

Position Paper

THE ROLE OF COUNSELLING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

**Guidelines for Structuring and Developing
Counselling and Development Services in Higher Education in South Africa**

PRESENTED BY

**SOUTHERN AFRICAN ASSOCIATION FOR COUNSELLING AND
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **purpose** of this document is to provide a framework for national policy development and institutional planning related to the role of Counselling and Development Services (CDS's) in higher education.

CDS's provide a **comprehensive range of counselling, career and development services** to empower students to meet the challenges of the 21st Century individually and corporately. The service is rendered by professionals working in **multidisciplinary teams with core objectives** that include:

- The promotion of wellness through the enhancement of healthy, holistic growth and development;
- The assistance of students in identifying and enhancing learning skills, which help them to effectively meet their educational and life goals and to increase graduate output.
- The provision of guidance, counselling and/or therapy to students experiencing personal adjustment, vocational, developmental and/or psychological problems.

Current counselling and development practice is predominantly **proactive in nature**, focusing comprehensively on the holistic developmental and preventative empowerment of students. Counselling and development services are therefore not only support services. It is an **integral part of the academic endeavours** of all institutions of higher learning.

Higher education institutions must recognise the unique roles and competencies of CDS's, and the contributions they make to **improving the efficiency and effectiveness with which institutions** address the expected outcomes of the Higher Education sector. The provision of Counselling and Development Services is nationally and internationally an accepted practice while the needs and the necessity to meet them, are set to increase due to significant changes in the pre-tertiary educational environment.

Institutions should align their **policies** for Counselling and Development Services with national and international guidelines, principles and values. This will ensure the provision of a professional service that develops student potential maximally and increases the efficiency of the institution as a whole.

No other sector in higher education is as professionally prepared and focused as CDS's to guide students through the tertiary learning environment. It stands to reason that the unifying, guiding and coordinating roles of CDS's require the profession to be prominently **represented** in the management structures of national and regional education bodies, as well as on local campus level.

1. INTRODUCTION

The South African higher education landscape has been shaped by various policy documents. The changes were far-reaching and required the transformation of the higher education system as a *whole*. A key element was the focus on a learner-centred and outcomes-based approach, integrated into the educational programmes. Strong emphasis was also placed on access, increased student output and academic development. A further important element was the reduction of the number of higher education institutions through a series of mergers. The outcome of the process was three types of institutions, namely, merged institutions in which universities merged with universities or technikons with technikons, comprehensives in which universities merged with technikons and traditional universities that by and large retained their individual characters. The changes brought about by the mergers were felt at many levels. In merging institutions the departments/units/centres/bureaux responsible for counselling career and development services were affected to some degree. In some instances services were spun off to become independent or they were merged with others. In other instances they were merged with departments/units/centres/bureaux of different types to form entities that differed markedly from what they have been originally. It is this merged situation that necessitated the former Society for Student Counselling in Southern Africa to re-examine its identity and operations in order to remain relevant to its members and to continue to play a meaningful role in the broader student support and development endeavours at member institutions.

The specific objectives of the Position Paper are:

- To provide a *policy framework* for CDS's to be presented to statutory bodies such as Higher Education South Africa (HESA), the Department of Education (DoE) and other organisations working in the area of student support.
- To empower Directors of CDS's to negotiate the *positioning and status* of such services in institutions of higher education to bring them in line with national and international trends.
- To serve as a framework for CDS's in the design of quality criteria
- *To align CDS's in Southern Africa with international developments.*

2. THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN ASSOCIATION FOR COUNSELLING AND DEVELOPMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION (SAACDHE) (hereafter referred to as the Association)

The Association represents the interests of CDS's in Southern Africa

The mission of the Association is to *protect, unite, promote and advocate the interests of CDS's in the institutional and societal contexts*. The Association facilitates the *holistic development and professionaliation of staff in the CDS's* by providing a forum and developing structures, to foster the generation and sharing of research-based and other relevant information and skills amongst its members.

Professional development activities are provided through an annual conference as well as regional activities at branch level.

