



Australian Dental  
Association  
NSW Branch

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# Why not consider a career in Dentistry?

EDUCATING • ADVOCATING • INNOVATING

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# Is this you?

- ▶ Interested in healthcare
- ▶ Like helping people
- ▶ Enjoy working with your hands
- ▶ Like working as part of a team
- ▶ Have good concentration
- ▶ Enjoy talking to lots of different people
- ▶ Good organiser
- ▶ Enjoy continually learning new things...



... If so, you could  
enjoy a career in dentistry.



# You could be a:

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



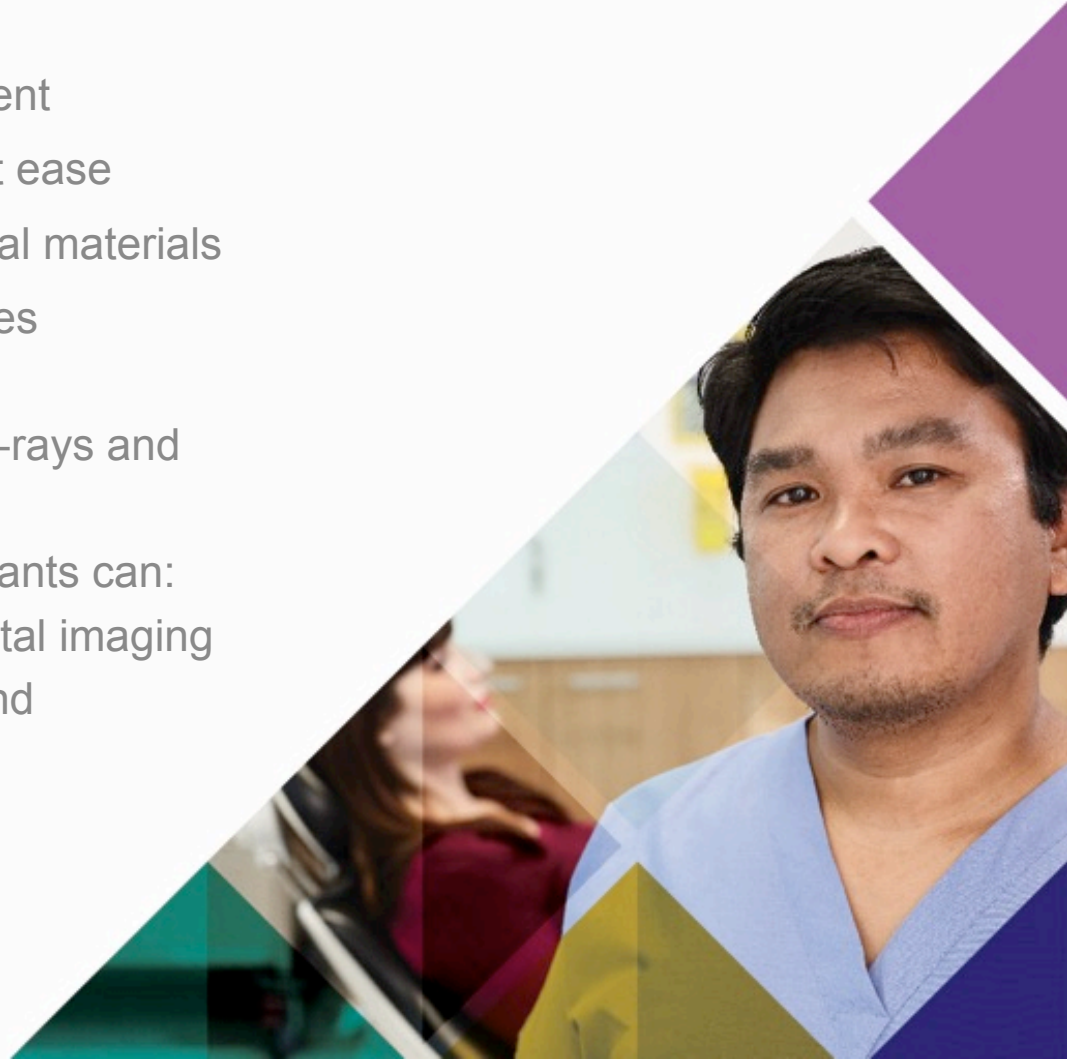


# Dental Assistant



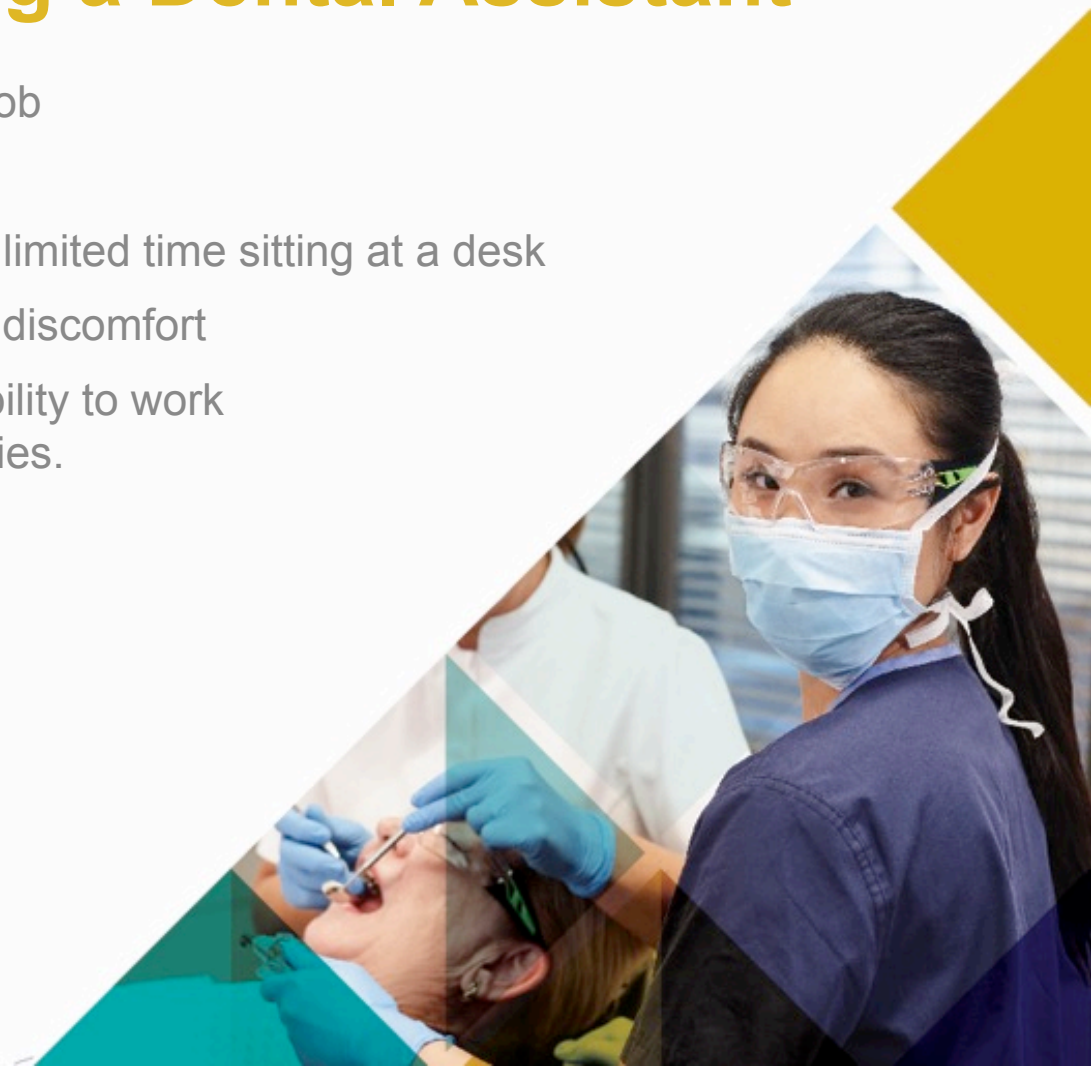
# What does a Dental Assistant do?

- ▶ Assists dentists during clinical treatment
- ▶ Greets patients and helps put them at ease
- ▶ Prepares the dental surgery and dental materials
- ▶ Carries out infection control procedures such as sterilising equipment
- ▶ Updates patient records, processes x-rays and carries out other administrative duties
- ▶ With advanced training, Dental Assistants can:
  - Take x-rays and other clinical dental imaging
  - Deliver oral hygiene instruction and diet counselling.



# Advantages of being a Dental Assistant

- ▶ Working in a varied and interesting job
- ▶ Working as part of a close-knit team
- ▶ Having an active hands-on role with limited time sitting at a desk
- ▶ Helping to relieve people's pain and discomfort
- ▶ Highly transportable skills with an ability to work all over Australia and in other countries.





# How to become a Dental Assistant

On the job training for dental assisting can be provided.  
Formal training options include a Certificate III and IV in dental assisting.

## Where can you go from there?

- ▶ Complete a Certificate IV or Diploma of Practice Management to become a Practice Manager
- ▶ Complete a 3-year Bachelor of Oral Health degree to become an Oral Health Therapist, Dental Therapist or Dental Hygienist
- ▶ Move into product sales in the dental industry
- ▶ Teach Dental Assistant courses
- ▶ Travel: Use your qualification on a working holiday.



