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practice MATTERS

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Allied Health Professions Council



AHPC What It Is and What It Is Not

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President's Message



Our mandate is to ensure these practitioners not only graduate with recognised qualifications but also remain accountable to the public they serve.

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the inaugural issue of the Allied Health Professions Council (AHPC) newsletter. This publication marks a significant milestone in our journey to enhance communication, share knowledge and explain regulatory policies within our allied health community.

As we embark on this new chapter, it is important to reflect on the pivotal role the AHPC plays in shaping allied health practice in Singapore. Established under the Allied Health Professions Act 2011, the AHPC serves as the regulatory authority for allied health professionals, including diagnostic radiographers, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, radiation therapists and speech-language therapists. Our mandate is to ensure these practitioners not only graduate with recognised qualifications but also remain accountable to the public they serve.

In this inaugural issue, we provide insights into the AHPC's role and functions, alongside information on Continuing Professional Education. Our goal is to create a platform for knowledge sharing and policy explanation that serves our professional community effectively.

I would also like to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to Ms Doreen Yeo on her appointment as AHPC Registrar from 1 January 2026, whilst expressing sincere appreciation to Adjunct Professor Susan Niam for her dedicated service and valuable contributions during her term as AHPC Registrar.

Happy reading!

Best wishes,

Professor Alan Wong

President

Allied Health Professions Council

Allied Health Professions Council

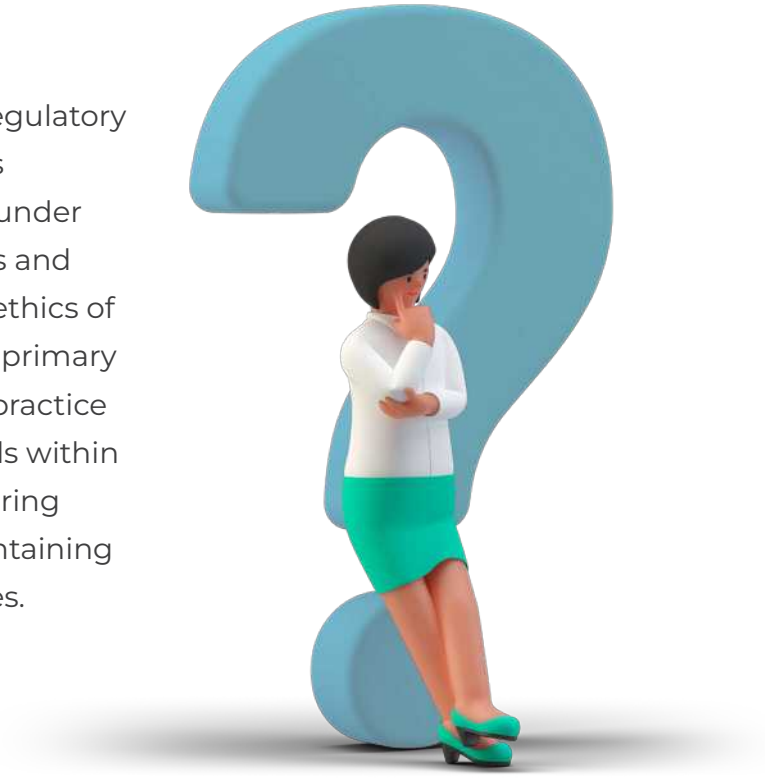
What It Is and What It Is Not

Understanding the Role and Functions of the Regulatory Body under the Allied Health Professions Act 2011

Allied health professions form an integral part of Singapore's healthcare system. Unlike the medical, dental and nursing professions, state registration of allied health professionals began only recently. The Allied Health Professions Act 2011 provides the legal framework governing the practice of selected allied health professions listed in the Act's First Schedule[1]. The first professions regulated under this Act were Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Speech Therapy in April 2013, followed by Diagnostic Radiography and Radiation Therapy in April 2016.

What is AHPC?

Under the Act, the Minister appoints a regulatory body called the Allied Health Professions Council (AHPC). As a professional board under the Ministry of Health, the AHPC governs and regulates the professional conduct and ethics of registered allied health professionals. Its primary mandate is to regulate the registration, practice and conduct of allied health professionals within Singapore—a function essential for ensuring safe and competent practice whilst maintaining public confidence in allied health services.