The core principles that guide the activities of the Association are

- the observation of fundamental human rights
- the values of fairness and justice
- respecting clients' right to confidentiality and
- Providing quality service at all times.

The members of the Association subscribe to a *code of ethics that* emphasises

- the principles of respect for the dignity of persons,
- responsible caring,
- integrity in relationships and
- responsibility to employing institutions

Communication between members and between members and the Management Committee is facilitated through four newsletters per year, a website (www.sscsa.org.za), an annual conference, an annual report and the dissemination of the minutes of Management Committee meetings to members via the regional coordinators.

3. THE ROLE OF CDS's AT HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

A CDS must be an *integral* part of the educational mission of a higher education institution. It should support the mission in preparing graduates with the skills and competencies to meet the human resource needs of the country and to engage in active citizenship. It implies a *holistic view* of students' development on intellectual, emotional, social, educational, spiritual, and physical levels. The CDS is the only service that deliberately and continuously focuses holistically on the student within a cooperative relationship with the academic, administrative and other professional support services.

CDS's are composed of multidisciplinary teams of professionals that provide *comprehensive* services to guide and counsel students with personal, social or academic needs, that render career and lifelong learning consultation and development planning, and orchestrate developmental programmes and initiatives that support and promote academic and meta-curricular life on campus.

CDS's are in the unique position to have contact with students throughout their *transition* from the pre-admission phase, to the in-institutional and exit-phases. This enables CDS staff to be sensitive to the needs of students and to play a pivotal role in assisting students to deal with the *learning environment*. CDS's emphasize a process-based culture, akin to continuous quality improvement. It is a *proactive* focus on the difficulties that students may have in adapting to the learning environment at higher education institutions. The service has a particular concern with the removal of barriers to students' achievement, resulting from their gender, age, cultural and national background, socio-economic background or disability.

In an inclusive approach where consultation with stakeholders is essential, CDS's provide an additional conduit through which the needs of students can be conveyed to other stakeholders and to top administrative levels. CDS's have the added responsibility to advocate the philosophy of *student centeredness* to the academic, administrative and professional components.

The focus of higher education on increased access, retention and throughput, has brought the value of the CDS's to the fore. Research has indicated that retention and throughput must be

approached systemically i.e. administrative, academic and professional services should all be aligned to facilitate the process. CDS's play a pivotal role in helping students develop the skills and motivation to access the study material and to pursue their study goals successfully.

4. GUIDELINES, PRINCIPLES AND VALUES FOR AN EFFECTIVE CDS

Guidelines, principles and values based on the needs and the expressed choices of its stakeholders ensure a top quality and consistent service. The following guidelines, principles and values are critical success factors for an effective CDS:

4.1 Objectives

The major objectives of CDS's related to the core business of the institutions are the following:

- To support the effective work and study of individuals and groups. Activities include:
 - Wellness promotion, including interpersonal effectiveness and growth;
 - Study, work and skills development; and
 - Guidance, counselling and therapy to support adjustment, problem solving and decision making with regard to personal, psychological and vocational issues.
- To support the effective operation of the institution as an organisation. Activities include:
 - Participation in the various boards, committees and other forums of the institution;
 - Providing feedback about students needs; and
 - Contribute to policy development and review.
- To maintain operational excellence. Activities relevant to this objective include:
 - In-service training;
 - Continuing professional development activities; and
 - Participation in professional activities.

4.2 Accessibility and Diversity

- CDS's must be available to *all* stakeholders and particularly to those who demonstrate the greatest need for assistance.
- CDS's must be accessible through *personal and multimedia channels* to cater for residential, non-residential and distance education students.
- Career guidance should specifically be available to prospective students, students with barriers to learning, disadvantaged groups, as well as mature students who qualify for Recognition of Prior Learning.

