



**inseta**

INSURANCE SECTOR EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING AUTHORITY

**RESEARCH AGENDA  
2024-2025**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority (INSETA) is a statutory body that is responsible for the promotion of skills development in the insurance sector. It aims to upgrade the skills of employees in insurance firms and encourage new entrants in the sector through the provision of internships, learnership and bursaries.

The functions and duties of the SETAs in terms of the *Skills Development Act* and *Skills Development Levies Act* are the following:

- Develop a sector skills plan.
- Implement its sector skills plan.
- Promote learning programmes.
- Register agreements for learning programmes.
- Perform functions delegated to it by the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO).
- Disburse levies collected from employers and their sector.
- Liaise with the National Skills Authority on policy, strategy and their sector skills plans.

## 2. IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH

The need for a research agenda is emphasised in national strategies and plans, such as the *National Development Plan (2030)*, *Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa 2010-2030*, *National Skills Development Plan (2030)*, and the *White Paper for Post-School Education and Training*.

Research is vital in the SETA environment for the following reasons:

- Enables evidence-based decision-making
- Sector skilling planning and budgeting
- Determining skills disequilibrium in the labour market
- Identifying sectoral priority occupations and skills gaps
- Profiling the insurance sector
- Proposing sector partnerships
- Assessing the effectiveness of training providers
- Measuring impacts of interventions
- Skills forecasting

- Conduct impact and tracer studies
- Assessing occupational and skills needs
- Scenario planning

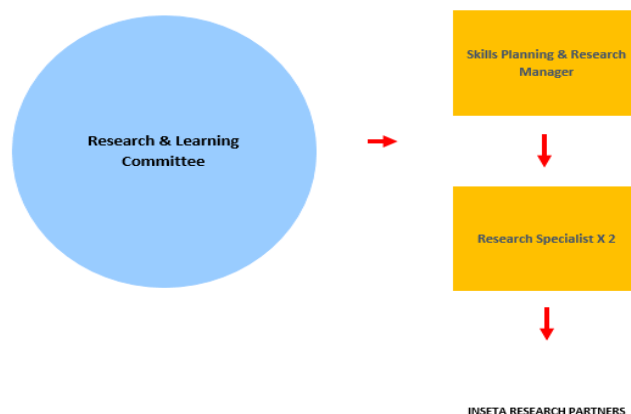
### 3. PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH AGENDA

The research agenda is a framework for ensuring that the INSETA conducts relevant research to guide the sector on skills planning. It aims to ensure that the board, structures, forums, and management make decisions on investments in skills planning based on the weight of empirical evidence.

The research agenda identifies the research needs each financial year to ensure that it is aligned and informs the INSETA Sector Skills Plan (SSP) and Annual Performance Plan (APP). The INSETA uses its research agenda to identify the areas that should be researched and the type of research methodologies that should be employed. It provides clarity and a framework for making decisions about research activities.

### 4. SKILLS PLANNING AND RESEARCH DIVISION

The Research Unit falls under the Skills Planning Division and is structured as follows:

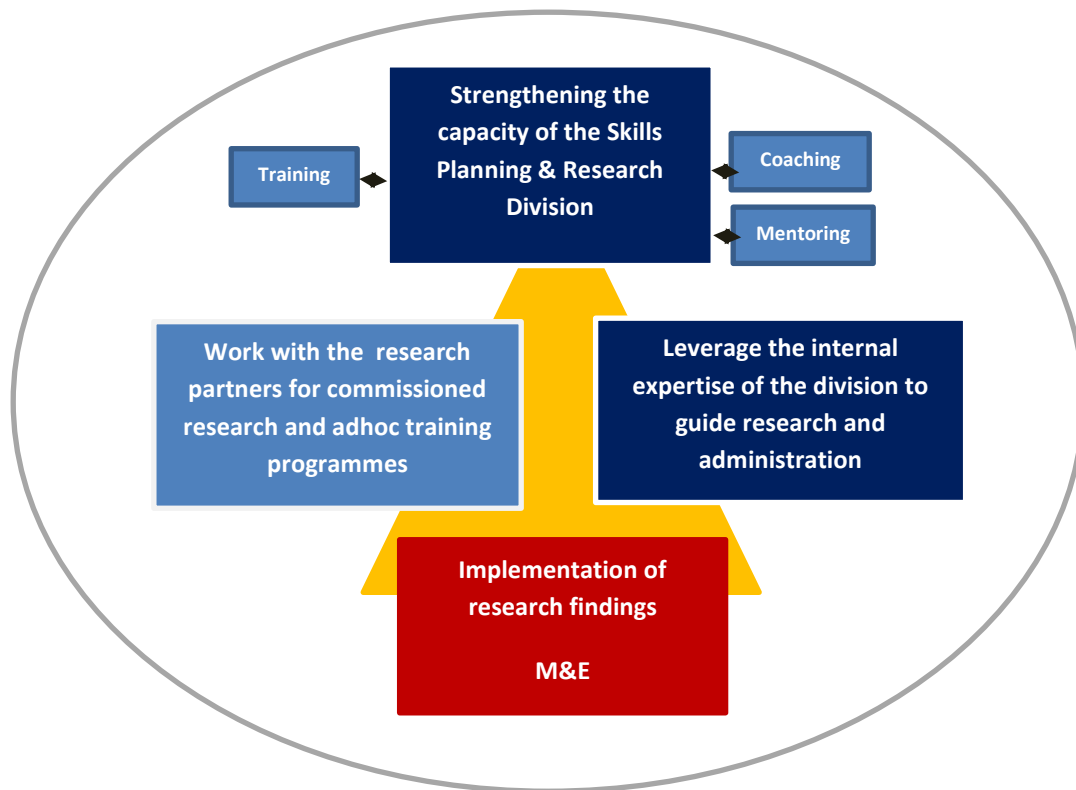


The functions of this division include:

- Developing the sector skills plan
- Identifying research priorities
- Developing the research agenda, strategy and plan

- Conducting skills development research
- Managing research partnerships
- Interviewing constituency representatives
- Co-ordinating the Research and Learning Committee
- Organising research events
- Evaluating commissioned research
- Collaborating with the research partners
- Analysing workplace skills plans
- Updating the board and other committees of the INSETA on research issues

The INSETA's approach to research is as follows:



## 5. RESEARCH AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

The INSETA has established a Research and Learning Committee (RLC) consisting of the insurance sector's leading strategic experts from professional bodies, industry associations, trade unions, universities, and companies.

The RLC functions focus on four key areas:

- **Research Oversight**
  - Provide input and advisory on research studies
  - Ensure research quality and integrity
- **Learning Facilitation**
  - Promote continuous learning culture
  - Recommend new programmes/qualifications
- **Sector Collaboration**
  - Assist in building research capacity
  - Support research partner networks
- **Knowledge Sharing**
  - Disseminate findings to stakeholders
  - Assess and provide input/feedback on research

The RLC meets on a quarterly basis to discuss research issues and provides input to the INSETA.



## 6. RESEARCH-POLICY NEXUS

The INSETA's research-policy nexus is informed by six guiding principles to improve its relevance:

**Accuracy** – Research should be accurate, truthful, and defensible.

**Legitimacy** – Research should be legitimate and grounded in the needs of stakeholders. It should be respectful of different views, unbiased, and fair in its treatment of opposing views and interests.

**Salient** – Research should be relevant to the needs of the decision-makers and result in sound decisions.

**Credible** – Research should be valid and reliable, providing evidence and options.

**Readability** – Research should be user-friendly, concise, and easy to understand.

**Applicability** – Research must be applications-driven.

The INSETA research should be a healthy engagement between research, policy, and practice.

## 7. BROAD RESEARCH PRIORITIES

The INSETA will pursue a diverse set of research initiatives covering key priorities like the 4th Industrial Revolution, Labour Market Intelligence, and research on Education and Training. The research agenda is structured across three core areas:

### 7.1 Technology and Workforce Disruption Research

The INSETA will conduct studies to understand the impact of technological disruptions like automation, digital platforms, data analytics, and AI on existing and future jobs in the sector. This includes investigating associated skills deficits or surpluses.

### 7.2 Labour Market Intelligence Research

Research will augment visibility into occupational change, skills supply and demand mismatches, hiring dynamics, barriers to critical skills development and associated recommendations.

