

Australian Society of Soil Science Inc. By-laws for Certified Professional Soil Scientists

1. Definitions:

In these By-laws, unless the context otherwise requires,

- 1.1 "ASSSI" means the Australian Society of Soil Science Inc.
- 1.2 "Chair" means the Chair of the Accreditation Board.
- 1.3 "Council" means the Federal Council of the Australian Society of Soil Science Inc, or any other governance body that in the future may be responsible for the management of the Society.
- 1.4 "CP" means Certified Professional.
- 1.5 "CPSS" means Certified Professional Soil Scientist.
- 1.6 "Accreditation Board" means the Certified Professional Soil Scientist Accreditation Board.
- 1.7 "OPD" means Ongoing Professional Development.
- 1.8 "Guidelines" means the Guidelines that the Accreditation Board, at its sole discretion, publishes from time-to-time setting out the criteria, procedures and regulations pertaining to the Society's Certified Professional scheme.
- 1.9 "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Accreditation Board.
- 1.10 "The Society" means the Australian Society of Soil Science Inc.

2. Objectives:

The objectives of the Accreditation Board are to implement and manage the Society's Certified Professional Soil Scientist accreditation scheme and in particular:

- 2.1 to ensure the fulfillment of the aims and objectives of ASSSI in regards to its CPSS scheme;
- 2.2 to promote and to ensure adherence to the highest possible standards of competence, conduct and continuing development amongst Certified Professional Soil Scientists;
- 2.3 to protect ASSSI and its Certified Professional Soil Scientists from the actions of persons or organisations that might erode the Standards, Rules of Conduct and Code of Ethics;
- 2.4 to maintain a register of Certified Professional Soil Scientists;
- 2.5 to act for Certified Professional Soil Scientists in matters of common concern; and
- 2.6 to promote the interests of its Certified Professional Soil Scientists by maintaining and enhancing their status.

3. Certified Professional Scheme:

The detailed criteria applicable to admission, approved and published by the Accreditation Board, are published on the Society's CPSS web site.

4. Eligibility for CPSS accreditation:

A person shall be eligible for admission to CPSS accreditation (Stage 1, 2 or 3) if the person:

- 4.1 is a financial, ordinary member of ASSSI;
- 4.2 has a minimum of five years of relevant professional experience in the field of Soil Science and/or a formal qualification in soil science

- 4.3 adheres to the Code of Ethics;
- 4.4 participates in the OPD Scheme and complies with requests from the Accreditation Board pertaining to the CPSS scheme.

5. Register of Certified Professional Soil Scientists:

- 5.1 The Accreditation Board will compile, maintain and publish annually a Register of Certified Professional Soil Scientists, which shall list all currently accredited Certified Professionals and, in each case, their
 - 5.1.1 title and full name;
 - 5.1.2 ASSSI membership status;
 - 5.1.3 an email address or other contact information; and
 - 5.1.4 any other information about the qualifications and professional experience of the Certified Professional that the Accreditation Board may consider is reasonable to include in the Register.
- 5.2 At the discretion of the Accreditation Board, the Register may be published in full, both in printed form and in any other medium the Accreditation Board may decide.

6. Admission to CPSS accreditation:

- 6.1 Applications for accreditation as a CPSS shall be made on the prescribed form on which the applicant shall give an undertaking to abide by these By-laws, the Code of Ethics and Rules of Conduct of the Society and any other Code in force in the Society.
- 6.2 Each applicant for CPSS accreditation shall furnish with the Application Form the names and addresses of three referees who shall be Certified Professional Soil Scientists or, failing those, professionals that, in the opinion of the Accreditation Board, are of comparable standing, and who are in a position to assess the applicant's work. All applicants are required to provide contact details of three referees. The ASSSI office will contact the referees and request a referee report be completed and submitted as part of the application process.
- 6.3 The Application Form and the supporting documents shall be forwarded to the ASSSI Federal Office for consideration by the Accreditation Board.
- 6.4 If the Accreditation Board is satisfied that an applicant is eligible for CPSS, the applicant shall be admitted and notified accordingly.
- 6.5 Upon the payment of any prescribed fees and satisfactory completion of ongoing professional development (diary), the applicant shall be entered on the Register of Certified Professional Soil Scientists in accordance with Section 5.1 above.
- 6.6 Upon the completion of all the admission requirements, the applicant will be issued a Certificate of Certified Professional accreditation signed by the Federal President or his or her nominee and the Chairman of the Accreditation Board or his or her nominee and the Executive Officer of the Society.
- 6.7 The Accreditation Board shall have absolute discretion to allow or deny accreditation as a Certified Professional Soil Scientist.
- 6.8 All rejected applicants shall be advised accordingly by the Accreditation Board and given reasons why their applications were rejected.
- 6.9 Any rejected applicant may reapply after twelve months from the date of rejection by submitting a new application.
- 6.10 Any applicant may appeal the rejection of his or her application to the Federal Executive if that person believes the Accreditation Board has not followed the administrative procedures

specified by these By-laws in regards to his or her admission to CPSS accreditation or has not been consistent in judging the criteria for acceptance.

