

Approval of courses to equip registered oral health practitioners to remove exclusions from their scope of practice policy

Date last reviewed	June 2013
Scheduled review	
Approved by:	Council

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure consistency when the Dental Council approves courses which are developed to equip registered oral health practitioners to remove exclusions¹ from their scopes of practice.

Scope

This policy applies to the approval of all courses developed to equip registered oral health practitioners to remove exclusions from their scopes of practice, offered by New Zealand educational institutions.

Policy

1. Any course developed to remove exclusions from a practitioner's registered scope of practice must satisfy the Dental Council's approval criteria.
2. A course provider is required to submit an application detailing how the course satisfies the approval criteria, along with the relevant application fees.
3. Course approval costs will be published in the Gazette, and be available on the Dental Council's website under the schedule of fees (including notification of any additional fees charged where a site visit is required).

Approval criteria

1. The course is run by an educational institution, a district health board, registered company or registered society.
2. The objective of the course is to educate oral health practitioners to the same standard as that of a Dental Council prescribed qualification for registration in those specific procedures as defined in the relevant scope of practice.
3. The course must demonstrate it includes verifiable knowledge and clinical skills learning outcomes equivalent to the relevant Dental Council prescribed qualification(s) - clearly stated in its learning objectives.

¹ These exclusions would have been placed on those practitioners' relevant general scope(s) of practice (i.e. dental hygiene, dental therapy and orthodontic auxiliary) that were not registered in all the additional scopes of practice as at 17 March 2011. Some oral health therapists also have exclusions on their scope of practice, as a result of areas not covered in their undergraduate training at that point in time.

4. The course content must include sufficient theory and clinical experience to enable students to demonstrate their ability to meet the learning objectives. Details of the theory and clinical components together with the learning strategies must be provided. Teaching and assessment must be designed to ensure students (upon successful completion of the course) can demonstrate the competencies required to remove the exclusions from their scope of practice, and assume responsibility for maintaining their continuing competence.
5. The course must demonstrate that it has adequate facilities and resources to enable achievement of its objectives. Students must be provided with suitable patients, equipment, materials and facilities during the course to enable them to develop the required competencies.
6. The course fee must not impose undue costs on the students.
7. The student/staff ratio and the quality and experience of the teaching staff must be sufficient to enable the courses objectives to be achieved. Maximum course numbers/staff ratios must be provided. Full details of the student/staff ratio and the qualifications of the staff must be provided.
8. Where successful completion of the course is dependent on the completion of practical experience under supervision in the workplace, details of the practical experience requirements and the responsibilities of supervisors must be provided.
9. Admission into the course must be based on published selection criteria and applied equitably during the selection process.
10. Student performance must be assessed relative to the attainment of the expected learning outcomes. There must be a clearly stated process and timeframe for providing feedback to students, the assessment methods must be defined and the pass standard explicit.
11. The environment must be safe for patients. Clinical supervision (onsite and in the workplace if relevant) must be adequate to ensure that adequate standards of patient care are maintained including accurate and complete record keeping. Evaluation processes must be in place to ensure that acceptable standards of patient care are maintained. Informed consent procedures must be in place to ensure that patients are aware of and consent to treatment being provided by students under supervision.
12. The environment must be safe for students. There must be processes in place to identify and address student grievances and concerns. There must be clearly articulated policies in place in relation to students who fail to meet the course requirements and in relation to the management of the potential conflict, which arises when course participants are also employees of the organisation providing the training course.
13. The course provider must plan, implement and demonstrate continuous quality improvement.
14. Students must be provided with a formal certificate upon completion of the course.

Review process

Review process of applications from course providers who **do not** provide training as part of a primary Dental Council accredited qualification



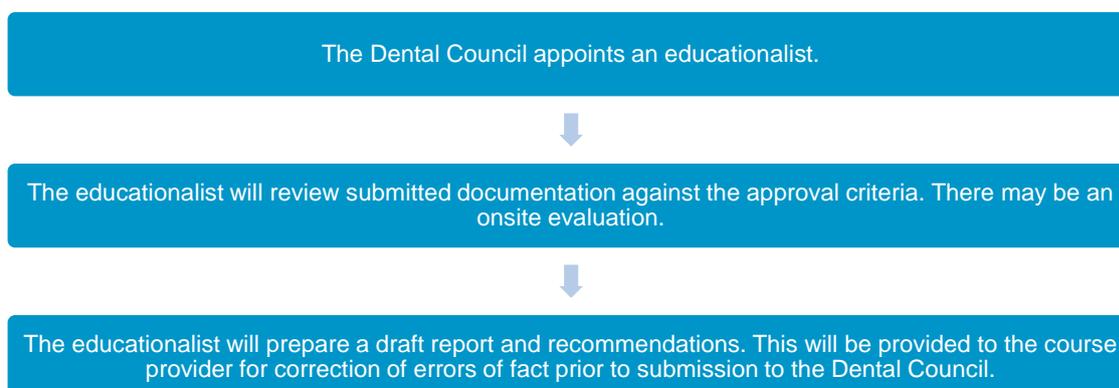
Composition of the review team

The review team is an ad hoc committee of the Dental Council. Each review team is constituted to assess and report on a particular course and then is disbanded.

The composition of the team must provide a balance of expertise to allow a transparent and independent assessment of the course. Each review team will normally consist of:

- an experienced oral health practitioner who is registered and competent in the relevant procedures being reviewed within the scope of practice and preferably with previous experience of a course approval/accreditation process
- a dental academic who has the educational competencies to evaluate the course submitted, preferably with previous experience of a course approval/accreditation process
- a member who preferably participates in all reviews and who is familiar with registration processes and the scopes of practice under consideration.

Review process of applications from course providers **who do** provide training as part of a primary Dental Council accredited qualification



The review process is not expected to be onerous on the educational institution (as it has already been through a formal Dental Council accreditation process), but simply allow the Dental Council to review/monitor the approved course.

Course approval status and periods

The Dental Council will consider the review team or educationalist's report, and will select one of the following options:

- **Approval** covering a period of up to five years from the date of approval before which time the course must be resubmitted for approval.
- **Approval with conditions** up to five years. However, this is subject to the condition that certain actions detailed in the report are realised within a specified time frame. The Dental Council may require the submission of further materials for review. A written statement detailing compliance with the conditions is the minimum requirement.
- **Refusal.** This is used in circumstances where deficiencies in a course are such that it is considered practitioners would be unable to achieve the required levels of competence.

Timeframe

Course providers should allow up to three months from the date of submitting the documentation to the Dental Council and receipt of the Dental Council's decision(s) on accreditation. Additional time may be required if the documentation submitted is not adequate to allow the Dental Council to assess the sufficiency of the course against the defined criteria.