

**Australian Dental Council report of an evaluation of
The University of Adelaide Doctor of Clinical Dentistry
programs in:**

- **Endodontics**
- **Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology**
- **Orthodontics**
- **Paediatric Dentistry**
- **Prosthodontics**

February 2021

Updated May 2021

Summary report

Program provider	The University of Adelaide
Program/qualification names, Program/qualification abbreviation, Program/qualification code	<p>Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Endodontics, DCLinDent, DENT 7212A-DENT 7214B</p> <p>Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, DCLinDent, DENT 7222A-DENT 7224B</p> <p>Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Orthodontics, DCLinDent, DENT 7232A-DENT 7234B</p> <p>Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Paediatric Dentistry, DCLinDent, DENT 7242A-DENT 7244B</p> <p>Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Prosthodontics, DCLinDent, DENT 7262A-DENT 7264B</p>
Head office address, including State	The University of Adelaide SA 5005
Campus	North Terrace Campus
Program length	3 years
Registration division	Specialist Dentist
Registration speciality	Endodontics, Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, Orthodontics, Paediatric Dentistry, Prosthodontics
Qualification type	HE
Australian Qualifications Framework level	9
Accreditation standards version	Accreditation Standards for Dental Practitioner Programs (Approved Dec 2014)
Date of site evaluation	Paper-based review, followed by site visit on 2-3 February 2021
Date of ADC decision	22 March 2021
Type of accreditation	Re-accreditation

Accreditation start date	1 January 2021 (for Endodontics, Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, Orthodontics and Prosthodontics)
Accreditation end date	31 December 2025 (for Endodontics, Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, Orthodontics and Prosthodontics)

Background

The University of Adelaide's Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (DClinDent) programs were last reviewed for the purposes of accreditation by the Australian Dental Council (ADC) in 2015. The programs were reviewed against the accreditation standards in effect at the time. There was a general concern by the SET that staffing across all DClinDent programs was light and several recommendations were made to strengthen the staffing profile during the next period of accreditation.

Depending on the discipline undertaken, the DClinDent programs enable graduates to apply to the Dental Board of Australia (DBA) to register as specialist dentists in:

- Endodontics
- Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology
- Orthodontics
- Paediatric Dentistry
- Prosthodontics

Overview of evaluation

A two-day site visit had been scheduled to take place on 19-20 May 2020. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and in line with the advice of the Australian Government Department of Health and the World Health Organisation (WHO) the ADC made the decision on 16 March 2020 to postpone the visit until later in the year. The ADC also developed a protocol to monitor the impacts on accredited programs of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure all programs continued to meet the Standards throughout the pandemic. In view of the ongoing impact of the pandemic, a further decision was made on 1 May 2020 to revise the re-accreditation process, with a paper-based review to be undertaken in the first instance followed by a site visit on 2-3 February 2021.

A Site Evaluation Team (SET) conducted a preliminary paper-based review based on The University of Adelaide's submission and associated appendices. A series of teleconferences for assessors across different specialisations were held on 29 and 30 June 2020 to discuss the submission. Additional information was requested from the Adelaide Dental School following these teleconferences and this was discussed at several meetings held between 1 to 8 October 2020.

Information submitted by the provider for the Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology and Paediatric Dentistry programs did not address all the SET's queries and interviews were conducted with key program representatives on 2 November 2020, including:

- Dean and Head of Adelaide Dental School

- Discipline Lead for Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology
- Discipline Lead for Paediatric Dentistry, and
- Director of Paediatric Dentistry, Adelaide Women's and Children's Hospital (AWCH)

A draft of the report based on the paper-based review and interviews as outlined above was forwarded to the School on 31 January 2021. The ADC advised that the report would be revised following the site visit to take into consideration any additional information gathered by the SET.

The SET conducted a site visit on 2 and 3 February 2021 to the Adelaide Dental School. During both days of the visit the SET inspected clinical and learning and teaching facilities at the Adelaide Dental Hospital (ADH), a facility operated by the South Australian Dental Service (SADS), as well as the facilities available at the AWCH.

The site visit on 2 February 2021 included specialists reviewing the DCLinDent programs in Orthodontics, Paediatric Dentistry and Prosthodontics, while on 3 February 2021 specialists reviewed the DCLinDent programs in Endodontics and Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology.

During the site visit the SET interviewed a range of stakeholders including:

- Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences
- Deputy Dean, Learning and Teaching for the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences
- Dean and Head of Adelaide Dental School
- Chairs of the Faculty Research Committee and School Program Board
- Program convenors
- Discipline Leads for each specialist program
- Clinical supervisors and teaching staff for each specialist program, excluding Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology
- Professional staff supporting the DCLinDent programs
- Representatives from the clinical partners for the program (SADS and AWCH)
- Students and recent graduates from each specialisation.

The findings in this report are based on the SET's assessment of the material outlined above, annual reports submitted for the programs, interview evidence and a review of the facilities at the time of the site visit.

In view of the complexity of this paper-based review, it was not possible to complete the process prior to expiry of the accreditation period on 31 December 2020. At the ADC Accreditation Committee meeting on 10 December 2020, it was agreed to extend the accreditation period for the five DCLinDent programs until **31 March 2021** to enable the process to be completed.

