

CONSTITUTION OF THE SINGAPORE ASSOCIATION FOR COUNSELLING



18 MARCH 2015



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1 PREAMBLE

- 1.1 Recognising that counselling has become universally established as an approach to the solution of personal problems; and
- 1.2 Recognising that counsellors are members of many different professional groups with different training standards and with different techniques; and
- 1.3 Committing ourselves to the goal of assisting other human beings to achieve greater psychological well-being;
- 1.4 It is decided to form an Association.

2 NAME AND PLACE OF BUSINESS

- 2.1 The name of the Association (hereinafter called "The Association") shall be the Singapore Association for Counselling.
- 2.2 The place of business of the Association shall be at the Singapore Professional Centre, 93 Toa Payoh Central #05-01, Toa Payoh Central Community Building, Singapore 319194 or at any other address as may from time to time be decided by the Executive Committee, subject to the approval of the general membership and the Registrar of Societies.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTS

- 3.1 The general purpose of the Association shall be to provide a common professional base for the advancement of counselling in Singapore.
- 3.2 The specific professional aims of the Association shall be:
 - (a) To promote the professional practice of counselling.
 - (b) To encourage the development and advancement of professional counselling as a mental health discipline in Singapore.
 - (c) To promote and assist in the research on counselling theories and practice.
 - (d) To promote and reinforce high standards in education and training, professional ethics, competency and growth.
 - (e) To promote and enhance public awareness of the profession of counselling.
 - (f) To foster co-operation and sharing of information and experience among professionals of different counselling approaches and specialities.

3.3 The specific objectives of the Association shall be:

- (a) To organise, participate in arranging and providing for conferences, workshops, exhibitions, business and social meetings, lectures and discussions on subjects of interest to persons interested in counselling, and also for conduct and publication of research relevant to counselling;
- (b) To print, publish and circulate papers, treatise, books, pamphlets, leaflets or communications to the Association, and proceedings and accounts of the Association;
- (c) To keep a Register of members, their qualifications and appointments, and particulars of their professional experience;
- (d) To act as trustee of any trusts established solely or principally for purpose similar or related to the aims of the Association; and
- (e) To consider and advise on any question of policy related to the practice of counselling referred to it for consideration by any member of the Association or by any other body/agency (government, non-government, public or private sector).

4 MEMBERSHIP

4.1 The Association shall consist of:

- (a) Fellow Members
- (b) Master Clinical Members
- (c) Clinical Members
- (d) Provisional Clinical Members
- (e) Allied Members
- (f) Student Members
- (g) Associate Members

4.2 FELLOW MEMBERS

4.2.1 Fellow membership shall be conferred through nomination and approval at Annual General Meeting.

4.2.2 Fellow membership shall be jointly nominated by at least three Fellow, Master Clinical or Clinical members and proposed as an agenda item at Annual General Meeting.

4.2.3 A Fellow member shall have fulfilled all the following requirements:

- i. Be a member in good standing
- ii. Holds the Master Clinical Membership for a minimum of 10 years.
- iii. Has made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of counselling knowledge or practice either by research, teaching, publications or clinical work (Published journal papers, chapters, books, conference presentations, established clinical practice, teaching awards etc).
- iv. Has performed distinctive service to the Association (Executive committee, Subcommittees, Organising committees, Standing committees etc).

4.2.4 Fellow members shall be entitled to use the post nominal letters: **FSAC**

4.3 MASTER CLINICAL MEMBERS

4.3.1 The Master Clinical membership is granted through application to and approval by the Executive Committee.

4.3.2 Application for Master Clinical membership is to be made on the prescribed form and formally supported by at least three Fellow, Master Clinical or Clinical members.

4.3.3 Application for Master Clinical membership is to be accompanied by documentary proof of training and supervision hours conducted by applicant.

4.3.4 A Master Clinical member shall have fulfilled all the following requirements:

- i. Be a member in good standing
- ii. Holds the Clinical Membership for a minimum of 5 years.
- iii. Holds the registration on the SAC Register of Counsellors for a minimum of 4 years.
- iv. Has conducted 100 hours of training / supervision in counselling.

