



**South African Council for Social Service Professions**

**Professional Board for Social Work**

**NORMS AND STANDARDS**  
**relating to the continuing professional**  
**development (CPD) for social workers**  
**and social auxiliary workers**  
***(inclusive of guidelines)***

2019

## South African Council for Social Service Professions

### Norms and standards relating to the continuing professional development (CPD) for social workers and social auxiliary workers (inclusive of guidelines)

First published: 2019

Principal: *Professional Board for Social Work*

Status: *Approved by Council (Resolution 8/56/2019)*

Effective date of implementation: **1 March 2020.**

#### Suggested citation

South African Council for Social Service Professions. 2019. *Norms and standards relating to the continuing professional development (CPD) for social workers and social auxiliary workers (inclusive of guidelines)*. Pretoria: SACSSP

#### © South African Council for Social Service Professions (2019)

*All care has been taken to ensure that the information is correct and original sources have been indicated for reference and verification. With an identification of the South African Council for Social Service Professions as source, the document may be freely quoted, reviewed, abstracted, reproduced and translated, in part or in whole, but not for sale nor for use in conjunction with commercial purposes. Original sources should be acknowledged where indicated in the publication.*

#### ENQUIRIES:

The Registrar

South African Council for Social Service Professions

37 Annie Botha Avenue, Riviera, Pretoria 0001, South Africa

Private Bag X12, Gezina, 0031

Tel: +27 12 356 8300

Email: [cpd@sacssp.co.za](mailto:cpd@sacssp.co.za)

Website: [www.sacssp.co.za](http://www.sacssp.co.za)

#### ABOUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SERVICE PROFESSIONS

The South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) is a statutory body established in terms of section 2 of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978. The SACSSP has two professional boards under its auspices: i.e. the Professional Board for Social Work and the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work. The SACSSP, in conjunction with its two professional boards, guides and regulates the professions of social work and child youth care work in aspects pertaining to registration, education and training, professional conduct and ethical behaviour, ensuring continuing professional development, and fostering compliance with professional standards. It is protecting the integrity of the social service professions as well as the interest of the public at large. In order to safeguard the public and indirectly the professions, registration in terms of the Act with the SACSSP is a prerequisite for practising social work and child and youth care work. This includes social workers, social auxiliary workers, student social workers, student social auxiliary workers, child and youth care workers, auxiliary child and youth care workers, student child and youth care workers, and student auxiliary child and youth care workers.

## TABLE OF CONTENT

ACRONYMS .....	4
DEFINITIONS .....	4
1. INTRODUCTION .....	4
2. SCOPE .....	4
3. STANDARDS FOR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) .....	4
3.1 CPD policy compliance.....	4
3.2 Standards for social workers and social auxiliary workers .....	5
3.2.1 Administrative management of a Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) .....	5
3.2.2 Mainstreaming of CPD .....	5
3.3 CPD standards for providers .....	5
3.3.1 Administrative requirements .....	5
3.3.2 Physical infrastructure .....	9
3.3.3 Legislative requirements.....	9
3.3.4 Knowledge and skills component .....	10
4. APPEAL .....	10
5. NON-COMPLIANCE .....	10
6. CONCLUSION .....	10
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	10

## ACRONYMS

<b>CPD</b>	Continuing Professional Development
<b>ETQA</b>	Education and Training Quality Assurance
<b>PoE</b>	Portfolio of Evidence is the collection of evidence from diverse sources, which is packaged together.
<b>SACSSP</b>	South African Council for Social Service Professionals

## DEFINITIONS

In this document, unless the context indicates otherwise -

*'appeal'* means a process of seeking a review of a decision already made from a higher authority.

*'assessor'* means a person who is registered by the relevant ETQA body to measure the achievement of a specific National Qualifications Framework Standards or qualifications.

*'facilitator'* means an individual who facilitates learning processes, activities, and manages administrative assessments.

*'policy'* means the *'Policy on continuing professional development policy (CPD) for social workers and social auxiliary workers (2021)'*.

*'provider'* means a body that offers any education/training programme or trade and occupational learning.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the document is to set the standards for continuing professional development as per sections 3(a)(g)(h)(j), 14b(c), 14B(g) of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978 and to meet the objectives of the National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008.