4.3 Learning and Development

- CDS's must be *responsive to the needs* of all stakeholders and to opportunities in the learning environment.
- CDS's must *complement the mission* of the institution as well as the outcomes of the national policy on higher education.
- CDS's should support students through the major *transitions* related to higher education. Firstly, into higher education, secondly, through their institutional life and finally, with their move from higher education into the workplace and their careers. Activities should focus on the *management of the learning environment* to enhance the learning process in and out of the traditional classroom as well as the development of students *holistically*.
- Career development should focus on *lifelong learning* and learning for life. In partnership with academic departments and other support services, students should be assisted in preparing for their life work, employment and careers beyond higher education.
- Programmes delivered by student counsellors should be based on *critical values* that include human dignity, diversity, inclusiveness, community, high expectations, a global view, citizenship, leadership, ethical living, and the understanding that students must participate actively in their own development and the building of a knowledge and skills portfolio.
- Counselling and development should be rendered in *different forms and through different media*. Information technology must be used as tools in the learning process to enable students to process and utilize information and not just as a means to an end.
- CDS's will be rendered with academic and personal *integrity* and responsible behaviour in the community.

4.4 Quality Assurance

- CDS's must adhere to an ethical code that guides practice;
- Ongoing professional development must be done;
- Members must be registered with professional bodies where applicable;
- Internal and external evaluation of programmes and services should be done according to set guidelines;
- Performance appraisal of staff should be done on a regular basis;
- Management practices to be accountable to stakeholders.

4.5 Resource Requirements

- A modern *technological infrastructure* must be made available to students and student counsellors in order to manage programmes and services effectively.
- *Physical facilities* should be accessible to all students, including the disabled. It should be physically separate from administrative offices, campus police, and judicial offices.
 - Individual soundproofed *offices* should be provided for each professional staff member and intern. Each office should have a telephone, filing cabinet, furniture that create a relaxing environment for clients, and computer access.

- There should be a *reception area* that provides a comfortable and private waiting area for clients.
 - A central space to *store* records. It should be locked with controlled access.
 - The counselling service should have *library resources* that include professional journals, books and other technical materials.
 - A *resource centre* of occupational and career information should be made available where career counselling services are provided.
 - An area suitable for individual and *group testing* should be available as well as space for group counselling sessions and staff meetings.
 - Counselling services with training components should have adequate *audio-visual recording facilities* and, where possible direct observation facilities.
- *Funding* of CDS's must ideally be multifaceted and must include significant institutional support. Support from outside sources and fund-raising may have to be employed to provide the level and array of services required of a particular institution.

4.6 Research

Student counselling professionals are generally considered experts with regard to students, their development, and the teaching and learning environment. They do qualitative and quantitative research which they publish internally and externally. They engage in scholarly activities such as attending conferences and presenting papers. They are actively engaged in the creation of new knowledge on the primary client group served by the institution namely the students.

4.7 Positioning

The organisational structure and the relationships of the CDS's to other departments within institutions, will vary according to individual campus arrangements. The following guidelines should be taken into consideration:

a) Line of Reporting

The most direct line of reporting should be established to ensure that CDS personnel have access to top management. In this way their needs will be heard, understood and addressed, and their contributions toward furthering the goals of the institution will be acknowledged.

b) Functional Independence and Neutrality

- Though CDS's have typically been grouped with student affairs/student services/student support units, this may not be the most appropriate placement. The direct link to the core business of institutions requires that they be closely linked to the academic sector to ensure that the partnership of teaching and learning is established and strengthened. The structure will however vary from one institution to the other
- To achieve this linkage CDS's must retain their *functional independence and administrative neutrality*. If it is perceived as being linked with units that are involved in making admissions, disciplinary, curricular, or other administrative decisions it can severely restrict the utilization of the service. Such perceptions may prevent students from seeking services for fear that information they disclose may negatively affect their academic careers.

c) Partnerships

The CDS's are *student centred* and engaged in *partnerships* with all other stakeholders in the broad sense of working with students and influencing the learning environment. The service must be delivered in a manner that is seamless and meaningful, and *compatibly integrated* into the overall academic mission of the institutions.

