

APPENDIX E

BACHELOR OF ORAL HEALTH (THERAPY/HYGIENE)

1. Background

The School of Dental Science is currently producing diplomates in Oral Health Therapy who are educated in basic sciences, oral health promotion and vocational (dental therapy or dental hygiene) clinical practice. Since the inception of the Diploma in Oral Health Therapy (DipOHT), its curriculum has been reviewed and restructured in line with student feedback, quality of teaching surveys and subject co-ordinators' own evaluation processes.

The proposal for the Dip OHT to be upgraded to bachelor degree level is therefore based on the need to:

1. Meet the state, national and international demand for oral health therapy skills, which includes the capacity to synthesise and adapt knowledge gained during the course to a variety of situations and groups. Such skills meet the objectives of a qualification at Bachelor Degree level. The Dip. OHT course is delivered over two calendar years (1514 contact hours) and the students are awarded a qualification in one of two streams: dental therapy or dental hygiene.
2. Meet the University of Melbourne's Academic Programs Committee request that the current restructured Diploma in Oral Health Therapy still requires extensive rationalisation of student contact hours and assessment load.
3. Meet the national and international direction for oral health therapy academic qualification levels. The University of Queensland offers a three year Bachelor of Applied Science (Oral Health) and the University of Adelaide offers a three year Bachelor of Oral Health Therapy. Both these degrees provide combined dental therapy and hygiene outcomes. In New Zealand, the Auckland University of Technology offers a three year Bachelor of Dental Therapy and the University of Otago offers a 3 year Bachelor of Dental Therapy and a 3 year Bachelor of Dental Hygiene.

The School has had some difficulty attracting students to its DipOHT program as eligible DipOHT candidates have sought similar courses at degree level in other educational institutions. In addition, a degree program provides opportunities for further study, whereas those opportunities are limited upon completion of a diploma program. Moreover, a degree in oral health therapy will be far more attractive to fee-paying local and overseas students and therefore enhance the School's ability to generate fee income. A degree will also enable those graduates who wish to pursue further studies, to undertake postgraduate courses in such areas as health promotion and public health and research activities. Consultation was undertaken with the professional associations (the Australian Dental Association Victorian Branch, the Victorian Dental Therapist Association and the Dental Hygienists Association of Australia Victorian Branch), Dental Health Services Victoria and the Department of Human Services during the process of developing the proposed curriculum. The separate stream model has been developed in response to comment from and with the support of these stakeholders.

4. Rationalise the annual student contact hours (over the three year degree program) to ensure that the total weekly contact hours do not exceed 26 hours per week for a period not exceeding 24 weeks per academic year, whilst maintaining the content and goals of the OHT program. The current Diploma program incorporates intensive clinical programs outside of semester and movement to a three year Bachelor program allows the incorporation of these intensive clinical programs into semester periods.
5. Maximise the efficiency of student contact hours through modified teaching strategies, including computer-based self-directed learning, problem-based learning, and efficient utilisation of laboratory and clinical sessions. This will enable learning strategies to better meet the University of Melbourne's strategic goal of "Best (Teaching) Practice" at an appropriate qualification level.
6. Increase the capacity of staff to meet the University's academic requirements including scholarly and community activity by reducing outside of semester contact time.

7. Meet the standards set by the Australian Dental Council for accreditation of dental therapy and dental hygiene education.
8. Spread the assessment load proportionately over three years so that the annual assessment is not excessive and examines the students' knowledge and skills at the appropriate level prior to graduation.
9. Extending the two-year diploma into a three year degree will enable the graduates to demonstrate proficiency in all aspects of either dental hygiene or dental therapy practice. In this way, the proposed new course will meet the increasing demand from the dental industry (private and public sectors) for more competent graduates with either dental hygiene or dental therapy skills.
10. Continue to allow qualified Dental Therapists or Dental Hygienists wishing to add the skills of the alternate stream to enter directly into a later year of the course and complete specific subjects.

It is intended to offer existing graduates the opportunity to upgrade their Diploma qualifications to Bachelor degrees by undertaking additional studies.

It is considered that year-long subjects should be maintained to allow for incremental skill development which can respond to individual learning processes. Students' clinical skills can progress at different rates, but generally meet the required standards by the end of the year. Experience has shown that preventing students from progressing to the second part of a clinical subject can be inappropriate, if it is considered they are likely to satisfactorily complete the second semester and meet the clinical requirements of the course. Semesterisation of clinical subjects which require sequential training throughout the year is therefore inappropriate. It is difficult to assess a student's ability to satisfactorily meet the year's overall clinical requirements at the end of first semester. As a majority of the components of the course involve clinical skills, all subjects have been retained in year long format in the interests of consistency.

A large number of contact hours in the course are spent undertaking laboratory and clinical work. The expected workload for the course is addressed under each subject in Appendix 1.

