

A large, stylized graphic of a hand in a light peach color, with fingers pointing towards the top right. The hand is partially obscured by the title text.

# Assessor Training

Stage 1: What you need to know before  
you start assessing a program

# Who should use this?

- This presentation is designed for individuals appointed to the Australian Dental Council's (ADC's) register of assessors
- These slides will assist you in understanding the ADC's accreditation processes
- You are encouraged to read this **before** you start assessing a program for accreditation
- At the end of this you should have a better understanding of why we do what we do and how we do it!

# Outline

- The Regulatory Environment
  - 1.1 Health and dental regulation
  - 1.2 Education provider regulators and frameworks
- The ADC's Accreditation Function
  - 2.1 An overview of ADC accreditation
  - 2.2 Accreditation standards and supporting documents
  - 2.3 Applying the Accreditation Standards
  - 2.4 Gathering evidence: hints and tips

# Regulatory environment

## 1.1 Health & Dental Regulation

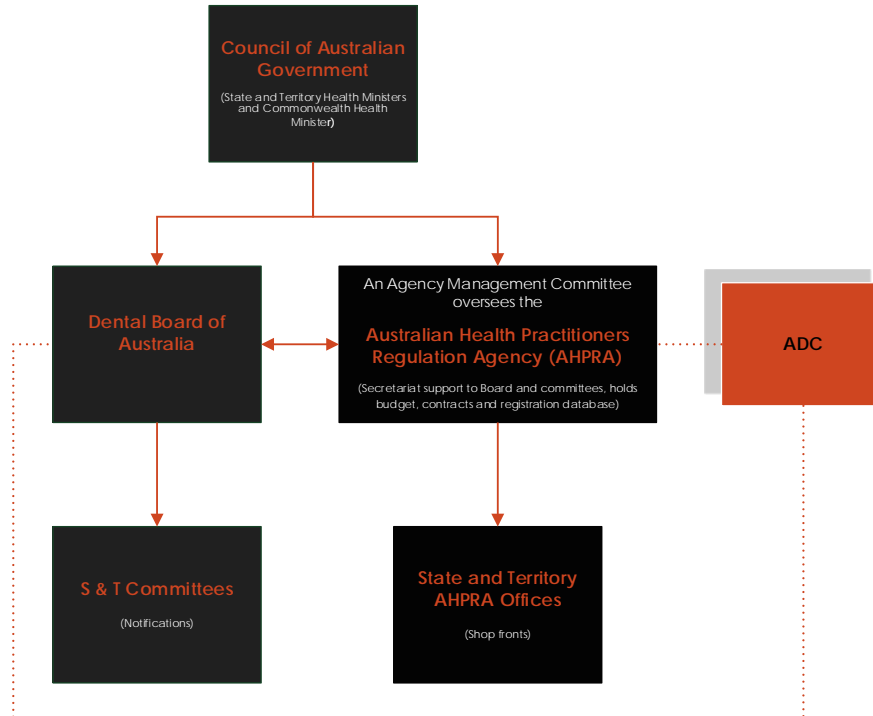


AUSTRALIAN  
DENTAL COUNCIL

# Who does what in dental accreditation?

Australian Dental Council (ADC)	Dental Board of Australia (DBA)	Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)
Develops (and reviews) accreditation standards (for <u>all</u> categories of registration) with wide public consultation	Approves accreditation standards; requests review of accreditation standards	Contracts for required accreditation functions
Assesses new and existing programs of study for accreditation  Monitors accredited programs of study to ensure ongoing compliance with accreditation standards	May approve or refuse to approve an accredited program of study as providing a qualification for the purposes of registration	Publishes list of approved programs for registration
Assesses overseas trained practitioners for suitability to apply for registration	Recognises ADC assessed practitioners passing the ADC requirements that lead to registration	Processes registration applications

# Structure of national registration & accreditation scheme



ADC is assigned its accreditation function by AHPRA and the DBA

# Regulatory environment

## 1.2 Education Provider regulators and frameworks



# Regulators of Education Providers

- Providers of education programs the ADC accredits are regulated by either TEQSA or ASQA
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA):
  - regulates Higher Education (HE) program providers, including universities, against the TEQSA Act and the Higher Education Standards
  - TEQSA acts in the interests of students (not the profession)
  - More info visit: <http://www.teqsa.gov.au/about>