4.3.5 Master Clinical members shall be entitled to use the post nominal letters: **MMSAC**

4.4 CLINICAL MEMBERS

4.4.1 The Clinical membership is granted through application to and approval by the Executive Committee.

4.4.2 Application for Clinical membership is to be made on the prescribed form and formally supported by at least two Fellow, Master Clinical or Clinical members.



4.4.3 A Clinical member shall have fulfilled all the following requirements:

- i. Has completed an SAC recognised course in counselling or its equivalent.
- ii. Holds current registration on the SAC Register of Counsellors.

4.4.4 Clinical members shall be entitled to use the post nominal letters: **CMSAC**

4.5 PROVISIONAL CLINICAL MEMBERS

4.5.1 The Provisional Clinical membership is granted through application to and approval by the Executive Committee.

4.5.2 Application for Provisional Clinical membership should be made on the prescribed form and formally supported by at least two Fellow, Master Clinical or Clinical members.

4.5.3 Application is to be accompanied by a declaration of intent in working towards registration on the SAC Register of Counsellors on the prescribed form.

4.5.4 A Provisional Clinical member shall have fulfilled all the following requirements:

- i. Be a member in good standing.
- ii. Has completed an SAC recognised course in counselling or its equivalent.
- iii. Is working towards registration on the SAC Register of Counsellors.

4.6 ALLIED MEMBERS

4.6.1 The Allied membership is granted through application to and approval by the Executive Committee.

4.6.2 Application for Allied membership should be made on the prescribed form and formally supported by at least two Fellow, Master Clinical, Clinical or Allied members.

4.6.3 An Allied member shall have fulfilled all the following requirements:

- i. Holds an undergraduate / postgraduate degree in Counselling, Human Services, Psychology, Social Work or its equivalent.
- ii. Is working in a counselling-related position.

4.7 STUDENT MEMBERS

4.7.1 The student membership is granted through application to and approval by the Executive Committee.



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- 4.7.2 Application for student membership is to be made on the prescribed form and formally supported by at least one Fellow, Master Clinical, Clinical or Allied member.
- 4.7.3 Student members shall be undertaking a SAC recognised course in counselling at the time of application.
- 4.7.4 Application is to be accompanied by a confirmation of studentship in writing from the educational institution in which he is enrolled.

4.8 ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

- 4.8.1 Associate membership is open to any persons with a keen interest in counselling and holds qualifications at the tertiary level.
- 4.8.2 The Associate membership is granted through application to and approval by the Executive Committee.
- 4.8.3 Application for Associate membership is to be made on prescribed form and formally supported by at least one Fellow, Master Clinical, Clinical or Allied member.

4.9 MEMBERSHIP PRIVILEGES

- 4.9.1 Fellow, Master Clinical and Clinical members as specified in 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 shall have voting rights at Annual General Meetings and shall be eligible to hold office in the Executive Committee and to Chair Subcommittees.
- 4.9.2 Provisional Clinical, Allied, Student and Associate members as specified in 4.5, 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8 shall be collectively known as Non-Clinical Members.
- 4.9.3 Provisional Clinical and Allied members as specified in 4.5 and 4.6 shall have voting rights at Annual General Meetings but shall not be eligible to hold office in the Executive Committee or to Chair Subcommittees.
- 4.9.4 Student and Associate members as specified in 4.7 and 4.8 shall not have any voting rights at Annual General Meetings and shall not be eligible to hold office in the Executive Committee or to Chair Subcommittees.
- 4.9.5 All members shall be eligible to be appointed by the Executive Committee to serve on Subcommittees.

5 SAC REGISTER OF COUNSELLORS

- 5.1.1 The Association shall organise and maintain the SAC Register of Counsellors.
- 5.1.2 The Register of Counsellors Board shall be appointed by the Executive Committee. The function of the Register of Counsellors Board is to register counsellors who are

practising or would like to practise in Singapore. The Register of Counsellors Board shall comprise the following:

- i. Two SAC Fellow, Master Clinical or Clinical Members. At least one member shall be appointed by the Executive Committee at each Annual General Meeting for a 2-year term.
- ii. Four Registered Counsellors from the Register. At least two Registered Counsellors shall be appointed by the Executive Committee at each Annual General Meeting for a 2-year term.
- iii. The Honorary Secretary or Assistant Honorary Secretary of the Association.
- iv. At the discretion of the Executive Committee, up to four members from outside the Association, representing relevant government agencies and Ministries, when it deem necessary.

