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**Certified Professional  
Soil Scientist, CPSS  
(by Publications and  
CV)**



**CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL  
SOIL SCIENTIST**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This guide is for persons seeking admission to *Soil Science Australia's Certified Professional Soil Scientist* (CPSS) accreditation program **by Publications** (NOT **by Narratives**). Persons applying by the Publications method are expected to be highly acclaimed soil science researchers who have outstanding current publication records plus a significant current international reputation in soil science research demonstrated in a curriculum vitae. **As a guide, only persons having >30 internationally peer-reviewed papers of high impact factor (with at least 15 papers in the past 5 years) should apply using this method.** As for the applications **by Narrative**, applicants **by Publication** must hold appropriate qualifications and demonstrate competency (**Section 2**). The competency Standards are outlined in **Section 3**, and advice on how to submit an application is given in **Section 4**.

## 2. QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCY

Accreditation in the Certified Professional Soil Scientist (CPSS) program is based upon both qualification and competency. You must demonstrate you hold a recognised qualification with experience (see **Section 2.1**) and you must demonstrate competency to practice as a qualified member of a professional soil science team (see **Sections 2 and 3**).

### 2.1 Qualifications

Applicants must hold equivalent Australian Qualifications Framework Level 7 degrees recognized by the Board.

### 2.2 Competency

Applicants must demonstrate in their publication list and *curriculum vitae* that they meet the minimum requirements outlined in the *Competency Standards for Professionals in Soil Science* (**Section 3**).

## 3. COMPETENCY STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONALS IN SOIL SCIENCE

*Soil Science Australia* publishes and maintains the Standards for Professionals in Soil Science, which can be found on the *Soil Science Australia* web site: <https://www.soilscienceaustralia.com.au/cpss/apply/> under "Application process". The "Standards" define the required Competencies under the combination of "Professional Practice" and "Practice of Soil Science" expected of a highly acclaimed soil science researcher. It should be obvious from your CV and Publication list that you satisfy the competencies in the Standards outlined in **Appendix A**.

## 4. PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION

### 4.1 Application form

Insert information on proof of identity, contact details, then list and provide true certified copies of your educational qualifications, a completed diary of ongoing professional development (OPD), contact details for 4 referees, and then sign the declaration. **Appendix B** provides information about certifying documents.

### 4.2 Proof of identity

We prefer a certified true copy of your passport bio-data page, Australian driving licence, or other Official Identity Document but if none of these is possible, we may accept a certified copy of your Birth Certificate and a certified passport-style photograph. If your current name differs from that shown on identity documents, evidence of your name change needs to be provided.

### 4.3 Qualifications

Supply true certified copies of the original certificates for your degrees / diplomas, although the individual course transcripts are not required. In cases where your certificates are not printed in English, you must provide copies of the original document plus a certified English version (along with the name and contact details for the translator).

### 4.4 Curriculum vitae and publication list

Your CV should make clear to the Assessors the depth and breadth of your research experience in soil science; it could include a listing of soil science appointments (name and location of employing institution, title of the positions you held, plus the dates and duration of appointments).

### 4.5 Ongoing Professional Development (OPD) diary

You need to provide a completed OPD diary showing evidence of professional development in the amount of at least 50 hours undertaken during the previous calendar year. Once accredited, you will only need to submit a triennial OPD diary. The OPD diary can be found on the *Soil Science Australia* web site: <https://www.soilscienceaustralia.com.au/cpss/apply/> under 'Application process'.

### 4.6 Referees

Provide the names and contact details of four professional referees, all of whom must be CPSS accredited, and who will be contacted by telephone to provide an objective evaluation of your skills and competencies as a highly acclaimed soil science researcher. No more than 2 referees can be from the same workplace as you.

### 4.7 Application fees

The schedule of fees for CPSS applications is available on the CPSS web site, <https://www.soilscienceaustralia.com.au/cpss/apply/> under "Application and Accreditation Fees". If you are a member of Soil Science Australia you must be current and financial. A receipt for fees is a good way to prove you have paid the fees.

## 4.8 Lodging your application

Two separate lodgments are required:

i) An electronic copy of your application should be emailed directly to the CPSS Administrator at [cpssadmin@soilscienceaustralia.org.au](mailto:cpssadmin@soilscienceaustralia.org.au). The electronic copy of the application form, your CV and your publication list should be submitted as pdf file(s), and the completed OPD diary should be submitted as an Excel file.

ii) A hard copy of ONLY p.1 of the application (signed) plus the certified documents required (Identity and Qualifications), posted to *Soil Science Australia*, PO Box 155 Bridgewater SA 5155.