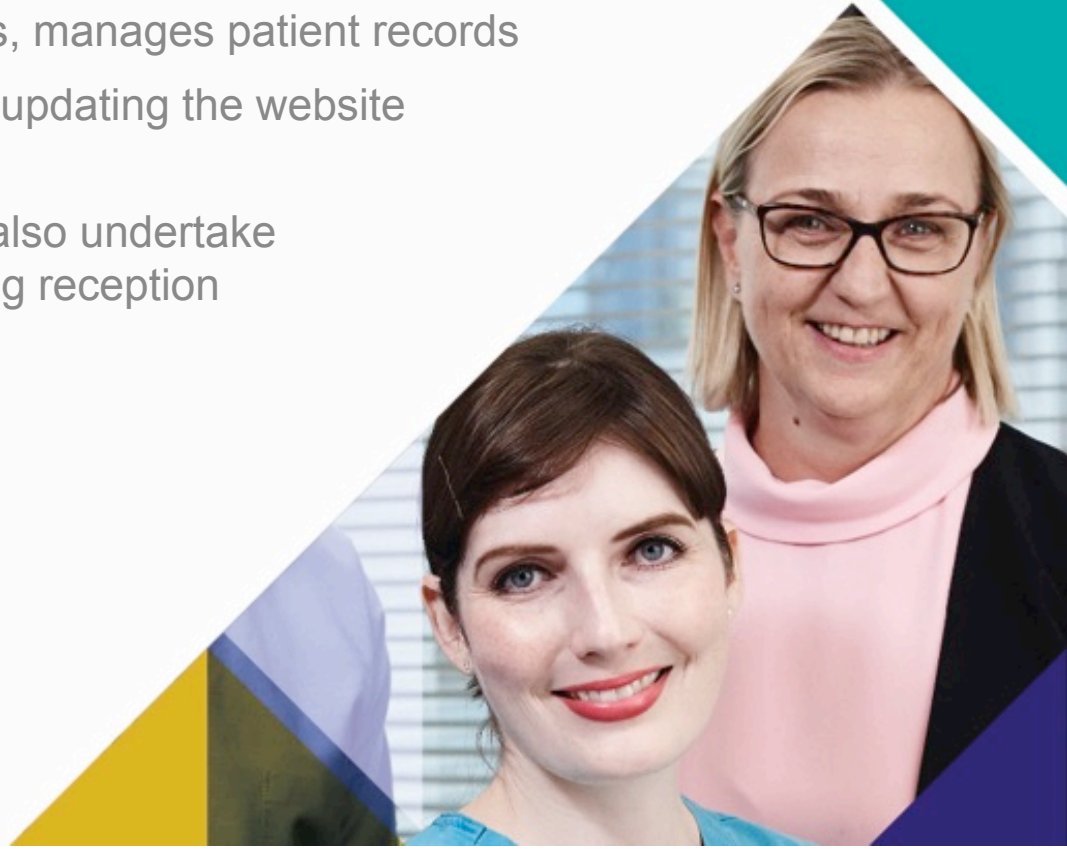


# Practice Manager



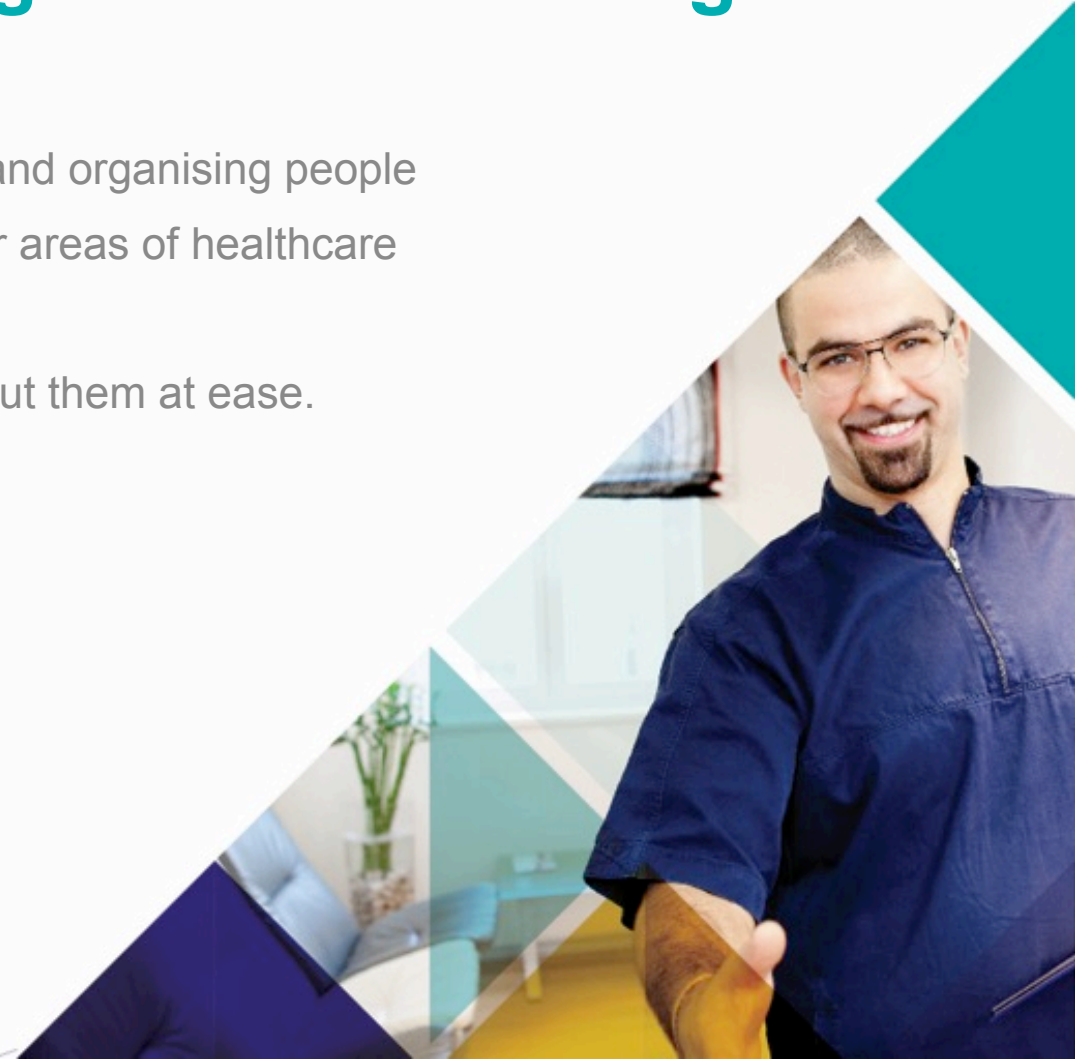
# What does a Practice Manager do?