5.1.3 The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Register of Counsellors Board shall be decided by members of the said Board at the beginning of each calendar year. The Executive Committee shall be formally informed of the decision.

5.1.4 The Honorary Secretary or Assistant Honorary Secretary of the Association shall not occupy the office of Chairperson or Vice Chairperson of the Register of Counsellors Board.

5.2 Registrants of the SAC Register of Counsellors

5.2.1 The intended registrant shall be a member of the Association and in good standing and shall satisfy the Register of Counsellors Board that they have approved training and experience in counselling in accordance with the requirements set out in 5.2.2 or 5.2.3.

5.2.2 The intended registrant shall be a graduate from an accredited institute of higher learning and has also completed recognized training courses in counselling theory. The counselling content (of a minimum of 300 contact hours altogether) must include:

- i. Counselling Theory, which includes the principles, concepts, and practice of counselling and orientation to basic counselling models;
- ii. Counselling Content Areas may include: Human Growth and Development, Helping Relationships, Group work, Appraisal and Research, Career and Lifestyle Development, Professional Orientation and Ethics, Marriage and Family Work and other specialization topics.
- iii. Counselling Practicum or Internship as part of the degree programme, which includes a minimum of 100 hours in the practice of face to face counselling under supervision of an SAC registered Counsellor or SAC Registered Supervisor,

or a Clinician Supervisor approved by the institute. The supervision will consist of at least one hour of supervision for each ten hours of counselling practice.

- iv. Applicant must complete 600 hours of face to face counselling within a minimum period of two years, subject to a maximum of three years. This time period need not start immediately after graduation, but must consist of one block period of time that is completed within seven years upon graduation. The recording of hours will begin only when coursework has been completed. The supervision, which must be by an SAC Registered Counsellor or SAC Registered Supervisor, or a Clinical Supervisor approved by the institute will consist of at least one hour of clinical supervision for each ten hours of counselling practice.

5.2.3 The intended registrant is presently a social and counselling service provider/practitioner and shall have completed recognized training courses in counselling theory and skills practice (of a minimum of 300 contact hours altogether) from an accredited educational or training institute.

- i. Counselling Theory, which includes the principles, concepts, and practice of counselling and orientation to basic counselling models;
- ii. Counselling Content Areas may include: Human Growth and Development, Helping Relationships, Group work, Appraisal and Research, Career and Lifestyle Development, Professional Orientation and Ethics, Marriage and Family Work and other specialization topics.
- iii. Applicant must complete 600 hours of face to face counselling within a minimum period of two years, subject to a maximum of three years. This time period need not start immediately after graduation, but must consist of one block period of time that is completed within seven years upon graduation. Recording of hours may begin when course work begins. This time period need not start immediately after completion of course work, but must consist of one block period of time. The supervision, which must be by an SAC Registered Counsellor or SAC Registered Supervisor, or a Clinical Supervisor approved by the institute will consist of at least one hour of clinical supervision for each ten hours of counselling practice.

5.2.4 Registrants are entitled to style themselves as SAC Registered Counsellors and use the post nominal letters: **RegCLR**

5.3 RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION

5.3.1 The registration of a SAC Registered Counsellors shall be renewed every two years.

5.3.2 For each two-year period registered as a SAC Registered Counsellors, the registrant shall complete 50 hours of continuing professional education (CPE) as described below. The two-year period begins at the AGM of the year of registration.

- i. The continuing professional education (CPE) is based upon chronological hours. As an example, a four-hour workshop then accounts for four of the necessary hours.
- ii. The continuing professional education (CPE) will consist of workshops, seminars, or training in counselling, social work, psychology or a related field.
- iii. Either a photocopy of the certificate of attendance or a written letter confirming your participation is sufficient evidence of participation in the continuing professional education (CPE).
- iv. The evidence of the 50 chronological hours is to be presented to the Register of Counsellors Board.
- v. Provision is made for a three-month cushion, before or after the AGM date to facilitate the accumulation of CPE hours. Once submitted, the same CPE hours cannot be re-submitted for a subsequent year period.

