

**Australian Dental Council (ADC) / Dental Council New Zealand (DC(NZ))**  
**Accreditation Standards for Dental Practitioner Programs**  
**[Revised draft for consultation – February 2020]**

© Australian Dental Council Ltd  
PO Box 13278  
Law Courts Victoria 8010  
Australia

**Tel:** +61 (0) 3 9657 1777

**Fax:** +61 (0) 3 9657 1766

**Email:** [accreditation@adc.org.au](mailto:accreditation@adc.org.au)

**Web:** [www.adc.org.au](http://www.adc.org.au)

**ABN:** 70 072 269 900

Dental Council New Zealand  
PO Box 10-448  
Wellington 6143  
New Zealand

**Tel:** +64 4 499 4820

**Fax:** +64 4 499 1668

**Email:** [inquiries@dcnz.org.nz](mailto:inquiries@dcnz.org.nz)

**Web:** [www.dcnz.org.nz](http://www.dcnz.org.nz)

## Document Version Control

Rev	Description	Originator	Reviewed	Approved	Date
1.0	Implementation				01/01/2016
2.0	Revised draft	ADC/DCNZ			

## Preamble

The *ADC/DC(NZ) Accreditation Standards for Dental Practitioner Programs* (the Standards) are endorsed by the ADC and approved by the DC(NZ) and the Dental Board of Australia (DBA) - pursuant to the *Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003* (the Act – New Zealand) and *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009* (National Law - Australia). The Standards help to ensure that only suitably trained and qualified dental practitioners can register to practise in Australia and New Zealand. The Standards apply to all dental education programs that are approved/prescribed programs that enable graduates to apply for registration as dental practitioners in Australia and New Zealand. In Australia, the Standards also apply to programs that enable graduates to apply for endorsement of registration for conscious sedation.

The Standards comprise six domains:

1. Public safety
2. Academic governance and quality assurance
3. Program of study
4. The student experience
5. Assessment
6. Cultural competence for programs seeking accreditation in New Zealand

or

Cultural safety for programs seeking accreditation in Australian

Each Domain includes a standard statement that articulates the key purpose of the Domain. Each standard statement is supported by multiple criteria, which set out what is expected of an ADC/DC(NZ) accredited program in order to meet each standard statement. The criteria are not sub-standards that will be individually assessed. When assessing a program the ADC/DC(NZ) will have regard for whether each criterion is met, but will take an on-balance view of whether the evidence presented by a program provider clearly demonstrates that a particular Standard is met.

New programs and established programs are assessed against the same accreditation standards, although the assessment may be varied according to the circumstances of the program provider.

For queries related to these Standards contact the ADC via [accreditation@adc.org.au](mailto:accreditation@adc.org.au) or DC(NZ) via [inquiries@dcnz.org.nz](mailto:inquiries@dcnz.org.nz) .

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
1. Public safety	1. Public safety is assured.	<p>1.1 Protection of the public and the care of patients are prominent amongst the guiding principles for the program, clinical training and learning outcomes.</p> <p>1.2 Student impairment screening and management processes are effective.</p> <p>1.3 Students achieve the relevant competencies before providing patient care as part of the program.</p> <p>1.4 Students are supervised by suitably qualified and registered dental and/or health practitioners during clinical education.</p> <p>1.5 Health services and dental practices providing clinical placements have robust health and safety, patient safety and quality and care policies and processes and meet all relevant regulations and standards.</p> <p>1.6 Patients consent to care by students.</p> <p>1.7 In Australia, all students are registered with the relevant regulatory authority/ies.</p> <p>1.8 Ensure that students understand the legal, ethical and professional responsibilities of a registered dental practitioner.</p> <p>1.9 The program provider holds students and staff to high levels of ethical and professional conduct.</p>

