

# Annual Report

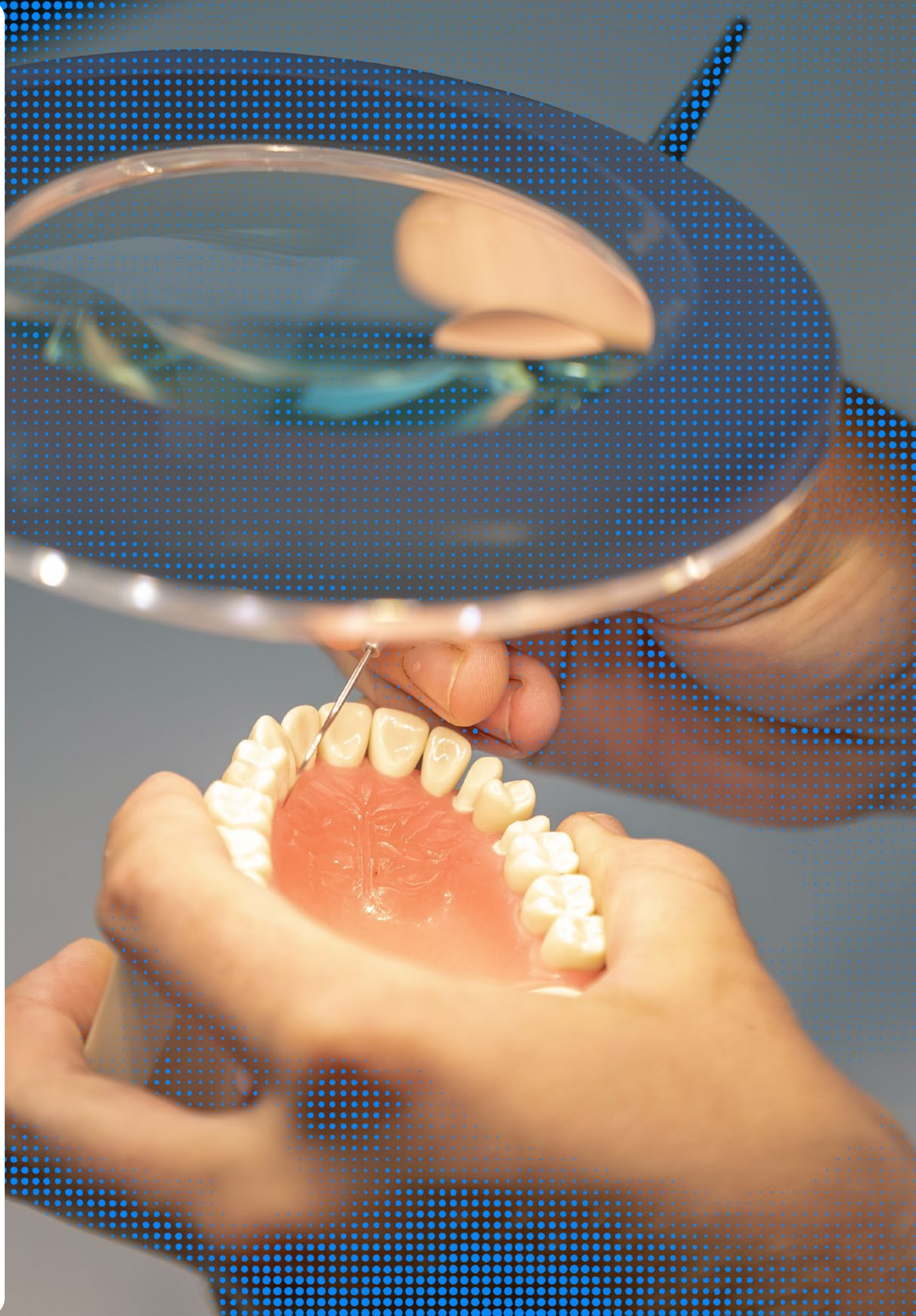
2020/21





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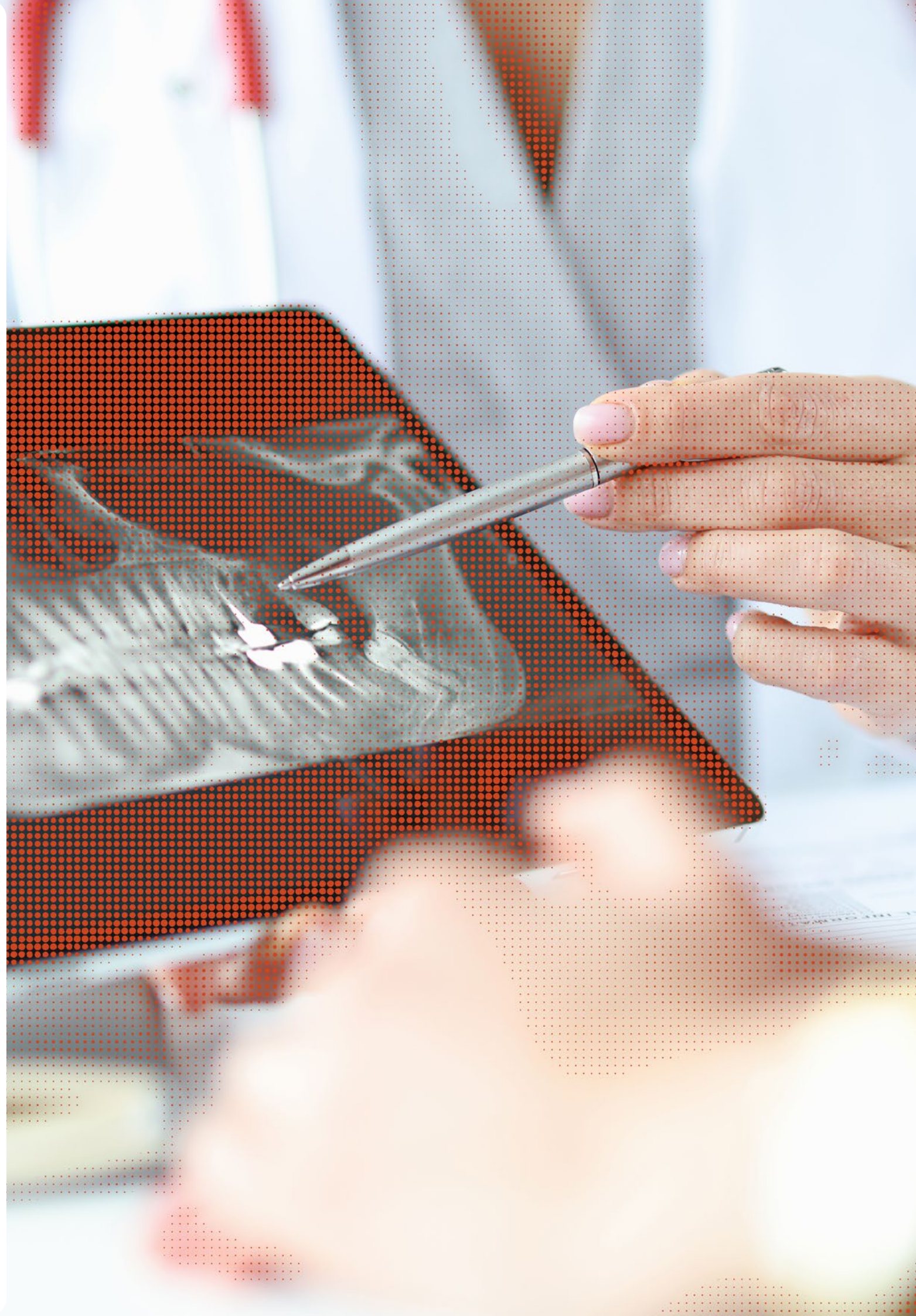
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# 1

## Introduction



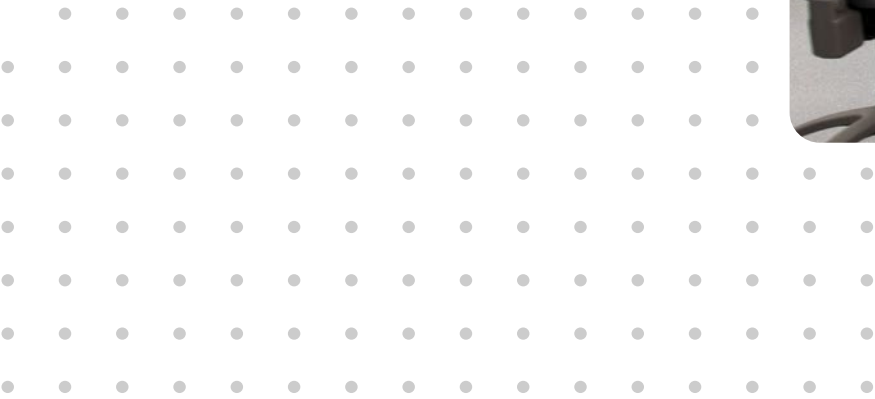


# About the ADC

The Australian Dental Council (ADC) works to protect the health and safety of the public by ensuring dental practitioners meet the high standards required of the dental professions in Australia.

We are assigned the accreditation functions for the dental professions by the Dental Board of Australia (DBA) under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (NRAS). Through our role, we are responsible for:

- Accrediting education and training programs leading to registration as a dentist, dental specialist, dental hygienist, dental therapist, oral health therapist, and dental prosthetist.
- Developing accreditation standards, policies, and procedures for Australian-based dental practitioner programs.
- Developing standards, policies, and procedures for the assessment of qualifications and skills of overseas trained dental practitioners, excluding dental specialists, seeking registration to practise in Australia.
- Assessing the professional qualifications, knowledge, judgement, and clinical skills of overseas trained dental practitioners, excluding dental specialists, for the purposes of eligibility to apply for registration to practise in Australia.



A not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee, the ADC is a registered charity under the *Corporations Act* 2001 and holds charity status under the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission. The organisation is also registered with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission.

The ADC is funded by a grant from the DBA and through fee for service activities.

Current members of the ADC include key professional bodies, academic bodies, and other individual members of the Australian dental professions.



# Interim strategy: July 2020 to December 2021

## Vision

To be a leader in accreditation and assessment nationally and internationally

## Values



Ethical



Respectful



Fair



Transparent



Independent



Supportive



Collaborative



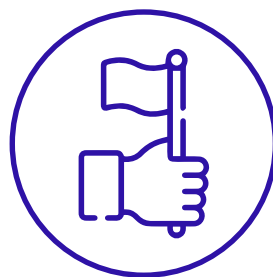
Innovative

## Key Result Areas



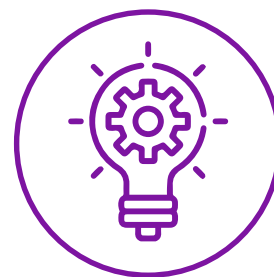
### Social Accountability

The ADC makes decisions that are ethical, safe, and minimise environmental impact



### Leadership

The ADC participates in activities and initiatives that demonstrate its leadership in accreditation and assessments



### Innovation

The ADC is curious and actively seeks new opportunities through the pursuit of innovation and quality improvement



### Capability

The ADC invests in its people and systems to achieve its aims, build resilience, and adaptability

# Our highlights

## Accreditation

65 accredited programs across 18 providers.

Re-accredited 26 programs and accredited one new program in the financial year.

Introduced the revised [ADC/Dental Council \(New Zealand\) Accreditation standards for dental practitioner programs](#).

Commenced work to review the [Professional competencies of the newly qualified dental practitioner](#).

Signed a MoU with the UAE's Commission of Academic Accreditation to undertake international accreditation.

## Assessments and examinations

Assessed 636 initial assessment applications while navigating lockdown restrictions.

Safely conducted 1,169 written examinations across two sessions.

Finalised the review of the written examination process ahead of the September 2021 examination.

Safely delivered 580 practical examinations across 29 sessions.

Successfully introduced new communication cluster passing standard and rubric into the practical examination.

## Enterprise

Created People and Culture Directorate to focus on organisational culture, leadership and team development.

Started work on a new online stakeholder portal ADC Connect.

Released the [Interim Strategy: July 2020 to December 2021](#) to provide direction during the pandemic and beyond.

Completion of diversity and inclusion training by the ADC Board, Committee members, examiners, assessors, and team.

Registered intention to launch inaugural RAP with Reconciliation Australia.



# Chair's Message

**Professor Lindsay Richards**  
Chair, ADC

Twelve months ago, I spoke of the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had across all areas of the ADC. While recognising the uncertainty facing the ADC at the time, little did we know the long-term impact the pandemic would have on our activities.

Restrictions imposed by federal, state, and territory governments directly impacted on our ability to deliver our examinations. This, in turn, impacted on our financial performance in the 2021 financial year, with the organisation recording a \$902,326 deficit.

