



## SINGAPORE DENTAL COUNCIL

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SDC 8:4 Vol 3

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To: All Registered Dental Professionals

I would like to highlight some important changes due to take place in the coming months:

- **REVISED GUIDELINES ON DISPLAYABLE QUALIFICATIONS**

1. The current Guidelines on Displayable Qualifications were introduced in 2009. A review of these guidelines was conducted to ensure currency and in view of the SDC's Register of Dental Specialists.
2. We have enclosed a copy of the **Revised Guidelines on the Display of Qualifications or Titles 2013** in Appendix I for your information. A copy of the guidelines is available at SDC's website:  
<http://www.sdc.gov.sg>
3. The revised guidelines will be implemented with effect from **1 May 2013**.

- **NEW PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATION SYSTEM**

1. The Singapore Dental Council will be launching a new professional registration system in June 2013. The new system aims to provide an easy and convenient means for the public and all dental professionals to communicate with the Council through the Internet.
2. Key functions of the new system includes registrations, renewals, accreditations, professional assessments, continuing professional education, professional education event search, finance, administration and professional register search.
3. More details relating to the launch will be communicated nearer the launch date.

- **RENEWAL OF PRACTISING CERTIFICATE FOR DENTISTS IN 2013**

1. The current practising certificates for dentists are due to expire on 31 Dec 2013. All dentists are reminded to attain the following before 30 Sept 2013:
  - (a) meet the necessary CPE requirements and
  - (b) have a valid Basic Cardiac Life Support (BCLS) Certificate before renewing your licence at the end of the year.
2. As practising certificate fee for all registered dentists was revised from \$200 to \$300 per year from 1 Feb 2012, all dentists who have opted to pay for their renewals through **GIRO** are reminded to inform your respective banks to **revise the authorised amount to \$600.00** (being payment for the 2-year practising certificate) due for deduction in Oct 2013.

- **MANDATORY UPDATE OF CONTACT DETAILS**

1. Dental practitioners are reminded to update their email and contact details with the Council so that urgent information can be delivered promptly. Under section 13(4) of the Dental Registration Act, dental practitioners are required to inform Council of any change in practice or residential address.

Thank you.

Sincerely

Clin A/Prof Patrick Tseng  
Registrar  
Singapore Dental Council

*This letter is computer-generated and no signature is required.*

**REVISED GUIDELINES ON THE DISPLAY OF QUALIFICATIONS OR TITLES  
2013**

**Preamble**

i. The Accreditation Committee formed on 3 July 2003 had been tasked to set up the criteria and evaluate the recognition and registration of Additional Qualifications (AQ). The guidelines were formulated in 2004 and formally approved and adopted by the Singapore Dental Council on 12 November 2004. They were further modified at the Council Meeting of 12 January 2007.

ii. With the setup of the guidelines for the Specialist's Register in the first half of 2008, the Committee had been tasked by the Singapore Dental Council as follows:

a. At the special council meeting of 11 Dec 2007, the Singapore Dental Council had given in-principle approval to a new framework with Additional Qualifications now divided into Specialty Qualifications and Displayable Qualifications (DQs).

b. The incumbent AC was tasked to make recommendations on the criteria for the new Displayable Qualifications category.

iii. Subsequent discussions by Council and consultations with the DSAB led to the modification of the categorization mentioned in Para (ii) above, with recognition of relevant specialty qualifications to be determined by DSAB independently and DQs to be the universal set of all qualifications and titles acceptable for display. DQs would be under the purview of the council.

iv. The Accreditation Committee will be renamed the Credentials Committee (CC) with effect from 02 February 2009.

v. The roles of the Credentials Committee are to:

a. make recommendations on the criteria for the acceptance of new Displayable Qualifications

b. make recommendations to Council with respect to the application of any qualification that is not a basic degree

vi. The formulated guidelines are principally to protect the public.

## **Disclaimer**

vii. The Singapore Dental Council maintains this listing for the acceptance of additional qualifications or titles for the purpose of display. This is because there is a need to control the proliferation and misrepresentation of titles to protect the interest of the public. This listing does not imply endorsement, accreditation or approval by the SDC. The qualifications or titles accepted for display must be Qualifications or titles that "...indicate genuine advancement in expertise and experience and provide the dental surgeon with a significant quantum increase in knowledge and expertise..."