### 2. SCOPE

The norms and standards relating to continuing professional development (CPD) focus on the following areas:

- (a) CPD policy compliance.
- (b) CPD standards for employers.
- (c) CPD standards for providers.

### 3. STANDARDS FOR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

#### 3.1 CPD policy compliance

No	Norm	Standards	Guidelines
1	Social workers and social auxiliary workers should adhere to the CPD policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CPD points should be acquired from both individual and group activities;</li> <li>2. Acquired CPD points should be compliant to the CPD policy prescripts of the SACSSP;</li> <li>3. CPD points should be obtained within the cycle period of 1 April to 31 March of each year or over a period of two years;</li> <li>4. The combination of individual and group activities should be relevant to the registrants current or future practice needs;</li> <li>5. Non- attendance of CPD activities should be supported by a motivation; and</li> <li>6. Attended CPD activities should seek to enhance or improve the quality of</li> </ul>	

No	Norm	Standards	Guidelines
		practice and developmental service delivery.	

## 3.2 Standards for social workers and social auxiliary workers

### 3.2.1 Administrative management of a Portfolio of Evidence (PoE)

No	Norm	Standards	Guidelines
1	Maintain an updated Portfolio of Evidence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CPD PoE's should be submitted on request to the SACSSP.</li> <li>Social workers and social auxiliary workers are personally responsible for maintaining and managing their CPD points and PoE's.</li> <li>The PoE should be divided into three categories: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>category one: individual activities.</li> <li>category two: group activities.</li> <li>category three: online activities.</li> </ol> </li> <li>The categories should be sub-divided into SACSSP approved and non-approved activities.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group, individual and online activities not carrying CPD points from SACSSP may be submitted for CPD points.</li> <li>Social workers and social auxiliary workers should submit a motivation with activities not carrying CPD points to motivate how it contributed to their continued professional development.</li> <li>Proof of attendance of group and online activities has to be provided in the form a signed attendance register or confirmation of participation from the service provider, together with the program/agenda of the activity.</li> </ul>

### 3.2.2 Mainstreaming of CPD

No	Norm	Standards	Guidelines
1	Employers employing social workers and social auxiliary workers should adhere to the SACSSP CPD policy prescripts.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CPD should be incorporated in the annual workplace skills plan of employers.</li> <li>Appropriate CPD activities should strive to benefit both service users and employers.</li> <li>Approved CPD activities should contribute to skills development, increased productivity and work effectiveness.</li> <li>CPD should be incorporated in the annual performance management system.</li> </ol>	

## 3.3 CPD standards for providers

### 3.3.1 Administrative requirements

No	Norm	Standards	Guidelines
1	Providers should apply at least six (6) weeks before the planned group activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicants should complete the prescribed application form.</li> <li>The application form should be completed in full and submitted to the SACSSP by hand or electronically.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All required information should be completed on the application form</li> <li>The application form must be signed by the applicant and dated.</li> </ul>
2	Providers should submit the application form together with all supporting documents.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The following documents should be attached to the application form: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>detailed programme/agenda.</li> <li>the date of the activity should be indicated on the programme/agenda and should correspond with the date indicated in the application form.</li> <li>the topic or activity name should be reflected in full on the agenda/programme.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	

