Dental Hygiene Program Standard

The approved program standard for all Dental Hygiene programs of instruction leading to an Ontario College Diploma delivered by Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (MTCU funding code 51628)

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
March 2007*
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This version replaces the program standard released in June 1996. Inquiries regarding this program standard should be directed to the address noted above.

Inquiries regarding specific Dental Hygiene programs offered by colleges of applied arts and technology in Ontario should be directed to the relevant college.

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I. Introduction

This document is the Program Standard for all Dental Hygiene programs of instruction leading to an Ontario College Diploma delivered by Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology (MTCU funding code 51628). This version replaces the program standard released in June 1996.

Development of System-Wide Program Standards

In 1993, the Government of Ontario initiated program standards development with the objectives of bringing a greater degree of consistency to college programming offered across the province, broadening the focus of college programs to ensure graduates have the skills to be flexible and to continue to learn and adapt, and providing public accountability for the quality and relevance of college programs.

The Program Standards and Evaluation Unit of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities has responsibility for the development, review, and approval of system-wide standards for programs of instruction at Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology.

Program Standards

Program standards apply to all similar programs of instruction offered by colleges across the province. Each program standard for a postsecondary program includes the following elements:

- **Vocational standard** (the vocationally specific learning outcomes which apply to the program of instruction in question);
- **Essential employability skills** (the essential employability skills learning outcomes which apply to all programs of instruction); and
- **General education requirement** (the requirement for general education in postsecondary programs of instruction).

Collectively, these elements outline the essential skills and knowledge that a student must reliably demonstrate in order to graduate from the program.

Individual colleges of applied arts and technology offering the program of instruction determine the specific program structure, delivery methods, and other curriculum matters to be used in assisting students to achieve the outcomes articulated in the standard. Individual colleges also determine whether additional local learning outcomes will be required to reflect specific local needs and/or interests.
The Expression of Program Standards as Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes represent culminating demonstrations of learning and achievement. They are not simply a listing of discrete skills, nor broad statements of knowledge and comprehension. In addition, learning outcomes are interrelated and cannot be viewed in isolation of one another. As such, they should be viewed as a comprehensive whole. They describe performances that demonstrate that significant integrated learning by graduates of the program has been achieved and verified.

Expressing standards as learning outcomes ensures consistency in the outcomes for program graduates, while leaving to the discretion of individual colleges curriculum matters such as the specific program structure and delivery methods.

The Presentation of the Learning Outcomes

The learning outcome statement sets out the culminating demonstration of learning and achievement that the student must reliably demonstrate before graduation.

The elements of the performance for each outcome define and clarify the level and quality of performance necessary to meet the requirements of the learning outcome. However, it is the performance of the learning outcome itself on which students are evaluated. The elements are indicators of the means by which the student may proceed to satisfactory performance of the learning outcome. The elements do not stand alone but rather in reference to the learning outcome of which they form a part.

The Development of a Program Standard

In establishing the standards development initiative, the Government determined that all postsecondary programs of instruction should include vocational skills coupled with a broader set of essential skills. This combination is considered critical to ensuring that college graduates have the skills required to be successful both upon graduation from the college program and throughout their working and personal lives.

A program standard is developed through a broad consultation process involving a range of stakeholders with a direct interest in the program area, including employers, professional associations, universities, secondary schools, and program graduates working in the field, in addition to students, faculty, and administrators at the colleges themselves. It represents a consensus of participating stakeholders on the essential learning that all program graduates should have achieved.
Updating the Program Standard

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities will undertake regular reviews of the vocational learning outcomes for this program to ensure that the Dental Hygiene Program Standard remains appropriate and relevant to the needs of students and employers across the Province of Ontario. To confirm that this document is the most up-to-date release, contact the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities at the address or telephone number noted on the inside cover page.
II. Vocational Standard

All graduates of Dental Hygiene programs of instruction must have achieved the 7 vocational learning outcomes listed in the following pages, in addition to achieving the essential employability skills learning outcomes and meeting the general education requirement.

Preamble

The Dental Hygiene program provides students with both the knowledge and practice required to function as a dental hygienist in different practice settings within the province. Successful completion of the program results in the conferring of an Ontario College Diploma. The vocational learning outcomes articulate a range of fundamental skills necessary for entry-level position, as a dental hygienist.

