



Experiential Training, Internship and Professional Development Policy

DIRECTORATE: EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EXTENSION SERVICES



agriculture,
forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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1. INTRODUCTION

In terms of existing qualification requirements at certain tertiary educational institutions (especially universities of technology), students in specific study disciplines have to complete a practical work module in order to obtain a qualification. This is especially true for students in the agricultural fields of study.

On the other hand, many of the learners whose qualifications did not require any practical work module and who have already qualified are unable to secure employment because they lack the experience required by the highly competitive job market. This has contributed to a greater number of unemployed graduates in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries sector. Moreover, there is a wide spectrum of post-matric learners, some of whom are interested in serving as voluntary workers for the purposes of gaining experience before they can proceed with their studies.

Part of the mandate of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) is to contribute towards the development of human resources. In order to achieve this, the department is engaged in various initiatives relating to the provision of bursaries and study assistance for students in Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. One of these initiatives is the provision of relevant experiential training, internship and professional development opportunities.

Furthermore, a shortage of skilled professionals and technical staff is one of the handicaps to development in South Africa. There is evidence that the majority of the senior researchers and technicians are approaching retirement.

The DAFF Professional Development Programme is a capacity-building programme contributing to a relevant and credible future base for the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries sector.

Through the programme, a pool of young scientists from the previously disadvantaged groups will be created. Young graduates will be attached to senior researchers for mentoring. During their stay in the programme they will be exposed to various research methodologies and they will be equipped with practical experience of the research environment.

DAFF is further engaged in international exchange programmes through cooperation agreements already signed with African and overseas countries for professional development. Through the cooperative agreements, officials from the departments of agriculture of these countries are able to visit DAFF for transfer of technology, professional development and sharing of best practices. In return, these countries have also demonstrated tremendous goodwill to accommodate officials from DAFF in their respective countries to exchange technical knowledge and for professional development.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the implementation and management of the Experiential Training, Internship and Professional Development Programme in DAFF in terms of the department's responsibility to develop human resources.

The policy is also intended to give effect to the broad national strategies, namely the Internship Framework for the Public Service led by the Department for Public Service and Administration (DPSA), the National Human Resource Development Strategy, the National Skills Development Strategy and the DAFF Workplace Skills Plan.

3. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy applies to the following categories of interns/trainees:

- 3.1 DAFF bursary holders not in the employ of the department and requiring experiential training as part of their qualification conditions



- 3.2 Other students in Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries study disciplines requiring experiential training as part of their qualification conditions
- 3.3 Unemployed graduates with appropriate skills required by DAFF who need practical hands-on experience to improve their chances of employment
- 3.4 Young graduates in the requisite Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries study fields qualifying to study further at Honours, Master's and Ph.D. levels.

4. OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 To enhance youth development and employability, and to develop a culture of high-quality, life-long learning
- 4.2 To establish a supply pipeline of skills to the department, as deemed necessary and appropriate by the department

5. DEFINITION OF TERMS

- 5.1 **Experiential training** means “traditional” experiential training (students with compulsory experiential training), “voluntary” experiential training (students without compulsory experiential training) and internship/learnership (school leavers and unemployed graduates).
- 5.2 **Experiential Training and Internship Programme** is defined as a planned, structured and managed work experience that is occupationally based and that incorporates a skills programme designed to produce meaningful competencies which may earn a trainee an education and training credit. The expected units of outcomes and performance are framed for mutual and optimal benefit to both the trainee and the department.
- 5.3 **Trainee** means a student, learner, volunteer or intern appointed in DAFF in terms of this policy.
- 5.4 **Contract** means a legal agreement between a trainee and the department and between the academic institution and the department.
- 5.5 **Mentor** means a competent person who provides practical training and facilitates other forms of training to a trainee or mentee.
- 5.6 **Bursary holder** means a student or learner who is sponsored by the DAFF External Bursary Scheme.
- 5.7 **Professional Development Programme** means DAFF's Capacity-building Programme contributing to a relevant and credible future scientific base for the South African Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries sector.