# Regulators of Education Providers

- Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA):
  - is the national regulator for the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector
  - ASQA uses VET Quality Framework (including Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)) and Standards for VET Accredited Courses to regulate courses and training providers
  - More info visit: <http://www.asqa.gov.au/about/about-asqa.html>

# External frameworks

- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF):
  - Initially developed by the Australian Qualifications Framework Council (AQFC), but now managed by Australian Government Department of Education and Training
  - AQF qualifications - Level 1 (Certificate 1) to Level 10 (PhD) – includes VET & Higher Education qualifications
  - Non-compliance can lead to regulatory action by TEQSA or ASQA

# External frameworks

- Health Industry Training Packages
  - Skills IQ is the Skilled Services Organisation responsible for supporting the Dental Industry Reference Committee to develop and review VET qualifications and competency standards for occupations including dental prosthetists
  - Program providers delivering ADC-accredited Advanced Diplomas in Dental Prosthetics must adhere to the Committee's training package
  - The VET Advanced Diploma of Oral Health (Dental Hygiene) program accredited by the ADC is part of a state-based training package

# The ADC's Accreditation Function

## 2.1 An Overview of ADC Accreditation

# Joint ADC/DC(NZ) Accreditation Committee

## Functions

- Evaluates and monitors Australian and New Zealand education programs against the '*Accreditation Standards for Dental Practitioner Programs*' (the Accreditation Standards)
- Reviews and advises on Accreditation Standards, guidelines & processes
- Makes decisions on the accreditation of programs within the scope of its delegation
- Makes recommendations to ADC Board and/or DC(NZ) on policy matters

# Joint ADC/DC(NZ) Accreditation Committee

- The membership of the Accreditation Committee consists of:
  - 2-3 dental practitioners
  - 2-3 dental academics
  - A person from the public dental sector
  - A final year dental student
  - 2 community representatives
- **Current Chair:** Professor Mike Morgan
- **Meets:** 3-4 times per year face-to-face, teleconference and out-of-session meetings as needed

# Role of the Site Evaluation Team (SET)

Reviews documentation submitted by the education provider covering aspects of the program relevant to the Accreditation Standards

- Conducts a site visit to verify information provided and clarify any matters by:
  - interviewing provider staff, students and other relevant stakeholders,
  - assesses provider facilities and teaching hospitals/clinics

# Role of the Site Evaluation Team (SET)

- Prepares, for consideration by the Accreditation Committee:
  - a detailed report evaluating the program against the Accreditation Standards
  - advice to foster quality improvement, through Recommendations and acknowledgement of good practice
  - an overall recommendation concerning accreditation of the program to:
    - (re)accredit without conditions up to the maximum accreditation period for the program being considered
    - (re)accredit with condition(s) up to the maximum accreditation period for the program being considered
    - refuse to accredit or to revoke accreditation



# Composition of the SET

- SETs are drawn from ADC Register of Assessors
- 3-5 members, ensuring the following coverage:
  - Team Chair - an experienced assessor
  - experienced clinician in relevant discipline
  - senior academic with strong understanding of modern educational principles and practice
  - ADC secretariat to provide advice regarding the application of standards and the accreditation process

# Accreditation Process



# The ADC's Accreditation Function

## 2.2 Accreditation Standards and Supporting Documents

# Accreditation Standards

- The 'Accreditation Standards for Dental Practitioner Programs' specify the standards against which education and training programs are assessed for accreditation purposes
- These new standards became effective on 1 January 2016 and there is one set of accreditation standards for the profession
- Prior to this there were different sets of standards for the various parts of the dental profession

# The Standards

- One set of Standards for the professions
- Five Domains – with a descriptive Standard Statement

Domain	Standard Statement
1. Public safety	Public Safety is assured
2. Academic Governance & Quality Assurance	Academic governance and quality assurance processes are effective
3. Program of study	Program design, delivery and resourcing enable students to achieve the required professional attributes and competencies
4. The student experience	Students are provided with equitable and timely access to information and support
5. Assessment	Assessment is fair, valid and reliable

