impact of internship Programme lessons and outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Graduation/Exit Strategies</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Series of labour market orientated workshops;</li> <li>• HSRC-Host institution graduation/exit strategy;</li> <li>• Career guidance and career pathing clinics hosted for interns;</li> <li>• Explicit host institution exit preparation approach to mentoring</li> </ul>

Figure 1: Mapping Pathways to Impact



## 4 MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMME

The M&E for the DSI-HSRC Internship Programme will be guided by the core imperatives of evidence-based policymaking and Programme implementation which are to **document**, **evaluate**, **reflect** and **learn**, see Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2: The DSI-HSRC internship Programme evidence-based policymaking and implementation cycle**



## 5 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

### 5.1 Capacity Development

#### 5.1.1 Definition of Capacity Development

At the outset it is important to agree on an acceptable definition of capacity development namely:

*“Capacity development is the process through which individuals, groups, organizations and societies deploy, adapt, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to define, plan and achieve their own development objectives on an inclusive, participatory and sustainable basis.” (UN, Economic Commission for Africa, n.d., p5)<sup>1</sup>*

Many other definitions exist and have in common a focus on enhancing individual abilities, is process oriented and iterative, that it requires strengthening organisational systems to create an enabling environment and for the process to be inclusive and sustainable.

#### 5.1.2 Objectives of the Capacity Development Plan

The objective of the capacity development plan for the internships is to:

- Recognise and nurture capabilities and competencies across all interns;
- Facilitate a results-oriented approach to capacity development with evidence of core technical, foundational and transversals skills progression;
- Support career planning and promote skills for enhancing labour market access of interns.

#### 5.1.3 Principles informing Capacity Development Interventions

A set of principles have been articulated as a guide to the development and implementation of capacity strengthening interventions for the DSI–HSRC Internship Programme. These are not intended to be prescriptive or in a sense conveying as “*best practice*”, but rather to inform practical steps for capacity strengthening and draw on widely articulated principles (Essence, 2014; DFID,2010).

- Commitment to ensuring interns are equipped and adequately on-boarded;
- The Capacity Development Programme is evidence based;
- It draws on an understanding/assessment and building on existing capacities for enabling capacity strengthening;
- It is flexible, demand led and iterative;
- It is tailored to needs rather than a one size fits all approach;

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/PublicationFiles/capacity\\_development\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/PublicationFiles/capacity_development_strategy.pdf).

- It embeds a strong support mechanism of effective supervision and mentorship.

#### 5.1.4 Capacity Development Interventions Approach

- **Effective Mentoring** – this will focus on outlining required capabilities of mentors to prospective host institutions and to providing induction to mentors on mentoring methodologies/frameworks, mentor responsibilities and to ensure the ongoing support to honing those skills or competencies.
- **Provision of online training interventions** aimed at building basic technical, foundational and soft skills required in workplaces.
- **Promote access to an e-Learning Platform.** It is intended to develop an online platform for the provision of synchronous and asynchronous training opportunities as well as repository of guides and manuals available for interns for easy access training and skills development interventions. The relevance of investment in a subscription for a digital e-learning platform is its suitability for delivering flexible learning solutions, which allow interns to participate in a range of learning solutions including instructor led, online and blended learning. Importantly, the e-learning platform is expected to provide the intern with access to a comprehensive library of off the shelf free learning courses offered globally which will allow for personalised training content per graduate. The platform will allow HSRC to track participation and performance outcomes per intern through reporting on specific metrics.

## 6 INTERN ASSUMPTION OF DUTY

Interns who have signed the contract for the 2021/23 DSI-HSRC Internship Programme are expected to assume duty at their respective host institutions on one of three commencement dates namely 04<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> October or 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021.

### 6.1 Verification of Information

HAs and mentors will be required to verify the date of assumption on the relevant form provided, Refer to Annexure 2:

The HSRC will share with mentors and host administrators (HAs) a verification schedule which the host institution will be required to complete and update information in relevant fields and once completed this will be submitted to the DSI-HSRC Programme Management Unit (PMU) on the designated email address [DSI\\_HSRC\\_Internship@hsrc.ac.za](mailto:DSI_HSRC_Internship@hsrc.ac.za) on the stipulated date.



