



CONSTITUTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA

1) NAME

- a) The name of the association is the Educational Psychology Association of South Africa ("EPASSA").
- b) In this document, "the association" shall mean the Educational Psychology Association of South Africa.

2) MAIN PURPOSE

The main purpose of the association is:

- a) To promote, maintain and protect the interests of educational psychology as a profession,
- b) To provide guidance and support to its members,
- c) To facilitate the provision of quality educational psychology services to the public by members of the association.

3) AIMS

- a) The association aims:

- a.i) To provide a forum for educational psychologists to share ideas, to promote their work and to strive for ethical, contextually appropriate service delivery;
- a.ii) To address the significant challenges facing Educational Psychology and South African educational psychologists, including scope of practice and training issues;
- a.iii) To support, augment and enrich the education and training of student and intern educational psychologists and promote the continuous professional development of qualified educational psychologists through the provision of workshops, guidance, advisory groups and the dissemination of knowledge relevant to the profession.
- a.iv) To provide a strong voice to the field of psychology in general and specifically to educational psychologists;
- a.v) To effectively respond to challenges facing the profession and public;
- a.vi) To establish common ground amongst educational psychologists swiftly;
- a.vii) To collaborate closely with and/or to influence other organisations that may act in ways that affect educational psychology;
- a.viii) To protect the profession and the public;
- a.ix) To promote, market and advance the general interests of educational psychology and educational psychologists;
- a.x) To help promote and coordinate professional, research and community activities in the field of Educational Psychology;
- a.xi) To promote liaison between educational psychologists and other role players whose work impacts on the field of educational psychology (for example social support services, departments of education and/or social work, health departments, educators, psychiatrists, parents, medical and mental health professionals and personnel, and the public at large;
- a.xii) To maintain a good relationship between the association and other bodies;
- a.xiii) To collect and disseminate information pertaining to Educational Psychologists (for example, informing members of relevant information, conferences and events related to the area of Educational Psychology);

- a.xiv) To influence policy relevant to educational psychology, the practice of educational psychology in the health and mental health sector, the wider community and education in South Africa;
- a.xv) To debate issues in mental health practices in South Africa;
- a.xvi) To combat discrimination against Educational Psychologists and the field of Educational Psychology;
- a.xvii) To raise and collect funds by means of membership fees, donations, contributions, the holding of events or by any other lawful means as may be determined by the Executive Committee of the association;
- a.xviii) To utilise and apply the funds of the association for the purpose of paying its lawful expenses;
- a.xix) To serve the needs and interests of all South Africans;
- a.xx) To engage in community outreach work; and
- a.xxi) To promote the general interests of members and their clients.

b) The association will pursue its aims by-

- b.i) Discussions and meetings, establishing appropriate sub-committees to address the needs of the profession, hosting conferences and training workshops, initiating or supporting relevant research, facilitating contact between members, engaging with relevant stakeholders that impact the profession (such as the Health Professions Council of South Africa, Governments Departments, Council for Medical Schemes, the media and other relevant parties), by publications and other steps as deemed desirable;
- b.ii) Promoting ethical conduct amongst its members in accordance with ethical codes and guidelines;
- b.iii) Promoting educational and psychological information and services;
- b.iv) Continually assessing relevant legislation, initiating amendments and advocating for new legislation to serve the interests of psychology and educational psychology as a profession, the provision of relevant mental health services and the interests of the public.

- c) The Association will not conduct any business with a view to profit for either the association or any of its members.

4) **VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION**

The voluntary association shall:

- a) Exist as a separate legal entity, separately from its members.
- b) Continue to exist even when its membership changes and there are different office bearers.
- c) Be able to own property and other assets, separate from its members.
- d) Have the capacity to appoint employees.
- e) Have the capacity to take legal action relevant to protecting the public and the profession
- f) The members and/or office bearers will not be personally liable for any of the obligations of the association.
- g) The members and/or office bearers will not be personally liable for any loss suffered by any person as a result of an act or omission which occurs in good faith during the performance of their functions for or on behalf of the association.

5) **MEMBERSHIP**

a) Full membership

Any HPCSA-registered educational psychologist, who agrees with the aims of the association is eligible for full membership. (This category includes Honorary Life Members and Fellows.)