- ▶ Coordinates appointments and administration for dental office efficiency
- ▶ Manages dental clinic staff and operations
- ▶ Bills patients, organises appointments, manages patient records
- ▶ Markets the practice by, for example, updating the website and sending out e-newsletters
- ▶ Sometimes a practice manager may also undertake other roles in the dental clinic including reception or assisting duties.



# Advantages of being a Practice Manager

- ▶ Varied and interesting role
- ▶ Good training in running a business and organising people
- ▶ Can move into administration in other areas of healthcare
- ▶ Working as part of a close-knit team
- ▶ Working with people and helping to put them at ease.



# How to become a Practice Manager

Opportunities for formal training as a Practice Manager include a Certificate IV or Diploma of Practice Management.

## Where can you go from there?

- ▶ Complete a 3-year Bachelor of Oral Health degree to become an oral health therapist, dental therapist or dental hygienist
- ▶ Move into other administrative or office management roles in the healthcare sector or beyond
- ▶ Teach Practice Management courses
- ▶ Travel: Use your qualification on a working holiday.







# Dental Hygienist Dental Technician Dental Therapist

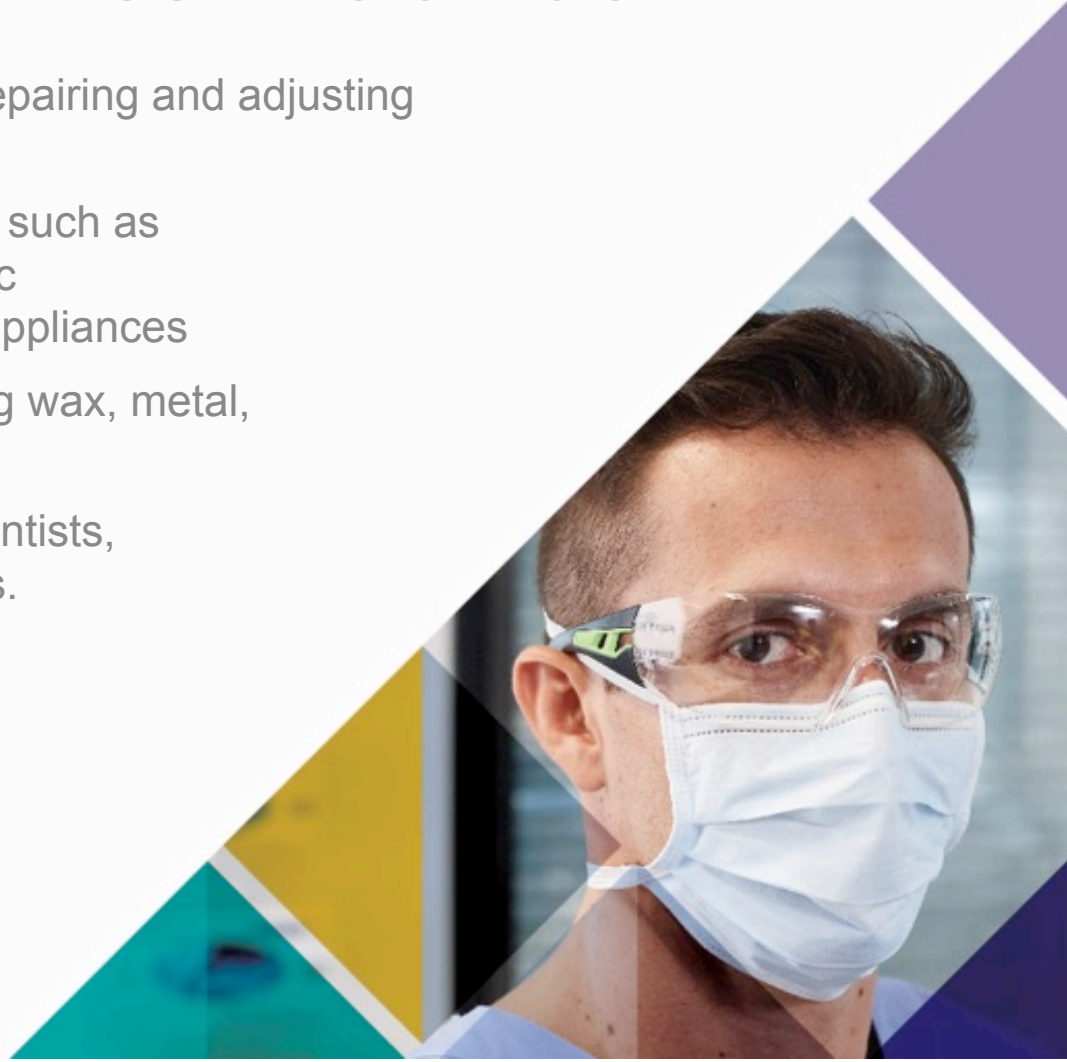
# What does a Dental Hygienist do?

