



SACNASP Newsletter 1/2017

JANUARY 2017

Dear Registered Scientist

Firstly, on behalf of Council and staff, SACNASP would like to take this opportunity to wish you all the best for 2017. We hope it is an absolutely wonderful and productive year for all of us.

SACNASP as usual hit the road running with multiple engagements taking place already. As indicated previously, our aim this year is to focus on the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and free student enrolment programmes amongst others.

One of the areas where we recently have received a lot of queries is on the CPD programme, hence we decided to dedicate this newsletter to this topic to assist you in understanding how SACNASP envisages the roll out of CPD. You are of course welcome to contact the office at any point with your queries.

Implementation of Continuing Professional Development for Scientists

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is an internationally recognised tool which professionals use to maintain and enhance their knowledge and skills. CPD is essential in supporting professionals not only in their current role but also in their career progression. CPD is vital if a professional is to remain effective and more importantly compliant to regulatory requirements as set out in the Natural Scientific Professions Act, 2003 (Act No 27 of 2003).

What does this mean?

The implications for the registered scientist are that in order to remain compliant and renew their professional registration Professional Natural Scientists need to complete their CPD activities over a 5 year period.

In South Africa a significant number of professions are encouraging practitioners to follow the CPD route. This includes professionals working in the Health Professions, Engineering, Project Management and Financial Services. Within SACNASP's broad spectrum of fields of practice already there is a drive from Geological Scientists, Statistical Scientists, Extension Scientists and Animal Scientists to implement CPD.

Science is always evolving. If Scientists do not keep abreast of their field it is impossible to make a decision based on scientific principles. As the world changes there are constant developments that can only be acquired through a managed process of learning and development as encouraged by CPD.

The role of SACNASP

SACNASP's definition of CPD is very adaptable so it is relevant for all registered scientists at all stages of their career. SACNASP's CPD programme will function solely through a web based system. This eliminates any issues caused by manual delivery of information. The system has two elements:

Phase 1 CPD Training Provider Portal

This Portal enables training providers to submit and have validated all the training material for the activities in compulsory category – Category 1.

This system is now active and available at www.SACNASP.org.za. The training material is submitted via the website and validated by an expert in the field. Once the material is approved the training provider will receive a certificate and will be able to market activities with SACNASP points.

Phase 2 Registered Scientist Portal

The registered scientist portal will allow registered scientists to log and track their CPD points. This system will assist in the management of the CPD progress over the 5 year period. A registered scientist will not be able to access this portal if registration fees have not been paid.

The Process

Over a 5 year period 25 CPD credits need to be accrued in order to be eligible for renewal of registration as a registered scientist. This may seem like many points and an onerous task but points can be accrued quite easily in the day to day work that a professional performs. This can be achieved by gaining CPD credits across 3 broad categories of which category 1 is compulsory.

There are 3 categories in which CPD points can be gained.

CATEGORY	ACTIVITIES	CREDITS PER ANNUM
Category 1: Developmental Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance of Natural Science related conferences, congresses, symposia, seminars and workshops Presentation of seminars, courses, workshops and papers (both preparation & presentation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 credit / 10 hours (max 4 credits)
Category 2: Work based Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Going to work b. Mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 1 credit / 400 hours (max 2 credits) b. 1 credit / 50 hours
Category 3: Individual Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Belonging to a SACNASP recognised voluntary association. Individual activities – that includes but not limited to, part-time lecturing; Publications; Subscription to natural science related magazine; informal learning; Participation in statutory and professional, institutional, science committees or task groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 credit / 30 hours (max 3 credits)

What is required by Scientist?

It is important that Scientists register with SACNASP as required by Act 27 of 2003 to be able to practise as a Professional Scientist. Scientists need to engage in the process of CPD to ensure that the profession remains competitive. There are opportunities for Scientists in private practise and industry to become involved in CPD activities not only by attending workshops and training, but organising and presenting relevant training for the specialised disciplines within Science.

In summary the goals of the SACNASP CPD programme are in line with SACNASP's principle values that professional scientists provide a service to the public and that the public has a right to be protected. The converse of that is that the profession also has a right to be protected. Ensuring that a well-managed and documented programme of professional development is implemented goes a long way towards achieving both these objectives.

SACNASP needs to inform our registered scientists that in rolling out the CPD programme, SACNASP is also in a steep learning curve. There may be changes made as we progress over the years as the CPD programme is intended to be an enabler to assist scientists with their careers. Scientists are encouraged to engage with the office on a regular basis providing us with feedback on their experience of the programme. It can be noted that some deviation (within reason) will be allowed by SACNASP but we encourage our scientists to log all their activities for future reference. You are advised to obtain your five points annually but SACNASP appreciates that this may not always be possible every year. Registered scientist are reminded that the aim is to achieve the 25 points over the five year period.