

CONSTITUTION FOR THE SEXUALITY AND GENDER DIVISION OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA

1. NAME

The name of the division is the Sexuality and Gender Division (SGD) of the Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA).

2. STATUS

- 2.1. SGD is a division of PsySSA and has been established in terms of Article 12 of the PsySSA constitution.
- 2.2. In the event of any contradictions between this constitution and the constitution of PsySSA, the provisions of the PsySSA constitution shall enjoy precedence.

3. OBJECTIVES

In addition to the objectives of PsySSA and the functions of divisions as expressed in Articles 2 and 12.4 respectively of the PsySSA constitution, the mission of the SGD is to promote a psychological understanding of the fields of sexuality and gender. The SGD addresses this mission through the advancement of scientific research, clinical practice, continuing professional development and being responsive to related national, continental and international issues and concerns. The objectives derived from this mission are to be achieved in cooperation with PsySSA, other professional organisations, relevant civil society organisations and the general public.

The above objectives should be seen against the origins and development of the SGD. The division developed from a collaborative project between PsySSA and APA (the American Psychological Association). PsySSA is a member of the International Network for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Concerns and Transgender Issues in Psychology (INET, now called IPsyNET), that is hosted by the APA. IPsyNet is composed of national, multinational and international psychological associations. "The vision of IPsyNet is that psychological organisations are effective leaders in ensuring that all persons fully enjoy health and human rights, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or sex characteristics, by incorporating the goals of celebrating and valuing the full range of human diversity, including diversity in gender, sexual orientation, and sex, into their structure, programmes, and activities (IPsyNet, 2013)." Accordingly, PsySSA and the SGD adhere to a psychology that is affirmative of sexual and gender diversity. This includes the recognition of various sexualities and gender identities as normal variations of human sexuality and not per se as the cause of psychological difficulties or pathology. Contextual awareness is emphasised, including

an understanding of how aspects such as homo- and transphobia, heterosexism, prejudice and stigma impact on mental health and well-being. Furthermore, The SGD therefore acknowledges the intersections between sexuality, gender and other forms of difference such as race and class. It aims to promote a critical psychology of sexuality and gender that goes beyond a focus on sex/gender differences to a consideration of how such differences are produced, reproduced and normalised through exclusionary and oppressive practices and mechanisms.

4. MEMBERSHIP

4.1. Categories and rules

SGD makes provision for four categories of membership, in accordance with the provisions of PsySSA (Article 5). Clause 7 of this constitution contains the specific voting arrangements. The rules for membership in the various categories are as follows:

4.1.1. Full members

Full members refer to psychology professionals, namely psychological counselors and psychometrists (applicable degree e.g. Honours), as well as psychologists (applicable Masters and/or doctoral degree in psychology).

4.1.2. Affiliate membership

Affiliate members shall be persons who are not psychology professionals, with an interest or working in fields related to the psychology of gender, sexual-, reproductive- or mental health, as well as registered students at the undergraduate, Honours, Masters or doctoral level and interns in any of the above fields.

4.1.3 Student members

Student members refer to registered students at the undergraduate, Honours, Masters or doctoral level and interns, in any of the above fields.

4.1.4. Foreign Affiliates

Persons, whether they are psychology professionals or not, living beyond the borders of South Africa with an interest or working in fields related to the psychology of gender, sexual-, reproductive- or mental health.

4.2 The above classes of membership shall hereafter be collectively described “the members”.

4.3. Membership fees

The division’s executive committee in conjunction with the executive of PsySSA shall annually decide upon membership fees.

Persons shall be enrolled in the highest class of membership for which they are eligible.

5. MANAGEMENT

5.1. Structure

The executive consists of the following office bearers:

- A chairperson
- A deputy chairperson
- A secretary
- A treasurer
- Three additional members

With the exception of the chairperson and deputy chairperson, an individual may hold more than one portfolio. The offices of the secretary and treasurer may be combined.

5.2. Election of the Executive

Office bearers are selected annually during the annual general meeting by way of voting by call. Only full members in good standing may be elected to the positions. When a member is nominated in her/his absence, the nominator must provide evidence that the nominee consents to stand for the position.

Chairpersons of regional branches of the division shall be ex officio members of the executive.

The executive may co-opt further members.

5.3. Quorum

Four members (but including either the chair or deputy chair) shall form a quorum at executive meetings. The frequency of meetings will be determined by each executive.

5.4. Terms of office

The term of office of all office bearers is two years. Office bearers shall not hold office in the same position for more than two consecutive terms.

5.5. Representation on the Council of PsySSA

The chairperson or deputy chairperson shall represent SGD on the Council of PsySSA. The executive shall appoint an alternate when necessary.

5.6. The division shall submit an audited income and expenditure statement to Council for purposes of financial control.

6. REGIONAL BRANCHES

Regional branches may be formed in the various regions of PsySSA to promote the mission of the division.

7. GENERAL MEETINGS, VOTING RIGHTS AND PROCEDURES

- 7.1. A general meeting of SGD shall be held at least once a year, preferably during the annual congress of PsySSA.
- 7.2. The chairperson of SGD shall call for an extraordinary general meeting if she/he considers it necessary, or on written request by no less than 25% of full members.
- 7.3. Members shall be informed in writing of general and extraordinary general meetings, and of the agenda of such a meeting, at least 30 days in advance of such a meeting.
- 7.4. The members present at any meeting of SGD shall be deemed to be a quorum of the members, except where otherwise stipulated.
- 7.5. During a general meeting the majority vote shall be final. Voting may take place by ballot or by show of hands as the chairperson may determine.
- 7.6. Full members of the division shall have the right to vote by postal ballot or electronic mail and at general meetings.
- 7.7. The chairperson shall have a casting vote at a general meeting.
- 7.8. Amendments to the constitution shall be ratified by postal ballot or electronic mail. A general meeting can refer any other matter for vote by postal ballot or electronic mail.

8. DISCIPLINARY AND OTHER MEASURES

SGD can recommend to the Council of PsySSA that disciplinary or other measures be taken against members who act contrary to the objectives of SGD or PsySSA. No such recommendation will be made to the Council unless at least two thirds of the members of the division's executive vote in favour of such action. The member has the right to appear personally or be represented at a meeting of the executive before a decision about such a recommendation to the Council is finally taken.

9. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- 9.1. Proposals regarding amendments to the constitution shall be submitted to the executive and shall be put to a general meeting of SGD. These proposals can be made by members or the executive.
- 9.2. Written notice of motion for such a proposed change shall be sent to members not less than 30 days prior to the general meeting.
- 9.3. Amendments shall be accepted by a 2/3 majority of members with voting rights at a general meeting, through a paper based or electronic vote procedure. Only full members have a vote.
- 9.4. In the event of amendments to the constitution of PsySSA, the constitution of SGD must be reviewed and changed if necessary.

10. DISSOLUTION

- 10.1. SGD may be dissolved by the Council of PsySSA in terms of Article 12.6.3 of its constitution.
- 10.2. SGD may be dissolved by a resolution taken at a general meeting in accordance with the procedure laid down for amendments to the constitution. Such a decision must be ratified by referring the matter to all full members by means of a postal or electronic vote. A 2/3 majority of the postal or electronic votes shall be deemed decisive.
- 10.3. If SGD resolves to dissolve, the assets and liabilities of SGD shall be disposed of by the PsySSA Council.