

SAPSI Recruitment and Selection Policy (Summary)

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Compiled By: Quality Assurance Officer

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Preamble

SAPSI's **Recruitment and Selection Policy** (effective Jan 2025) is designed to attract, develop, and retain skilled, ethical, and diverse staff through transparent and fair hiring. It aligns with South Africa's constitutional and labour-mandated principles of equality and fairness. In particular, public service recruitment must **reflect national diversity** and be based on competence and impartiality while also remedying historical disadvantages. The policy explicitly commits to merit-based hiring, transformation (employment equity), and full legal compliance throughout the process.

Legal and Policy Framework

SAPSI's policy is anchored in key laws and regulations that govern employment in South Africa:

- **Constitution (1996):** Guarantees equality and prohibits unfair discrimination on grounds like race, gender, etc. It also enshrines the right to "fair labour practices".
- **Employment Equity Act (EEA, 1998):** Requires affirmative action to **redress disadvantages** faced by designated groups (Black people, women, people with disabilities) and achieve equitable representation.
- **Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA, 1997):** Sets **minimum employment standards** (hours, leave, notice, etc.) which must be met in all contracts. Employers may offer better but not worse conditions than BCEA minima.
- **Labour Relations Act (LRA, 1995):** Affirms the right to fair labour practices and regulates collective aspects of employment. Combined with the Constitution, it underpins the policy's emphasis on fair treatment and grievance resolution.
- **Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA, 1993):** Mandates employers to ensure the health and safety of employees at work. SAPSI must provide a safe workplace and comply with OHS requirements for new hires.
- **Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (COIDA, 1993):** Requires compensation for workers injured on the job, ensuring employees' rights to injury benefits are preserved.
- **Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (PEPUDA, 2000):** Enforces Section 9 of the Constitution by outlawing unfair discrimination and promoting equality. The recruitment policy prohibits any form of bias or harassment in hiring.
- **Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA, 2013):** Governs the processing of personal data. SAPSI's policy mandates confidentiality of applicant information and lawful handling of records per POPIA. In practice, candidates' personal data may be processed only with consent and for recruitment purposes.
- Other relevant acts (Skills Development Acts, Promotion of Access to Information Act, etc.) guide training, transparency, and data access. In sum, the policy ensures all steps comply with the above legislation.

Policy Objectives

The policy aims to:

- **Recruit competent, ethical, and diverse staff.** Emphasizing both merit and diversity, in line with constitutional values.

- **Ensure fair, inclusive, and transparent hiring.** All candidates get equal consideration and clear information about opportunities.
- **Support Employment Equity (EE) goals.** Actively promote designated groups (race, gender, disability) to remedy past inequities.
- **Standardize recruitment practices.** Apply consistent, documented procedures across SAPSI to ensure accountability.
- **Ensure legislative compliance.** Adhere strictly to labour, equity, safety, and privacy laws at each step.

These objectives reflect both **meritocracy** and **affirmative action**: recruiting the best-qualified candidates while advancing inclusion.

Scope of Application

This policy covers virtually all SAPSI personnel appointments, including:

- Permanent and fixed-term employees
- Interns and trainees
- Contract facilitators or subject-matter experts
- Project- or contract-based staff

All such appointments must follow the procedures and principles below, unless a formal exemption is approved.

Recruitment Principles

The policy establishes the following guiding principles for recruitment:

- **Merit-based selection:** Candidates are chosen on the basis of qualifications, skills and suitability for the job. The selection process centers on the *inherent requirements of the position*.
- **Fairness and non-discrimination:** No candidate will face unfair bias on any prohibited ground (race, gender, etc.). Reasonable accommodation is provided where needed (e.g. for disabilities), and all advertisement language and criteria avoid excluding any group.
- **Transparency and accountability:** Vacancy announcements, selection criteria, and decisions are documented. SAPSI will advertise vacancies widely (see below) so all qualified persons are aware of opportunities. Selection panels explain and record their decisions.
- **Confidentiality:** All applicant data (resumes, test results, medical info) is handled in strict confidence, in compliance with POPIA.
- **Transformation and diversity:** In line with EE law, the policy actively promotes diversity. Selection processes encourage applications from designated groups, and selection panels include representation from these groups where possible.

These principles ensure recruitment is ethical, legal, and aligned with SAPSI's values.

Recruitment Procedures

Vacancy Approval

Before advertising, a vacancy must be fully justified and documented. This includes: a business case explaining the need, an updated organizational chart, and a clear job description/profile. These ensure that the role is legitimate and needed, and establish the competencies required (qualification, experience, skills).

Advertising of Posts

Vacancies are normally advertised both internally and externally. The goal is to reach “*the entire pool of potential applicants, especially historically disadvantaged*” individuals. Advertisements must clearly state the job title, core functions, and prerequisites. For senior posts (e.g. level 13 and above), national advertising is required. Lower-level posts must be advertised internally at minimum and may also be opened to the wider public to attract diverse applicants. SAPSI may also use an employment agency, provided it follows public service regulations.

Advertisements will highlight SAPSI’s commitment to EE (e.g. “SAPSI is an equal opportunity employer”) and include clear instructions for application. Care is taken to place ads in media that reach underrepresented communities, avoiding biased language or exclusive venues.