5.3.3 For each two-year period registered as a SAC Registered Counsellors, the registrant shall submit on the prescribed form a record that he/she has completed at least 400 hours of clinical work as described below. The two-year period begins at the AGM of the year the individual is admitted to the Register.

- i. Clinical work shall consist of face to face counselling, group counselling/psychotherapy, and provision of clinical supervision.

5.3.4 Notwithstanding 5.3.2 and 5.3.3, each SAC Registered Counsellors shall maintain active membership in the Association at the level of Clinical Member or above during the period of registration.

5.4 REMOVAL FROM THE REGISTER

5.4.1 A registrant may be suspended or removed from the SAC Register of Counsellors in accordance with 5.4.2 or 5.4.3.

5.4.2 A registrant may be removed from the SAC Register of Counsellors by written notice from the Register of Counsellors Board if the registrant does not complete the continuing education requirement and/or the clinical work requirement as stipulated in 5.3.2 and 5.3.3.

5.4.3 A registrant shall be automatically suspended or removed from the SAC Register of Counsellors if the registrant:



- i. Ceases to meet qualifications specified in 5.2
- ii. Is found by the Board or the Association to have engaged in immoral, dishonorable, unprofessional, or ethical conduct, and such conduct is deemed to compromise the integrity of the Register; or
- iii. Is found to be guilty of an unlawful act involving conduct that is considered contrary to community standards of justice, honesty or good morals by a court of competent jurisdiction.

5.4.4 A registrant who has been removed from the SAC Register of Counsellors in accordance with 5.4.2 may be reinstated when he/she is able to satisfy the Register of Counsellors Board that he/she has met the requirements set out in 5.3.2 and 5.3.3.

5.4.5 The period which 5.4.4 could take effect is 2 years from the time of removal from the SAC Register of Counsellors, after which a new application for registration has to be submitted.

5.4.6 A registrant who does not maintain his/her clinical membership with the Association as stipulated in 5.3.4 will have his/her registration suspended.

5.4.7 A registrant who has his/her registration suspended according to 5.4.6 for more than six months will be permanently removed from the SAC Register of Counsellors.

5.5 PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY

5.5.1 All registrants must show evidence of professional indemnity coverage when they apply for new registration or renew their registration with the SAC Register of Counsellors.

6 RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES

6.1 The rights and privileges of every Member shall be personal to the member only and shall not be transferable.

7 SUBSCRIPTIONS

7.1 The subscriptions payable by the members shall be prescribed at the Annual General Meeting of members from time to time.

7.2 Any member whose subscription is in arrears after due notice has been sent to the member's address as shown in the Register of Members, membership will be automatically terminated. The committee may at any time in their discretion restore him/her to membership upon payment of all arrears of subscription then due.

7.3 The election of a member shall not become effective until the appropriate subscription payable on such election has been paid.

- 7.4 Any member may resign from the Association by informing the Executive Committee in writing that the member wishes to resign. The member shall cease to be a member at the termination of the period covered by the member's current subscription unless the member shall withdraw the member's resignation before that date
- 7.5 Annual subscriptions shall be due and payable before or at the registration of the Annual General Meeting.
- 7.6 The annual subscription fee shall be such sum as the members at the Annual General Meeting may from time to time determine.
- 7.7 All subscription fees shall be paid to the Association. Cheques shall be made payable to "The Singapore Association for Counselling" and crossed "Account Payee".

