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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>

EAPASA Professional Development Committee

Board Members: Ms Snowy Makhudu (Chairperson), Dr Khangwelo Desmond Musetsho (Vice-Chairperson),
Mr Zama Dlamini, Ms Jacqui Hex, Mr Phumudzo Nethwadzi, Mr Danie Neumann, Ms Minnette Le Roux, Dr Jennifer Molwantwa,
Mr Khathutshelo Tshipala, Adv. Thato Moeeng and Ms Lethogonolo Tungamirai.

Registrar: Dr Patrick Sithole

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**.

The Section 24H Registration Authority Regulations (Regulation No. 849, Gazette No. 40154 of 22 July 2016, of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended) provide the foundation for CPD as the legal requirement for the renewal of registration, as per Regulation 17 copied below.¹

17. (1) A registered environmental assessment practitioner or registered candidate environmental assessment practitioner must, at least three months prior to the expiry of his or her registration, apply to the registration authority for renewal of registration.
- (2) An application for renewal of registration must be made on an official application form obtainable from the registration authority and must contain —
 - (a) a portfolio of evidence demonstrating effective competence in practice over the previous five year period of registration;
 - (b) evidence that the applicant has updated and improved his/her skills, knowledge and understanding in the field of environmental assessment during the past five year registration period; and
 - (c) evidence that the applicant has contributed to transformation, skills transfer, capacity building and awareness raising in the environmental assessment field during the past five year registration period.

¹ The EAPASA CPD Guidelines must be read together with the NEMA and the Section 24H Regulations, and the Guideline is not intended to be a substitute for the provisions of NEMA, the Section 24H Regulations or any other SEMAs in any way.

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, supervisors and/or mentors is important to ensure that a Candidate EAP progresses to becoming a Registered EAP. Employers and the self-employed 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.

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 ongoing 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.²

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

WHO BENEFITS FROM CPD? ³

The **Registered EAP or Candidate EAP will benefit** as CPD:

- Maintains and increases one's level of technical competence;
- Extends one's range of skills, and develops 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.

A Registered EAP or Candidate 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 Source: Based on the South African Council for the Project and Construction Management Professions (SACPCMP) Revised Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Policy Framework

³ Source: South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP) Continuing Professional Development Explained (CPD)

The aim of CPD is to commit to ongoing professional development, maintenance of high standards and professional competence. A well-defined CPD requirement in terms of professional registration also helps employers of Registered EAPs and Candidate EAPs to justify the allocation of time and money towards mentorship and staff development. CPD also promotes best practice and ensures national relevance, international recognition and professional integrity in the field of environmental assessment.

2. EAPASA CPD Requirements

All Registered EAPs are required to submit a CPD portfolio of evidence when applying to renew their registration for a further five-year period of registration. 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, which could include:

- Keeping up-to-date with improving skills, knowledge and understanding in the field of environmental assessment (EA) – conceptualised broadly to include the environmental management involved in post-decision implementation – related to one’s day-to-day and foreseeable future work, (e.g. updates to EA legislation/regulations) (this area is compulsory and is required by Regulation 17.(2)(b) of the Section 24H Regulations);
- Developing knowledge and skills complementary to EA practice to enhance competence and help career progression, including (this area is not listed as a requirement in the Section 24H Regulations):
 - Human resources, financial and project management;
 - Good governance and ethical conduct;
 - 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 improving your knowledge of the natural sciences, and vice versa; knowledge of air, water, waste, noise, heritage, environmental law, climate change mitigation and adaptation, social equity and environmental justice;
- Developing personal qualities to enhance professional conduct (this area is not listed as a requirement in the Section 24H Regulations):
 - Interpersonal communication (e.g. tactful, polite);
 - Honesty and integrity (e.g. being reliable, organised and accountable), and
- Sharing knowledge and experience to grow the EA profession (this area is compulsory and is required by Regulation 17.(2)(c) of the Section 24H Regulations).

The intention of including the broad range of areas listed above is to allow individual choice in choosing areas for personal and professional growth, while making sure that all chosen areas support the core focus which is to enhance EA practice.

