



COMPANY POLICY

POLICY AND CRITERIA ON AFFILIATION AND DESIGNATION

Document Reference: 001

Revised Date	1 September 2026
Approved By	Dr Gerhard Botha (CEO)
Review Cycle	Every three (3) years
Status	Approved

TABLE OF CONTENTS

#	SECTION	PAGE
1	Purpose	3
2	Scope	3
3	Definitions	3
4	Objectives	4
5	Affiliation and Designation Categories	5
6	Development of Professional Designations	6
7	Eligibility requirements	7
8	Awarding of Professional Designations	7
9	Annual renewal	9
10	Monitoring of Professional Designations and Affiliation	9
11	Suspension and cancellation of Professional Designations or Affiliation	10
12	Re-registration (Restoration) of a Professional Designation or Affiliation	11
13	Appeals	12
14	Records and Privacy	12
15	Affiliate Rights	12
16	Affiliate Responsibilities	12
17	Affiliate Benefits	13
18	Review of Policy	13
19	Effective date	13
	Appeal Form AD01	14

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the principles, criteria, processes and responsibilities for the development, awarding, monitoring, suspension and cancellation (revocation) of professional designations awarded by the Association of Christian Religious Practitioners (ACRP).

This policy supports ACRP's mandate as a SAQA-recognised Professional Body and ensures that all professional designations are administered in a fair, transparent, consistent and accountable manner.

This Policy further establishes a fair, transparent, and consistent framework for affiliation with the ACRP, including:

- Affiliation categories and eligibility requirements.
- Application, evaluation, approval, renewal, suspension, and termination processes.
- Rights and responsibilities of affiliates.
- Maintenance of professional standing and compliance with SAQA requirements.
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) pathways.
- Protection of the integrity and reputation of ACRP and its professional designations.

2. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all individuals affiliated ACRP, including applicants for affiliation or professional designations, designated persons, students or associated affiliates, and any person holding an ACRP professional designation. It also applies to all committees, councils, staff members, and persons appointed by ACRP to perform functions related to the administration, monitoring, and governance of professional designations and affiliations. Provide a framework for transformation within ACRP, whilst staying true to the core functions, vision and strategy of ACRP.

3. DEFINITIONS

All terms not defined herein shall bear the same meaning as in applicable legislation. Key definitions include:

- **“ACRP (Association of Christian Religious Practitioners)”** – a professional body recognised by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), comprising expert practitioners within the field of Christian religious practice.
 - **“Affiliation”** – the formal association of an individual with the recognised body typically established through admission, registration, or acceptance into that entity. It signifies participation, identification, and a recognised relationship with the organisation, often involving adherence to its rules, standards, or values, and may confer certain responsibilities or privileges within that body. An affiliate can either be a designated affiliate or a non-designated affiliate.
 - **“Applicant”** – a person that has submitted an application to ACRP for registration as an affiliate, but whose application has not yet been formally approved by ACRP.
 - **“CGMP (Council for General Ministry Practitioners)”** – a council of ACRP responsible for professional registration with a focus on general ministry practice.
-

- **“CMTP (Council for Ministry Training Practitioners)”** – a council of ACRP tasked with professional registration focusing on ministry training practices.
- **“CPSC (Council for Pastoral and Spiritual Counsellors)”** – a council of ACRP responsible for professional registration specialising in pastoral and spiritual counselling.
- **“Competency”** – The demonstrated and assessed ability to apply integrated knowledge, skills, values, and experience to perform tasks and fulfil responsibilities to the required standard within a specific professional context. It includes the capacity to transfer and apply learning to new situations and is evidenced through consistent, appropriate performance in line with the relevant **scope of practice** and qualification or professional designation requirements.
- **“Designated Affiliate”** – an affiliate who has satisfied the prescribed requirements for an ACRP professional designation and has been formally awarded such a designation.
- **“Non-Designated Affiliate”** – an affiliate who has been accepted for affiliation, but who has not been awarded an ACRP professional designation.
- **“Portfolio of Evidence (PoE)”** – a structured collection of documents and evidence submitted by an applicant to demonstrate prior learning, competencies, ministry experience, knowledge and professional practice.
- **“Professional Designation”** – a formal title or status conferred by the professional body recognising an individual’s expertise, competence, professional standing, and right to practice within a specific occupational field.
- **“Professional involvement”** – a person is considered professionally involved in ministry or pastoral counselling when they actively and regularly engage in Christian ministry as a primary or significant component of their vocation or occupation. This involvement entails applying ministry knowledge, skills, and ethical standards in serving others and maintaining accountability for conduct, competence, and professional integrity.
- **“Qualification”** – any educational programme / learning achievement officially registered with the **South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)** on the **National Qualifications Framework (NQF)**, ensuring that the qualification meets national standards and is quality-assured.
- **“Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)”** – a formal assessment process through which prior knowledge, skills, competencies, and practical experience are evaluated and recognised for purposes of professional designation registration.
- **“Scope of Practice (SoP)”** – the defined range of activities, responsibilities, and professional functions permitted within a specific professional designation.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Promote professional standards and public confidence in Christian ministry and religious practice.
- Ensure fair and equitable access to professional recognition.
- Maintain standards aligned with the requirements of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).
- Support the objectives of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