## 5. CHECKLIST

Item	Sent by email to <a href="mailto:ocpssoffice@cpss.com.au">ocpssoffice@cpss.com.au</a>	Sent by post to <i>Soil Science Australia</i>
p.1 signed declaration	√	√
Certified identity documents	√	√
Certified qualification documents	√	√
2-page application form (with referee details)	√	
CV	√	
Publication list	√	
OPD diary	√	
Proof of fee payment (receipt from SSA)	√	

## 6. ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

### 6.1 Suitability of the format of your application (Publication versus Narrative)

The CPSS Accreditation Board appoints a CPSS-accredited Assessor to review your application and recommend whether it is in the correct format (i.e. whether it is suitable for assessment by the Publication and CV format or whether you should be invited to re-submit it using the Narrative format). If it is deemed that an application from you would be more suitable in the Narrative format, you will be advised as soon as possible and directed to the Narrative application form and procedures.

### 6.2 Assessment of your application

If your application is deemed assessable in the Publication and CV format, the Assessor will evaluate your CV and publication list against the Standards for Professionals in Soil Science and submit a report and recommendation to the Board on whether you should be granted CPSS accreditation. Occasionally, candidates are asked to provide additional information or to attend an interview with one or more of the Assessors to clarify aspects of the application. Finally, the Assessor will interview your Referees. (*Soil Science Australia* will not approach your employer or other third party without first seeking your permission to do so).

### 6.3 Timing

You will normally be advised within 30 days that your application was assessed as demonstrating (or not demonstrating) competency and eligibility for CPSS accreditation. If your application is unsuccessful you will be provided with feedback on the areas where you failed to demonstrate competency at the level required of a highly acclaimed soil science researcher.

### 6.4 Review of decision

If you believe you have been unfairly treated in the assessment of your application you may appeal the decision by writing to the Chair of the CPSS Accreditation Board via the Federal Office of *Soil Science Australia*. An appeal should set out the basis on which you think you have been unfairly treated. In any appeal, all documentation from your file will be presented to the Appeals Committee, although under Australian Privacy Legislation your permission is required so your signature on your letter of appeal will be taken to denote your consent. Your appeal must be accompanied by the Appeal Assessment Fee, listed on the website; the Appeal Assessment Fee will be refunded if the outcome is in your favour, otherwise not.

## APPENDIX A

	<b>Standards for Professionals in Soil Science</b> <i>(updated April 2017)</i>	
<b>Section 1. Professional Practice (Must satisfy 7 of 10 competencies listed below)</b>		
<b>1.1 PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY (minimum 2 of 4 competencies)</b>		
1.1.1	Prepares and provides a <b>demonstrably significant contribution</b> to papers given at national conferences, published in soil journals, or publicly available technical reports of a similar standard.	
1.1.2	Provides <b>sound</b> recommendations and management of social, ethical and environmental considerations in soil science.	
1.1.3	Provides <b>management and application</b> of regulations and legal requirements relating to individuals and industries operating in soil science.	
1.1.4	<b>Initiates and formally</b> contributes to discussions affecting the soil science profession through participation in, and committee membership of, professional and/or industry groups or associations.	
<b>1.2 PROJECT MANAGEMENT (minimum 1 of 3 competencies)</b>		
1.2.1	<b>Manages</b> a soil work program with <b>responsibility for effective and efficient performance</b> of the soils team, and/or <b>manages financial and resource plans</b> for soils programs and projects ensuring satisfactory progress.	
1.2.2	<b>Develops and implements</b> effective quality assurance procedures and systems for soil programs.	
1.2.3	<b>Supervises and/or manages</b> the planning, implementation, reporting and evaluation of soil projects using recognised scientific principles.	
<b>1.3 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (minimum 1 of 3 competencies)</b>		
1.3.1	<b>Expands knowledge</b> and skills via higher level continuing professional development activities and contributes to the provision of professional development activities in the practice of soil science.	
1.3.2	<b>Maintains and applies</b> up-to-date knowledge of relevant specialised research findings.	
1.3.3	<b>Maintains</b> a network of experienced soil scientists and <b>provides mentoring</b> to less experienced soil scientists.	
<b>Section 2. Practice of Soil Science (Must satisfy 10 of 13 competencies listed below)</b>		
<b>2.1 SOIL SCIENCE KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNOLOGY (minimum 3 of 4 competencies)</b>		
2.1.1	<b>Interprets, applies and contributes</b> to developing soil science knowledge.	
2.1.2	<b>Develops sound</b> proposals for determining needs and priorities in soil monitoring and scientific work.	
2.1.3	<b>Manages the acquisition and implementation</b> of new soil science techniques (including modelling) and improvements to established protocols, methods and practices, <b>exercising innovation and judgment</b> .	
2.1.4	<b>Develops and manages</b> the commissioning and delivery of research and/or development of commercial soil science products or services.	
<b>2.2 SOIL MONITORING, ANALYSIS AND INVESTIGATION (minimum 4 of 6 competencies)</b>		
2.2.1	<b>Investigates and analyses</b> soil science-based problems and opportunities, and prepares relevant reports, documents and papers containing justifiable, rational conclusions.	
2.2.2	<b>Supervises and/or manages</b> the collection and preparation of soil data, analyses soil data, and <b>makes</b> sound recommendations on soil function and management.	
2.2.3	<b>Implements</b> procedures for the <b>safe and effective</b> use of soil laboratory or field instruments/equipment (e.g. Safe Work Method Statements)	
2.2.4	<b>Conducts and manages</b> complex analyses of soil chemical, physical and/or biological properties.	
2.2.5	<b>Investigates and models</b> scientific processes involving soils with one or more of water, plants, animals and the environment.	
2.2.6	<b>Selects and manages</b> appropriate techniques to maintain or improve soil function.	
<b>2.3 SOIL ADVISORY, TRAINING, EDUCATION SERVICES (minimum 1 of 3 competencies)</b>		
2.3.1	<b>Provides authoritative</b> soil advice to improve soil and/or land management decisions of stakeholders.	
2.3.2	<b>Provides authoritative</b> technical presentations at field days, field excursions, group discussions, seminars or demonstrations using appropriate soil knowledge to meet the objectives of participants.	
2.3.3	<b>Lectures</b> students on soil science subjects at tertiary level.	