The graduate dental hygienist is a self-regulated practitioner who performs a variety of roles including clinical therapy, health promotion, education, change agent, administration, and research. The dental hygienist may work independently, interdependently, and collaboratively with other health professionals in a variety of practice environments, including and not limited to clinical practice, community and public health, institutions, and long-term care facilities. In all roles and practice settings, the dental hygienist works with the client*, uses evidence-based practice*, and bases all decisions, recommendations, judgments, and interventions on current dental hygiene research and theory.

To practise as a dental hygienist in Ontario, the graduates must successfully complete all registration requirements, as set by the College of Dental Hygienist of Ontario (CDHO). Once they are registered with the CDHO, graduates may perform a variety of roles in accordance with relevant legislation* and scope of practice. Practising dental hygienists in Ontario are required to maintain a professional portfolio and undertake continuing education for quality assurance purposes.

* Please see Glossary of Terms
Synopsis of the Vocational Learning Outcomes
Dental Hygiene Programs

*The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

1. ensure client* and personal safety in the practice environment.
2. establish comprehensive client profiles* in collaboration with the client* and other health care professionals.
3. develop, substantiate, and communicate a dental hygiene care plan* for oral health services and programs* using comprehensive assessment data and the client's profile*.
4. provide and/or facilitate the required oral health services and programs* identified in the dental hygiene care plan* or health promotion plan.
5. evaluate the effectiveness of oral health services and programs* provided.
6. practise in a professional and competent manner.
7. manage client* and practice information* according to relevant legislation*, codes of ethics, practice standards, and business principles.

Note: The learning outcomes have been numbered as a point of reference; numbering does not imply prioritization, sequencing, nor weighting of significance.

* Please see Glossary of Terms
The Vocational Learning Outcomes

1. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to ensure client* and personal safety in the practice environment.*

**Elements of the Performance**

- apply health and safety legislation* and standards relevant to the practice setting;
- employ Standard Precautions*;
- apply principles of client* and practitioner safety;
- ensure stationary and portable equipment and instruments are maintained in good working order, according to manufacturer's directions and current health and safety standards;
- ensure materials and supplies are handled and stored according to the manufacturer's directions;
- assess client's* dental and medical condition, anticipate reactions that may occur during dental hygiene care, and, if necessary, implement emergency response;
- implement ongoing professional strategies to improve the health and safety of the client* and health care professionals;
- ensure the safe management, storage, and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes according to recognized guidelines and regulations;
- document accurately and immediately health and safety incidents in accordance with relevant health and safety legislation and standards;
- use all equipment, instruments, materials, and supplies according to manufacturer's directives.

* Please see Glossary of Terms
2. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

establish comprehensive client profiles* in collaboration with the client* and other health care professionals.

**Elements of the Performance**

- collect and assess, using a variety of methods, data that relates to the client's* oral health condition, knowledge, and practices and include in the client profile*;
- collect and assess, using a variety of methods, information that relates to the client's* general health and determinants of health* and include in the client profile*;
- determine the client's* oral health prognosis, given the client's* knowledge, history, and oral health practices, as well as their general health and determinants of health*;
- evaluate assessment data to determine the client's* need for present and future oral health services and programs*;
- identify barriers to and resources required for the provision of optimal oral health services and programs* for the client*.

* Please see Glossary of Terms
3. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

 develop, substantiate, and communicate a dental hygiene care plan* for oral health services and programs* using comprehensive assessment data and the client's profile*.

**Elements of the Performance**

- include the client* as an active participant in the planning of oral health services and programs*;
- support an atmosphere that enhances client* participation in planning oral health services and programs*;
- refer the client* to other professionals as required and in accordance with legislation*;
- support the client* in achieving oral health goals and objectives, through collaborative relationships with the client* and other professionals;
- determine appropriate oral health care services and programs including preventive and therapeutic interventions, as well as the client's* needs, beliefs, values, abilities, and resources;
- develop a dental hygiene care plan* that includes the sequence of delivery for oral health services and programs* and the identification of appropriate equipment, supplies and human resources;
- ensure the client* understands the advantages, disadvantages, and risk factors related to the implementation of the dental hygiene care plan*, as an integral part of obtaining informed consent, before the implementation of treatment.

* Please see Glossary of Terms
4. **The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to**

provide and/or facilitate the required oral health services and programs* identified in the dental hygiene care plan* or health promotion plan.