6. POLICY STATEMENT

- 6.1 DAFF will provide experiential training opportunities primarily for bursary holders in relevant study disciplines requiring experiential training as part of their qualification conditions provided that adequate financial resources and infrastructure resources are available to accommodate such bursary holders.
- 6.2 DAFF will further provide 12-month internship opportunities for bursary holders who complete their studies and cannot secure employment immediately after completion, provided that adequate financial resources and infrastructure resources are available to accommodate such bursary holders.
- 6.3 Experiential training opportunities may be accessible to other categories of trainees provided that:
 - 6.3.1 Adequate financial resources are available to accommodate such trainees
 - 6.3.2 Adequate infrastructure resources are available to accommodate such trainees

- 6.3.3 Appropriate and qualified mentor(s) are available to supervise trainees
- 6.3.4 Specific or particular duties that can best be executed by trainees are available
- 6.4 The appointment of candidates into the Professional Development Programme is to be advised by the strategic understanding of the core capacity requirements for research, skilled professionals and technical staff in the DAFF and the sector.

7. CONDITIONS

- 7.1 The conditions pertaining to this policy relate to experiential training and internship only and should not be construed to include vacation for students.
- 7.2 The Directorate: Education, Training and Extension Services is responsible for the coordination, implementation and management of the Experiential Training, Internship and Professional Development Programme in DAFF.
- 7.3 Prior to the implementation of the Experiential Training, Internship and Professional Development Programme, the various managers within the DAFF will:
 - 7.3.1 Determine experiential training requirements for their respective divisions in collaboration with the Directorate: Education, Training and Extension Services
 - 7.3.2 Apply effective experiential training and internship management tools developed by the Directorate: Education, Training and Extension Services, for example, trainee logbooks
 - 7.3.3 Ensure that all functions to be performed by the trainees are clearly articulated, understood and agreed to by all parties
 - 7.3.4 Ensure that the necessary infrastructure (physical, human and financial resources) is in place to accommodate trainees
 - 7.3.5 Ensure that appointments will be made with due consideration given to the applicable labour legislation (Trainees will not be appointed on the departmental establishment but additional thereto and recommended according to paragraph 7.3.)
 - 7.3.6 Ensure that appointments are made in accordance with the Employment Equity directives
 - 7.3.7 Ensure that all appointments are made in terms of contracts with no guarantee of permanent employment
- 7.4 Included in the contract will be the following:
 - 7.4.1 Trainees will not be allowed to use DAFF equipment and facilities without proper authorisation.
 - 7.4.2 Trainees may not be utilised for work activities that do not relate to their field of study.
 - 7.4.3 Trainees will subject themselves to DAFF's organisational discipline and protocol.
- 7.5 In the event of conflicts/disputes, the normal tenets in the contract shall apply.
- 7.6 Upon resignation/termination of contract the interns/trainees should submit a written letter and hand it to the supervisor/mentor, who should then forward it to the coordinator of the Experiential Training, Internship and Professional Development Programme. The resignation letter should show the date of resignation. Interns are required to serve 1 (one) week's notice (five working days).
- 7.7 Interns are covered by the Compensation for Occupational Injuries Act, 1993, with regard to injuries on duty.
- 7.8 The department shall supply the necessary protective clothing to the interns.

- 7.9 Interns shall be entitled to:
- 7.9.1 **Annual leave:** An intern shall at the beginning of his/her contract period be granted annual leave that is proportional to his/her term of employment at a rate of one twelfth of the annual leave credit applicable to the employee category (i.e. 22 days), per month of service.
 - 7.9.2 **Sick leave:** An intern shall at the beginning of his/her contract period be granted normal sick leave that is proportional to his or her term of employment at a rate of 1 (one) day's normal sick leave per month of service.
 - 7.9.3 **Maternity leave:** An intern shall be granted paid maternity leave that is proportional to her term of contract at a rate of 10 (ten) calendar days' maternity leave with full pay calculated at each month of her term of contract to a maximum of 4 (four) months, whereafter maternity leave without pay shall be granted. The total period granted in respect of maternity leave shall not exceed 4 (four) consecutive months.
 - 7.9.4 **Adoption leave:** An intern who adopts a child who is younger than 2 (two) years, shall qualify for adoption leave at a rate of 4 (four) days' paid leave for each month to a maximum of 45 (forty-five) working days.
 - 7.9.5 **Family responsibility leave**
 - 7.9.5.1 An intern shall be granted 3 (three) days' leave per annual leave cycle for utilisation if:
 - (a) The intern's spouse or life partner gives birth to a child, or
 - (b) The intern's child, spouse or life partner is sick.
 - 7.9.5.2 The intern shall be granted 5 (five) days leave per annual leave cycle for utilisation if:
 - (a) The intern's child, spouse or life partner dies, or
 - (b) An immediate family member of the intern dies.
 - 7.9.5.3 The total number of family responsibility leave days taken shall not exceed 5 (five) days in an annual leave cycle.
- 7.10 Candidates for the Professional Development Programme shall fulfil the following requirements:
- 7.10.1 The candidates shall be in possession of at least a B.Sc., B.Sc. (Agric.), B.Sc. (Eng.), B.V.Sc. or postgraduate qualification in agriculture or one of the natural sciences. Candidates in possession of a postgraduate degree in Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries economics also qualify.
 - 7.10.2 The candidates shall be interested in a career in Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries research and/or science and technology.
 - 7.10.3 The participants shall be from the historically disadvantaged groups.
 - 7.10.4 During the selection process, the candidates shall demonstrate potential for development.
 - 7.10.5 The candidates shall register and further their studies with the tertiary institutions of their choice.
 - 7.10.6 The candidates' research project at the university shall be aligned with DAFF's core business and priority programmes.

