



## **THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ESWATINI EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (SERA)**

### **PREAMBLE**

The establishment of the Eswatini Educational Research Association is motivated by the need to form a non-profit making, voluntary association for the development and promotion of educational research in the Kingdom of Eswatini. This Association will be guided by the articles stated below.

### **1.0 NAME OF THE ASSOCIATION**

- 1.1 The name of the association shall be THE ESWATINI EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (SERA) hereinafter referred to as “the association.”
- 1.2 The Headquarters of the Association shall be based at Dean’s Office in the Faculty of Education at the University of Eswatini.

### **2.0 INTERPRETATION OF TERMS**

- 2.0 “Association” shall mean the Eswatini Educational Research Association.
- 2.1 Executive Committee” shall mean the governing body of the Association appointed in terms in this Constitution.

### **3.0 AIMS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

- 3.1 To encourage, co-ordinate and facilitate educational research;
- 3.2 To identify and prioritize research areas, paying special attention to the practical problems that are relevant to the Kingdom of Eswatini;
- 3.3 To facilitate the publication of research contributing to the advancement of education both at a practical and theoretical level in the Kingdom of Eswatini;
- 3.4 To hold conferences, seminars and workshops on educational research;
- 3.5 To co-operate with other organisations with similar research aims to those of the association and;
- 3.6 To promote the research capabilities and skills of its members.

### **4.0 MEMBERSHIP**

- 4.1 Membership shall be constituted by the following categories:-
  - 4.1.1 Full membership: shall be open to persons with an active interest in educational research and who pay the annual subscription fees.
  - 4.1.2 Students Membership: shall be open to students registered with a recognised institution and have an interest in educational research. Student members shall be eligible to participate in all activities of the Association upon payment of an annual student subscription fee.
  - 4.1.3 Associate Membership: shall be open to persons interested in receiving publications and attending conferences of the association, and who pay an annual subscription fee.

- 4.1.4 “Honorary membership” shall be conferred by the association, at the recommendation of the Executive Committee, on persons who have made outstanding contributions to the field of educational research in Eswatini.  
Payment of annual subscriptions fee shall be waived for honorary members.
- 4.2 A person desiring to join the association shall lodge an application form with the Secretary. Such application shall be considered and decided upon by the Executive Committee.
- 4.3 Subscription for members shall be due and payable on the **1<sup>st</sup> day of July** in each year.
- 4.4 Any member intending to resign from the Association shall in writing notify the Secretary of such intention to resign on or before the **30<sup>th</sup> June** in any year, and shall otherwise be liable for his or her subscription for the ensuing year.

## **5.0 RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS**

- 5.1 Every member shall have the same constitutional rights and shall be bound by the same constitutional responsibilities.
- 5.2 Every member shall promote the aims and interests of SERA.
- 5.3 An officer who vacates office for any reason shall surrender to relevant executive all property, books and funds. Failure thereto shall result in a legal action taken against the offender.

## **6.0 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND TERMS OF OFFICE**

- 6.1 The Executive committee shall consist of **seven** (7) members of the Association namely: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson or Chairperson elect, Secretary, Vice Secretary, Treasurer and two other members elected into the Committee.
- 6.2 The Executive Committee shall be elected at an Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Association and shall hold office for **three** years; however the office of the Chairperson shall not be contested for election.
- 6.3 Notwithstanding the end of tenure of office of the Executive Committee and holding of an election, the person holding office of Vice Chairperson shall become Chairperson for a period of **two** years without being elected to such office.
- 6.4 Functions of the Executive Committee are to:-
- 6.4.1 register the Association under law.
- 6.4.2 co-opt for a period or for the remainder of a year, members of the Association into temporary vacancies in the Executive Committee caused by the death, resignation, suspension or expulsion of any of its members.
- 6.4.3 appoint sub-committees for special purposes,
- 6.4.4 co-opt any member of the Association whose services may be deemed necessary and shall be mandated to establish or form any committee as and when the need arises.
- 6.4.5 appoint Association staff and where means permit, such appointment shall be on full time or part-time basis.
- 6.4.6 suspend or dismiss any Association employee.
- 6.5 The executive committee shall meet at least **once every three months**.