- a.i. Only full members have full voting rights.
- a.ii. Only full members may mention their EPASSA membership when informing the public of their professional credentials, subject to any rules and laws applying to the advertising of psychological services.
- a.iii. All members must abide by appropriate ethical norms for the profession of psychology.

b) Student membership

Student members must:

- b.i.i. Hold at least an undergraduate or honours degree with a major in psychology or educational psychology, and are aspiring toward becoming an educational psychologist, or
- b.i.ii. Be registered with the HPCSA as a student or an intern educational psychologist.
- b.i.iii. Limited to a maximum of 5 years student membership, which will include study towards Honours and Masters degrees in psychology as well as subsequent completion of the necessary internship where applicable.

c) Affiliate membership

- i. Any person interested in psychology or educational psychology as a science or as a profession and registered with a relevant mental health body or association may apply for Affiliate Membership. This includes neuropsychologists, clinical, counselling, industrial and research psychologists, and HPCSA-registered mental health professionals.
- ii. Affiliate members will not be charged an annual fee, nor will they have membership rights with regard to voting or attendance of membership events such as general support or discussion meetings or reduced fees for conferences.

d) Honorary Life Members:

Persons who have distinguished themselves by outstanding achievements or service in the fields of psychology or educational psychology, on the recommendation of full members as well as the EPASSA Executive Committee, may be invited by the executive to become honorary members of EPASSA. Honorary Members have all the rights and privileges of full members.

e) Registration with the HPCSA

Registration with the HPCSA may sometimes be the basis on which members may attend certain workshops. For instance, support groups for psychologists are likely to exclude members who are not registered with the HPCSA.

6) TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- a) Any member wishing to terminate his/her membership may do so by giving written notice of the date of such termination. Such a member will not be entitled to any partial or full refund of fees.
- b) Membership can also be terminated by EPASSA under the following circumstances:
 - b.i) where a member has brought the name of EPASSA into disrepute.
 - b.ii) where a member violates or undermines the objectives flowing from the Constitution and EPASSA - approved activities.
 - b.iii) Where the member has engaged in serious ethical transgressions and has been found guilty of such.

No termination under this clause shall take place without the affected member having had the opportunity to state his/her case to the Executive Committee, and the Executive Committee shall apply its mind to the matter and make a finding based on the provisions of this Constitution, all relevant information and the documents placed before it.

7) MANAGEMENT AND POWERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

- a) The general management, control and direction of policy of the Association shall be vested in the Executive Committee of the Association.
- b) The Executive Committee shall consist of:
 - b.i) A chairperson
 - b.ii) An immediate past chairperson
 - b.iii) A vice-chairperson
 - b.iv) A secretary
 - b.v) A treasurer
 - b.vi) At least ten and no more than fifteen elected members (from whom chairpersons of subcommittees, the secretary, treasurer, chairperson and vice-chairperson are drawn, but excluding members of the Senate); and
 - b.vii) No more than three co-opted members (who may also head subcommittees that may include student and affiliate members).

- b.viii) All past chairpersons who have completed a three-year term shall automatically be full (non-voting) members of the executive committee and shall also form an advisory Senate. The Senate or individual senators will avail themselves to be consulted by members of the executive committee and to provide an institutional memory and support.
- c) The members of the Executive Committee shall have the power to co-opt ad-hoc members.
- d) Members of the Executive Committee shall be democratically elected by the full members, by e-mail voting, web-based voting or popular vote. Members who have the right to vote and are unable to be present at the meeting may give written and signed consent to a full member as a proxy to vote on his/her behalf.
- e) Members of the Executive Committee shall democratically elect the chairperson and vice-chairperson of the association.
- f) Only fully paid-up members may vote.
- g) The executive committee's term of office shall be three years. Elections will take place every three years or when there are more than two vacancies in the executive committee.
- h) Past office bearers may stand for re-election, providing that no person may hold the same position for more than two consecutive terms (i.e. six years in a row).
- i) The Executive Committee may take on the power and authority that it believes it needs to be able to achieve the objectives that are stated in points number 2 and 3 of this constitution. Its activities must abide by the law.
- i.i) The Executive Committee has the power and authority to raise funds or to invite and receive contributions.
- i.ii) The Executive Committee has the power to buy, hire or exchange any property that it needs to achieve its objectives.
- i.iii) The Executive Committee has the right to make rules for proper management, including *bona fides* procedure for application, approval and termination of membership.
- i.iv) The Executive Committee will decide on the powers and functions of office bearers, as well as the duties of staff.