-
- Recognise both formal qualifications and relevant ministry/counselling experience.
 - Promote professional recognition and career progression within Christian ministry.
 - Encourage lifelong learning and professional development through CPD.
 - Protect the public by ensuring that affiliates meet appropriate standards of competence and conduct.

5. AFFILIATION AND DESIGNATION CATEGORIES

ACRP may establish and maintain affiliation categories as approved by its Board from time to time.

Current affiliation categories may include:

5.1 Non-designated Affiliation

Associated affiliation

Associated Affiliation is intended for individuals who support the objectives of ACRP and wish to remain informed about developments in professional ministry or pastoral counselling. It also applies to those who do not currently meet the requirements for a professional designation, as well as those who are professionally registered elsewhere but seek to maintain an affiliation with a Christian professional body. Associated Affiliates are not permitted to use ACRP professional designations.

Student affiliation

Student Affiliation is available to students enrolled in SAQA-registered ministry, theology, pastoral counselling or related programmes. They may participate in approved ACRP activities but may not use professional designations.

After completing their studies, student affiliates may apply for designated affiliation if they meet the requirements.

5.2 Designated Affiliation

Designated Affiliation is intended for persons actively and professionally involved in Christian ministry / Pastoral counselling and who meet the requirements for registration on one of ACRP's SAQA-registered professional designations:

Religious Practitioner (level 1)

For ministry leaders and pastors with:

- A non-ministry qualification at NQF Level 2 or higher; and
- At least one year of recognised ministry experience.

Advanced Religious Practitioner (level 2)

For persons with:

- A SAQA registered or evaluated ministry or theology qualification at NQF Level 2 or higher; and
- Relevant ministry experience.

Religious Professional (level 3)

For persons with:

-
- A SAQA registered or evaluated ministry or theology qualification at NQF Level 5 or higher; and
 - Relevant ministry experience.

Religious Specialist (level 4)

For persons with:

- A SAQA registered or evaluated ministry or theology qualification at NQF Level 9 or higher; and
- Relevant ministry experience.

Where applicable, the relevant ACRP Council may impose additional experience requirements for specific ministry or pastoral counselling specialisations. Furthermore, if an applicant has not obtained, or is unable to provide, the relevant underlying SAQA-registered qualification as required for a designation, the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process shall apply.

6. DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATIONS

6.1 Principles

ACRP shall develop and maintain professional designations that reflect the competencies required for professional ministry and pastoral counselling practice, comply with the requirements of SAQA, support public protection and professional accountability, promote ongoing professional development and progression, and remain relevant to the evolving needs of churches, ministries, counselling practices, and society.

6.2 Development Process

When developing or reviewing a professional designation, ACRP shall:

- Consult with ministry practitioners, pastoral counsellors, educators, churches, denominational representatives and relevant stakeholders.
- Consider developments within the ministry and counselling profession and related qualifications.
- Ensure alignment with SAQA requirements and the NQF.
- ACRP shall develop and maintain detailed documentation for each professional designation, including the designation title and purpose, as well as the associated qualification, practical experience, competency, assessment, RPL and CPD requirements and the relevant progression pathways.
- Submit applications to SAQA where registration of a new designation is required.

6.3 Review of Designations

ACRP shall periodically review its professional designations to ensure they remain relevant and appropriately aligned with current ministry and pastoral counselling practices, comply with SAQA requirements, incorporate new qualifications, and respond effectively to evolving professional and societal needs.

6.4 Professional Designations application

Only affiliates who have been formally awarded an ACRP designation and who remain in good standing shall be entitled to use the relevant designation title and to represent themselves as registered professionals of ACRP.