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
2. Academic governance and quality assurance	2. Academic governance and quality assurance processes are effective.	<p>2.1 The program can demonstrate academic governance arrangements are in place and include systematic monitoring, review and improvement.</p> <p>2.2 Students, patients, dental consumers, and internal and external academic, and professional peers contribute to the program's design, management and quality improvement.</p> <p>2.3 Mechanisms exist for responding within the curriculum to contemporary developments in clinical practice and health professional education.</p>

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
3. Program of study	3. Program design, delivery and resourcing enable students to achieve the required professional competencies.	<p>3.1 A coherent educational philosophy informs the program's design and delivery.</p> <p>3.2 Program learning outcomes address all the required professional competencies.</p> <p>3.3 The quality, quantity and variety of clinical education is sufficient to produce a graduate competent to practice across a range of settings.</p> <p>3.4 Learning and teaching methods are intentionally designed and used to enable students to achieve the required learning outcomes.</p> <p>3.5 Graduates are competent in research literacy for the level and type of the program.</p> <p>3.6 Students work with and learn from and about relevant dental and health professions.</p> <p>3.7 Teaching staff are suitably qualified and experienced to deliver their educational responsibilities.</p> <p>3.8 Learning environments and clinical facilities and equipment are accessible, well-maintained, fit for purpose and support the achievement of learning outcomes.</p> <p>3.9 Cultural competence is articulated clearly, integrated in the program and assessed, to ensure students are equipped to provide care to diverse groups and populations.</p> <p>3.10 The dental program has the resources to sustain the quality of education that is required to facilitate the achievement of the professional competencies.</p>

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
		3.11 Access to clinical facilities is assured, via formal agreements as required, to sustain the quality of clinical training necessary to achieve the relevant professional competencies.

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Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
4. The student experience	4. Students are provided with equitable and timely access to information and support.	<p>4.1 Course information is clear and accessible.</p> <p>4.2 Admission and progression requirements and processes are fair and transparent.</p> <p>4.3 Students have access to effective grievance and appeals processes.</p> <p>4.4 The program provider identifies and provides support to meet the academic learning needs of students.</p> <p>4.5 Students are informed of and have access to personal support services provided by qualified personnel.</p> <p>4.6 Students are represented within the deliberative and decision making processes for the program.</p> <p>4.7 Equity and diversity principles are observed and promoted in the student experience.</p>

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
5. Assessment	5. Assessment is fair, valid and reliable to ensure graduates are competent to practise.	<p>5.1 There is a clear relationship between learning outcomes and assessment strategies.</p> <p>5.2 Learning outcomes are mapped to the required professional competencies and are assessed.</p> <p>5.3 Multiple assessment methods are used including direct observation in the clinical setting.</p> <p>5.4 A range of mechanisms ensure a consistent approach to appropriate assessment and feedback to students.</p> <p>5.5 Suitably qualified and experienced staff, including external experts for final year, assess students.</p>

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
<p>6. Cultural competence</p> <p>(Applicable to programs seeking accreditation in New Zealand)</p>	<p>6. The program ensures students are able to provide culturally competent engagement and appropriate care for Māori and Pacific peoples.</p>	<p>6.1 The program demonstrates its commitment to honouring the Treaty of Waitangi as the foundation document of New Zealand.</p> <p>6.2 The program upholds both the Articles and Principles of the Treaty through its educational philosophy and delivery.</p> <p>6.3 The program, staff and students understand the Māori perspective of health and wellbeing, their beliefs and cultural practices as it pertains to oral health in particular.</p> <p>6.4 Cultural understanding of Māori and Pacific peoples are integrated throughout the program, clearly articulated in required learning outcomes (including competencies that will enable effective and respectful interaction with Māori).</p> <p>6.5 Clinical experiences provide students with experience of providing culturally competent care for Māori and Pacific peoples, and clinical application of cultural competence is appropriately assessed.</p> <p>6.6 There is a partnership in the design and management of the program from Māori and Pacific peoples.</p> <p>6.7 The program provider promotes and supports the recruitment, admission, participation, retention and completion of the program by Māori and Pacific peoples.</p> <p>6.8 The program provider ensures students are provided with access to appropriate resources, and to staff and the community with specialist knowledge, expertise and cultural capabilities, to facilitate learning about Māori health.</p> <p>6.9 The program recognises the important role of Māori Te Reo, Ngā Mokai o Ngā Whetu (Māori Dental Students' Association) and Te Aō</p>

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
		Marama (The New Zealand Maori Dental Association) in achieving cultural competence to oral health practitioners.
		6.10 Staff and students work and learn in a culturally appropriate environment.