## **Guidelines on the Display of Qualifications or Titles**

### **Introduction**

1. The purpose of listing for display is to indicate to the public and to other practitioners that, in addition to a primary dental qualification, a dental surgeon has acquired knowledge, skills or experience which are available for the benefit of patients.
2. Dental Surgeons should be encouraged to upgrade their knowledge, skills and experience, whether as General Dental Practitioners (GDPs) or after attaining specialist status. The qualification or title must indicate that the dental surgeon has achieved a genuine advancement in expertise and experience and provided the dental surgeon with a quantum leap in knowledge and expertise. Acquired titles that are displayed should not be merely cosmetic.
3. The Singapore Dental Council views the display and use of qualifications and titles as pertaining to the provision and dissemination of information to the public about the dentist's services, as promulgated in Section 4.4 of the SDC Ethical Code and Guidelines (2006). Section 31 (7) of the Dental Registration Act (2008) defines "use", in relation to any qualification, title, addition or designation, as to include "..... to exhibit or publish the qualification, title, addition or designation in any card, letter, stationery, nameplate, signboard, placard, circular, handbill or any notice displayed by the registered dentist concerned at any premises used by him for the practice of dentistry".
4. Titles suggesting various degrees of specialization should only be allowed for display if they conform to our current pattern of recognition of specialties and sub specialties. This is to avoid ambiguity in a dental surgeon's specialist status in Singapore. The titles themselves need not fall neatly within our specialist or sub-specialist classification, but the topics therein should be relevant to the registered area of practice of the applicant.
5. Titles accepted for display up to now should continue to be allowed. New rules should not be applied retrospectively. The list of Aqs accepted as of 02 February 2009 will be grandfathered into the List of Displayable Qualifications (DQs).

### **Criteria for acceptance for the purpose of display**

#### **Acceptable Qualifications or Titles**

6. Qualifications or titles will normally be accepted for display if:
  - a. these are awarded after a programme of training, study or research in an area directly relevant to some aspect of dentistry or medicine or area of health care that is complementary and relevant to clinical dental practice.
  - b. the qualification must demonstrate that the holder possesses a more extensive knowledge in a subject relevant to the practice of dentistry than would be required to obtain a registrable primary dental qualification.
  - c. when in a clinical area, qualifications must have adequate supervised clinical training in an approved institution.

c(i). supervised clinical training - this is defined as training involving the management and treatment of a specific patient/patients, where a supervisor is responsible for the treatment planning and is physically present during the treatment of the patient/patients to ensure proper delivery of such care. The supervisor must be appointed by the approved institution.

c(ii). Approved institution - this is defined as a dental school that is listed on the Schedule or one that is deemed equivalent by the Council in the context of this DQ Guidelines 2013.

d. for qualifications that may lead the public to believe that the holder has advanced clinical training in a particular area of clinical dentistry or clinical specialty, these will be held to a higher standard commensurate to the claimed level of advanced training.

**I. DSAB-specialty qualifications:**

Any qualification/title involving a DSAB-recognized specialty must fulfill all the requirements of "Basic Specialist Training" as determined by the DSAB, before it can be accredited as a Displayable Qualification.

Exit qualification in a DSAB-recognized specialty can only be displayed by a SDC-registered specialist.

**II. Non-DSAB Specialty qualifications/Titles**

***a. Clinical Qualification :***

Clinical qualifications that do not fall under any of the DSAB-recognized specialties shall be evaluated in accordance with DQ Guidelines 2013.

***b. Non-Clinical Qualifications***

Non-clinical qualifications relevant to the practice of dentistry shall be evaluated in accordance with DQ Guidelines 2013. Non-clinical qualifications that are not relevant to the practice of dentistry shall not be accepted for display.

e. Distance learning courses, or courses with a major distance learning component, leading to implied advanced training in a clinical area, shall not be accepted for display.

f. Any qualification where the major part of training is outsourced to or conducted through a private organization/s shall not be accepted for display even if an approved institution awards the qualification.

7. With respect to Awarding Bodies, acceptable qualifications or titles for display are either:

a. higher qualifications by examination or research awarded by a Faculty of Dentistry or Dental School in a University of standing; or

b. qualifications awarded in recognition of completion of prescribed training and/or experience by Dental / Medical / Surgical Colleges and recognised institutions, accredited specialty training programmes or American Specialty Board equivalent.

## **Honorary Qualifications**

8. Honorary Qualifications are those that are conferred by Colleges, Associations, Membership Societies and other professional bodies upon dental surgeons in recognition of their status. The criteria are often based on seniority, research, teaching contribution to literature and community involvement. There is no training course, no examination and does not demonstrate an advancement in experience and expertise on the recipient.

9. Honorary qualifications and fellowships without examination should henceforth not be allowed for display with the exception of or unless they are deemed to be of special status to the individual that is of credit to the profession.

