

**Policy on the New Zealand Dental Registration  
Examinations: Applicants with Assessment of Eligibility  
applications submitted AFTER 4 November 2009**

Approved by Council: 2 August 2010  
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***Introduction***

The Dental Council has approved the following policy for the following New Zealand Dental Registration Examinations:

- New Zealand Dentist Registration Examination (NZDREX)
- New Zealand Dental Specialist Registration Examinations (NZDSREX)
- New Zealand Dental Technology Registration Examinations (NZDTechREX)
- New Zealand Dental Hygiene Registration Examination (NZDHREX)
- New Zealand Dental Therapy Registration Examinations (NZDTREX)

The examination process for all of the examinations except the specialist examination (NZDSREX) comprises of two components:

- Written examination
- Clinical examination

The specialist examination details are provided separately at the end of this policy. The preceding information up to the specialist section is applicable to **ALL OTHER** examinations (Dentist, Technology, Hygiene and Therapy)

***Legislation***

Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003:

- Section 12 – Qualifications must be prescribed.

***Policy Statement for all examinations EXCLUDING Specialist Examinations***

**Eligibility criteria for the written examination:**

1. To be eligible to gain entry to the written examination applicants must satisfy each of the following minimum criteria:

- a) Provide satisfactory evidence of successful completion of an appropriate dental qualification at a recognised tertiary academic institution:

| Examination                                                          | Dental qualifications                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| New Zealand Dentist Registration Examination (NZDREX)                | Five-year undergraduate dental degree from a recognised tertiary academic institution                                                                                                                                         |
| New Zealand Dental Technology Registration Examinations (NZDTechREX) | Three-year dental technology qualification from a recognised tertiary academic institution. Applicants who have completed a two-year qualification with appropriate subsequent experience may be admitted to the examination. |
| New Zealand Dental Hygiene Registration Examination (NZDHREX)        | Two-year dental hygiene qualification from a recognised tertiary academic institution or successful completion of an undergraduate dental degree at a recognised tertiary academic institution.                               |
| New Zealand Dental Therapy Registration Examinations (NZDTREX)       | Two-year dental therapy qualification from a recognised tertiary academic institution or an undergraduate dental degree from a recognised tertiary academic institution.                                                      |

- b) Be registered in your specific scope of practice and provide a certified copy of the registration certificate, including Certificates of Good Standing from relevant Boards/Councils where registration is, or has been held in the last seven years<sup>1</sup>. Certificates of Good Standing must be no more than three months old;
- c) Appear to satisfy the fitness for registration requirements of s16 of the Health Practitioners Competency Assurance Act 2003 (the Act)<sup>2</sup>. This section states that no applicant may be registered if:
- i) he or she does not satisfy Council that he or she is able to communicate effectively; or
  - ii) he or she does not satisfy Council that he or she is able to communicate and comprehend English sufficiently to protect the health and safety of the public; or
  - iii) he or she has been convicted of an offence punishable by imprisonment for a term of three months or longer which reflects adversely on his or her fitness to practise; or
  - iv) he or she is unable to perform the functions required for the practise of dentistry because of a mental or physical condition; or
  - v) he or she is the subject of professional disciplinary proceedings and those proceedings reflect adversely on his or her fitness to practise; or
  - vi) he or she is under investigation in respect of a matter that may be the subject of professional disciplinary proceedings and that investigation reflects adversely on his or her fitness to practise; or
  - vii) he or she is subject to an order which reflects adversely on his or her fitness to practise; or

<sup>1</sup> Where the profession in which the applicant was engaged was not a registered profession in the jurisdiction in which the applicant qualified and/or subsequently worked, then a Statutory Declaration of professional good standing would be required from the applicant.

<sup>2</sup> Council will not permit applicants to enter the New Zealand Dental Registration Examinations who may not be eligible for registration. If an applicant does not appear to satisfy the fitness for registration requirements of s16 of the Act, he or she will be directed to submit an application for registration to the Dental Council.