1 Allied Health Professions Act 2011 is publicly available on Singapore Statues Online at https://sso.agc.gov.sg/Act/AHPA2011?ProvIds=Sc1-#Sc1-.

Our Eight Core Functions

The Act entrusts the AHPC with eight statutory functions designed to uphold and enhance professional standards amongst allied health practitioners. Section 7 of the Act outlines these functions:

1. to approve or reject applications for registration under this Act and to approve any such applications subject to such conditions and restrictions as it may think fit
2. to issue practising certificates to registered allied health professionals
3. to accredit programmes for, and providers of, the training and assessment of persons seeking to become registered allied health professionals
4. to accredit programmes for, and providers of, the continuing professional education of registered allied health professionals
5. to determine and regulate the standards of practice, competence, conduct and ethics of registered allied health professionals
6. to keep and maintain the registers
7. to coordinate and supervise the activities of the committees and professional boards appointed under section 12
8. generally to do all such acts, matters and things as are necessary or authorised to be carried out under or for the purposes of this Act



Registration and Certification (Functions 1, 2 & 6)

The first, second and sixth functions are procedural. Eligible allied health professionals apply for registration, and the AHPC reviews applications based primarily on academic qualifications and supporting documents such as certificates of good character. The AHPC approves or rejects applications according to pre-established criteria and, upon approval, issues practising certificates. The register of all registered allied health professionals is maintained by the AHPC.

Educational Programme Accreditation (Functions 3 & 4)

Functions three and four involve accreditation responsibilities. The AHPC appoints committees or review panels to evaluate educational programmes and their qualifications where applicable. Two types of programmes exist:

First, entry-level educational programmes are reviewed by the Curriculum and Organisation Review Committee (CORC) and included in the List of Recognised Qualifications to facilitate registration decisions. This list undergoes periodic review, though no fixed review schedule exists. When qualifications change, the AHPC may approve reviews of such qualifications and their curricula. Programmes meeting the required standards are recommended to the Health Minister for approval and gazetting. CORC also reviews the readiness of organisations to employ allied health professionals undergoing conditional registration based on defined criteria.

Second, continuing education programmes are numerous and constantly emerging, making a comprehensive recognised list impractical. Instead, the AHPC provides guidance and criteria for these programmes.[2]



2 For the criteria and eligibility to be an accredited CPE Provider, please refer to AHPC's website at https://www.ahpc.gov.sg/for-partners/.

Professional Standards and Ethics (Function 5)

The fifth function requires the AHPC to "determine and regulate the standards of practice, competence, conduct and ethics of registered allied health professionals". The AHPC has established a Code of Professional Conduct providing guidance on professional and ethical practice, whilst continuing to develop standards of practice and competence.[3]

Currently, the AHPC implements a Conditional Registration system whereby graduates from recognised local programmes undergo one-year conditional registration with individually appointed supervisors providing guidance and assessment. This system relies on fully registered professionals with over three years' experience serving as supervisors. All local programmes (including those at the National University of Singapore and Singapore Institute of Technology) from which majority of our allied health professionals graduated, have undergone thorough review - including curriculum assessment, faculty and student interviews, and site visits - before ministerial approval for gazetting.

The Conditional Registration practice is under review due to its significant staffing requirements. Whilst the AHPC works towards establishing comprehensive entry-level and specialist practice standards, the current focus on Conditional Registration limits the regulatory body's capacity for broader standard development.





3 For AHPC Code of Professional Conduct, please refer to AHPC's website at https://www.ahpc.gov.sg/for-professionals/regulations-guidelines-and-circulars/.

Coordination and General Functions (Functions 7 & 8)

The final two functions are secretarial in nature. The regulatory body may appoint committees to fulfil its functions. All appointments are currently honorary, and we remain grateful to the dedicated professionals contributing to the regulatory body.