Partnerships with all the sectors within and immediately outside higher education and the institutions must be established to promote student adaptation to the learning environment, successful graduation, work placement and lifelong learning. These partnerships include students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, employers, social service agencies, primary and secondary education, government agencies, and local, national, regional, and global communities.

d) Representation

The CDS's should:

- Participate in institutional boards, committees and forums; and
- Have representation, either as full members or with observer status in Senate.

e) Classification of student counsellors

With regard to the student counselling component of the CDS's it is accepted that such persons are professionals who have *advanced academic training*. They should preferably be *registered* with Professional Councils or other relevant professional bodies. Professional practice is embedded in applied research and has as its foundation, ongoing professional development in line with contemporary trends and new developments for practice. The theoretical fields that cover student-counselling practice include: psychology, sociology, education, industrial psychology, social welfare and community development.

The nature of student counsellors' practice and the level of training can only be sustained where the following conditions prevail:

- Access to a well equipped library and a modern technological infrastructure;
- Time for research and continuing professional development; and
- Opportunities to attend conferences, nationally and internationally.

Because of the nature of student counsellors' functions, it is necessary that a *career path* be created in which counsellors can be promoted according to criteria set for qualification and experience. Salaries, benefits, and career advancement opportunities should be commensurate with those of other professionals in the institution with similar qualifications and responsibilities.

f) Staffing benchmarks

The human resources necessary for the effective operation of a counselling service depend to a large degree on the size and nature of the institution and the extent to which other mental health and student support resources are available in a region. The complexity of the service offerings and training programmes also influences staffing needs. Staff levels should be

continually monitored with regard to student enrolment, service demands, and staff diversity to ensure that service objectives are being met.

The International Association of Counselling Services (2000) set the following guidelines:

- Adequate support staff to assume responsibility for all reception and secretarial duties necessary for the effective functioning of the counselling service.
- A minimum staffing ratio in the range of one professional staff member (excluding trainees) for every 1,000 to 1,500 students, depending on services offered and other campus mental health services.
- Not less than two full-time equivalent professional staff members in any CDS.

Counselling services with subunits at different locations, for example satellite campuses or regional centres would be assessed as a single unit where all the subunits must meet the above requirements.

g) Workload

Student counsellors should have a balanced workload that affords time for all aspects of their professional functioning. Direct service responsibilities such as intake, individual and group counselling, crisis intervention, training and programme management should not exceed 65% of the workload on a continuing basis according to criteria set by the International Association of Counselling Services (2000).

6. CORE COMPETENCIES OF STAFF IN CDS's

The roles and functions of staff in CDS's will vary from one institutional setting to another depending on the nature of the institutional environment as well as the number and qualifications of the staff complement. There are, however, communalities that cut across institutional and professional boundaries and these core competencies will be important from a policy formulation point of view. The core competencies are those competencies, which critically underpin the staff of the CDS's competitive advantage. These competencies are not easily imitated by competing organisations or services.

To be effective CDS's should include an appropriate range of the following functions:

6.1 Counselling

Counselling services must provide individual and group counselling that are responsive to the diverse population of students experiencing psychological, personal or behavioural difficulties. This is a direct service and includes the following:

- Guidance and counselling that provides for educational, career, personal, developmental, and relationship issues that could potentially be disruptive to students' successful academic, interpersonal, and campus adjustment.
- Psychometric and psychological tests and other assessment techniques conducted as needed, to enable client self-understanding and decision-making and to determine the most effective intervention strategies possible within the limits of available resources.

Counsellors have the necessary training to conduct assessment and adhere to the ethical principles for counsellors/psychologists.

- Qualified personnel, in compliance with professional training standards supervise interns, practicum students, and paraprofessionals. Student counsellors engage in continuing professional development and research to maintain high professional standards in their own practice with an up-to-date knowledge of new trends and developments in the professional and subject fields.