# The Standards

- Each Standard Statement supported by a set of 'Criteria'
- Criteria are indicators that set out what is expected of an ADC/DC(NZ) accredited program in order to meet each Standard Statement
- They are not sub-standards that will be individually assessed
- When assessing a program the ADC/DC(NZ) will have regard for whether each of the Criteria is met, but will take an on-balance view of whether the evidence presented by a provider clearly demonstrates that a particular Standard is met

# Accreditation Standards

- Are **minimum (i.e. threshold) standards** and set out the minimum required to deliver dental education and training to produce an **entry level graduate**
- Programs are **not** assessed against best practice standards under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (the National Law)
- Providers only have to meet the threshold for a Standard to be met

# Professional Competencies

- As there is now one set of accreditation standards these statements are a key reference point for education providers to use in developing their programs
- Professional Competencies are available for a:
  - *Newly Qualified Dentist*
  - *Newly Qualified Dental Hygienist*
  - *Newly Qualified Dental Therapist*
  - *Newly Qualified Oral Health Therapist*
  - *Newly Qualified Dental Prosthetist*



# Professional Competencies

- Programs should be able to demonstrate that graduates have acquired the relevant professional competencies.
- The DBA in conjunction with the DC(NZ) have developed entry-level competencies for dental specialists and these are available from the DBA's website – [Specialist competencies](#).

# The ADC's Accreditation Function

## 2.3 Applying the Accreditation Standards



# Assessment of programs

- Programs are assessed using a fitness for purpose approach, which means:
  - the provider undertakes a self-assessment against the Standards (this is the 'submission')
  - the provider is free to explain and justify how its program meets the Standards and provides its graduates with the competencies required for practice

# Assessment of programs

- The SET must review the evidence provided and determine whether each Standard is:
  - met
  - substantially met or
  - not met
- The ADC has developed a range of tools to assist the SET in reviewing the evidence.

# ADC Assessor Tools

- **Prompts for assessing evidence against the standards** - These are points to consider when reviewing the provider's self assessment against the Standards
- **SET Worksheet: Assessing the evidence against the Accreditation Standards** - This Word document enables SETs to record a preliminary view on the extent to which the program meets the Accreditation Standards.

# ADC Assessor Tools

- **Interview Session Worksheets** - These worksheets help structure the interviews of stakeholders and contain a bank of questions SETs can use. Questions developed by the SET can be added to these worksheets.
- **Accreditation Definitions** - The ADC has approved a set of definitions to be applied by SET's and the ADC in the assessment of programs
- Please refer to the **Assessors Manual** for further details on using these tools

# Accreditation definitions - meeting the Standards

- **Standard is met:** A Standard is met when the program meets the minimum (i.e. threshold) requirements of the Standard.
- **Standard is substantially met:** A Standard may be found to be substantially met if the plans and/or arrangements in place for the provision of the program do not meet in full the requirements of a standard at the time of accreditation.

# Accreditation definitions - meeting the standards

- A finding of substantially met must satisfy the following two criteria:
  1. The plans and/or arrangements in place that are applicable to the standard must not adversely affect student welfare, or the capacity of the education provider to deliver the program or the learning outcomes and clinical competencies that would be expected of graduates of the program.
  2. There must be a reasonable expectation that the education provider and the program will be able to meet the standard in full within a timeframe that does not pose an unacceptable risk in terms of the matters outlined above criterion 1.



# Accreditation definitions - failing to meet the standards

- **Standard is not met:** A Standard is not met when the program does not meet the minimum requirements of the Standard **and** the arrangements planned or currently in place for the provision of the program:
  1. impair or undermine the acquisition of clinical competencies required for competent practice; and/or
  2. call into question the education provider's capacity to resource or administer the program; and/or
  3. will have, or are having, significant adverse effects on student welfare.