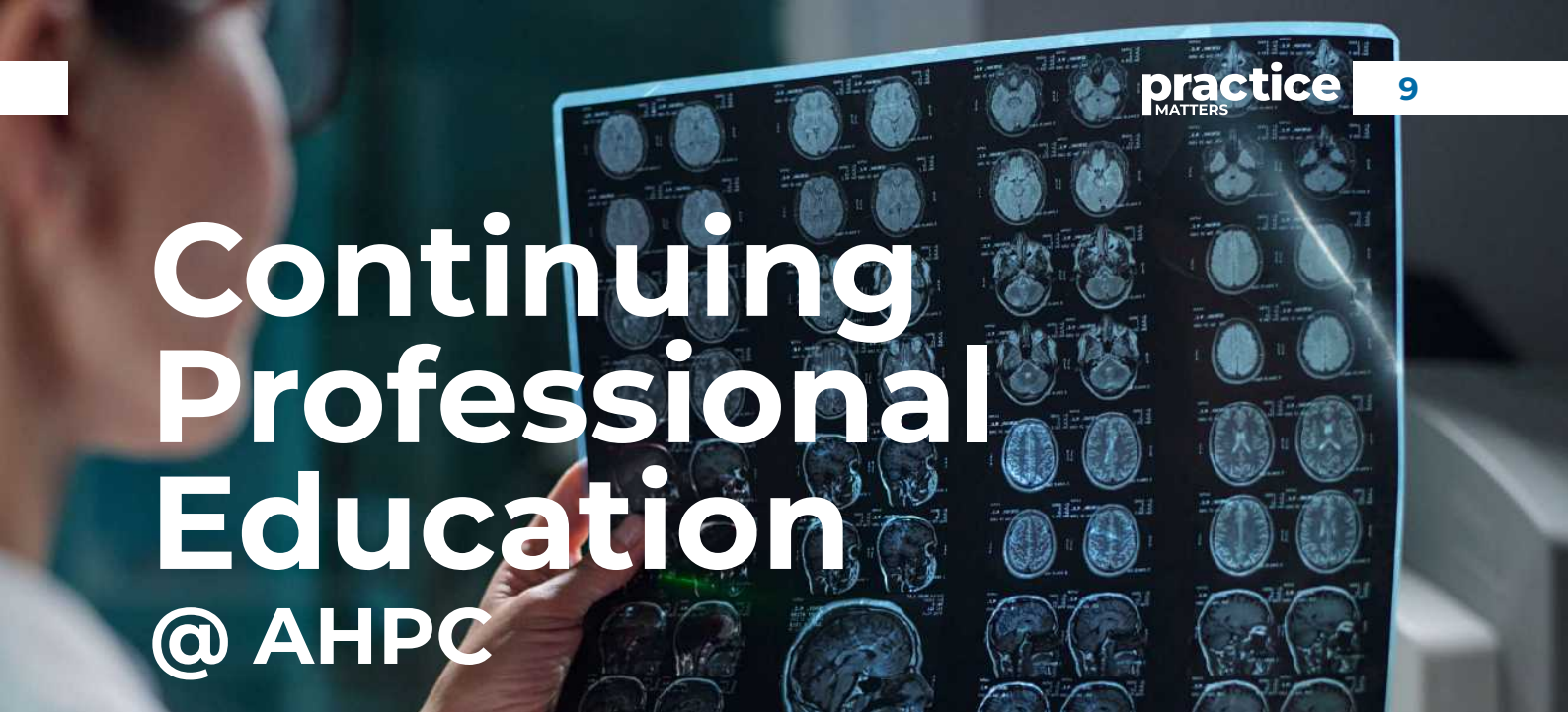
Looking Forward: Our Next Steps

The AHPC remains committed to regulating allied health professionals to ensure public safety and strengthen confidence in allied health services. We aim to maintain an accessible and efficient registration process. Currently, much of our work focuses on Conditional Registration and supervision enforcement. However, we recognise that workplace supervision should ideally be embedded within professional culture rather than dependent on regulatory enforcement.

As a regulatory body, we are reviewing this practice and hope to streamline the process in the near future, allowing greater focus on strategic professional aspects such as determining specialist practice standards and establishing a specialist register.



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Continuing Professional Education @ AHPC

Background

Continuing Professional Education (CPE) is defined by AHPC as educational activities that serve to maintain, develop or increase the knowledge, skills and professional performance of registered Allied Health Professionals (AHPs). CPE is integral for healthcare professionals to maintain currency in knowledge, skills, and competencies in a rapidly evolving field (Al-Omary et al., 2024; De Gruyter, 2022). Regulatory bodies worldwide often mandate a minimum number of CPE "points" for practising certificate renewal to improve clinical practice (Cervero & Gaines, 2015).

From 1 January 2027, section 23(7)(b)1 of the Allied Health Professions Act (AHPA) for compulsory CPE requirements as a condition for the renewal of practising certificates (PC) will be implemented (Allied Health Professions Act, 2011, s 23). Section 7(d) of the Act ensures AHPC supports AHPs fulfilment of CPE by accrediting educational programmes and CPE providers (Allied Health Professions Act, 2011, s 7).