Transitional Arrangements from DipOHT to BOH

1. It is planned to introduce the BOH program in February 2005 and phase out the DipOHT program by December 2005.
2. Timetable for phasing out the DipOHT program:
 - i. In 2004 – 1st year DipOHT & 2nd year DipOHT;
 - ii. In 2005 – 2nd year DipOHT & 1st year BOH
 - iii. In 2006 – 1st year BOH, 2nd year BOH & possibly 3rd year BOH for those students who have completed the DipOHT program in 2005 and want to enter the BOH program. These students must meet the entry requirements to the BOH program.
 - iv. In 2007 - 1st year BOH, 2nd year BOH & 3rd year BOH plus DipOHT graduates who wish to enter the 3rd year of the BOH program.
3. Provisions will be made, as described below, for students undertaking the DipOHT program during the transitional phase and who are required to repeat:
 - i. 1st year in 2005 and then enter 2nd year in 2006;
 - ii. 2nd year in 2006, or
 - iii. 2nd year in 2007

The 1st and 2nd year of the proposed BOH program are similar to the 1st and 2nd year of the current DipOHT program. Therefore it is currently considered that the students who are required to repeat 1st or 2nd year of the DipOHT during the transition phase will not be disadvantaged, in that they will be able to conjointly attend, with the BOH students, selected lectures/tutorials/ seminars/ and preclinical and clinical sessions. In addition, any extra sessions needed to cover material required for the DipOHT that may not be covered in the respective years of the BOH program, will be arranged. Further exploration of these transitional arrangements will be undertaken with a full proposal submitted, by the end of June 2004, to the University Academic Programs Committee for consideration.

The DipOHT course received accreditation from the Australian Dental Council (ADC) in 2002. DipOHT staff have participated in, and will continue to participate in, national and international dental education conferences and oral health therapy exchange programs. One DipOHT staff member is also a member of the ADC accreditation Committee and has participated in the accreditation of other dental courses in Australia.

2. Entry Requirements

VCE Entry from 2005

1. **Prerequisites:** A study score of at least 25 in units 3 and 4 of the VCE subjects English (any) and in either Biology or Chemistry.
2. **Selection:** ENTER score of at least 70 (or equivalent), performance in the Undergraduate Medical and Health Sciences Admissions Test (UMAT), and level of performance in prerequisite subjects.

Non VCE Entry from 2005

1. **Prerequisites:**
 - (i) A study score of at least 25 in units 3 and 4 of the VCE subjects English (any) and either Biology or Chemistry and,
 - (ii) Successful completion of a dental assistant/nursing formal qualification and subsequently 18 months full time (or equivalent) employment as a dental assistant.

Selection

1. The Undergraduate Medicine and Health Sciences Admissions Test (UMAT) will be used in the evaluation of every application, except overseas students for full-fee places. In the case of applicants who have completed part of a degree in Medicine, Physiotherapy or Dentistry, the Selection Committee may decide in exceptional circumstances to consider the applicant without the applicant sitting UMAT.
2. For applicants who have completed part of a degree in Medicine, Physiotherapy or Dentistry selection will be based on the whole academic record, including VCE (or equivalent), UMAT (where this was used for selection into their current course) and results at tertiary level.
3. For full-fee overseas students, the Selection Committee will use the ENTER (or equivalent) performance in prerequisite subjects (where applicable), and results at tertiary level (where applicable).
4. For applicants not covered by 2 or 3, selection will use a ranking based on ENTER (or equivalent), performance in prerequisite subjects, results at tertiary level (where applicable), and a ranking based on performance in UMAT.

3. Course Structure

It should be noted that points have been allocated according to number of contact hours for the subject. It is acknowledged that generally speaking, practical components of courses at the University of Melbourne do not carry the same weighting as didactic learning, however the discipline specific clinical roles demanded of Bachelor of Oral Health graduates require that they perform irreversible procedures on human patients. It is necessary for them to be able to synthesize knowledge learned in the theoretical environment and apply it to the clinical setting, be clinically competent in a range of technical procedures, be able to identify the boundaries of their competency and work in a professional manner. It is therefore mandatory that a minimum level of clinical competency be achieved and the units involving clinical practice (Oral Health practice 1,2 and 3) have been weighted accordingly.

Year	Sem	Subject	Points	Module	Hours	
1	Year long	Society, Health and Education	25.00	Health Informatics	20	
				Research Methods	10	
				Community Studies	35	
				Human Development, Behaviour & Learning	50	
				Total	115	
	Year long	Oral Health Sciences 1	37.50	Anatomy & Histology	48	
				Oral Anatomy	72	
				Physiology	10	
				Pathology	30	
Microbiology, Biochemistry and Chemistry				40		
Oral Biology and Preventive Dentistry				40		
Total	240					
Year long	Oral Health Practice 1	37.50	Dental Materials	36		
			Preclinical Procedures	78		
			Introduction to Emergency Medicine	6		
			Clinical Procedures	100		
			Oral Radiology	50		
			Total	270		
2	Year long	Health Promotion	25.00	Health Promotion Principles	50	
				Health Education Programs	50	
				Dental Health Policy and Professional Ethics	10	
				Total	110	
	Year long	Oral Medicine, Pathology and Pharmacology	25.00	Oral Medicine, Pathology and Pharmacology	48	
				Management of Compromised Patients	60	
				Total	108	
	Year long	Oral Health Practice 2	50.00	Dental Therapy/Hygiene Practice 1	290	
				Specialist areas in Dentistry	64	
Total				354		
3	Year long	Oral Health Practice 3	50.00	Dent. Therapy Practice 2/Hygiene Practice 2		
				Total	342	
	Year long	Outreach Elective Studies	25.00		Total	100
Year	Oral Health Therapy Research	25.00	Health Policy and Ethics	10		
			Sociology	35		
			Health Promotion Research	70		
			Total	115		

4. EFTSU and Budgetary Consequences

The course will be available to both Australian and international students on a fee-paying basis, full-time only.

Academic Board Resolutions on Selection

FACULTY OF MEDICINE, DENTISTRY AND HEALTH SCIENCES

Bachelor of Oral Health (to replace the Diploma in Oral Health Therapy in 2006)

For the purposes of selection from 2004/2005 the entry requirements are:

Eligibility

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