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Environmental Assessment Practitioners Association of South Africa

Advancing environmental assessment practice in South Africa



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EAPASA Guidelines for Continuing Professional Development



Image source: <http://study5.info/www.cpd.org.html>

These EAPASA CPD Guidelines have been published for public comment.
Please send comments to registrar@eapasa.org by 15 July 2019.

EAPASA Professional Development Committee
Version 2, 22 May 2019

Board Members: Ms Snowy Makhudu (Chairperson), Mr Khangwelo Desmond Musetsho (Vice-Chairperson),
Mr Nisako Baloyi, Mr Zama Dlamini, Mr Siyabonga Gqalangile, Ms Jacqui Hex, Ms Sibusisiwe Hlela,
Mr Malcolm Moses, Mr Phumudzo Nethwadzi, Mr Danie Neumann, Ms Keshni Rughoobee.

Registrar: Dr Richard Hill

NPO Reg. No. 122-986

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1. Introduction

The Environmental Assessment Practitioners Association of South Africa (EAPASA) is a statutory Registration Authority established by Section 24H of the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998 as amended (NEMA). One of the objectives of EAPASA is to provide guidance and frameworks to ensure that Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is established and consistently implemented by Registered Environmental Assessment Practitioners (EAPs).

For the purposes of fulfilling this objective, EAPASA makes a clear distinction between:

- *Professional Development* of Registered **Candidate EAPs** leading to registration as an EAP, and
- *Continuing Professional Development* of Registered **EAPs**.

1.1 Professional Development for Candidate EAPs

Registered Candidate EAPs who are working towards registration as EAPs should plan their professional development to work towards meeting the requirements for registration. The support and assistance of employers and/or mentors is important to ensure that a Candidate EAP progresses to becoming a Registered EAP. Employers should ensure that adequate resources are allocated to appropriate training and relevant experience, recognising that professional development will benefit their organisation by strengthening the professional competence of their employees.

The EAPASA Candidate EAP status lapses after 5 years and is not renewable. It is the intention that Candidate EAPs will progress to being able to apply for full registration during this period. Should sufficient experience not be achieved during this period, the individual would have to furnish a new application to be reassessed for the status of Candidate EAP.

1.2 Continuing Professional Development for Registered EAPs

Once registered, the focus of an EAP's CPD will differ according to his/her sector of work, background training, competencies, experience, and career aspirations.

CPD is defined as:

The systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skills and the development of personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties, and contribution to capacity building in the field, throughout an Environmental Assessment Practitioner's working life.

All Registered EAPs will be required to undertake and record CPD activities as a prerequisite for renewal of their professional registration after each five-year period of registration. The responsibility to meet the CPD obligation rests with the registered professional who has to commit to ongoing learning.

Demonstration of CPD shows a commitment to ongoing professional development, maintenance of high standards and professional competence. A well-defined CPD requirement in terms of professional registration also helps an EAP's employers to justify the allocation of time and money towards staff development. CPD also promotes best practice and ensures national relevance, international recognition and professional integrity in the field of environmental assessment.

WHO BENEFITS FROM CPD?

The Registered EAP will benefit as CPD:

- Maintains and increases one's level of technical competence;
- Extends one's range of skills;
- Develops new areas of expertise;
- Promotes confidence and pride in one's work, and
- Establishes links and networks with fellow professionals, thereby increasing one's career opportunities and prospects.

The public and employers will benefit. A Registered EAP complying with CPD obligations means that the public and employers can rely on:

- Professionals whose skills are being maintained and developed;
- Skilled professional service, and
- Technical competence.

2. EAPASA CPD Requirements

All Registered EAPs are required to submit CPD records when applying to renew their registration at the end of each stipulated five-year period. In order for an EAP to optimise his/her CPD, it is recommended that the Registered EAP explicitly identifies and prioritises those particular areas within his/her current and/or foreseeable future work, including specific personal and career ambitions, that would benefit from additional learning or skills acquisition. The CPD programme should strive to address those priority areas.

The CPD record sheets, to be included in the CPD Report, should show progress in three key categories, as follows.

Category 1: Developing Knowledge, Understanding and Technical Skills in EA

Updating and improving knowledge and understanding of the environment and sustainable development, and the technical skills required for environmental assessment and management.

CPD should target activities needed to:

- Undertake current environmental assessment (EA) and management work more effectively, and
- Keep up-to-date with developments in aspects of EA directly related to one's day-to-day work, (e.g. updates to EA legislation/regulations).

