

HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA
PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND HEARING
PROFESSIONS

EXAMINATION GUIDELINES FOR PRACTITIONERS FOR
REGISTRATION/RESTORATION

1. INTRODUCTION

All individuals who practice any of the health care professions incorporated in the scope of the HPCSA are obliged by the Health Professions Act, 1974, to register with the HPCSA, such that failure to do so constitutes a criminal offense.

The implementation of the examination is in line with the objectives of the Professional Board for Speech Language and Hearing as outlined in section 15A of the Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act No. 56 of 1974), which entails, amongst others, the control and exercise of authority in respect of all matters affecting the education and training of persons in, and the manner of the exercise of the practices pursued in connection with, any health profession falling within the ambit of the professional board. In terms of section 15B of the Act the boards may appoint examiners and moderators and conduct examinations and charge such fees in respect of the examinations as may be prescribed.

2. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Examination- means a method of assessing the standard and/or the skills and knowledge level achieved by a candidate in a discipline and/or profession.

Examiner- means a person appointed by the Professional Board to ascertain whether the specific outcomes of a qualification and its underpinning programme have been achieved.

Invigilator- means any person who supervises candidates during examinations, including any member of the Board or HPCSA staff member. The primary task of the invigilator is to ensure that the examination rules are adhered to at all times.

Misconduct- means any unacceptable/fraudulent act or deed (examples indicated above).

Moderation- means the process that ensures that the assessment of outcomes has been fair, valid and reliable.

Moderator- means a person appointed by the Professional Board for Speech Language and Hearing or relevant Committee established by the Board for measuring the specific outcomes achieved for registration.

Qualification- means the formal recognition and certification of learning achievement conferred by an accredited provider, and signifies and formally certifies the demonstrated achievement of a person by means of a planned and purposeful combination of learning outcomes at a specified level of performance.

Re-marking- means the re-marking of an examination answer sheet/book by the moderator, and is subject to the payment of a fee (50% of examination fee) by the candidate.

3. REGISTRATION A PREREQUISITE FOR PROFESSIONS UNDER THE AMBIT OF THE BOARD

Registration is a prerequisite for practicing in terms of section 17 of the Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act No. 56 of 1974), no person shall be entitled to practice within a Republic any profession registrable in terms of the Act, unless he/she is registered. The professions under the ambit of the Professional Board for Speech Language and Hearing are the following:

ST	Speech Therapist
STA	Speech Therapist and Audiologist
AU	Audiologist
GAK	Hearing Aid Acousticians
AM	Audiometrician
SAU	Supplementary Audiologist
SGAK	Supplementary Hearing Aid Acousticians
SSTA	Supplementary Speech Therapy and Audiology
SGK	Speech and Hearing Correctionist
SGG	Community Speech and Hearing worker
STB	Speech Therapy Assistant
STB	Speech and Hearing Assistant

4. REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION OF BOARD EXAMINATION

4.1 ADMISSION FOR BOARD EXAMINATION FOLLOWING ERASURE

4.1.1 Applicants, who are not registered and had not been practicing their profession and had not been engaged in CPD for more than 3 years, have to pass the Board exam before they may be restored to the register.

May be restored upon receipt of the following:

- Restoration Form (Form 18)
- A detailed letter motivating the reasons for restoration
- An updated Curriculum Vitae with referees
- Restoration Fees and any other outstanding fees
- Documentary evidence of all related activities engaged in since the date of erasure
- A period of completed supervised practice to be decided upon

- Submission of a report by the supervisor to the Chairperson of the Education, Training and Registration Committee as to the competency of the health professional or whether a further period of supervised practice is recommended
- Upon submission of a successful report from the supervisor, the health professional may be restored to the category Independent Practice if he/she was registered in that category prior to the erasure
- Accrue the necessary CEUs as per the CPD Guidelines
- The health professional be included in a CPD Audit after the period of supervised practice to ensure that this requirement is adhered to
- Once all requirements have been met, the practitioner may apply to have his/her name restored to the register for independent practice
- Passing the Board Examination

4.1.2 Practitioners who were erased unknowingly from the registers for 2 years or more and have practiced the profession to be restored upon receipt of the following

- Duly completed application for restoration form (Form 18) and applicable Restoration Fees
- Proof of practicing their profession – CV and letter from the previous employer confirming employment with dates specified.
- COS (Recent certificate of good status issued by the Regulatory authority in the country where he/she had been practicing) not older than 3 months.
- Proof of CPD attended to during preceding 24 months.
- Proof of payment

4.2 ADMISSION FOR BOARD EXAMINATION FOR FOREIGN QUALIFIED APPLICATIONS

Speech Therapist, Speech Therapist and Audiologist, Audiologist and Hearing Aid Acousticians

An applicant must hold a qualification equivalent to the recognised South African qualification.

An applicant for registration must also submit official documentary evidence of having completed full-time practical training and/or professional experience.