This result is not unexpected. However, it is not dire as it could have been. The ADC was successful in managing cash flows as well as accessing government assistance and rent relief to offset the reduction in income for the year. Sound financial and risk management before the pandemic ensured the ADC had sufficient reserves to manage any long-term impacts on the business.

While it's easy to focus on the challenges, it is equally important that we recognise the positives as well. COVID-19 has been a defining moment for the ADC. The Board and ADC senior leadership continue to use this once in a lifetime event as an opportunity to future proof the ADC and its operations. The fantastic response of our Chief Executive Officer, Narelle Mills and her senior leadership team has set in motion a number of activities and projects designed to improve the ADC's agility and adaptability in the long term.

The Board and ADC senior leadership continue to use this once in a lifetime event as an opportunity to future proof the ADC and its operations.

Many of these are highlighted in the pages of this year's report and I invite you to learn more about them as you'll hear more about these initiatives in the coming year.

## Strategic planning

A topic constantly at the forefront of the Board's mind is the future direction of the ADC. This year saw the natural conclusion of the *2018-2020 Strategic Plan*. While there have been discussions about the next iteration of the strategic plan, the onset of COVID-19 significantly impacted our long-term planning. This forced us to refocus our attention on addressing the immediate impacts of the pandemic on the ADC.

In September we released the [Interim Strategy: July 2020 to December 2021 \(Interim Strategy\)](#). The Interim Strategy took into consideration the impacts of COVID-19, whilst looking at the long-term success of the organisation.

A key change in the Interim Strategy was the introduction of four Key Result Areas (KRAs). Driving the work of the ADC, these KRAs expand the ADC's ability to be agile and resilient in a challenging and evolving operational landscape. This is an important change as social factors and technological advancements are changing how everyone does business. The ADC is not immune from this. We need to be aware of these factors and the challenges and benefits these can bring, now and in the long term.

The Board is now focusing on strategic planning beyond December 2021. We are looking at how we can harness the expertise of our people as well as current trends in the sector to ensure the ADC remains relevant in a rapidly evolving landscape. Key to this is ensuring the right foundations are in place so the organisation can deliver on its vision to be a leader in accreditation and assessment.

As I write this, work is underway to finalise the *2022-2024 Strategic Plan*. We look forward to presenting the final plan to you in the coming year.



# Chair's Message (continued)

## Diversity and inclusion training

Last year I wrote of the ADC's commitment to a diverse working environment. We continued to work in pursuit of this commitment with the delivery of training entitled *Diversity and inclusion as a key enabler in decision making* in late 2020.

Delivered in partnership with diversity and inclusion consulting company Symmetra, the training was provided to the ADC Board as well as examiners, assessors, and members of the ADC team. This training was designed to give participants practical tools to enhance their decision-making processes – not just in their work with the ADC, but in other professional roles. I personally found the training to be invaluable and a welcome opportunity to reflect on my own views of diversity and inclusion in my decision making.

The journey towards becoming a diverse and inclusive workplace for all is ongoing. The Board is committed to ensuring this remains a focal point for the ADC across all aspects of its business, now and into the future.

I personally found the training to be invaluable and a welcome opportunity to reflect on my own views of diversity and inclusion in my decision making.

## Board changes and appointments

We farewelled Associate Professor John Boucher AM following his retirement from the Board of Directors in November 2020. John has had a long history with the ADC. During 12 years on the Board, he served as President and Vice President as well as sitting on the organisation's Nominations and Assessment Committees. He is passionate about the work of the ADC and has long been an advocate for its work. We thank him for his invaluable contribution not only on the Board, but to the broader work of the ADC.

November 2020 also saw us welcome Dr Felicia Valianatos to the ADC Board for an initial term of three years. Felicia is an experienced general dentist, executive manager, and a passionate advocate for professional excellence. She is an accomplished professional with a Master of Health Management and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Felicia has had a long history with the ADC, first as a candidate and then as an examiner, convenor, and member of the Assessment Committee. She provides fresh insight into the workings of the ADC at a time where the organisation is planning to implement its new strategic direction.

We were pleased to reappoint Lucy Vincent for a second three-year term in February 2021. As a community member, Lucy's views and thoughts are a welcome balance to the Board and we look forward to having her insights for another term.

## In closing

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Board for their continued hard work, dedication, and support throughout 2021. The Board is committed to seeing the organisation work in pursuit of its vision whilst upholding the high standards of the dental professions.

Special thanks must go to Associate Professor Cathy Snelling for the significant contribution that she has made not only as a Director, but also in her role as Chair of the Assessment Committee and, more recently, as Deputy Chair of the Board. Her contribution to the ADC during the past nine years has been outstanding and I speak on behalf of the Board when I say that her opinions and insights have been invaluable. Thank you Cathy.

Cathy and I will step down from the Board at the closure of the Annual General Meeting having served our maximum terms. I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate Professor Chis Peck and Dr Chris Bourke on their appointments to Chair and Deputy Chair respectively. I'm delighted that Chris will succeed me as Chair. He is an outstanding Director who has already made a strong contribution to the ADC and the Board. I look forward to seeing the ADC's go from strength to strength under his guidance.

I'm delighted that Chris will succeed me as Chair. He is an outstanding Director who has already made a strong contribution to the ADC and the Board.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to express our appreciation to the ADC team for their unwavering resilience and commitment in another challenging year. I would like to especially thank Chief Executive Officer Narelle Mills for continuing to provide strong leadership to the ADC. Narelle's passion for the work of the ADC is unparalleled and it is this passion that has seen the organisation navigate the challenges of the past year. Her drive and endless energy has ensured that the ADC continues to be regarded as a leader in accreditation and assessments not only in Australia, but around the world.

The ADC is strongly striving towards the future. I look forward to seeing the achievements of the team in the months and years ahead.



**Professor Lindsay Richards**  
Chair  
Australian Dental Council



# Chief Executive Officer's Message

**Narelle Mills**

Chief Executive Officer, ADC

When writing last year's Chief Executive Officer's message I hoped the worst impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic were behind us. However, the arrival of the Delta variant to Australian shores meant we were once again forced to apply contingencies to our day-to-day operations.

Evolving lockdown restrictions imposed by state, territory, and federal governments had far-reaching implications on the delivery of program accreditation and assessments and examinations in the 2021 financial year. Despite the challenges, the ADC team was able to continue to deliver our work to the highest possible standards.

Our accreditation team successfully completed seven site visits and six paper-based reviews during the year. This schedule included the completion of accreditation visits postponed in 2020 due to the pandemic as well as those programs due for reaccreditation in 2021. The team also continued to work closely with providers to monitor the longer-term impacts of the pandemic on accredited programs. This work was extensive but necessary. It helps ensure accredited dental practitioner programs continue to produce graduates with the knowledge, skills, and competencies to practise safely in Australia.

Government restrictions have had a far greater impact on our ability to deliver examinations. We were able to deliver written examinations in September 2020 and March 2021 as well as practical examinations throughout the first half of 2021. However, domestic and international border restrictions have heavily impacted the ability of candidates to travel to sit their examinations. Recognising this impact, the senior leadership team worked closely with the Board in the second half of the 2021 financial year to introduce changes to the *COVID-19 policy for assessments and examinations*. Coming into effect in July 2021, these changes give candidates with an approved practical examination seat the option to apply for a refund of their examination fees or postponement. This policy will apply until the end of 2021.

Examinations were an exempt activity in Victoria which has meant the ADC has been able to continue delivering the practical examination during lockdown periods in 2021. We are currently in the middle of examining more than 400 candidates with postponed examinations. I look forward to updating you on our practical examination process next year.

## Professional competencies review

In early 2021 work started to review of the *Professional competencies of the newly qualified dental practitioner* (the competencies). The competencies are vital to our day-to-day work. They outline at a threshold level what is expected of a newly qualified dental practitioner. At the ADC we use the competencies in our accreditation and assessment functions but they are an important document for all dental stakeholders.

The competencies are vital to our day-to-day work. They outline at a threshold level what is expected of a newly qualified dental practitioner.

It is for this reason we convened the Professional Competencies Review Advisory Committee. This committee comprises regulators, consumers, employers, education providers, and the dental professions. Their role is to help inform the review process and ensure any revisions that are made are relevant to the professions. I'd like to thank the committee for their work on the competencies review to date.

The proposed revisions to the competencies are out for public consultation as I write this message. We anticipate the revised competencies will be approved in late-2021 with an implementation plan to be released in early 2022.





# Chief Executive Officer's Message (continued)

## Implementation of the new format written examination

The ADC is committed to providing a fair, responsive, valid, and defensible assessment process to all our candidates. As part of this commitment, we formed the Assessment Review Working Party (ARWP) in 2018. The role of the ARWP is to complete a compressive review of all elements of our assessment process. One of the key projects identified by the ARWP was a comprehensive review of the written examination.

This project involved revising the written examination format to ensure it was in-line with national and international best practice. The examination blueprint was also reviewed and mapped to the competencies. This activity was particularly important as it reinforces that the standard of examination is consistent with the minimally competent recent Australian graduate from an accredited program.

The project also took into consideration the outcomes of the 2019 Candidate Feedback survey. Candidates responding to the survey indicated a preference for scenario-based questions and a reduction in the total number of questions per paper. We value this feedback from our candidates and where appropriate, incorporated this into the revised format.

Candidates responding to the survey indicated a preference for scenario-based questions and a reduction in the total number of questions per paper.

We announced the transition to the new format in late-May 2021, with the first candidate cohort sitting the examination in September 2021.

I would like to thank the ARWP and our assessments and examinations team for their work on the review of the written examination. This was a significant body of work, and the final result goes a long way to ensure our examination processes remain fair, valid and responsive.

## Introduction of People and Culture Directorate

Above all else, the most important part of the ADC is its people. Since starting with the organisation in 2016, I've seen it continue to grow. We have long been an organisation committed to our people. However, the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with the organisation's continued growth, meant now was the ideal time to establish a dedicated People and Culture Directorate.

The Nominations Committee was renamed the People and Culture Committee to reinforce the Board's commitment to ongoing consideration of talent management as well as the important role the Board plays in the culture of the organisation.

We welcomed Tara Waller to the ADC as Director, People and Culture in April 2021. Tara is an experienced HR strategy and leadership expert with more than 20 years' experience across a range of sectors. She is formally recognised for her leadership capability as an individual as well as leading award-winning teams in organisational development, inclusion, and diversity.

## Reconciliation Action Plan

In mid-2021 we commenced our formal reconciliation journey with the development of the organisation's first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). We have long been committed to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. However, a gap in our commitment has been our own contribution to reconciliation.

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The development of the Reflect RAP is a major milestone in the ADC's journey towards reconciliation. It will shape our vision for reconciliation and establishes the foundation that will form future RAPs that are meaningful, mutually beneficial, and sustainable.

We have established a Working Group to lead the RAP's development, implementation, and reporting. It is co-chaired by Goreng Goreng, Gangulu and Biri Gubba man and President of the Indigenous Dentist's Association of Australia, Dr Gari Watson and ADC's Director, People and Culture, Tara Waller.

The Reflect RAP is scheduled for release in 2022.

## ADC Connect

Last year we announced the launch of a major digital uplift project at the ADC. Program Fusion includes a suite of IT infrastructure projects designed to improve the capability of our systems, organisation wide. The cornerstone of this package of work is ADC Connect. A Customer Relationship Management platform, ADC Connect is designed to give our stakeholders, including our candidates, examiners, assessors, and education providers, centralised access to our key applications, forms, and documentation.

ADC Connect is designed to give our stakeholders, including our candidates, examiners, assessors, and education providers, centralised access to our key applications, forms, and documentation.

One of the most important features of ADC Connect is the migration of our existing paper-based and manual systems to a digital environment. It will enhance the experience of anyone interacting with the ADC by providing dashboard access and self service capability to your profile as a stakeholder with the ADC.

This is a significant project for the whole ADC Team. We are in the process of finalising our user acceptance testing and expect that we'll start releasing components of the system in late-2021.



# Chief Executive Officer's Message (continued)

## ADC Leadership

In July 2021 I was humbled to be elected to the position of Chair of the Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum (the Forum).

The Forum is a coalition of the accreditation authorities in the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme and the role of Chair is an important opportunity to continue to demonstrate the importance of accreditation in public safety. As part of this role, I am a Forum nominee on the newly established Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) Agency Management Committee Accreditation Committee.

This Committee was established under ministerial direction as an outcome of the Accreditation Systems Review completed in 2018. This committee will consider accreditation policy reform areas identified in the Accreditation Systems Review and I am pleased to be able to contribute to those discussions.

## In closing

I would like to thank our examiners, assessors, item writers, and Committee members for their flexibility, insights, and support throughout the year. Each and every one of you has been incredibly flexible and understanding with the changes we have had to implement. Your knowledge and experience ensure that we continue to perform our role to the highest standards for the benefit of the Australian public.