3. Three Categories for CPD Credits

The CPD portfolio of evidence should show activities in three key categories, totalling a minimum of 25 credits over 5 years, as follows.⁴ It is important to note that CPD credits must be obtained from all three Categories 1, 2 and 3, and some activities are capped to a maximum number of credits in a given year or 5-year period. Additional credits earned in one five year period may not be transferred to the following period of registration.

Category 1: EA Professional Development

Demonstrate knowledge progression, enhanced understanding and updated technical skills in the field of EA, from attendance at structured developmental meetings (compulsory requirement of Regulation 17.(2)(b) of the Section 24H Regulations):

- 10 hours = 1 credit
- Compulsory, but no annual minimum
- At least 5 credits over the 5 year cycle

The CPD activities in Category 1 are provided in **List 1** below (and in tabular form on page 10 with further information about appropriate evidence):

- Attend EA related conferences, lectures, seminars, workshops or colloquiums
- Attend relevant meetings, workshops or courses of voluntary associations, competent authorities, or professional organisations
- Attend refresher or training courses, and
- Attend training seminars and workshops within your own organisation.

Category 2: Work-Based EA Practise

Demonstrate knowledge progression, enhanced understanding and updated technical skills from work-based EA practice, including managerial activities and supervision of work-place Candidate EAPs (compulsory requirement of Regulation 17.(2)(b) and 17.(2)(c) of the Section 24H Regulations):

- 400 hours = 1 credit, or 800 hours = 2 credits
- Optional, maximum of 2 credits per year, and 10 credits in 5 years
- A completed Basic Assessment Report = 1 credit
- A completed Scoping/EIA process, Final EIR = 2 credits
- EIA related work such as a completed Water Use License Application = 1 credit
- EIA related work such as a completed ECO (6 to 36 months project) = 1 credit

⁴ The Board of EAPASA gratefully acknowledges the CPD policies, systems and credit ratings of the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions, the Engineering Council South Africa, and the South African Council for the Architectural Profession, which have provided a framework for the development of the EAPASA CPD Guidelines.

Category 3: Growing the EA Profession

Demonstrate contributions to the EA industry through transformation, skills transfer, 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 (compulsory requirement of Regulation 17.(2)(c) of the Section 24H Regulations):

Category 3(a) Membership of an EAPASA Recognised Voluntary Association and Professional Body/Council⁵

- Optional, membership = 1 credit
- Maximum of 1 credit per year

Category 3(b) Individual Activities

- Optional, credit allocation listed below
- Maximum 3 credits per year, and 15 credits in 5 years

The CPD activities for EA related activities in Category 3(b) are provided in List 2 below (and in tabular form on page 11 with further information about appropriate evidence):

- Presentations to conferences, workshops, seminars = 1 credit each
- Publication of conference papers, professional or technical articles, industry standards or procedures (provided the latter not as a service provider) = 1 credit per publication per author
- *Pro bono* work in support of sustainability, environmental and social advocacy bodies, including non-government organisations or community-based organisations with EA work = 1 credit for 10 hours
- Involvement in statutory or professional bodies' or associations' boards, committees, working groups, focus groups, forums or panels, including internationally recognised organisations = 1 credit for 10 hours
- Attain a relevant post-graduate qualification = 3 credits
- Provide part-time training, tutoring, and / or guest lecturing, for instance present undergraduate lectures or postgraduate seminars at institutions of higher learning = 1 credit for 10 hours
- External supervision of post-graduate student research = 2 credits per graduate
- External examination of postgraduate dissertations or academic programmes
 - Honours = 1 credit; Masters and PhD = 2 credits, maximum of 2 credits per year
- Co-ordinate and/or host short courses = 1 credit for 10 hours
- Act as an accredited EAPASA Assessor, which requires undergoing EAPASA approved Recognition of Prior Learning training = 3 credits per year.

⁵ The Board of EAPASA has approved The South African Affiliate of the International Association of South Africa (IAIASa) as EAPASA's first recognised Voluntary Association.

Category 3(c) Career guidance for aspiring EAPs and mentorship⁶ of Candidate EAPs internally and externally.

