
What is a Dentist?

Dentists diagnose and treat diseases, injuries and abnormalities of teeth, gums and surrounding structures in the mouth, undertake preventive procedures, conduct surgery and perform other specialist techniques.

Roles of a Dentist

- A dentist may perform the following tasks:
- Perform comprehensive oral health assessments by examining patients' teeth and gums using dental equipment and X-rays
- Educate patients on oral health care and prevention
- Diagnose dental conditions and plan oral health care in consultation with patients
- Clean teeth and provide preventive care
- Repair decayed and broken teeth by placement of various filling materials, and when necessary extract and replace teeth through clinical treatment agreed upon
- Treat diseases of the gums, root canal treatment to decayed tooth involving the nerve
- Perform surgical operations to the mouth, jaws, teeth and soft tissues
- Administer and monitor local and general anaesthetics when necessary for carrying out treatment
- Prescribe medications to reduce the burden of infection or prevent infection
- Design, construct and fit dentures, crowns and bridges for the replacement of lost, or missing teeth
- Refer patients to dental specialists for complicated treatment

Career Opportunities

SWSLHD Oral Health Services regularly advertise Dentist positions.

Qualifications Required

Dentistry offers excellent career opportunities for the high school graduate and non-traditional student (i.e. individuals who are over 23 years of age, an individual seeking career change or re-entry or an individual from a culturally diverse background).

There are two Dental courses available now in NSW –

One is **post- graduate** course offered by the University of Sydney – Bachelor of Dentistry/ Doctor of Dental Medicine is a **four-year degree full time program**. Students must hold an undergraduate degree in a different subject area prior to application. University of Sydney campuses are Surry Hills, Camperdown/Darlington, Sydney Dental Hospital and Westmead.

[Website – www.usyd.edu.au]

Entry requirements:

- Completion of a Bachelor degree in any discipline from an accredited university
- Taking studies in anatomy, physiology, chemistry, physics and biology can be beneficial
- GAMSAT Admissions test (Graduate Australian Medical School Admissions Test-
<http://www.gamsat.acer.edu.au/>)
- Participation in a semi-structured interview
- Assess relevance of the course to your career plans
- Participation in a practical aptitude test
- Assesses manual dexterity and hand-eye coordination

Second one is **undergraduate course** offered by the Charles Sturt University (CSU) CSU's Bachelor of Dental Science is a **five-year degree program**, developed in close association with the Australian Dental Association, the Australian Dental Council and the industry to prepare graduates for a career as a dental practitioner. There will be around 40 places available each year. [Website – www.csu.edu.au]

Additional Information:

Australian Dental Association: <http://www.ada.org.au/dentalprofessionals/dentist.aspx>.

Contact your chosen institution for details and to discuss your circumstances.

Clinical studies in the above course are undertaken at United Dental Hospital, Surry Hills and Westmead Hospital Dental Clinical School.

In addition, rural placements and training may be required. Registration authorities throughout Australia accept the Bachelor of Dentistry degree.

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What sort of person should I be?

- Have a good sense of caring and sensitivity
- Enjoy being with people

Personal Requirements of a Sterilising Technician

- Good active communication skills
- Good manual dexterity with well-developed fine motor skills
- Able to work independently and as part of a team
- Ability to concentrate on tasks