Thanks to Professor Lindsay Richards and the entire ADC Board for their support in another challenging year for the organisation. The Board is passionate about the work of the ADC and is committed to ensuring we continue to put public safety at the forefront of everything we do.

We said goodbye to senior leadership team member Dr Justine Stamford shortly after the end of this financial year. Justine started with the ADC in 2017 as Manager, Examination Delivery and played a pivotal role in the development of our new-format practical examination process. She stepped into the Acting Director, Assessments and Examinations role in mid-2020 and achieved so much in this time.

We welcomed Tara Waller in the role of Director, People and Culture in April 2021 and recently welcomed Veronica Vele to the role of Director, Assessments and Examinations. Veronica brings a wealth of experience to the ADC with more than 15 years' experience in medical and health professional education. She has also held senior positions at the Australian Council for Education Research and the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and is quickly making a huge difference to the assessments and examinations functions.

To the senior leadership team, Mark, Dianne, Tara, and Veronica, thank you. This year has been filled with challenges, but also a lot of change. Each of you has a wealth of experience and is incredibly passionate about the work you do. I value and appreciate the unique insights you bring to your roles and the organisation.

Last, but by no means least, I would like to thank the entire ADC team. It has been another challenging year for the organisation, but this team has once again risen to the occasion. This team is committed to delivering quality work in difficult situations, but, more importantly, they are committed to looking out and supporting one another.

It has been another challenging year for the organisation, but this team has once again risen to the occasion.

Looking ahead, we are continuing to strive towards our vision for the ADC, including who we want to be and how we want to work. I'm proud of what the ADC team has delivered in these challenging times. As we continue to work towards our vision, I look forward to updating you on our work and achievements.



**Narelle Mills**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Australian Dental Council



# 2

## Governance





# Board of Directors



## Professor Lindsay Richards

### CHAIR AND DIRECTOR

Professor Lindsay Richards has a long history with the Adelaide Dental School, most recently as its Dean and Head. He is a Specialist Member of the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons and International College of Prosthodontists; a Fellow of the International College of Dentists and the Academy of Dentistry International; and an honorary Life Member of the Australian Prosthodontic Society.



## Associate Professor Deborah Cockrell

### DIRECTOR

Associate Professor Deborah Cockrell is an overseas trained Oral Surgeon with a PhD in dental education. She has worked in a wide range of settings including academia, outreach services, public and private practice. Having been President of Australian Dental Association (ADA) NSW, she has skills and experience relevant to the ADC.



## Associate Professor Cathy Snelling

### DEPUTY CHAIR AND DIRECTOR

Associate Professor Cathy Snelling is an Education Specialist at the University of Adelaide. She received a 2013 Australian Award for University Teaching, a 2017 Australian Government commendation for colleague development, and the University of Adelaide Stephen Cole the Elder Award for teaching excellence in 2010 and again in 2017.



## Anthony Evans

### DIRECTOR

Anthony Evans has extensive financial and corporate governance experience as a senior executive and a board member in the health, aged care, education, resources and not-for-profit sectors. He has a Bachelor of Business and is a Fellow of CPA Australia, the Governance Institute of Australia and the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



## Dr Chris Bourke

### DIRECTOR

Dr Chris Bourke is a proud Gamillaroi man and the first Indigenous dentist in Australia. With an extensive career in public and private practice, Dr Bourke helped establish the Indigenous Dentists' Association of Australia and was its inaugural President. In 2011 he became the first Indigenous representative of the ACT Legislative Assembly and was appointed Minister in 2016.



## Professor Christopher Peck

### DIRECTOR

Professor Chris Peck has a long history within the healthcare sector. Director of the University of Sydney's Westmead Initiative, and the university's Dean of Dentistry, he is responsible for developing and leading the multidisciplinary strategy integrating dental and systemic health, curriculum reform and the introduction of the university's Doctor of Dental Medicine.



# Board of Directors (continued)



**Dr Janet Preuss**

**DIRECTOR**

Dr Janet Preuss has a biomedical and business background, specialising in the commercialisation of new technologies. In addition to establishing her own service-based companies, Janet has held executive and non-executive roles in private, public, not-for-profit and government organisations and has worked in the UK and Hong Kong.



**Dr David Sykes OAM**

**DIRECTOR**

Dr David Sykes is a specialist prosthodontist working in private practice in Sydney. He is a Senior Clinical Associate at the University of Sydney and has served on a number of councils, including the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons.



**Dr Felicia Valianatos**

**DIRECTOR**

Dr Felicia Valianatos is an experienced general dentist, executive manager and a passionate advocate for professional excellence. She is a Master of Health Management, a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons, a Fellow of the International College of Dentists and an Honorary Fellow at the University of Melbourne.



**Lucy Vincent**

**DIRECTOR**

Lucy Vincent has senior executive level experience in the private and public sectors covering corporate governance, change management, project management, primary industry and regional socio-economic development. With qualifications in risk management, project management, agriculture and environmental law, she is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



# Senior Leadership Team



**Narelle Mills**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Narelle Mills joined the ADC as CEO in 2016. With more than 15 years' experience in the health education and accreditation sector, she has a deep understanding of the value accreditation brings to healthcare. Narelle is active across a range of committees and working parties. She was elected as Chair of the Health Accreditation Collaborative Forum in 2021, is Co-Chair of the Accreditation Liaison Group, and is a member of the Ahpra Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Cultural Safety Strategy Group. Narelle has a Master of Health Policy and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



**Dr Justine Stamford**

**ACTING DIRECTOR, ASSESSMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS**

Dr Justine Stamford joined the ADC in 2017 as Manager, Examination Delivery. She has played an integral role in the development and implementation of the organisation's new format practical examination and has a strong interest in assessment design and quality improvement. Prior to her time with the ADC, Justine worked as a clinical dentist and holding a Master of Business Administration, consulted on several key projects in the dental health sector. She was appointed Acting Director, Assessments and Examinations in 2020.



**Mark Ford**

**DIRECTOR, ACCREDITATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE**

With extensive experience in process improvement and policy implementation Mark has held roles across the education, health, and government sectors. He joined the ADC as a Senior Accreditation Officer in 2013 and played an integral role in the 2014 accreditation standards review and subsequent revision of the professional competencies expected of newly qualify dental practitioners in 2015.



**Tara Waller**

**DIRECTOR, PEOPLE AND CULTURE**

Tara is an experienced HR strategy and leadership expert with more than 20 years' experience in People and Culture across a range of sectors. She's formally recognised for her leadership capability as an individual as well as leading award-winning teams in Organisational Development, inclusion, and diversity. She is committed to building and strengthening the culture, capability, and communication of the ADC to ensure the successful delivery of its organisational strategy.



**Dianne Moore**

**DIRECTOR, CORPORATE SERVICES**

Dianne commenced with the ADC in 2012 in the role of Director, Finance and Human Resources before being appointed to the Director, Corporate Services in 2019. Holding a Bachelor of Commerce with majors in Accounting and Human Resource Management, Dianne has managed the finance, human resources, IT and administration functions of several not-for-profit organisations in the health and welfare sectors, including the Australian Pharmacy Council.



# People and Culture Committee

## Professor Lindsay Richards

Chair, People and Culture Committee

The People and Culture (P&C) Committee, formerly the Nominations Committee, is a Standing Committee of the ADC Board of Directors. Its purpose is to advise the Board on matters relating to the composition, structure, evaluation, selection, appointment, and succession planning of the Board and its Standing Committees. It is also responsible for matters relating to the selection, appointment, and evaluation of the Chief Executive Officer and progressing the P&C agenda at the ADC.

In February 2021 the P&C Committee revised its charter and terms of reference. The purpose of this review was to expand the committee's remit to a more holistic approach to P&C related issues. These include, but are not limited to:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety,
- succession and talent management, and
- complaints management processes.

Recognising this expanded purpose, the Committee updated its name to the P&C Committee.

The P&C Committee is comprised of five members: The Board Chair, the Chair of the Assessments Committee and Chair of the Accreditation Committee, one Board Director and one independent external member with senior human resource management expertise in Board and executive recruitment, including succession planning and performance evaluation.

## Succession planning

The P&C Committee took a proactive and focused approach to succession planning for Board and Standing Committees over the 2021 financial year.

The Committee implemented a new skills matrix to support the ongoing development of Board and Standing Committee members, to enable the development of a talent pool of potential members and develop a clear success profile for those who are considering and/or appointed to one of our Standing Committees or to our Board.

A revised approach to the recruitment of Board and Committee members was also implemented with an aim of increasing the diversity of applicants to our governance positions. In particular, the Committee recognised a need to increase the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on our Board and Committees.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy

In November 2020, the P&C Committee took oversight of the ADC's first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander strategy. The strategy commits to tangible action to create pathways that will integrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and leadership in ADC decision making and will strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The strategy recognises that cultural safety cannot be a standalone activity and that Key Performance Indicators must integrate cultural safety into all our 'business as usual' activities. This includes our communication planning, capability development, how we collaborate and who we collaborate with, what we celebrate and who and how we recruit.

One of the primary actions under the strategy is the development and implementation of the ADC's first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The ADC formally expressed interest and registered its intention to launch a RAP in May 2021 with an intention that the RAP will be launched early in the 2022 calendar year.

# People and Culture Committee (continued)

## 2021 appointments

During the 2021 financial year there were three new appointments to the ADC's Board of Directors and Standing Committees. These appointments are outlined below.

TABLE ONE. BOARD AND STANDING COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS FOR FY2021

| Committee               | Appointee             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Board of Directors      | Dr Felicia Valianatos |
| Accreditation Committee | Dr Christopher Bourke |
| Assessment Committee    | Dr Aida Solarte       |

In the coming year, the P&C Committee will continue to advise the Board on succession planning and talent management, with an increased focus on understanding the talent and potential successors to Boards and Committees existing within the ADC's networks and stakeholder relationships

The Committee will lead an evaluation of performance and effectiveness of our current Board and individual members and implement recommendations to continually improve the effectiveness of the governance structures in place at the ADC. It will continue to review and develop policies and procedures to benchmark against best practice and make recommendations for Board appointments and membership of Standing Committees to ensure that the Board continues to deliver effective governance.

The Committee will also continue to expand its focus from nominations to a more fulsome P&C remit. This will include an increased focus on reconciliation, guiding the ongoing development of the RAP and ongoing implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander strategy. A review of complaints management processes, policies and procedures is another key area of focus for the committee with a new complaints management frameworks and associated policies to be implemented over the course of the financial year.

## 2021 Committee members

TABLE TWO. PEOPLE AND CULTURE COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR FY2021

| Name                                 | Role                                |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Professor Lindsay Richards, Chair    | Chair, People and Culture Committee |
| Associate Professor Deborah Cockrell | Chair, ADC Accreditation Committee  |
| Dr Janet Preuss                      | Community Representative            |
| Peter Gibson                         | Independent Member                  |
| Associate Professor Cathy Snelling   | Chair, Assessment Committee         |



# Finance Audit and Risk Monitoring Committee

**Anthony Evans**  
Chair, Finance Audit and Risk Monitoring Committee

The Finance Audit and Risk Monitoring (FARM) Committee is a Standing Committee of the ADC Board of Directors. Comprising of two ADC Board Directors and one external independent member, the FARM Committee's primary role is to monitor the ADC's financial performance and compliance obligations.

The FARM Committee is responsible for:

- monitoring policies for investment and finance,
- monitoring the organisation's ability to assess, monitor and manage risks,
- reviewing the ADC's Risk Management Plan (RMP),
- reviewing monthly and audited financial reports prior to submission to the ADC Board of Directors,
- reviewing and recommending the appointment of an external auditor,
- liaising with the auditor and reporting to the Board of Directors on the audit process,
- managing assets,
- discussing corporate risks and related matters with senior management,
- legislative compliance,
- seeking independent advice and expertise, where warranted, for due diligence, and
- other related matters as referred by the Board of Directors.

Working with the Chief Executive Officer and Finance team, the FARM Committee ensures the ADC complies with its legislative obligations as a public company under the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) and as a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

## Auditor appointment

Saward Dawson were appointed as auditors and completed the 2021 financial year audit. The FARM Committee met with Jeff Tulk and Matthew Crouch, auditors from Saward Dawson on 8 September 2021. Saward Dawson provided an unqualified audit opinion and a comprehensive review and report on internal control procedures and quality of ADC's financial management.

## Responding to COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic and continued government lockdowns and restrictions have had a significant impact on the ADC's revenue, resulting in a deficit of \$902,326 for the 2020/21 financial year. The ADC accessed government assistance and rent relief and managed cash flows to offset the reduction in examination income. The Enterprise Risk Management Plan continues to be regularly reviewed and updated with COVID-19 preventative controls and mitigation strategies.

