

# Australian Dental Council (ADC) / Dental Council New Zealand (DC(NZ))

## Accreditation standards for dental practitioner programs

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## Preamble

The ADC/DC(NZ) Accreditation Standards for Dental Practitioner Programs (the Standards) are approved by the DC(NZ) pursuant to the *Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003* (the Act).

DC(NZ)'s primary purpose is to protect the health and safety of the public by ensuring that oral health practitioners are competent and fit to practise. This responsibility is mandated to Council under the *Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003*.

The Standards help to ensure that only suitably trained and qualified oral health practitioners can register to practise in New Zealand. The Standards apply to all dental education programs that are prescribed programs that enable graduates to apply for registration as oral health practitioners in New Zealand.

The Standards comprise six domains:

1. Public safety
2. Academic governance and quality assurance
3. Program of study
4. The student experience
5. Assessment
6. Cultural competence

Each Domain includes a standard statement that articulates the key purpose of the Domain. Each standard statement is supported by multiple criteria, which set out what is expected of a DC(NZ) accredited program in order to meet each standard statement. The criteria are not sub-standards that will be individually assessed. When assessing a program, the DC(NZ) will have regard for whether each criterion is met, but will take an on-balance view of whether the evidence presented by a program provider clearly demonstrates that a particular Standard is met.

New programs and established programs are assessed against the same accreditation standards, although the assessment may be varied according to the circumstances of the program provider.

For queries related to these Standards contact the DC(NZ) via [inquiries@dcnz.org.nz](mailto:inquiries@dcnz.org.nz).

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
1. Public safety	1. Public safety is assured.	<p>1.1 Protection of the public and the care of patients are prominent amongst the guiding principles for the program, clinical education and learning outcomes.</p> <p>1.2 Student impairment screening and management processes are effective.</p> <p>1.3 Students achieve the relevant competencies before providing patient care as part of the program.</p> <p>1.4 Students are supervised by suitably qualified and registered dental and/or health practitioners during clinical education.</p> <p>1.5 Health services and dental practices providing clinical placements have robust health and safety, patient safety and quality and care policies and processes and meet all relevant regulations and standards.</p> <p>1.6 Patients consent to care by students.</p> <p>1.7 Students understand the legal, ethical and professional responsibilities of a registered dental practitioner.</p> <p>1.8 The program provider holds students and staff to high levels of ethical and professional conduct.</p>

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
2. Academic governance and quality assurance	2. Academic governance and quality assurance processes are effective.	<p>2.1 Academic governance arrangements are in place for the program and include systematic monitoring, review and improvement.</p> <p>2.2 Students, dental consumers (including patients), internal and external academic, and professional peers contribute to the program's design, management and quality improvement.</p> <p>2.3 Mechanisms exist for responding within the curriculum to contemporary developments in clinical practice and health professional education.</p>

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
3. Program of study	3. Program design, delivery and resourcing enable students to achieve the required professional competencies.	<p>3.1 A coherent educational philosophy informs the program's design and delivery.</p> <p>3.2 Program learning outcomes address all the required professional competencies.</p> <p>3.3 The quality, quantity and variety of clinical education is sufficient to produce a graduate competent to practice across a range of settings.</p> <p>3.4 Learning and teaching methods are intentionally designed and used to enable students to achieve the required learning outcomes.</p> <p>3.5 Graduates are competent in research literacy for the level and type of the program.</p> <p>3.6 Students work with and learn from and about relevant dental and health professions to foster interprofessional collaborative practice.</p> <p>3.7 Teaching staff are suitably qualified and experienced to deliver their educational responsibilities.</p> <p>3.8 Learning environments and clinical facilities and equipment are accessible, well-maintained, fit for purpose and support the achievement of learning outcomes.</p> <p>3.9 Cultural competence is articulated clearly, integrated in the program and assessed, with graduates equipped to provide care to diverse groups and populations.</p>

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
		<p>3.10 The dental program has the resources to sustain the quality of education that is required to facilitate the achievement of the professional competencies.</p> <p>3.11 Access to clinical facilities is assured, via formal agreements as required, to sustain the quality of clinical training necessary to achieve the relevant professional competencies.</p>

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
4. The student experience	4. Students are provided with equitable and timely access to information and support.	<p>4.1 Course information is clear and accessible.</p> <p>4.2 Admission and progression requirements and processes are fair and transparent.</p> <p>4.3 Students have access to effective grievance and appeals processes.</p> <p>4.4 The program provider identifies and provides support to meet the academic learning needs of students.</p> <p>4.5 Students are informed of and have access to personal support services provided by qualified personnel.</p> <p>4.6 Students are represented within the deliberative and decision making processes for the program.</p> <p>4.7 Equity and diversity principles are observed and promoted in the student experience.</p>

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
5. Assessment	5. Assessment is fair, valid and reliable to ensure graduates are competent to practise.	<p>5.1 There is a clear relationship between learning outcomes and assessment strategies.</p> <p>5.2 All required professional competencies are mapped to learning outcomes and are assessed.</p> <p>5.3 Multiple assessment methods are used including direct observation in the clinical setting.</p> <p>5.4 Mechanisms facilitate a consistent approach to appropriate assessment and timely feedback to students.</p> <p>5.5 Suitably qualified and experienced staff, including external experts for final year, assess students.</p>

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
<p>6. Cultural competence</p> <p>(Applicable to programs seeking accreditation in New Zealand)</p>	<p>6. The program ensures students are able to provide culturally competent engagement and appropriate care for Māori and Pacific peoples.</p>	<p>6.1 The program demonstrates its commitment to honouring the Treaty of Waitangi as the foundation document of New Zealand.</p> <p>6.2 The program upholds both the Articles and Principles of the Treaty through its educational philosophy and delivery.</p> <p>6.3 The program, staff and students understand the Māori perspective of health and wellbeing, their beliefs and cultural practices as it pertains to oral health in particular.</p> <p>6.4 Cultural understanding of Māori and Pacific peoples are integrated throughout the program, clearly articulated in required learning outcomes (including competencies that will enable effective and respectful interaction with Māori).</p> <p>6.5 Clinical experiences provide students with experience of providing culturally competent care for Māori and Pacific peoples, and clinical application of cultural competence is appropriately assessed.</p> <p>6.6 There is a partnership in the design and management of the program from Māori and Pacific peoples.</p> <p>6.7 The program provider promotes and supports the recruitment, admission, participation, retention and completion of the program by Māori and Pacific peoples.</p> <p>6.8 The program provider ensures students are provided with access to appropriate resources, and to staff and the community with specialist knowledge, expertise and cultural capabilities, to facilitate learning about Māori health.</p>

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
		<p>6.9 The program recognises the important role of Māori Te Reo, Ngā Mokai o Ngā Whetu (Māori Dental Students' Association) and Te Aō Marama (The New Zealand Maori Dental Association) in achieving cultural competence to oral health practitioners.</p> <p>6.10 Staff and students work and learn in a culturally appropriate environment.</p>