## **Examination for Qualifications or Titles Examining Body**

10. The Examining Body must be recognized by the national Ministry of Health or equivalent as well as the national Dental Council or equivalent. The title in question must itself be either (a) recognized by the authorities for specialist accreditation in the country of origin, or (b) if not recognized for specialist accreditation but is accepted for display. However, the examining body for specialist qualifications must be the one that the authorities accept for specialty recognition in that country and from an institution of good international standing.

## **Nature of the Qualifications or Titles**

11. There are many levels and types of qualifications available. To be acceptable for display:

a. The qualification must provide a dental surgeon with a significant quantum increase in knowledge and expertise. The content must push the dental surgeon clearly above his current state. Qualifications that merely reinforce a current level of competence will not be acceptable as this is no better than Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

b. Any qualification that is not relevant to dentistry cannot be approved.

## **Courses and Examination**

12. While there is wide variation in training courses and examinations, some basic criteria must be met to ensure reliable increase in competence. Criteria and method of assessment used by the awarding body for conferment of the qualification should demonstrate sufficient academic rigour and due process e.g. continual assessment, examinations.

a. There should preferably be eligibility criteria such as minimum qualification already attained or number years of practice post graduation or post-specialisation, to ensure that the dental surgeon has consolidated his previous experience before taking a course or an examination.

b. There must be a standard training programme or course structure with a syllabus that demonstrates clear extension of knowledge and expertise beyond the level of a primary dental qualification. The course content could include didactic lectures, clinical

teaching, essays or dissertations and field or clinical experience; and the program must be substantial and cumulative.

**If a Clinical Course**, the program must demonstrate supervised clinical training in an approved institution equivalent to a minimum of at least 8 weeks full time clinical training (i.e. 320 hours) in addition to other forms of training. Such supervised clinical training must be scheduled in the course curriculum. Definitions of “supervised clinical training” and “approved institution” are stated in Clause 6 above.

**If a Non-Clinical Course leading to a Masters/Doctorate degree**, the program should be of at least 1 year duration (i.e. 1,200 hours) or an equivalent period of part-time study.

**If a Non-Clinical Course not leading to a Masters/Doctorate degree**, the program should be of at least six months duration (i.e. 600 hours) or an equivalent period of part-time study.

Council reserves the right to determine the classification of a course as Clinical or Non-Clinical.

c. There must be a structured assessment that examines the theoretical and/or clinical aspects or practice evaluation. While there may not be clinical examinations involving real patients, there must be evidence of evaluation of practice aspects of the subject.

### **Administrative Processes**

13. A dental surgeon seeking to display a qualification or title should apply in writing to the Singapore Dental Council. A criterion based application form is available to guide dental surgeons in the submission of qualifications or titles to SDC for display (Refer to Annex A). The checklist should be completed and this should be accompanied by documentary verification. Source verification will be done by the SDC secretariat and the applicant shall sign a consent for release of information addressed to the awarding body. For qualifications that are not on the list of approved qualifications, course prospectus and curriculum must be submitted and it should pertain to the period of study undertaken by the applicant.

14. If any category in the checklist is checked NO, it is a veto factor and the dental surgeon need not submit the form to SDC at all. This should constitute a self-selection or de-selection process.

15. The application should, where relevant, include the following documents:

- (a) a certified true copy of the certificate confirming the award of the qualification
- (b) syllabus: subjects, length of study, abstract of thesis ( if relevant )
- (c) does the conferring body require a certain number of years of practice before the candidate is eligible
- (d) method of assessment (e.g. a postgraduate specialty exam) and the criteria on which it is awarded
- (e) awarding body



- (f ) proof of recognition of qualification in country of awarding body
- (g) can the qualification be displayed in the country of awarding body
- (h) is the qualification conferred eligible for specialist accreditation in the country of awarding body?
- (i) suggested abbreviation for displayable qualification, if relevant ( to provide evidence of the most widely recognized abbreviation for the qualification in the country of awarding body )

16. Upon submission of the form to SDC, the secretariat will verify the documentation, then forward the request to the CC to evaluate the titles. Minimum time taken for a decision on a ***new*** qualification is two months from the time all supporting documents including source verification confirmation, are received by SDC.

17. The application will be processed by the Council and it must be satisfied that the criteria listed have been fully met.