If unsure whether or not an activity will be deemed relevant, it should still be included.

The CPD activities given below are not exhaustive:

- Attend a seminar, conference, congress, colloquium or workshop;
- Attend meetings of associations or professional organisations in the field of impact assessment or related fields such as environmental management;
- Attend a training course at a University or accredited Training Institution;
- Attend training courses, meetings and seminars run by an environmental assessment organisation;¹
- Attend training or colloquia within your own organisation;
- Study through distance learning programmes, and
- Read relevant journals / articles, and provide a summary of key learning points in your CPD Report.

Category 2: Developing Professional and Multi-Disciplinary Knowledge and Abilities to Complement EA Practice

Updating and improving knowledge and understanding of professional attributes and other disciplinary fields, to enhance your professionalism.

CPD in this category should target activities needed to:

- Develop knowledge and skills complementary to EA practice designed to enhance competence and help career progression, including:
 - Project management;
 - Human resources and financial management;
 - Good governance;
 - Ethical theory and professional ethics, and
 - Disciplinary specialist contributions to EA practice other than those already mastered, for example, if you are an EAP with a disciplinary background in the social sciences

¹ May include relevant societies and voluntary associations (e.g. IAIAAsa)

improving your knowledge of the natural sciences, and vice versa; knowledge of air, water, waste, noise, heritage, environmental law, etc.

- Develop personal qualities to enhance professional conduct:
 - Interpersonal communication (e.g. tactful, polite);
 - Emotional intelligence, and
 - Honesty and integrity (e.g. being reliable, organised and accountable).

If unsure whether or not an activity will be deemed relevant, it should still be included. The examples given below are similar to those of Category 1 above, but with a focus on different disciplinary areas:

- Attend a seminar, conference, congress, colloquium or workshop;
- Attend meetings of associations or professional organisations in fields other than impact assessment;
- Attend a training course at a University or accredited Training Institution;
- Attend training courses, meetings and seminars;²
- Attend training or colloquia within your own organisation;
- Study through distance learning programmes, and
- Read relevant journals / articles, and provide a summary of key learning points in your CPD Report.

Category 3: Growing the EA Profession

Contributing to the EA industry through capacity building and awareness raising, providing evidence of having 'given back' knowledge, understanding and related skills of environmental assessment to peers, Candidate EAPs and the wider public.

If unsure whether or not an activity will be deemed relevant, it should still be included. The examples given below are not exhaustive:

- Deliver presentations or talks on impact assessment and related topics to the profession, students and the public, to improve knowledge and awareness;
- Voluntary work in support of sustainability, environmental and conservation bodies, including assisting non-government organisations or community-based organisations with EA or related work on a *pro bono* basis;
- Involvement in boards, committees or sub-committees, working groups, focus groups, forums or panels related to EA;
- Network with other EAPs, EA organisations / institutions, and provide a summary of key learning points in your CPD Report;
- Provide training, tutoring, and/or lecturing in EA or related topics, for instance, present undergraduate lectures or postgraduate seminars at institutions of higher learning, and act as supervisor for student dissertations;
- Co-ordinate and/or host short courses;

² May include relevant professional councils, institutes, societies or voluntary associations (e.g. IWMSA)

- Mentor Candidate EAPs and/or support the development of aspiring EAPs;
- Write papers and articles on environmental assessment, as author or co-author, and
- Become an accredited EAPASA Assessor, which requires undergoing EAPASA approved Recognition of Prior Learning training, by replying to EAPASA advertisements calling for further assessors.

In each Category:

- List all activities and proof of attendance, e.g. attendance registers, proof of payment for courses or conferences, papers written or presented;
- List activities in chronological order, and
- List details such as the dates, time spent on each activity, and a brief description of the subjects covered.

It is important to note that CPD points must be obtained from all three Categories 1, 2 and 3, and some activities will be capped to a maximum number of points in a 5-year period. Details of the points provided and any applicable thresholds are contained in Section 6.2 below.

3. Accreditation of Training Courses in Future

During the first registration cycle (2018 to 2023) EAPASA will not accredit training courses and therefore the onus is on the individual EAP attending the course to determine whether a particular training course is appropriate and meets their training requirements to become a well-rounded professional. The EAP should provide EAPASA with a certificate of attendance, where such is provided, an academic record, or a letter from the training institution indicating that the EAP has attended and met the requirements for a particular course. The EAP should further provide contact details of the training provider.