7. Maintenance of Professional Accreditation (Ongoing Professional Development requirements):

- 7.1 Accredited Certified Professional Soil Scientists shall furnish annually evidence of their compliance with their Ongoing Professional Development (OPD) obligations during the previous calendar year, in such form as the Accreditation Board requires.
- 7.2 The Accreditation Board shall keep a record of CPSS OPD diaries and relevant correspondence.
- 7.3 A CPSS must complete and have approved by the CPSS Accreditation Board a minimum of 50 hours OPD annually to gain accreditation. Additional OPD hours can be submitted with a maximum of between 80 and 90 hours able to be approved in any calendar year depending on the stage of accreditation. Hours in excess of the 50 hours required for the current years' accreditation can be carried over to the following year. PhD students are automatically granted 50 hours OPD for their research if studying full time however no carry-over hours are granted.
- 7.4 CPSSs with the maximum carry-over hours must satisfy the minimum annual OPD requirement of five hours in two Core Capabilities (total 10 hours) annually for a Stage 1 CPSS, five hours in three Core Capabilities (total 15 hours) for a Stage 2 CPSS and five hours in four Core Capabilities (total 20 hours) for a Stage 3 CPSS, irrespective of their carry-over hours.
- 7.5 At its entire discretion, the Accreditation Board may request from a Certified Professional, further evidence of compliance with their OPD obligations.
- 7.6 If a Certified Professional fails to comply with point 7.1 above to the satisfaction of the Accreditation Board, the Accreditation Board may exclude the person's name from the Register of Certified Professionals.

8. Cessation of CPSS Accreditation:

- 8.1 A Certified Professional who ceases to be a financial member of ASSSI shall cease to be a Certified Professional forthwith and his or her name shall be removed from the Register of Certified Professionals.
- 8.2 A Certified Professional who fails to provide evidence of compliance with their OPD obligations within four months of such evidence being due, shall be deemed to have forfeited their CPSS accreditation and shall be removed from the Register of Certified Professionals.
- 8.3 A Certified Professional who fails to pay an annual subscription within four months of the due date shall be deemed to have forfeited their CPSS accreditation and shall be removed from the Register of Certified Professionals.
- 8.4 A person may resign Certified Professional accreditation by informing the Chair of the Accreditation Board to that effect in writing, whereupon that person shall be removed from the Register of Certified Professionals.
- 8.5 The rights and privileges of a Certified Professional shall cease immediately upon that person's removal from the Register of Certified Professionals.

9. Disciplinary Actions:

- 9.1 Any unprofessional behaviour of a Certified Professional Soil Scientist, including any breaches of these By-laws or of the Guidelines as amended from time to time and/or failure to

comply with the Code of Ethics and Rules of Conduct shall be reported in writing to the Accreditation Board through its Chair.

- 9.2 If the Accreditation Board is of the opinion that the conduct of a Certified Professional Soil Scientist warrants investigation, it shall appoint a CPSS Ethics Committee, composed of three senior CPSS members, to consider the matter and advise the Board. A decision on a complaint should be reached and communicated to all parties involved within 30 working days of receipt of the complaint by the Accreditation Board.
- 9.3 At the discretion of Federal Council or at its own discretion, the Accreditation Board may take appropriate disciplinary action against an offending Certified Professional Soil Scientist.
- 9.4 The Accreditation Board's disciplinary action may involve termination or suspension of CPSS accreditation.
- 9.5 Suspension or termination of membership of ASSSI because of disciplinary action will result in automatic suspension or termination of that person's CPSS accreditation.
- 9.6 The Accreditation Board, at its sole discretion, may publicise in any form the Accreditation Board deems fit, any disciplinary action taken against a Certified Professional Soil Scientist.

10. Management:

- 10.1 The Accreditation Board manages its affairs in accordance with these By-laws.
- 10.2 The Accreditation Board will have at least five members, with at least four drawn from the ASSSI membership representing research, academe and consulting fields.
- 10.3 The elected members of the Accreditation Board will serve for a period of two years from 1 January. Half of the elected members of the Accreditation Board will retire in any year. A retiring member will be eligible for re-election. Each ASSSI Branch can nominate an ex-officio member to assist the Accreditation Board carry out its duties as required by the Accreditation Board.
- 10.4 Nominations for membership of the Accreditation Board will be called from Branches not later than 1 September and will be accepted by Federal Council no later than 30 September in each year.
- 10.5 Any casual vacancy on the Accreditation Board may be filled by the Accreditation Board until the next election.
- 10.6 The Accreditation Board will elect its own Chair for a period of one year from 1 January. A retiring Chairman will be eligible for re-election.
- 10.7 The ASSSI Executive Officer will be appointed as Secretary to the Board as the Federal Council's appointed member and shall be a non-voting member of the Accreditation Board.
- 10.8 The Accreditation Board shall convene by teleconference quarterly and meet annually at a location to be agreed upon by Accreditation Board members for the last meeting of the year. Telephone conferencing will be used by the Accreditation Committee to deal with matters out of session. The quorum for meetings of the Accreditation Board shall be three (3).

11. Committees:

The Accreditation Board shall appoint such committees as are necessary, from time to time.

12. Change of By-laws:

- 12.1 The Accreditation Board may petition a change of these By-laws by the simple majority vote of its members.
- 12.2 Twenty Certified Professional Soil Scientists may petition under signature a postal ballot to change these By-laws.

- 12.3 These By-laws may be changed by a postal ballot of all Certified Professional Soil Scientists.
- 12.4 A voting form will be forwarded to all Certified Professional Soil Scientists, and the form shall state a closing date for receipt of votes, which date shall be not less than 30 days from the date on which the voting forms were mailed out.
- 12.5 In the event of a ballot, the Accreditation Board shall appoint an independent Returning Officer who will determine the outcome of the ballot.
- 12.6 A simple majority of the formal votes received will constitute a decision.
- 12.7 Any change of these By-Laws shall be subject to the approval of Federal Council.

13. Non-conflict between the CPSS By-Laws and the Society's By-laws:

Where these By-laws are silent in any matter or their provisions are in conflict with those of the Society's By-laws, the Society's By-laws shall take precedence over these By-laws.