No	Norm	Standards	Guidelines
		(d) provision should be made in the programme/agenda to address ethics in relation to the topic. (e) brief outline of the facilitator/s CV's. (f) framework of the content. (g) blank copy of attendance register. (a) blank copy of an evaluation form. (b) example of a certificate that will be issued to participants. (c) proof of payment.	
3	All participants should be provided with proof of attendance.	1. Participants should be issued with certificates of attendance which stipulates the following: (a) CPD approval number. (b) name of the activity. (c) date of the activity. (d) name of the social worker or social auxiliary worker. (e) registration number with SACSSP of social worker or social auxiliary worker. (f) allocated CPD points.	
4	Data of all conducted activities should be securely stored.	1. Attendance registers, evaluation forms and presentations should be stored for a period of 3 years. 2. Access to the storage area should be controlled. 3. Data should be made available to the SACSSP on request.	
5	The CPD application form should clearly reflect the target group.	1. The target group of group activities should be clearly defined, also reflecting their level of experience: (a) newly graduated social worker and/or social auxiliary workers; or (b) experienced social worker and/or social auxiliary workers or; (c) social work supervisors and/or managers; or (d) social workers registered as specialists in the different fields of specialization in social work (specifying the field); or (e) a combination of the above categories.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The level of the depth of learning should be appropriate for the target group and their level of experience.</li> <li>The contents of the topic should be appropriate for the target group.</li> <li>Combining social workers and social auxiliary workers in one activity should bear in mind the difference in the scope of practice for social workers and social auxiliary workers.</li> <li>Depending on the type of group activity (information session, conference, workshop, etc.), combining social workers and/or social auxiliary workers with participants from other professional settings (e.g. child and youth care workers, community care givers lay counsellors, educators, psychologists, nurses) should be carefully considered as it will impact on the depth of learning for social workers and social auxiliary workers.</li> </ul>
6	Individual, group and online activities should contribute to the continued professional development of social workers and social auxiliary workers	1. Activities should be on a higher level than the basic level of training for social work and social auxiliary work (under-graduate/basic qualification). 2. Activities may include information from other professions, relevant to holistic- and inter-disciplinary service delivery (e.g. medicine, psychology, psychiatry). 3. Skills development activities should be within the scope of practice of social work and social auxiliary work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activities should clearly contribute to the professional development of social workers and social auxiliary workers.</li> <li>The focus of activities where information/ knowledge from other professions/fields are shared should be to improve holistic- and inter-disciplinary service delivery. It is recommended that the relevance and applicability of such information be contextualized by a social work professional.</li> </ul>

## Norms and standards relating to the continuing professional development (CPD) for social workers and social auxiliary workers

No	Norm	Standards	Guidelines
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The focus of skills development activities should be within the scope of practice of social workers and/or social auxiliary workers and clearly defined in line with the scope of practice for social workers and social auxiliary workers</li> <li>It is advised that the ethical considerations, in line with the Policy Guidelines for Course of Conduct, Code of Ethics and the Rules for Social Workers, be included in all activities</li> </ul>
7	Delegates should be provided with opportunities to participate during individual and group activities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participatory activities should be evident within the programme/agenda.</li> <li>An opportunity for clarity question should always form part of the programme/agenda, irrespective of the type of activity.</li> <li>Participatory activities shall support the intended outcome/s of the activity.</li> </ol>	<p>The program should clearly indicate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>time allocated for participatory activities, separate from presentations and other items on the programme/agenda;</li> <li>the contents of the participatory activities, e.g. group discussion of certain provided topics/questions, case studies, etc.; and</li> <li>the expected outcome of the participatory activities; and time for feedback/evaluation from the participatory activities.</li> </ul>
8	Delegates should be provided with opportunities to develop their skills during group- and online activities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills development activities should relate to the topic/theme.</li> <li>Skills development activities should support the intended outcome/s of the application e.g. participants can be asked to practically complete a report or conduct an interview session etc.</li> </ol>	<p>The program should clearly indicate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>time allocated for skills development activities, separate from presentations and other items on the programme/agenda;</li> <li>the contents of the skills development activities, e.g. role plays, practical application of specified skills/knowledge;</li> <li>the expected outcome of the skills development activities; and</li> <li>time for feedback/evaluation from the skills development activities.</li> </ul>
9	The duration of an activity shall exclude any activities, which are not related to the CPD activity.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The activity duration shall exclude time allocated for registration, tea breaks and lunch breaks.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When applications are assessed only time spent on activities related to the CPD activity is considered (excluding registration, tea break, lunch, etc.)</li> <li>If the activity forms part of a meeting, the programme submitted for CPD points should only reflect the details of the CPD activity.</li> </ul>
10	The ratio between the facilitators and participants should be manageable.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ratio should take cognizance of the differences between the following activities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conferences</li> <li>workshops</li> <li>seminars</li> <li>short learning programmes</li> <li>group discussions</li> <li>information sessions</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p>The CPD application should clearly indicate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the number of facilitators involved in the activity;</li> <li>the role of the facilitators; and</li> <li>when break away groups/group discussion form part of the program, the size of each group and who will facilitate the groups/discussions</li> </ul>
11	Facilitator/s of skills development activities should have an understanding of social work and social auxiliary work.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitators should have an understanding of the scope of practice for social worker and social auxiliary workers, reflected in the CV.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social work specific topics should be facilitated by social work professionals.</li> <li>It is advised that presenters from other professions (e.g. psychology, theology) be supported by social work</li> </ul>