**Elements of the Performance**

- explain the goals and objectives of oral health services and programs* to the client* and health professionals identified in the dental hygiene care plan*;
- provide effective oral health services and programs* that are within the dental hygiene scope of practice;
- manage equipment, supplies, and human resources required to deliver effective oral health services and programs* that benefit the client*;
- collaborate with the client* and other professionals to provide oral health services and programs*.

* Please see Glossary of Terms
5. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

**evaluate the effectiveness of oral health services and programs* provided.**

**Elements of the Performance**

- monitor and evaluate the client's* satisfaction with oral health services and programs*;
- evaluate the effectiveness of the services and programs with respect to the client's* oral health outcomes based on a variety of resources including the client profile*;
- evaluate one's own role as a dental hygienist in the provision of the client's* oral health services and programs*;
- modify oral health services and programs* according to on-going evaluation results;
- determine, in collaboration with the client* and other health professionals, the need for further oral health services, programs, and referral*;
- review with the client* the information contained in the documentation of preventive and therapeutic interventions to determine their effectiveness over time;
- select and, where appropriate, design evaluation methods to monitor preventive and therapeutic oral health interventions and oral health services and programs* to ensure their effectiveness and efficiency.

* Please see Glossary of Terms
6. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to practise in a professional and competent manner.*

**Elements of the Performance**

- adhere to relevant legislation*, practice standards, and codes of ethics;
- be accountable for own behaviour and decisions in the practice environment;
- engage in learning activities that include critical reflection and self-evaluation to promote professional competence;
- identify and implement strategies to enhance professional competence;
- recognize professional limitations and consult with other professionals as required;
- advocate for the client's* right to safety, privacy, confidentiality, self-determination, and informed consent;
- develop and use time management and organizational skills to accomplish personal and professional goals.

* Please see Glossary of Terms
7. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to manage client* and practice information* according to relevant legislation*, codes of ethics, practice standards, and business principles.

Elements of the Performance

- maintain confidentiality of client* information, records, and documents, including and not limited to paper-based, electronic, and verbal forms;
- collect, document, and review current and historical client* information, special considerations, or precautions relevant to the provision of oral health services and programs*;
- ensure the accuracy, relevance, and security of paper-based and/or electronic client* records;
- document objectively and accurately the processes and outcomes related to the provision of oral health services and programs* according to current practice standards;
- maintain all records and documents so they are clear and legible, organized, accessible, and retrievable;
- collect, process, organize, store, and retrieve business and financial information according to relevant legislation and regulations.

* Please see Glossary of Terms
Glossary of Terms

**Care Plan** – an organizational framework for the provision of services and programs. A care plan reflects the client assessment, current theory and research in health and disease, and the proposed and implemented preventive and therapeutic interventions and services.

**Client** – a recipient of oral health services. This term is broad and inclusive and may refer to an individual of any age or gender, a family, a group, and/or a community. The client, as a consumer of oral health services, will be unique with diverse needs, demands, and definitions of wellness, motivations, and resources. The client is assumed to be seeking out a broad range of oral health services that are effective and efficient.

**Client Profile** – the collection, analysis, and organization of information pertinent to the client's oral health and health.

**Determinants of Health** – the factors and conditions which have an influence on the health of individuals. The key determinants are income and social status, social support networks, education employment/working conditions, social environments, physical environments, personal health practices and coping skills, healthy child development, biology and genetic endowment, health services, gender and culture.

**Evidence-Based Practice** – the practice of dental hygiene is supported by a scientific body of knowledge that facilitates clinical decision making and evaluation of dental hygiene services/programs using objective outcome measures.

**Legislation** – the relevant laws enacted by the provincial and federal governments. Examples of such laws include Regulated Health Professions Act, Healing Arts Radiation Protection Act, Dental Hygiene Act, and the Dentistry Act.

**Oral Health Services and Programs** – broad range of care offered by health practitioners. Oral health services and programs are designed to achieve the desired goals and objectives related to the attainment and maintenance of optimal oral health and general health. Oral health services and programs are client centred; that is, they are individualized according to client need and resources. These services and programs may be preventive and therapeutic.