# Overall recommendation to the Accreditation Committee

- Once the evidence is evaluated, the SET must make an overall recommendation concerning accreditation of the program to the Accreditation Committee.
- The SET can recommend to the Accreditation Committee to accredit, with or without conditions, up to the maximum period applicable for the program as outlined in the table below.
- Alternatively the SET can recommend that the Accreditation Committee refuse or revoke accreditation if standards are not met or substantially met.



# Overall recommendation to the Accreditation Committee

- The Accreditation Committee is not required to accept the recommendations of the SET and will have regard for ensuring fairness and parity with previous decisions in reaching a final decision

Type of program	Maximum accreditation period (years)
Dentist	7
Dental Specialist	5
Dental Hygienist, Dental Therapist, Oral Health Therapist	5
Dental Prosthetist	5

# Accreditation Conditions

- In the event that a SET finds that a Standard or Standards are substantially met, the SET will need to consider if Conditions should be recommended for the program.
- s48 of the National Law states that if a program **substantially meets** the Standards, Conditions may be imposed where they 'will ensure the program meets the Standards within a reasonable time'

# Accreditation Conditions

- **ADC definition of a Condition:**
  - One or more Conditions may be imposed on a program if a Standard is substantially met and the imposition of Conditions will ensure full compliance with the standard within a reasonable timeframe.
  - For further detail on imposing conditions, refer to the Risk Matrix section of the Assessors Manual.

# Quality improvement - recommendations and commendations

- **Recommendation:** refers to an action or a course of actions that should be considered by the provider to improve the delivery and/or outcomes of the program.
- The aim of a Recommendation is to encourage education providers to consider specific quality improvements to programs.

# Quality improvement - recommendations and commendations

- Recommendations may also highlight areas of potential future risk to programs that can be addressed through the action(s) recommended. Education providers may seek to achieve the proposed improvements to program delivery or outcomes through a course of action that differs from what is recommended.
- Inaction or lack of action regarding a Recommendation could pose risks to a program's future compliance with the Standards, particularly where a Recommendation highlights a potential risk to a program.

# Quality improvement - recommendations and commendations

- **Commendation:** refers to particularly significant achievement by the program provider with regard to the program. The aim of a commendation is to acknowledge and encourage best practice.



# The ADC's Accreditation Function

## 2.4 Gathering evidence: hints and tips

# The accreditation submission - what to expect

- The first key document you will receive will be the education provider's accreditation submission
- The provider is supplied with an 'application template' which they should use to structure their submission to demonstrate how their program meets the accreditation standards

# The accreditation submission - what to expect

- Providers should include a narrative of how the program meets each of the five accreditation standards together with supporting evidence to complement that narrative
- A list of 13 'core evidence' requirements are specified for all programs. Aside from this, providers are at liberty to include whatever further evidence they wish

# The accreditation submission - next steps

- Your first step should be to read the submission and form an initial view of where you are comfortable that the evidence shows the standards are met and where you would like to know more
- The SET teleconference provides an opportunity for the SET to agree what further information they would like from the provider and what further questions they would like to ask
- The teleconference also provides an opportunity to agree the site visit agenda
- Further information can be requested ahead of the site visit or to be made available on the day of the visit



# Evidence gathering techniques

- Three key techniques for evidence gathering:
  - Sampling
  - Tracking, trailing or drilling down.
  - Triangulation