A designation is a formal title conferred by a professional body in recognition of an individual's expertise, competence, professional standing, and authorised scope of practice within a specific occupational field. It does not constitute a qualification and may not be represented as such. The awarding of a designation does not imply that ACRP accepts, recognises, or accredits the qualifications submitted as part of the application. Rather, a designation is granted through a formal evaluation process conducted in accordance with the ACRP Rules of Affiliation and Designation.

No affiliate may misrepresent their registration status or designation level, nor may they transfer or allow the use of their individual registration or registration number by any church, counselling practice, or institution

7. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants are required to support the mission, values, and objectives of ACRP and must agree to comply with its Code of Ethics, as well as all applicable policies and procedures. They are expected to provide accurate and complete information throughout the application process and to meet the relevant qualification, experience, or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) requirements for the category to which they apply.

An applicant may, however, be declared ineligible if any fraudulent or misleading information is submitted, or if they have been found guilty of professional misconduct by a recognised regulatory or professional body. Ineligibility may also arise where the applicant's conduct could bring ACRP or the ministry profession into disrepute, or where the prescribed registration requirements are not met

8. AWARDING OF PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATIONS

8.1 Application submission

Applicants must:

- Submit the fully and correctly completed Council specific application form in the prescribed format (online or paper format).
- Submit all supporting documentation as indicated in the application forms.
- Provide proof of qualifications, ministry or pastoral counselling experience.
- Provide reference letter(s) where required.
- Submit Identification documents (clear copy of RSA ID or valid passport).
- Submit any additional documentation requested by the relevant ACRP Council.
- Submit Proof of payment of applicable application fees.

Incomplete applications—defined as those with outstanding information, documentation, or unpaid fees—will not be evaluated and may result in delays in processing. Applicants will be notified of any outstanding requirements and will be granted a period of two (2) months to submit the necessary information.

Should the required documentation or information not be provided within this period, the application, together with any fees already paid, may lapse, and the applicant will be required to submit a new

application for affiliation.

8.2 Evaluation of Applications

The relevant Council Registration and Evaluation Committee shall evaluate applications in accordance with the approved designation criteria, as set out in the ACRP Rules of Affiliation and Designation.

Evaluation may include consideration of:

- Relevant SAQA-registered qualifications and/or relevant SAQA-verified foreign qualifications.
- Ministry/Counselling experience.
- Professional references.
- Scope of practice requirements.
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) evidence.

Processing and evaluation of an application can take up to four (4) weeks.

8.3 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

ACRP recognises that ministry competence may be developed through formal, informal, and non-formal learning pathways. Applicants who do not possess the required SAQA-registered ministry or pastoral counselling qualifications for the awarding of a designation may instead be assessed through the ACRP Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process, in accordance with the ACRP RPL Policy and Criteria.

RPL assessment may consider (but is not limited to): Promote awareness of the policy.

- Ministry/counselling experience and practical application.
- Relevant formal, informal, and non-formal training completed.
- Formal, informal, and non-formal ministry training provided and counselling, teaching, mentoring, or community engagement.
- Relevant work performance.
- Leadership responsibilities as well as ethical and professional conduct.
- Publications, sermons, teachings, or ministry resources.
- Portfolio of Evidence.
- References and testimonials.

RPL is for access to a professional designation and not for the awarding of a qualification. Awarding of a designation through RPL does not imply recognition or accreditation of non-formal training.

8.4 Foreign Qualifications

A Foreign Qualification can be defined as a qualification awarded by a nationally recognised education or training institution outside the Republic of South Africa and forming part of the formal national education and training system of that country. For purposes of professional designation applications, foreign qualifications may be accepted only where the qualification has been evaluated by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and a valid SAQA Certificate of Evaluation has been issued indicating its comparability within the South African National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

For more information on evaluation of foreign qualifications, visit the SAQA website at:

<https://saqa.org.za/services/evaluation-of-foreign-qualifications/>

8.5 Approval, Awarding and Notification

When all requirements are met, the designated ACRP Council Registration and Evaluation Committee shall approve the application. Once the applicable fees have been paid, the applicant details and registration number shall be entered onto the ACRP Register and system, a designation certificate shall be issued.

The designation shall be reported to SAQA through prescribed reporting processes.

Applicants shall receive written notification of the outcome of their application.

Where an application is unsuccessful, reasons shall be provided together with information regarding available appeal processes.

9. ANNUAL RENEWAL

Affiliation shall be renewed annually on the dates specified on the renewal notifications and affiliation certificates.