Despite the reduction in income, the ADC continued to invest in its Information Technology (IT) systems during 2021 financial year, resulting in increased IT project expenses. This investment in IT systems will improve the ADC's processes, reduce manual work for ADC staff and improve service delivery for stakeholders.

It was recommended at the May 2020 Board meeting that the ADC develop a crisis policy to cover 'black swan' events that may have major consequences and disrupt normal business operations. The FARM Committee developed a Crisis Management Policy in response to the learnings from COVID-19 which was approved at the November 2020 Board meeting.

Due to the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, a deficit budget is also forecast for the 2022 financial year, as the ADC continues to adapt and return to normal operating activities. As part of its work as a Standing Committee of the ADC Board, the FARM Committee continues to work with the Board to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on the ADC's operating activities and financial position to ensure the ADC's financial sustainability.

## 2021 Committee members

TABLE THREE. FARM COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR FY2021

| Name                 | Role                  |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Anthony Evans        | Chair, FARM Committee |
| Professor Chris Peck | Director              |
| Samantha Challinor   | Independent Member    |

# 3

## Organisational capability





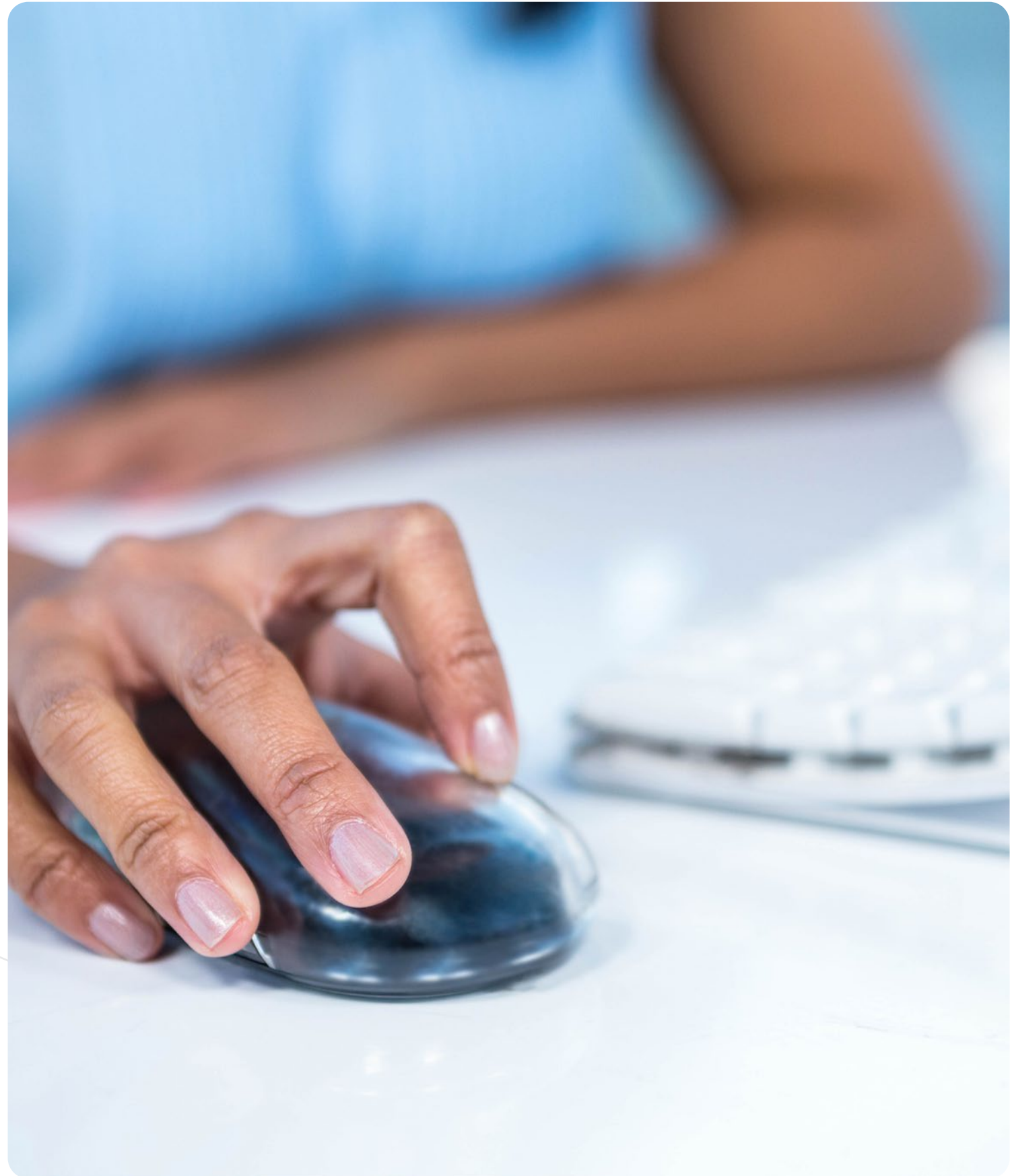
# ADC Connect: Changing how you interact with the ADC

In 2020 we announced the commencement of Program Fusion – a suite of IT infrastructure projects designed to enhance the ADC's systems and remove manual and paper-based processes. The cornerstone of this project is the development of the ADC's new online self-service portal, ADC Connect.

ADC Connect is designed to streamline our program accreditation and dental practitioner assessment processes by giving our candidates, examiners, assessors, and education providers access to our key applications, forms, and documentation. It gives our stakeholders the power to determine how they wish to interact with the ADC. Through the platform, our stakeholders will be able to complete applications, upload documents, submit annual reports, and make payments online, in real-time, with ease.

This is a significant project for the ADC. Once live, the program will enable the ADC team to increase its focus on process improvements and customer service across the organisation. An example of this can be seen in the initial assessment process. By moving the process online, candidates will no longer need to depend on international post or couriers to deliver their forms and documents, eliminating much of the manual processing currently required.

ADC Connect is on track to be launched in late-2021.





# 4

## Accreditation and assessment





# Accreditation Committee

**Associate Professor Deborah Cockrell**  
Chair, Accreditation Committee

The Accreditation Committee is made up of individuals with backgrounds from across the dental professions with experience in dental education and practice, community advocacy and representation, and a student representative. The main roles carried out by the Committee are to:

- a. Develop, review and consult on *Accreditation Standards for dental practitioner programs*.
- b. Develop, review and consult on *Professional Competencies of the newly qualified dental practitioner*.
- c. Assess dental practitioner programs against the Standards and make a decision or recommendation about the accreditation outcome.
- d. Monitor accredited programs to ensure they continue to meet the Standards throughout the period of accreditation.

It is hard to imagine that more than a year has gone by since the Accreditation Committee last met in person, but what a year it has been. Flexibility seems to have been the only constant across the year as the work of the Accreditation Committee has continued unabated.

I acknowledge and thank the members of the Accreditation Committee and assessors on Accreditation Teams for their significant contributions, ensuring that dental education programs in Australia continue to meet the accreditation standards and remain so highly respected. The flexibility of Accreditation teams and the providers of the programs we accredit is a testament to the resilience and adaptability of both assessors and educators.

The ADC Accreditation Team has worked tirelessly to support the work of the Committee and our assessors, and I thank them for all their support. The team is led by Mark Ford in the role of Director, Accreditation and Quality Assurance and includes Anne Szadura as the Manager, Accreditation, and Samantha Fairclough as Senior Accreditation Officer. This year Mark, Anne and Samantha have welcomed into the team Dr Andrea Watt in the role of Policy and Research Coordinator

and two new Senior Accreditation Officers, Michael Tamayo and Sidra Farooqui. All have adapted quickly to their roles, and I look forward to working with them.

Across the 2021 financial year a total of 26 programs have been reviewed for re-accreditation and one new program has been accredited. A further six programs are scheduled to be reviewed for re-accreditation by the end of 2021 and two programs are under review as the result of material changes introduced by providers. It has been a busy review schedule and we thank providers for their ongoing engagement and professionalism as they undertake the accreditation process.

From the start of 2021, the ADC recommenced accreditation site visits, either in person or virtually, as circumstances and travel restrictions allowed. Safety of all involved in the accreditation process has continued to be our primary concern. Undertaking accreditation reviews in a COVIDSafe way has been central to the ADC's approach to determining whether onsite visits are practicable or whether a virtual visit is required. Providers and assessors have been very flexible to adapting to new ways of working, with changes sometimes occurring at very short notice.

We continue to see the pandemic impacting dental practitioner programs, some significantly more than others. These impacts have been closely monitored by the ADC in accordance with [ADC's protocol to monitor the impacts on accredited programs of the COVID-19 pandemic](#) (the Protocol). The Protocol was first introduced in March 2020 and has guided how the ADC and education providers have worked together throughout the pandemic to ensure that accredited programs continue to meet the Standards. Ever evolving, revisions to the Protocol were agreed by the Accreditation Committee at its 18 November 2020 meeting, requiring quarterly, in lieu of monthly, exception-based reports to be submitted. The aim of using an exception-based reporting approach allows the ADC to fulfill its

obligations to ensure programs continue to meet the Accreditation Standards. The need to advise the ADC only of what has changed reduces any unnecessary burden on education providers.

Regardless of the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, much has been achieved over the course of the year, including from 1 January 2021 the implementation of the revised [ADC/DC\(NZ\) Accreditation standards for dental practitioner programs](#) (the Standards). A key change to the Standards is the inclusion of a cultural safety Domain, which was developed in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health leaders. This focus on cultural safety is aligned with the work of the ADC in improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

To support the implementation of the revised Standards the ADC has updated the [ADC Accreditation guidelines for dental practitioner programs](#) as well as released publicly for the first time the [Prompts for assessment - Assessing an education program against the ADC Accreditation Standards](#). This is a valuable resource for both assessors and education providers in determining whether a program is meeting the Standards.

The review of the *Professional Competencies of the newly qualified dental practitioner* (the Competencies) commenced in early 2021. An Advisory Committee has been formed and initial stakeholder consultations supported revisions to the Competencies in focus areas identified, including practitioners' readiness to provide care to those at greatest risk of poor oral health outcomes. I would like to thank the stakeholder groups and their representatives for their commitment to this collaborative approach.

The Competencies review is expected to be completed by the end of 2021. Revision of the Competencies are aimed at ensuring that newly qualified dental practitioners have the knowledge and skills needed to meet the future oral health needs of the Australian population.

# ADC Accreditation Committee (continued)

## Accreditation of dental education programs

Accreditation is granted by the ADC to dental practitioner programs meeting the *ADC/DC(NZ) Accreditation standards for dental practitioner programs* (the Standards). Accreditation means the program produces graduates with the professional competencies necessary to apply for registration to practise dentistry in Australia.

## Accreditation Committee meetings

### ADC/DC(NZ) Accreditation Committee meeting

- 14 August 2020 (video conference)

### ADC Accreditation Committee meetings

- 24 September 2020 (video conference)
- 30 October 2020 (video conference)
- 18 November 2020 (video conference)
- 10 December 2020 (video conference)
- 29 January 2021 (video conference)
- 17 March 2021 (video conference)
- 5 May 2021 (video conference)
- 16 June 2021 (video conference)

The joint ADC/Dental Council (New Zealand) (DC(NZ)) Accreditation Committee held its last meeting on 14 August 2020. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the DC(NZ), the New Zealand committee members and DC(NZ) staff for their dedication and collegiality. It has been a pleasure working with the DC(NZ) and we look forward to collaborating on future projects.

The ADC Accreditation Committee held its first meeting on 24 September 2020 and during the year welcomed Dr Christopher Bourke as a new member.

Emma Turner stepped down at the end of 2020 following the completion of her term as the student representative. We have welcomed Phillip Nguyen as our new student representative. I would like to thank Emma, Phillip and the Australian Dental Students' Association (ADSA) for their contribution to the Accreditation Committee.

## 2021 Committee members

TABLE FOUR. ADC ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR FY2021

| Name  | Role  |
|---|---|
| Associate Professor Deborah Cockrell          | Chair, ADC Accreditation Committee                                      |
| Dr Kate Amos                                  | Dental practitioner   |
| Adjunct Associate Professor Werner Bischof AM | Dental Specialist   |
| Dr Chris Bourke                               | Director, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dental practitioner |
| Jan Connolly                                  | Community representative  |
| Kelly Di Manno                                | Dental hygienist  |
| Anthony Evans                                 | Director, and community representative                                  |
| Phillip Nguyen <i>from January 2021</i>       | Final year dental student   |
| Kate Thomas                                   | Community representative  |
| Emma Turner <i>to December 2020</i>           | Final year dental student   |



# Professional competencies review

*The Professional competencies of the newly qualified dental practitioner* (the competencies) outline at a threshold level what is expected of someone on their first day as a dental professional.