The AHPC has launched the voluntary CPE phase on 1 March 2024 for AHPs and CPE providers to familiarise themselves with the CPE system. The voluntary phase will end on 31 December 2026.

Implementation of CPE would:

- ensure practice standards are maintained and steadily improved across professions and sectors;
- ensure those who are returning to active practice would still be competent and relevant in their profession;
- provide an opportunity to drive standards for the professionals, as skills and knowledge in various professions may evolve from time to time.

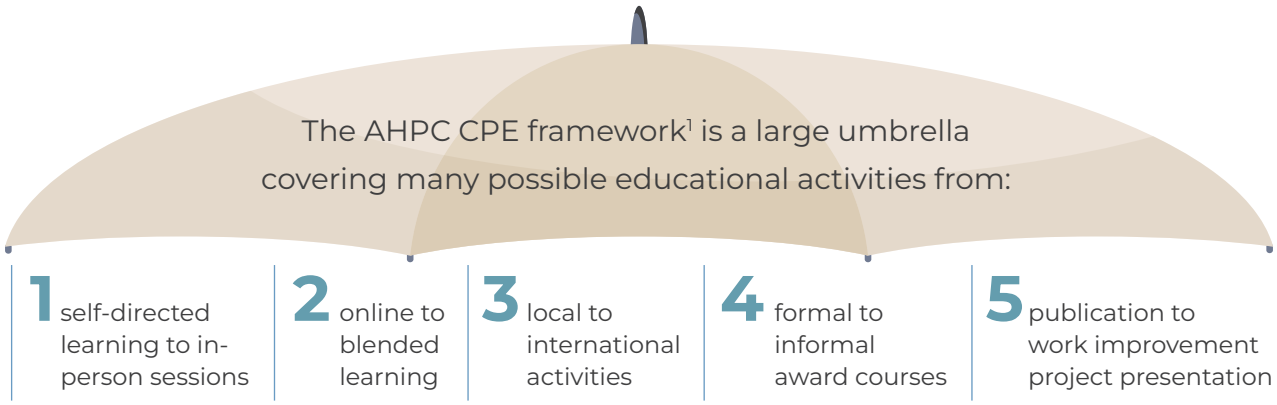
AHPC's CPE journey began with the appointment of AHPC's CPE Committee in 2022. Members were drawn from public healthcare institutions (PHI), social service agencies and educational institutions representing all AHPC's professions. The committee was tasked with developing AHPC's framework and to work with the Secretariat of healthcare Professional Boards (SPB) to launch CPE for AHPs. The National Council of Social Services and PHI's Directors of Allied Health were consulted on the proposed CPE framework and roll out. The framework was also mapped to SMC, SDC and SPC's frameworks.

With the launch of compulsory CPE, AHPC will join other health professions regulatory board with compulsory CPE such as Singapore Medical Council (SMC), Singapore Dental Council (SDC), Singapore Pharmacy Council (SPC), Singapore Nursing Board (SNB) and Optometrists and Opticians Board (OOB).

AHPC CPE Framework

CPE will be applicable to AHPs on Full and Restricted Registration from 1 January 2027. They must attain 50 CPE points with at least 20% core points within the 2-year qualifying period (1 January 2027 to 31 December 2028) to renew their subsequent practising certificate (2028 PC renewal). Core points are educational activities specific to the registrant's profession with non-core points for general topics related to health or social care.

PC renewal occurs between 1 October and 31 December of renewal year. Registered AHPs must note that fulfilment of 50 points requirement is necessary when renewing their PC. This means that a registered AHP who wishes to renew on 1 October will need to demonstrate fulfilment of 50 CPE points upon renewal application.



The registered AHP would not need to log on to the professional registration system (PRS) to claim for points for attendance of AHPC approved local events as this would be submitted by accredited local educational providers. For example, submission of the registered AHP's attendance for a synchronous online seminar organised by a

1 https://www.ahpc.gov.sg/for-professionals/registered-allied-health-professionals/continuing-professional-education-cpe/cpe-categories/

professional association and pre-approved by AHPC by the professional association (as an approved CPE provider) would lead to points being awarded. However, it is prudent for the registered AHP to track points earned by logging into the PRS periodically.