### **7.3 Education, Training and Impact Research**

Evaluative studies will assess the effectiveness of the INSETA interventions like learnerships, internships, work-integrated learning, short-skill programmes. Research initiatives under this priority includes the Insurance Body of Knowledge (BoK) which underpins qualifications and sets benchmark standards across technical insurance competencies. Insurance education research aims to elevate practitioner skills and professionalization.

Cutting across these research priorities is a commitment to generating actionable insights that can inform the INSETA Strategic Plan, Annual Performance Plan and the Sector Skills Plan. Evidence-based research will recommend strategies that will inform INSETA’s skills development priorities.

## **8. RESEARCH ON OCCUPATIONAL SUPPLY AND DEMAND**

The need to research supply and demand is necessary to determine public investments in skills development investments – projects, learnerships, internships and bursaries.

The key to providing impactful skills development interventions is to ensure that funding targets the three core areas. It means having insights into the constraints and opportunities of supply and demand.

### **Research Studies:**

- i. Skills supply
- ii. Skills demand
- iii. Top 10 sector priority occupations

## **9. FOSTERING RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS**

INSETA partners with selected universities to access their research expertise. These university partners have deep knowledge in areas like insurance risk analysis, industry trends, future skills, labour market intelligence and analytical methods.

Collaborating with universities provides the following benefits:

- Drawing on their focused skills in insurance and risk management topics
- Utilizing their know-how in research design and academic best practice



- Getting fresh insights from academics such as professors studying insurance related issues
- Ensuring their participation in developing research capabilities within TVET and CET colleges who partnering with INSETA

Working together allows INSETA to enhance the quality and relevance of its research agenda. The partnerships assist INSETA by ensuring that it builds a strong knowledge base to guide the sector on skills planning. It also enables the board, structures, forums, and management to make informed decisions on investments in skills planning based on the weight of empirical evidence.

University partnerships boost the INSETA's capacity to produce empirical, practical research that informs skills strategies and priorities. The agenda reflects combining resources strategically to maximize value.

The INSETA has appointed three research partners thus far: Durban University of Technology (DUT), University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), and the University of Witwatersrand (Wits). Further research partners are in the pipeline and will be sought during the current financial year.

A Centre of Excellence Model (CoE) of the functions of the research partnership is depicted below:



The partnerships aim to achieve the following:

- Sponsorship for insurance research partners

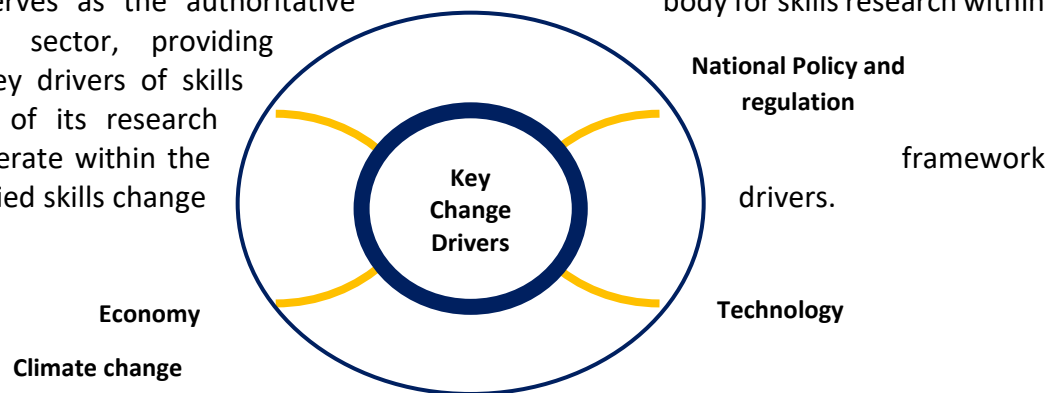
- Research events for the benefit of the industry using the Innovation Hub
- Virtual insurance repository for the industry and students studying insurance qualifications
- Research studies related to skills development in the insurance sector
- Networking and partnerships with academia and the industry
- Research collaborations nationally through partnerships

The insurance sector is largely a tertiary education sector. Therefore, there is a need to establish partnerships with selected universities to support the skills development agenda of the sector. There is also a need to ensure that tertiary institutions are offering programmes that are relevant to the needs of the sector.

The university research partners will strengthen skills planning research outputs in the INSETA and contribute to its Sector Skills Plan, Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plan. The research partners will also advise the INSETA on reskilling, upskilling and the development of new qualifications or short-skill programmes.

