



Australian  
Dental  
Council

**AUSTRALIAN DENTAL COUNCIL  
REPORT OF AN MONITORING VISIT TO  
UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE  
BACHELOR OF ORAL HEALTH / GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN DENTAL  
THERAPY**

**October 2014**

# SUMMARY REPORT

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<b>Program provider</b>	University of Newcastle
<b>Program/qualification name</b>	Bachelor of Oral Health / Graduate Diploma in Dental Therapy
<b>Program/qualification abbreviation</b>	BOH / GradDipDT
<b>Program/qualification code</b>	
<b>Head office address, including State</b>	Central Coast (Ourimbah), Chittaway Road, Ourimbah NSW
<b>Campus</b>	Central Coast Campus at Ourimbah
<b>Program length</b>	3 years (BOH) / 1 year (GradDipDT)
<b>Registration division</b>	Dental Hygienist , Dental Therapist
<b>Registration specialty</b>	NA
<b>Qualification type</b>	HE
<b>Australian Qualifications Framework Level</b>	Level 7 (BOH) / Level 8 (GradDipDT)
<b>Accreditation standards version</b>	June 2010, Version 1.0
<b>Date of site evaluation</b>	28 October 2014
<b>Date of ADC decision</b>	11 December 2014
<b>Type of accreditation</b>	Monitoring Visit
<b>Accreditation start date</b>	1 January 2013
<b>Accreditation end date</b>	31 December 2017 (BOH) / 31 December 2014 (GradDipDT)

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## Background

The Bachelor of Oral Health (BOH) is a three year program which commenced in 2005, is accredited by the ADC until 31 December 2017 and leads to registration as a Dental Hygienist. The Graduate Diploma in Dental Therapy (GradDipDT) is a one year program which commenced in 2010, is also accredited until 31 December 2017 and leads to registration as a Dental Therapist or in the case of BOH graduates as an oral health therapist.

Following a re-accreditation process for both programs in 2012, at its meeting on 19 October 2012 the ADC Accreditation Committee placed the following condition on both programs:

- Submission of a report to the ADC in December 2012 providing evidence of satisfactory progress of the development of facilities that enable greater access by students to experiential practice, including confirmation that these will be available for use at the start of Semester 2, 2013.

The ADC Accreditation Committee also determined that a further accreditation review would occur in July/August 2014 as part of monitoring the programs' accreditation.

Following a submission in response to the condition the ADC informed the University of Newcastle that it had met the condition of accreditation for both programs and accreditation would continue until 31 December 2017 without further conditions. The University was also advised that the monitoring site visit scheduled for 2014 would review student opportunities for practise, including the operation of the new simulation laboratory.

In February 2013 the University advised the ADC that it was beginning work on a major revision of its BOH program in response to both internal and external stakeholder feedback which was aimed at incorporating the competencies attained in the GradDipDT program within the existing BOH program. The new Bachelor of Oral Health Therapy (BOHT) program is currently in the process of being reviewed for accreditation and at the time of writing it is intended that students currently enrolled in the BOH and GradDipDT programs will complete these programs as currently taught, with no further intake for either program from 2015 onwards.

## Overview of the Evaluation

The ADC last visited the University of Newcastle in June 2012 to assess the BOH and GradDipDT for reaccreditation. During this visit the SET reviewed the facilities, met with key staff and also observed students in clinic with patients and determined that the facilities were adequate. However, with plans for a new simulation laboratory and some concerns expressed by the SET at the time about

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how high student numbers could be accommodated in the existing laboratory facilities it was determined to undertake a monitoring visit to both programs in 2014 to view the new simulation laboratory facilities.

As the courses are being taught out the opportunity was also taken during the monitoring visit to confirm plans for teach out of the programs to ensure that the remaining students are not disadvantaged in any way.

During the visit the SET toured the simulation laboratory facilities and met with:

- The Program Convenor
- Clinical laboratory staff
- BOH and GradDipDT students
- Lecturing and tutoring staff from the BOH and GradDipDT

As this was a monitoring visit compliance with the full set of accreditation standards was not reviewed. This report addresses only the following standards:

- 2 – Responses to recommendations and suggestions from the last accreditation process
- 5 – Physical facilities and resources
- 6 – Staff and staff development
- 8 – The curriculum
- 9 – Articulation pathways
- 10 – Clinic Administration
- 11 – Preparation for practice
- 13 – Student privileges, support and representation
- 14 – Interface with hospital/government services
- 20 – Strategies and timetables for improvement

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## Key Findings

While the final cohort of GradDipDT students should complete their studies in 2014 the SET remains concerned about the clinical experience gained by BOH students prior to graduation – both in terms of the clinical hours as an operator, the number of patients treated and the range of procedures provided. Given the projected intake to the new BOHT program the concerns of the SET are amplified and the capacity within the BOH program to increase student clinical hours is currently unclear. The SET therefore proposes that a report be provided in mid-2015 to update the ADC on this matter.

The School is to be commended for the articulation pathways that it has put in place that will allow current BOH students to transfer to the new BOHT program. This has the potential to ease the pressure on clinical facilities available to students. Students also commented positively on the commitment of BOH and GradDipDT staff and the support provided to all students.

While there will be two cohorts of students remaining in the BOH from the start of 2015 the School wishes to maintain the program's accredited status until the end of 2017 to accommodate deferring students and to allow for the remediation of any failing students.

## ADC Accreditation Decision

The ADC has determined that:

1. The final cohort of the University of Newcastle's Graduate Diploma in Dental Therapy students will complete their studies and graduate in December 2014 and that the program will no longer require accreditation from the start of 2015.
2. The University of Newcastle's Bachelor of Oral Health (BOH) program remains accredited until **31 December 2017**, subject to the following condition:

That by **30 June 2015** a satisfactory report, demonstrating that Accreditation Standards 2, 6, 11 and 20 are met in full, is provided to the ADC detailing:

- a) the clinical experience that will be provided to year 2 and year 3 BOH students, including the minimum number of hours as an operator that each student will undertake prior to graduation
- b) evidence of the appointment of a 0.5fte staff member to manage the simulation laboratory, as required under Recommendation 6.1 in the 2012 re-accreditation report.