- viii) Council has reason to believe that the applicant may endanger the health and safety of the public.
- d) Demonstrate the ability to communicate and comprehend English to a level sufficient to protect the health and safety of the public.
  - i) Meet the requirement(s) as stipulated in the current Policy on English Competence and English Tests listed on the Dental Council website.
- e) Have not exceeded the maximum number of attempts as stipulated in the Attempts section below.

### ***Eligibility criteria for the clinical examination***

2. To be eligible to gain entry to the clinical examination applicants must satisfy each of the following criteria:
  - a) Hold a current pass in the written examination.
  - b) Meet the requirement of the current Policy on English Competence and English tests.
  - c) Provide a valid Hepatitis B and C report (requirements for a valid report can be found on the Dental Council website).
  - d) Have not exceeded the maximum number of attempts as stipulated in the Attempts section below.

### ***Clinical examination priority***

3. The clinical examination can accommodate a limited number of applicants. If more applicants apply, the Dental Council gives priority, in the following order, to applicants who:
  - i) are new and have been declined a place once, or have failed and subsequently been declined a place twice (other than priority vii)
  - ii) have passed the written examination, in the first attempt, ranked on the basis of their marks
  - iii) have been exempted from the written examination
  - iv) have passed the written examination, but required more than one attempt, ranked on the basis of their marks
  - v) have failed the clinical examination and subsequently been declined a place once
  - vi) have failed the clinical examination and are making their first application to resit
  - vii) are unable to demonstrate recent clinical experience, being a minimum of six months after graduation, within the past three years
  - viii) have transferred from the Australian Dental Council preliminary examination process
  - ix) have failed and been advised of the desirability of retraining before resitting.

### ***Passing criteria***

4. In order for an applicant to be deemed successful in passing a New Zealand Dental Registration Examination he or she must:
  - a) pass the written examination; and
  - b) pass the clinical examination

### ***Attempts***

5. Applicants have a maximum of three opportunities to pass **both** the written and clinical examinations collectively within three years from the date of first sitting the written examination.
  - a) The above principle will also apply for any Australian Dental Registration Examination component failure(s) and will therefore be deemed as a failed attempt(s) of the respective examination components.
6. After two failed attempts Council strongly advises an applicant to undertake a course of re-training prior to commencing the third attempt.

### ***Withdrawing***

7. If an applicant decides to withdraw from any of the components a withdrawal fee will apply. These fees will be published on the Dental Council website.

### ***Australian Dental Council (ADC) transfers:***

8. Applicants are allowed to transfer from the ADC registration process.
  - a) Those applicants will have to comply fully with all sections of the current New Zealand Dental Registration Examinations' policy(ies)

### ***Validity of examination***

9. Applicants have three years from the date of first sitting the written examination to pass both examination components. If an applicant fails to pass the written and clinical examinations within the three-year period they will not be eligible for registration in New Zealand through the New Zealand Dental Registration Examinations pathway.
10. Applications for the assessment of eligibility for enrolment in the written examination are valid for the next available examination session only. If an applicant does not sit the first available written examination, or fails to pass the examination, they will be required to submit a new application for assessment of eligibility in order to enrol for and sit the next available written examination session.
11. Applications for the assessment of eligibility for enrolment in the clinical examination are valid only for the next available examination session when the applicant has been granted a place in that session. If an applicant is declined a place in the next available examination session, or fails to pass the examination, they will be required to submit a new application for assessment of eligibility in order to enrol for and sit the next available clinical examination session.

12. The components of the examination process is valid for the following periods from the date of successful completion of the examinations/tests:
- a) English Tests (as required by the current Policy on English Competence and English Tests) - two years.