## 10. RESEARCH BASED ON CRITICAL ISSUES FOR THE INSURANCE SECTOR

The INSETA serves as the authoritative body for skills research within the insurance sector, providing insights into key drivers of skills change. Some of its research endeavours operate within the framework of these identified skills change drivers.



Research studies that are conducted include:

- Skills Planning Research
- Impact Studies
- Emerging Issues
- Institutional Research

## 11. RESEARCH THEMES AND TOPICS

Below are the key research areas with which the INSETA research team and research partners are engaged in. Current and planned<sup>1</sup> research will be conducted under these themes which is aligned to the INSETA's target objectives.

### **Key Theme 1: Development and Delivery of a Research Agenda which focuses on the insurance sector**

*Topic 1: Setting the research priorities, goals and focus areas for the agenda*

Identifying the key topics and studies that need to be conducted.

Start Date: 2 April 2024

Anticipated Completion Date: 13 December 2024

*Topic 2: INSETA Sector Skills Plan in 24/25 & 26/27*

The purpose of the SSP is to ensure that INSETA has relevant, up-to-date information and analysis to allow it to perform its strategic skills planning function for the insurance sector, and to maximize participation by employers in the National Skills Development Strategy through the efficient use of resources available.

The Durban University of Technology (DUT) supports the INSETA in the development of Chapters 1 through 6 of the Sector Skills Plan for 2023 through 2024.

1. Chapter 1: Sector Profile,
2. Chapter 2: Key Skills Change Drivers,
3. Chapter 3: Occupational Shortages and Skills Gaps,
4. Chapter 4: Sector Partnerships,
5. Chapter 5: SETA Monitoring and Evaluation and
6. Chapter 6: Strategic Skills Priority Actions

Start Date: 05 April 2023

Anticipated Completion Date: 01 August 2024

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<sup>1</sup> Research topics may not always be included in the research agenda, as there is a possibility of conducting ad hoc research.

## **Key Theme 2: Impact assessment/ Tracer studies**

### *Topic 1: Impact Studies of INSETA Programmes (over three years)*

An impact study that will cover the INSETA learning programmes completed on a yearly basis over a period of three years, viz. 2021/2022, 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 financial years. This study will also include a summary of all INSETA conducted impact studies over the past ten years to provide historical context and identify trends.

Start Date: 01 July 2024

Anticipated Completion Date: 31 March 2025

## **Key Theme 3: Emerging Skills and Future Work**

### *Topic 1: Generative Artificial Intelligence Opportunities and Possibilities to Grow and Improve the Insurance Sector in South Africa*

This research will explore the opportunities and possibilities to grow the insurance sector in South Africa through an early adoption of GenAI.

GenAI offers several benefits to the South African insurance sector through the following: task automation; enables personalized products and services by leveraging large datasets; improves customer service through AI powered chatbots; and GenAI enhances risk assessment accuracy and prediction modelling, contributing to more informed decision-making, etc. From an overall perspective to look at GenAI's potential to drive efficiency, profitability, and compliance within the South African insurance sector.

Start Date: 07 August 2023

Anticipated Completion Date: 05 August 2024

### *Topic 2: An Exploration of the Impact of Drone Technology on South Africa's Insurance Sector: A Comprehensive Study of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)*

This research endeavour aims to contribute to the sustainable growth of the South African insurance industry by harnessing the transformative potential of drone technology, making insurance more accessible and responsive to the needs of the SME sector. Drones have the potential to revolutionise key aspects of the insurance sector ranging from risk assessment and underwriting to claims processing.

The introduction of drone technology presents an opportunity for the insurance industry to address some of the challenges faced by SMEs in South Africa. Drones can efficiently survey

and assess risks, collect data on properties and assets, and provide real-time information for underwriting decisions

Start Date: 02 October 2023

Completion Date: 28 March 2024

*Topic 3: Developing SME Critical and Scarce Skills for the Insurance Sector*

The objective of this research is to identify, analyse, and address critical and scarce skill gaps within small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operating within the insurance sector. By conducting a comprehensive analysis, the aim is to contribute valuable insights that will inform targeted skills development programs, ultimately enhancing the overall competency and competitiveness of SMEs in the insurance industry. Furthermore, it is of critical importance to identify the challenges that exist for new small medium micro-enterprises to enter the insurance sector as well as to identify strategies which will make it easier for small medium micro-enterprise to gain entry into the insurance sector. Start Date: 2nd May 2024  
Completion Date: 29 November 2024