6.2 Therapy

- Preventive and curative individual and group assistance to students to learn new and more effective ways to cope with stress and disappointment, resolve conflicts, deal with specific problems or habits, and manage their lives. Typical activities might include brief psychotherapy, crisis intervention, couples counselling, group psychotherapy, behaviour modification, hypnotherapy, biofeedback, and medical treatment (medication) as needed.
- Cooperation with the health services unit to provide psychiatric interventions including medications and referrals when necessary to stabilize seriously distressed students.

6.3 Career Development

Career development includes career planning for lifelong learning. It covers career counselling and assessment to prospective students to make career decisions, course and subject selection. This service further:

- educates students and the community-at-large about current career opportunities and employment trends.
- trains students for job-hunting, CV writing, portfolio compilation and interview skills. Identify employability skills and assist in empowering students.
- provides placement of graduates into full-time and part-time employment. It also provides assistance, expertise and facilities to potential employers for the recruitment of graduates.
- develops relationships with local employers that will assist in co-curricular experiences and learnerships.
- assists alumni in their search for jobs and provides support during career transitions;
- markets alumni to prospective employers and helps to sustain a bond with alumni to foster close mentoring relationships with students entering the workforce in their employment sectors.

6.4 Student and Academic Development

6.4.1 Student Development

Student development programmes and initiatives support academic and meta-curricular life on campus. These programmes and initiatives make students sensitive and informed about

general wellness, which includes a healthy and balanced lifestyle. While there may be staff dedicated to the student development role, CDS's can provide additional input to programmes where they have the expertise. They can also take the lead in programmes where such dedicated staff are not available. Care should be taken not to provide services that overlap and collaboration should be sought wherever possible. Student development programmes in which the staff of CDS's can make a contribution are the following:

- Orientation programmes aim to:
 - Introduce students to the culture of an institution;
 - Introduce the types of learning tasks required for higher education; and
 - Assist students to develop a range of appropriate skills for higher education studies.
- Developmental and preventative workshops such as assertiveness training, stress management, support for returning adult students and time management. These workshops empower students with life skills to take control of their own lives and to make them more employable.
- Student development deals with leadership and personal development, community service, academic integrity, awareness and enforcement of community standards, multicultural and gender issues.
- Topics and issues covered in developmental programmes are produced as leaflets or booklets and made available in the resource centre for student use. Topics cover coping with loss, seeking change, the tertiary leap, starting a conversation, returning to study, speaking effectively to groups, etc.

6.4.2 Academic Development

- Academic advisors/counsellors identify environmental and other conditions that may impede student academic achievement and propose interventions that may neutralize such conditions. Available data about students' academic and educational needs, performance, aspirations and problems are reviewed for research purposes.
- Academic development focuses on the improvement of students' learning and study skills. Skills training include issues such as time management, dealing with examination anxiety, motivation, memory and concentration strategies and skills. It also assists students in understanding academic policies and procedures.
- Academic development includes cognitive skills training such as creative writing, brainstorming, creative mind-mapping, the problem-solving process, critical thinking for decision-making, etc.
- Academic development is rendered on an individual or group basis. It is either offered as general domain or generic skills that cut across faculties or it is offered in collaboration with relevant programmes in faculties.
- The CDS's collaborate with faculty and student groups in providing opportunities for peer support.

- Academic development is infused in the design and writing of study guides. Study and thinking skills development are incorporated into the learning outcomes, assignments and assessment.
- Academic development is offered through access courses, that should ideally be credit bearing.
- Resources are designed and developed, for example a leaflet series or a study skills package to provide basic information on topics like essay writing, time management, examination preparation. Students are helped to access all other campus resources that will enhance their ability to be academically successful, for example on-line computer programmes, the library, etc.
- Special attention is given to ensure that the needs of disabled students are addressed, for example arranging for interpreters/signers for deaf students, acquiring alternative formats of classroom materials (Braille, audio textbooks, large print text), arranging for appropriate alternative assessment, etc.