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Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
<p>6. Cultural safety</p> <p>(Applicable to programs seeking accreditation in Australia)</p>	<p>6. The program ensures students are able to provide culturally safe care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.</p>	<p>6.1 There is external input into the design and management of the program from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.</p> <p>6.2 The program provider promotes and supports the recruitment, admission, participation, retention and completion of the program by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.</p> <p>6.3 Cultural safety is integrated throughout the program and clearly articulated in required learning outcomes.</p> <p>6.4 Clinical experiences provide students with experience of providing culturally safe care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.</p> <p>6.5 The program provider ensures students are provided with access to appropriate resources, and to staff with specialist knowledge, expertise and cultural capabilities, to facilitate learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.</p> <p>6.6 Staff and students work and learn in a culturally safe environment.</p>

## Appendix 1 – Proposed changes to the ADC/DC(NZ) Accreditation standards for dental practitioner programs

This appendix highlights the changes proposed to the Standards in detail and should be read in conjunction with *Consultation paper - Proposed changes to the ADC/DC(NZ) Accreditation standards for dental practitioner programs* document.

When reading this document please note that text crossed out (e.g. ~~strike through~~) is proposed to be deleted from the Standards. Text that appears as **bold** is proposed to be added to the Standards.

Editorial amendments are proposed to improve consistency, flow and understanding of the Standards. The intent of the Standards is not changed by these amendments. These amendments include:

- removing reference to “*attributes*” and referring to “*professional competencies*”
- using the term “*program provider*” (rather than “*provider*”)
- simplifying “*program of study*” to “*program*” in the criteria
- deleting the word “*educational*” before program as this descriptor is deemed to be unnecessary
- deleting the word “*student*” in reference to “*learning outcomes*” as it is implicit that the “*learning outcomes*” pertain to students or trainees.

This document is provided as an aide to understand the proposed changes

### Preamble – newly added section

The addition of a preamble to the Standards is intended to provide a contextual background to their purpose.

This section is proposed to be added and provides reference to other important documents such as the accreditation guidelines.

## Standard 1 – Public safety

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
1. Public safety	1. Public safety is assured.	<p>1.1 Protection of the public and the care of patients are prominent amongst the guiding principles <del>of for the educational program</del>, clinical training and <del>student</del> learning outcomes.</p> <p>1.2 Student impairment screening and management processes are effective.</p> <p>1.3 Students achieve the relevant competencies before providing patient care as part of the program.</p> <p>1.4 Students are supervised by suitably qualified and registered dental and/or health practitioners during clinical education.</p> <p>1.5 Health services and dental practices providing clinical placements have robust <del>quality</del> <b>health and safety, patient safety and quality and care</b> policies and processes and meet all relevant regulations and standards.</p> <p>1.6 Patients consent to care by students.</p> <p>1.7 <del>Where required</del> <b>In Australia</b>, all students are registered with the relevant regulatory authority/ies.</p> <p><b>1.8 Ensure that students understand the legal, ethical and professional responsibilities of a registered dental practitioner.</b></p> <p><b>1.9</b> <del>1.8</del> The <b>program</b> education provider holds students and staff to high levels of ethical and professional conduct.</p>

### Commentary

- Criterion 1.5 has been revised as the criterion as worded has been broadly interpreted. The revised wording focusses on all policies and processes of clinical

facilities in which students gain experience that assist to maintain a safe environment.