**Key Theme 4: Skills Collaboration and Research partnerships**

*Topic 1: Research Capacitation of TVET Colleges*

To influence research output from TVET Colleges through paper-driven output, white papers and factory papers. Research knowledge and established research practices are non-existent in the TVET College System. This leaves no room for articulation of learning from the Further Education System to the Higher Education System. The INSETA Research Partner underpinned by the TVET Colleges to upskill and provide guidance, direction and mentorship to the satellite research centres by way of research partnerships between the DUT and the TVET Colleges.

Start Date: 01 June 2021

Completion Date: 28 March 2024

*Topic 2: Collaborative Research Between UKZN and Elangeni TVET College*

To conduct an applied quantitative literacy assessment and identify detailed gaps in financial and insurance knowledge that can directly enable relevant capacity building programmes.

Start Date: TBC

Anticipated Completion Date: TBC

*Topic 3: Research in the Development of CET Colleges*

The research aims to provide insights into providing capacitation to CET Colleges by identifying strengths and areas for improvement. Additionally, the study will explore potential recommendations for enhancing collaboration between the Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority (INSETA) and CET colleges to address any identified skills gaps or challenges experienced by the college.

Start Date: June 2024

Anticipated Completion Date: December 2024

*Topic 4: Collaborative Research Between UKZN and TVET Colleges*

This research topic aims to investigate the potential for collaboration between insurers and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges to conduct research on pertinent issues within the insurance sector.

Start Date: TBC

Anticipated Completion Date: TBC

**Key Theme 5: Interventions to address the identified Skills Change Drivers**

*Topic 1: Enhancing Skills Development for Insurance Professionals in the Face of Climate Change*

This research aims to identify the specific skills required for insurance professionals to address challenges posed by climate change effectively. The outcomes will inform the development of training programs that equip industry practitioners with the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate climate-related risks.

There is a growing need for a skilled workforce that can adapt to new technologies and leverage them for climate change mitigation.

Start Date: 01 March 2024

Anticipated Completion Date: 20 December 2024

EMPOWERED TO INFLUENCE AND INSPIRE!

*Topic 2: Formulation of a Body of Insurance Knowledge - Vol.3 & Vol.4 (over two years)*

The purpose of the Insurance Body of Knowledge (BoK) project is to construct this body of technical knowledge on insurance which can be used by the industry. This project will further extend the General Principles of Insurance with an additional two volumes.

Knowledge within insurance is viewed more from a guild rather than a public good perspective.

Start Date: 20 March 2024

Anticipated Completion Date: 31 March 2025

*Topic 3: Transformation in the South African Insurance Sector: Past and Current State*

This research represents the second series of INSETA's comprehensive transformation research in the South African insurance sector. Building on the foundational insights from the first series, this phase aims to compare and explore the current state of transformation and provide strategic recommendations for future progress.

Start Date: 16 August 2024

Anticipated Completion Date: 31 March 2025

## 12. RESEARCH FUNDING AND PROCUREMENT

The INSETA allocates funding through the use of its own financial resources to Universities and Research institutions for conducting research on skills development in collaboration with the insurance stakeholders and industry associations. Current and past research undertaken or planned can be seen below:

No.	Title of Research <sup>2</sup>	Name of Service Provider/ Research Partner	Start Date (month & year)	Completion Date (month & year) <sup>3</sup>
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<sup>2</sup> The title and contents of the research output could be changed or amended and may appear differently in the research paper compared to the title in the research agenda.

<sup>3</sup> The completion date for research projects may extend beyond initial projections due to the unpredictable nature of academic inquiry. Factors such as unanticipated challenges, the complexity of the research topic, and the iterative process of data collection and analysis can all contribute to the need for additional time.