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Certification of documents**

- 1) Certified copies of previously certified copies will not be accepted. You must provide a properly certified copy of the original document.
- 2) Proper certification will appear on each page to be certified, and should show:
  - a) the signature of the person certifying the document.
  - b) the name of the person certifying the document (clearly printed or evident in the official stamp).
  - c) the address of the person certifying the document.
  - d) the phone number and if possible the email address of the person certifying the document.
  - e) an official stamp indicating the status of the person certifying the document, i.e. Justice of the Peace, Commissioner for Oaths, Notary Public, or at least indicating the name of the law firm.
- 3) The following classes of persons are authorised to certify copies of documents:
  - a) Certified Professional Soil Scientists
  - b) Other persons:
    - Permanent employee of the Australian Postal Corporation with  $\geq 5$  years continuous service who is employed in an office supplying public postal services;
    - Agent of the Australian Postal Corporation in charge of an office supplying public postal services;
    - Australian Consular Officer, or Australian Diplomatic Officer, (within the *Consular Fees Act 1955*);
    - Bailiff;
    - Bank Officer with 5 or more continuous years of service;
    - Fellow of the National Tax Accounts Association;
    - Finance company officer with  $\geq 5$  years of continuous service;
    - Holder of a statutory office not specified in another item in this Part;
    - Judge, or Master, of a court;
    - Justice of the Peace;
    - Magistrate;
    - Member of the Association of Taxation and Management Accountants;
    - Member of the Australian Defence Force who is an Officer, or a Non-commissioned Officer within the *Defence Forces Discipline Act 1982* with  $\geq 5$  years continuous service, or a Warrant Officer within the *Act*;
    - Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia, the Australian Society of Certified Practising Accountants or the National Institute of Accountants;
    - Member of the Institute of Corporate Managers Secretaries and Administrators;
    - Member of the Parliament of the Commonwealth, or the Parliament of a State, or a Territory Legislature, or a Local Government Authority of a State or Territory;
    - Minister of Religion registered under *Division 1 of Part IV of the Marriage Act 1961*;
    - Notary Public;
    - Permanent employee of a Commonwealth or of a Commonwealth Authority, or of a State or Territory Authority, or a Local Government Authority, with  $\geq 5$  years continuous service who is not specified in another item in this Part;
    - Police Officer;
    - Person before whom a statutory declaration may be made under the law of the State or Territory, or of a Commonwealth, State or Territory Authority;
    - Sheriff or Sheriff's Officer; or
    - Teacher employed on a full-time basis at a school or tertiary education institution.
  - c) Persons Authorised Overseas:
    - An officer of an Australian Diplomatic Post;
    - A Notary Public authorised in the country of application;
    - A Commissioner for Oaths (Declarations) authorised in the country of application;
    - A Solicitor, Barrister or Judge authorised in Australia or in the country of application;
    - A Justice of the Peace authorised in Australia or in the country of application.