



DIVISION OF REGISTERED
COUNSELLORS &
PSYCHOMETRISTS

2016 – 06 - 26

REGISTERED COUNSELLORS AND PSYCHOMETRISTS
URGENT MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

This newly proposed framework is in contradiction of The Health Profession's Act 56 of 1974 Annexure 12, and the HPCSA's own policies and guidelines on the matter.

On behalf of the PsySSA RCP Division Chair, Mrs Mirah Wilks, and the Executive Committee of the Registered Counsellors and Psychometry Division of the Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA), viz., Dr. Diana. S. de Sousa (Vice Chair RCP) and Mr Brent George (Vice Chair, Psychometry) we would like to respond to the newly proposed **Competency Framework for Career Development Practitioners in South Africa**.

Issue: The proposed government legislation Draft seeks to promote greater access to career guidance within a professional, skilled, informed and ethical manner.

According to the Professional Board of Psychology of the Health Profession's Council of South Africa (HPCSA), HPCSA Form 208, pg 5, point D, sub-point IV, states:

"Only persons registered with the Professional Board for Psychology under the auspices of the HPCSA may administer, score, interpret and give feedback on psychological tests. However, interpretation and feedback are limited to registered psychologists, and psychometrics registered in the category Independent/Private Practice."

Following from this, registration with the Professional Board of Psychology of the Health Profession's Council of South Africa (HPCSA) is fundamental for a good grasp of theory and ethics underpinning career guidance assessment and providing feedback to clients within a professional, skilled, informed and ethical manner.

The implications of the proposed **Competency Framework for Career Development Practitioners (CDPs) in South Africa** are twofold:

- *Firstly*, the specialised Career Development Practitioner category - requires additional training but with no registration with the Professional Board of Psychology of the HPCSA. This means that the HPCSA cannot regulate or monitor the activities of such CDP practitioners regarding professional competence and ethical conduct to protect the public.

- *Secondly*, the category of Specialised Career Development Practitioner, could be construed to convey the impression that Psychometrics and Registered Counsellors who are deemed competent to practise by having completing a four-year degree, a practicum and passed a professional exam by the Professional Board of Psychology of HPCSA, would now need to attend additional training and register with a new council or association, in order to utilise psychometric testing in the career context already permitted within their Scope of Practise.

From the perspective of the PsySSA Division of Registered Counsellors and Psychometry, this newly proposed framework will allow lay persons wishing to become **Career Development Practitioners in South Africa** - to circumvent/or not comply with the rigorous expectations and standards of:

- the completion of the current 4 year degree,
- mandatory training and administration in the use of psychometric assessments
- mandatory Practicum supervision of specialised psychometry assessments
- the HPCSA Board of Psychology National Examination (as required by the HPCSA Form 94 and HPCSA Form 255),
- mandatory policy on CPD psychometry assessment training requirements.

Such proposed sanctioned circumvention in academic and practical learning outcomes (as listed above) will seriously undermine the sterling and professional work effected by Registered Counsellors and Psychometrists. These HPCSA registered professionals currently perform psychological and career assessments, or alternatively phrased: “perform the Scope of Practice “as a Registered Counsellor and Psychometrist in Independent Practice.

To reiterate: this newly proposed framework *is in contradiction* of The Health Profession’s Act 56 of 1974 Annexure 12, and the HPCSA’s *own policies and guidelines* on the matter. An immediate re-evaluation of the proposed draft framework should be conducted by the Executive Management of PsySSA - taking into account the existing governing legislation and the affected HPCSA scopes of practice.

Author 1

Mr. Brent George
 PSYSSA Vice-Chair (RCP Division Psychometry): Registered Counsellors and Psychometry
 HPCSA Psychometrist: Independent Practice
 PR No: 810280054
 HPCSA Registered Counsellor: Independent Practice (Trauma)
 PSYSSA Member of Testing and Assessment Practice Standing Committee
 PSYSSA Member of Ethics Standing Committee
 Cell: 082 447 4255
 brentjgeorge@gmail.com

Author 2

Dr. Diana.S.de Sousa
 PSYSSA Vice-Chair RCP Division: Registered Counsellors and Psychometry
 Researcher
 PS No: 0098736
 Cell: 083 452 3626
 diana@sacap.edu.za

Author 3

Mrs. Mirah Wilks
 PSYSSA Chair RCP Division: Registered Counsellors and Psychometry
 PSYSSA Member of Tariffs and Private Practice Standing Committee
 HPCSA Registered Counsellor: Independent Practice (Trauma)
 PR No: 810320757
 Cell: 082 413 5052
 mirah@innov8trix.co.za