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# Guidelines on the Drafting of Interim and Final Reports for VPET Leading Houses

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Basis for VPET research

The Swiss Federal Administration initiates and supports research referred to as federal policy research. This research is carried out in the public interest and provides findings the Federal Administration needs to fulfil its tasks. These include, for example, the development of evidence-based foundations for policy development in various policy areas, for implementation work within the framework of legal requirements, for legislative work or for responding to and implementing parliamentary initiatives. The legal basis for federal policy research is provided in particular by the Federal Act on the Promotion of Research and Innovation ([RIPA](#), Art. 16) as well as special legal provisions and international agreements.<sup>1</sup>

Federal policy research in the area of vocational and professional education and training (VPET) is managed and coordinated by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI)<sup>2</sup>. It is based on the special legal principles in accordance with the Vocational and Professional Education and Training Act ([VPETA](#), Art. 4) and the Vocational and Professional Education and Training Ordinance ([VPETO](#), Art. 2). The aims of SERI's VPET research can be summarized as follows:

- Establishment of sustainable VPET research structures in Switzerland that conduct research according to internationally recognised standards of scientific excellence
- Informing VPET policy and practice on the basis of research findings
- Evidence-based development of the Swiss VPET system

### 1.2 Leading House funding

To achieve these objectives, SERI provides, among other measures, funding to centres of competence in a key VPET area. The tasks of these so-called Leading Houses, which are directed by one or more university chairs, include researching their focus area, disseminating and valorising research findings, promoting young researchers, and formation of networks. Leading House funding pursues the overarching goal of consolidating the established structures in the long term and making them financially independent of SERI funding. Leading Houses are tendered by SERI as required.

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<sup>1</sup> Federal government research: [www.ressortforschung.admin.ch/rsf/de/home.html](http://www.ressortforschung.admin.ch/rsf/de/home.html)

<sup>2</sup> SERI research on VPET: <https://www.sbf.admin.ch/sbf/en/home/education/berufsbildungssteuerung-und--politik/vet-pet-research.html>

## 1.3 Quality assurance

The demands placed on the Leading Houses funded by SERI are high. When assessing and maintaining quality, SERI is advised by the Scientific Advisory Committee for VPET Research. This committee is made up of renowned experts from various fields and scientific disciplines. New research proposals are reviewed by the Scientific Advisory Committee and submitted for international review. In addition, the Scientific Advisory Board also reviews all interim and final reports of the Leading House. And finally, each Leading House has its own Advisory Board consisting of experts in the field of the Leading House that meet once per year to discuss and advise the Leading House and write a report on the Leading House's development for SERI.

## 1.4 Purpose of guidelines

For the purpose of quality assurance, SERI regularly requires progress reports on funded projects. As a rule, these interim and final reports serve as a prerequisite for the disbursement of further funding and are therefore examined in detail.

In order for the reporting process to run smoothly, it is important that reports satisfy a number of formal and scientific criteria. This document is intended for those responsible for a VPET Leading House to help them prepare interim and final reports. This document thus provides information about the expected content of Leading House reports as well as on the report examination processes.

## 2. Leading House Reports

### 2.1. Address for submission

Interim and final reports must be submitted to SERI in both electronic ([bbfo@sbfi.admin.ch](mailto:bbfo@sbfi.admin.ch)) and hard-copy form to:

State Secretariat for Education,  
Research and Innovation SERI  
VPET Research  
Einsteinstrasse 2  
CH-3003 Bern

### 2.2. Reporting form

The 'Reporting Form for Leading Houses' is available for download on the SERI webpage for VPET research<sup>3</sup>. This reporting form should be used when submitting Leading House reports.

### 2.3. Scope and level of detail of reporting

Leading House interim reports should comprise (excluding all appendices and enclosures) a maximum of 25 pages in font size 11 or 12 pts. The final report should be a maximum of 50 pages.

The reports should be drawn up in such detail that they are understandable without knowledge of the research application or appendices. References to appendices should be avoided and key points from the research application should be briefly reiterated in the report (questions, hypotheses, theoretical and methodological aspects, etc.).

The wording and terminology used should be chosen so that the reports can be easily understood by experts from other scientific disciplines.

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<sup>3</sup> 'Reporting Form for Leading Houses': <https://www.sbfi.admin.ch/sbfi/en/home/education/berufsbildungssteuerung-und-politik/vet-pet-research.html>

## 2.4. Content

The report should give a broad picture of the Leading House as a whole. The first section should present the organisational structure (if possible) in graphic form and give an overview over the locations where the Leading House is active, the persons involved and their responsibilities. Furthermore, it should describe the overall concept of the Leading House and provide information on the newest developments of the Leading House overall.

The research section should contain a brief presentation of the individual sub-projects, without going into great detail. Two or three (prototypical, central) sub-projects can be described in more detail.

The remaining sections should focus on the other Leading House activities, i.e. support for young researchers, network formation, knowledge transfer and institutionalization, and inform along the criteria strengths, weaknesses and notable developments.

The instructions on the 'Reporting Form for Leading Houses' indicate in more detail what information should be provided in each section.

## 2.5. Enclosures

Each report must be accompanied by an updated abstract of the Leading House's work. The length of this abstract should be between 200 - 400 words. SERI will have the abstract translated into the languages German, French and/or Italian, as well as into English. The abstracts will be posted on SERI's VPET webpage as well as on the ARAMIS information system website<sup>4</sup>.

In addition, a financial report and/or a report on the use of research findings must be submitted at contractually agreed times.

## 2.6. Submission deadline and extension of deadlines

Generally speaking, the contractually agreed submission deadlines shall apply. However, as the scientific evaluation of reports takes place at the meetings of the Scientific Advisory Committee for VPET Research, it is usually possible to request an extension of the deadline up to at least five weeks before the next scheduled meeting. Longer deadline extensions must be contractually agreed upon.

Researchers wishing to apply for an extension of the deadline are requested to contact SERI in good time. The dates for the meetings of the Scientific Advisory Committee are posted on the SERI website<sup>5</sup>.

## 3. Review of reports

After SERI receives a report, it will be examined by SERI and the Scientific Advisory Committee for VPET Research. A report may be accepted or returned for revision:

<b>Report accepted</b>	If the submitted report is well received, the work in the project can be continued according to plan.  If grants are contractually contingent upon acceptance of the report, an invoice may now be sent to SERI.
<b>Report returned for revision</b>	If the report is returned for revision, this means that certain improvements are necessary. The letter announcing the decision made by SERI and the Scientific Advisory Committee lists the improvements to be made.

<sup>4</sup> ARAMIS Information System on Research and Development: <https://www.aramis.admin.ch/>

<sup>5</sup> SERI Research on VPET, 'Meetings of the Scientific Advisory Committee, 20xx': <https://www.sbf.admin.ch/sbf/en/home/education/berufsbildungssteuerung-und-politik/vet-pet-research.html>

	Researchers are expected to provide SERI with a revised draft of the report (unless otherwise agreed upon) no later than five weeks before the next scheduled meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee for VPET Research. Text passages revised in the report must be highlighted in colour. In addition, researchers must submit a letter presenting their stance on the various objections raised and the requested improvements.
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## 4. Contact

The Further Education Unit will gladly handle any other questions that you may have:

State Secretariat for Education  
Research and Innovation SERI  
Camil Würgler  
+41 58 465 96 46  
[camil.wuergler@sbfi.admin.ch](mailto:camil.wuergler@sbfi.admin.ch)  
Einsteinstrasse 2  
CH 3003 Bern

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