- ▶ Provides preventative treatment to children and adults, including scaling, cleaning and polishing teeth
- ▶ Takes and interprets x--rays
- ▶ Takes impressions and makes dental models
- ▶ Provides fluoride treatment as well as other dental medicaments
- ▶ Constructs mouthguards and other dental appliances
- ▶ Provides oral health advice and diet counselling.



# What does a Dental Technician do?

- ▶ Works in a laboratory, constructing, repairing and adjusting dental appliances
- ▶ Works with dentists to fabricate items such as dentures, crowns, bridges, orthodontic appliances, mouthguards and sleep appliances
- ▶ Works with various materials including wax, metal, plaster and ceramics
- ▶ Works with dental prosthetists and dentists, but has no direct contact with patients.





# What does a Dental Therapist do?

- ▶ May have a teaching role, working with other healthcare providers
- ▶ Collaborates with and refers patients to dentists
- ▶ Provides dental examinations, oral cancer and tooth decay screenings and saliva testing for young people
- ▶ Fills and extracts teeth, administers injections and cleans teeth and gums
- ▶ Takes and interprets x-rays and makes impressions of the teeth for plaster study models and mouthguard construction
- ▶ Educates young people and their parents about oral healthcare.



# Advantages of being a Dental Hygienist, Oral Health Therapist or Dental Therapist

- ▶ Working independently in a varied, interesting and skilled role, and also working as part of a team
- ▶ Using clinical, teaching and customer service skills
- ▶ Relieving people's pain and discomfort.



# How to become a Dental Hygienist, Oral Health Therapist or Dental Therapist

You will need to complete a full-time Bachelor degree available at several universities in metropolitan and regional Australia. These are usually three years in duration.

## **Where can you go from there?**

- ▶ A Bachelor degree can be used for entry into a postgraduate dental degree
- ▶ Move into education, research, community work or administration in the oral health or healthcare sectors
- ▶ Work overseas.







# Dentist

# What does a Dentist do?

## Patient care

- ▶ Performs dental examinations, provides diagnoses and creates treatment plans to address patient concerns
- ▶ Provides 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
- ▶ Depending on capabilities, provides more specialised dental care
- ▶ Educates patients on how to prevent oral health problems by teaching skills such as how to brush the teeth and make positive diet choices
- ▶ Prescribes medications and refers patients to other health practitioners including specialists.



# What else does a Dentist do?

- ▶ Processes and interprets x-rays
- ▶ Provides education on dental care to the public
- ▶ Maintains concise, complete and accurate patient dental records
- ▶ Supervises the rest of the team and is responsible for leading the team in delivering oral health services
- ▶ Continually educates himself or herself and upgrades skills.





# How to become a Dentist

Dentists require a degree to enable them to be registered to practice; there are 11 universities in Australia, New Zealand and Fiji that offer dental training. Some universities require a first degree prior to undertaking a dental training course.

## Where can you go from there?

- ▶ Teach dentistry or become an academic
- ▶ Specialise in a chosen area of dentistry such as endodontics (focusing on the teeth)
- ▶ Create and deliver educational programs or get on the speaker circuit
- ▶ Work in remote areas of Australia or overseas in the community aid or public health sectors.



