Notice Under the Legislation Act 2019 of Prescribed Qualifications for Scope of Practice for Dental Hygiene

Under the Legislation Act 2019, notice is given of the making of the following secondary legislation:

Title	*Empowering provision(s)*	*Administering agency*
Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003	Section 12	Dental Council

The following replaces the prescribed qualifications for the Scope of Practice for Dental Hygiene as published in the *New Zealand Gazette*, 16 April 2026, Notice No. 2026-sl1808. The scope of practice and competencies for dental hygiene published in in the *New Zealand Gazette*, 12 November 2021, Notice No. 2021-sl4805 remain unchanged.

This notice has the status of secondary legislation for the purpose of the Legislation Act 2019 and can be accessed at: https://dcnz.org.nz/about-the-dental-council/who-we-are/publications?type=Gazette+notice#e738.

This notice comes into force on 10 December 2026.

Prescribed Qualifications for the Scope of Practice for Dental Hygiene

New Zealand Accredited Programmes

- Bachelor of Oral Health, University of Otago[1].
- Bachelor of Health Science in Oral Health, Auckland University of Technology[1].
- Certificate in Dental Hygiene issued by Otago Polytechnic and approved experience in the provision of oral health services within the scope of dental hygiene practice, and Dental Council approved courses for administering local anaesthetic, undertaking orthodontic procedures, intra-oral radiography and extra-oral radiography[2].
- New Zealand Defence Force training programme in Dental Hygiene and approved experience in the provision of oral health services within the scope of dental hygiene practice, and Dental Council approved courses for administering local anaesthetic, undertaking orthodontic procedures, intra-oral radiography and extra-oral radiography[2].
- Diploma in Dental Hygiene issued by a New Zealand educational institution, and Dental Council approved courses for administering local anaesthetic, undertaking orthodontic procedures, intra-oral radiography and extra-oral radiography[2].
- Diploma in Dental Hygiene, University of Otago (orthodontic procedures conferred from 2002) and Dental Council approved courses for administering local anaesthetic and extra-oral radiography[2].
- Bachelor of Health Science (Endorsement in Dental Hygiene), University of Otago[2].

Competent Authority – Qualification

Australia

- An Australian Dental Council accredited programme that included education in administering local anaesthetic, undertaking orthodontic procedures, intra-oral radiography and extra-oral radiography[3].
- An Australian educational institution qualification approved by the Dental Board of Australia for the purposes of registration in dental hygiene in Australia that included education in administering local anaesthetic, undertaking orthodontic procedures, intra-oral radiography and extra-oral radiography[4].

United Kingdom

- An approved UK educational institution dental hygiene qualification accredited by the GDC, and Dental Council approved courses for administering local anaesthetic, undertaking orthodontic procedures, intra-oral radiography and extra-oral radiography.
- An approved UK educational institution dental hygiene qualification conferred by the GDC, and Dental Council approved courses for administering local anaesthetic, undertaking orthodontic procedures, intra-oral radiography and extra-oral radiography.

United States of America (USA)

- A dental hygiene qualification and a pass in the USA National Board Dental Hygiene Examination, and a

pass in a USA state board dental hygiene clinical examination, and Dental Council approved courses for administering local anaesthetic, undertaking orthodontic procedures, intra-oral radiography and extra-oral radiography.
- A USA educational institution dental hygiene qualification accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation, and a pass in the USA National Board Dental Hygiene Examination, and Dental Council approved courses for administering local anaesthetic, undertaking orthodontic procedures, intra-oral radiography and extra-oral radiography.

Canada

- A dental hygiene qualification and a pass in the Canadian National Dental Hygiene Certification Examination, and a pass in a Canadian regional dental hygiene clinical examination, and Dental Council approved courses for administering local anaesthetic, undertaking orthodontic procedures, intra-oral radiography and extra-oral radiography.
- A Canadian educational institution dental hygiene qualification accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada, and a pass in the Canadian National Dental Hygiene Certification Examination, and Dental Council approved courses for administering local anaesthetic, undertaking orthodontic procedures, intra-oral radiography and extra-oral radiography.

Examination

- A dental hygiene qualification and a pass in the New Zealand Dental Hygiene Registration Examination.

Competent Authority – Registration[5]

- Current full/unrestricted/unconditional dental hygiene registration with a competent authority(s) recognised by the Dental Council[6]; and
- Clinical practice[7] in dental hygiene in the recognised competent authority(s) for at least 33 months (working 20 hours or more per week) during the 48 months prior to application.

Dated this 2nd day of November 2026.

MARIE MACKAY, Chief Executive, Dental Council.

Endnotes

1. Before 1 November 2017.

2. Accreditation expired.

3. Before 30 June 2010, and before 17 October 2010 for Western Australia.

4. From 1 July 2010 onwards, and 18 October 2010 onwards for Western Australia.

5. The Competent Authority – Registration pathway came into effect on 1 November 2026. Upon commencement of practice in New Zealand, practitioners registered under the competent authority registration pathway will practise under the oversight of a Dental Council approved practitioner for a period of at least six months under the terms of the oversight protocol.

6. Republic of Ireland (Dental Council of Ireland), United Kingdom (General Dental Council), Canada (provincial dental regulators), United States of America (state dental boards), Australia (Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency) for the purposes of dental hygiene practice.

7. Clinical practice means 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.

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