

ADC Accreditation of specialist dental programs – Frequently Asked Questions

How will the ADC undertake the re-accreditation of specialist dental programs?

The ADC and the Dental Council of New Zealand (DC(NZ)) have a joint 'Procedure for the re-review of specialist dental practitioner programs'. Accredited specialist dental programs are re-accredited by the ADC at least every five years and where a provider offers more than one specialist dental program the ADC aims to review all programs at the same time to reduce the burden of accreditation on that provider.

In addition to a Chair and Deputy Chair, the Site Evaluation Team (SET) that reviews the specialist programs will include a discipline specific specialist reviewer for each specialist program being reviewed so that direct discipline specific input can be made into the report of the SET.

How does the ADC choose the assessors to review programs?

The various specialist Academies and Societies were asked to nominate experienced individuals to the ADC Register of Assessors. Each nomination is subject to review by the ADC Accreditation Committee prior to admission to the Register to ensure that nominees meet the assessor criteria. When a SET is being put together, individuals from the Register are invited to be a member of that SET. Rigorous processes are in place to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest in the accreditation process.

What is happening to specialist Academy or Society 'Peer Review' processes?

Any program provider is free to engage with Academies and Societies to have them undertake a peer review but the outcomes of the peer review will not impact on an accreditation decision by the ADC. However a program provider may choose to be benchmarked against world's best practice for kudos and reputation of the program.

Will each specialist dental program be reviewed by a SET with just one specialist assessor?

Normally yes. If there are reasonable grounds to do so the ADC may include more than one specialist assessors in the SET for the review of a particular program if it is felt that a greater breadth of expertise is needed.

ADC also has in place Guidelines on 'Second Specialist Accreditation Assessor' that sets out how specialist Academies/Societies may nominate a second assessor to support the primary ADC specialist assessor during the accreditation process if they wish to do so.

Are the ADC Accreditation Standards the same as specialist Academy/Society peer review standards?

No. There is, as you might expect, a lot of overlap but there are also differences between the ADC Accreditation Standards and the requirements for peer review. The ADC Accreditation Standards are threshold standards that set out what is expected of an accredited program for the graduates to achieve the necessary outcomes to practice

competently. Peer review processes often focus on world's best practice thus assessors may be looking at a program through a 'different lens'.

How does the ADC ensure consistency in applying the Accreditation Standards to so many specialist dental programs?

In a number of ways. Firstly, training is made available to individuals on the ADC Register of Assessors prior to each site visit and a one day workshop from time to time. This ensures that all members of the SET have a shared understanding of the accreditation process and Accreditation Standards. All SETs are chaired by an experienced person who will have undertaken a minimum of three previous accreditation visits and will therefore be familiar with the ADC accreditation processes and standards.

In addition, an experienced ADC staff member will be part of every SET to ensure that the process runs appropriately, consistently and to allow for the sharing of experience across multiple accreditation visits. Finally, all SET reports are presented to the ADC/DC(NZ) Accreditation Committee which has oversight of all of ADC's accreditation activities and therefore ensures consistency in the approach and outcomes for all SETs.