

10 August 2020

Outcome from joint Australia and New Zealand accreditation standards consultation

The Dental Council New Zealand and Dental Board of Australia approved updates to the joint *Australian Dental Council (ADC)/Dental Council (New Zealand) Accreditation standards for dental practitioner programs* (the standards). The new standards will come into effect on 1 January 2021.

The new standards are available for download [here](#).

Approval of the updated standards marks the final stage of the review process.

Used to assess programs of study enabling graduates to apply for registration as an oral health practitioner in New Zealand or Australia, the standards underpin the accreditation process. They aim to protect the public by ensuring education and training programmes produce graduates who can demonstrate the skills knowledge and professional competencies needed to register as an oral health practitioner in New Zealand or Australia.

Commencing in 2019, the review aimed to ensure the standards remain contemporary and fit for purpose while maintaining a focus on public safety.

The most significant change to the standards is the introduction of a new domain – cultural competence. The new domain is to ensure students are able to provide culturally competent engagement and appropriate care for Māori and Pacific peoples, to help improve Māori and Pacific oral health outcomes.

Other changes to the new standards include:

- consumer involvement in program design, management and quality improvement
- clearer expectations regarding inter-professional collaborative practice, and
- clarification of the assessment standard and associated criteria.

The DC(NZ) will work closely with the New Zealand dental education providers and assessors on the implications these standards will have on the programme accreditation process.

Consultation on the proposed changes to the Standards

Consultation on the proposed changes to the standards was conducted from 18 February to 20 April 2020, with late submissions accepted until 10 May due to the impact of COVID-19.

The submissions are published on our website and grouped in [New Zealand](#) and [Australian](#) responders for ease of reference.

The DC(NZ) and ADC considered all the feedback provided in response to the draft standards released for consultation.

The [Report of the consultation on proposed changes to the ADC/DC\(NZ\) Accreditation standards for dental practitioner programs – May 2020](#) provides a detailed summary of the consultation process and the feedback received. It also details how we will use the feedback provided in other areas of its work, including in the review of the professional competencies of the newly qualified oral health practitioner.

All stages of the review process have been informed by stakeholder consultation and feedback. We thank all of those that provided comment on the draft standards.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marie Warner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marie Warner
Chief Executive