A lowered CPE requirement can be applied when the registered AHP faces situations that make it difficult to meet full CPE requirements. An example would be a prolonged serious medical condition affecting a AHP from carrying out his daily activities. Upon successful application, a lowered CPE requirement can be applied.

Table 1. Summarised List of Categorised CPE Activities (AHPC, 2025)

Category	Type of Event	Eligibility	Points	Cap
1A	Local Events (Pre-approved)	Facilitator, Speaker, Participant	1 point/hour	Nil
1B	Local Events (Ad-hoc), Local Postgraduate Course, Basic Cardiac Life Support Course	Facilitator, Speaker, Presenter, Participant, Postgrad Student	4 points/day or event, 1 point/hour (postgrad) 4 points (BCLS)	Nil
1C	International Events, International Postgraduate Course	Speaker, Presenter, Participant, Postgrad Student	4 points/day	40 points
1D	Supervised Learning	Clinical Educator, Supervisor, Supervisee	5 points/block (supervisor), 4 points/block (supervisee)	40 points
2	Publications	Author, Editor, Co-author, Reviewer, Presenter	5 points (main), 2 points (supporting roles)	40 points
3A	Self-directed Learning (No Assessment)	Participant	2 points/article/ chapter	20 points
3B	Self-directed Learning (With Assessment)	Participant	4 points/reading	40 points
4	Presentation of Projects, Non-accredited Events	Team Leader, Member, Speaker, Presenter, Participant	2 points/project, 1 point/hour (max 4/day)	10 points

Suggested Strategy for CPE

The following strategies are proposed to ensure successful attainment of CPE points for PC renewal. Table 2 provides an example of achieving 50 CPE points.



Plan for your CPE.

Attend all organisational CPE.

Attend professional association's CPE events regularly

Achieve 20 core points reading profession specific articles or chapters

Attain as many points as possible by taking self directed online learning with assessments.

Table 2. Example of CPE 50 Point Achievement

Category	Type	Role	Submission By	Points
1A	Organisational professional in-services 8 sessions x 1 hour	7 sessions: Participant	Organisation	8
1A	Professional Association Special Interest Group Sessions/Journal Club 4 sessions x 2 hours	1 session: Speaker	Professional Association	8
1B	National Assoc. Professional Conference 2 days	Participant	Conference Organiser	8
1B	An institutional of higher learning invited international speaker session 2 sessions x 3 hours across 2 days	Participant & Presenter	Institution of Higher Learning	8
3A	Readings of 10 profession's journal publication	Participant	Self	20
			Total	52

Conclusion

By mandating CPE for PC renewal, regulatory bodies such as AHPC, SMC, SDC, SNB, SPC and OOB ensure that health professionals remain competent assuring public trust. For AHPs, CPE is not just about compliance but an opportunity for institutionalising a culture of continuous learning to improve and maintain professional standards.

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For more information, you can visit https://www.ahpc.gov.sg/for-professionals/registered-allied-health-professionals/continuing-professional-education-cpe/

Update: English Language Proficiency Requirements for Speech-Language Therapists

The Allied Health Professions Council (AHPC) has updated its English Language Proficiency (ELP) requirements for Speech-Language Therapists (SLTs) seeking registration. Applicants with qualifications from countries outside Singapore, Australia, Canada (except Quebec), New Zealand, Ireland, South Africa, the UK, and the USA must demonstrate English proficiency through one of the following tests:

- IELTS (UK)
- TOEFL (USA)
- OET (Australia – profession-specific)

This change ensures SLTs can effectively communicate in Singapore's English-based healthcare system.

Starting 1 August 2025, the minimum required scores for accepted English Language Proficiency (ELP) tests was lowered. Please see the table for the updated minimum scores.

Accepted ELP tests	Previous Minimum ELP scores accepted	Updated Minimum ELP scores accepted from 1 August 2025
IELTS (Academic Module)	Overall 8 and no less than 7.5 for ALL components (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking)	Overall 7.5 and no less than 7.0 for ALL components (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking)
TOEFL (internet-based test)	110 marks	102 marks
OET	At least 3 Grade As and 1 Grade B	Grade B (400) in three components and B (350) in any one component

Applicants must pass all test components in one exam sitting; combining results from multiple sittings is not allowed. Only test results from within two years prior to the application date are valid. Multiple attempts are allowed, but each must meet the minimum scores across all components in a single sitting.

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