### ***Policy Statement for Specialist Examinations ONLY***

#### ***Eligibility criteria for the New Zealand Dental Specialist Registration Examinations (NZDSREX)***

13. Three-year postgraduate dental qualification in the specialty from a recognised tertiary academic institution. Applicants who have completed a two year qualification with appropriate subsequent experience may be admitted to the examination. Council also requires applicants to possess an appropriate level of knowledge and skills of general dental practice. Council will be satisfied on this account where an applicant:
- a) possess a prescribed qualification for registration in the general dental scope of practice (which includes a pass in the NZDREX general dental practice examination) or are registered in the general scope of dental practice; or
  - b) has met any general examination or assessment requirements set by Council such as sitting and passing all or part of the NZDREX general dental examination or any other Council approved examination or assessment.
14. An applicant should provide evidence of his/her competence to practise in the specialist scope by providing proof that he/she has:
- a) practised in the specialty to the required level in the last three years
  - b) has undertaken appropriate Continuing Professional Development within the last three years
15. Evidence of research undertaken by the applicant is required and may be assessed either as part of the admission to the specialist examination or as part of the examination process.
16. Appear to satisfy the fitness for registration requirements of s16 of the Health Practitioners Competency Assurance Act 2003 (the Act)<sup>3</sup>. This section states that no applicant may be registered if:
- a) he or she does not satisfy Council that he or she is able to communicate effectively; or
  - b) he or she does not satisfy Council that he or she is able to communicate and comprehend English sufficiently to protect the health and safety of the public; or
  - c) he or she has been convicted of an offence punishable by imprisonment for a term of three months or longer which reflects adversely on his or her fitness to practise; or
  - d) he or she is unable to perform the functions required for the practise of dentistry because of a mental or physical condition; or
  - e) he or she is the subject of professional disciplinary proceedings and those proceedings reflect adversely on his or her fitness to practise; or
  - f) he or she is under investigation in respect of a matter that may be the subject of professional disciplinary proceedings and that investigation reflects adversely on his or her fitness to practise; or

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<sup>3</sup> Council will not permit applicants to enter the New Zealand Dental Registration Examinations who may not be eligible for registration. If an applicant does not appear to satisfy the fitness for registration requirements of s16 of the Act, he or she will be directed to submit an application for registration to the Dental Council.

- g) he or she is subject to an order which reflects adversely on his or her fitness to practise; or
  - h) Council has reason to believe that the applicant may endanger the health and safety of the public.
17. Demonstrate the ability to communicate and comprehend English to a level sufficient to protect the health and safety of the public.
- a) Meet the requirement(s) as stipulated in the current Policy on English Competence and English Tests listed on the Dental Council website.
18. Provide a valid Hepatitis B and C report (requirements for a valid report can be found on the Dental Council website).

### ***Examination components***

19. The Specialist Registration Examination consists of five sections:
- Written Examination which establishes whether a candidate has an adequate understanding of the scientific basis of a specialty and can apply that knowledge to clinical situations
  - Case presentations where applicants are required to submit documentation of a number of specific cases relating to their specialty
  - Clinical examination
  - Oral examination
  - Evaluation of the candidates research skills

### ***Passing criteria***

20. All sections of the exam must be passed to pass the specialist exam. No partial passes are awarded.
21. Candidates will only be permitted one attempt at the specialist examination.

### ***Following sections applicable to ALL applicants***

#### **Previous policies:**

22. This policy rescinds all previous policies related to examinations, including but not limited to the Policy on Entry Requirements to New Zealand Dental Registration Examinations.
- a) Applicants registered under the April 2009 Policy on Entry Requirements to New Zealand Dental Registration Examinations have two years from the approval date on this policy to complete the New Zealand Dental Registration Examination under the April 2009 policy.
  - b) Applicants who do not complete their examination within the two year period will be required to enrol and comply with the requirements of this policy.

### ***Future policy changes***

23. In the event that this policy or any other policy associated with this policy changes, the Dental Council will inform all New Zealand Dental Registration Examination applicants of the policy changes that would potentially impact on them and/or any implementation grace period(s) in the revised policy that will be applied to registered applicants.

### ***Other examination related policies***

- a) Policy on English Competence and English Tests – current policy as available on the Dental Council website