Key findings

The University of Adelaide's submission for all five Doctor of Clinical Dentistry specialisations lacked sufficient detail and supporting evidence, making it difficult for the SET to validate claims made within the submission documentation. This is an issue across the five specialisations reviewed but was particularly acute for the Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology and Paediatric Dentistry programs. The SET attempted to clarify and seek additional information during interviews with representatives from these two specialisations. The site visit provided appropriate clarification for the Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology specialisation. However, for the DClinDent in Paediatric Dentistry program the SET remains concerned that insufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the program meets the Accreditation Standards.

Across four specialisations, there is concern that patient safety is not prominent in the program learning outcomes and as a result it is difficult to determine how the assessment practices ensure patient safety in the program delivery and outcomes. There are concerns about the level of pre-clinical training and the level of input by the Adelaide Dental School into ensuring appropriate patient safety. This currently appears to be the sole responsibility of SADS.

The staffing profile across all disciplines was cause for concern, but particularly for the Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology and Paediatric Dentistry programs. The information provided raises serious concerns that there is sufficient staffing to deliver the programs and ensure these remain viable over the longer term.

The Course guides provided to the SET lacked detail of program structure, progression, and assessment requirements.

Evidence demonstrating robust academic governance structures in place was lacking, particularly with regards to program review incorporating both student and external input. Without evidence that demonstrates discipline specific input for each specialisation, it is difficult to determine how the provider ensures that contemporary developments in health professional education are incorporated across programs.

The SET was advised of the processes in place to manage student behaviour if it fails to meet the expectations of ethical and professional conduct. However, the submission did not address how a student can raise a grievance related to a staff member's behaviour or conduct and how the provider handles complaints of this nature to ensure staff also meet the ethical and professional standards expected.

For the Endodontics, Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, Orthodontics and Prosthodontics programs, there is a lack of clarity about how the program learning outcomes provide graduates with the necessary professional competencies for speciality practice in these areas and how this is assessed. The SET also has concerns about the delivery and structure of the programs of study including interdisciplinary interactions with other dental and health professionals and the research program over the three years of the DClinDent program. Several conditions have been imposed on these programs for the provider to address these areas of concern.

The clinical or pathological exposure for the Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology program appears to be fully reliant on the relationship forged by the Head of School with Clinpath and there appears to be no other options in place should access to Clinpath cease to be possible. No formal agreement appears to be in place, which is a risk to continuity of access to the facilities students require to achieve the required learning outcomes and expected competencies. A condition has been imposed on the program to address this. The SET also has concerns about the

involvement of a range of examiners, both internal and external to the program and the moderation procedures in place to ensure consistent and appropriate assessment of the program. Based on the evidence presented, only one staff member is currently responsible for supervising and assessing students throughout the program. Further support for this program is required if it is to remain viable into the future.

The SET has grave concerns about the ability of the DClinDent in Paediatric Dentistry program to meet the Accreditation Standards to such an extent that these matters must be addressed immediately and before students continue in the program. The issues identified are of such a nature that the deficiencies raise serious concerns as to the provider's oversight of the program and for students to achieve the required learning outcomes to operate as safe specialists in the discipline upon graduation.

The SET expresses serious concern for the Paediatric Dentistry program over the supervision of students in clinical settings and the clarity of roles and responsibilities of supervisors in external settings including the AWCH and during rotations to SADS clinics. The staffing profile for the program does not appear sustainable for longer term delivery of the program. There is also a lack of evidence of structure and diversity in the didactic component of the program, with the SET unable to confirm whether students are provided with the opportunities necessary to develop the level of knowledge required to underpin clinical decision making expected of a specialist paediatric dentist. Questions were also raised as to whether the range of experiences are appropriate to enable students to develop the competencies expected of a specialist in paediatric dentistry. Students see a high volume of patients, but the complexity of cases required to develop surgical skills needed for the discipline, including in undertaking complex interdisciplinary case management, appears insufficient. The SET heard evidence that no direction has been given to those supervising students in relation to assessment and the mechanisms in place for moderation of assessment. The SET requested evidence of marking rubrics or other instruction provided to clinical supervisors, however this was not provided and based on interview evidence does not appear to be in place. The SET was unable to determine the mechanisms by which feedback is provided to students in the paediatric dentistry program to enable progression through the program. Given the lack of formalised formative assessment, the SET was unable to establish how students are assessed as having achieved a level of clinical proficiency expected of a specialist paediatric dentist, which raises serious concern. Students appear to be isolated from the Adelaide Dental School and are lacking in support and opportunities for inter-disciplinary dental interaction.

The SET also considered additional information provided by the Adelaide Dental School in response to the draft report forwarded to the School for comment following the site visit (here after referred to as the draft report). Whilst the provider describes the program as a hospital-based training program, the SET notes that the didactic component and overall oversight of the program is the responsibility of the Adelaide Dental School and the SET has continuing concerns that were not addressed satisfactorily in the additional information provided regarding the implementation of several key aspects of the program, including the didactic component, mapping to the DBA's entry-level competencies for Paediatric Dentistry, supervisory arrangements across all sites, interdisciplinary interaction, and assessment rubrics. The provider refers to the handbook as defining program components however interview evidence does not support that there is an awareness of these requirements or that they are taking place.