# Other Dental Careers

# Dental Technician

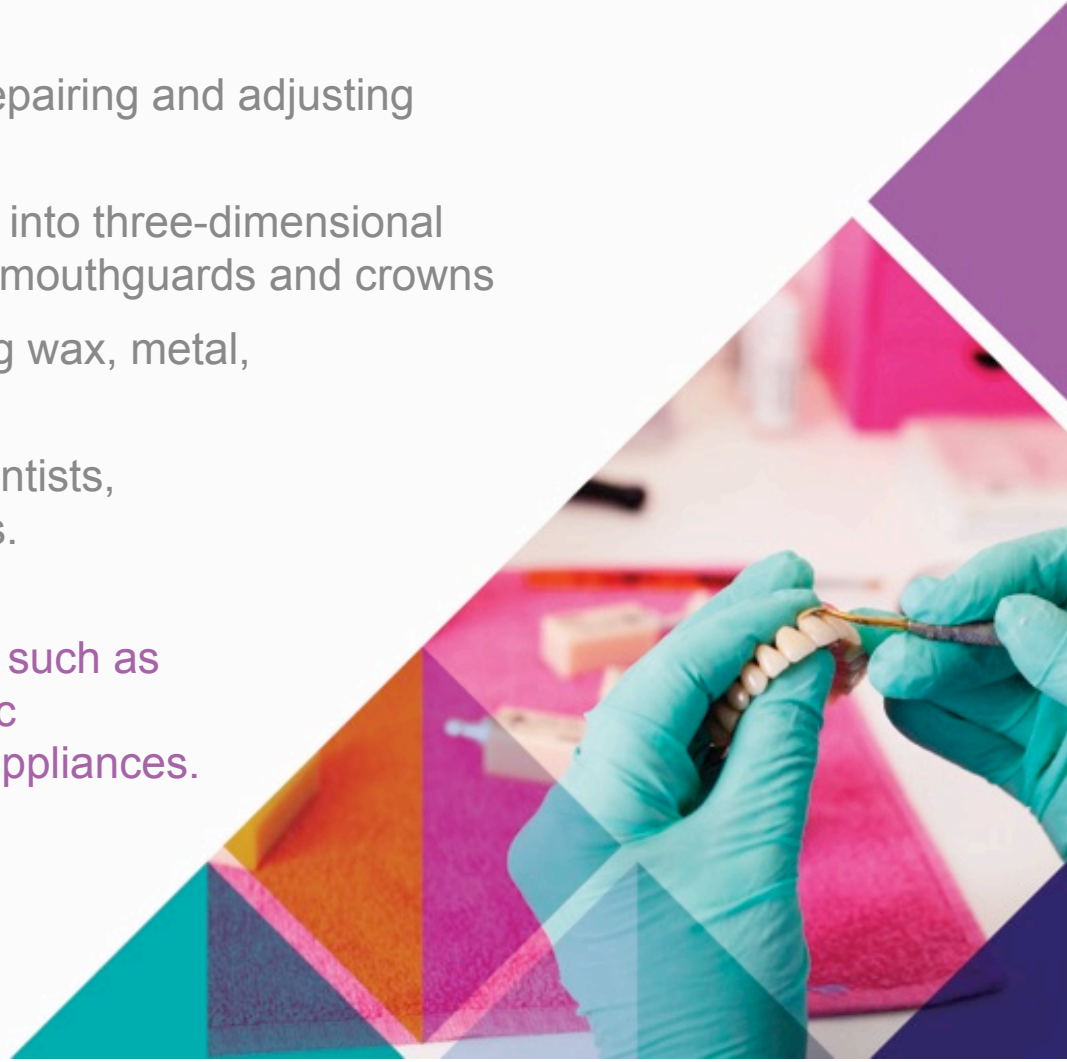




# What does a Dental Technician do?

- ▶ Works in a laboratory, constructing, repairing and adjusting dental appliances
- ▶ Translates two-dimensional diagrams into three-dimensional products such as dentures, implants, mouthguards and crowns
- ▶ Works with various materials including wax, metal, plaster and ceramics
- ▶ Works with dental prosthetists and dentists, but has no direct contact with patients.

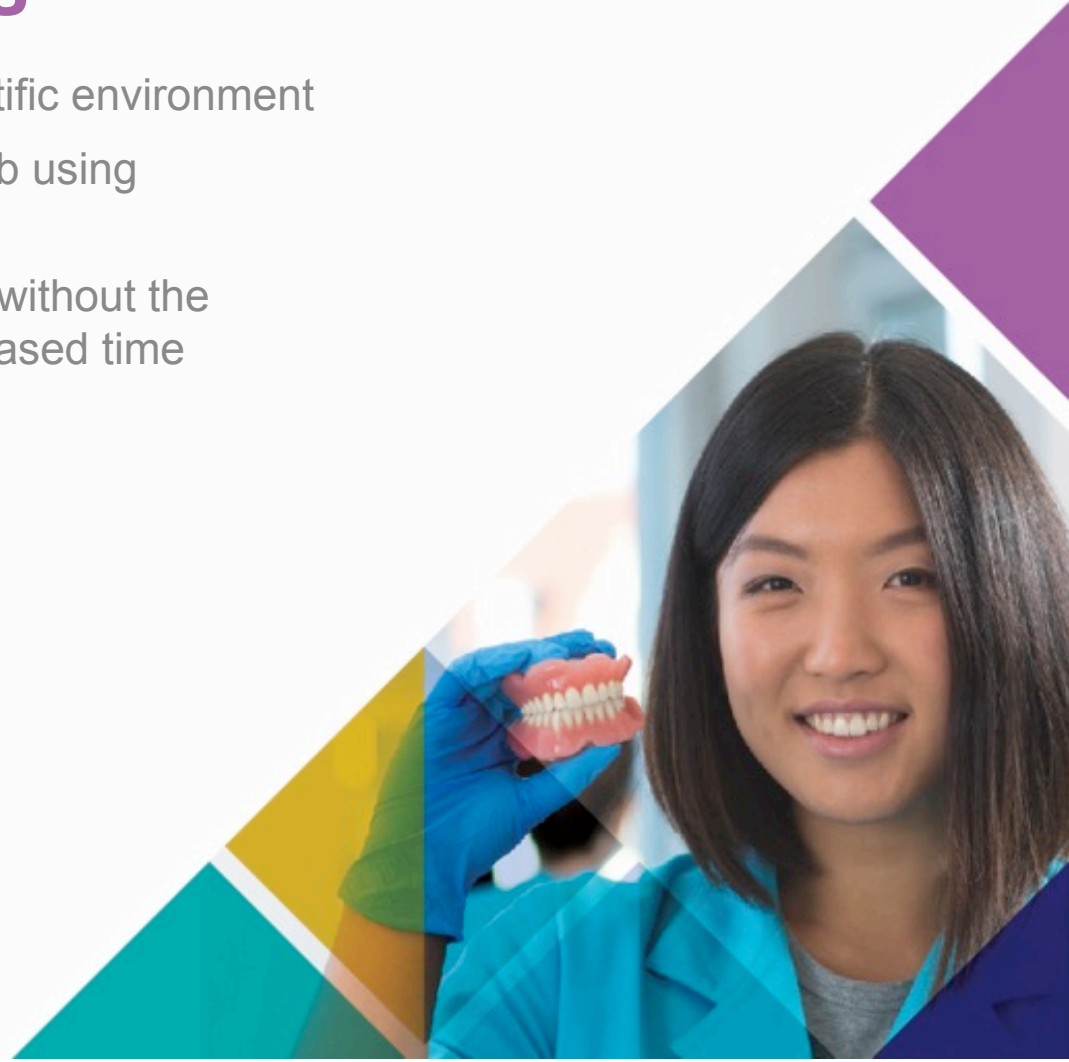
Works with dentists to fabricate items such as dentures, crowns, bridges, orthodontic appliances, mouthguards and sleep appliances.