The attached application form, duly completed

- Copies of all degree/diploma certificates or similar academic qualifications certified by an attorney in his capacity as notary public and bearing the official stamp. Copies certified only by a Commissioner of Oaths will not be accepted;
- Original transcripts of record issued by the applicants educational institution indicating course content of each qualification referred to above (copies of original documents will only be accepted if duly certified as outlined above);
- A recent original Certificate of Status (Certificate of Good Standing), indicating that the applicant is in good standing, issued by the foreign registration authority where the applicant is currently registered; which has been issued within the preceding three months;

- A copy of a valid Passport or Identity Document as proof of current citizenship, duly certified by a notary public; and
- A letter of endorsement in support of the application for registration issued by the Foreign Workforce Management Program (FWMP) of the National Department of Health (Form 176 DOH attached hereto for this purpose). Applications should be directed to The Programme Manager, FWMP, Room 1123, Fedlife Building, National Department of Health, Private Bag X828, Pretoria, 0001, RSA (Corner of Church and Prinsloo Streets).

4.3 CANCELLATION OR RESCHEDULING THE BOARD EXAMINATION

Cancellation of an application to sit for the examination must be in writing and faxed to 012 338 3904/9415/9407 or e-mailed to SLHBoard@hpcsa.co.za

Notification of cancellation to sit for the examination has to reach the Board at least 3 weeks prior to date of the examination, where after the examination fee will be forfeited.

4.4 CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR CONTACT DETAILS

If the applicant changes either his/her address or contact details before the examination for which an application has been made, the applicant shall notify the Board in writing of such change of address or contact details at least 3 weeks prior to date of the examination to ensure that the study material and confirmation of the examination venue are mailed to the correct address.

5. EXAMINATION FEES APPLICABLE TO THE SLH REGISTERS

For enquiries pertaining to examination fees applicable, please contact Professional Board on 012 338 3904/ 9415/ 9407 or e-mailed to SLHBoard@hpcsa.co.za.

6. PAYMENT OF THE EXAMINATION FEE

The proof of payment (deposit slip) must reflect the candidate's surname, registration number, contact telephone number, email address and correct reference number either the registration number, initials, surname and professional board SLH (for restoration) or ID or passport number, initials, surname and professional board SLH (for Foreign Qualified candidates).

The Professional Board will not accept responsibility for exclusion of a name of a candidate from the list of candidates due to non-receipt of proof of payment by the HPCSA.

The banking details of the HPCSA are as follows:

HPCSA

ABSA

Arcadia Branch

Account number: 0610-000-169,

Branch code: 33-49-45

REF NO: REGISTRATION NUMBER AND INITIALS AND SURNAME OF THE CANDIDATE (for restoration) - PBSLH ID/PASSPORT AND INITIALS AND SURNAME OF THE CANDIDATE (for Foreign Qualified) - PBSLH

- ii. The HPCSA has for safety reasons implemented “a no-cash on premises policy” and payments have to be made at the bank or through electronic funds transfer (EFT);
- iii. Incomplete application forms will not be processed and will be returned to candidates;
- iv. An admission letter issued by the Board, their ID/Passport document to be provided the invigilator on the day of the examination.

7. BOARD EXAMINATIONS

The South African Qualifications Authority’s (SAQA) framework requires that examinations and/or assessments are based on minimum objective criteria/outcomes. The examination is predicated on minimum competency and ethical standards within the South African context, legislation and international best practice in the profession.

The purpose of the examination is to establish insofar as is possible whether the applicant demonstrates the exit level outcomes that are indicators of professional competence to practice as a speech therapist or audiologist.

8. STRUCTURE OF THE EXAMINATION

The examination takes the form of an Objective Structured Clinical Examination similar to those conducted for final year students and should take no less than 2 and no more than 3 hours.

The examination is an oral examination and the facilities should exist for the applicant to demonstrate proficiency in the use of technical equipment (speech sample analysis, audiometers, hearing aids, tests of speech or language) (and voice and swallowing) if necessary. The format of the examination is an in depth presentation of two case studies.

Applicants will be sent the set of questions with instructions to choose two for presentation to the examiners. Candidates must prepare a document that will be presented to examiner at the outset of the examination. Access to audiovisual facilities for presentation purposes must be requested from the examiner ahead of time.

The candidate will present the cases to the examiners. During the presentation and discussion, the candidate should demonstrate the following:

- Knowledge of an eco-systems approach with special attention to South African content to communication and the management of persons with communication disorders.
- Familiarity with and knowledge of current theories in the chosen communication disorders.
- Relevant clinical application to the cases in hand
- Knowledge of relevant assessment protocols or procedures
- Interpretation of the test findings
- Knowledge and application of treatment/management protocols for the chosen communication disorders
- Evidence of clinical experience/s in a range of contexts in which the cases/communication disorders are managed
- Evidence of knowledge of appropriate models of teamwork and their application to the cases in hand
- Knowledge of referral systems in the South African context for clients with communication disorders
- Knowledge of local private and public sector contexts and their differences
- Familiarity with new developments and research trends in the selected fields
- Knowledge of professional conduct and patient right.

The examiner will select a third question from among the HPCSA cases. The candidate should demonstrate knowledge of the local conditions and how these impact upon assessment and management within the Primary Health Care policy framework.