8. FINANCING AND COMPENSATION

- 8.1 The internship budget will be centralised and administered by the Directorate: Education, Training and Extension Services.

8.2 Trainees are not to be regarded as lower-cost alternatives to permanent or regular employees. Instead, managers must ensure that, as they “employ” trainees to get work done; they also improve the trainees’ potential for future employment.

This is the trade-off they are asked to assume in meeting operational needs at a lower rate of compensation than that of the regular employees.

8.3 The remuneration of interns/trainees in the DAFF will be as follows:

8.3.1 Qualifications with the NQF Exit Level 4 will be 35% of the minimum notch of Salary Level 4.

8.3.2 Qualifications with the NQF Exit Level 5 will be 35% of the minimum notch of Salary Level 5.

8.3.3 Qualifications with the NQF Exit Levels 6, 7 and 8 will be 33% of the minimum notch of Salary Level 8.

8.3.4 Qualifications with the NQF Exit Level 9 will be 34% of the minimum notch of Salary Level 8.

8.3.5 Qualifications with the NQF Exit Level 10 will be 35% of the minimum notch of Salary Level 8.

8.4 In the event that a stipend is paid by a different sponsor, no payment will be made by the department.

8.5 For the Professional Development Programme interns/trainees, DAFF shall cover the following expenses:

(a) University study fees

(b) Operational budget

(c) Monthly allowance

(d) Life-skills training

8.6 A guideline document for the implementation of DAFF’s Professional Development Programme will form part of this policy (ET/EAPAX 2).

8.7 Interns and trainees participating in DAFF’s Professional Development Programme will not be allowed to have an additional sponsor.

9. PROCEDURES

9.1 The Directorate: Education, Training and Extension Services will conduct a regular capacity assessment with the different directorates.

9.2 Following budget approval, applications from suitable candidates will be considered.

9.3 Concomitant herewith:

9.3.1 A mentorship system will be established.

9.3.2 A logbook system will be developed in collaboration with different academic institutions.

9.3.3 Trainees will be selected and placed in collaboration with the relevant senior managers.

9.3.4 Training will be managed by the respective sectional managers in collaboration with the Directorate: Education, Training and Extension Services.

9.3.5 Following a recruitment and selection process, qualifying Professional Development Programme candidates shall be formally informed in writing.

9.3.6 In appointing interns, the employment equity status of the department shall be considered.

10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

10.1 The Directorate : Education, Training and Extension Services shall:

- 10.1.1 Ensure compliance with the Experiential Training, Internship and Professional Development Policy
- 10.1.2 Maintain liaison and communication with host functions/mentors and ensure that the Experiential Training, Internship and Professional Development Programme takes place in terms of academic requirements and that the trainee logbooks are kept up to date
- 10.1.3 Provide the DAFF Executive Committee with regular reports regarding the Experiential Training, Internship and Professional Development Programme and the utilisation of DAFF resources
- 10.1.4 Maintain ongoing liaison with the different academic institutions regarding the progress of trainees
- 10.1.5 Control and manage the budget of the entire Experiential Training, Internship and Professional Development Programme
- 10.1.6 Implement the overall monitoring and evaluation of the programme
- 10.1.7 Constantly liaise with institutions in terms of the trainees' progress
- 10.1.8 Liaise with line managers to identify needs and provide suitable interns to meet their needs
- 10.1.9 Provide induction and orientation programmes for interns
- 10.1.10 Provide training, advice or support for supervisors/mentors in the department
- 10.1.11 Manage the exit programme/strategy related to the internship programme
- 10.1.12 Enter into a formal agreement (contract) with institutions and trainees in terms of the obligations of each party
- 10.1.13 Coordinate the administrative logistics of international delegates hosted by DAFF for exchange programmes and professional development which will include the following:
 - (a) Induction and orientation of delegates
 - (b) Acquisition of security access cards
 - (c) E-mail, internet and telephone connections

