

A stylized graphic of a hand with fingers pointing towards the center, rendered in a light peach color. The fingers are thick and rounded at the tips.

# Assessor Training

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Stage 2: The Site Visit

# Outline

1. Site Evaluation Team (SET) roles and responsibilities
2. Conducting the site visit
  - 2.1 Setting the scene
  - 2.2 The interviews
  - 2.3 The SET report
  - 2.4 After the visit

# SET roles and responsibilities

## 1.1 SET roles and responsibilities



# Recapping the role of the SET

- Reviews documentation submitted by education provider covering aspects of the program relevant to the Accreditation Standards
- Conducts a site visit to verify information provided and clarify any matters by:
  - interviewing provider staff, students and other relevant stakeholders,
  - assessing provider facilities and teaching hospitals/clinics



# Recapping the role of the SET

- Prepares, for consideration by the Accreditation Committee:
  - a report evaluating the program against the Accreditation Standards
  - advice to foster quality improvement, through Recommendations and acknowledgement of good practice (Commendations)
  - an overall recommendation concerning accreditation of the program to:
    - (re)accredit without Conditions up to the maximum applicable for the program being considered
    - (re)accredit with Condition(s) up to the maximum applicable for the program being considered
    - refuse to accredit or to revoke accreditation

# Role of SET Chair

- Chairs the SET and provides leadership and direction in evaluating the program, e.g. leading in-camera discussions concerning the program
- Provides leadership in determining the SET's approach to program evaluation, including the nature and structure of the site visit
- Leads SET questioning of provider staff and stakeholders
- Ensures the timely completion of the SET report

# Role of the ADC secretariat

- Manages the liaison between the SET and the provider
- In collaboration with the Chair, ensures the visit runs to time and schedule
- Provides key advice to SET on the interpretation and application of the Accreditation Standards
- Ensures consistency in application of Standards across SETs
- Ensures that SET activity is consistent with the ADC's responsibilities under the National Law
- Manages the Accreditation Committee's consideration of SET report and overall recommendation

# Conducting the site visit

## 2.1 Setting the scene





# Setting the scene - staff

- Be aware that staff may:
  - resent the notion of an external body telling them how to teach ('academic freedom')
  - be subject to other external or internal reviews
  - operate in an environment where change is either difficult or constant and resources are scarce
  - have little understanding of purpose or process of accreditation

# Setting the scene - stakeholders

- Students may be constrained by:
  - fear of the impact of their ability to register as a practitioner if their course is not accredited
  - fear of retaliation from the provider
- Professional/ practitioner stakeholders may think:
  - the ADC needs to raise standards / be tougher on providers
  - the ADC is too academic in its approach
- Both sets of stakeholders may have unrealistically high expectations of ADC's powers and functions

# Setting the scene - the interviews

- Chair to explain at the outset of interviews
  - **Purpose of the site visit:** to consider the program for ADC (re-)accreditation
  - **Purpose of the interview:** to hear honest appraisals of what works well and what needs improving, as part of an evaluation of whether the program meets the Accreditation Standards
  - **Confidentiality:** no identification of individuals - individual views will not be fed back to the provider's staff

# Conducting the site visit

## 2.2 Interviews



# Interviews - the purpose

- Interviews should be used to gather evidence to:
  - inform judgments on compliance with the standards
  - triangulate information
  - support findings in the report regarding compliance with the Standards
  - support the SET's overall recommendation, including any recommendations to impose conditions
  - provide the context for quality improvement recommendations

# Interviews - pitfalls to avoid

- **Avoid compromising interviewees:** don't interview staff together in reporting/power relationships, e.g. Head of School with Program Coordinator, staff with students
- Avoid promising changes/resolutions to problems
- **Do not identify previous interviewees, even if asked to:** e.g. as the source of a line of inquiry, or by quoting them directly

# Asking questions - what to avoid

- Assessors should avoid:
  - using wordy preambles to questions
  - telling anecdotes or making speeches
  - prejudging outcomes, e.g. statements such as 'we are going to recommend accreditation of the program' or similar
  - asking complex or multiple questions - a more straightforward question, with a follow-up question(s) is generally more effective

# Asking questions - what to avoid

- Types of questioning assessors should avoid:
  - putting words into the mouths of interviewees, e.g. prefacing questions with 'Do you agree that the situation at your School needs improving?'
  - detailing the situation in their own organisation, e.g. 'At my School we...'
  - offering suggestions or advice 'What I would do if I was you is...'
  - questions that reveal in-confidence evidence from previous interview session, e.g. 'In the last session with the students we heard that...'



# Conducting the site visit

## 2.3 The SET report



# The SET report - preparation

- Pointers on writing the report:
  - begin writing sections as findings are made
  - short focused bullet points are best
  - clearly indicate how an individual Standard is met, substantially met, or not met (as the case may be)
  - evaluate the program against the Standards only
  - support findings with evidence
  - be clear and consistent in conclusions and findings
  - complete a draft by the of end of the site visit, where necessary, finalising any remaining matters via email



# The SET report - options

- SET determines whether each standard is:
  - Met
  - Substantially met
  - Not met
- In case of 'substantially met' a condition is imposed
- Satisfying the condition makes good the shortfall
- If a standard is met, but there are areas for strengthening then the SET can make a Recommendation
- Where a standard is met but there is known future change a monitoring requirement can be imposed

# Conducting the site visit

## 2.4 After the visit



# After the visit

- The report is considered by the Accreditation Committee
  - The Accreditation Committee considers the recommendation of the SET, but may come to a different conclusion
  - The Accreditation Committee will make a decision or if needed refer to the ADC Board for a decision
  - The provider is advised of the ADC's decision and provided the full SET report
  - Assessors are advised of the outcome and provided with the summary report
  - Assessors are reminded to destroy all materials, both electronic and in paper form regarding the visit

## After the visit

- The Dental Board of Australia (DBA) is advised of the ADC's decision
  - The DBA makes its own approval decision which may differ from that of the ADC's

# Discussion & questions



AUSTRALIAN  
DENTAL COUNCIL