- Compulsory, 20 hours = 1 credit
- Minimum of 1 credit per year, and 5 credits in 5 years
- Evidence: Written statement from recipient of mentoring
- Internal Mentorship - within one's organisation = 1 credit
- External Mentorship – outside of one's organisation = 2 credit

⁶ Mentoring Guidelines are being developed by EAPASA and will be circulated when complete.

4. 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 an accomplished professional. The EAP should provide EAPASA with a certificate of attendance, where such is provided, a course programme, an academic record, a letter from the training institution indicating that the EAP has attended and met the requirements for a course, or any other relevant evidence. The EAP should further provide contact details of the training provider.

5. 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. Further information in this regard will be provided in the forthcoming EAPASA CPD Implementation Plan. Requests for CPD requirements to be adjusted should be made in writing, providing sound reasons, to the EAPASA Registrar - email registrar@eapasa.org

6. 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. EAPASA emphasises the importance of honesty and integrity in structuring and compiling your CPD portfolio of evidence. Credits 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 portfolio of evidence, the EAP will be called to appear before the EAPASA Professional Conduct Committee for an enquiry and, if dishonesty is confirmed, the disciplinary action will be the termination of registration.

7. 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 and the self-employed 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 the portfolio of 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:

- Tasks expected to be performed in your work position, or if unemployed through undertaking other activities such as voluntary reviews for non-governmental organisations or registering for further studies if funds allow;
- Areas of required expertise;
- Skills needed to perform tasks well and identified skill gaps;
- 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 plan does not need to be submitted to EAPASA as registered professionals are deemed competent to manage their own CPD process.

Each and every Candidate EAP must prepare a Professional Development Plan for implementation under the guidance and monitoring of their supervisor/mentor, to manage the process of developing the skills necessary for a subsequent application for registered EAP status – 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 of progress.

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, supervisors and 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.

8. 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. course, conference, seminar, workshop, etc.), and provide evidence of the activity;
- Capture the number of hours spent on each activity, where applicable, and
- Include proof of activities, such as attendance registers, conference papers, research papers, dissertations, certificates and diplomas.

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.

Each Registered EAP must keep an adequate CPD portfolio of evidence, with record sheets and PDFs of individual pieces of evidence that will need to be submitted to EAPASA in support of an application for renewal of registration, at least three months prior to the expiry of his or her registration.

The Professional Development Committee's next task is to prepare a CPD Implementation Plan for rolling-out the system. This will involve the development of an online portal linked to the EAPASA online registration system at <https://registration.eapasa.org> to which Registered EAPs can upload the CPD evidence they have started to collect from the date of their registration.

Table 1 overleaf provides a summary guide to CPD activities. EAPASA may periodically issue additional guidelines/clarification of categories, activities and credits, subject to a consultation process requesting comments from Registered EAPs about any proposed changes.

Table 1: EAPASA CPD Requirements in 3 Categories

| EAPASA Continuing Professional Development | | |
|---|--|--|
| Categories | Description of Activities and Credits | Minimum and Maximum Credits |
| | | Compulsory: Minimum 25 credits in 5 years |
| Category 1 | Environmental Assessment (EA) Professional Development | |
| | * Activities as per List 1: 10 hrs = 1 credit | Compulsory: At least 5 credits over 5 years, no annual minimum |
| | | |
| Category 2 | Work-Based EA Practise, including managerial activities and supervision of work-place Candidate EAPs | |
| | * 400 hours = 1 credit, 800 hours = 2 credits | Optional: Maximum 2 credits per year |
| | | |
| Category 3 | Growing the EA Profession | |
| | (a) Membership of an EAPASA Recognised Voluntary Association and/or Professional Body/Council = 1 credit | Optional: Maximum 1 credit per year |
| | (b) Individual activities as per List 2 | Optional: Maximum 3 credits per year and 15 credits in 5 years |
| | (c) Career guidance for aspiring EAPs and mentorship of Candidate EAPs internally and externally * 20 hours = 1 credit (internally) *20 hours = 2 credits (externally) | Compulsory: Minimum 1 credit per year |