The provider has provided the Clinical Placement Agreement between the Minister for Health and Well-being and The University of Adelaide, however the SET noted that this agreement expired at the end of 2020 and the status of its renegotiation is unclear and there is currently no guarantee for continuity of placement. Furthermore, although the agreement references the arrangements in place for clinical supervision this was not reflected in the understanding of interviewees.

The SET's view remains that the existing gaps are still of such concern that the decision regarding this program stands.

ADC accreditation decision

The ADC has determined that the following programs offered by The University of Adelaide are re-accredited until **31 December 2025**:

- Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Endodontics
- Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology
- Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Orthodontics
- Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Prosthodontics

Subject to the following conditions:

1. In order to fully meet Standard 1 – Public Safety, Standard 3 – Program of Study and Standard 5 – Assessment, the provider is required to:
 - (a) review the mapping of program learning outcomes against the DBA entry-level competencies across the Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Endodontics, Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, Orthodontics and Prosthodontics programs and provide clear evidence that each program addresses all competencies. In doing so, the provider is requested to demonstrate how the learning outcomes are assessed both clinically and academically to ensure that the entry-level competencies are being met.
 - (b) demonstrate how students are assessed to ensure patient safety is a priority in the provision of clinical care to the level expected of a specialist dentist in each discipline.

A report is to be submitted to the ADC by **10 September 2021** advising of how these matters have been addressed and of any changes made to these programs.

2. In order to fully meet Standard 2 – Academic Governance and Quality Assurance and Standard 4 – The student experience, the provider is required to review the governance structures of the DCLinDent programs. In undertaking the review, the School is to ensure that:
 - (a) student evaluations and peer review are incorporated as a part of quality assurance processes, and

(b) student representation and external input relevant to each specialisation are included into quality assurance processes.

A report is to be submitted to the ADC by **23 July 2021** advising of changes made to ensure programs remain contemporary and providing evidence that student evaluation and peer input is incorporated into quality improvement processes.

3. In order to fully meet Standard 4 –The student experience, the provider is requested to provide **by 23 July 2021** a course guide that clearly details the DClinDent program for each of the Endodontics, Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, Orthodontics and Prosthodontics specialisations. The provider is requested to provide evidence of how information is provided to students to inform them of:
 - (a) program structure, including delivery of didactic and clinical components and learning outcomes
 - (b) progression requirements
 - (c) assessment requirements, including marking rubrics and due dates for assessment.
4. In order to fully meet Standard 4 – The student experience, the provider is requested to provide **by 23 July 2021** evidence of how a student can raise a grievance related to a staff member's behaviour or conduct and how the provider handles complaints of this nature.
5. In order to fully meet Standard 3 – Program of Study, evidence is to be provided by **23 July 2021** of the formalisation and systematic approach to the interactions with other dental and health professionals to provide interdisciplinary treatment and care. In providing this information the provider is requested to include evidence of the implementation of interdisciplinary seminars attended by students across all specialisations.
6. In order to fully meet Standard 3 – Program of Study, the provider is requested to provide evidence that a coherent and detailed research program is in place to enable students to achieve the stated learning outcomes. Evidence is to be provided to the ADC by **23 July 2021** of the program that is in place.

For the Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Prosthodontics:

7. In order to fully meet Standard 3 – Program of study, the provider is required to submit by **23 July 2021** details of how the diagnosis, treatment and management of orofacial pain has been comprehensively incorporated into the curriculum of the program.

For the Doctor of Clinical Dentistry program in Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology:

8. In order to fully meet Standard 3 – Program of Study, the provider is requested to provide evidence that the staffing profile is sufficient to deliver the Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology. The report should include clear details of the level of engagement of each staff member, teaching and clinical supervision commitments and is to be submitted to the ADC by **23 July 2021**.

9. In order to fully meet Standard 3 – Program of Study, the provider is requested to provide evidence by **30 April 2021** that placement locations for the program have appropriate accreditation for the delivery of pathology service to provide reassurance that the equipment and facilities are of an appropriate standard to support students to achieve the required learning outcomes.

The ADC has determined that this condition has now been met.

10. In order to fully meet Standard 3 – Program of Study, evidence is to be provided by **23 July 2021** of the opportunities for students to gain clinical exposure to and experience in the handling or preparation of tissue samples to meet the required competencies of the specialty.
11. In order to fully meet Standard 5 – Assessment the provider is required to provide by **10 September 2021** a comprehensive list of internal and external examiners of the program and details of the moderation procedures in place to ensure consistent and appropriate assessment of students.

The ADC has determined The University of Adelaide's Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Paediatric Dentistry program is **refused** accreditation.

ADC Secretariat Note:

At the ADC Accreditation Committee on 5 May 2021, the ADC considered the condition report submitted by The University of Adelaide on 9 April 2021.

Conditions that the ADC has determined to have been met or amended are indicated above.