# Advantages of being a Dental Technician

- ▶ Working with professionals in a scientific environment
- ▶ Working in a varied and interesting job using both scientific and artistic skills
- ▶ Ability to construct dental appliances without the patient being present leading to increased time flexibility with fabrication processes.



# How to become a Dental Technician

It is recommended that you complete a two-year Diploma in Dental Technology at TAFE or other accredited institution.

## Where can you go from there?

- ▶ Study further to become a prosthetist, therapist or dentist
- ▶ Move into other areas of prostheses construction such as post-cancer surgery reconstruction.

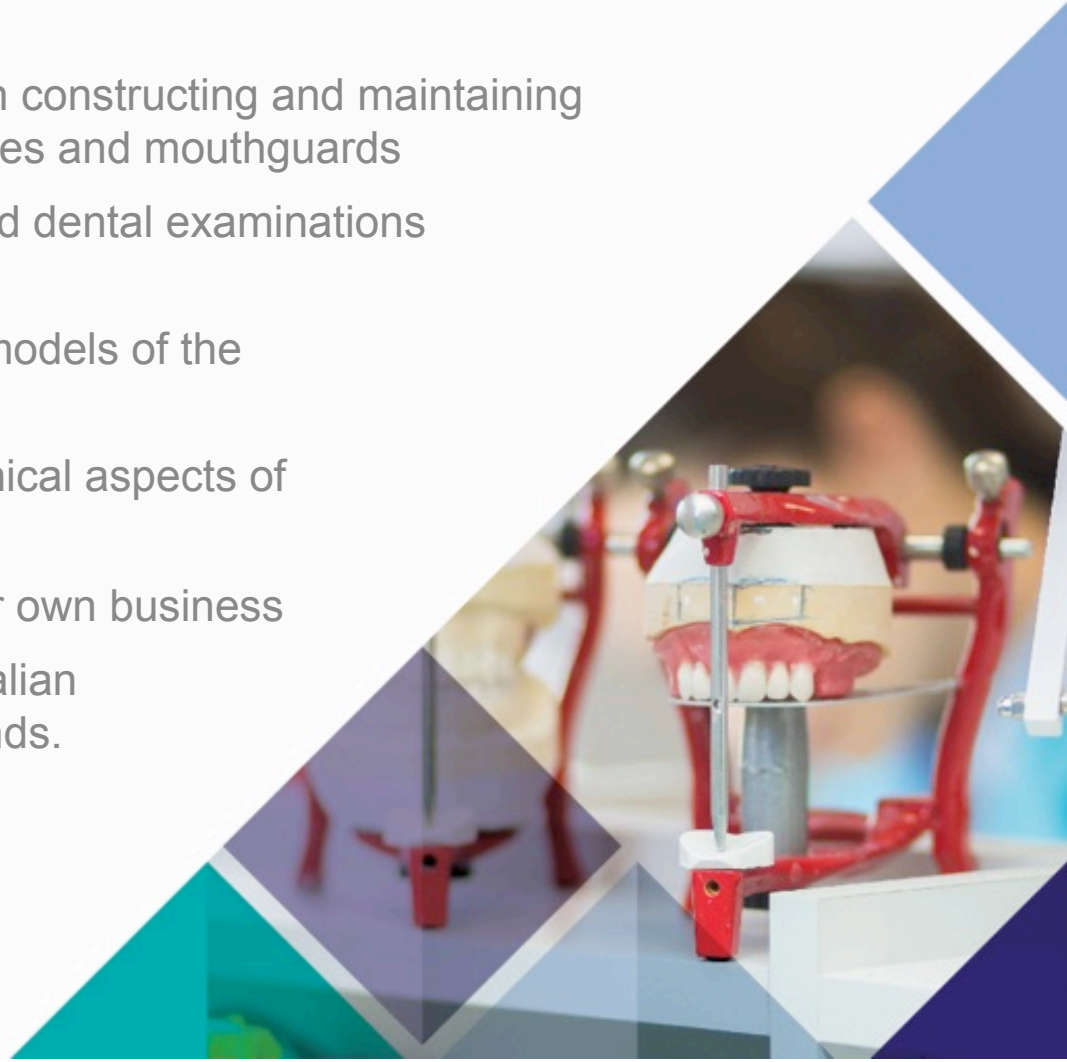




# Dental Prosthetist

# What does a Dental Prosthetist do?

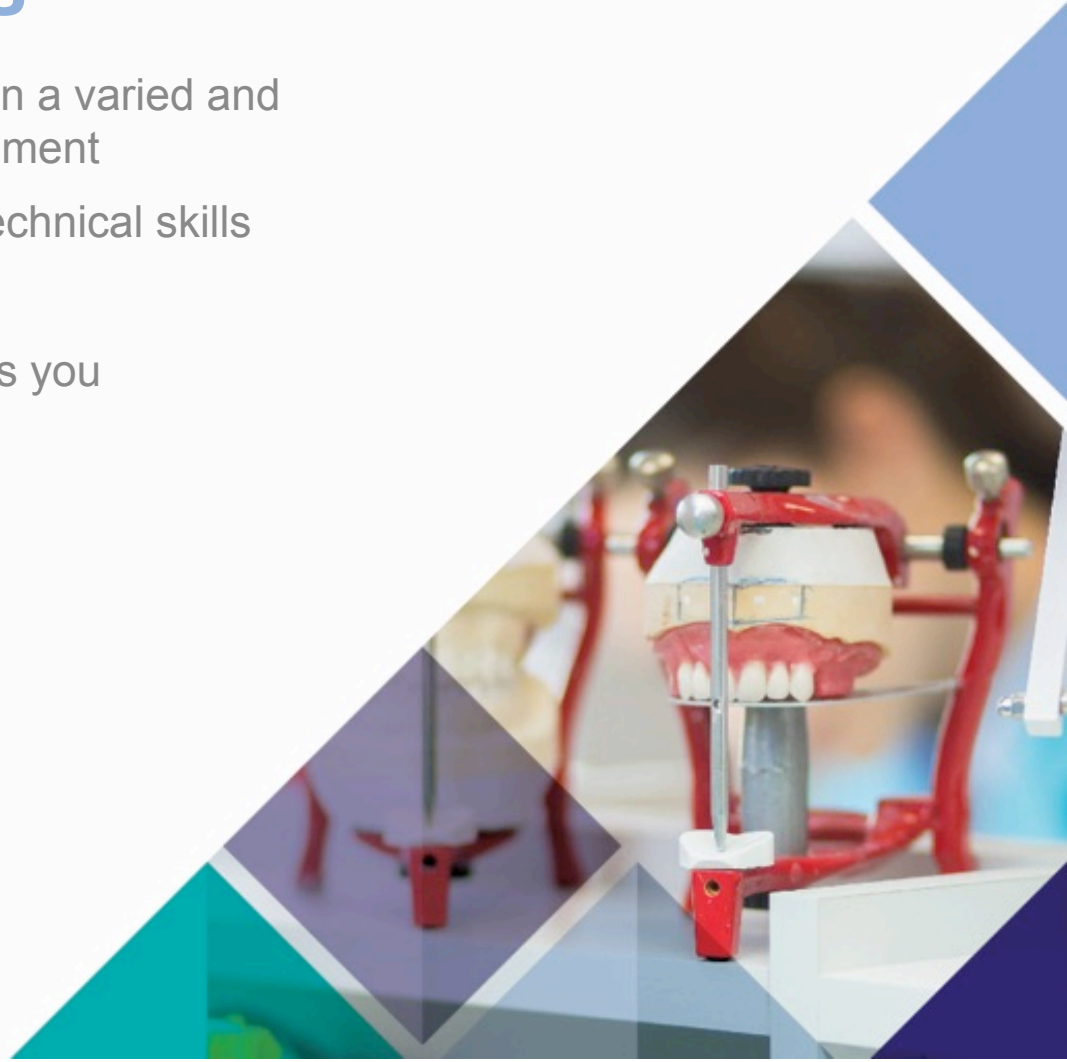
- ▶ Consults with dentists and patients on constructing and maintaining removable appliances such as dentures and mouthguards
- ▶ Performs oral health assessments and dental examinations on patients
- ▶ Makes impressions of the teeth and models of the mouth, teeth and jaws
- ▶ Is skilled in both the clinical and technical aspects of fitting appliances
- ▶ May work independently and run their own business
- ▶ Is a provider recognised by the Australian Government and all private health funds.





# Advantages of being a Dental Prosthetist

- ▶ Working with a wide range of people in a varied and interesting job in a healthcare environment
- ▶ Using scientific, artistic, clinical and technical skills
- ▶ Being your own boss
- ▶ Seeing upfront the positive differences you have made to people's lives.





# How to become a Dental Prosthetist

- ▶ Firstly, you will need to complete a two-year Diploma in Dental Technology at TAFE or other accredited institution
- ▶ Complete a two-year part-time Advanced Diploma in Dental Prosthetics at TAFE or other accredited institution.

## **Where can you go from there?**

- ▶ Teach students at TAFE and university about clinical and technical aspects of dentistry
- ▶ Become an inventor – develop, patent and produce new dental appliances or production processes
- ▶ Be a technical advisor or marketing manager for the dental laboratory industry
- ▶ Research new dental materials.



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# Thank you

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**For more information**

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