

Careers in Dentistry



AUSTRALIAN DENTAL
ASSOCIATION

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Is this you?

- Interested in healthcare
- Want to help people
- Enjoy working with your hands
- Thrive as part of a team
- Have good concentration
- Enjoy meeting new people
- Good organiser
- Likes to continually learn new things



You could become a...

- Dentist
- Dental Assistant
- Oral Health Therapist
- Dental Hygienist
- Dental Technician
- Practice Manager



Dentist



The Dentist is generally the most senior member of the Dental Team.

Dentistry is a highly ethical, well-educated profession, which actively fosters a culture of ongoing learning and development. Dentists are experts in the treatment of conditions affecting the mouth, teeth, jaws, and gums and their impact on general health.

A Dentist is responsible for a wide scope of work to take care of patients, including:

- Dental examinations, providing diagnoses and creating treatment plans to address patient concerns
- Dental treatment such as restoring teeth, surgery including extractions, periodontal care for gum disease, replacement of missing teeth, diagnosing pathology, and managing oral health in patients with systemic disease
- Educating patients on how to prevent oral health problems by teaching skills such as how to brush the teeth and make positive diet choices
- Prescribing medications and referring patients to other health practitioners including specialists
- Processing and interpreting x-rays

What will you study?

Bachelor of Dental Surgery (Post-Grad Degree Optional)

Dental Assistant



Dental Assistants work as an essential part of a wider dental team, primarily with Dentists, but also with Dental Specialists, Oral Health Therapists and Dental Hygienists.

As a Dental Assistant you will assist in patient care through:

- Assisting Dentists during clinical treatment
- Preparing the dental surgery and dental materials
- Carrying out infection control procedures such as sterilising equipment
- Updating patient records, processes x-rays and other administrative duties

Many Dental Assistants will grow their skills to take on higher level roles, including Practice Management. Some Dental Assistants go on to do further studies in other oral health fields including hygiene and oral health therapy. Skills learnt as a dental assistant can be applied across many industries.

What will you study?

Certificate III and IV in Dental Assisting

Practice Manager



As a Practice Manager, you will be responsible for organising and controlling the functions and resources of a professional dental practices. These are great roles that develop skills that are applicable across a range of industries.

As a Practice Manager, you will undertake a wide range of responsibilities including:

- Coordinating appointments and administration for practice efficiency
- Managing practice staff and operations, rosters, payroll etc
- Billing patients, organise appointments, manages patient records
- Marketing the practice by, for example, updating the website and sending out e-newsletters

What will you study?

Diploma of Practice Management or a related management degree

Oral Health Therapist



As an Oral Health Therapist your role will involve treating basic dental issues in children and adolescents. You may be actively engaged with a varied cross section of the community including schools and play groups.

As an Oral Health Therapist, you will support the Dentist and the team in many ways including:

- Providing dental examinations, oral cancer and tooth decay screenings and saliva testing for young people
- Filling and extracting teeth, administering injections and cleaning teeth and gums in children
- Takes and interprets x-rays and makes impressions of the teeth for plaster study models and mouthguard construction
- Refers patients to Dentists for more complex treatments.

What will you study?

Bachelor of Oral Health

Dental Hygienist



Dental Hygienists are essential members of the dental team and very common within dental practices in South Australia. In consultation with a Dentist, you'll play a critical role in the delivery of a therapeutic course of action for each patient.

As a Dental Hygienist, you do a wide variety of roles including:

- Providing preventative treatment to children and adults, including scaling, cleaning and polishing teeth
- Taking x-rays, impressions and dental models
- Constructing mouthguards and other dental appliances
- Providing fluoride treatments as well as other dental medicaments

What will you study?

Advanced Diploma of Oral Health (Dental Hygiene)

Dental Technician



As a Dental Technician you will generally work in a laboratory creating, modifying or repairing a wide range of oral devices, known as “appliances”, designed to replace or repair missing teeth. This is a highly skilled and technical role.

What will you study?
Diploma of Dental Technology

Questions?

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