18. Council reserves the right to make changes to the guidelines as necessary.

*Last updated: 060312*



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ANNEX A

### APPLICATION FOR DISPLAY OF ADDITIONAL TITLES / QUALIFICATIONS

(Please fill in one application form for each title / qualification applied for)

Name of Dental Practitioner: \_\_\_\_\_ DCR Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Qualification in full: \_\_\_\_\_ Abbreviation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of awarding institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Country of awarding institution: \_\_\_\_\_ Year of conferment of title: \_\_\_\_\_

Field of specialty/sub-specialty (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

For General Dental Practitioners, field of interest: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Dental Practitioner: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Submission: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Notes**

1. Please fill in the checklist overleaf, with a tick in the appropriate box.
2. Attach documentary verification of your declarations on the checklist. These include copies of the certificate, information about the awarding institution and its recognition by local authorities, course syllabus and structure and format of the assessment. You are responsible for providing evidence of all the criteria in the checklist. Absence of relevant evidence will result in rejection of your application.
3. Provide the suggested abbreviation for the qualification or title (to provide evidence of the most widely recognized abbreviation for the qualification in the country of awarding body);
4. If any of your declarations is 'NO', it is veto factor and you do not need to submit this application form. Your title is not acceptable for display.
5. **New Qualifications (not in the list of DQs)**
  - (a) If you have filled in 'YES' to all sections and if the qualification is not in the list of displayable qualifications (DQs), please submit this form to SDC together with **an administrative fee of \$50 (non-refundable)** for each qualification where a further evaluation will be made and the relevant Dental Specialist Accreditation Committee (DSAC) or the Credentials Committee (CC) as appropriate will be asked to give its opinion. Your title will be accepted for display if all criteria are deemed met and the relevant DSAC/CC also assents.
  - (b) Minimum time taken for a decision on a new qualification is **two months** from the time all supporting documents including source verification confirmation, are received by SDC.
6. A **source verification fee of \$50 (non-refundable)** will be imposed for conduct of verification on qualification with respective institution. You are required to complete the Release of Information Form in Annex A.
7. A **registration fee of \$50 for each qualification is payable on approval.**

**CHECKLIST FOR APPLICATION FOR DISPLAY OF ADDITIONAL TITLE / QUALIFICATION**

CRITERIA and notes	YES	NO (Veto)	Additional information	SDC Verification
<p><b>1. If a clinical qualification is it directly related to and consistent with your registered area of dental practice?</b></p> <p align="center"><b>OR</b></p> <p><b>Is the non-clinical qualification relevant to your clinical practice?</b> The subject should directly advance clinical practice and not be peripheral or theoretical.</p>				
<p><b>2. Is this title OTHER than an honorary title?</b> The title should not be merely conferred, but must be based on training courses. Honorary titles are not accepted for display, except those that have historically been allowed.</p>				
<p><b>3. Can the qualification be displayed in the country of awarding body?</b></p> <p align="center"><b>OR</b></p> <p><b>Is the qualification conferred eligible for specialist accreditation in the country of awarding body?</b></p>				
<p><b>4. Is the issuing body of the clinical qualification accredited by the Ministry of Health or Dental Council or their equivalents in that country as the appropriate authority for the relevant area of practice?</b></p> <p align="center"><b>OR</b></p> <p><b>Is the University that is conferring the qualification of good international standing?</b></p>				
<p><b>5. Does the clinical title indicate an advance in GDP, specialty or sub-specialty interest, which is NOT procedure specific?</b></p> <p align="center"><b>OR</b></p> <p><b>Does the non-clinical qualification or title indicate an advance in knowledge beyond your highest clinical qualification?</b> The degree should not represent a lower order of knowledge than your highest clinical qualification and generally should not be obtained prior to achieving your highest clinical qualification.</p>				
<p><b>6. If a clinical qualification, is eligibility for this title limited to dentists only?</b></p> <p align="center"><b>OR</b></p> <p><b>If this is an non-clinical qualification, this is not relevant (indicate 'NA')</b></p>				
<p><b>7. Are there eligibility criteria to enter the program?</b>  There should be stated minimum qualifications and minimum duration of practice before entry into a program.</p>				
<p><b>8. Is there a standard, formal course towards this title?</b> - for clinical course not less than equivalent of 8 weeks full time?</p> <p align="center"><b>OR</b></p> <p>- if a non-clinical course, not less than one year program</p>				
<p><b>9. Is there structured assessment and evaluation, examination or defense of a thesis?</b></p>				
<p><b>10. Is this title recognized by the relevant DSAC for display?</b> SDC will consult the relevant DSAC / DSAB. <i>You do not have to fill this column.</i></p>				

**For Official Use:**

## RELEASE OF INFORMATION

To: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of University

To Whom It May Concern

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (IC or Passport No. \_\_\_\_\_)  
Name of dentist

with enrolment number \_\_\_\_\_ give my consent to the

\_\_\_\_\_ to release my enrolment  
Name of University

status from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ to The Singapore Dental Council  
dd/mm/yyyy dd/mm/yyyy

for the purpose of verification.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date