1.	Impact of the Platform Economy or Gig Economy on the Insurance Sector and Regulatory Labour Framework	Durban University of Technology	Feb-20	Jun-22
2.	SMME (InsurTech) challenges in the sector and emerging new businesses resulting from digitalisation of the sector	Durban University of Technology	Jun-21	Jun-22
3.	Jobs to Occupations Analysis in the Insurance Sector	Durban University of Technology	Jun-21	Jun-22
4.	Impact of Covid-19 on Training and Development	DPRU - University of Cape Town	Aug-21	Aug-22
5.	Surveys: Impact of COVID-19 on the Insurance Sector	Durban University of Technology	Jan-21	Dec-22
6.	Green economy and the Insurance Sector	DPRU - University of Cape Town	Aug-21	Mar-23
7.	Job quality in INSETA firms	DPRU - University of Cape Town	Aug-20	Mar-23
8.	Learning and Career Articulation Pathways in the Insurance Sector	DPRU - University of Cape Town	Aug-20	Mar-23
9.	Towards building cybersecurity culture in TVET colleges - Impact assessment of behavioral change strategies	Durban University of Technology	Jan-20	Apr-23
10.	Sector Skills Plan Support 2023-2024	Durban University of Technology	Apr-23	Aug-23
11.	Retirement Planning Practices of Black South African Entrepreneurs/Business owners	University of Johannesburg	Mar-23	Aug-23
12.	Research Capacitation of TVET Colleges	Durban University of Technology	Jun-21	Mar-24



<b>13.</b>	An Exploration of the Impact of Drone Technology on South Africa's Insurance Sector: A Comprehensive Study of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)	Durban University of Technology	Jul-23	Mar-24
<b>14.</b>	Developing SME Critical and Scarce Skills for the Insurance Sector	University of KwaZulu-Natal	Mar-24	Sept-24
<b>15.</b>	Enhancing Skills Development for Insurance Professionals in the Face of Climate Change	University of KwaZulu-Natal	Apr-24	Mar-24
<b>16.</b>	Sector Skills Plan Support 2024-2025	Durban University of Technology	Feb-24	Aug-24
<b>17.</b>	Generative Artificial Intelligence Opportunities and Possibilities to Grow and Improve the Insurance Sector in South Africa	Durban University of Technology	Feb-24	Aug-24
<b>18.</b>	Formulation of a Body of Insurance Knowledge (Vol.3)	University of Witwatersrand	Apr-24	Mar-25
<b>19.</b>	Formulation of a Body of Insurance Knowledge (Vol.4)	University of Witwatersrand	Apr-26	Mar-27
<b>20.</b>	Collaborative Research Between UKZN and Elangeni TVET College	University of KwaZulu-Natal	TBC	TBC
<b>21.</b>	Research in the Development of CET Colleges	University of KwaZulu-Natal	Jun-24	Dec-24
<b>22.</b>	Transformation in the South African Insurance Sector: Past and Current State	University of KwaZulu-Natal	Aug-24	Mar-25
<b>23.</b>	Collaborative Research Between UKZN and TVET Colleges	University of KwaZulu-Natal	TBC	TBC
<b>24.</b>	Impact Study of INSETA Programmes from 2021 up to 2025	TBC	TBC	Mar-25

### **13. CONCLUSION**

The INSETA research agenda plays a crucial role in skills development by providing a structured framework for learning, fostering partnerships, nurturing critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, and enhancing communication and collaboration skills. By setting clear objectives and aligning efforts with research priorities, the INSETA can systematically develop and expand its skills development initiatives, enabling it to make valuable contributions in the insurance sector. Embracing the research agenda is essential for continuous skill development, professional growth, and staying at the forefront of knowledge and innovation.

## 14. REFERENCES

1. GCIS (2012). Amended Skills Development Act 26 of 2011. Available from: [https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis\\_document/201409/a262011.pdf](https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/a262011.pdf)
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8. Role and Purpose of a Research Agenda - <http://higheredprofessor.com/2017/09/25/role-purpose-research-agenda/>
9. Terms of Reference: Research and impact assessments on a yearly basis of INSETA learning programmes for a period of 3 years, INSETA Skills/Research Division, April 2024

**SIGN-OFF:**

Ms Lizelle van der Merwe

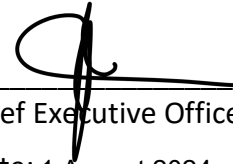


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INSETA Board Chairperson

Date: 1 August 2024

Ms Gugu Mkhize



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Chief Executive Officer

Date: 1 August 2024