4. Adjusting CPD Requirements

In certain circumstances (e.g. illness, maternity leave, temporary overseas residence), considered on a case-by-case basis by the Professional Development Committee, the requirement for CPD may be adjusted. Requests for CPD requirements to be adjusted should be made in writing, providing sound reasons, to the EAPASA Registrar - email registrar@eapasa.org

5. Failure to Meet CPD Requirements

Failure to meet the CPD requirements will impact on the ability of a Registered EAP to re-register at the end of each 5 year cycle, as per Section 10.3.4.1 of the EAPASA Constitution which states:

“According to the Section 24H Registration Authority Regulations, failure to re-register will prevent further professional activities thus depriving an EAP of their livelihood and fulfilment. Proven fraudulent CPD claims will lead to an EAP being removed from the EAP Register.”

EAPASA emphasises the importance of honesty and integrity in implementing your CPD Plan and compiling your CPD Report. Points claimed fraudulently will be in direct contravention of the EAPASA Code of Ethical Conduct and Practice which all EAPs sign as part of their registration. Should potentially dishonest claims be discovered in a CPD record, the EAP will be called to appear before the EAPASA Professional Conduct Committee for an enquiry and, if dishonesty is confirmed, disciplinary action will be taken as per the sanctions outlined in the EAPASA Rulebook.

6. Planning for Continuous Professional Development

It may be challenging for a Registered EAP who is employed within an organisation to develop professionally without support and encouragement. Employers should ensure that the firm or department allocates adequate resources to training, that training opportunities are made available, and that CPD is accepted as an important and integral part of enhancing professional life.

It is useful to plan for CPD activities in advance, both to identify and justify the time and cost but also to plan the developmental path of the individual. In this regard it is useful to capture the goals and training needs of an individual and review progress annually. This will assist in ensuring that the relevant documentation is readily available when it is time to provide evidence of the CPD undertaken.

To this end, it is recommended that the following information be captured in a CPD Plan prepared by the Registered EAP in support of, and attached to, their CPD Report:

- Tasks expected to be performed in your work position, or if unemployed through undertaking other activities such as voluntary reviews for non-governmental organisations;
- Related areas of required expertise;
- Skills needed to perform tasks well and identified skill gaps;
- Longer term career ambitions;
- Priority areas for professional development, and
- A planned CPD programme for the coming year/s.

The CPD Plan should be a short, succinct, statement – of one's current situation and what one needs to do to advance to better performance. It can include an analysis of personal and professional circumstances, aspirations and needs and the steps one has identified to meet those needs. **Annexure A** suggests a format for the CPD Plan.

The Professional Development Plan for Candidate EAPs should be prepared to guide the process of developing the skills necessary for a subsequent application for registered EAP status, and should be attached to such an application – the plan should:

- Identify the gaps between the requirements for EAP registration and the Candidate's current training, skills, competencies and experience;
- Identify ways in which those gaps could best be met in one's current working environment (e.g. by undertaking specific activities that would address those needs);
- Prioritise related activities in relation to the needs of the Candidate EAP, and
- Arrange, as far as practicable, to undertake those activities during the subsequent year covered by the plan through ongoing implementation and monitoring.

For Candidate EAPs such planning is important to ensure the progression required to work towards registration, targeting those skills, competencies or types of experience that would assist them to satisfy the EAP registration requirements. Mentors and/or employers of Candidate EAPs play an important role in helping them towards registration, by co-operating with them and supporting them in preparing a personalised Professional Development Plan; facilitating professional development in the priority areas identified by the Candidate EAP and the monitoring thereof; and ensuring that they keep a clear record of their professional development during the period of mentorship.

6.1 Regular Record Keeping

Annexure B shows a CPD Record Sheet. Such record sheets of professional development should:

- Be legible and well presented;
- Record only those activities which have contributed to meeting the EAP re-registration requirements;
- Align with the core competencies required for EA practice;
- Show clearly the date(s) or period(s) in which the various professional development activities were undertaken;
- Show clearly the nature of the activity undertaken (e.g. distance learning, home-based reading, course, conference, seminar, workshop, etc.), and provide evidence of the activity;
- Capture the number of hours spent on each activity, and
- Include proof of activities, such as attendance registers, conference papers, research papers, dissertations, certificates and diplomas.

6.2 CPD Point Requirements and Allocation

CPD should form the primary focus for defining and recording a Registered EAP's professional development. As the CPD needs of each individual EAP will differ depending on his/her area or sector of work and background training, competencies, experience and career aspirations, the emphasis of each CPD plan and record sheet will be different.