8 ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE ASSOCIATION

- 8.1 The supreme authority of the Association is vested in a General Meeting of the members and its decisions final.
- 8.2 The powers and duties of the members at Annual General Meetings shall include:
 - (a) The determining of general policy and a programme of activity for the Association;
 - (b) The election of Office Bearers of the Association;
 - (c) Deciding the annual subscription payable by Members;
 - (d) Approving the budget;
 - (e) Receiving and accepting the Statement of Accounts; and
 - (f) The amending of the Constitution of the Association.
- 8.3 The Annual General Meeting shall be convened once a year at a time and place designated and held not later than 31st March.
- 8.4 A notice convening the Annual General Meeting shall with the Agenda, Annual Report, and Accounts be sent to all members not less than fourteen (14) days before the Meeting. Any member who wishes to place an item on the agenda of a general meeting may do so provided the member gives notice to the Honorary Secretary one week before the meeting is due to be held.
- 8.5 The quorum for the Annual General Meeting shall be one-quarter of the voting members or 30 voting members, whichever is the smaller number.



- 8.6 In the event of a lack of quorum thirty minutes after the Annual General Meeting is due to begin, the meeting shall be held but shall not have the power to alter or amend rules.
- 8.7 Each individual member shall have one vote except the Chairman who shall have a casting vote.
- 8.8 The Extraordinary General Meeting may be convened on the written request of at least 10 voting members. A minimum of two weeks advance notice for the meeting must be served.

9 THE OFFICE BEARERS

- 9.1 The office bearers of the Association shall be:
 - (a) The President.
 - (b) The Vice-President.
 - (c) The Honorary Secretary.
 - (d) The Assistant Honorary Secretary.
 - (e) The Treasurer.
 - (f) Two Committee Members.
 - (g) Representative from professional organisations related to counselling may be invited to sit in the Executive Committee.
- 9.2 All office bearers shall hold office for a term of not more than two years and shall be eligible for re-election except for the post of Honorary Treasurer. The Honorary Treasurer shall be eligible for re-election only after a lapse of one term of office.
- 9.3 **THE PRESIDENT:**

The President shall take office at the declaration of the ballot at the Annual General Meeting. The President of the Association shall be the Chairman of the Annual General Meeting and of the Executive Committee.
- 9.4 **VICE PRESIDENT:**

The Vice President shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting and will deputise in the absence of the President.
- 9.5 **HONORARY SECRETARY:**

The Honorary Secretary shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting and shall be responsible for the following duties:

- (a) Secretary of the Annual General Meeting and of the Executive Committee.
- (b) Keeping a membership register.
- (c) Issuing notices and to convene the Annual General Meeting and Executive Committee Meeting.
- (d) Attend to all correspondences of the Association.

9.6 ASSISTANT HONORARY SECRETARY:

Shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting and shall assist the Honorary Secretary.

9.7 HONORARY TREASURER:

The Honorary Treasurer shall not hold office for more than one term of two years and the Treasurer's duties shall be:

- (a) The maintenance of a record of payments of subscriptions;
- (b) The banking of moneys and payments of accounts properly rendered to the Association;
- (c) The co-signing of cheques drawn on the bank account of the Association with either the President or the Honorary Secretary as the second signatory;
- (d) The advising of the Executive Committee on financial matters including the current financial position of the Association, its assets and its liabilities;
- (e) The submissions annually of the draft budget to the Executive Committee and the presentation for its approval of duly certified accounts for the preceding years; and
- (f) The presentation to the Annual General Meeting for its approval of duly certified accounts for the preceding years.

9.8 ELIGIBILITY FOR NOMINATION

All those who have been members of the Association for at least one year shall be eligible to stand for office.

10 COMMITTEES

- 10.1 The members at Annual General Meetings shall be empowered to establish Standing Committees as it shall consider desirable, and to delegate to such Committees such of its power and duties as it shall consider appropriate.

- 10.2 The Executive Committee shall be empowered to establish such ad-hoc Committees or Working Parties to report by a specified date to the Executive Committee, for further report to the members at Annual General Meetings where appropriate.
- 10.3 Committee or Working Parties of the Executive Committee shall be automatically dissolved after the purpose for which they have been formed is completed.
- 10.4 The Executive Committee is authorised to invite donations to the funds of the Association by lawful means and to expend such sums of money as the Association may think fit in furtherance of the aims of the Association.

