



## **KSA 1# – Protocol:**

# **Encouraging DSA staff to publish**

**21 April 2021**

## ABBREVIATIONS AND MEANINGS

**KSA** – Key Strategic Area

**UFS** – University of the Free State

**DHET** – Department of Higher Education and Training

**SLE** – Senior Lecturer Equivalent (1 SLE is equal to the salary of a senior lecturer)

**ITP** – Integrated Transformation Plan

**DSA** – Division of Student Affairs

**SCD** – Student Counselling and Development

**ICT** – Information and Communication Technologies

**JSSA** – Journal of Student Affairs in Africa

**ACUHO-I** – Association of College and University Housing Officers – International

## Background

This initiative is imperative to promote professionalisation by encouraging writing for publication on topics that contribute to knowledge and advancement of practice in student affairs. The higher education sector is facing many challenges in addressing students' issues, which include, but are not limited to, intensifying residential inequality and financial exclusion. For these reasons, there is a growing need for student affairs practitioners to contribute towards solutions through engagement in scholarly research and journaling. The envisioned programme aims to achieve two core outcomes:

- i) *Promoting writing through presentation and engagement on the context of student affairs, and*
- ii) *Providing important steps to follow when dealing with scholarly writing.*

# 1. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE INITIATIVE

## Institutional importance

One of the institution's core functions is the ITP.

*“The university will have a differentiated research strategy that increases research productivity, performance, best practice, local application, and relevance. The UFS will also be established as a preferred academic knowledge partner that can conceptualise, develop, and successfully commercialise research activities, fostering an innovative and entrepreneurial culture.”*

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) also requires the UFS to consistently produce researched publications; to do this, each department must achieve a specific target to meet the set institutional goals. Some of these goals include the following:

- Becoming a research-led institution with excellent programmes
- Developing research skills of staff
- Attracting international stakeholders by producing quality research publications
- Increasing the institution's third-stream income

## Departmental requirements

- The DSA is expected to contribute to the institutional core functions and research targets by establishing internal research output goals.
- Contributing to the institutional advancement.
- By virtue of working in higher education, we are required to be data-driven and further motivate our functional existence through publishing.
- Writing to publish also contributes largely to professionalising the DSA environment and improving the effectiveness of our systems and programmes.
- Enhancing research output and using research to improve our systems in contributing to the transformation plan (ITP).
- Generating third-stream income for the DSA and the UFS.
- Generating a staff research entity (funds used by staff for research purposes).
- Increasing SLEs for the DSA, as well as the allocation of subsidies by DHET, through publishing in accredited journals.
- Developing research skills of staff members.
- Increasing intellectual property for the DSA and staff.

## 2. FRAMEWORK FOR PUBLISHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- Accredited journal – subsidy can be claimed from DHET.
- Non-accredited journal – subsidy cannot be claimed from DHET.
- Academic writing – formal writing intended for a scholarly or academic audience in a specific discipline. It is source-based with journal prerequisites.
- Non-academic writing – generally informal with a mass audience.

### Research output units include the following:

- Creative output (creative writing)
- Journal publications – articles and chapters
- Books
- Conference proceedings – published paper presented at a conference (conference proceedings are only accepted when the presentation is submitted as an article in the proceedings). The proceedings must adhere to DHET criteria.

### Important documents for staff:

- Department of Higher Education and Training List of Approved South African Journals (January 2020)
- Creative Outputs and Innovation Policy Implementation Guidelines 2019
- DHET Research Output Policy 2015
- UFS ITP Section 3.5, pages 7-8 [https://www.ufs.ac.za/docs/default-source/all-documents/the-ufs-integrated-transformation-plan7b62e2e65b146fc79f4fff0600aa9400.pdf?sfvrsn=d7768d21\\_0](https://www.ufs.ac.za/docs/default-source/all-documents/the-ufs-integrated-transformation-plan7b62e2e65b146fc79f4fff0600aa9400.pdf?sfvrsn=d7768d21_0)

### Recommended journals for DSA:

- **DHET Approved South African Journals (January 2020)** – see attachment
- ***Journal of Student Affairs in Africa (JSAA)***

The *Journal of Student Affairs in Africa (JSAA)* is an **independent, peer-reviewed, multidisciplinary, open-access academic journal** that publishes scholarly research and reflective discussions on the theory and practice of student affairs in Africa.

The details on the submission process can be accessed at the following link: <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/jssa>

- **Journal of College and University Student Housing** is the ACUHO-I's academic journal, providing readers with scholarly insight into housing and student affairs topics. Each year, ACUHO-I publishes three issues of the journal, delivering insightful and well-researched information that you can use to improve your campus housing operations. You may use the following link for more information <https://www.acuho-i.org/journal?portalid=0?portalid>

- **South African Journal of Psychiatry and South African Journal of Psychology** These are journals that the Student Counselling and Development (SCD) unit can use to publish. SCD can even publish in the **South African Medical Journal**.