**Practice Information** – refers to information required for the effective operation of the dental office and would include human resources and inventory control information, financial records, advertising, and client care protocols. The collection of this information would adhere to professional regulations, employment standards, and business law.
**Standard Precautions** – measures designed to protect client, health professionals, and their families from exposure to infectious elements. Standards and guidelines for universal precaution protocols are developed by a number of provincial, federal, and international authorities and must be in accordance with current legislation. These precautions include surface disinfecting, caring for and sterilizing instruments and equipment, proper hand washing, using barriers (for example, gloves, glasses, and body coverings), and correct handling of sharps (for example, instruments and needles) that have been in contact with body fluids, and safe disposal of hazardous waste.
III. Essential Employability Skills

All graduates of Dental Hygiene programs of instruction must have reliably demonstrated the essential employability skills learning outcomes listed on the following pages, in addition to achieving the vocational learning outcomes and meeting the general education requirement.

Context

Essential Employability Skills (EES) are skills that, regardless of a student’s program or discipline, are critical for success in the workplace, in day-to-day living, and for lifelong learning.

The teaching and attainment of these EES for students in, and graduates from, Ontario's colleges of applied arts and technology are anchored in a set of three fundamental assumptions:

- these skills are important for every adult to function successfully in society today;
- our colleges are well equipped and well positioned to prepare graduates with these skills;
- these skills are equally valuable for all graduates, regardless of the level of their credential, whether they pursue a career path, or they pursue further education.

Skill Categories

To capture these skills, the following six categories define the essential areas where graduates must demonstrate skills and knowledge.

- Communication
- Numeracy
- Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
- Information Management
- Interpersonal
- Personal
Application / Implementation

In each of the six skill categories, there are a number of defining skills, or sub skills, identified to further articulate the requisite skills identified in the main skill categories. The following chart illustrates the relationship between the skill categories, the defining skills within the categories, and learning outcomes to be achieved by graduates from all postsecondary programs of instruction that lead to an Ontario College credential.

EES may be embedded in General Education or vocational courses, or developed through discrete courses. However these skills are developed, all graduates with Ontario College credentials must be able to reliably demonstrate the essential skills required in each of the six categories.

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<th>SKILL CATEGORY</th>
<th>DEFINING SKILLS: Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates:</th>
<th>LEARNING OUTCOMES: The levels of achievement required by graduates. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:</th>
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| COMMUNICATION                 | • Reading  
• Writing  
• Speaking  
• Listening  
• Presenting  
• Visual literacy            | 1. communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken, and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience.  
2. respond to written, spoken, or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication. |
| NUMERACY                      | • Understanding and applying mathematical concepts and reasoning  
• Analyzing and using numerical data  
• Conceptualizing            | 3. execute mathematical operations accurately. |
| CRITICAL THINKING & PROBLEM SOLVING | • Analyzing  
• Synthesizing  
• Evaluating  
• Decision making  
• Creative and innovative thinking | 4. apply a systematic approach to solve problems.  
5. use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems. |
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<th>LEARNING OUTCOMES: The levels of achievement required by graduates. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| INFORMATION MANAGEMENT | • Gathering and managing information  
• Selecting and using appropriate tools and technology for a task or a project  
• Computer literacy  
• Internet skills | 6. locate, select, organize, and document information using appropriate technology and information systems.  
7. analyze, evaluate, and apply relevant information from a variety of sources. |
| INTERPERSONAL | • Team work  
• Relationship management  
• Conflict resolution  
• Leadership  
• Networking | 8. show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems, and contributions of others.  
9. interact with others in groups or teams in ways that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals. |
| PERSONAL | • Managing self  
• Managing change and being flexible and adaptable  
• Engaging in reflective practices  
• Demonstrating personal responsibility | 10. manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects.  
11. take responsibility for one’s own actions, decisions, and consequences. |
IV. General Education Requirement

All graduates of Dental Hygiene programs must have met the general education requirement described on the following pages, in addition to achieving the vocational and essential employability skills learning outcomes.

Requirement

The General Education Requirement for programs of instruction is stipulated in the Credentials Framework (Appendix A in the Minister's Binding Policy Directive Framework for Programs of Instruction).

In programs of instruction leading to either an Ontario College Diploma or an Ontario College Advanced Diploma, it is required that graduates have been engaged in learning that exposes them to at least one discipline outside their main field of study, and increases their awareness of the society and culture in which they live and work. This will typically be accomplished by students taking 3 to 5 courses (or the equivalent) designed discretely and separately from vocational learning opportunities.

This general education learning would normally be delivered using a combination of required and elective processes.

