



Australian
Dental
Council

**AUSTRALIAN DENTAL COUNCIL
REPORT OF AN EVALUATION OF
GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY
BACHELOR OF DENTAL HEALTH SCIENCE / MASTER OF DENTISTRY
PROGRAM**

May 2017

SUMMARY REPORT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Program provider	Griffith University
Program/qualification name	Bachelor of Dental Health Science / Master of Dentistry
Program/qualification abbreviation	BDentHealSc/MDent
Program/qualification code	1259
Head office address, including State	Griffith Health Centre, School of Dentistry and Oral Health, Level 7, Parklands Drive, Gold Coast campus, Queensland 4222
Campus	Gold Coast Campus
Program length	5 Years
Registration division	Dentist
Registration specialty	NA
Qualification type	Bachelor Degree / Masters
Australian Qualifications Framework Level	AQF 7 & 9
Accreditation standards version	Accreditation Standards for Dental Practitioner Programs (Approved Dec 2014)
Date of site evaluation	Not Applicable – Paper Based Review
Date of ADC decision	18 August 2017
Type of accreditation	Major Change
Accreditation start date	1 January 2018
Accreditation end date	31 December 2022

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Background

Griffith University's Bachelor of Oral Health in Dental Science/ Graduate Diploma of Dentistry (BOraH/GDipDent) program was last reviewed by the Australian Dental Council (ADC) in 2015 at which time the program was accredited for seven years without conditions. The Site Evaluation Team (SET) that reviewed the program in 2015 made a range of quality improvement recommendations including that the School of Dentistry and Oral Health specifically identify opportunities for the inclusion of scientific methodology into the learning objectives of relevant units.

In response to the quality improvement recommendation, the School notified the ADC in the program's 2016 annual report of proposed changes to be introduced in 2018 with the introduction of the Master of Dentistry (MDent) program. The School advised that official notification would be provided once internal approval processes for the MDent program were completed.

The School of Dentistry and Oral Health wrote to the ADC in November 2016 advising that the BOraH/GDipDent would be replaced by the Bachelor of Dental Health Science (BDentHealSc) / Master of Dentistry (MDent) program from 2018. The School advised that the change of name from Bachelor of Oral Health in Dental Science to Bachelor of Dental Health Science (the first three years of the combined program) was a name change only and that the change from the GradDipDent to the MDent was to ensure the dental curriculum aligns with the requirements of the *Professional Competencies of the Newly Qualified Dentist* with the introduction of specific education research methodology and practice.

The ADC considered the proposed changes and determined that the changes amounted to a major change to an accredited program. The ADC determined that a paper based review be undertaken to determine whether the proposed BDentHealSc / MDent program continues to meet the Accreditation Standards.

Overview of the Evaluation

The paper based review was undertaken by the SET based on the information supplied by Griffith University in its November 2016 letter to the ADC, the information provided by the School in February 2017 once advised of the paper based review and the additional information requested following the SET's teleconference of 16 May 2017.

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The findings of this report are based on the SET's assessment of the material outlined above, the 2015 and 2016 annual reports submitted for the BOralH/GDipDent program and the 2015 ADC Report of an Evaluation of Griffith University Bachelor of Oral Health in Dental Science / Graduate Diploma of Dentistry.

Key Findings

The changes proposed by Griffith University to its dentistry program are limited in their impact and as such the SET focused its assessment on the introduction of courses in research methodology and the requirement for students to complete a research project within the final year of the combined five year program. The assessment was focused on how these changes impacted on the program's ability overall to meet Standard 3 – Program of Study, Standard 5 – Assessment as well as specific criteria associated with Standard 4 – The student experience.

The SET were satisfied that the introduction of courses in research methodology from the first trimester of the MDent program (Year 4 of dentistry) will provide students with the grounding in research methodology required to complete a research project during year 2 of the MDent program (Year 5 of the dentistry combined degree). The SET were satisfied that the program as presented continues to meet the accreditation standards that were assessed.

Between 2018 and 2020, graduates will receive different awards as the changes to program titles are phased in. On the completion of the program in 2018, students will be awarded the BOralH/GDipDent. Whereas students commencing year 4 in 2018 will enroll in the MDent course, having already completed the BOralH by the end of 2017 and therefore graduate with the awards BOralH/MDent from 2019. From 2020 onwards, it is anticipated that graduates will have been awarded the BDentHealSc/MDent.

Regardless of the awards presented the evidence indicates that students will be required to undertake the same clinical requirements and the majority of the same didactic elements, with the exception of the research requirements, as those students in the currently accredited BOralH/GDipDent program.

Information provided to the SET indicates that students have been advised of these changes in advance of their implantation. The SET encourages the School to continue to monitor the implementation of the changes overall in terms of the impact on student experience and whether the timing in which the research requirements are introduced are optimal for student learning, particularly when combined with the program's final year clinical requirements.

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Griffith University's School of Dentistry and Oral Health is to be commended for the introduction of the BDentHealSc/MDent program which aims to ensure that the dental curriculum aligns with the research and critical thinking requirements of the Accreditation Standards and the *Professional Competencies of the Newly Qualified Dentist*.

ADC Accreditation Decision

The ADC has determined that the major change to Griffith University's Bachelor of Dental Health Science / Master of Dentistry program is accepted and that the program is accredited from **1 January 2018** to **31 December 2022**.

As a monitoring requirement, the School of Dentistry and Oral Health is asked to provide an update in the 2019 and 2020 annual reports on the implementation of the MDent program, in particular feedback from students and staff on the introduction of the research requirements and any proposed changes to the program in response to this feedback.