# Sampling and tracking/trailing

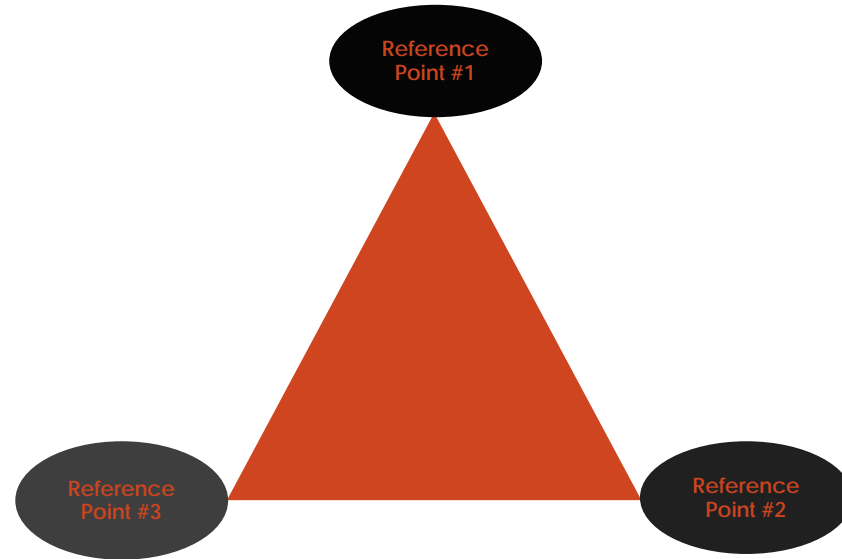
- From the Team's analysis of the Provider's self-review & supporting documents, the Team can choose to sample a particular area that requires further, detailed investigation
- Sampling could include:
  - aspects of the program that highlight problems affecting its successful delivery
  - changes to the program's curriculum
  - planned improvements to the program

# Sampling and tracking/trailing

- The SET must also determine the documentary or oral evidence it needs to sample, for example minutes of committees involved in program approval
- The SET may track/trail targeted issues by use of document/paper trails, and/or through interviews with staff, students

# Triangulation

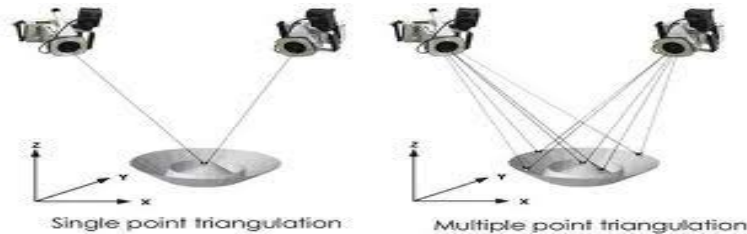
- Three similar answers from three different groups gives a high degree of confidence in the claims made by the provider





# Triangulation

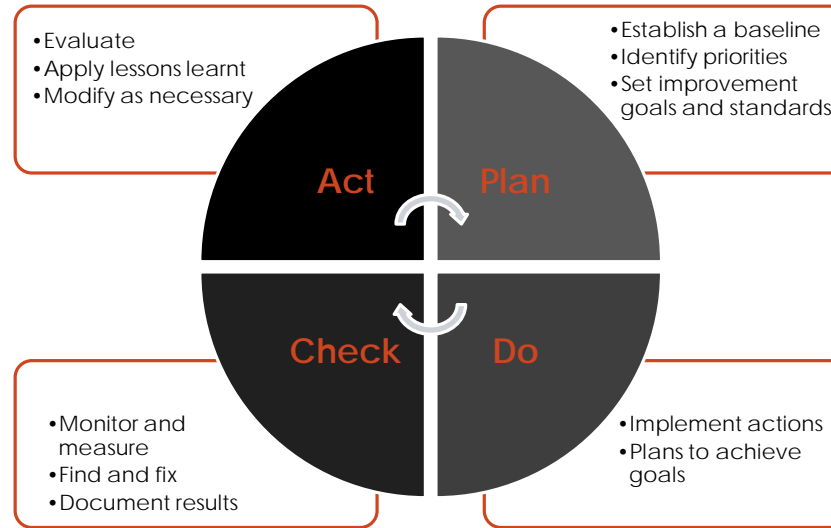
- **Three different versions** - e.g. policy; minutes of meetings; oral accounts - suggests a **low degree of confidence** in the provider's claims, e.g. a policy not being deployed properly.



- **Example:** the university claims it is being successful in improving the quality of its teaching in clinical practice, but the evidence available suggest that it is not, so you triangulate responses from different groups of interviewees.

# Continuous improvement cycle

- Look for evidence of the education provider's commitment to continuous improvement, as exemplified below



# Thank you

Please consult the **Assessor Manual** for more detailed explanations regarding definitions, the risk framework, accreditation processes and logistics.

Bring your questions to the Stage 2 training and site visit preparation session - or send them to [accreditation@adc.org.au](mailto:accreditation@adc.org.au)



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