- 6.6 The officers shall prepare and present reports which are explicit and in practical terms to the membership.
- 6.7 The committee shall ensure the roles allocated to specific Stakeholders are executed during each year such as University of Eswatini (UNISWA) and the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET).

## **7.0 DUTIES OF OFFICE BEARERS**

### 7.1 The Chairperson shall:

- 7.1.1 chair all meetings of SERA.
- 7.1.2 represent SERA at official functions;
- 7.1.3 call and chair meetings of the Executive committee;
- 7.1.4 together with the Treasurer and / or Secretary, sign all cheques for disbursing SERA funds;
- 7.1.5 hold a casting vote in case of a tie

### 7.2 The Vice Chairperson or Chairperson elect shall:

- 7.2.1 chair meetings during the absence of the Chairperson;
- 7.2.2 work with the Chairperson to ensure a smooth transition for the coming year in which the Vice-Chairperson shall become Chairperson;

### 7.3 The Secretary shall:

- 7.3.1 produce announcements of meetings for approval of the Executive Committee;
- 7.3.2 circulate meeting announcements to all members of SERA;
- 7.3.3 minute the procedures of the official meetings;
- 7.3.4 circulate the minutes of meetings to members;
- 7.3.5 reproduce material related to research funding sources and other information needed by the members of SERA;
- 7.3.6 serve as co-signatory for cheques for disbursements of SERA funds and;
- 7.3.7 be overseer of employees of the Association.

### 7.4 The Vice Secretary shall:

- 7.4.1 act in the absence of the Secretary.
- 7.4.2 collaborate with the Secretary in executing all duties.

### 7.5 The Treasurer shall:

- 7.5.1 deposit in a registered commercial bank monies that are accrued from membership fees and other research grants;
- 7.5.2 prepare reports for the Association on the current status of funds;
- 7.5.3 pay bills that are incurred as a direct function of the Association and;
- 7.5.4 serve as a co-signatory for cheques for disbursement of SERA funds.

### 7.6 Additional members shall:

- 7.6.1 aid in meetings and organise rooms and media facilities for use during meetings of the Association
- 7.6.2 work with the Chairperson to ensure a smooth transition for the coming year in which the Vice-Chairperson shall become Chairperson and;

7.6.3 carry out duties assigned by the Chairperson.

## 8.0 EMPLOYEES OF THE ASSOCIATION

- 8.1 Funds permitting, the Association shall appoint full-time or part time staff as and when the need arises.
- 8.1.1 Such appointments shall be made by the Executive committee.
- 8.1.2 The most senior officer; the Administrative Secretary shall be an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee but shall have no voting rights.
- 8.1.3 The authority to appoint or dismiss fulltime staff of the Association shall be vested in the Executive Committee which shall determine the duties and conditions of service and remuneration of these officers.
- 8.1.4 The Administrative Secretary shall administer and supervise the operations of the SERA office. S/he shall discharge duties and functions as directed by the SERA Executive Committee and shall be directly supervised by the Association's Secretary.

