

Registration as an oral health practitioner in New Zealand policy

Date last reviewed	July 2006
Scheduled review	
Approved by	Council

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a consistent, fair and transparent approach to registration of oral health practitioners.

Scope

This policy applies to all applicants for registration, including New Zealand graduates.

Policy

The Dental Council will register an oral health practitioner within a scope of practise if the applicant:

- (a) Is fit for registration as set out in the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 ("the Act");
 - (b) Has the qualifications that are prescribed by the Dental Council for that scope of practice;
 - (c) Is competent to practise, as described in the Dental Council's Policy on Competence.
1. All applicants must declare in their registration application whether or not they have been convicted in New Zealand or overseas of any offence and whether they have ever had a recognised or treated drug or alcohol problem or other mental or physical disability or condition.

Details are required where applicable and failure to give this information may well jeopardise a graduate's right to registration.

2. Applicants can register in a specialist scope of practice without being first registered in a general scope of practice.

Areas of practice which were not included in a practitioner's training should not be undertaken unless the practitioner has completed appropriate training and practises to the standards required by the relevant Code of Practice.

3. Applicants with non-prescribed qualifications can apply for registration and individual consideration by Council if they consider Council might regard their qualifications are equivalent to a prescribed qualification.

Such applications are subject to additional fees to cover the costs of the individual assessment of the applicant's qualifications, training and experience.

4. A pass in the New Zealand Dental Council Registration Examinations is a prescribed qualification for registration as an oral health practitioner.

5. Alterations or conditions may be placed on a Scope of Practice at the time of registration.
6. Persons with dental qualifications who are engaged in advising, reporting, teaching, research or management roles and who consider that they are not engaged in 'dental practice' (see definition below) are not required to be registered.

Please note: Registered practitioners must also hold an annual practising certificate (APC) in order to practise dentistry in New Zealand (refer Dental Council Policy on Recertification).

Definition: The practice of dentistry

Secretariat to re-consider wording.

The Dental Council defines the practice of dentistry as:

The maintenance of health through the assessment, diagnosis, management, treatment, and prevention of any disease, disorder or condition of the orofacial complex and associated structures within the scope of the practitioner's approved education, training and competence. Practice in this context goes wider than clinical dentistry to include:

- (a) reporting or giving advice in a dental capacity; and*
- (b) teaching, research and management roles*

given that such roles use the knowledge and skills attained through undertaking a dental qualification and that such roles influence clinical practice and public safety.

The practice of dentistry is carried out by registered oral health practitioners: dentists, dental specialists, dental therapists, dental hygienists, dental auxiliaries, dental technicians and clinical dental technicians.

Other relevant documents

1. Dental Council Policy on English Language.
2. Dental Council Policy on Competence.
3. Dental Council Policy on Fitness to Practise.
4. Dental Council Policy on Restoration to the Register.
5. Dental Council Policy on Recertification.
6. Dental Council Policy on the New Zealand Dental Registration Examinations.