
Feedback on Proposed Registration Pathways for Overseas-Trained Dentists

To Consultations <Consultations@dcnz.org.nz>

Dear Consultation Team,

I am writing in response to the Dental Council of New Zealand's consultation on the proposed new registration pathways for overseas-trained dentists and oral health practitioners.

I am a foreign-trained dentist with postgraduate training in Orthodontics and clinical experience outside New Zealand. I would like to express my appreciation for the Council's efforts to develop more inclusive, experience-based registration pathways while maintaining high standards of patient safety. The proposed Competent Authority Pathway and Comparable Health Systems Pathway, in particular, appear to be positive steps toward recognising overseas clinical experience in a structured and transparent manner.

I would appreciate clarification on a few points:

1. Whether overseas-trained specialists (such as orthodontists) would be assessed under these pathways, or if they would continue to require separate specialist registration processes.
2. How clinical experience gained outside the listed "comparable health systems" would be evaluated.
3. Whether transitional or provisional registration options are being considered for dentists who meet competency requirements but need local orientation or supervision.
4. Financial and examination barriers
For many overseas-trained dentists, the current assessment and examination pathways involve very high costs with significant financial risk, particularly where outcomes are uncertain and fees are non-refundable. Consideration of experience-based assessments, provisional or supervised practice pathways, and structured orientation programmes would greatly improve accessibility without compromising patient safety.
5. Indicative timelines for implementation, should these pathways be approved.

As an international dentist exploring future opportunities in New Zealand, these proposed changes would significantly influence my career planning and preparation. I strongly support initiatives that balance workforce needs with patient safety and professional standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this consultation. I would be happy to provide further feedback if required and would appreciate being informed about any upcoming webinars or consultation sessions.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Harini Archana A

Overseas-trained Dentist / Orthodontist