<https://sajp.org.za/index.php/sajp>

<https://journals.sagepub.com/home/sap>

<http://www.samj.org.za/index.php/samj>

Only complete, peer-reviewed articles in journals are accepted for subsidy.

#### **The following types of articles are NOT subsidised according to the DHET Outputs Policy, 2015:**

- Correspondence to the editors
- Abstracts or extended abstracts
- Keynote addresses
- Obituaries
- Book reviews
- News articles
- Advertorials

#### **Other platforms where stories can be published:**

- **DSA Internal Storybook Collection** – new initiative\*\*  
It includes stories from staff in all divisions, sharing experiences in our respective spaces. This initiative requires a structured outline that highlights the types of stories required, followed by information sessions to provide staff members with more knowledge and useful guidelines that will inspire them to contribute to the DSA book.
- **UFS eDumela:** An arrangement has been made with the Department of Communication and Marketing for DSA staff to also use this platform for their writing.

Contact office:

Ms Amanda Tongha, [TonghaA@ufs.ac.za](mailto:TonghaA@ufs.ac.za) or  
Mr Lunga Luthuli ([LuthuliLL@ufs.ac.za](mailto:LuthuliLL@ufs.ac.za))  
Mr Thabo Kessah, [KessahT@ufs.ac.za](mailto:KessahT@ufs.ac.za)

The office accepts stories concerning staff, and news from divisions and departments. Staff members are also welcome to air their views in a column, short features, or snippets. A maximum word count of 400 words is accepted.

Departments are welcome to forward stories, suggestions/ideas for new editions.

This platform is an opportunity for DSA to get more exposure and share experiences with the UFS community at large.

- **Staff using their personal LinkedIn page to publish short stories:**

**LinkedIn** is a social network that focuses on professional networking and career development. However, it has established a professional platform that allows members to publish articles about their expertise and interests.

This will enable DSA staff to connect with different experts in their field of interest. The platform provides the advantage of promoting personal growth and encouraging DSA staff to share their experiences with the world. This will ultimately enhance interaction with potential external stakeholders of the university.

Specific training on the publication of articles will be arranged via LinkedIn for all DSA staff.

The aim is to provide an overview of steps you need to follow to publish through LinkedIn and to identify focus topics or focus areas that can be shared on LinkedIn.

- **Create a departmental blog for publication of stories and articles:**

**Purpose of the DSA blog**

Blogs are easily accessible, and anyone can share their experience, knowledge, and opinion. The blog will be an online hub for the department to store information and produce more articles. All staff members will be allowed to publish on the topic of their choice, which should align to the focus of the department. Students can also be encouraged to publish on the blog.

Publications may include the Student Toolkit, #WellbeingWarriors, and MindMatters, among others.

## Benefits

- The University of the Free State aspires to contribute locally and globally to knowledge production. The blog will make it easier for people to connect because of the articles published on the platform.
- This will also improve the university's rankings on search engines.
- The blog will promote the sharing of information on student affairs-related topics.
- It will promote online engagement with different university stakeholders and cultivate interest on the knowledge contribution by Student Affairs and the university.

## ICT Support

The ICT department will assist in creating a blog, inclusive of the required functions to allow writers to contribute their articles. The following steps would apply:

- Design of the blog
- Login credentials
- Piloting to staff
- Information session on the functions of the blog

## 3. KSA 1 DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR DSA

- Create opportunities for DSA staff to develop/improve their research and writing skills.
- Enhance knowledge of what the publishing process entails.
- Provide evidence of improved quality and quantity publications from DSA.  
KSA 1# and the Research office is to create a publication track sheet for departments to assist the divisions in saving the evidence. The sheet may indicate the preferred or defined types of recognised publications, a column to indicate the number of publications, and a column to indicate publication evidence (e.g., link to a publication).
- Produce publications that earn subsidy for the institution from DHET and increase SLEs.
- Create an internal platform for DSA staff to submit stories that will culminate in a book publication – creative outputs.
- Give official/ formal recognition to staff for publishing – create a DSA writers' wall at the Steve Biko Building; SA Awards: research incentives entity.

### Collaborations:

- KSA 2 – assist with postgraduate list for staff; share ideas on the writing-support programme initiative created by KSA 2; provide support with the process of encouraging staff to publish and present at the DSA Colloquium; support with the DSA story collection book idea by KSA 1.
- Arts and Culture – share ideas on creative publishing output and launch of the book.

### Hosting of virtual inspirational and skills development sessions:

- Virtual launch:  
Highlight the purpose of the initiative; communicate desired outcomes and plans, with the timeline.  
Importance of publishing and increasing research outputs for the institution by Prof Puleng LenkaBula;  
The context of Student Affairs: Overview and developments by Mr Pura Mgolombane.
- Difference between scholarly writing and non-academic writing  
Unpacking different types of scholarly writing: research focus article, reflective article, and review article.
- How to publish an academic research paper: approach and steps to follow.
- Creative publishing in higher education.