8) ELECTION PROCEDURES

- a) The secretary shall give notification of elections at least forty calendar days before an election.
- b) Nominations shall be duly proposed and seconded by two full members of the association and accepted in writing by the nominee.
- c) Only Full Members of the association with no serious prior criminal conviction may be nominated as candidates, and the proposer as well as the seconder must be Full Members of the association, with no serious prior ethical or criminal convictions.
- d) A quorum will be achieved for the purpose of electing an executive committee when at least fifty full members participate in voting.
- e) Any office bearer who is found guilty of a serious crime or ethical infringement at a disciplinary hearing of the HPCSA may, at the discretion of the executive committee, be required to vacate their position.
- f) Nomination forms must be lodged with the Secretary of the association at least fourteen calendar days before the date of the election.
- g) Nominated candidates will be given the opportunity by the secretary to present an introductory document or a policy statement, which the committee may in its discretion withhold should the policy statement contradict the terms of this Constitution.
- h) A member of the Committee shall be disqualified from holding office in any of the following circumstances:
 - h.i) If he or she absents himself from 4 (four) consecutive meetings of the Committee without apology or good cause;
 - h.ii) If he or she commits any act, which in the opinion of the Committee brings the association into discredit or disrepute. If so, the EPASSA executive committee will notify the nominee and nominators of their decision. An appeal may be lodged with the Ethics Committee, which will make a recommendation to the executive committee based on their investigation.

- h.iii) If he or she becomes of unsound mind, or is no longer able to fulfil his or her functions on the Committee for whatever reason.
- i) The Chairperson and/or the Executive Committee shall be obliged to resign from office if the association at a general meeting passes a resolution of no confidence in the Chairperson or Executive Committee, as the case may be, which is voted for by 75% (seventy five percent) of full members of the association present at such meeting, provided that at least 35 full members are present at the meeting.

9) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

- a) The annual general meeting (AGM) must be held once every year, towards the end of the organisation's financial year, which will be on 1 June each year. The organisation should deal with the following business, amongst others, at its annual general meeting:
 - a.i) Agree to the items to be discussed on the agenda;
 - a.ii) Record the names of those present and any apologies;
 - a.iii) Confirm the previous meeting's minutes with matters arising;
 - a.iv) Take the Chairperson's report;
 - a.v) Take a financial report by the Treasurer;
 - a.vi) Consider any proposed changes to the constitution, although the constitution may also be amended online, as discussed in paragraph 15;
 - a.vii) Elect new office bearers;
 - a.viii) Consider general issues.
- b) The requirement for reaching a quorum for an AGM will be the attendance of at least 20 full members. Failing this, the AGM will be rescheduled for seven calendar days after the initial meeting date where the organization can then proceed with the agenda.

10) MEETINGS

- a) The Chairperson shall co-ordinate all executive committee meetings. In the absence of the Chairperson, the vice-chairperson shall do so. In the absence of both the chair and vice-chairpersons, the committee will elect one of its members to co-ordinate the meeting.
- b) The secretary or an assigned committee member or administrative employee will take minutes of meetings of the committee, although e-mail correspondences may also serve as a record.
- c) A copy of the minutes shall be submitted to all members of the Executive Committee within ten days of the date of the meeting.
- d) The Chairperson, unless overruled by a majority of the elected committee members, may whenever he or she deems it necessary convene a meeting of the Committee upon giving such notice to the members of the Committee as may be practical in the circumstances.
- e) Each member of the Committee shall be entitled to one vote. In the event of a tie, the chairperson may exercise an additional, decisive vote.
- f) The Chairperson may adjourn any meeting on such terms as he or she considers necessary within ethical and legal boundaries and may thereafter reconvene any such meeting again on such terms as he or she may consider necessary, within ethical and legal boundaries.

11) SUB-COMMITTEES

- a) The Executive Committee of the association shall have the power to form such sub-committees as may be necessary to achieve the aims and objects of the association.
- b) Each sub-committee shall include a member of the Executive Committee.
- c) Minutes shall be kept of each sub-committee meeting and shall be made available to the Executive Committee within seven days following the sub-committee meeting.
- d) Sub-committees shall consist of three or more members; including:
 - d.i) a sub-committee chairperson;

- d.ii) At least two other elected members; and
 - d.iii) no more than three co-opted members.
- e) The members of the sub-committee shall have the powers to co-opt ad-hoc members.

