

Dental Hygiene Essential Job Function and Technical Standards

The Quinsigamond Community College Dental Hygiene Program is committed to diversity and fostering an inclusive environment that reflects the diverse healthcare community. We recognize the uniqueness and potential of every learner and strive to cultivate a culture of respect and equity, welcoming all students, including those with disabilities.

We encourage students with disabilities to disclose their needs and seek accommodations to fully participate in our program. All disability-related conversations and requests are handled confidentially to protect your privacy. If you believe you may need accommodations after reviewing the Technical Standards, please contact the Student Accessibility Services Office as early as possible. Due to the complexities of clinical-based programs, additional time may be required to implement accommodations effectively.

Contact Information: Student Accessibility Services

For more information, visit the Student Accessibility Services webpage [Student Accessibility Services](#), call (508) 854-4471, email SAS@qcc.mass.edu, or visit room 246A located in the Administration Building, 670 West Boylston Street, Worcester, MA 01606.

The following technical standards define the physical, cognitive, and behavioral abilities necessary for students to successfully complete the Associate of Science in Dental Hygiene Program. All students, with or without reasonable accommodations, must meet these requirements upon entering the program.

1. MOTOR SKILLS

GENERAL:

A student must utilize gross and fine motor skills to perform movements essential for providing the dental hygiene process of care for patients.

SPECIFIC:

A student utilizes the motor skills to perform palpation, percussion, auscultation, and other diagnostic procedures. These actions require coordination of gross and fine motor skills, hand and finger dexterity, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.

A student must be able to transfer and position patients, position and reposition themselves around the patient and the dental chair, and perform basic life support, including CPR.

A student must be able to operate hand and foot controls, use low-speed dental handpieces, power scalers, and hand instruments in the provision of dental hygiene procedures.

A student must possess the ability to function effectively in confined spaces, maintain prolonged sitting postures, and perform physical movements such as bending, stretching, twisting, and reaching. The student must also demonstrate proficiency in manipulating and operating various tools and mechanisms, including dental equipment, patient chairs, laboratory instruments, sterilization systems, and X-ray machinery.

2. SENSORY/OBSERVATION

GENERAL:

Students must have adequate sensory and perceptual abilities critical for effective performance in clinical settings.

Students must have the ability to monitor sound and assess the needs of the dental team and patients. They must observe and assess during procedures and have the tactile ability to perform dental hygiene duties efficiently.

SPECIFIC:

Students should visualize at varying distances and read measurements in millimeters at close range, discern variations in color, shape, and texture, and utilize both direct and indirect vision during patient care.

Students must have the ability to detect sound and understand muffled communication without visualizing the speaker's mouth and lips, detect warning signals on equipment, demonstrate

sufficient peripheral vision with or without accommodation to anticipate patient movement, and use tactile senses directly by palpation and indirectly by sensations transmitted through instruments.

3. COMMUNICATION

GENERAL:

Students must be able to communicate effectively, conveying, receiving, and interpreting written, verbal, and non-verbal communication.

SPECIFIC:

Students must be able to communicate effectively to obtain patient information, accurately interpret data from medical records, document observations and provide directions relevant to patient treatment.

Students must be able to demonstrate effective communication by listening and responding respectfully with all members of the healthcare team including patients, faculty, outside healthcare providers and fellow students.

4. CONGNITIVE

GENERAL:

Students must be able to learn, integrate, reason, analyze, and synthesize information and be able to critically think, problem-solve, and make decisions in both laboratory and clinical settings.

SPECIFIC:

Students must be able to comprehend three-dimensional and spatial relationships of structures, accurately integrate and synthesize information rapidly, especially in emergency situations, and apply instructional concepts in both lab and clinical settings.

5. BEHAVIORAL

GENERAL:

Students must possess the ability to utilize their intellect, exercise sound judgment, and complete all responsibilities associated with patient care in the clinic and/or laboratory settings.

Students must be able to develop mature, sensitive, respectful, and professional relationships.

SPECIFIC:

Students must be able to endure and function effectively with physically and emotionally taxing workloads, adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function under stress amid the uncertainties inherent in clinical patient care.

Students must be able to manage apprehensive patients with various moods and behaviors in a tactful, congenial, personal, and professional manner. They must be able to accept criticism and appropriately modify their behavior in response. Students must interrelate with colleagues, staff, and patients with honesty, integrity, respect, and nondiscrimination.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL**GENERAL:**

Students must be able to tolerate environmental stressors.

SPECIFIC:

Students must be able to adapt to a rapidly changing environment and/or stress, practice standard precautions in the dental setting, wear personal protective equipment including scrubs, gloves, face mask, face shield, protective eye wear. The students must be able to maneuver and function in areas that are close, crowded and/or noisy. Students must anticipate exposure to body fluids, contaminated sharps, chemicals, and biological agents.

7. ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM**GENERAL:**

A student must be able to maintain the standards of conduct for ethics and professionalism as set forth in the QCC Dental Programs Policy and Procedure Handbook and in the American Dental Hygienists Association's Principles of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct.

SPECIFIC:

Students must be able act with integrity and trustworthiness in all interactions.

Students must have the ability recognize ethical and legal responsibilities, demonstrate cross-cultural competence, integrity, moral reasoning, ethical behavior, and concern for others.