The competencies are one of the most important documents used by the ADC in its work to accredit dental programs and assess overseas trained dental practitioners.

These outcome focused statements are used in program accreditation to ensure dental programs prepare their students with the skills, knowledge and capabilities needed to practise safely upon graduation. In the overseas qualified dental practitioner assessment and examination process, the competencies are an important reference point for mapping and blueprinting examinations.

The consistent application of the competencies across the ADC's work is vital. It ensures Australian graduates and overseas trained dental practitioners meet the same threshold.

The competencies have a broader application beyond the work of the ADC and are frequently used by the dental professions, regulators, consumers, and employers.

Due to their impact, it is important that the competencies align with the expectations and needs of the Australian population. They also need to be appropriately focused to ensure those seeking to apply for registration have the knowledge and skills needed to practise safely and ethically.

It is for these reasons that the ADC regularly reviews the competencies.

The role of the competencies goes beyond the work of the ADC. They are an important document for all dental stakeholders. It is for this reason the ADC convened the Professional competencies review advisory committee in early 2021.

Made up of a diverse group, the advisory committee has helped inform the review process and ensure any proposed revisions are relevant to the professions and the needs of the community.

In April 2021, the ADC conducted a survey to determine whether the competencies worked in their current format and identify potential areas for improvement.

Open to all our dental stakeholders, findings from the survey indicated that respondents were supportive of the proposed focus areas for the review, including:

- cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples,
- interprofessional collaborative practise,
- care and treatment of people experiencing domestic and family violence,
- at risk groups, including those living with disability,
- preparedness to serve rural and remote communities, and
- social accountability and environmental awareness.

Feedback from the stakeholder survey identified that in reviewing the competencies consideration of moving from patient-centred to person-centred approaches to care; practitioner readiness to utilise emerging technologies, including telehealth; and the self-awareness, well-being, reflective practise, and resilience of dental practitioners should be included as areas of focus.

This feedback has been incorporated in the potential revisions to the competencies.

At the time of writing the proposed changes to the competences are open for public consultation. The revised competences are expected to be approved in late-2021 with an implementation plan released in early 2022.



# Assessment Committee

## Associate Professor Cathy Snelling Chair, Assessment Committee

Even in challenging circumstances the ADC dental practitioner assessment process continues to contribute to achievement of the ADC vision.

This year's message only covers a fraction of the work completed by the ADC team during the 2021 financial year. This year I've seen the ADC work on and deliver a number of significant projects while navigating the fall out of state, territory, and federal government impacts on the delivery of the dental practitioner assessment process.

### COVID-19 response

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to have a substantial impact on the delivery of each stage of the dental practitioner assessment process.

The ADC, in partnership with test delivery partner Pearson VUE, was able to safely deliver two written examination sessions in September 2020 and March 2021. Candidates affected by the postponement of the March 2020 written examination were offered the opportunity to sit the September 2020 examination. More than 500 candidates made the decision to sit this examination, with 46 per cent successfully passing.

The March 2021 examination was open to all candidates with a valid initial assessment. Again, more than 500 candidates sat the examination with 42 per cent successfully passing.

The successful and safe delivery of both examinations is testament to the hard work of the ADC team.

The impacts of COVID-19 on our initial assessment process and practical examination have been more profound. The arrival of the Delta variant and subsequent restrictions introduced by state, territory, and federal governments, including the announcement of lockdowns in Victoria, significantly impacted the ADC's ability to process initial assessment applications and deliver the practical examination.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our candidates for their ongoing patience and understanding throughout the 2021 financial year. We are acutely aware of the impact COVID-19 has had on our candidates, both in Australia and around the world. The *COVID-19 policy: Assessments and Examinations* details the measures introduced by the ADC from the start of the pandemic to support candidates through their candidature at this time.

Delivering high stakes examinations was a permitted activity in accordance with public health orders issued by the Victorian Government in 2021 and the ADC has worked tirelessly to assess as many candidates as possible during extended lockdowns in 2021. As I write this year's message, work is now underway to process initial assessment applications received during the various lockdowns. The ADC is also delivering practical examinations for more than 400 candidates impacted by postponements due to COVID-19 with seats for 2022 to be opened by end of 2021.

### Release of the new format written examination

In May 2021, we announced that the revised written examination was scheduled to be delivered in September 2021. The ADC is committed to the delivery of a fair, responsive, and valid assessment process.

As part of this commitment, ADC formed the Assessment Review Working Party (ARWP) in 2018 to comprehensively review the ADC assessment process. The review took into consideration a wide range of procedural and statistical information, as well as advice from external consultants.

The ARWP determined that revisions to the written examination format, in line with national and international best practice were needed. This project included a comprehensive review of the assessment blueprint, along with the Written Examination and

Practical Examination blueprints. Feedback from the candidate survey was also considered, including overwhelming support for scenario-based questions and a reduced number of total questions per paper.

As a result, the new format has seen a reduction in the number of questions to 280, with all questions following a scenario-based format. This format is designed to give candidates with a greater opportunity to showcase their application of the knowledge of the science and practise of dentistry in a clinical situation. Furthermore, candidates are assessed against their performance across the entire examination, rather than by each paper.

It has taken a team to complete this review. Thanks must go to ARWP members Dr Tom Tseng, Dr Anu Polster, Professor Lindsay Richards, Dr Felicia Valianatos and Chief Executive Officer, Narelle Mills for their hard work and quality contributions to this review.

As I write this year's message the team is working on resulting for the September 2021 written examination. More information on the outcomes will be available in the 2022 report.

### 2021 appointments

In February 2021 we welcomed Dr Aida Solarte to the Assessment Committee (the Committee). A former ADC candidate, Aida now a practising dentist. Aida's appointment follows a decision in 2020 to introduce a specific member category on the Committee for a recently successful candidate. This was an important step for the Committee. The ADC's work, across all sections, is to ensure the health and safety of the public. Having a former candidate on the Committee gives us a unique insight into the process from the candidate perspective.

Aida's appointment coincides with the reappointments of Dr Mark Rowe and Professor John Boucher AM in May and June 2021 respectively.



# Assessment Committee (continued)

## In closing

This is my last message as Chair before I step down from Board of Directors in November 2021. I will continue to be an active member of the Committee into 2022.

It has been a privilege to serve on the Committee as Chair. I would like to thank everyone who has supported me during this time and has contributed so much to the dental practitioner assessment process. This includes members of the Committee, examiners, item writers, and convenors who give their time to develop and run examinations. I would also like to thank the ADC team for their continued hard work and dedication to the process. A lot of work goes on behind the scenes to ensure each stage of the process runs as seamlessly as possible. Thanks to each of you to making this possible.

This year we said goodbye to Dr Justine Stamford as Acting Director, Assessments and Examinations. Justine stepped into the role at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and, among her many achievements, was able to successfully develop a strategy to ensure the safe resumption of examinations during the 2021 financial year. I would like to thank Justine for her contribution to the ADC, not only as Acting Director, but throughout her time with the organisation. She has a bright future ahead and I wish her every success.

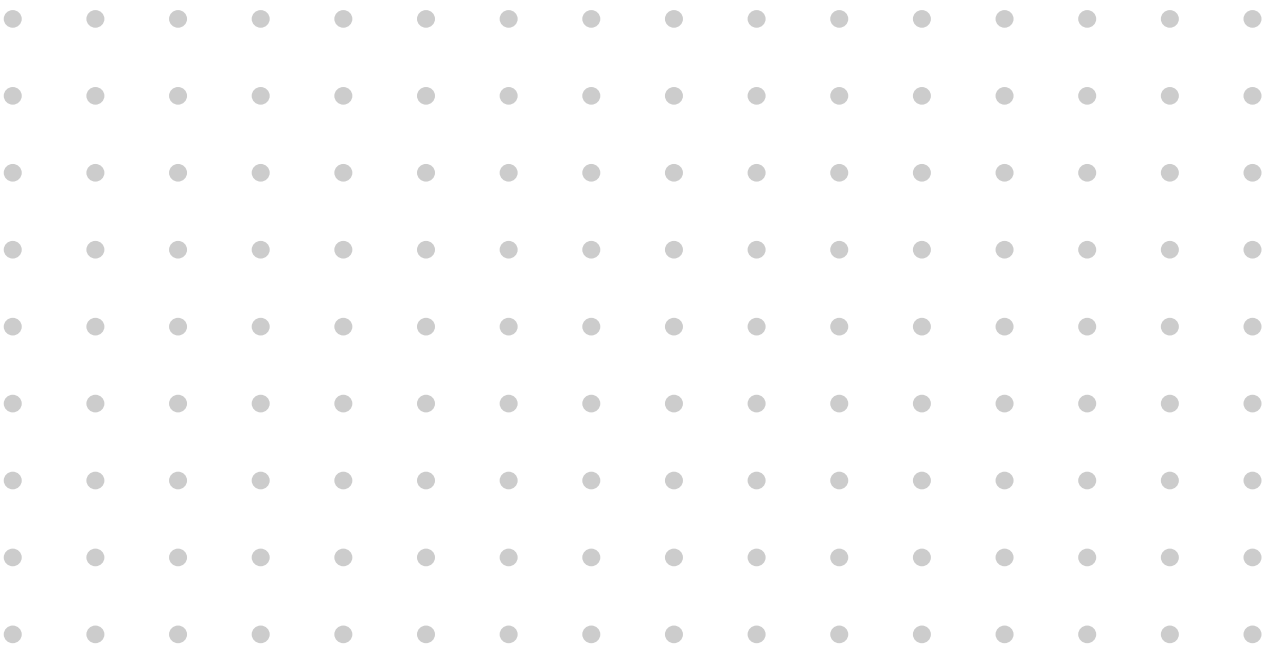
It is my privilege to congratulate Dr Felicia Valianatos on her appointment to Chair of the Assessment Committee. Felicia has a long history with the ADC, starting as a candidate in 2000 and in the following years as an examiner, convenor, and more recently as a Board Director. She has a great passion for the dental profession and the work of the ADC. She will step into the role in November 2021 and I am confident that she will lead the Committee from strength to strength.

I've thoroughly enjoyed my time with the ADC. It has been a privilege to work with such an incredible and dedicated group of people. There are a lot of exciting things on the horizon and I look forward to seeing what the ADC achieves next.

## 2021 Committee members

TABLE FIVE. ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR FY2021

| Name                                      | Role   |
|---|--|
| Associate Professor Cathy Snelling        | Chair, Assessment Committee                  |
| Associate Professor John Boucher AM       | Dental practitioner                          |
| Associate Professor James Dudley          | Dental practitioner                          |
| James Farrugia                            | Community representative                     |
| Paul Geyer                                | Community representative                     |
| Dr Mark Rowe                              | Community representative                     |
| Dr Aida Solarte <i>from February 2021</i> | Dental practitioner and former ADC candidate |
| Dr Tom Tseng                              | Dental practitioner                          |



# Assessments and examinations statistics

## Initial assessments

The ADC received and processed 636 initial assessments of professional qualifications (initial assessments) applications across all dental professions between July 2020 and June 2021.

Initial assessment numbers are consistent with previous financial years. This is despite the impact on application processing due to Victorian Government lockdown restrictions.

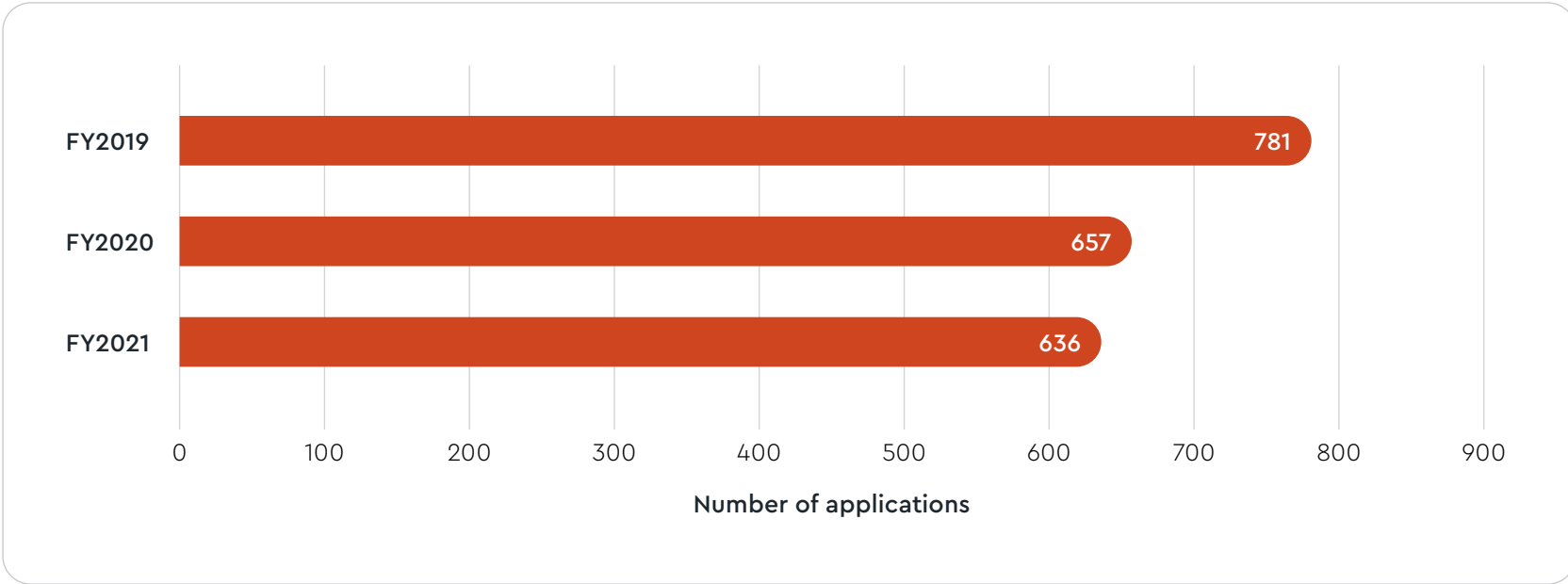
Table six and Figure one provide an overview of the number of initial assessment applications processed by the ADC during the last three financial years (July 2018 to June 2021).