10. MONITORING OF PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATIONS AND AFFILIATES

10.1 Annual Monitoring

ACRP shall:

- Maintain an up-to-date register of designated and non-designated affiliates.
- Monitor annual renewals and affiliation status.
- Monitor CPD compliance (designated affiliates).
- Monitor complaints and disciplinary outcomes.
- Report designation information to SAQA as required.

10.2 Good Standing Requirements

To remain in good standing, affiliates must:

- Adhere to the ACRP Code of Ethics.
- Comply with all ACRP policies and rules.
- Remain within the relevant Scope of Practice (designated affiliates).
- Maintain annual affiliation.
- Pay annual fees.
- Meet CPD requirements (designated affiliates).
- Maintain accurate contact details.

10.3 Affiliation fees

Application, evaluation, affiliation, renewal and reinstatement fees shall be determined annually by the ACRP Board and shared on the ACRP website.

Payment: Applicants and affiliates will receive notifications on the specific fees and the dates these fees are payable.

Non-Payment: Failure to pay affiliation fees may result in suspension of benefits and professional standing, removal from the register, and eventual cancellation of affiliation.

Affiliates remain liable for any outstanding amounts due prior to cancellation.

Suspended Affiliation: Affiliates whose annual fees remain unpaid for a period exceeding three (3) months may be subject to suspension. During the period of suspension, such individuals shall not be permitted to use ACRP designations or to represent themselves as affiliates in good standing.

Cancelled Affiliation: Affiliation that remains unpaid after the prescribed additional grace period of three (3) months (in other words, being in arrears for a total of 6 months) may be cancelled, and the individual's name may be removed from the register.

10.4 Continued Professional Development (CPD)

All designated persons are required to participate in ACRP-approved CPD activities and must accumulate a minimum of twenty (20) CPD points during each twelve-month cycle, unless formally exempted by ACRP. Designated persons may also be required to submit CPD records and supporting evidence upon request. ACRP reserves the right to conduct CPD audits to verify compliance with these requirements.

10.5 Complaints Monitoring

Complaints against, and any alleged misconduct of, designated persons or affiliates shall be managed in accordance with the **ACRP Disciplinary Policy and Procedure**.

Disciplinary action may include the issuing of a written warning, the suspension of affiliation, or the implementation of specified conditions for continued affiliation, depending on the nature and circumstances of the matter. In more serious cases, disciplinary measures may result in the removal of a professional designation, the cancellation of affiliation, and the removal of the individual's details from the ACRP database.

Records shall be maintained of all complaints received, investigations conducted, findings made, corrective actions implemented, and disciplinary actions taken.

11. SUSPENSION AND CANCELLATION OF PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATIONS OR AFFILIATION

11.1 Grounds for Suspension or Cancellation (Revocation)

ACRP may suspend or cancel (revoke) a professional designation or affiliation where a person:

- Submitted a voluntary written resignation.
 - Violates the ACRP Code of Ethics.
 - Is found guilty of professional misconduct.
 - Fails to comply with CPD requirements (designated affiliates).
 - Fails to maintain affiliation in good standing.
 - Fails to pay annual fees within the prescribed period.
 - Provides false or misleading information during application or renewal.
-

-
- Fails to update required contact information.
 - Is convicted of an offence that brings the profession or ACRP into disrepute.
 - Fails to maintain the required eligibility criteria.

Notwithstanding suspension or cancellation, the individual shall remain liable for any outstanding fees or obligations incurred prior to the effective date of termination.

In the event of an affiliate's death, ACRP must be notified in writing by a relative or third party and, where possible, be provided with a copy of the death certificate. Upon receipt of such notification, ACRP will cancel the affiliation

11.2 Procedure

Before a professional designation or affiliation is cancelled, the affiliate shall be informed of the concern in writing and, where necessary, an investigation shall be conducted in accordance with the circumstances of the matter. The individual shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to respond to the allegations or concerns raised. Where required, a disciplinary hearing shall be convened, after which a decision shall be made in accordance with the ACRP Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

11.3 Cancellation (Revocation)

Where cancellation is approved:

- The affected individual shall receive written notice of the decision as well as the reason for the decision and the right to appeal the decision.
- The designation or affiliation shall be removed from the ACRP Register.
- The designation or affiliation certificate shall be deemed cancelled.
- The person shall be informed to cease using the designation or affiliation.
- Relevant records shall be updated.
- SAQA shall be informed through prescribed reporting mechanisms.

12. RE-REGISTRATION (RESTORATION) OF A PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATION OR AFFILIATION

Former affiliates whose affiliation or professional designation has lapsed or been cancelled may apply for re-registration or restoration, subject to the requirements determined by ACRP.

