

**SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY (SAQA)**

In accordance with Regulation 24(c) of the National Standards Bodies Regulations of 28 March 1998, the Standards Generating Body (Task Team) for

**Dental Therapy and Oral Hygiene**

registered by Organising Field 09 – Health Science and Social Services , publishes the following Qualification for public comment.

This notice contains the titles, fields, sub-fields, NQF levels, credits, and purpose of the Qualification. The full Qualification can be accessed via the SAQA web-site at [www.saq.org.za](http://www.saq.org.za). Copies may also be obtained from the Directorate of Standards Setting and Development at the SAQA offices, SAQA House, 1067 Arcadia Street, Hatfield, Pretoria.

Comment on the Qualification should reach SAQA at the address below and **no later than 30 November 2009**. All correspondence should be marked **Standards Setting – Task Team for Dental Therapy and Oral Hygiene** and addressed to

The Director: Standards Setting and Development  
SAQA  
*Attention: Mr. E. Brown*  
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**D. MPHUTHING**  
**ACTING DIRECTOR: STANDARDS SETTING AND DEVELOPMENT**



SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

**QUALIFICATION:**  
**Bachelor of Dental Therapy**

SAQA QUAL ID		QUALIFICATION TITLE	
74451		Bachelor of Dental Therapy	
ORIGINATOR		PROVIDER	
TT - Dental Therapy and Oral Hygiene			
QUALIFICATION TYPE	FIELD	SUBFIELD	
Professional Qualification	9 - Health Sciences and Social Services	Promotive Health and Developmental Services	
ABET BAND	MINIMUM CREDITS	NQF LEVEL	QUAL CLASS
Undefined	360	Level 6	Regular-ELOAC

New NQF Level: NQF Level 07

***This qualification does not replace any other qualification and is not replaced by another qualification.***

**PURPOSE AND RATIONALE OF THE QUALIFICATION**

Purpose:

The purpose of this Qualification is to provide the learner with the necessary scientific knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to be able to function as a practitioner in oral health care, independently and/or as a part of the multi-disciplinary healthcare team. The practitioner will focus on the holistic care of patients, which ranges from prevention of oral disease and promotion of oral health to the alleviation of oral abnormalities, pain and disease. The practitioner will be able to provide a service for individual patients as well as the broader public in both public and private sectors.

Although the sub-field indicated is that of curative health, the practitioner will also function in the sub-fields of preventive, promotive and rehabilitative health, on primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

The qualifying learner will be able to:

- Function legally, ethically and professionally within the relevant scope of practice.
- Apply management principles in the oral healthcare environment.
- Apply universal precautions to maintain the highest standards of health and safety.
- Enable the individual and/or community members to maintain oral health and assist when remedial interventions are necessary.
- Explain and demonstrate the various preventive, promotive, curative and rehabilitative interventions expected in terms of the relevant scope of practice.
- Develop research skills and carry out an applicable research exercise.

On successful completion of this Qualification, the learner will be eligible for registration with the Professional Board for Dental Therapy and Oral Hygiene of the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) as an independent practitioner.

Rationale:

Oral diseases are highly prevalent in South Africa and impact on the physical, social, psychological and economic well being of individuals and communities. The oral disease profile, potential burden of oral diseases and the oral consequences of health problems all require intervention to be addressed at various levels such as promotion, prevention, therapeutic and curative, surgical and rehabilitative measures. The need for oral health care is required for individuals and communities across the social and economic spectrum and this practitioner can provide care within the South African context that ranges from rural and disadvantaged communities to sophisticated, highly technological urban communities.

The South African community requires the services of a practitioner who has the competence to provide cost effective oral care within and beyond the traditional service models. Furthermore, to produce competent practitioners who will take cognisance of, and be able to adapt to, the unique circumstances of a changing South Africa with emphasis on equity in health care. This qualification, which will address the oral disease burden, placed on the health care system, will be cost effective and relevant in terms of meeting the human resource needs of our country.