6.5 Advocacy and consultation

The CDS's

- advocate on behalf of students when adverse personal and/or organisational conditions may have a negative effect on assessment/examination results.
- campaign for the provision of appropriate assistance and opportunities for students with disabilities so that they are able to compete equally with their peers in the academic environment.
- advocates on behalf of minority groups e.g., lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender students and play a role in policy formulation.
- promote the philosophy of *student centeredness* to the academic, administrative and other service components.
- provide consultation and advice to campus staff and family members, when appropriate, to assist in dealing with students who have emotional problems.
- provide a psychological consultative/advisory/voluntary training service to staff to enable them to maximise their effectiveness in carrying out their guidance and learner support roles.
- assist in the mediation between students and staff with regard to conflict resolution, for example cultural differences, harassment, misunderstanding, etc.

6.6 Research

An integral function and responsibility of CDS's are to conduct ongoing evaluation and accountability research, to determine the effectiveness and quality of their services. The researchers adhere to the following:

- Research must comply with the professional, ethical standards of an institution, as well as a professional association or board (where applicable).
- Research focusses on counselling and development. CDS staff also assist or collaborate with students and faculty who wish to conduct individual research on student characteristics or on the effect of specific student development programmes.
- The CDS staff contribute to the fields of counselling, psychology, education, social work and other relevant professions through research and other scholarly endeavours.
- CDS staff who are skilled in the area of research provide mentoring and coaching to members in the area of research.

6.7 Training

- CDS's must provide training, professional development and continuing education experiences for staff as well as supervision of interns, paraprofessionals and practicum students. They also include the training and mentoring of peer helpers.
- Programmes related to advice on dealing with students are offered to staff within institutions.
- The function of training should not supercede the primary service role of CCDC staff.

6.8 Community Outreach

- Career guidance is given to learners during school visits, careers exhibitions and open days.
- Preparatory programmes (pre-college/technikon/university) are offered to assist individuals or target groups in communities. Advice, encouragement, study skills and orientation programmes are launched to empower prospective students to attempt tertiary study with confidence.

CDS staff, peer helpers or student leaders present community outreach programmes.

Central to the core competencies of student counsellors are the following that are needed as inherent qualities, knowledge and skills of the individuals charged to carry out these roles and functions. Although formal academic preparation of the student counsellor takes place, the following elements provide the necessary foundation for the preparation and development of the required expertise for SCCD Service work in particular (IASAS, 2000)

- **Knowledge of Students and Student Subcultures**

Students are the main stakeholders and the *raison d'être* for higher education. CDS staff must have a thorough knowledge of the composition and characteristics of the student population,

its broad diversity, their expectations and satisfaction, their bio-psycho-social development, as well as their behaviour and motivation. This will enable CDS staff to develop and administer appropriate programmes that will promote successful student graduation and increased output.

CDS staff should analyse existing data to develop a comprehensive and accurate holistic view of the student population. The knowledge is used to inform campus administration, faculty, student leaders, and government officials of the nature and needs of the student body. Inadequate or missing information elements should be identified and appropriate action should be initiated. The use of scientific instruments and methods are crucial.

- **Theoretical Framework and Model**

Knowledge of the student population should form the foundation for the adoption or development of a model or theoretical frame of reference that can be used as a structure or strategy to interpret student behaviour. CDS staff must be able to understand and predict the effects of various programmes and activities on their students. This will enable them to view their efforts within the context of a global effort and better understand the importance of their specific role in the institution.

- **Programming**

CDS staff need to be able to translate concepts into programmes and activities. They must be capable of identifying specific needs and to design appropriate programmes in response. General organizational skills as well as additional professional skills are required for those involved in academic skills development, counselling, career advice and other specific activities.

- **Interpersonal Skills**

CDS's are student and stakeholder centred. This requires staff to have superior communication skills, especially listening. CDS staff must be able to interact with a wide variety of individuals and personalities on a one-to-one basis.

- **Leadership and Management Skills**

The knowledge of students, the use of a theoretical framework, the programming of activities and the interaction with stakeholders is a process. To manage the process a clear mission and the following competencies are needed:

- Curriculum development and programme design
- Budget development and resource allocation
- Programme administration
- Staff supervision
- Effective operation within the context of institutional governance
- Marketing of accomplishments
- Knowledge of students, individually and collectively
- Professional development
- Research, evaluation, and assessment
- Strategic planning, mission and vision development
- Legal dimensions of working with higher education students

- Integration of various forms of technology into the delivery of programmes and services.

