

**July 2007.1 version**

**ASSERT NATIONAL**

**Professional Member - Sexuality Researcher**

A Sexuality Researcher is a person with the following qualifications and characteristics.

The applicant must provide documentation to show competency in each of the following areas described.

**1. Professional qualification/s**

A degree from a recognized university in Australia as listed in the Australian Qualifications Framework, register of recognized institutions (<http://www.aqf.edu.au/register.htm>) or from an international institution listed in the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) register (<http://www.workplace.gov.au/workplace/Individual/Migrant/NationalOfficeofOverseasSkillsRecognitionNOOSR.htm>).

It is important that the institution or university have a recognized code of ethics to which the candidate is bound. The ethics statement should be accessible to the accreditation committee.

The degree will be in an area related to sexuality and sexual health with at least 60 hours (6 - credit point equivalent) of course content in sexuality and sexual health related content.

The degree should include a research component of no less than 60 hours of tertiary education (6 credit point equivalent) on research methodology. It is recognized that sexual health research utilizes a diversity of methods and it is not necessary that the research component of training be directly related to sexuality.

In addition to this, the content should include at least 60% of the following core areas:

- An overview of the discipline of sexology, research and literature
- Sexual anatomy and physiology and the sexual response cycle
- Developmental sexuality and sexual health across the lifespan, from a psychosocial-biological perspective
- Dynamics of interpersonal relationships
- Sexual pleasure, sexual function and dysfunction and factors affecting it - biological and psychosocial
- Gender-related issues including sexual orientation and gender identities
- Socio-cultural and spiritual factors in sexual values and behaviour
- Medical factors that may influence sexuality including illness, disability, drugs, pregnancy, pregnancy termination, contraception and fertility
- Sexually transmitted infections and safer sex practices

- Sexual rights and reproductive rights
- Sexual abuse and laws related to sexuality/forensic sexology

## **2. ASSERT National Code of Ethics**

The applicant will have read the ASSERT National Code of Ethics. By signing the certification application form, the applicant agrees to be bound by the ASSERT National Code of Ethics.

## **3. Professional documentation in sexuality and/or sexual health research**

This should include at least one of the activities listed in Category 1 and at least one in the activities listed in Category 2

### **Category 1:**

1.1 Research as part of a degree:

Honour's research project/thesis as part of a first degree

Masters (where this includes a dissertation)

PhD

1.2 Participation in a research team for a successful research grant (completed or current)

1.3 Publication of at least two articles in peer reviewed journals within the last 5 years.

1.4 \*Publication of a book within the last 5 years (that has at least 30% research input)

\* To be reviewed through a case-by-case criterion by the accreditation committee

### **Category 2:**

2.1 Two or more conference presentation and/or posters in a research area.

2.2 Participation in the teaching of research

2.3 Research supervision at Honours, Masters or PhD level.

2.4 \*Two or more research publications in the popular media

\* To be reviewed through a case-by-case criterion by the accreditation committee

## **4. Ongoing involvement in research**

The applicant for Professional Membership Sexuality Researcher will be required to document an ongoing commitment to and participation in sexuality/sexual health/sexology research.

The applicant will be required to submit a 1000 word report of this involvement. The involvement could include activities such as:

- Member of a research team
- Current enrollment in a research degree
- Supervision of a research student.
- Individual research.

## **5. Professional Member - Sexuality Researcher - Special Circumstances**

The accreditation committee of ASSERT National recognizes that there are many members with extensive experience in sexuality research who have not had the opportunity of a formal qualification in the area. The committee will consider these applications individually under this 'special circumstances category'.

Special circumstances could include specialization in one or limited areas of sexuality research.

The ASSERT National Accreditation Committee will review the documentation of research and professional experience.

International applicants must show evidence of equivalent research and professional experience.

### **Documentation:**

The following documentation must be submitted to the ASSERT National Sexuality Researcher Accreditation Committee:

1. Completed formal application for ASSERT National Sexuality Researcher, signed and dated
2. Official transcripts of program(s) in which degree(s) and diploma(s) were earned.
3. Official documentation of experience in Sexuality and/or Sexual Health research
4. Statement of philosophy of sexuality research.
5. A nomination signature from an ASSERT National Sexuality Researcher (or other ASSERT National Professional member), supporting the application.
7. Copy of current professional insurance.
8. The processing fee of \$50.00 AUD

## **6. Membership**

Upon approval of the ASSERT National Sexuality Researcher Accreditation Committee, the successful applicant will receive a certificate of recognition of having met the ASSERT National requirements for certification in the area of sexuality research. This certificate will be subject to renewal every 3 years. Membership in ASSERT National must be maintained on an annual basis to retain the ASSERT National Sexuality Researcher certification status. If membership lapses, certification will also lapse.

## **7. Professional Membership - Special Circumstances Category**

For those applicants being considered under the Special Circumstances Category, the ASSERT National Accreditation Committee will clearly indicate where the applicant has met the required criteria for Sexuality Researcher. The ASSERT National Committee will also indicate where there are unmet criteria and make clear recommendations of how these can be met within a practical time frame and with the support from ASSERT National at the local, state or national levels.

## **8. Maintaining Professional Standards as a Sexuality Researcher**

Once accredited, the Sexuality Researcher will establish ongoing consultations or collaborations ideally with other ASSERT National accredited Sexuality Researchers or equivalent. Such consultations may also be with a small peer or professional research group focused on sexuality research. Such consultations may be on a quarterly basis and more frequently, as the need arises.

The purpose of such consultations would be to provide relevant specialist support to maintain a high standard of knowledge, competencies, self-awareness and rigour in research. The Sexuality Researcher needs to keep informed of new developments in sexuality research in general, and in particular their own area of research specialty. Ethical issues and standards, and particularly transparency in funded research need to be considered and maintained.

Professional members will be expected to have at least one paper published in a recognised journal or a conference presentation at national or international level every three years.

The accredited Sexuality Researcher will make a reasonable effort to attend ASSERT National conferences and meetings as well as their state organised continuing education program.

Participation in the above processes with relevant documentation ensures ongoing membership of ASSERT National as a Sexuality Researcher.