- Criterion 1.7 is relevant to student registration which is a requirement for Australian students. The criterion has been revised to reflect this.
- It is proposed to add a criterion relating to preparedness for working within a regulatory environment upon graduation. Criterion 1.8 is proposed to be added. The additional criterion has necessitated a renumbering of the current criterion 1.8 to 1.9.

## Standard 2 - Academic governance and quality assurance

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
2. Academic governance and quality assurance	2. Academic governance and quality assurance processes are effective.	<p><del>2.1</del> The <del>provider has robust</del> <b>program can demonstrate</b> academic governance arrangements <del>are</del> in place <del>for the program of study that</del> <b>and</b> includes systematic monitoring, review and improvement.</p> <p><del>2.2</del> <del>Quality improvement processes use student and other evaluations, internal and external academic and professional peer review to improve the program.</del></p> <p><b>2.2</b> <b>Students, patients, dental consumers, and internal and external academic, and professional peers contribute to the program’s design, management and quality improvement.</b></p> <p><del>2.3</del> <del>There is relevant external input to the design and management of the program, including from representatives of the dental professions.</del></p> <p><del>2.4</del> <b>2.3</b> Mechanisms exist for responding within the curriculum to contemporary developments in <b>clinical practice and</b> health professional education.</p>

### Commentary

- Following work undertaken to identify potential overlap and duplication between the Higher Education Standards Framework used to assess higher education programs in Australia and the ADC/DC(NZ) Standards, it is proposed to revise Criterion 2.1 to focus on monitoring, review and quality assurance at the **program level**, rather than governance arrangements of the wider educational institution.
- It is proposed to combine criteria 2.2 and 2.3, as there is often an overlap in evidence submitted by providers to address these criteria. A requirement to include input from patients and dental consumers has been included into this criterion.
- Criterion 2.3 has been extended to include contemporary developments in clinical practice. It is important for the curriculum to reflect contemporary developments in both clinical practice and knowledge to ensure readiness to practice.

### Standard 3 – Program of study

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
3. Program of study	3. Program design, delivery and resourcing enable students to achieve the required professional <del>attributes and</del> competencies.	<p>3.1 A coherent educational philosophy informs the program's <del>of study</del> design and delivery.</p> <p>3.2 Program learning outcomes address all the <del>relevant attributes and</del> <b>required professional</b> competencies</p> <p>3.3 The quality, <del>and</del> quantity <b>and variety</b> of clinical education is sufficient to produce a graduate competent to practice across a range of settings.</p> <p>3.4 Learning and teaching methods are intentionally designed and used to enable students to achieve the required learning outcomes.</p> <p>3.5 Graduates are competent in research literacy for the level and type of the program.</p> <p><del>3.6 Principles of inter-professional learning and practice are embedded in the curriculum.</del></p> <p><b>3.6 Students work with and learn from and about relevant dental and health professions.</b></p> <p>3.7 Teaching staff are suitably qualified and experienced to deliver <del>the units that they teach</del> <b>their educational responsibilities.</b></p> <p><del>3.8 Learning environments support the achievement of the required learning outcomes.</del></p> <p><b>3.8 Learning environments and clinical facilities and equipment are accessible, well-maintained, fit for purpose and support the achievement of learning outcomes.</b></p> <p><del>3.9 Facilities and equipment are accessible, well-maintained, fit for purpose and</del></p>

		<p>support the achievement of learning outcomes.</p> <p><b>3.9</b> <del>3.10</del> Cultural competence is <b>articulated clearly</b>, integrated <del>within</del> <b>in</b> the program and <b>assessed</b>, clearly articulated as required disciplinary learning outcomes: this includes Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori cultures to ensure <b>students are equipped to provide care to diverse groups and populations.</b></p> <p><b>3.10</b> <del>3.11</del> The dental program has the resources to sustain the quality of education that is required to facilitate the achievement of the necessary attributes and competencies.</p> <p><b>3.11</b> <b>Access to clinical facilities is assured, via formal agreements as required, to sustain the quality of clinical training necessary to achieve the relevant professional competencies.</b></p>
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## Commentary