TABLE SIX. INITIAL ASSESSMENTS PROCESSED FROM FY2019 TO FY2021

| Financial Year | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Total |
|----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| FY2019         | 56  | 59  | 68  | 99  | 58  | 39  | 61  | 70  | 83  | 72  | 57  | 59  | 781   |
| FY2020         | 54  | 68  | 67  | 84  | 63  | 34  | 64  | 98  | 79  | 13  | 10  | 23  | 657   |
| FY2021         | 42  | 32  | 29  | 43  | 79  | 52  | 62  | 68  | 76  | 57  | 54  | 42  | 636   |
| Average        | 51  | 53  | 55  | 61  | 67  | 42  | 63  | 79  | 79  | 47  | 22  | 41  | 691   |

\*Initial assessment processing was postponed for periods in the 2020 and 2021 financial years due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions introduced by the Victorian Government.

FIGURE ONE. INITIAL ASSESSMENTS PROCESSED FROM FY2019 TO FY2021





# Assessments and examinations statistics (continued)

## Written examinations

### General dentistry

The written examination for general dentistry is delivered in a computer-based format at testing centres across Australia and around the world.

Two written examination sessions were held in the 2021 financial year. We worked closely with our test delivery partner, Pearson VUE, to safely deliver a written examination in September 2020. All candidates affected by the postponement of the March 2020 written examination were offered a seat in this examination. Overall, 584 candidates sat the September 2020 written examination. Of these 270, or 46 per cent, of candidates passed the examination.

A second written examination was held in March 2021. Using the learnings from the March and September 2020 written examinations, the ADC was able to safely deliver the examination for 585 candidates across approximately 30 venues around the world. Of the sitting candidates 246, or 42 per cent, passed the examination.

The number of candidates sitting the written examination in the 2021 financial year is below the historical average. It is anticipated that these numbers will increase as the world recovers from the effects of COVID-19.

Table seven and Figure two outline the written examination pass rates for general dentistry during the past two financial years.

### Dental hygiene, dental therapy, and combined dental hygiene/dental therapy

Four candidates sat the written examination across the dental therapy, dental hygiene, and combined dental hygiene/dental therapy professions in September 2020. These candidates were originally scheduled to sit the March 2020 written examination before it was postponed due to COVID-19. Three of the four candidates, or 75 per cent, passed the examination.

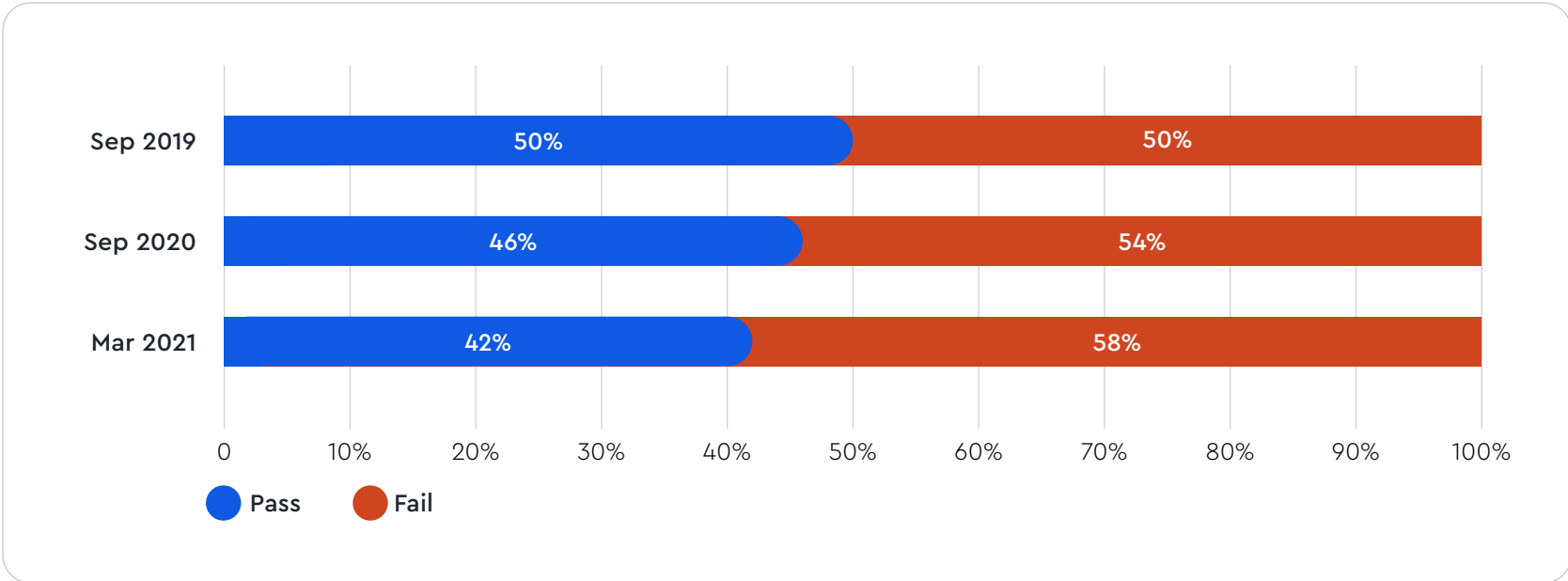
No written examination was held for dental hygiene, dental therapy, or combined dental hygiene/dental therapy in March 2021. This was due to no applications being received during the application period.

TABLE SEVEN. WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS IN GENERAL DENTISTRY COMPLETED BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 2019 AND JUNE 2021

| Exam date | Sep 2019 | Sep 2020 | Mar 2021 | Average |
|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| Total     | 686      | 584      | 585      | 618     |
| Pass      | 343      | 270      | 246      | 286     |
| Fail      | 344      | 314      | 339      | 332     |
| % Pass    | 50%      | 46%      | 42%      | 46%     |
| % Fail    | 50%      | 54%      | 58%      | 54%     |

\*Only one written examination was held in the 2020 financial year due to the postponement of the March 2020 examination due to evolving COVID-19 situation.

FIGURE TWO. PASS RATE FOR WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS IN GENERAL DENTISTRY COMPLETED BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 2019 AND JUNE 2021



# Assessments and examinations statistics (continued)

## Practical examinations

### General dentistry

Between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021, 580 practical examinations were delivered across 29 examination sessions. Ongoing lockdown measures introduced by the Victorian Government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic restricted the opening of the ADC's examination centre. This impacted on the number of practical examinations delivered by the ADC during the 2021 financial year.

Of the candidates sitting practical examinations in the 2021 financial year, 209 candidates, or 36 per cent, passed the assessment.

A comparison of the practical examination session numbers, attendance, and pass rates over the last three financial years is available in Table eight.

To pass the practical examination, candidates do not need to pass each individual practical examination session or task. Rather, they need to achieve a pass in seven 'clusters', which are groupings of like tasks. The clusters include communication, infection control, clinical information gathering, diagnosis, and management planning, clinical treatment and evaluation, restoration-based tasks, and preparation-based tasks.

The ADC introduced the revised communication cluster assessment rubric and cut score on 15 March 2021. Updated assessment criteria across the clinical information gathering, diagnosis and management planning and clinical treatment and evaluation clusters was also introduced at this time.

The dataset for the 2021 financial year contains a combination of results from examinations using the previous assessment criteria and the revised assessment criteria for the clusters.

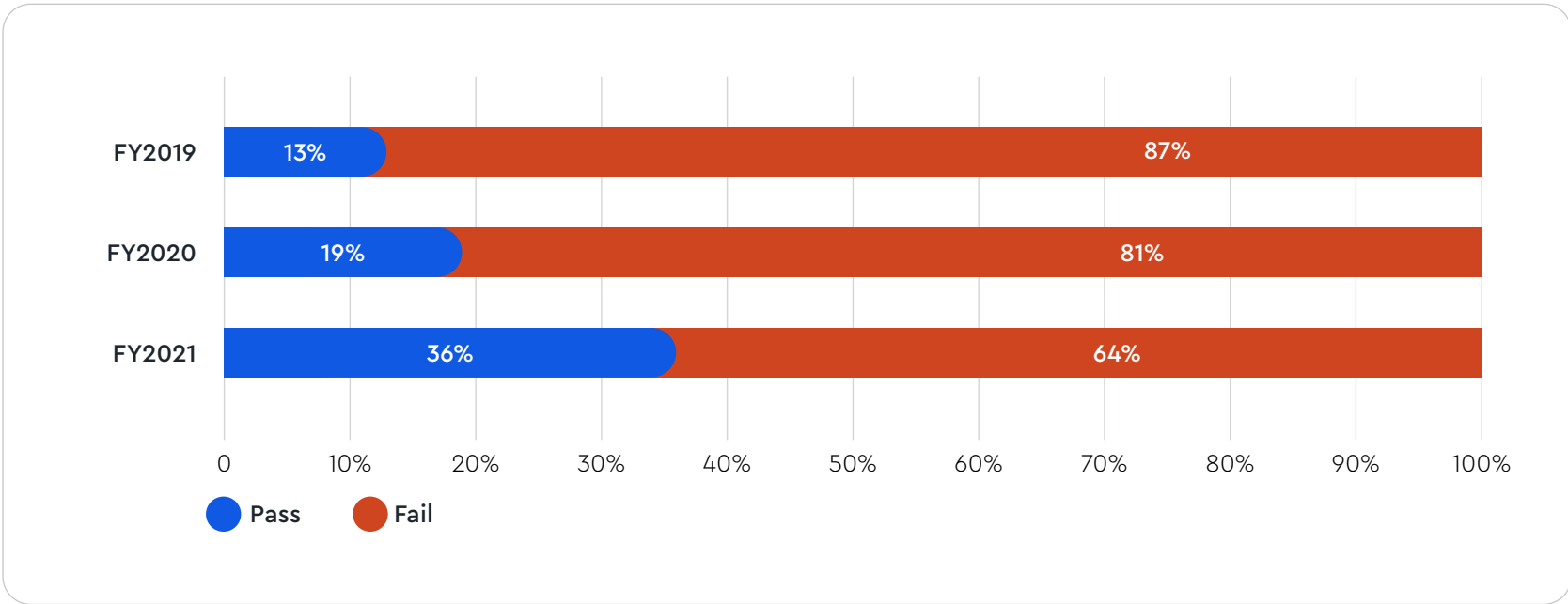
A comparison of overall candidate performance between the 2019 and 2021 financial years is provided in Figure three. The number of candidates completing the practical examination in the 2021 financial year was substantially lower than in previous years, impacting the ability to make direct comparisons across candidate cohorts.

TABLE EIGHT. PRACTICAL EXAMINATION IN GENERAL DENTISTRY COMPLETED BETWEEN JULY 2018 AND JUNE 2021.

| Measurement                     | FY2019 | FY2020* | FY2021* |
|---------------------------------|--------|---------|---------|
| Number of sessions held         | 57     | 40      | 29      |
| Number of assessments           | 1,339  | 940     | 580     |
| Attendance rate                 | 98%    | 98%     | 83%     |
| Number of candidates successful | 176    | 180     | 209     |
| % Pass                          | 13%    | 19%     | 36%     |

\*Select practical examinations scheduled in 2020 and 2021 were postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions

FIGURE THREE. CANDIDATE PASS RATES FOR THE GENERAL DENTISTRY PRACTICAL EXAMINATION BETWEEN FY2019 AND FY2021





# Assessments and examinations statistics (continued)

A comparison of candidate performance in the clusters during the past three financial years is demonstrated in Figure four.

