

University of New England

Technical Standards – Dental Hygiene Program

Introduction

Technical standards are all of the nonacademic functional abilities that are essential for the delivery of effective and safe dental hygiene care. The technical standards listed below identify the skills and behaviors necessary to successfully complete the dental hygiene curriculum and adequately prepare our students for the practice of dental hygiene.

Students who have a documented disability should contact Disability Services (DS) as soon as possible. Registration with DS is required before any accommodation requests will be granted. After registering with DS, the student and DS will collaborate to identify to what extent reasonable accommodations may exist that will enable the student to meet both the academic and technical standards of the program without lowering programmatic expectations. Reasonable accommodations will be directed toward providing an equal educational opportunity for students with disabilities while adhering to the standards of dental hygiene practice expected of all students. As stated in the syllabus of most dental hygiene courses, any student eligible for and needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with the professor within the first two weeks of class. Under no circumstances will the Dental Hygiene Program waive any essential course requirements or technical standards for any student with or without a disability.

The Dental Hygiene Program's technical standards are as follows, which a student must meet with or without reasonable accommodations:

Motor Skills / Manual Dexterity

Students must have full manual dexterity including adequate functioning of arms, wrists, hands and fingers. Appropriate psychomotor skills, manual dexterity and motor movement skills are necessary to render clinical dental hygiene treatment while possessing the physical strength to move oneself into a position that will enable the student to provide appropriate dental hygiene care.

The student must be able to:

Use personal protective devices (tolerate face mask/shield, safety eyewear, surgical gloves and laboratory coat)

Function in an environment where latex is present

Carry out OSHA infection control procedures using cleaners and chemicals

Perform dental hygiene procedures (scaling, polishing, x-rays) and manipulate dental materials

Access a patient from a seated or standing position

Operate switches, knobs, levers in operation of the dental chair and accessory equipment in all clinics and laboratory settings
Exhibit sufficient motor function to elicit information from a patient by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic modalities
Perceive and interpret tactile vibrations appropriately
Manipulate small objects and materials, paying close attention to fine detail
Perform basic life support including CPR
Transfer and position patients with disabilities

Sensory Skills / Observation Skills

A functional use of all senses is required. Visual acuity and intellectual ability are necessary to acquire information from documents such as charts, radiographs, small print, handwritten notations and computer images. Appropriate depth perception with vision from a distance of 18” with or without corrective lenses is essential.

A student must be able to:

Observe demonstrations at a distance and close at hand
Perform procedures in the classroom, clinic area and laboratory setting
See fine detail, focus at several distances, discern variations in color, shape and texture in order to differentiate abnormal from normal
Discern tactile sensations to perceive and interpret information associated with clinic procedures
Visually assess, bimanually palpate hard and soft anatomic structures
Develop reasonable skills of percussion and auscultation

Intellectual Skills / Conceptual and Cognitive Skills

Consistent, accurate and quick integration of information is required especially in an emergency situation.

The student must:

Possess the ability to learn, interpret, integrate, analyze and synthesize data
Possess the intellectual abilities required to carry out reasoning, analysis, problem – solving, critical thinking, self-evaluation and lifelong learning
Be able to comprehend three dimensional and spatial relationships

Communication Skills

A student must:

Communicate effectively with patients, colleagues, faculty and guests in verbal, nonverbal, and written form

Possess sufficient command of the English language in order to retrieve information from lectures, textbooks, and exams

Be able to obtain an accurate medical/dental history

Be able to accurately record findings in patients' records

Behavioral / Social / Mental / Emotional Skills

High levels of emotional and mental stability are required on a daily basis.

A student must possess the emotional health and mental stability necessary to:

Demonstrate respect and caring for patients, peers, staff, and faculty

Interact with peers, patients, staff and faculty in an emotionally stable, professional, and ethical manner

Demonstrate respect for the diversity of cultures among clinical patients, college personnel and peers

Demonstrate a team approach in carrying out responsibilities in all settings

Endure physically taxing workloads

Function effectively under stress

Adapt to changing environments by displaying flexibility

Display compassion, integrity, concern for others, respect, strong interpersonal skills

Be tactful and congenial

Be able to accept criticism and respond by appropriate modification of behavior

Be able to interrelate among colleagues, staff, and patients with honesty, integrity, professionalism and nondiscrimination

Exercise good judgment

Promptly complete responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients

Respect the confidentiality of patient privacy.

Other Skills

Students must demonstrate the ability to arrive at their clinical assignments on time and meet the programmatic requirements in a timely, professional and competent manner.

I attest that with proper training see no reason why I am not capable of performing the technical standards expected of a student in the UNE Dental Hygiene Program as outlined above with or without reasonable accommodations.