No	Norm	Standards	Guidelines
			<p>professionals to ensure sufficient contextualization of the activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The impact of the level of experience/expertise of facilitators on the depth of learning for social workers and social auxiliary workers should be considered.</li> <li>It is recommended that activities targeting social workers in the different fields of specialization in social work be facilitated by specialists in the specific field.</li> </ul>
12	All training activities to be evaluated	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training providers should evaluate CPD activities in terms of:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>achievement of expected outcomes;</li> <li>professional development of participants/increased knowledge and skills;</li> <li>relevance for target group; and</li> <li>effectiveness of the facilitator.</li> </ol> </li> <li>Training participants should be provided an opportunity to evaluate the CPD activity</li> <li>Sufficient time should be included in the programme/agenda to evaluate the activity</li> </ol>	<p>Training providers should develop an evaluation tool/form in order to measure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>whether the expected outcomes of the activity was achieved;</li> <li>the activity contributed to the professional development of participants (e.g. pre- and post-questionnaires, assessment of practical application, exam, assignments);</li> <li>the relevance of the training for participants;</li> <li>whether the facilitator(s) effectively transferred knowledge and/or skills; and</li> <li>any other aspects of activity.</li> </ul>
13	Attendance of the CPD activities to be monitored	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants should attend the full training programme, in order to qualify for the CPD points allocated</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service providers need to indicate how attendance will be monitored.</li> <li>Evidence of attendance and completion of the training/session has to be available on request from Council.</li> </ul>
14	Online activities to provide increased access to information and training opportunities to social workers and social auxiliary workers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online activities can include the following:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>information sessions;</li> <li>seminars, symposiums and conferences; and</li> <li>training programmes</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	
15	Providers should apply at least six (6) weeks before the online activity is released	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicants should complete the prescribed application form.</li> <li>The application form should be completed in full and submitted to the SACSSP by hand or electronically.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All required information should be completed on the application form.</li> <li>The application form must be signed by the applicant and dated.</li> </ul>
16	Providers should submit the application form together with all supporting documents.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The following documents should be attached to the application form:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>detailed programme outline:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the duration of the activity should be indicated and should correspond with the time indicated in the application form</li> <li>the topic of the activity / training programme</li> <li>online training programmes should be presented in modules with an evaluation/test/ assignment to be completed and submitted to the</li> </ul> </li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The duration of the activity/programme should be clearly separated into time spent on presentations/viewing of training material on line, practical activities implemented off line (e.g. assignments) and completing of evaluations and/or online testing/examination.</li> <li>It should be clearly outlined how participants will be supported through online communication between the facilitator/ administrator and the participant.</li> </ul>



No	Norm	Standards	Guidelines
		<p>administrator after each module. Once the evaluation/test/assignment was completed successfully, access to the next module will be obtained</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provision should be made in the programme to address ethics in relation to the topic.</li> <li>• participants should have access to the facilitator/ administrator of the activity to ask clarifying questions, if required.</li> </ul> <p>(b) brief outline of the facilitator/s CV's;</p> <p>(c) framework of the content;</p> <p>(d) copy of an evaluation form;</p> <p>(e) example of a certificate that will be issued to participants; and</p> <p>(f) proof of payment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contents and the expected outcome of the online evaluation/ test/assignment should be clearly outlined.</li> </ul>