9. EXAMINATION DATES AND VENUES

You have applied for registration/restoration as a Speech Therapist or Audiologist with the Health Professions Council of South Africa. As a practitioner, you are required to present yourself for examination at one of the training institutions for the SLH professions.

The institution at which the examination takes place is selected on availability of examiners and the place and venue will be made known to the applicant when they apply for the examination.

10. PUBLICATION OF THE EXAMINATION RESULTS

The outcome of the Board examination will be communicated to the candidate 30 days after the Education, Training and Registration Committee meeting.

11. RE-EXAMINATIONS

Applicants who are unsuccessful in the examination will be eligible for re-examination provided it occurs within a period of a year after the issuing of the resolution to the candidate. Proof of payment of the examination fee (deposit slip) must be submitted. The fees payable for a re-examination is **100% of the examination fee**.

12. VALIDITY OF THE RESOLUTION OF THE COMMITTEE

Applicants should note that the resolution of the committee relating to approval granted to applicants to sit for Board examination in terms of the duration of the resolution would be valid for a year to sit for subsequent examinations, following which the applicant must re-apply.

13. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Applicants who have any complaints/grievances regarding the examination are at liberty to submit their complaints/grievances **in writing** to the Board within **1 week** after date of the examination;

The complaints process aims to be fair to all parties involved with the complaint. All complaints will be treated as legitimate and investigated without prejudice.

Complaints will be dealt with promptly, courteously and in accordance with their urgency within the Board's set timeframes. Complaints will be resolved in a maximum of 30 working days where possible. Complaints handling shall be at no charge to the complainant, subject to statutory requirements. However, the normal charges relating to Access of Information requests will apply.

Complaints have to be lodged in writing and may be submitted by fax or e-mail to- The Deputy Company Secretary
Professional Board for Speech, Language and Hearing Professions
P.O Box 205
Pretoria
0001
E-mail: SLHBoard@hpcsa.co.za
Tel/Fax: +27 (0) 12 338 3964

14. FRAUD, DISHONESTY AND OTHER MISCONDUCT

If it shall appear to the Board that there is credible evidence of the following misconduct and/or fraudulent activities, the Board shall serve written charges on the specific candidate by mail at the last address provided to the Board by the candidate, stating with particularity the facts upon which such charges are based. The candidate's examination results shall be withheld pending the outcome of the investigation

- i. Either by omission or commission falsified the application or proof required for admission to the Board examination or misrepresented the applicant's eligibility to sit for the Board Examination;
- ii. either by omission or commission falsified documentation submitted in support of a special request or served such documentation under false pretences;
- iii. brought unauthorised items or materials into the examination room or otherwise violated the Board's examination security policy;
- iv. possessed in any manner, reviewed and/or utilised any unauthorised notes, books, recordings, electronically retrievable information or other unauthorised materials during the Board examination;
- v. sought copied or used answers or information from or given answers or information to other candidates during the Board examination;
- vi. removed any examination materials or notes made during the examination from the examination room;
- vii. memorised questions for the purpose of reporting and or reported the substance of questions to any person associated with any person or organization engaged in the preparation of the applicants to take the Board examination or otherwise violated the copyright protection to the Board examination materials;
- viii. engaged in fraud, dishonesty in connection with the administration of the Board examination;
- ix. compromised or disrupted the process for admission to or administration of the Board examination.

Applicants shall be granted an opportunity to respond to the charges within a period of 21 days after date of the letter which contains the charges. Such a response shall identify with specificity the charges disputed by the candidate, who shall set forth any evidence which can be adduced by the candidate in the contradiction of such charges. The applicant may include in such written response a request that a hearing be held.

In the event of an applicant not submitting a written response within the set timeframe, the Board shall deem the facts presented in the written charges to be true. In the event of the candidate not requesting a hearing and the Board does not on its own accord determine to conduct a hearing, the Board shall make a determination based on the evidence submitted.

The Board shall have the authority to determine a sanction to be applied based on the severity of the allegations/ offences and inform the candidate accordingly. Sanctions to be applied by the Board may include but not be limited to:

- i. nullification of the examination taken by the applicant;
- ii. disqualification of the applicant from sitting for another examination for a period not exceeding five years from the date of such determination;
- iii. invalidation or striking off one or more answers of the examination taken by the applicant, or reduction of the applicant's final score by one or more points.

The Board shall notify the applicant of its decision in writing within a period of 30 days from the date of the hearing of the charges.

The applicant shall be entitled to representation by an attorney at his/her own expense at every stage of the proceedings.

15. SUGGESTED READING MATERIAL

- i. Examination Preparation Guide
- ii. Ethical rules, relevant legislation, e.g. Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act 56 of 1974), regulations relating to the scope of practice, etc. (obtainable from Council's website [www.hpcsa.co.za /Health Related Acts/ scope of practice](http://www.hpcsa.co.za/Health%20Related%20Acts/scope%20of%20practice)).
- iii. Any reading material and/or text books of the applicant's own choice that addresses the core competencies of the relevant registration category, as well as contextual issues.
- iv. South African Speech, Language and Hearing Association Guideline (www.sashla.co.za)
- v. American Speech – Language and Hearing Association Guidelines (www.asha.org)
- vi. Evidence-based information on scope of practice