



South African Hindu Maha Sabha

THE NATIONAL BODY FOR HINDUS IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
Founded by Swami Shankaranandji on 31st May 1912

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CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The SA Hindu Maha Sabha commits to encourage professional conduct through integrity, quality and ethics ensuring a productive holistic approach within the delivery of priestly services. We recognise that the SAHMS professional body is a new body. This CPD policy is therefore deliberately simple to allow members to embrace the system.

Introduction

1. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) CPD is “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 throughout the individual’s working life.”
 - 1.1 Priests must perform their duties in a manner that maintains and enhances public confidence and trust in the integrity, objectivity and impartiality of the professional body.
 - 1.2 There are increased expectations on the standards and competencies needed to function effectively as a priest. This is met with increased expectations to display professional knowledge and skills.
 - 1.3 Although it is the responsibility of the priest to maintain competence by undertaking relevant continuing professional development (CPD) activities, the professional body has an obligation to:
 - (a) Foster a commitment to lifelong learning (maintaining and developing professional competence among its members;
 - (b) Facilitate access to CPD opportunities and resources for their members;
 - (c) Adopt prescribed requirements relating to the development and implementation of appropriate measurement, monitoring and compliance procedures to help their members develop and maintain the professional competence necessary to protect the public interest.
 - 1.4 CPD is a continuation of initial professional development, i.e. the learning and development through which individuals first develop the competence that enables them to perform the role of a priest. CPD is learning and development



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that takes place to maintain and develop the competencies to continue to perform their role competently.

CPD provides continuing development of:

- a) Professional knowledge
- b) Professional skills;
- c) Professional values, ethics and attitudes;
- d) Competence, ie: the ability to perform a role to a defined standard with reference to real-life working environments

In addition to the skills identified by SA Hindu Maha Sabha in the priest's qualification, CPD also includes learning and development activities such as coaching and mentoring, networking, observation, feedback and reflection and the self-directed and unstructured means by which competence can be achieved.

2. Objectives

2.1 The objective of setting minimum requirements for members is to ensure that members –

- (a) develop a commitment (positive attitude) to lifelong learning (maintaining and developing professional competence);
- (b) take responsibility for undertaking relevant CPD activities to remain competent in their roles;
- (c) take responsibility for recording their CPD activities to demonstrate that they have undertaken relevant and appropriate learning activities

2.2 Having a formal CPD policy has the following benefits:

- To improve the capacity of priests to develop their technical and professional knowledge;
- To improve the personal and ethical capacities of priests;
- To ensure that priests fulfil their responsibilities competently;
- To allow priests to improve their performance in their current roles;
- To allow priests to take on new roles;
- To improve career prospects and support career progression.



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3. Policy Requirements

3.1 Members' responsibility

- 3.1.1 The responsibility for developing and maintaining competence rests with the member.
- 3.1.2 It is the members' responsibility to exercise professional judgement in reaching a decision based on their career paths and taking into account both their current and future roles, which CPD activities they should undertake.
- 3.1.3 The purpose of such learning activities should be to develop their professional knowledge, skills and values, which are relevant to the members' current and future roles.
- 3.1.4 It is important for members to develop and maintain their non-technical competencies (pervasive skills), such as ethical behaviour, leadership and management skills, which are also regarded as relevant CPD activities.
- 3.1.5 The responsibility for developing and maintaining professional competence post qualification applies to all members, irrespective of the field in which they operate or roles they perform.

4. Measurement

The continuing professional development management system is a new system for encouraging and recognizing trainers/ practitioners. The process requires persons registered with the SA Hindu Maha Sabha to obtain a specified number of points annually in order to maintain ethical and high quality service.



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Professional Body Points Schedule

Members are to complete 20 credits per year.

Schedule of Activities

Category One

Priests initiated activities. These are activities in which you decide to participate. These add value to you as a professional.

Types of activities include:

1. Attending sector meetings, workshops and conference.
2. Attending capacity building sessions with The SA Hindu Maha Sabha Writing and circulating articles of Hindu interest, online journals, websites and publications.
3. Researching: Undertaking research in Hindu related activities

Category Two

These are activities that are initiated externally and come from external providers e.g. independent providers. These are credit bearing.

These are run by approved service providers who are endorsed by the SA Hindu Sabha.

Who will monitor?

Priests will monitor their own activities and be responsible for the points registration with the SA Hindu Maha Sabha.

Points Schedule (maximum of 2 per category)

Type of Activities Points per Annum

Attending meetings –

2 per meeting

- a) Temple
- b) Organization
- c) SAHMS
- d) Interfaith



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Attending a workshop or a conference

- | | |
|------------|---|
| • ½ Day | 2 |
| • 1 Day | 3 |
| • 2-5 Days | 5 |

Participating in community development initiatives	3
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Giving discourses for special occasions	5
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Interaction with youth groups	5
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Participating in SAHMS CPD programme	10
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Research and writing an article or paper	4
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Part or full Qualifications (See table below)

1) This activity must be based on you developing as a professional

2) These are initiated, accredited externally provided programmes

Duration	Points
2-5 days	10
10-20 days	15
More than 20 days	20
Full Qualification	
1 year	30

5. Reporting period

Members will follow an annual cycle, as set out in the recording options below, subject to the annual minimum requirement being met.