## 6.2 Contracting

**Intern Contracts:** The expectation is that all interns sign their Contract of Employment on the first day of duty. Interns are requested to email a scanned copy of the signed Contract to DSI HSRC Internship team to this email address [DSI\\_HSRC\\_Internship@hsrc.ac.za](mailto:DSI_HSRC_Internship@hsrc.ac.za) as per the dates which were communicated in the correspondence with your institution and presented below:

Intern Commencement Date	Contract Submission Date
4 <sup>th</sup> October 2021	6 <sup>th</sup> October 2021
11 <sup>th</sup> October 2021	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2021
1 <sup>st</sup> November 2021	20 <sup>th</sup> October 2021

**Host Institution Contracts:** Host Institution contracts are signed prior to the commencement of the Intern placement. These dates were communicated when the contracts were shared with the Host Institutions.

*We urge all interns, hosts and mentors to familiarise themselves with the contract provisions. Copies of the generic contracts are attached as **Annexure 2**.*

## 6.3 Remuneration of interns

Interns will be remunerated on a monthly basis according to the Qualification Level of the post awarded to the host institution as indicated below:

- |                               |        |            |
|-------------------------------|--------|------------|
| • Bachelor's Degree/Advanced- | NQF 7: | R 6 375.00 |
| • Hons /B.Eng                 | NQF 8  | R 7 055.00 |
| • Masters / M.Tech            | NQF 9: | R 8,375.00 |

## 6.4 DSI-HSRC Internship Management Online Platform

The HSRC is currently finalizing the development of the online platforms to create a paperless and seamless submission of documentation and records management system. When fully developed the system will include electronic submission of the Annual Goal Setting and Work Plan documents, quarterly assessment reports, leave applications and approvals, resignation and monthly registers.

Until the platform is fully developed Host institutions and Interns will be required to utilize the paper-based forms for manual submission. See documents included in a folder titled **Annexure 3**.

## 6.5 Intern Performance Management System

### 6.5.1 Annual Goal Setting and Workplan

As part of the Performance Management System Interns and Mentors will be expected to complete the Goal Setting and Workplan document on an annual basis.

The Goal Setting and Workplan document is an articulation of the work programme that the intern will undertake during the course of the internship programme as a means towards the realisation of the goals set out jointly between the mentor and the intern

It is hoped that the online platform will be ready for electronic submissions by that date. If not, then manual submissions will be requested to be completed and emailed to PMU.

The **submission date** for the **Goal Setting** document submission is the **15<sup>th</sup> November 2021**.

### 6.5.2 Intern Performance Review and Progress Assessment Form

This form is designed to assess the progress of the intern against the key performance areas, activities and expected outputs as stated in the Goal Setting and Work Plan document. Dates by which the form should be completed online are as follows:

- Assessment 1 - 02 February 2022
- Assessment 2 - 06 June 2022
- Assessment 3 - 02 October 2022

## 7 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

### 7.1 Conditions of Employment

The Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) No 75 of 1997 as amended guides the Conditions of Employment of the Interns. A link to the act is provided here [https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis\\_document/201409/a75-97.pdf](https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/a75-97.pdf).

The Basic Conditions of Service (BCOS) document for the Internship is included as **Annexure 4** of the handbook. In addition, the HSRC Grievance Procedures, Disciplinary Code and Disciplinary Procedures documents are shared. Mentors and interns are requested to familiarize themselves with the conditions.

## 8 Annexures

Annexure 1: Profile of the HSRC

Annexure 2: Contracts with Host Institutions and Interns

Annexure 3: Forms for Manual Submission

Annexure 4: DSI-HSRC Internship Programme Basic Conditions of Service, HSRC Grievance Procedures, Disciplinary Code and Disciplinary Procedures.

## 9 CONTACT DETAILS

DSI -HSRC Internship Programme  
Programme Management Unit  
Human Sciences Research Council  
134 Pretorius Street  
0000  
Pretoria

**Email #** [DSI\\_HSRC\\_Internship@hsrc.ac.za](mailto:DSI_HSRC_Internship@hsrc.ac.za)