## 9.0 MEETINGS

- 9.1 An Annual General Meeting of members shall be held soon after the end of the Association's financial year as may be convenient, but not later than **30<sup>th</sup> September** of each year. The meeting shall include on its agenda:-
- 9.1.1 Presentation of an annual report by the Secretary and an audited financial statement by the Treasurer, as approved by the Executive Committee;
- 9.1.2 Election of the Executive Committee, save that the office of the Chairperson shall be filled in accordance with Article 6.3 hereof;
- 9.1.3 Such other matters as the Executive Committee may deem fit.
- 9.1.4 Any other business approved by the Executive Committee.
- 9.2 General Meetings shall be convened by the Secretary, who shall give notice in writing to all members; such notice shall be given not less than a month before the date of such meeting and such notice shall set-out the agenda, time and venue of the meeting.
- 9.3 A Special General Meeting of members may be held at any time on the written request, which shall set out the purpose of the meeting, to the Secretary of;-
- 9.3.1 at least one quarter of the voting members.
- 9.3.2 the Executive Committee and / or;
- 9.3.3 in the absence of a quorum of the committee, by the chairperson.
- 9.4 An emergency General Meeting may be convened by the secretary on **seven (7)** days' notice on the written request of:-
- 9.4.1 The Executive Committee and/or
- 9.4.2 In the absence of a quorum, of the Executive Committee; by the chairperson.
- 9.5 The quorum for the Annual General Meetings and for the Special General Meetings or Emergency General Meetings, shall be one quarter of the total registered voting members. If, after the first attempt to conduct the Annual General Meeting, there is still no quorum, those members present and eligible to vote at such meetings shall constitute the quorum.

- 9.6 A Special General Meeting or an Emergency General Meeting shall have the power to raise, discuss and decide only such specific matters as have been set-out for consideration in the notice of such meeting.
- 9.7 At any meeting of the association only full members shall be entitled to vote.

#### 10.0 FINANCE

- 10.1 The financial year of the Association shall commence on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of July each year and terminate on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of June of the following year.
- 10.2 There shall be a finance policy outlining the handling and operations of finances in the Association.

#### 11.0 ELECTIONS

- 11.1 Each individual member shall be entitled to one vote at Annual General or Special General Meetings. Each institution member shall similarly be entitled to one vote.
- 11.2 Nomination for the Executive Committee shall be either in writing, at least **fourteen (14)** days before the date of the meeting, or verbally at the meeting. Either method shall be duly seconded.
- 11.3 Decisions shall be taken by simple majority of members present and voting, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote except for Constitutional amendments. Such voting shall be by now a show of hands, except that decisions shall be by ballot on a motion to that effect by a member duly seconded.
- 11.4 At least **three** members of the Executive Committee shall be elected at an Annual General or Special Meetings in the following order; Chairperson elect, Secretary and one member; then in the next elections the Treasurer, Vice Secretary and one member.

#### 12.0 POWERS AND LIMITATION

- 12.1 All officers have a collective responsibility to the execution of their duties.
- 12.2 No officer shall exercise powers that are not conferred and derived from the constitution.

#### 13.0 MISCONDUCT

A member may be suspended, or expelled, by the Executive Committee, for the miscarriage of any provision of this Constitution, which charges shall be put to the member who shall be given the opportunity to defend him/herself or offer an explanation. Any member aggrieved by the decision of the Executive Committee shall have the right to appeal against such decision to the Annual General Meeting, whose decision by a majority of members present and voting shall be final.

#### 14.0 AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION

The constitution of the Association may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting at a General Meeting of the Association as a Special General Meeting summoned for this purpose. Full notice of proposed amendments shall be provided by the secretary to all members at least one month before the date of the meeting which is to consider the amendments.

#### 15.0 DISSOLUTION

- 15.1 The association may be dissolved by a **three-quarters** ( $3/4$ ) majority of the members present and voting at a duly constituted General Meeting of the Association specially called to consider such dissolution. Full notice of the proposed dissolution shall be given to all members at least **one month** before the date of such meeting.
- 15.2 On dissolution, the assets and liabilities of the Association shall be disposed of according to the wishes of the members present and voting at the meeting.

---

## **BY-LAWS AND RULES OF PROCEDURE**

The Association may adopt such Bylaws as are necessary for its operation by a majority of the active members present and voting at any Annual General Meeting of the Association. Such Bylaws shall not be in conflict with the provisions of the constitution. Bylaws or their modification may be proposed by an active member of the Association.

There shall be By-laws and procedures to regulate various aspects of the constitution. These by-laws shall be structured by sub-committees appointed at an Annual General Meeting or by the Executive Committee to regulate:-

1. Finance policy
2. Discipline of members
3. Grievance handling and procedures
4. Key stakeholders and their role in the Association
5. Conflict resolution mechanism