The EAPASA requirement for CPD is to gain ***a minimum of 100 points of CPD over a five-year period***, with ***a minimum of 10 points from Category 1, a minimum of 20 points from Category 2 and a minimum of 30 points from Category 3***. The annual requirement is a minimum of 10 points, to ensure that CPD activities are spread throughout the five-year period. One CPD point is obtained for every three hours of CPD activity, which requires a CPD commitment of 60 hours per annum if evenly distributed over the five year period.

Each practitioner should keep adequate records of evidence which can be assessed and verified if subject to audit. The CPD Plan and CPD Report, with detailed record sheets, are to be submitted to the registration authority on application for renewal of professional registration.

The table overleaf provides a guide to CPD activities. EAPASA may periodically issue additional guidelines/clarification of activities, categories and points.

Table 1: EAPASA CPD Requirements in 3 Categories – Categories 1 and 2

Description of Activity	Typical Evidence ³
Category 1: Developing Knowledge, Understanding and Technical Skills in EA	
Category 2: Developing Professional and Multi-Disciplinary Knowledge and Abilities to Complement EA Practice	
Formal, accredited education and training, including distance education	Certificates of attendance; Certificates / degrees / diplomas awarded and academic records / transcripts of results
Attending short courses and/or training, including in-house training	Certificates of attendance or attainment, attendance registers, receipts for payments
Attending conferences, meetings, workshops and seminars	Certificates of attendance or attainment, attendance records, receipts for payments
Private study of journals, papers, texts etc (informal learning activities)	Diary records, personal declaration
Developmental activities - these are activities which are offered by a voluntary association, such as IAIAA or which are presented by a third-party provider	Certificates of attendance or attainment, attendance records, receipts for payments

³ The same type of Activities and Evidence apply in Category 1 and 2 as they are both about developing knowledge and skills - in EA for Category 1 and in professional practice as more broadly defined in Category 2, respectively.

Table 1: EAPASA CPD Requirements in 3 Categories – Category 3 (continued)

Description of activity	Typical Evidence
Category 3: Growing the EA Profession	
Mentoring Candidate or aspiring EAPs	Diary records of discussions and interactions, statement from recipient of mentoring, and mentoring reports
Service activities to professional EA bodies, associations (committees or sub-committees, boards, panels, advice, etc.)	Minutes of meetings, attendance registers, letters of appointment, copies / records of any reports or written advice
Developing new networks to promote EA	Diary records, records of agreements and correspondence, any terms of reference required for the networks
Presentations to courses, conferences or seminars where there is a contribution to the environmental assessment profession but the paper is not published	Handout notes, copy of conference / course / seminar brochures and programmes, which name the person and the paper
Part-time or guest lecturer to environmental courses at academic institutions (points are per hour for time required for the preparation of the lecture material and actual face-to-face presentation)	Academic institution records, course notes presented, receipts for payments received as a lecturer, letter of appointment as lecturer
Publication of technical or research papers	The actual publication in which the paper appears, acceptance letter from an editor or conference organiser
<i>Pro bono</i> activities such as voluntary work in support of sustainability, environmental and conservation bodies, including assisting non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations with EA or related work	Records of the organisation with which the involvement takes place, diary entries, written confirmation from the recipient organisation

ANNEXURE A: Format for Continuing Professional Development Plan

Priority area for professional development, to meet certification requirements	Type of activity targeted to meet professional development need	Description of activity to be undertaken	Date / time of activity	Hours	Points
e.g. evaluation of impact significance	e.g. training course	e.g. short course at local university	e.g. June 2019		
Total Hours and Points					

ANNEXURE B: Continuing Professional Development Record Sheet

Name: _____ Email and Telephone contact details: _____

EAP Registration Number: _____ Five-year reporting period: _____

I declare that all information on this form is true, accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Category 1: Developing Knowledge, Understanding and Technical Skills in EA					
CPD activity number	Description of activity	Date / time of activity	Evidence	Hours spent on activity	Points
Category 2: Developing Professional and Multi-Disciplinary Knowledge and Abilities to Complement EA Practice					
CPD activity number	Description of activity	Date / time of activity	Evidence	Hours spent on activity	Points
Category 3: Growing the EA Profession					
CPD activity number	Description of activity	Date / time of activity	Evidence	Hours spent on activity	Points