Purpose

The purpose of General Education in the Ontario college system is to contribute to the development of citizens who are conscious of the diversity, complexity, and richness of the human experience; who are able to establish meaning through this consciousness; and, who, as a result, are able to contribute thoughtfully, creatively, and positively to the society in which they live and work.

General Education strengthens student's essential employability skills, such as critical analysis, problem solving, and communication, in the context of an exploration of topics with broad-based personal and / or societal importance.
Themes

The themes listed below will be used to provide direction to colleges in the development and identification of courses that are designed to fulfil the General Education Requirement for programs of instructions.

Each theme provides a statement of Rationale and offers suggestions related to more specific topic areas that could be explored within each area. These suggestions are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. They are included to provide guidance regarding the nature and scope of content that would be judged as meeting the intent and overall goals of General Education.

1. **Arts in Society:**

*Rationale:*
The capacity of a person to recognize and evaluate artistic and creative achievements is useful in many aspects of his/her life. Since artistic expression is a fundamentally human activity, which both reflects and anticipates developments in the larger culture, its study will enhance the student's cultural and self-awareness.

*Content:*
Courses in this area should provide students with an understanding of the importance of visual and creative arts in human affairs, of the artist's and writer's perceptions of the world and the means by which those perceptions are translated into the language of literature and artistic expression. They will also provide an appreciation of the aesthetic values used in examining works of art and possibly, a direct experience in expressing perceptions in an artistic medium.

2. **Civic Life:**

*Rationale:*
In order for individuals to live responsibly and to reach their potential as individuals and as citizens of society, they need to understand the patterns of human relationships that underlie the orderly interactions of a society's various structural units. Informed people will have knowledge of the meaning of civic life in relation to diverse communities at the local, national, and global level, and an awareness of international issues and the effects of these on Canada, and Canada's place in the international community.

*Content:*
Courses in this area should provide students with an understanding of the meaning of freedoms, rights, and participation in community and public life, in addition to a working knowledge of the structure and function of various levels of government (municipal, provincial, national) in Canada and/or in an international context. They may also provide an historical understanding of major political issues affecting relations between the various levels of government in Canada and their constituents.
3. **Social and Cultural Understanding:**

*Rationale:*
Knowledge of the patterns and precedents of the past provide the means for a person to gain an awareness of his or her place in contemporary culture and society. In addition to this awareness, students will acquire a sense of the main currents of their culture and that of other cultures over an extended period of time in order to link personal history to the broader study of culture.

*Content:*
Courses in this area are those that deal broadly with major social and cultural themes. These courses may also stress the nature and validity of historical evidence and the variety of historical interpretation of events. Courses will provide the students with a view and understanding of the impact of cultural, social, ethnic, or linguistic characteristics.

4. **Personal Understanding:**

*Rationale:*
Educated people are equipped for life-long understanding and development of themselves as integrated physiological and psychological entities. They are aware of the ideal need to be fully functioning persons: mentally, physically, emotionally, socially, spiritually, and vocationally.

*Content:*
Courses in this area will focus on understanding the individual: his or her evolution; situation; relationship with others; place in the environment and universe; achievements and problems; and his or her meaning and purpose. They will also allow students the opportunity to study institutionalized human social behaviour in a systematic way. Courses fulfilling this requirement may be oriented to the study of the individual within a variety of contexts.

5. **Science and Technology:**

*Rationale:*
Matter and energy are universal concepts in science, forming a basis for understanding the interactions that occur in living and non-living systems in our universe. Study in this area provides an understanding of the behaviour of matter that provides a foundation for further scientific study and the creation of broader understanding about natural phenomena.
Similarly, the various applications and developments in the area of technology have an increasing impact on all aspects of human endeavour and have numerous social, economic, and philosophical implications. For example, the operation of computers to process data at high speed has invoked an interaction between machines and the human mind that is unique in human history. This development and other technological developments have a powerful impact on how we deal with many of the complex questions in our society.

*Content:*
Courses in this area should stress scientific inquiry and deal with basic or fundamental questions of science rather than applied ones. They may be formulated from traditional basic courses in such areas of study as biology, chemistry, physics, astronomy, geology, or agriculture. As well, courses related to understanding the role and functions of computers (e.g., data management and information processing), and assorted computer-related technologies, should be offered in a non-applied manner to provide students with an opportunity to explore the impact of these concepts and practices on their lives.