6. Reporting and Record Keeping

In addition to the members' responsibility for planning and undertaking activities that maintain and develop their professional competence, members are also responsible for documenting the relevant professional development activities which they have undertaken (record keeping).

Explanation

All members, are required to maintain appropriate records and supporting documentation of all CPD activities completed.



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Appropriate records could include but are not limited to –

- recording details of the learning activities on the SAHMS CP system; or
- keeping a spreadsheet of the learning activities undertaken; or
- recording relevant learning activities in a diary.

Members may use their discretion in determining the supporting documentation required to demonstrate participation in a relevant CPD activity.

Supporting documentation would include but is not limited to –

- certificates of attendance;
- attendance registers;
- minutes of meetings;
- examination results;
- course outlines or teaching materials;
- independent assessments of a learning activity performed;
- publication of an article or results of research - Newspaper articles / photographs

Members have two options for maintaining CPD records:

- (a) Members may record CPD activities on the on-line CPD system; OR
- (b) Members may maintain their own records and provide SAHMS with an annual declaration that they are undertaking relevant professional development activities.

Explanation Members who select the option of maintaining their own records are electing the “self-compliant option” and as such are required to maintain their own records and supporting documentation. The following details may be recorded:

- Date of CPD activity;
- Whether it was a SAHMS or non-SAHMS activity;
- Description or title of activity;
- Type of activity, for example course, e-learning, meeting;
- Provider of the activity;
- Duration (expressed in hours or quarter-hour increments)
- Whether the CPD activity constitutes verifiable or non-verifiable CPD.



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An illustration of the format of record keeping

Date	15/03/2019
Activity	Non-NCOHP
Description	Reading education publication
Activity type	Reading
Provider	Hindu Electronic Journal
Duration	1 hour
Verifiable/non-verifiable	Non-verifiable

Once a member has decided that this is the most suitable option for him/her the next step is to either –

- select the “self-compliant option” on the SAHMS CPD system; or
- complete the self-compliant declaration form (found on the SAHMS website and sent out electronically with the annual subscription fee invoice) and return it to SAHMS via e-mail.

All records/documents should be kept for 5 years in case they are required for an audit. The self-compliant option is valid for a single calendar year. This is not the preferred option for SAHMS

7. Exemptions

Members may apply for exemption from the requirements of this policy in exceptional circumstances. To qualify for an exemption members must not be professionally active.

Explanation Members apply for exemption by submitting an application with the relevant information on-line via the CPD system. All applications submitted are assessed on a case-by-case basis. Prior to the submission of an application for an exemption from the CPD policy the member must consider the following aspects:



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- The member must not be professionally active – i.e. may not carry out any priestly or related work or any work that is associated with the use of the professional designation.

Once the exemption has been granted to the member, this will remain in place until the circumstances for which the exemption was granted are no longer applicable. The onus is on the member to inform SAHMS when the circumstances around the granting of the exemption are no longer applicable.

The following are examples of, but not limited to, circumstances for which an exemption may be granted to a member:

- A member has retired completely and no longer carries out any activities associated with the designation of a Priest.
- Members who take extended leave from work for family-related reasons; e.g. a member who decides to take family responsibility leave;
- Members who take extended breaks due to illness or incapacitation.

Although not directly stated in the CPD policy, members who successfully obtain an exemption are encouraged to keep up to date. This will ensure that, should the members' circumstances change, they have a foundation on which to base a return to their chosen roles.

Members to whom exemption is granted are required to confirm their professional status on an annual basis.

Members who are re-instated are required to demonstrate that, while they were not members of SAHMS, they maintained and developed their professional competencies and could be required to demonstrate this on re-instatement.

8. Disciplinary actions and sanctions

Members who do not comply with the requirements of this policy shall be referred to SAHMS management department who will then follow the appropriate process. (Refer to Code of Conduct and Appeals Policy).



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9. Conclusion

SAHMS cannot provide assurance that all members will provide high quality professional service at all times. Doing so would entail more than merely monitoring professional competence. High quality professional service entails the application of that knowledge with professional judgement and an objective attitude. Similarly, SAHMS cannot be assured that every member who participates in a CPD programme will reap the full benefits of that programme, as this is dependent on an individual's commitment and capacity to learn.

The SAHMS Board believes that, despite the inherent limitations it is important to have a CPD programme in place, to make it possible for an individual member to fulfil his/her professional activities and responsibilities and to ensure the maintenance of professional standards, ethics and knowledge.