#### **RECOGNIZE PREVIOUS LEARNING?**

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#### **LEARNING ASSUMED IN PLACE**

- Communication at NQF Level 4.
- Mathematical Literacy at NQF Level 4.
- Biology or Life Sciences at NQF Level 4.

It is strongly recommended that the learner is proficient in end-user computing skills at NQF Level 3.

#### **Recognition of Prior Learning:**

This Qualification may be achieved through the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Portfolios of Evidence, endorsed by previous mentors or employers may be presented and may include learning outcomes achieved through formal, informal/non formal learning and work experience. Recognition of Prior Learning may be awarded in accordance with the decision of the relevant provider and in agreement with the relevant ETQA.

#### **Access to the Qualification:**

Admission is open to all learners in possession of a Senior Certificate or equivalent NQF Level 4 qualification, subject to the additional requirements laid down by the providing institution and/or relevant ETQA.

#### **QUALIFICATION RULES**

All the Exit Level Outcomes must be achieved for the learner to be awarded the Qualification.

#### **EXIT LEVEL OUTCOMES**

1. Apply the principles of ethics, relevant legislation and professional behaviour within the oral healthcare milieu.
2. Apply management principles in a clinical oral healthcare environment.
  - Range of administrative duties include but are not limited to: Preparation and maintenance of clinical oral health facility and equipment, patient record keeping, patient bookings, stock control, correspondence, bookkeeping, occupational health and safety legislative requirements.
3. Apply universal precautions to avoid cross infection and maintain the highest standards of health and safety.

4. Promote oral health to prevent oral disease in a community.
5. Explain and demonstrate the various preventive, promotive, curative and rehabilitative interventions expected of the dental therapist.
6. Develop research skills, conduct a research project in the area of oral health and present the findings in the required research format.

Critical Cross-Field Outcomes:

- Identifying and solving problems are demonstrated in patient examination and treatment planning.
- Working effectively with others as a member of a team, group, organisation or community is demonstrated in the interactions between the dental therapist and other members of the oral healthcare team.
- Organising and managing self is demonstrated in the successful management of clinical facility and patients.
- Collecting, analysing, organising and critically evaluating information is indicated in the successful generation of patient treatment plans.
- Communicating effectively is demonstrated through the successful delivery of oral health education sessions.
- Utilising science and technology effectively and critically is clearly indicated in the successful treatment of patients.
- Demonstrating an understanding of the world as a set of related systems is indicated in all the activities of a successful dental therapist.

**ASSOCIATED ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

Associated Assessment Criteria for Exit Level Outcome 1:

- 1.1 Ethical and legal responsibilities pertaining to oral healthcare practice are explained and applied during all interactions with patients, colleagues and/or the community.
- 1.2 All treatment is rendered in terms of the Bill of Rights and the Patient Charter and patient confidentiality is maintained throughout.
- 1.3 Professional and personal growth is achieved through the assumption of various roles within the clinical or community setting and is evidenced during interactions between practitioner and patient and/or practitioner and colleagues.
  - Range of roles include but are not limited to: Clinician, educator and administrator.
- 1.4 All interactions with colleagues, patients and communities promote human dignity and indicate due sensitivity to ethnic, cultural, religious and gender diversity.

Associated Assessment Criteria for Exit Level Outcome 2:

- 2.1 The legal requirements governing the operation of a private practice are explained and applied in accordance with the relevant current legislation.
- 2.2 Personal work plans and/or practice protocols for all personnel within the practice are drawn up and utilised.
- 2.3 All equipment is regularly checked for efficient working and faulty equipment is timeously reported and/or sent for repair.
- 2.4 Booking registers and patient records are maintained in a manner that ensures patient confidentiality and efficiency of practice.
- 2.5 Stock is classified and controlled to ensure currency of all products and efficiency of availability.
- 2.5 Accounts, receipts, petty cash and banking are managed in a manner that ensures safety, efficiency and, where applicable, maintenance of patient confidentiality.
- 2.6 Hazardous and scheduled materials are kept in controlled storage, appropriate inventory counts regularly are taken and recorded and relevant reports are made.