

**Australian Dental Council report of an evaluation of
The University of Sydney Dental Specialist programs in:**

- **Oral Medicine**
- **Orthodontics**
- **Paediatric Dentistry**
- **Periodontics**
- **Prosthodontics**
- **Special Needs Dentistry**

October 2020

Summary report

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| Program provider | University of Sydney |
| Program/qualification names, Program/qualification abbreviation, Program/qualification code | Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (Oral Medicine), DCLinDent, TCCLDORM1000 Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (Orthodontics), DCLinDent, TCCLDORD1000 Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (Paediatric Dentistry), DCLinDent, TCCLDPAD1000 Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (Periodontics), DCLinDent, TCCLDPER1000 Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (Prosthodontics), DCLinDent, TCCLDPRO1000 Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (Special Needs Dentistry), DCLinDent, TCCLDSCD1000 |
| Head office address, including State | The University of Sydney, NSW 2006 |
| Campus | Sydney Dental Hospital Westmead Centre for Oral Health |
| Program length | 3 Years |
| Registration division | Specialist Dentist |
| Registration speciality | Oral Medicine, Orthodontics, Paediatric Dentistry, Periodontics, Prosthodontics, Special Needs Dentistry |
| 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 |
| Date of ADC decision | 10 December 2020 |
| Type of accreditation | Re-accreditation |

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|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Accreditation start date | 1 January 2021 |
| Accreditation end date | 31 December 2025 |

Background

The University of Sydney's Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (DClinDent) programs were last reviewed for the purpose of accreditation in 2015. The then six specialty programs in the disciplines of oral medicine, orthodontics, paediatric dentistry, periodontics, prosthodontics, and special care dentistry were all accredited for a period of five years, with conditions imposed on all programs. All conditions were deemed to have been subsequently met.

Since the previous review, an additional specialty program in the discipline of oral surgery has been added to the suite of programs offered by the University. The DClinDent (Oral Surgery) program is subject to a differing cycle of accreditation and has not been evaluated as part of this review process.

Since the previous review, the University's organisational structure has been revised and the Faculty of Dentistry has been incorporated into the Faculty of Medicine and Health, with the new Sydney Dental School formed. Program titles have also been revised within the period of accreditation, but this change is administrative in nature and had no impact on the programs as implemented.

Overview of evaluation

A three-day site visit had been scheduled to take place from 2 to 4 June 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 2020. 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 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 in 2021 if this is deemed safe to do so.

A Site Evaluation Team (SET) conducted a paper-based review based on The University of Sydney's 55-page submission and associated appendices. A series of teleconferences for assessors across different specialisations were held between 20 and 24 July 2020 to discuss the submission. Additional information was requested from the Sydney Dental School following these teleconferences.

In November 2020, the Sydney Dental School provided additional information regarding the DClinDent (Oral Medicine) program in response to the draft accreditation report provided for comment. This information was considered by the SET.

The findings in this report are based on the SET's assessment of the material outlined above, annual reports submitted for the programs and the COVID-19 monitoring reports submitted by the provider between March 2020 and August 2020.

Key findings

Overall, the DClinDent programs appear to provide the range of experiences required for students to develop the competencies expected of dental specialists.

Deficiencies in the oral medicine program were identified regarding opportunities for students to treat cases presenting with orofacial pain. This is a core element of an oral medicine program. The provider has identified this as a weakness and taken action to address the issue. The Sydney Dental School has introduced opportunities for final year students to demonstrate their ability to provide care in this area of specialist oral medicine practice, however integration of this area of practice is required throughout the program. The SET was satisfied that final year students have demonstrated they have achieved the required program learning outcomes. The visit scheduled to be undertaken in 2021 (subject to safety concerns and travel restrictions) provides opportunity to further explore oral medicine students' readiness to care for patients presenting with orofacial pain.

The site visit also provides opportunity to explore several aspects of the other specialist programs reviewed and confirm that the policies and processes as outlined are effective. This includes areas such as assessment practices used to evaluate preparedness for practice at the level expected of specialist dentists and of students' readiness to provide culturally safe care based on the resources outlined to the SET.

The School is encouraged to work with the facilities providing student clinical experience to ensure patients are made aware of and consent to the involvement of specialists-in-training within their care. The School is also encouraged to review reference materials to ensure updated and contemporaneous resources are available to assist students. The SET noted variances between the specialties as to how external input is used in continuous improvement of programs, with some disciplines expected to benefit from a greater input from the professions, particularly oral medicine, and special needs dentistry.

ADC accreditation decision

The ADC has determined that the following University of Sydney programs are accredited until **31 December 2025**:

- Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (Oral Medicine)
- Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (Orthodontics)
- Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (Paediatric Dentistry)
- Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (Periodontics)
- Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (Prosthodontics)
- Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (Special Needs Dentistry)