

COVID-19 dental practitioner program accreditation principles

The situation surrounding novel coronavirus SARS-COV-2/COVID-19 disease is rapidly evolving. Its impact across society is unprecedented and wide reaching. For providers of dental practitioner programs in Australia, measures to address the spread of COVID-19 have significant consequences on the delivery of education and training programs.

The following principles have been agreed to by the Australian Dental Council and all dental practitioner programs, and endorsed by the Dental Board of Australia. Developed with mutual respect of each other's role within the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme and the education sector, these principles guide how we will work together during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Australian Dental Council

Education providers

Public safety is our priority

We achieve this through our role as the accreditation authority and by evaluating programs against the accreditation standards in a pragmatic way while still ensuring programs continue to meet the accreditation standards.

We achieve this by our staff and students abiding by the advice of state and territory governments, chief health officers and regulators and by providing our students with opportunities to develop and demonstrate the required professional competencies.

We acknowledge each other's role and expertise

We achieve this by recognising that education providers are the experts in developing curriculum and assessments to determine whether students have achieved the required learning outcomes.

We achieve this by acknowledging that the ADC is responsible for measuring programs against published accreditation standards and must take action in accordance with documented policies and process when programs are at risk of not meeting these standards.

Only students who demonstrate competence to practice ethically and safely will graduate

We achieve this through evaluation of programs against the accreditation standards and by discussing with education providers when risks or concerns are identified as to how these will be managed.

We achieve this through the assessment of students and, where necessary, revising assessment practices so that students have the opportunity to demonstrate the required professional competencies prior to graduation.

We recognise that simulation activities cannot fully replace chair-side clinical experience

We achieve this by understanding that providers will use different ways to demonstrate students have had the necessary experience to achieve the competencies, but the application of skills and knowledge includes assessment in the clinical environment in addition to other environments.

We achieve this through assessing students' application of clinical skills and knowledge using multiple forms of assessment in order for students to demonstrate they have achieved the required program outcomes necessary to provide safe and effective patient care beyond graduation.

We will continue to be outcomes focused and embrace innovation

We achieve this by recognising that accreditation standards allow for innovation in delivering educational experiences using flexible approaches to achieve the required professional competencies.

We achieve this by identifying new and innovative ways of providing students with opportunities to develop professional competencies, which may be within and outside the clinical dental setting.

We will continue to provide students with the support needed for a quality education

We achieve this by communicating regularly with education providers about impacts on accredited programs and ensuring that opportunities for students to be represented in decision making is maintained.

We achieve this by having appropriate and accessible student support available and engaging students in program design and student experience.

