

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA internship and work-integrated learning programmes directly supports youth development, skills transfer, and workplace readiness
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The Public Servants Association (PSA), against the backdrop of persistently high youth unemployment in South Africa and graduate unemployment remaining a critical socio-economic challenge, continues to position the Union as a leading platform for youth development, skills transfer, and workplace readiness.

Aligned with national priorities and global best-practice benchmarks, the PSA has embedded structured Internship and Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) programmes into the Union's broader organisational strategy. Through strategic partnerships with Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), the PSA has successfully implemented five internship programmes and one WIL programme over the past three years, creating meaningful developmental opportunities for 45 young people. These initiatives are designed to bridge the well-documented gap between academic learning and workplace capability, an area globally recognised as a key barrier to youth employment.

The PSA provides immersive, real-work environments where participants are entrusted with meaningful responsibilities that contribute directly to organisational objectives. This model reflects international best practice, which demonstrates that experiential learning, mentoring, and exposure to organisational systems significantly improve graduate employability outcomes. As a result, the PSA has recorded strong impact metrics, including the absorption of ten interns into permanent roles in the Union, whilst several others have secured employment externally before programme completion. All participants exit the programme with enhanced technical competencies, workplace readiness, and professional confidence, positioning them competitively in the labour market.

The PSA's workplace model responds directly to employer expectations by focusing on technical skills development and the cultivation of critical behavioural competencies, including professionalism, resilience, adaptability, and emotional intelligence, attributes consistently identified in research as essential for long-term career success.

Building on this track record, the PSA has entered into a new partnership with the ETDP SETA, enabling the launch of the Union's largest intake to date. A cohort of 25 interns will commence on 1 July 2026, participating in a structured 24-month programme across eleven PSA offices. This initiative reinforces the PSA's role as a national leader in public-sector capacity building and youth empowerment.

Through these programmes, the PSA contributes to addressing systemic unemployment challenges and strengthens its own organisational capability by cultivating a pipeline of skilled, values-driven talent aligned to the Union's mission. This dual impact, societal contribution, and organisational sustainability positions the PSA as a benchmark institution in internship and WIL programme implementation in the public-sector landscape.

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