## 4. ACTION PLAN TO ACHIEVE DESIRED KSA 1 OUTCOMES AND INCREASE PUBLICATIONS BY DSA STAFF

|    | Tasks   | Desired outcomes   | Status   |
|----|---|--|----------|
| 1. | Provide a list of online courses and workshops from the Postgraduate School | -To ensure that all members are well informed about online courses offered by the Postgraduate School. | Ongoing  |
| 2. | Add DSA Research office and KSA1# staff to UFS Research                     | To receive training and ensure that  | Achieved |



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|    | Development mailing list – Lelani Oosthuizen  | DSA’s research and publications are aligned with the requirements and timeline of the institution’s RIMS office.   |   |
| 3. | Add DSA Research office and KSA1# staff to UFS Research Development mailing list (Creative Writing) – Themba Masiba | To receive training and ensure that DSA research and publications are aligned with the requirements and timeline of the institution’s RIMS office.   | Achieved  |
| 4. | Host a virtual launch of the initiative via Zoom  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To demonstrate the importance of research that culminates in writing and publishing in journals, promoting knowledge-based practice in student affairs and institutions of higher education.</li> <li>- Encouraging DSA staff to become involved in academic and non-academic writing.</li> </ul> | <p>Achieved</p> <p>-The launch was held on 10 September 2020 from 10:00 to 12:00.<br/>Guest speakers:<br/>Former Dean - Mr Pura Mgolombane, and former VC - Prof Puleng LenkaBula</p> |
| 6. | Information session to provide staff with knowledge on the process of publishing academic writing                   | To ensure that all DSA staff are knowledgeable and informed about the steps to consider when writing for publication.  | 19 February 2021<br>Achieved  |

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|    |   | -To clearly demonstrate the proper process to be followed.  |                           |
| 7. | Session with a well-established creative writer to encourage and give insight to staff members – collaborate with the Arts and Culture Office | To link DSA staff with prominent publishers.<br><br>-To invite a prominent creative writer to inspire and motivate DSA staff to engage in creative writing.<br>- To expand relationships between various stakeholders and offices to fulfil the goal of publishing. | 19 March 2021<br>Achieved |
| 8. | Ethical clearance and RIMS discussion   | An information session to educate staff on the process and importance of ethical clearance.   | 26 March 2021<br>Achieved |
| 9. | LinkedIn training   | Training for staff on populating the article section and enhancing their profiles.  | 9 April 2020<br>Achieved  |
| 9. | Snowball writing exercise/competition   | - Initiative to implement what was shared during the creative writing workshop, by means of an office-format exercise/competition.<br>- Each department determines a relevant theme, after which each staff member writes a   | April/May 2021            |

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|     |  | paragraph, passes it on to the next, etc., until a final product can be delivered.<br>- Incentives to be provided.   |  |
| 10. | Establish a DSA Writers' Wall – public recognition                       | -To honour and publicly recognise contributions by DSA staff who have published articles and books; to inspire other staff members to write and publish; to achieve the institutional goals.<br>-To ensure that the DSA space reflects institutional values. | In progress:<br>two design options from Stephen Collet and/or virtual wall on relevant platform(s), e.g., DSA webpage, Staff Support Bb page, etc. |
| 11. | Submit a budget proposal for the DSA book, e.g., editing, printing, etc. | To evaluate the overall cost and seek financial support to achieve desired goals of the project.   | 31 May 2021  |
| 12. | Forward framework and requirements for stories to appear in the DSA book | To provide clear guidelines and requirements for the book.<br>-To ensure focus points and subjects of interests in line with student affairs themes that would enhance development.<br>-To promote ethical conduct in writing.                               | 30 June 2021   |
| 13. | Deadline for submission of stories – DSA book                            | To ensure enough time to submit for editing and peer   | 29 July 2022   |

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|     |   | review before final approval to publish.  |                                       |
| 14. | Submit combined stories in book format – creative writing for peer review | To ensure enough time to submit for editing and peer review before final approval to publish. | 30 September 2022                     |
| 15. | Create a blog   | DSA blog for articles, stories, and engagement.   | In progress with assistance from ICT. |

## 5. RECOMMENDATION: APPOINTMENT OF AN AD HOC ASSISTANT IN THE DSA RESEARCH OFFICE

KSA 1 proposes the appointment of a research assistant at the research desk as additional support for Mr Ruben Langenhoven. The assistant's role will be to provide support with additional administrative duties related to the writing for publishing project.

The assistant will also gather information about events/projects/programmes within DSA. This would entail sending a template to DSA departments, which should be completed with information on relevant events/projects/programmes, as well as pictures. The information can then be shared with the Department of Communication and Marketing from ONE central point. It can be combined in an annual report to showcase work per department, and it can be shared with staff, students, and alumni as a short newsletter every quarter. We believe this will take us forward in terms of marketing and showcasing our offerings and services.

### Contact list:

Research Development

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