Cluster performance has improved over financial years, with the average number of clusters passed by candidates also increasing. Increased candidate performance across all clusters is consistent with the increased pass rate for the practical examination in the 2021 financial year.

Despite cluster and overall pass rates improving in the 2021 financial year, there continues to be a discrepancy between the overall pass rate and individual cluster pass rates. This suggests that no individual cluster is acting as a hurdle for passing the practical examination. Rather, it is the need to demonstrate the competence across the suite of skills of a general dentist, to pass all clusters, that seems to be impacting overall candidate pass rates.

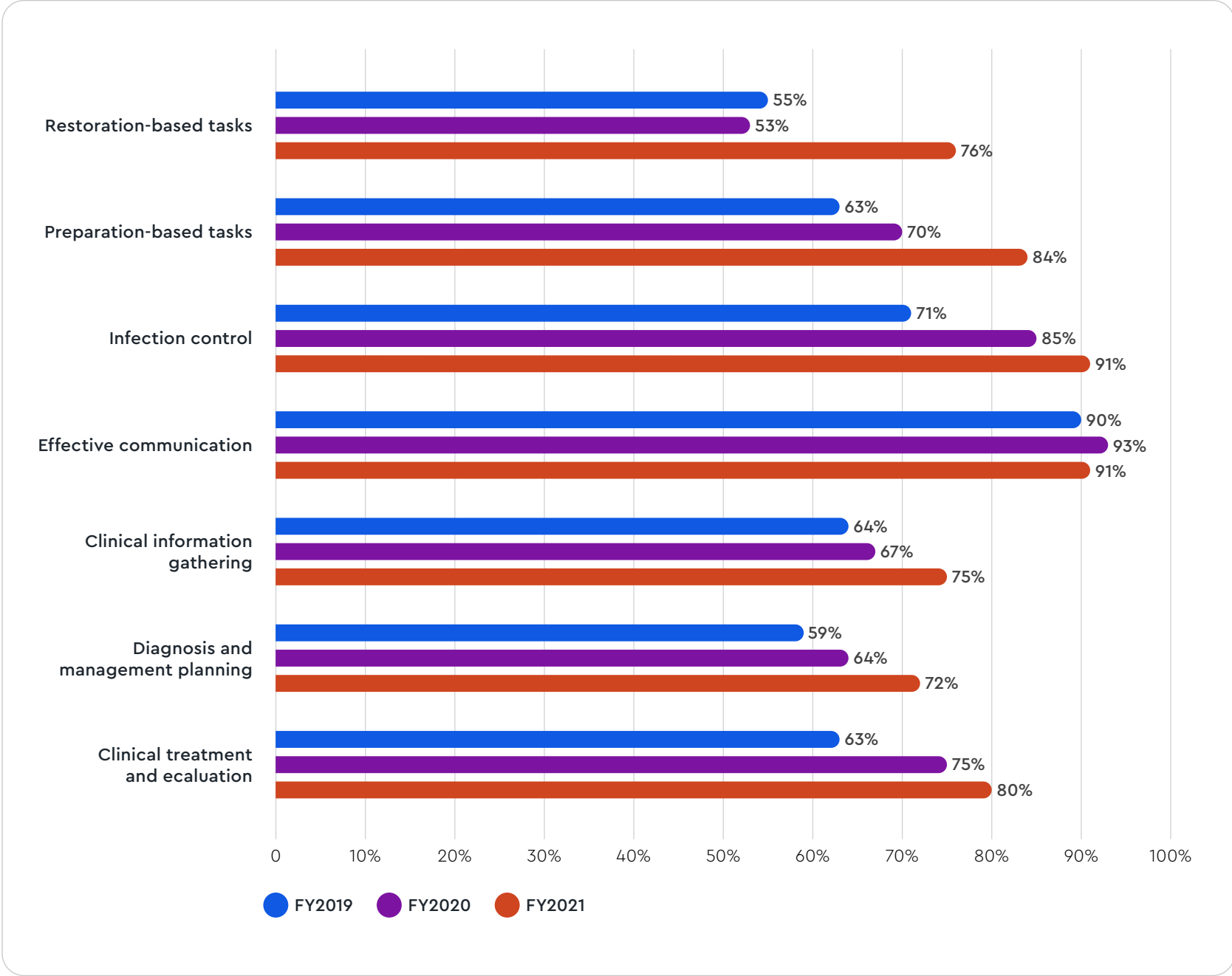
As identified in Figure three, the lower number of candidates completing the practical examination in 2021 financial year does not allow for meaningful comparisons with previous candidate cohorts.

## Dental hygiene, dental therapy, and combined dental hygiene/dental therapy

A practical examination was held for dental hygiene, dental therapy, and combined dental hygiene/dental therapy on 26 March 2021. Four candidates across these professions sat the examinations. No candidates were successful in this examination.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic no practical examinations for dental hygiene, dental therapy, and combined dental hygiene/dental therapy between March 2020 and February 2021.

FIGURE FOUR. CANDIDATE PASS RATES FOR EACH CLUSTER OF THE GENERAL DENTISTRY PRACTICAL EXAMINATION BETWEEN FY2019 AND FY2021.



# Preparation for practice research released

## The accreditation of dental practitioner programs leading to registration as a dental practitioner in Australia is a core function of the ADC.

However, in order to evaluate the impact of accreditation, the ADC wanted to understand how prepared dental graduates are to practise once they have completed an accredited program.

To strengthen the organisation's understanding on the extent to which dental practitioner programs leading to general registration prepared dental practitioners for practise, the ADC commissioned the University of Melbourne to complete a research project titled [\*Preparation for practice of newly qualified dental practitioners in Australia\*](#).

This body of work aimed to address the outcomes the ADC seeks to achieve through the undertaking of its accreditation activities.

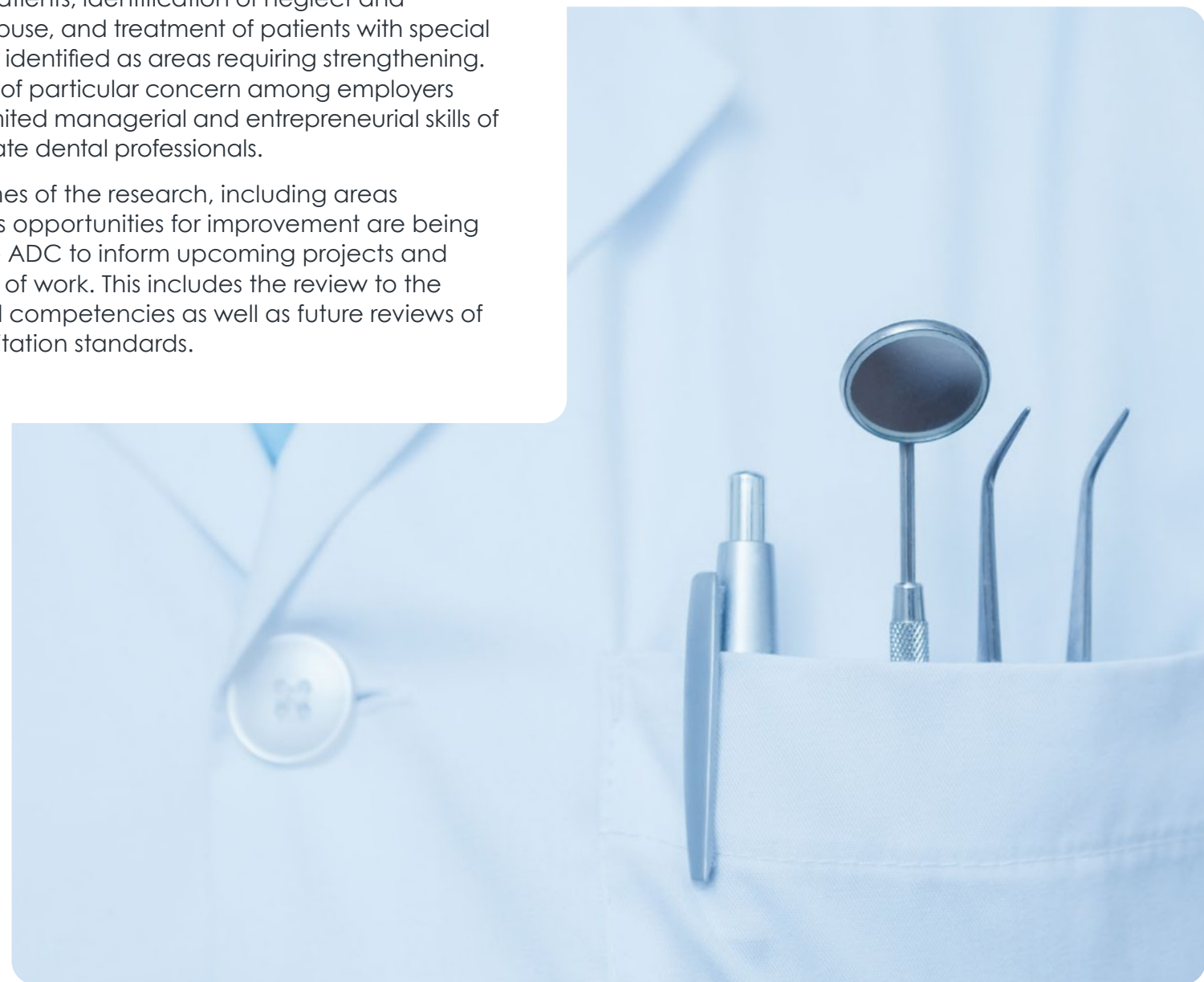
The research focused specifically on programs producing graduates eligible to apply for registration as a dentist, dental hygienist, dental therapist, oral health therapist, or dental prosthetist in Australia.

This project was completed in two stages using a mixed method approach. The initial phase involved the creation of a theoretical framework of preparedness for practise areas and priorities. The second phase involved the collection of qualitative and quantitative data from a wide range of stakeholders, including current students, recent graduates, dental professionals, and dental consumers.

Overall, findings from the research suggest that graduates from Australian dental practitioner programs are prepared to practise safely upon graduation. New graduates were well prepared in competencies such as communication skills, social and community orientation, and being aware of limitations, professional attitude, and ethical judgement.

The study results indicated that new graduates were less prepared for managing emergencies, as well as the management and treatment of dental trauma. Stakeholders questioned the sufficiency of real-life exposure and preparedness for dealing with new clinical and non-clinical challenges. More specifically, referral of patients, identification of neglect and domestic abuse, and treatment of patients with special needs were identified as areas requiring strengthening. In addition, of particular concern among employers were the limited managerial and entrepreneurial skills of new graduate dental professionals.

The outcomes of the research, including areas identified as opportunities for improvement are being used by the ADC to inform upcoming projects and other areas of work. This includes the review to the professional competencies as well as future reviews of the accreditation standards.





# 5

## Stakeholder engagement





# Work starts on the ADC's first Reconciliation Action Plan

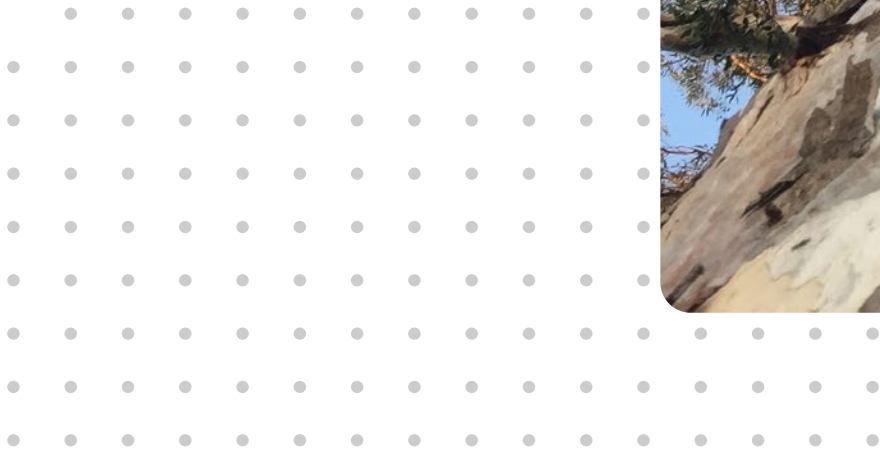
In May 2021 the ADC registered its intention to develop its inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). This step marks the start of the organisation's formal reconciliation journey.

The RAP will provide a structured plan to drive the organisation's contribution to reconciliation, internally, more broadly through our role as a leader in accreditation and assessment and within the communities within which the ADC operates.

The journey will start with the development of a Reflect RAP. As the beginning level RAP, it will set out the foundations of the ADC's reconciliation approach. It will outline the structure and time needed to scope and develop relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and shape the organisation's vision for reconciliation. It is an important first step as it will help in the production of future RAPs that are meaningful, mutually beneficial, and sustainable.