- It is suggested that the words '**and variety**' is incorporated within criterion 3.3 to produce a graduate competent to practice across their scope of practice within a range of settings. Ensuring that students are provided with the range of cases required to develop competency is a focus for assessors.
- Criterion 3.6 has been revised to ensure graduates are prepared to work with other members of the dental team as well as with other health practitioners providing care.
- The proposed revision of criterion 3.7 is to acknowledge different program structures accredited by the ADC/DC(NZ). The proposed wording aims to capture the differing elements of didactic, clinical, supervision and research incorporated within accredited programs, whilst reflecting that programs offered by different provider types use different terminology.
- There is often an overlap in evidence submitted for criteria 3.8 and 3.9 and a lack of clarity as to how they differ. It is proposed to combine these two criteria.
- Criterion 3.10 [now 3.9] has been reworded in light of the proposed specific Standards for cultural safety / cultural competence relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia and Māori in New Zealand. The criterion addresses other diverse groups and populations which as highlighted in the consultation document are common in Australia and New Zealand.

- Criterion 3.11 is proposed to provide reassurance as to the ongoing availability of clinical opportunities that students require to demonstrate they have achieved the required professional competencies.

## Standard 4 – The student experience

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
4. The student experience	4. Students are provided with equitable and timely access to information and support.	<p>4.1 Course information is clear and accessible.</p> <p>4.2 Admission and progression requirements and processes are fair and transparent.</p> <p>4.3 Students have access to effective grievance and appeals processes.</p> <p>4.4 The <b>program</b> provider identifies and provides support to meet the academic learning needs of students.</p> <p>4.5 Students are informed of and have access to personal support services provided by qualified personnel.</p> <p>4.6 Students are represented within the deliberative and decision making processes for the program.</p> <p>4.7 Equity and diversity principles are observed and promoted in the student experience.</p>

### Commentary

- Criterion 4.4 amended for consistency with other criteria.

## Standard 5 - Assessment

Domain	Standard statement	Criteria
5. Assessment	5. Assessment is fair, valid and reliable <b>to ensure graduates are competent to practise.</b>	<p>5.1 There is a clear relationship between learning outcomes and assessment strategies.</p> <p><del>5.2 Scope of assessment covers all learning outcomes relevant to attributes and competencies.</del></p> <p><b>5.2 Learning outcomes are mapped to the required professional competencies and are assessed.</b></p> <p>5.3 Multiple assessment <del>tools, modes and sampling</del> <b>methods</b> are used including direct observation in the clinical setting.</p> <p>5.4 <del>Program management and co-ordination, including moderation procedures</del> <b>A range of mechanisms</b> ensure <b>a consistent and approach to</b> appropriate assessment and feedback to students.</p> <p>5.5 Suitably qualified and experienced staff, including external experts for final year, assess students.</p> <p><del>5.6 All learning outcomes are mapped to the required attributes and competencies, and assessed.</del></p>

### Commentary

- The revised standard statement is aimed to improve clarity as to the purpose of why assessment is a focus.
- It is proposed to delete the existing criterion 5.2 and replace it with a reworded version of criterion 5.6. The revised order also provides a better progression from criterion 5.1.
- Changes to criteria 5.3 and 5.4 are designed to apply more broadly.
- Changes to criterion 5.4 capture not only moderation of assessment, but aim to also be inclusive of other practices that are used to ensure assessment is consistently applied and that feedback is appropriate to assist in student learning.

## **New Standard 6 – Cultural competence (New Zealand) and Cultural safety (Australia)**

A new domain is proposed for programs seeking accreditation related to cultural competence (New Zealand) or cultural safety (Australia).

The rationale for these separate domains is included in the consultation document. Please refer to the consultation document for further details.