List 1: EAPASA CPD Activities in Category 1

| Category 1: Environmental Assessment (EA) Professional Development | | |
|--|---|--|
| Description of Activity | Typical Evidence | Credits |
| Attend EA related conferences, lectures, seminars, workshops or colloquiums | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference, workshop or course programmes • Attendance registers • Any assignments submitted • Certificates awarded • Personal declaration of lessons learned • Tax invoices in receipt of payment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 hours = 1 credit • Compulsory, but no annual minimum • At least 5 credits over the 5 year cycle |
| Attend relevant meetings, workshops or courses of voluntary associations, competent authorities, or professional organisations | | |
| Attend refresher or training courses | | |
| Attend training seminars and workshops within your own organisation | | |

List 2: EAPASA CPD Work-Based EA Practise

| Category 2: Work-Based EA Practise | | |
|---|---|--|
| Description of Activity | Typical Evidence | Credits |
| A completed Basic Assessment Report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final BAR submitted to the Competent Authority • Final EIR submitted to the Competent Authority • Water Use License (WUL) • Audit Reports • SEA Reports • Sustainability Reports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 400 hours = 1 credit, or 800 hours = 2 credits • Optional, maximum of 2 credits per year, and 10 credits in 5 years |
| A completed Scoping/EIA process, Final EIR | | |
| EIA related work such as a completed Water Use License Application | | |
| EIA related work such as a completed ECO (6 to 36 months project) | | |
| Strategic Environmental Assessments and/or Sustainability Assessments | | |

List 3: EAPASA CPD Individual Activities in Category 3(b)

| Category 3(b): Growing the EA Profession - Individual Activities | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| Description of activity | Typical Evidence | Credits |
| Presentations to conferences, workshops, seminars | Handout notes, copy of conference / course / seminar brochures and programmes, which name the person and the paper | = 1 credit each |
| Publication of conference papers, professional or technical articles, industry standards or procedures (provided the latter not as a service provider) | The actual publication in which the paper appears, acceptance letter from an editor or conference organiser | = 1 credit per publication per author |
| <i>Pro bono</i> work in support of sustainability, environmental and social advocacy bodies, including non-government organisations or community-based organisations with EA work on a basis | Minutes of meetings, attendance registers, letters of appointment, copies / records of any reports or written advice | = 1 credit for 10 hours |
| Involvement in statutory or professional bodies' or associations' boards, committees, working groups, focus groups, forums or panels, including internationally recognised organisations | Records of the organisation with which the involvement takes place, written confirmation from the recipient organisation | = 1 credit for 10 hours |
| Attain a relevant post-graduate qualification | Certified copy of qualification and academic records / transcripts of results | = 3 credits |
| Provide part-time training, tutoring, and / or guest lecturing, for instance present undergraduate lectures or postgraduate seminars at institutions of higher learning | Academic institution records, course notes presented, receipts for payments received as a lecturer, letter of appointment as lecturer | = 1 credit for 10 hours |
| External supervision of post-graduate student research | Letter of appointment | = 2 credits per graduate |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| External examination of postgraduate dissertations or academic programmes | Letter of appointment | Honours = 1 credit; Masters and PhD = 2 credits, maximum of 2 credits per year |
| Co-ordinate and/or host short courses | Course programme and register of participants | = 1 credit for 10 hours |
| Act as an accredited EAPASA Assessor, which requires undergoing EAPASA approved Recognition of Prior Learning training | Signed EAPASA-Assessor Memorandum of Agreement | = 3 credits per year |

Annexure A: Format for Continuing Professional Development Plan

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

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: EA Professional Development | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------|-------------------------|---------|
| CPD activity number ⁷ | Description of activity | Date / time of activity | Evidence | Hours spent on activity | Credits |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Category 2: Work-Based EA Practise | | | | | |
| CPD activity number | Description of activity | Date / time of activity | Evidence | Hours spent on activity | Credits |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Category 3: Growing the EA Profession | | | | | |
| CPD activity number | Description of activity | Date / time of activity | Evidence | Hours spent on activity | Credits |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

⁷ This is simply a numbering system you choose for your own activities.