Applications for re-registration or restoration may require the submission of a new application together with updated supporting documentation, payment of all outstanding amounts and prescribed re-registration or re-application fees, and compliance with any additional requirements imposed by ACRP.

Applicants may also be required to undergo a reassessment of their eligibility and to provide satisfactory evidence supporting the request for restoration, including proof that the cause of the cancellation or lapse has been rectified.

Re-registration or restoration is not automatic and remains subject to formal approval by the relevant ACRP Council structure or authorised ACRP authority.

13. APPEALS

An applicant whose application has been declined may lodge a written appeal within twenty-one (21) business days of being notified of the outcome by submitting the **Appeal Form AD01**.

The appeal must clearly state the grounds upon which it is based and should be limited to clarification or reconsideration of the original evidence submitted. The submission of new evidence will be regarded as a new application and will not form part of the appeal process.

Any applicant or designated person who is aggrieved by a decision relating to the awarding, suspension, or revocation of a designation, or by any related disciplinary outcome, may submit an appeal in accordance with this procedure.

The decision of the designated appeal structure shall be final.

14. RECORDS AND PRIVACY

ACRP shall maintain an official affiliation register, and all personal information shall be collected, processed, stored, and protected in accordance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA), the ACRP POPIA Policy, as well as all applicable South African legislation.

15. AFFILIATION RIGHTS

Affiliates in good standing have the right to:

- Receive affiliation benefits.
- Participate in ACRP programmes and activities.
- Access CPD opportunities.
- Receive professional recognition and a Scope of Practice through their designation.
- Be treated fairly and in accordance with due process.

16. AFFILIATION RESPONSIBILITIES

Affiliates shall:

- Conduct themselves ethically and professionally.
 - Promote the integrity of the ministry and counselling profession.
 - Maintain professional competence.
 - Comply with ACRP policies and procedures.
 - Participate in CPD activities where required.
 - Pursue lifelong learning and professional growth.
 - Keep their personal information updated.
 - Respect the scope of practice attached to their designation.
-

17. AFFILIATE BENEFITS

Belonging to ACRP provides professional recognition through registration with the sole professional body for Christian Religious Practitioners in South Africa, thereby affirming credibility within the field. Affiliates benefit from a clearly defined Scope of Practice that offers guidance and enhances the legitimacy of their ministry work, as well as a SAQA-registered professional designation that demonstrates competence and commitment to professional ministry. The framework further supports the recognition of ministry experience and prior learning through established professional pathways.

In addition, affiliates receive ongoing ministry/counselling support, including regular communication with sermon outlines, practical ministry resources, and relevant advice. Access is also granted to current information, updates, and resources related to Christian ministry and religious practice. Opportunities for Continued Professional Development (CPD) enable practitioners to strengthen their skills, enhance effectiveness, and maintain professional relevance. Furthermore, access to online conferences, workshops, and training events at discounted rates provides valuable opportunities for continued learning, networking, and professional growth.

18. REVIEW OF POLICY

This Policy shall be reviewed at least every three years, or earlier where necessitated by legislative changes, SAQA requirements, changes in ACRP structures or operations, or by resolution of the Board.

19. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Policy becomes effective on the date approved by the ACRP Board and replaces all previous versions of the policy.

Approved:

Chief Executive Officer	Signature	Date:
Dr Gerhard Botha		1 September 2026

This Policy was drafted and refined with the assistance of AI tools. All content was reviewed, edited and approved by the author to ensure compliance with applicable laws and the company's standards.

FORM AD01 – APPEAL FORM

Applicants who are aggrieved by a decision related to the awarding, suspension, or cancellation of a designation, may submit a written appeal within twenty-one (21) business days of notification of the outcome by using the below Appeal Form and submitting it to the relevant ACRP Council office.

Appeal form relating to the awarding, suspension or cancellation of a designation

Full names and Surname of appellant:	
ID or Passport nr:	
Email address:	
Contact nr.:	
Date of appeal:	
Date of notification of application / disciplinary hearing outcome:	
Outcome of application / disciplinary hearing:	
Reason for appeal – the reason must clearly state the grounds for appeal. The appeal should be based on clarification of the original evidence submitted. It is important to note that the submission of new evidence will constitute a new application rather than an appeal.	
Signature of appellant:	
Date:	
OFFICE USE	
Council Administrator name and surname:	
Date appeal received:	
Date appeal forwarded to Committee:	
Committee re-evaluation finding/outcome:	
Reason for outcome:	
Chairperson signature:	
Date:	