



## Information about the assessment pathway to registration in Australia for overseas qualified dental hygienists and dental therapists

### Who can practise as a dental hygienist and/or dental therapist in Australia?

If you wish to practise as a dental hygienist and/or dental therapist in Australia you must be registered with the Dental Board of Australia.

### How do you become registered with the Dental Board of Australia?

The Dental Board of Australia has published Registration Standards that define the requirements applicants need to meet to be registered and a list of approved qualifications that are required for general registration. The Dental Board of Australia's website has detailed information about the requirements and process for registration (see <http://www.dentalboard.gov.au/>).

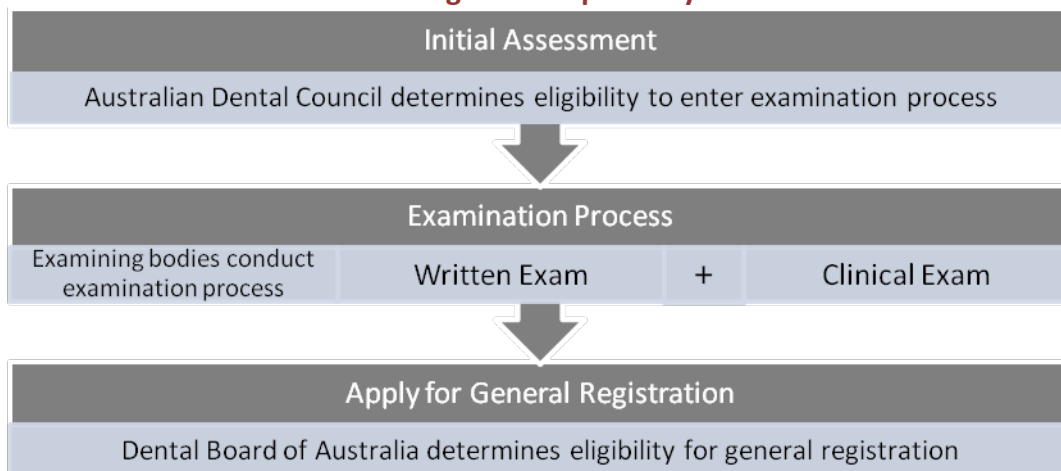
### Are your qualifications approved by the Dental Board of Australia?

If your qualifications in dental hygiene or dental therapy do **not** meet the Dental Board of Australia's requirements for registration to practise in Australia, there are two options available. The first is to complete an Australian qualification that is approved by the Board (see the Approved Programs of Study listed on the Board's website). A second pathway has recently been developed by the Dental Board of Australia working with the Australian Dental Council and is described below.

### Overview of the assessment pathway

The assessment pathway for overseas qualified dental hygienists and dental therapists involves the successful completion of the **Initial Assessment** (of professional qualifications and experience, 'good standing') and the **Examination Process**. During the examination process the knowledge, clinical skills and professional attributes of overseas qualified candidates are assessed for equivalence to those of a current graduate from an Australian approved program of study in dental hygiene or dental therapy and for safe practice in the Australian community. The ADC carries out the initial assessment of eligibility to undergo the examination process. The examination process will initially involve examinations conducted by approved examining bodies. Candidates who are awarded the 'ADC Certificate' at the end of the assessment process can apply to the Dental Board of Australia for general registration to practise in Australia. Applicants should be aware however that the Dental Board of Australia has its own eligibility criteria (relating to *eg* criminal history, English languages skills, professional indemnity insurance etc), that need to be met before registration is granted.

### 3 stages in the pathway





## Steps in the assessment pathway leading to registration in Australia for overseas qualified dental hygienists and dental therapists

The following table provides more detail about the steps involved in the assessment pathway.

