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

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 Therapy as published in the *New Zealand Gazette*, 16 April 2026, Notice No. 2026-sl1810. The prescribed qualifications for the Adult Care in Dental Therapy Scope of Practice published in the *New Zealand Gazette*, 16 April 2026, Notice No. 2026-sl1810 remain unchanged. The scope of practice and competencies for dental therapy and adult care in dental therapy published in the *New Zealand Gazette*, 12 November 2021, Notice No. 2021-sl4807 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 Therapy

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 Therapy or Certificate in Dental Nursing (issued by the Department of Health or a New Zealand educational institution), and approved experience in the provision of dental therapy services within the scope of dental therapy practice (including interpreting periapical and bitewing radiographs under the direction and supervision of a dentist who can attest to competency), and evidence of successful completion of Dental Council approved courses for pulpotomies and stainless steel crowns and radiography and diagnostic radiography, or an exemption certificate for radiography issued by the New Zealand Medical Radiation Technologists Board current as at 18 September 2004[2].
- Diploma in Dental Therapy (issued by a New Zealand educational institution), and approved experience in the provision of dental therapy services within the scope of dental therapy practice (including interpreting periapical and bitewing radiographs under the direction and supervision of a dentist who can attest to competency), and evidence of successful completion of Dental Council approved courses for pulpotomies and stainless steel crowns and radiography and diagnostic radiography (excluding a Diploma in Dental Therapy issued by University of Otago or an exemption certificate for radiography issued by the New Zealand Medical Radiation Technologists Board current as at 18 September 2004)[2].
- Bachelor of Health Science (Endorsement in Dental Therapy), University of Otago[2].

Competent Authority – Qualification

Australia

- An Australian Dental Council accredited programme that included education in pulpotomies, stainless steel crowns, radiography and diagnostic radiography[3].
- An Australian educational institution dental degree approved by the Dental Board of Australia for the purposes of registration in dental therapy in Australia that included education in pulpotomies, stainless steel crowns, radiography and diagnostic radiography[4].

Examination

- A dental therapy qualification and a pass in the New Zealand Dental Therapy Registration Examination.

Competent Authority – Registration[5]

- Current full/unrestricted/unconditional dental therapy registration with a competent authority(s) recognised by the Dental Council[6]; and

- Clinical practice[7] in dental therapy 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. United Kingdom (General Dental Council), United States of America (state dental boards), Australia (Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency) for the purposes of dental therapy.

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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