



**Australian Dental Council report of an evaluation of
La Trobe University's Bachelor of Health Sciences in
Dentistry / Master of Dentistry and Bachelor of Dental
Science (Honours) programs**

May 2019

Summary report

Program provider	La Trobe University
Program/qualification name/abbreviation /qualification code/AQF level	Bachelor of Health Sciences in Dentistry/Master of Dentistry, BHSc(Dent)/MDent, HZHSD, Level 7 / Level 9 Bachelor of Dental Science (Honours), BDS(Hons), Level 8
Head office address, including State	La Trobe University, Bundoora, VIC 3086, AUSTRALIA
Campus	La Trobe Rural Health School, Bendigo
Program length	5 Years
Registration division	Dentist
Registration specialty	NA
Qualification type	HE
Accreditation standards version	Accreditation Standards for Dental Practitioner Programs (Approved Dec 2014)
Date of site evaluation	14 - 15 May 2019
Date of ADC decision	9 August 2019
Type of accreditation	Reaccreditation, Initial Accreditation
Accreditation start date	1 January 2020
Accreditation end date	31 December 2026

Background

La Trobe University's Bachelor of Health Sciences in Dentistry/Master of Dentistry program was visited by the Australian Dental Council (ADC) in 2012 at which time the program was accredited until 31 December 2019 without conditions.

La Trobe University advised the ADC in October 2018 of planned changes to the currently accredited program, which the ADC determined constituted the introduction of a new program.

In consultation with the provider, the ADC agreed that the review of the current Bachelor of Health Sciences in Dentistry/Master of Dentistry program for reaccreditation and the Bachelor of Dental Science (Honours) (BDS(Hons)) program for initial accreditation be undertaken simultaneously.

La Trobe University plans to teach out the current program, with the current first year cohort anticipated to graduate in 2023. The first intake of students for the Bachelor of Dental Science (Honours) program is scheduled for 2020.

Overview of evaluation

An ADC Site Evaluation Team (SET) conducted a site visit on 14 and 15 May 2019 to La Trobe University's Bendigo Campus. The SET reviewed the Department of Dentistry and Oral Health's self-review against the Standards for each program, attached appendices and additional information requested following the SET's teleconference of 1 April 2019.

During the visit, the SET interviewed a range of individuals, including:

- Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Science, Health and Engineering
- Head of Department Dentistry and Oral Health
- Dentistry Course Coordinator
- Clinical and year level coordinators
- Academic staff
- Clinical educators
- La Trobe Regional Clinic Coordinator
- Senior Dentist, Bendigo Health
- La Trobe University staff responsible for developing and maintaining the digital portfolio (Pebble Pad)
- Representatives of the Course Advisory Committee (CAC)

- Currents students from all years of the program
- Recent graduates
- School Manager La Trobe Rural Health School
- Administrative and support staff
- A Representative of the Australian Dental Association (ADA) Victorian Branch
- Head of Oral Health and Coordinator Oral Health, Barwon Health
- Representatives of Dental Health Services Victoria (DHSV)

Key findings

The existing program is providing students with the quality and quantity of experiences required to demonstrate they are ready to practise safely by the point of graduation. The Department identified opportunities to further strengthen the existing program as the new BDS(Hons) program was developed. Once implemented, these changes will further improve graduates readiness to practise as the existing program is taught out.

The newly created program has provided an opportunity to better horizontally and vertically align the curriculum, by scaffolding the didactic elements of the program and ensuring relevance to the pre-clinical and clinical components as the program is implemented year on year.

It is anticipated that the plans for the new program will further strengthen students understanding of the didactic elements of the program, which are essential to inform evidence based practise. This assessment is based on the various threads running through the new BDS(Hons) course which enables an interconnectedness not as well developed in the current curriculum.

The opportunity to better align the teaching of areas such as research, cultural safety and health promotion across the years is clear in the new curriculum design and is to be commended.

The Department is aware of the challenges it faces in maintaining a staffing profile with the breadth of experience needed across disciplines given its rural location. Opportunities for additional specialist input in the fields of periodontics and oral surgery to further enhance teaching and the development of students skills in these areas would be of benefit to the programs.

ADC accreditation decision

The ADC has determined La Trobe University's Bachelor of Health Sciences in Dentistry/Master of Dentistry is reaccredited until **31 December 2026**.

The ADC has determined La Trobe University's Bachelor of Dental Science (Honours) program is accredited from **1 January 2020** until **31 December 2026**.