Initial Assessment		
Activity	Organisation	Description of Activity
<b>Step 1</b> Lodge Application for Initial Assessment	<b>ADC</b>	1.1 Overseas qualified dental hygienists and dental therapists apply to the ADC for initial assessment of their eligibility to undertake the examination process 1.2 On receipt of the completed Application Form and Fee the ADC evaluates the applicant's qualifications, experience, his or her 'good standing' (disciplinary history or legal right to practise overseas) and determines whether the applicant is eligible to apply to enter the examination process and, if so, what type of examination process, <i>ie</i> either dental hygiene or dental therapy or both 1.3 Eligible candidates need to commence the examination process within 12 months of being advised of eligibility
Examination Process		
<b>Step 2</b> Undertake Written Examination	<b>Approved Examining Body</b>	2.1 Eligible candidates apply directly to the relevant tertiary education institution conducting the examination process [ <b>the examining bodies</b> ], pay the examining body's examination fees and comply with any other requirements set by the examining body 2.2 The candidate completes the written examination (which may be offered in an approved location overseas) 2.3 Successful completion of the written examination is required before candidates are able to sit the clinical examination
<b>Step 3</b> Apply for 'Limited' Registration	<b>DBA</b>	3.1 Eligible candidates (who have successfully completed the written exam) apply to the Dental Board of Australia for 'Limited Registration'. Candidates must be registered in this way in order to carry out clinical procedures on patients as part of the clinical exam
<b>Step 4</b> Undertake Clinical Examination	<b>Approved Examining Body</b>	4.1 Eligible candidates undertake the clinical examination 4.2 The examining bodies notify candidates of their results
<b>Step 5</b> Apply for ADC Certificate	<b>ADC</b>	5.1 Successful candidates may apply for an 'ADC Certificate', which is evidence of the successful completion of the full assessment process. Satisfactory evidence of the successful completion of the Occupational English Test (OET) is required before the ADC Certificate can be issued 5.2 The certificate will be provided on payment of a fee
Apply for General Registration		
<b>Step 6</b> Lodge Application for General Registration	<b>DBA</b>	6.1 Successful candidates apply to the DBA (via AHPRA) for registration, using the 'ADC certificate' as evidence that they have successfully completed the assessment process 6.2 The DBA determines eligibility for general registration 6.3 Applicants granted general registration by the DBA can commence practising in Australia



## Organisations involved in the assessment pathway for overseas qualified dental hygienists and dental therapists

Organisation	Acronym	Description
<b>Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency</b> <a href="http://www.ahpra.gov.au/">http://www.ahpra.gov.au/</a>	AHPRA	<p>AHPRA is the body that supports the 10 national health practitioner regulatory Boards, one of which is the Dental Board of Australia, in implementing the <a href="#">national registration and accreditation scheme</a>. Its role includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>managing the registration processes for all regulated health practitioners and students across Australia</li> <li>managing investigations into the <a href="#">professional conduct, performance or health</a> of registered health practitioners</li> <li>supporting the Boards in the development of registration standards, and codes and guidelines</li> </ul> <p>AHPRA's operations are governed by the <i>Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009</i>, which came into effect on 01 July 2010.</p>
<b>Australian Dental Council</b> <a href="http://www.adc.org.au/">http://www.adc.org.au/</a>	ADC	<p>ADC is the accreditation authority for dentistry in Australia. Its accreditation functions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>overseeing the assessment of the knowledge, clinical skills and professional attributes of overseas qualified dental practitioners who are seeking registration and whose qualifications are not approved qualifications</li> <li>recommending accreditation standards to the DBA</li> <li>assessing programs of study and education providers against the accreditation standards.</li> </ul> <p>Accreditation standards help to ensure that education providers and programs of study provide students with the knowledge, clinical skills and professional attributes appropriate for practice in Australia.</p>
<b>Dental Board of Australia</b> <a href="http://www.dentalboard.gov.au/">http://www.dentalboard.gov.au/</a>	DBA	<p>DBA is the national registration authority for the dental professions. Each health profession that is part of the <a href="#">National Registration and Accreditation Scheme</a> is represented by a National Board. The DBA regulates the practice of dentists, dental specialists, dental hygienists, dental therapists, oral health therapists and dental prosthetists. Its primary role is to protect the public; it determines standards for registration (including qualifications, English language skills, criminal history, professional indemnity insurance, recency of practice, etc) and policies for registration of dental practitioners in Australia. DBA's functions are supported by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).</p>
<b>Approved Examining Bodies</b> <a href="http://www.tafesa.edu.au/dental-studies-centre.aspx">http://www.tafesa.edu.au/dental-studies-centre.aspx</a>		<p>Approved examining bodies are the tertiary education institutions whose examinations for overseas qualified dental hygienists and dental therapists have been 'accredited' by the ADC. The institutions currently offer accredited programs in dental hygiene and/or dental therapy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>South Australia – TAFESA Gilles Plains Campus – conducts the dental hygiene examination</li> <li>Details of the assessment pathway for dental therapists will be published as soon as they become available</li> </ul>
<b>Occupational English Test Centre</b> <a href="http://www.occupationalenglish.test.org/">http://www.occupationalenglish.test.org/</a>	OET	<p>The Occupational English Test (OET) is a language test for health practitioners that assesses English language proficiency as it is used in the dental profession. The OET is administered by the OET Centre up to ten times a year and in over 40 locations around the world. The Test measures the English language competency of health practitioners who are seeking registration to practise in an English-speaking context in Australia. It is designed to ensure that language competency is assessed in the relevant professional context.</p>