7. CDS STAFF STRUCTURE

The functions and activities of CDS's will vary from one institutional setting to another depending on the nature of the institutional environment as well as the number and qualifications of the staff complement. Some functions can only be performed by professional counsellors who are registered psychologists, while other functions are best performed by advisors or professional social workers, nurses, librarians/resource centre managers, educators, computer specialists, researchers or administrative assistants. The ideal staff component of a CDS will therefore consist of a functional team with different capabilities. The multi-disciplinary team should be representative of the different functions of the CDS in order to render a comprehensive service to the diverse student community.

Permanent staff and trainees should all have access to multi-disciplinary consultation resources. Specialists in psychiatry, psychological assessment, learning disabilities, law, occupational information, substance abuse, health, HIV/Aids counselling, case management and programme development and evaluation are important resources. The staff structure may include the following:

7.1 Director or Head of Department

- The Director or Head of Department should hold at least a Master's degree but preferably a Doctorate from an accredited university. The level of the degree will be subject to the highest qualified staff members that he/she has to supervise (See 7.2 below). The degree should be in Psychology or a discipline closely related to the primary function of the CDS. Registration with a professional board as well as adequate depth and breadth of experience is recommended.
- Duties will include the management and overall administration of the CDS limited counselling and development practice, research and limited teaching.

7.2 Professional Counselling Staff

- Professional counselling staff should have a professional qualification in a relevant discipline from an accredited higher education institution and registration with a professional board.
- Professionals who meet the minimum criteria for registration as a psychologist with the professional board, may perform psychotherapeutic functions.
- Psychological counsellors may perform counselling or related functions within the limits of their registration category.
- Other professionals such as social workers who are registered with their respective professional boards may perform counselling functions as allowed by their registration status.

- Staff members who supervise other professional staff members or graduate student trainees must hold a more advanced degree than the supervisees, as well as comply with the minimum qualifications and experience set by their professional boards..
- Duties of counselling staff include individual and group counselling, psychotherapy, assessment and crisis intervention; designing and conducting developmental and outreach programmes; providing consultation services to stakeholders; participating in research and service evaluation; providing training and supervision as well as participation in committee work and sometimes limited teaching.

7.3 Development and Support Staff

Depending on the environment, the nature of the institution and the needs of the students, CDS's employ specialist staff as part of multi-disciplinary teams. The following specialists can be included in such teams:

- *Educationalists* to assist students with academic development and the enhancement of cognitive and study skills, reading, writing and general language skills.
- *Social workers* to assist students with social and welfare problems.
- *Nurses* to provide HIV/AIDS counselling, family planning and attend to various health issues.
- *Librarians or resource managers* to manage resource centres.
- *Researchers* to initiate projects and to focus on student related issues.
- *Careers advisors or specialists* to do career guidance and outreach programmes to secondary schools.
- Specialists to deal with disabled students and issues.
- Advisors to assist with *Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)* and mature students.

These staff members should have qualifications and proven skills in the respective area of specialisation.

7.4 Trainees/interns

When graduate level trainees/interns are included in the service delivery structure of a CDS, their work must be closely supervised in accordance with the trainee's professional specialty and a registration board's requirements. Responsibility for the placement, the supervision, the assignment of responsibilities, and the quality assurance of the work that is done, lies with the supervisor and ultimately the Director or Head of Department.

7.5 Administrative staff

- Adequately trained administrative staff, skilled in the use of technology and able to meet the CDS's workload must be employed.
- Administrative staff may be assisted by student assistants who help with the reception of clients, general office administration, scheduling, data analysis, word processing, Internet searches, etc. These assistants should be trained with regard to: (a) the operation and functioning of the CDS; (b) the limits of their functioning within the service; and (c) issues regarding confidentiality.

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