11 ACCOUNTS

- 11.1 The Association shall keep or cause to be kept proper books of accounts of the receipts and expenditures and the matters in respect of which the receipt and expenditure takes place and of the assets, credits and liabilities of the Association and of all sales and purchases of goods by the Association.
- 11.2 The books and accounts shall be kept by the Treasurer and, subject to any reasonable restrictions as to the time and manner of inspecting the same, shall be open to inspection of the Members.
- 11.3 A copy of every profit and loss account and balance sheet (including every document required by law to be annexed thereto) which is to be laid before the Annual General Meeting, together with copy of the Auditor's Report, shall, not less than 14 days before the date of the Meeting, be sent to all persons entitled to receive notices of meetings of the Annual General Meeting of the Association.

12 AUDIT

- 12.1 The accounts of the Association shall be examined annually and the correctness of the balance sheet ascertained by one or more properly qualified Auditor or Auditors, who are not members of the Committee. The Auditor or Auditors may hold office for two years. The Auditor or Auditors may be re-elected.
- 12.2 The appointment, remuneration and duties of the Auditors shall be decided at the Annual General Meeting.
- 12.3 The Financial year shall commence from January 1st and end on December 31st.

13 PROHIBITIONS

- 13.1 Gambling of any kind and playing of paikow or mahjong, whether for stakes or not, is forbidden on the Association's premises. The introduction of materials for gambling or drug taking and of bad characters into the premises is prohibited.

- 13.2 The funds of the Association shall not be used to pay the fines of members who have been convicted in court.
- 13.3 The Association shall not attempt to restrict or in any manner interfere with trade or prices or engage in Trade Union activity as defined in any written law relating to Trade Unions for the time being in force in Singapore.
- 13.4 The Association shall not indulge in any political activity or allow its funds and/or premises to be used for political purposes.
- 13.5 The Association shall not hold any lottery, whether confined to its members or not, in the name of the Association or its office-bearers, committee or members.

14 TRUSTEES

- 14.1 If the Association at any time acquires any immovable property, such property shall be vested in trustees subject to a declaration of trust. Any trustee may at any time resign his/her trusteeship. If a trustee dies or becomes a lunatic or of unsound mind or moves permanently or is absent from the States of Singapore for a period of one year, he/she shall be deemed to have resigned his/her trusteeship. If a trustee is guilty of misconduct of such a kind as to render it undesirable that he/she continue as a trustee, a General Meeting may remove him/her from his/her trusteeship. Vacancies in the trusteeship may be lesser than five or greater than two. Notice of proposal to remove a trustee from his/her trusteeship or to appoint a new trustee to fill a vacancy must be given by affixing in the premises of the Association a document containing such proposal at least two weeks before the meeting at which the proposal is to be discussed. The result of such a meeting shall then be notified to the Registrar of Societies.

15 AMENDMENT AND DISSOLUTION

- 15.1 The Constitution may be amended by a two-third majority of the total votes cast at the Annual General Meeting provided notice of the amendment has been given in writing to all members at least one month before the meeting and they shall not come into force without the prior sanction of the Registrar of Societies.
- 15.2 The Association may only be dissolved by the decision of three-fifths of the members present at the Annual General Meeting provided that notice of dissolution motion has been given in writing to all members at least three months before the meeting.
- 15.3 In the event that the required quorum for dissolution cannot be mastered at the General Meeting, the meeting shall be adjourned for one month at a place and time to be appointed and should the number present personally be insufficient to form the



required quorum, then those present shall be considered a quorum for the purpose of dissolution.

- 15.4 In the event of Dissolution, any fund or property of the Association shall, after discharge of all debts and liabilities of the Association be made over to any society having similar aims, or failing that, shall be applied to some professional, educational or charitable purpose, in either case the decision lying with the General Meeting at which the Association is dissolved.
- 15.5 Notice of dissolution shall be given within 7 days of the dissolution to the Registrar of Societies.

16 DISPUTES

In the event of any dispute arising amongst the members, they shall table the matter for resolution before an Extraordinary General Meeting to be held in accordance with the constitution. If the members fail to resolve the matter at the Extraordinary General Meeting, they shall bring the matter before a court of law for resolution.