



**Australian Dental Council report of an evaluation of
The University of Western Australia's
Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Oral Medicine &
Periodontics Dentistry**

21 June 2022

1. Executive summary

Program provider	The University of Western Australia
Program/qualification name	Doctor Clinical Dentistry in Oral Medicine, DCLinDent Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Periodontics, DCLinDent
Program/qualification abbreviation	DCLinDent
Program/qualification code	90840
Head office address, including State	UWA Dental School, Oral Health Centre of WA The University of Western Australia 17 Monash Avenue Nedlands WA 6009
Program length	3 Years
Registration division	Oral Medicine, Periodontics Dentistry
Registration specialty	Oral Medicine, Periodontics Dentistry
Qualification type	HE
Australian Qualifications Framework level	9
Accreditation standards version	Accreditation Standards for Dental Practitioner Programs (Approved August 2020)
Date of site evaluation	21 June 2021
Date of ADC decision	12 August 2022
Type of accreditation	Re-Accreditation
Accreditation start date	1 January 2023
Accreditation end date	31 December 2027

Background

The University of Western Australia's Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (DClinDent) programs were last reviewed for the purposes of accreditation by the Australian Dental Council (ADC) in May 2021. The programs were reviewed against the accreditation standards in effect at the time. Three conditions were imposed on the DClinDent programs overall, due to the AT's concerns about the program's governance structures for the DClinDent programs, program design, management and implementation of Cultural safety and the mapping of program learning outcomes against the DBA competencies. One of these conditions was subsequently met.

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:

- Oral Medicine
- Periodontics

Overview of evaluation

An ADC AT conducted a site visit on 21 June 2022 to review The University of Western Australia's (UWA's) DClinDent programs in Periodontics and Oral Medicine. During the day of the visit the AT inspected clinical, learning and teaching facilities at OHCWA as well as E-block at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. The AT reviewed the UWA Dental School's self-review against the Standards, attached appendices and additional information requested following the AT's teleconference on 4 and 5 May 2022. The review was undertaken against the revised Accreditation Standards that came into effect on 1 January 2021.

The site visit on 21 May 2021 included specialists reviewing the DClinDent programs in Oral Medicine and Periodontics.

During the visit the AT interviewed a range of individuals, including:

- Dean and Head, UWA Dental School
- Postgraduate program coordinator
- Chair, DClinDent Sub-Committee and Chair, School Learning and Teaching Committee
- Discipline Leads for each specialist program
- Manager Student Experience & Senior School Operations Coordinator
- Aboriginal Torres Strait Working Group
- Academic and clinical staff - Oral Medicine and Periodontics
- Current students – Oral Medicine and Periodontics
- Recent graduates – Oral Medicine and Periodontics

The findings of this report are based on the AT's assessment of the material outlined above and interview evidence.

Key findings

The UWA Dental School's DClinDent programs in Oral Medicine and Periodontics programs continue to attract a strong cohort of engaged students. The Oral Medicine and Periodontics programs are both led by very experienced and qualified program leads. Staff in general are very committed to providing students with all the necessary support throughout both programs.

Whilst the provider is currently well placed to deliver the Oral Medicine and Periodontics program from a financial and resource perspective, the University is experiencing difficulties in securing additional staff that are adequately qualified and experienced, in order to increase its staffing profile. Such additional staffing resources would allow further specialist training and support to students an existing academic staff alike. The University of Western Australia underwent a significant restructuring in late 2021, resulting in the removal of all faculties and a significant reduction in administrative staff. The AT identified an insufficient number of professional staff within the School which has lead to a significant administrative workload which may not be sustainable longer term.

The respective Discipline Leads for both the Oral Medicine and Periodontics programs play a very significant role in their program's structure, delivery and teaching of most of the didactic content. The AT suggest that additional FTE resources in clinical teaching staff would not only help to alleviate current pressures and time-constraints by distributing existing workload but is essential should the program see an increase in student uptake across either program. The AT also noted that the current process in place whereby external input into the Periodontics program is performed via an informal and ad-hoc basis. This process should be formalised. This same finding was raised at the on-site assessment visit in May 2021.

Whilst the University's clinical facilities are excellent with all students also undertaking clinical activities at Oral Health Centre of Western Australia (OHCWA) and other sites including the Perth Children's Hospital and Fiona Stanley Hospital, the current office space available to Oral Medicine students is at capacity and a new location or expansion of the existing space would be required with the planned increase in future student numbers. The OHCWA clinics are operated by UWA under a contractual agreement with the State Government's Department of Health, which assures ongoing clinical access and a broad range of patients. At the site visit the AT was advised that the contract with WA Department of Health was renewed earlier in 2022. There are comprehensive policies and processes in place for patient and public safety. Staff are appropriately qualified and their enthusiasm and commitment to the program was evident throughout the review.

Whilst the site visit indicated a respect for and understanding of the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples by staff, current students and recent graduates, implementation of the University's integration of cultural safety across the DClinDent programs is currently very limited. A Cultural Safety implementation roadmap has been prepared, though its implementation does not commence until July 2022, and it continues through to the second half of 2023. Whilst students do have access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients via OHCWA and the other hospitals where placements occur, there is no assurance that every student will have the opportunity to demonstrate culturally safe clinical care to Indigenous patients.

The AT are confident that Oral Medicine and Periodontic graduates produced by the University of Western Australia's are competent clinicians with adequate exposure and clinical knowledge upon graduation.

ADC accreditation decision

The ADC has determined that the following programs offered by The University of Western Australia are reaccredited for a period of five (5) years from **1 January 2023 to 31 December 2027**:

- Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Oral Medicine
- Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Periodontics

Subject to the following conditions for the Oral Medicine and Periodontics programs:

1. To meet standard 6 – Cultural safety, the provider is requested to provide by **17 February 2023** supporting evidence demonstrating progress towards the implementation of the Dental School Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy as outlined in the mapping table and timelines.

For the Doctor of Clinical Dentistry in Periodontics program:

2. To meet Standard 2 – Academic Governance and Quality Assurance, the provider is requested to review the governance structures for the DClintDent program in Periodontics to ensure external input relevant to the specialisation, including from dental consumers, external academic and professional peers is included in quality assurance processes. A report is to be submitted to the ADC by **17 February 2023** advising of changes made to ensure the program remains contemporary and providing evidence that external input is incorporated into quality improvement processes.