## 3.3.2

**Physical infrastructure**

No	Norm	Standards	Guidelines
1	Service providers should be accessible to existing and prospective clients	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Service providers should have:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) a telephone number;</li> <li>(b) an email address;</li> <li>(c) locatable address; and/or</li> <li>(d) access to social media such as a website</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	
2	Training venues and offices should be accommodative, accessible and locatable.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training venue should:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) be appropriate, properly sized and properly ventilated;</li> <li>(b) be comfortable with user-friendly chairs and desks;</li> <li>(c) have sufficient bathrooms and</li> <li>(d) be equipped with resources such as:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a black/white board;</li> <li>• projector and screen; and</li> <li>• flip chart.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> </li> </ol>	It is advised that training venue be easily accessible, also taking into consideration public transport.
3	Special provision should be made to accommodate people living with disabilities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Venues and rest rooms should be accessible for wheelchairs.</li> <li>2. Facilitators should be knowledgeable on the basic needs of people living with disability.</li> <li>3. Learning materials should be user friendly to accommodate people with disabilities.</li> </ol>	It is advised that special needs and requirements be determined prior to the implementation of the activity
4	Activities should be conducted in safe and secure environments.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Venues should be occupational health and safety compliant in terms of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• electricity;</li> <li>• fire;</li> <li>• lifts;</li> <li>• ventilation, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	On request, Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) certificates should be available

## 3.3.3

**Legislative requirements**

No	Norm	Standards	Guidelines
	CPD activities should be conducted in line with all relevant	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The pieces of legislation that focus on the following should be considered such as:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) protection of disclosure;</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	

No	Norm	Standards	Guidelines
	pieces of legislation	(b) adherence to the Social Service Professions Act; (c) promotion of fair labour practices; (d) compliance to anti-corruption legislation; (e) compliance to the legislative prescripts relevant to the social service sector; and (f) compliance to institutional policies.	

### 3.3.4 Knowledge and skills component

## 4. APPEAL

No	Norm	Standards	Guidelines
1	Service providers should be provided with an opportunity to appeal the outcome of their CPD assessment	1. Appeals should be submitted on the prescribed form to the ETD division. 2. Appeals should reach the ETD division within 21 calendar days after the applicant received their outcome of the CPD assessment. 3. Appeals should be reviewed by a CPD appeal panel, within 40 working days after the appeal has been received. 4. Written feedback must be provided to the appellant within 5 working days after the sitting of the CPD appeal panel. 5. The decision of the CPD appeal panel is final. 6. The Professional Board for Social Work and Council will be notified during their official meetings regarding the outcome of an appeal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The reason for appeal should be clearly stated on the appeals form.</li> <li>Should additional information or revised documents be provided with the appeal, it should be clearly indicated on the appeals form.</li> </ul>

## 5. NON-COMPLIANCE

No	Norm	Standards	Guidelines
1	Non-compliant service providers, social and social auxiliary workers shall be managed accordingly.	Non-compliant service providers, social workers and social auxiliary workers shall be managed according to the CPD policy and the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978.	

## 6. CONCLUSION

This norms and standards relating to the continuing professional development (CPD) in conjunction with the *Policy on continuing professional development policy (CPD) for social workers and social auxiliary workers (2019)* set the minimum standards required for social workers and social auxiliary workers, employers and service providers to promote excellence in service delivery.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008 (Published in *Government Gazette*, (31909) Pretoria: Government Printer).

Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000 (Published in *Government Gazette*, (20852) Pretoria: Government Printer).

Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978 (Published in *Government Gazette*, (6102) Pretoria: Government Printer).

Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978: Rules relating to the acts or omissions of a social worker, a social auxiliary worker or a student social worker which shall constitute unprofessional or improper conduct. (Published in *Government Gazette* (14526): Regulation Notice 54, Pretoria: Government Printer).

South African Council for Social Service Professions. 2017. *Policy on the Fit and Proper Person Requirement*. Pretoria: SACSSP.

South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). 2018. *Policy and criteria for recognising a professional body and registering a professional designation for the purposes of the National Qualifications Framework Act, Act 67 of 2008*. Pretoria: SAQA

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Published in *Government Gazette*, (17678) Pretoria: Government Printer).

**South African Council for Social Service Professions**

Private Bag X12, Gezina, Pretoria

37 Annie Botha Avenue, Rivera, Pretoria

[www.sacssp.co.za](http://www.sacssp.co.za)

**NON NOBIS - *Not for ourselves***