

# Reimagining the Scope of the Profession of Psychology

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On Saturday 18 February 2017, a meeting was held between 14:15–16:55 at Wits University to discuss the way forward re: The Scope of the Profession (SOP) of Psychology. As you may be aware, on the 14 November 2016 the High Court of South Africa (SA), Western Cape Division (Case No: 12420/13) ruled, *inter alia*:

3. The Regulations Defining the Scope of the Profession of Psychology (published GNR 704 in GG 34581 of 2 September 2011) (“the Regulations”) are declared invalid.

and suspended the invalidity for two years:

5. The order of invalidity, referred to in paragraph 3 above, is suspended for a period of 24 months.

This order affords the Minister of Health, the HPCSA and the Professional Board for Psychology (Board) the opportunity to correct the defects in the SOP over the next 21 months. This moment provides an opportunity for all in psychology to make representation to the Board in terms of changes that will ensure that the defects created by the current SOP do not plague the discipline in the future.

The meeting was convened by the Psychological Society of SA (PsySSA) and chaired by Prof Sumaya Laher, the current PsySSA President. The meeting was well attended by representatives of many psychology organisations and training institutions as well as professionals and students not affiliated to any organization.

Prof Laher presented four models to initiate the discussion. The PowerPoint presentation may be accessed at (<https://www.psyssa.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/PsySSA-SOP-Meeting-presentation.pdf>). As the discussions proceeded, three more models were added for consideration. These have been added to the PowerPoint presentation on a separate slide. During discussion, transverse registration was highlighted, as was community service and core competences. These issues were subsequently added to the slides as well as the need to think carefully about practitioners currently in the system should anything change in the SOP. Points were also raised on other stakeholders beyond the Professional Board for Psychology and the HPCSA that would be involved should any changes be proposed, such as the Council for Higher Education (CHE). Models 3, 4 and 5 were favoured by individuals at the meeting. Model 7 was presented in the closing comments hence preference for this model was not established. The notes from this meeting will be made available in due course.

PsySSA will be happy to receive any comments on any of the models, particularly with regards to suggestions as to the feasibility of these models to serve not only the profession but, importantly, SA society. Comment is also invited from psychology professionals and students who have a preference for a particular model to indicate how that particular model might work in SA. More specifically, how it would meet the needs of the profession and SA society and how tenable it would be within the current systems that exist at training institutions (universities and internship sites). It would also be useful to reflect on what may be needed within the current system that could make the proposed model more tenable. PsySSA will collate this information and disseminate to attendees at Saturday’s meeting as well as to all other organisations within the profession and to all individuals and students on the PsySSA networks. All feedback can be sent to [fatima@psyssa.com](mailto:fatima@psyssa.com).

We need to work together to produce constructive ways forward for Psychology in SA, which this year celebrates a century as an independent discipline.