12) ETHICS

- a) The Association shall promote and adhere to the professional code and rules of ethics espoused by the Health Professions Act 56 of 1974 .
- b) The Association shall advocate ethical practice by all of its members.
- c) The Association shall embody the following broad and universal ethical principles to guide decisions and interactions with members and other parties:
 - c.i) Autonomy (promoting self-determination of people);
 - c.ii) Beneficence (doing good; promoting the well-being of people);
 - c.iii) Nonmaleficence (avoiding harm);
 - c.iv) Justice (being fair);
 - c.v) Fidelity (making realistic commitments; keeping promises);
 - c.vi) Veracity (being truthful; dealing honestly with people);
 - c.vii) Confidentiality (non-disclosure of personal, private information)
- d) The Association shall refer all ethical matters to the Ethics Sub-Committee and encourage its members to make use of the guidance and advice provided by the Ethics sub-committee when such questions, matters or decisions arise.

13) FINANCES – INCOME DISBURSEMENTS AND PROPERTY

- a) An annual membership fee shall be payable by all members of the Association to provide funds for the carrying out of work of the Association. Increases may be determined by the Executive Committee and members will be informed in writing of such a decision.
- b) The Treasurer shall receive all moneys due and shall make all disbursements authorised by the Executive Committee.

- c) Books of account shall be kept by the Treasurer and audited annually by an independent auditor.
- d) The treasurer will present and publish the annual financial report at the AGM
- e) The accounts shall be available for inspection by members, who should give a week's notice beforehand.
- f) The Treasurer shall be entitled to open a bank account in the name of the Educational Psychology Association of South Africa (EPASSA).
- g) All disbursements are to be either co-signed or authorised by at least two members of the Executive Committee.
- h) The financial year of the organisation runs from 1 June to 31 May each year.
- i) The association will be able to call for additional donations to fund specific activities, for example (but not limited to) legal fees necessary to advocate for the public and profession.
- j) The association will keep a record of all assets.
- k) The association shall only enter into contracts, undertake activities and use its income and property to promote its objectives in alignment with its aims.
- l) No portion of the income or assets of the association shall be paid to any member of the Committee, provided that nothing shall prevent the payment in good faith to any person of reasonable compensation for services rendered and/or reimbursement of costs or expenses reasonably incurred on behalf of the association.
- m) Members or office bearers of the organisation do not have rights over the organisation's property and assets.

14) INDEMNITY

- a) No Committee member appointed shall be answerable or liable to make good any losses occasioned to or sustained by the association for any cause, save for any loss which arises from the dishonesty of the Committee member involved.
- b) No Committee member shall be liable for any act of dishonesty committed by any other Committee members unless he/she was a party thereto.
- c) Each Committee member shall, at all times, be deemed to have been indemnified out of the association assets against all claims and demands of

any nature arising out of the exercise or purported exercise of any powers conferred upon him or her under this Constitution.

15) AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSITUTION

- a) The Constitution can only be changed by a two-thirds majority vote of the total number of received votes, made by fully paid-up members at a general meeting, or a special meeting, or two-thirds majority electronic vote of the total number of received votes by participating full members, and only if the proposed changes have been fully discussed.
- b) The total number of votes received needs to reach a quorum of one-quarter (twenty five percent) of fully paid up members.
- c) The proposed changes to the constitution must be in writing, signed and seconded by two members of the association, at least five weeks before the meeting, and the changes must appear on the agenda of the said meeting.

16) DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

- a) The organisation may close down if at least two-thirds of the full members present and voting at a meeting convened for the purpose of considering such a matter are in favour of closing down.
- b) When the organisation closes down it must pay off all its debts. Thereafter, any property or money left over should not be paid or given to members of the organisation. It should be given to another non-profit organisation that has similar objectives. The organisation's general meeting can decide what organisation this should be, provided that the organisation is concerned with promoting, maintaining and protecting the honour and interests of Educational Psychology as a profession.

This constitution was amended, approved and accepted by members of Educational Psychology Association of South Africa, to which the Executive Committee members below attest:

Vanessa Barnes

Martin Strous

Landi Blok van Cronesteyn

Matjhabedi Mazibuko

Naledi Mokoena

Frances Kaplan

Tania Holz

Marlize Labuschagne