Headhunting and Special Recruitment

Headhunting or targeted recruitment (nominating specific candidates) is used only in exceptional cases – typically when **scarce or highly specialized skills** are needed. Such approaches require prior approval from SAPSI’s executive management to ensure transparency. Even when headhunting, SAPSI remains committed to equity: any person recruited this way should still support SAPSI’s transformation goals.

Selection Process

Selection Committee

For each vacancy a **selection committee** is appointed. Consistent with public service norms, the committee must have at least **three members**. Members are chosen to ensure diversity: in practice the panel will include different races and genders, and where possible a member of a designated group. The panel should include a senior manager (of higher grade than the post) as chair, plus other qualified officials (or external experts) of equal or higher grading. Lower-graded staff may support the committee in an advisory capacity but cannot vote.

All panel members must declare any conflicts of interest and recuse themselves if they have a personal stake in any candidate. This ensures an objective and credible process. The committee is responsible for vetting candidates, conducting interviews/tests, and recommending the best match for the job.

Interviews and Assessments

All applicants who meet the minimum criteria are *shortlisted* for interview. Each shortlisted candidate is interviewed by the committee. The interviews assess both technical skills and alignment with SAPSI's values. The committee may also use standardized assessments (e.g. technical tests, psychometric tests, or skills simulations) to evaluate candidates objectively. Psychometric or other assessment tools are administered only by qualified professionals to ensure validity.

Feedback (if requested) and final results are communicated in writing. The top candidate is recommended for appointment, with at least one backup in case the preferred choice declines.

Reference and Credential Checks

Before finalizing an appointment, SAPSI conducts thorough background checks on the recommended candidate. This includes:

- **Qualification Verification:** All academic and professional credentials are verified. Foreign qualifications must be evaluated through SAQA's formal process to confirm equivalence in South Africa. This safeguards against fraudulent degrees.
- **Reference Checks:** At least two previous employers are contacted to confirm the candidate's work history and performance. (As a public entity, SAPSI may contact prior government departments or institutions as needed.)
- **Legal Checks:** Where legally permissible, criminal record and credit checks are performed for posts that require high integrity (e.g. financial or sensitive positions).

These steps ensure the candidate's background is legitimate and trustworthy.

Appointment and Probation

Once the selection committee's recommendation is approved, a formal written offer of employment is issued. The offer specifies the position, salary, and conditions. Employment is contingent on passing all verification checks and, for foreign nationals, securing a valid work permit. SAPSI generally gives preference to South African citizens, in accordance with local labour requirements; however, critical foreign candidates may be hired if they bring essential skills and agree to mentor local staff.

All new appointments are **probationary** for an initial 3-month period. During probation, the employee's performance is monitored against a Development Plan. Probation may be extended once (for a justified additional period) if performance issues need further evaluation. At the end of probation, the manager conducts a formal review: if requirements are met, the appointment is confirmed; otherwise, it may be terminated in line with fair labour practices.

Employment Equity

Employment Equity (EE) goals are integral to the policy. SAPSI prioritizes candidates from designated groups whenever suitably qualified applicants are available. In practice:

- Job adverts explicitly encourage applications from EE target groups.

- Shortlisting and selection processes are monitored to ensure no qualified designated candidate is unfairly excluded.
- Any decision to appoint a candidate *not* from a designated group (when a qualified designated candidate was available) requires written approval from the CEO, to ensure oversight and compliance.

SAPSI reports on recruitment equity every quarter, tracking the representation of designated groups in hires. This aligns with the EEA's mandate to implement affirmative action and eliminate workplace disparities.

Re-Employment and Post-Retirement Appointments

SAPSI allows **re-employment of former employees** subject to need and past performance. Retirees may be rehired on renewable 12-month contracts, especially to fill expertise gaps, provided it complies with pension regulations.

For academic staff (e.g. former professors or public administration experts), returning retirees are encouraged to take on mentoring or training roles. This leverages their experience to build capacity among junior staff.

Roles and Responsibilities

Recruitment tasks are shared as follows:

- **Chief Executive Officer** – Policy owner; ensures implementation across SAPSI, and oversees amendments as laws change.
- **Human Resources Unit** – Facilitates the process: prepares adverts, coordinates shortlisting and interviews, conducts background checks, and reports on compliance (e.g. EE statistics). HR also advises hiring managers on legislation (BCEA, EEA, etc.) during recruitment.
- **Operations Manager** – Works with HR to define the job (drafting the job description/profile) and sits on the selection committee. The manager also plans onboarding for the new hire and sets performance goals.
- **Selection Committee Members** – Carry out interviews and assessments objectively, record their evaluations, and recommend candidates based on merit.

Each party must perform its duties transparently and document decisions, supporting accountability and fairness.

Monitoring and Review

To stay current with law and best practices, the policy is formally reviewed every **three years** or sooner if needed. Any changes (due to new legislation or organizational shifts) require Board approval. The Executive Director: Corporate Services monitors adherence to the policy (e.g. through audit of hiring files) and recommends adjustments. This ensures SAPSI's recruitment approach remains effective, lawful, and aligned with its strategic goals.

Sources: The above summary is based on SAPSI's own policy provisions and relevant South African legislation and guidelines, ensuring consistency with national

Document Control

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1.0	01 July 2025	30 June 2026	Quality Assurance	Chief Executive Officer

Name & Designation	Signature	Date
Chief Executive Officer		1 August 2025