A Working Group (the Group) has been established to lead the RAP's development. Made up of nine representatives from inside and outside the ADC, the Group is responsible for the RAP's development, implementation, and reporting. It is co-chaired by Goreng Goreng, Gangulu and Biri Gubba man and President of the Indigenous Dentist's Association of Australia, Dr Gari Watson, and Tara Waller, Director, People and Culture .

The Group first met in July 2021. The RAP is due for completion in early-2022.





# The ADC signs Memorandum of Understanding with the Commission for Academic Accreditation

On 23 February 2021 the ADC signed a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA), the National Accreditation Agency affiliated with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Ministry of Education.

Under the MoU the CAA awarded the ADC international accreditation authority status in registered higher education institutions in the UAE.

This recognition means that higher education providers based in the UAE can have their dental practitioner programs accredited by the ADC against the same standards and professional competencies as Australian programs. Furthermore, education providers in the UAE can seek joint accreditation by the CAA and ADC.

The signing of this MoU is a milestone event for the ADC. It highlights the high regard in which Australian accreditation standards and processes are held, not only within the UAE, but around the world.

The MoU will also provide opportunities for greater information sharing and collaboration between the two organisations on projects and activities regarding international program accreditation. Many of these projects will aim to enhance the understanding of accreditation practices across different jurisdictions to the benefit of the sector overall.

For students of dental practitioner programs in the United Arab Emirates accredited by the ADC the MoU opens up opportunities for them to pursue their postgraduate studies in Australia. Graduates of an ADC accredited program from the United Arab Emirates will still be required to complete the dental practitioner assessment process before they are eligible to register to practise with the Dental Board of Australia.

The ADC is now working closely with CAA to develop projects which aim to benefit the accreditation sector now and into the future.





# Engaging with our stakeholders

Stakeholder engagement is vital for the ADC's success. While COVID-19 impacted our ability to travel and meet with our stakeholders face-to-face, we were still committed to regular and meaningful engagement with all our stakeholders.

## Engaging with accredited programs

We regularly engage with providers of dental education and training programs and the Australasian Council of Dental Schools (ACODS) on matters relating to program accreditation. The frequency of these meetings was increased during the 2021 financial year to help programs navigate changes to reporting and monitoring requirements due to COVID-19.

In the 2021 financial year the ADC also worked to regularly meet with the Australian Dental Students Association. These meetings helped the ADC triangulate information received from providers and clarify the impact of COVID-19 on programs.

## Disability Royal Commission

As part of its role as the accreditation authority for the Australian dental professions, the ADC was asked by the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission) to give evidence on its processes and procedures as they relate to individuals with physical and cognitive disabilities. This evidence was submitted on 12 November 2020.

The ADC was further requested by the Disability Royal Commission to provide verbal evidence on 2 March 2021. The ADC Chief Executive Officer, Narelle Mills represented the ADC on the panel which also included representatives from the ADA, ACODS and the University of Western Australia.

## The provision of healthcare for people with intellectual disability

Following from the Disability Royal Commission, the ADC has increased its involvement in fora focusing on the provision of healthcare for people with intellectual disability.

In March 2021, Mark Ford, Director, Accreditation and Quality Assurance participated in discussions with the Disability and Oral Health Collaboration on the accessibility and quality of dental services for people with intellectual disability.

The ADC's Chief Executive Officer, Narelle Mills has also been involved in targeted group discussion on the development of the National Roadmap for improving Health Services for People with Intellectual Disability. Narelle has now been invited to participate on the Commonwealth Government's Roadmap Implementation Governance Group from November 2021.

Work and outcomes from these will inform the future work of the ADC. This includes informing the focus areas for the competencies review.

## International collaboration

The ADC continues to participate in international engagement, with regulators/accreditors in different jurisdictions to inform the work of the ADC and to identify opportunities for continued improvement. This culminated in a meeting on 5 November 2020, convened by the ADC in a meeting of International Dental regulators, with ongoing discussion and collaboration. Participants shared their responses to COVID-19 and lessons learned for the benefit of the group.

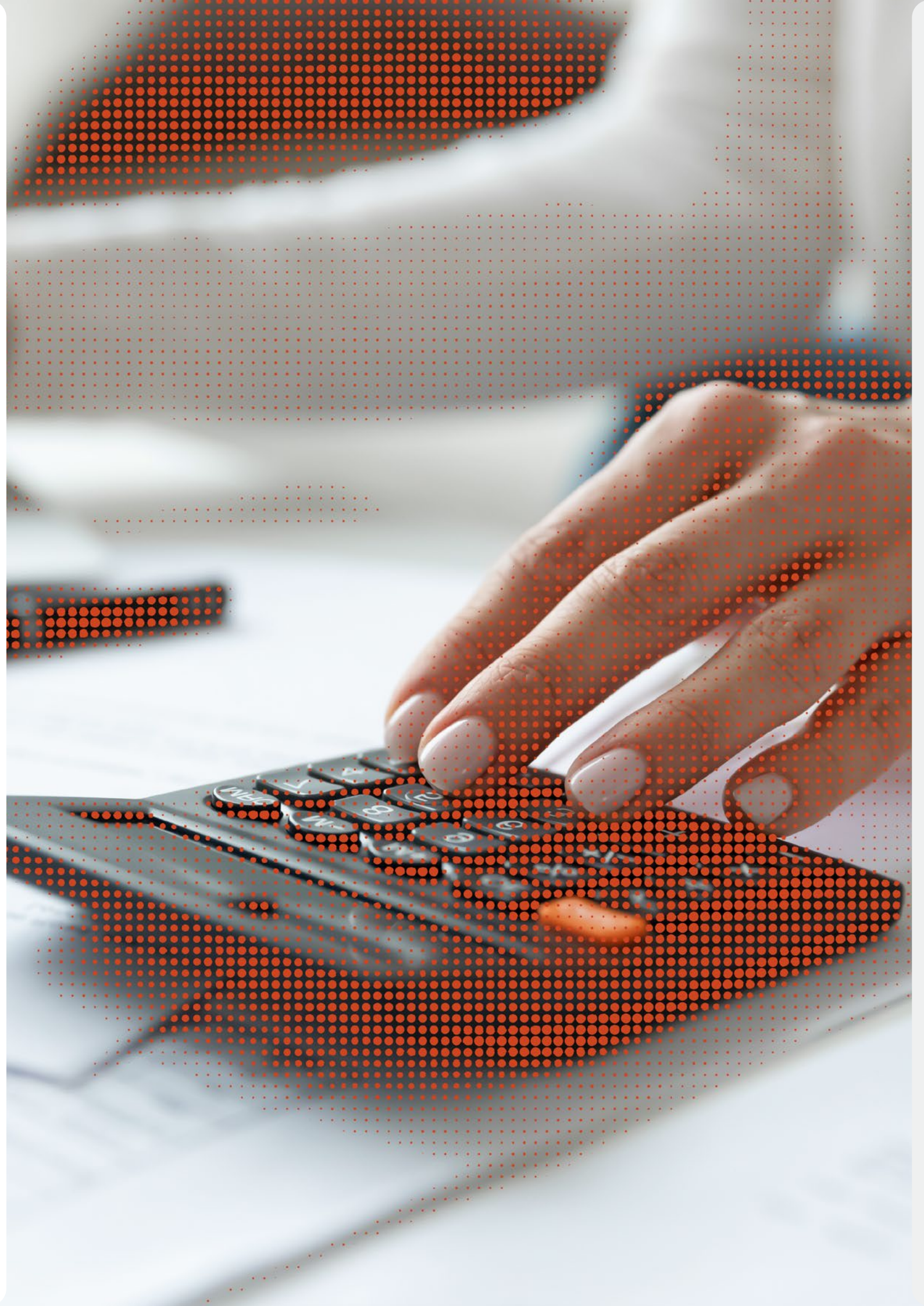
This meeting was valuable to the ADC as it helped clarify the organisation's approach to program accreditation and assessment and examinations, not only in response to COVID-19, but for the organisation's future plans.





# 6

## 2020/21 Statement of financials





# Auditor's statement



**Australian Dental Council Limited**

**ABN 70 072 269 900**

## **Report of the Independent Auditor on the Summary Financial Statements**

### **Opinion**

The summary financial statements, which comprise the summary statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021 and the summary statement of profit and loss and other comprehensive income for the year then ended, are derived from the audited financial report of Australian Dental Council Limited for the year ended 30 June 2021.

In our opinion, the accompanying summary financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial report.

### **Summary Financial Statements**

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Australian Accounting Standards – *Reduced Disclosure Requirements (including Australian Accounting Interpretations)* and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012. Reading the summary financial statements and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial report and the auditor's report thereon. The summary financial statements and the audited financial report do not reflect the effects of events that occurred subsequent to the date of our report on the audited financial report.

### **The Audited Financial Report and Our Report Thereon**

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the audited financial report in our report dated 7 October 2021.

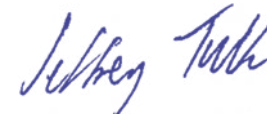
### **Board's Responsibility for the Summary Financial Statements**

The board is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the summary financial statements.

### **Auditor's Responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summary financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial report based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Auditing Standard ASA 810 *Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements*.

  
**Saward Dawson**



Partner: Jeffrey Tulk  
Chartered Accountant  
Blackburn, Victoria 3130

Date: 10 November 2021

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# Statement of profit and loss and other comprehensive income

For the year ended 30 June 2021

|  | 2021<br>\$       | 2020<br>\$         |
|--|------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Revenue</b>                                 | <b>7,231,748</b> | <b>7,554,052</b>   |
| Employee costs                                 | (3,176,827)      | (3,251,147)        |
| Examination costs                              | (2,701,216)      | (2,768,198)        |
| Accreditation costs                            | (508,272)        | (248,203)          |
| Depreciation expense                           | (598,809)        | (920,999)          |
| Rent and tenancy expenses                      | (120,690)        | (241,258)          |
| Meeting expenses                               | (87,913)         | (235,637)          |
| Other expenses                                 | (334,383)        | (434,671)          |
| Right-of-use amortisation                      | (509,474)        | (450,457)          |
| Lease interest expense                         | (96,490)         | (69,483)           |
| <b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>          | <b>(902,326)</b> | <b>(1,066,001)</b> |
| <b>Other comprehensive income for the year</b> | <b>-</b>         | <b>-</b>           |
| <b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b> | <b>(902,326)</b> | <b>(1,066,001)</b> |

Extracted from 30 June 2021 financial statements



# Statement of financial position

As at 30 June 2021

|                                      | 2021<br>\$        | 2020<br>\$        |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Assets</b>                        |                   |                   |
| <b>Current assets</b>                |                   |                   |
| Cash and cash equivalents            | 1,694,593         | 3,357,591         |
| Term deposits                        | 10,402,233        | 9,838,816         |
| Trade and other receivables          | 47,338            | 182,697           |
| Other assets                         | 70,212            | 120,896           |
| <b>Total current assets</b>          | <b>12,214,376</b> | <b>13,500,000</b> |
| <b>Non-current assets</b>            |                   |                   |
| Plant and equipment                  | 1,125,650         | 1,652,586         |
| Intangible assets                    | 12,671            | 30,710            |
| Right-of-use assets                  | 708,524           | 1,107,739         |
| <b>Total non-current assets</b>      | <b>1,846,845</b>  | <b>2,791,035</b>  |
| <b>Total assets</b>                  | <b>14,061,221</b> | <b>16,291,035</b> |
| <b>Liabilities</b>                   |                   |                   |
| <b>Current liabilities</b>           |                   |                   |
| Lease liabilities                    | 451,153           | 428,556           |
| Trade and other payables             | 423,876           | 301,555           |
| Other liabilities                    | 2,071,500         | 3,315,774         |
| Employee benefits                    | 251,966           | 203,972           |
| <b>Total current liabilities</b>     | <b>3,198,495</b>  | <b>4,249,857</b>  |
| <b>Non-current liabilities</b>       |                   |                   |
| Lease liabilities                    | 443,344           | 733,436           |
| Employee benefits                    | 35,294            | 21,328            |
| <b>Total non-current liabilities</b> | <b>478,638</b>    | <b>754,764</b>    |
| <b>Total liabilities</b>             | <b>3,677,133</b>  | <b>5,004,621</b>  |
| <b>Net assets</b>                    | <b>10,384,088</b> | <b>11,286,414</b> |
| <b>Equity</b>                        |                   |                   |
| Accumulated surpluses                | 10,384,088        | 11,286,414        |
| <b>Total equity</b>                  | <b>10,384,088</b> | <b>11,286,414</b> |

Extracted from 30 June 2021 financial statements





# Further information

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