10.2 Senior managers of host directorates shall:

- 10.2.1 Determine which skills and how many trainees they require in their divisions by completing the Experiential Training and Internship Questionnaire (Form ET/EAPAX 1)
- 10.2.2 Provide a relevant, experienced and responsible mentor
- 10.2.3 Provide office space and related facilities
- 10.2.4 Give feedback to the Directorate: Education, Training and Extension Services
- 10.2.5 Provide required information on the progress of the trainee
- 10.2.6 Ensure that a performance management agreement and a work-based learning plan between interns and supervisors is signed. The agreement will reflect the agreed duties that will bring about work experience for the development of the interns.
- 10.2.7 Ensure that interns execute relevant activities, which will provide them with the breadth and depth of experience required by their learning programme
- 10.2.8 Ensure that an appropriate supervisor/mentor is appointed and is available to support the intern in the learning process and assist him/her with any problems he/she may experience

- 10.2.9 Ensure that the performance of interns is properly managed and that the interns are provided with regular constructive feedback on their performance
 - 10.2.10 Ensure that interns provide a written monthly progress report
 - 10.2.11 Ensure that sufficient funds have been budgeted for line function related training according to the work-based learning plan
- 10.3 Trainees shall:
- 10.3.1 Execute all tasks/duties allocated and agreed to
 - 10.3.2 Comply with all tenets of the contract/agreement signed with the department
 - 10.3.3 Sign a performance agreement with the mentor
 - 10.3.4 Together with the appointed mentor, draft a development plan linked to the performance management agreement
 - 10.3.5 Apply themselves diligently to their tasks and projects
 - 10.3.6 Manage their own learning process by raising problems that may arise
 - 10.3.7 Link practical experience from the internship with their classroom learning
 - 10.3.8 Compile monthly and quarterly progress reports
- 10.4 Mentors shall:
- 10.4.1 Together with the appointed interns, draft a development plan linked to the interns' performance management agreements
 - 10.4.2 Ensure that quarterly performance reviews are concluded and forwarded to the Directorate: Education, Training and Extension Services
 - 10.4.3 Oversee the training and development of the interns
 - 10.4.4 Provide a supportive environment for the interns by playing a facilitation and mediation role
 - 10.4.5 Conduct ongoing monitoring and assessment of the interns' progress and performance
 - 10.4.6 Transfer skills to interns

11. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Directorate: Education, Training and Extension Services will monitor the implementation of the Experiential Training, Internship and Professional Development Programme through the following mechanisms:

- 11.1 Determining the total number of trainees who successfully complete the programme in the department, obtain a qualification and secure employment after the completion of the training programme
- 11.2 The degree to which managers are satisfied with the value of and contribution made by the trainees
- 11.3 Preparing an annual report on the Experiential Training, Internship and Professional Development Programme
- 11.4 Reviewing the overall programme for purposes of improvements and alignment with departmental strategic goals
- 11.5 Monitoring of sector education and training trends and patterns for forecasting and planning purposes

12. EXPERIENTIAL TRAINING AND INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME QUESTIONNAIRE

Please provide the information required using the format provided. Use a separate sheet for each subdirectorate in your directorate.

Organisational unit

Directorate:

Subdirectorate:

Contact person:

Extension number:

Experiential training and internship

Please provide information for every organisational subdirectorate identified in section 1 as set out below.

Note: You only have to provide the information for areas where you can accommodate trainees.

Proposed mentors: Name and contact details, e.g. telephone number and e-mail address	Number of trainees an organisation can accommodate	Placement centre, e.g. Pretoria (head office), Pretoria (Roodeplaat) or Durban	Qualifications	Major subjects/ specialisation	Brief job description/ profile

Director:

Signature:

Date:

