

2019

DENTAL

INDUSTRY REFERENCE COMMITTEE
INDUSTRY SKILLS FORECAST



CAPABLE PEOPLE MAKE CLEVER BUSINESS

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Executive Summary

The primary purpose of the dental services sector is to provide general or specialised dentistry services to improve oral health across the country. The dental workforce consists of both registered and non-registered health care professionals, and job roles can involve undertaking a wide range of functions, including administration and assistance, operational (i.e. technician and specialist) and/or supervisory, and management activities. The Dental Services Training Package is specifically focused on the skills training for primarily non-registered job roles such as dental assistants, dental technicians, and dental laboratory assistants.

The Dental Services Training Package Products are packaged within the HLT Health Training Package and consist of five qualifications that support pathways to employment in dental health practitioner roles across the health sector. Overall, the health care and social assistance industry workforce is expected to grow significantly over the next five years, with forecasts indicating it will reach 1.9 million workers in 2023. This growth will undoubtedly include many job roles supported by these Training Package Products.

Over the years both the dental services sector and clinical practices have evolved significantly. The sector overall has been experiencing several challenges which are impacting workforce skills requirements, including:

- Technology – the ability of providers to adopt new technology can be limited due to the lack of resources and skills within dental practices
- Dental registration standards and guideline reviews – the need to adapt in response to recommendations put forward via the various current and future reviews across the sector (including the upcoming reviews on *Guidelines on infection control* and *Guidelines on dental records*)
- Lack of career progression – due to the lack of opportunities available to dental assistant and technician roles.

Overall, technical skills are imperative for workers in the sector. However, there is a growing demand for key soft skills such as teamwork and communication, job-specific skills and knowledge, emotional intelligence, problem solving and self-management. Dental Training Package Products play a pivotal role in skilling the dental workforce with current and emerging skills, adapting to evolving technologies and workplace changes.

There is no Training Package development work proposed for 2019–2020, as consultation with the Dental Industry Reference Committee (IRC) and the broader dental industry did not identify any skills gaps which require action in the current year. Training Package Products under the scope of the Dental IRC are proposed for review in 2020–2021. Please note, however, that work to update the Training Package Products is currently being conducted on the following two qualifications:

- *HLT35015 Certificate III in Dental Assisting*
- *HLT45015 Certificate IV in Dental Assisting.*

Note: The National Schedule details the Training Package update and development work commissioned by the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC). The National Schedule is informed by this Industry Skills Forecast, which outlines the proposed timing for the update of existing Training Package Products. This Forecast has been compiled using a number of information sources, including academic literature, statistical data, Industry Reference Committee (IRC) member input and expertise, feedback received via public consultation, SkillsIQ's 2019 *Future Skills Survey*, and an industry analysis of both new and emerging workforce skills needs overseen by the Dental IRC.

Administrative Information

Industry Reference Committee (IRC)

Dental

The Dental Industry Reference Committee (IRC) is responsible for ensuring that the nationally recognised Dental Training Package Products deliver the skills and knowledge required to equip the highly skilled workforce under its remit. The IRC is comprised of industry representatives with expertise from a cross-section of the dental services sector, and its primary purpose is to provide advice to the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) about the skills needs of the dental services sector.

Skills Service Organisation (SSO)

SkillsIQ Limited

SkillsIQ supports 19 IRCs representing diverse 'people-facing' sectors. These sectors provide services to people in a variety of contexts such as customer, patient or client. The IRCs are collectively responsible for overseeing the development and review of Training Package Products, including qualifications, serving the skills needs of sectors comprising almost 50 per cent of the Australian workforce.

SkillsIQ's Industry Reference Committees (IRCs)

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker
- Aged Services
- Ambulance and Paramedic
- Children's Education and Care
- Client Services
- Community Sector and Development
- Complementary Health
- Dental
- Direct Client Care and Support
- Disability Support
- Enrolled Nursing
- First Aid
- Local Government
- Personal Services
- Public Sector
- Sport and Recreation
- Technicians Support Services
- Tourism, Travel and Hospitality
- Wholesale and Retail Services.

“ It takes skill to make a difference. We will only get skilled, valued and rounded workers when training provider, employee and employer are connected in their views on continuous learning. ”

SkillsIQ's Cross-sector Skills Committee

IRC Sign-off

Sign-off of this Industry Skills Forecast and Proposed Schedule of Work has been confirmed by the Dental Industry Reference Committee.

Dr Lanny Chor,
Chair

A. Skills Forecast

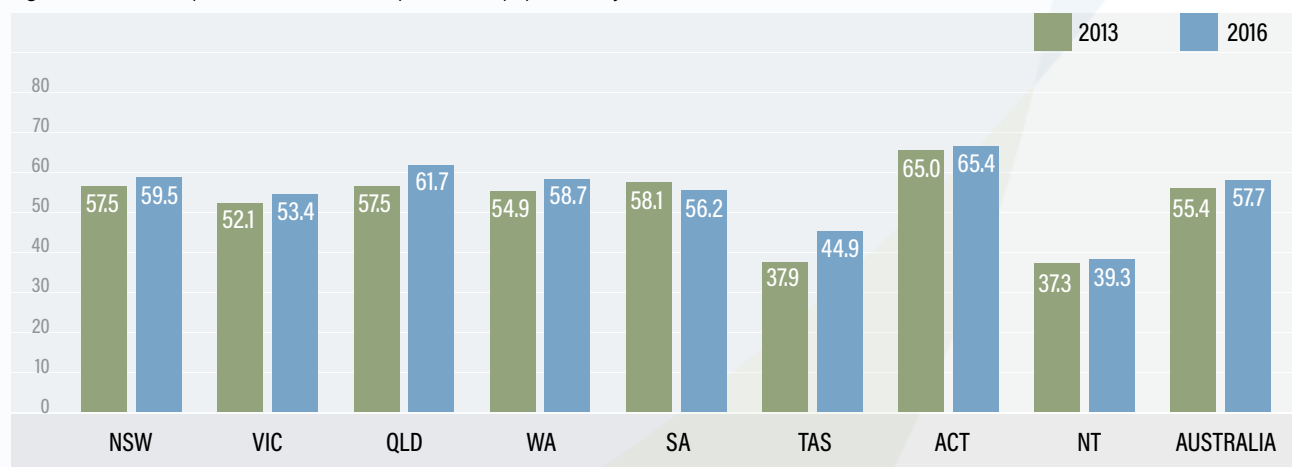
A.1 Sector Overview

Introduction

The dental services sector provides general or specialised dentistry services with the primary purpose of delivering improved oral health. The services and treatments provided can include a range of diagnostic, preventative and/or restorative treatments for oral health care including oral examinations, cleans, fillings, insertions, extractions and specialist services such as orthodontics, periodontics and oral pathology. Oral health is closely associated with an individual's general health and wellbeing, with strong links established between poor oral health and a number of chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease, lung conditions, diabetes and oral cancers.¹ To encourage and promote good oral health care, the sector also entails the provision of education and the implementation of dental health care programs across the country.

The latest statistics available show that half (50%) of Australians aged 15 years and over visited a dental professional in the last reported 12-month period (2017–18), and this has remained unchanged since 2011–12. The use of dental services, however, differs across population groups, and individuals living in areas of most disadvantage (40%) and those living in outer regional and remote areas (44%) are less likely to have visited a dental professional than their more urban and suburban counterparts.² Access to dental services is a particular issue for regional and remote communities, where the full-time equivalent (FTE) number of registered dentists per 100,000 population is almost half (i.e. 39.1 and 25.1 respectively per 100,000) the number available in major cities (64.6 per 100,000).³ This trend is further defined across states and territories, and in the Northern Territory, which consists of primarily regional and remote communities, only 39.3 dentists per 100,000 population were registered, compared to the Australian Capital Territory with nearly double this figure, with 65.4 dentists per 100,000 population (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Full-time equivalent (FTE) dentists per 100,000 population by States/Territories - 2013 to 2016



Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), Oral health and dental care in Australia. Released 20 March 2019. Web Report

While dental services are delivered by both private and public providers, the industry is primarily made up of small, independent private dental practices. During the past years, merger activity has meant that there has been a small amount of growth in the market share of some private group providers (e.g. BUPA Hi Holdings Pty Ltd). Overall, however, the workforce continues to be employed by mainly small private providers. In 2016, there were 45.6 dentists in the private sector per 100,000 population, compared with 6.0 FTE dentists in the public sector.⁴

Private health insurance and the associated additional financial cover for oral health is a growing influencer as to whether individuals visit a dentist, and trends show that those who do have oral health coverage are more inclined to visit a dentist for preventative check-ups and teeth cleaning. As private health insurance reforms are conducted, an increase in the uptake of extra covers in private health insurance is expected.⁵ This uptake is consequently expected to transition into future increases in demand for preventative check-ups and teeth cleaning dental services. Overall, the dental services sector is estimated to have generated \$10.8 billion in revenue in 2018–19, and forecasts show it is expected to grow over the next five years at an average annual growth rate of 2.1% (from 2018–19 to 2023–24).⁶

The dental workforce consists of both registered and non-registered health care professionals and job roles can involve undertaking a wide range of functions, including administration and assistance, operational (i.e. technician and specialist) and/or supervisory, and management activities. The Dental Services Training Package is specifically focused on the skills training for primarily non-registered job roles such as dental assistants, dental technicians, and dental laboratory assistants. Other job roles supported by the Training Package can, however, include a number of broader health and community service workers who are involved in the provision of some basic oral health care services and referrals.

Businesses Involved

As indicated earlier, the majority of businesses operating in the dental care service areas represent small private practices. Their locations are heavily distributed towards

metropolitan areas, with regional and rural communities generally under-represented. Those dental services delivered by public sector entities consist of state and territory governments and specialised dental hospitals and practices.

There are approximately 15,000 dental service businesses across Australia (as at June 2018).⁷

Stakeholders

Key stakeholders represent a range of organisations that perform a variety of strategic, regulatory and operational roles in the dental services sectors within the wider health care and social assistance industry. Stakeholders play an important role during Training Package reviews by supplying industry insights to ensure that updates are in line with industry needs. Examples of stakeholder organisations include:

- Government departments and agencies (Commonwealth and state/territory-based)
- Peak bodies and industry associations
- Employee associations
- Regulators
- Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), both public and private, and their representative bodies
- Small, medium and large private and public employers across metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas.

Challenges and Opportunities

Note: The findings are based on desk research and SkillsIQ's 2019 *Future Skills Survey* (conducted between November 2018 and January 2019) which has been filtered to include stakeholders from the dental services sector only. Insights and advice from IRC members and public consultation have also been used to compile and validate the information provided.

Technology

Technology over the years has been changing the way oral health and dentistry treatments, practices and support are delivered, and the sector has had to evolve quickly to adapt to new devices and practices as they have been released. Technological developments have included



the implementation of new scanning equipment, digital radiography, computerised charting, and intra-oral cameras.⁸ Computer-based technologies are now very much embedded in most practices and can include:⁹

- **Virtual reality (VR)** simulators which provide three-dimensional (3D) models and images
- **Augmented reality (AR)** which refers to overlaying computer-generated graphics in a real environment. It is widely used in image-guided surgery as well as in dental implantations and maxillofacial surgery
- **Computer-Aided Design/Computer-Aided Manufacturing (CAD/CAM)** which comprise digitised scanners, data processing software and technology to manufacture products from scanned images.

Technology has not only progressed in relation to how treatments and dental care are delivered, but also with regard to how dental practices operate. The digitisation of patient records, the collection and processing of digital imaging data and the increasing demand for online appointment keeping and engagement with patients have meant that the work environment today is very much driven by technology and online platforms. The development of communication and computing

technologies is also paving connections to national and international databases on diagnosis and treatment in surgery, which is a valuable system for aiding clinical decisions.

Adopting new technology is therefore a critical success factor for dental practices.¹⁰ The ability to learn and operate new equipment and implement online processes are key workforce skills. Workers in assistant and technician roles play an especially important role in the implementation and operation of technology and support practices in gaining efficiencies, as well as in maximising patients' experiences and wellbeing.

Dental registration standards and guideline reviews

The dental services sector, like many other health care sectors, is regulated through Government and state/territory policy and legislation. Dental practitioners and specialists must be registered with the national agency, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and practise according to the Dental Board of Australia's registration standards and guidelines (i.e. *Guidelines for scope of practice*). In 2018, the Dental Board conducted a public consultation to review such

standards and guidelines, and recommendations that are formed through the consultation outcomes are likely to impact, to different extents, the relationships and functions of all job roles across the sector. For example, one theme from the feedback was in relation to reducing that regulation considered unnecessary where well-established accreditation functions have been identified to be shaping the training and competencies of practitioners.¹¹ The Dental Board is in the process of finalising the review findings for submission to the Ministerial Council, and the outcomes will need to be considered by the dental workforce.

Other areas on scope for future reviews include the *Guidelines on infection control* and *Guidelines on dental records* which both came into effect on 1 July 2010.¹²

Lack of career progression

An extensive number of studies have identified that career progression and opportunities for professional development are one of a small number of key factors (including job content, pay and work conditions) that can drive job satisfaction, and consequently support staff retention and workforce suitability.¹³ Issues have been raised across the industry regarding the limited progression opportunities available to dental assistant and technician roles. The predominantly small-business nature of employers in the sector can mean career progression within a single business is limited. Continuing professional development is therefore critical to supporting the workforce in continuing their learning and careers whilst employed in small organisational structures.

The Dental Services Training Package provides individuals with learning and employment pathway options into a number of dental occupations as shown in Figure 2. Access to training which is linked to clear career pathways will be beneficial to ensuring that dental assistants and technicians are provided with opportunities to enhance their skills and grow within the dental services sector. A further exploration of pathways for dental assistants via the *Certificate III and IV in Dental Assisting* started in 2019 and is currently being conducted as part of the Training Package update work for these two qualifications.

Figure 2: Training options and job roles – Dental Services Training Package



Defining career progression options is not only important to minimise staff turnover and enhance job satisfaction, but it is also an important element for attracting workers to job roles. The Australian Government in recent years has added dentists and anaesthetists to the Regional Occupation List (ROL),¹⁴ in recognition of the significant dental workforce shortages experienced in regional and rural communities. However, industry has indicated other role types such as dental hygienists, oral health therapists, dental therapists and dental prosthetists are also urgently needed.¹⁵ Dental assistants and supportive roles are therefore in high demand in these areas, and ensuring that clear career pathways and progression opportunities are established, can support the attraction of workers.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) Qualifications Supporting Industry

The nationally recognised VET qualifications that cater to this sector are:

- HLT35015 Certificate III in Dental Assisting
- HLT35115 Certificate III in Dental Laboratory Assisting
- HLT45015 Certificate IV in Dental Assisting
- HLT55118 Diploma of Dental Technology
- HLT65015 Advanced Diploma of Dental Prosthetics.

Table 1: Number of Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) by nationally recognised **Dental** qualifications on scope – Dental Training Package Products

Qualification Code	Qualification title	No. of RTOs with Qualification on Scope
HLT35015	Certificate III in Dental Assisting	32
HLT35115	Certificate III in Dental Laboratory Assisting	7
HLT45015	Certificate IV in Dental Assisting	21
HLT55118	Diploma of Dental Technology (released 14 March 2018)	10
HLT55115	Diploma of Dental Technology (superseded)	15
HLT65015	Advanced Diploma of Dental Prosthetics	3

Source: Training.gov.au. RTOs approved to deliver this qualification. Accessed 14 January 2019.

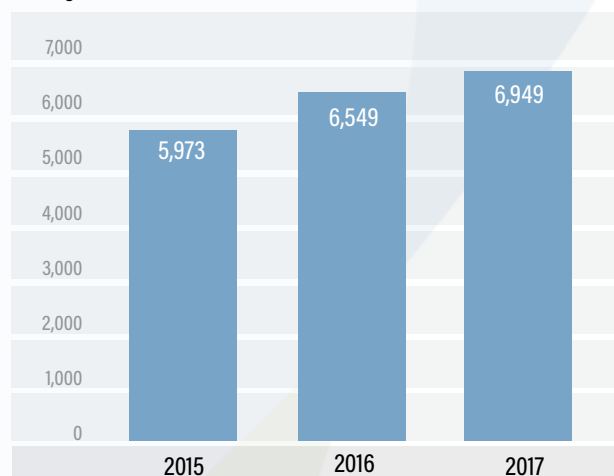
Enrolments and Completions

In 2017, there were approximately **7,000 enrolments** across all VET qualifications catered for by the Dental Training Package Products. This represents an increase of 6.1% from the previous year (equivalent to 400 enrolments). (See Figure 3.)

The most popular qualifications in 2017 were:

- HLT35015 Certificate III in Dental Assisting (3,224 enrolments)
- HLT45015 Certificate IV in Dental Assisting (1,203 enrolments).

Figure 3: Total number of enrolments (Total VET Activity [TVA]) by nationally recognised qualifications on scope - Dental Training Package Products - 2015 to 2017



Source: NCVET VOCSTATS, Program enrolments 2015-2017

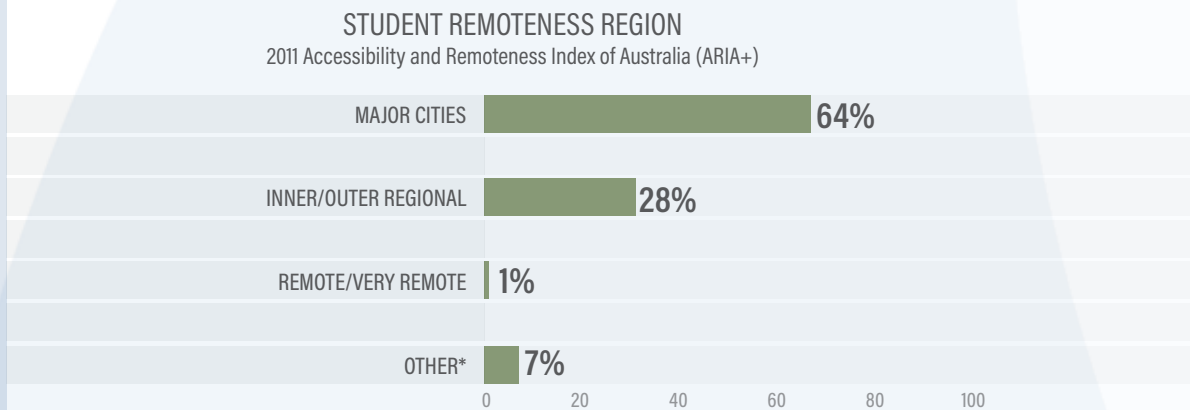
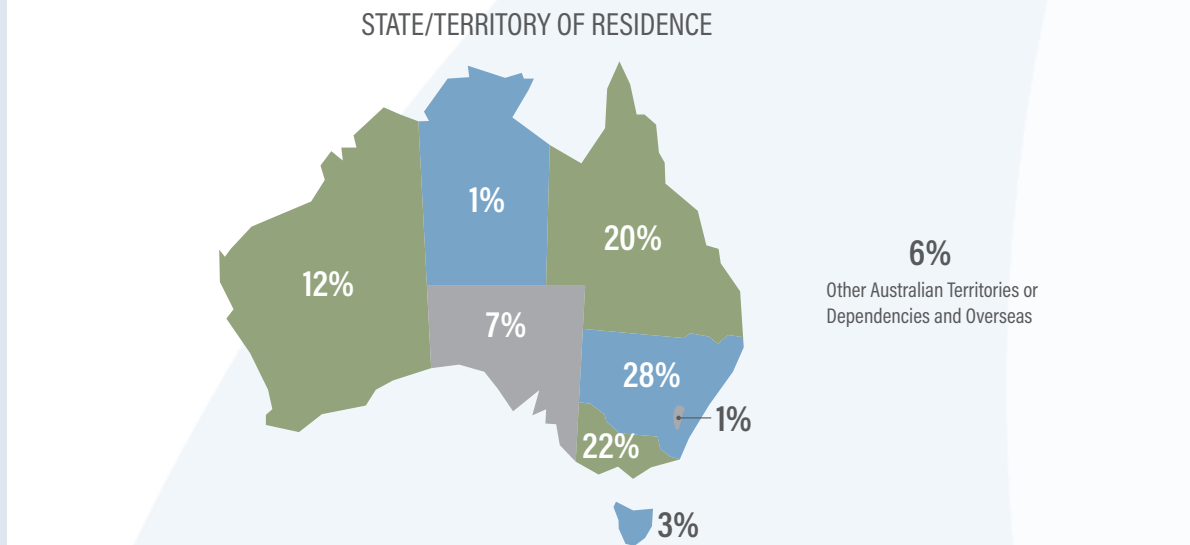
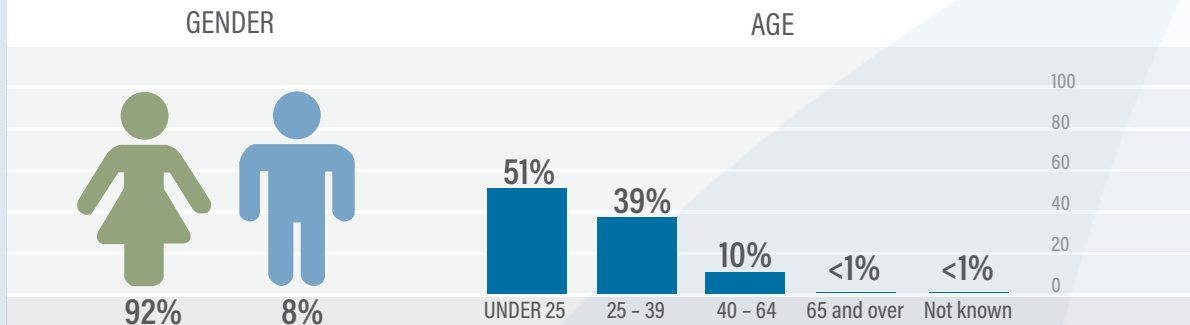
General notes on statistics:

1. Enrolment and completion data is sourced from NCVER VOCSTATS (program enrolments and completions 2015–2017), accessed December 2018.
2. It is important to note that not all training providers were required to submit enrolment and completion data at the time of collection, and some figures presented may therefore under-represent the true count of enrolments and completions for a qualification. From 2018, **all** training providers were required to submit data, and current discrepancies noted in the national NCVER figures versus actual attendance should therefore be minimal in future releases. The data presented in this report is shown for indicative purposes.
3. Figures reflect public and private RTO data.
4. Completion data for 2017 represents preliminary outcomes (i.e. not a full year).
5. ‘-’ symbol indicates qualification was not listed in NCVER data at time of reporting.
6. *Qualifications in italics represent superseded qualifications.*

A snapshot of key traits of the *HLT Dental Training Package* enrolments for 2017 is provided below, followed by a breakdown of enrolments and completions for individual qualifications (see Tables 2 and 3).

2017 ENROLMENT SNAPSHOT

DENTAL TRAINING PACKAGE PRODUCTS



Source: NCVER VOCSTATS (Program enrolments 2017 by various breakdowns)
*Includes 'Outside Australia' and 'Not known'.

Table 2: Total number of enrolments (Total VET Activity [TVA]) by nationally recognised qualifications on scope - Dental Training Package Products, 2014–2017

Qualification	2015	2016	2017	TOTAL
HLT35015 Certificate III in Dental Assisting	-	379	3,224	3,603
<i>HLT31812 Certificate III in Dental Assisting (Superseded)</i>	4,185	4,196	1,374	9,755
HLT35115 Certificate III in Dental Laboratory Assisting	-	27	64	91
<i>HLT32712 Certificate III in Dental Laboratory Assisting (Superseded)</i>	36	30	7	73
HLT45015 Certificate IV in Dental Assisting	-	86	1,203	1,289
<i>HLT43012 Certificate IV in Dental Assisting (Superseded)</i>	833	984	373	2,190
HLT55118 Diploma of Dental Technology	-	-	-	-
<i>HLT55115 Diploma of Dental Technology (Superseded)</i>	-	35	453	488
<i>HLT50512 Diploma of Dental Technology (Superseded)</i>	794	708	195	1,697
HLT65015 Advanced Diploma of Dental Prosthetics	-	13	45	58
<i>HLT60412 Advanced Diploma of Dental Prosthetics (Superseded)</i>	125	91	11	227

Source: NCVET VOCSTATS, accessed December 2018.

Table 3: Total number of completions (Total VET Activity [TVA]) by nationally recognised qualifications on scope - Dental Training Package Products, 2014–2017

Qualification	2015	2016	2017	TOTAL
HLT35015 Certificate III in Dental Assisting	-	37	696	733
<i>HLT31812 Certificate III in Dental Assisting (Superseded)</i>	1,881	1,930	851	4,662
HLT35115 Certificate III in Dental Laboratory Assisting	-	16	27	43
<i>HLT32712 Certificate III in Dental Laboratory Assisting (Superseded)</i>	14	9	3	26
HLT45015 Certificate IV in Dental Assisting	-	12	211	223
<i>HLT43012 - Certificate IV in Dental Assisting (Superseded)</i>	379	501	215	1,095
HLT55118 Diploma of Dental Technology	-	-	-	-
<i>HLT55115 Diploma of Dental Technology (Superseded)</i>	-	-	128	128
<i>HLT50512 Diploma of Dental Technology (Superseded)</i>	213	217	101	531
HLT65015 Advanced Diploma of Dental Prosthetics	-	-	22	22
<i>HLT60412 Advanced Diploma of Dental Prosthetics (Superseded)</i>	40	54	12	106

Source: NCVET VOCSTATS, accessed December 2018.

A.2 Employment and Skills Outlook Overview

Employment – Current and Projected

Note: The principal data sources that provide workforce data and trends regarding roles of relevance to this Training Package at a national level are:

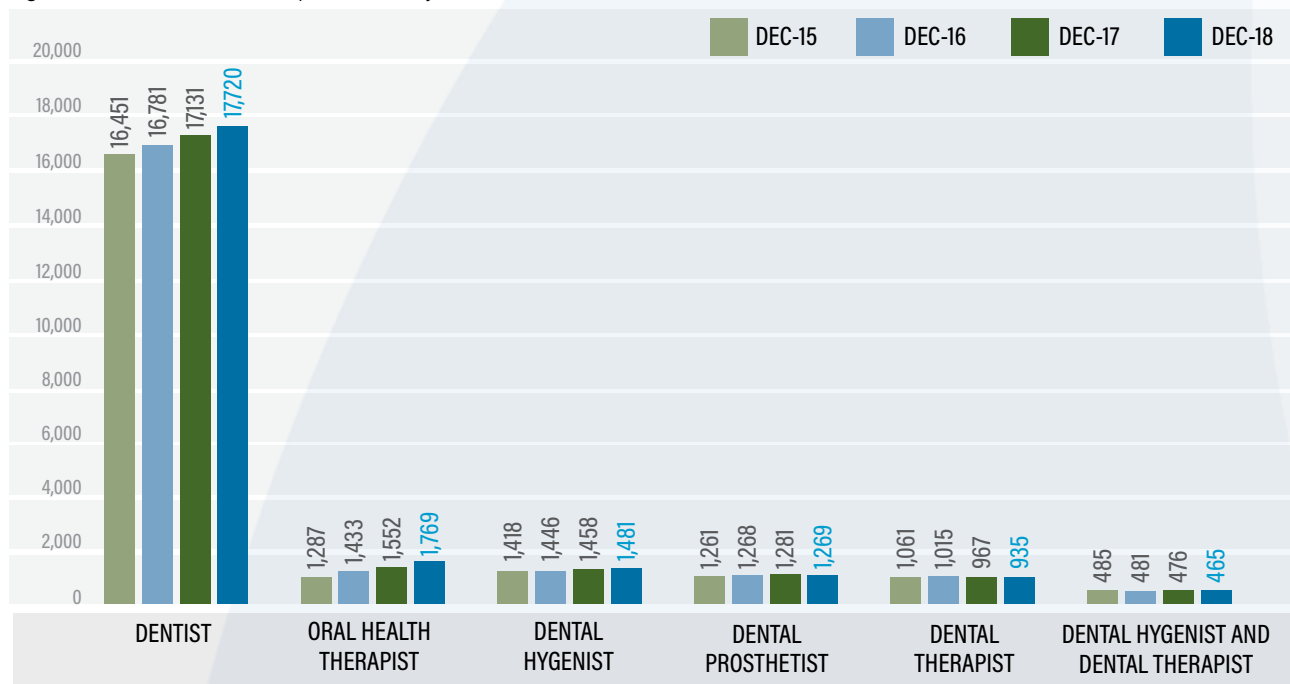
- **Dental Board of Australia Registrant data** [Dental Board of Australia] – provides registration information about dentists, students, dental specialists, dental therapists, oral health therapists, dental hygienists and dental prosthetists.
- **National Health Workforce Data Set (NHWDS)** [Department of Health] – provides a combination of registration and survey data collected through registration renewal processes for registered health practitioners, including various dental practitioners such as dentists, dental hygienists and dental therapists.
- **Census data collections** [Department of Jobs and Small Business] – provide workforce data and projections based on Census collections and reported according to prescribed Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) classifications.

The current definitions, and the labelling used for some ANZSIC and ANZSCO codes, as well as the aggregation of roles across codes, can be limited in providing a true picture of some sectors' workforces. Sectors can host a multitude of job functions, and consequently are comprised of job titles which go beyond the categories listed in ANZSCO. The statistics in this section are provided as an indicative overview of the sector only.

Variations in how roles are defined and categorised across data collections, as well as the timings of reporting, mean that the workforce counts reported across sources can differ.

The latest registration data published by the Dental Board of Australia shows that there were just over **23,100 dental practitioners** registered across Australia last year (December 2018).¹⁶ Three in four (75%) practitioners are dentists, representing the largest cohort type. Between the last two reporting periods (December 2017 and December 2018), there have been minimal changes in practitioner numbers across all divisions (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Total number of dental practitioners by division - 2015 to 2018



Source: Dental Board of Australia Registrant data. Various reporting periods (Table 1.1)

Note: Figures for the December quarter reflect the quarter 1 October to 31 December of the respective year.

Roles with 10 or fewer registrations have not been charted. They represent a range of dual registrations in roles charted above and total between 30 and 45 registrations per year.

Key traits of the registered dental practitioner workforce (which includes in aggregate all job roles in Figure 4) are:¹⁷

- **Age** – 17.6% are aged under 30 years of age, 29.9% are aged 30–39 years, 20.6% are aged 40–49 years and approximately one-third (32.0%) are aged 50 years and over
- **Gender** – 51.5% are female and 48.5% are male
- **Location** (principal place of practice) – 30% are located in New South Wales, 23.3% in Victoria, 20.2% in Queensland, 11.5% in Western Australia, 8.2% in South Australia, 1.7% in Tasmania, 1.8% in the ACT and less than 1% of the registered dental practitioner workforce is located in the Northern Territory.

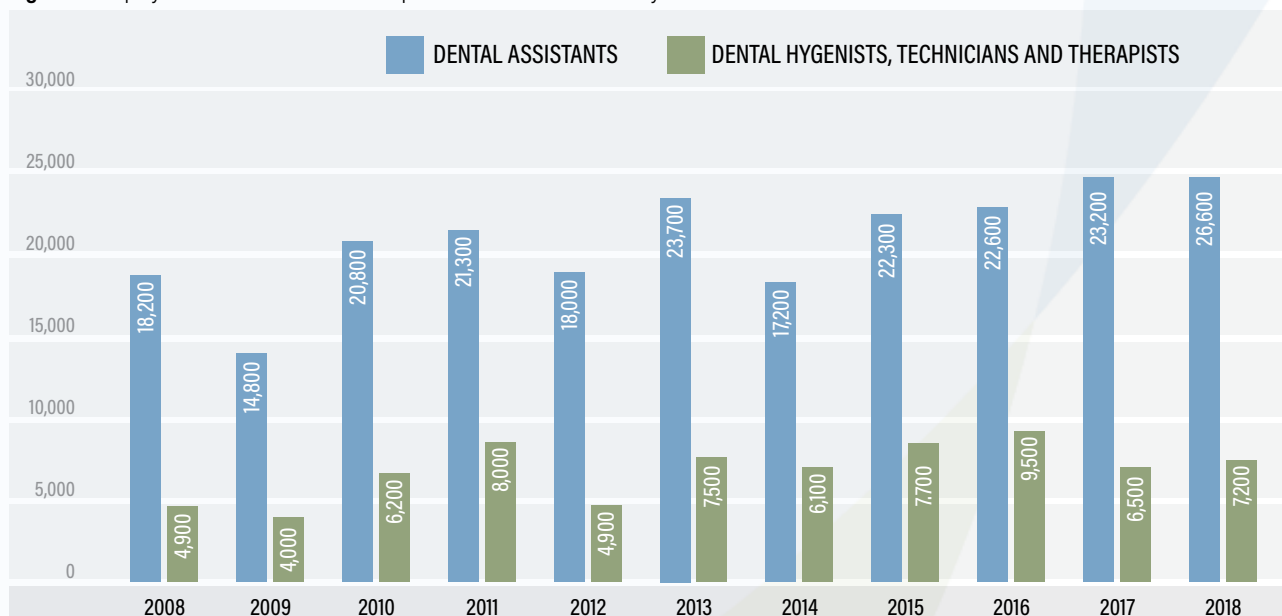
Job roles covered by the Dental Training Package Products are also captured within the Census data published by the Department of Jobs and Small Business and defined across the following ANZSCO category:

- ANZSCO 4232 **Dental Assistants**.
- ANZSCO 4112 **Dental Hygienists, Technicians and Therapists**.*

Note: * Whilst this ANZSCO classification includes job roles not specifically supported by the Dental Training Package (i.e. dental hygienists), employment trends have been presented in order to provide a picture of potential changes that have either occurred and/or are forecast to occur for the wider dental services sector.

Overall, the health care and social assistance industry employs approximately 1.7 million workers across Australia, making it the largest employing industry in the country.¹⁸ In 2018, there were **26,600 Dental Assistants** employed across the industry, noting an increase from the previous year of 3,400 workers (equivalent to a 14.7% increase) (see Figure 5). As of 2018, there are **7,200 Dental Hygienists, Technicians and Therapists** in Australia.

Figure 5: Employment level of selected occupations in the Dental industry - 2007 to 2018



Sources: Department of Jobs and Small Business - Job Outlook, ANZSCO 4232 Dental Assistants and ANZSCO 4112 Dental Hygienists, Technicians and Therapists [Accessed 10 December 2018]

Table 4: Workforce traits of selected occupations supported by the Dental Training Package (2017)

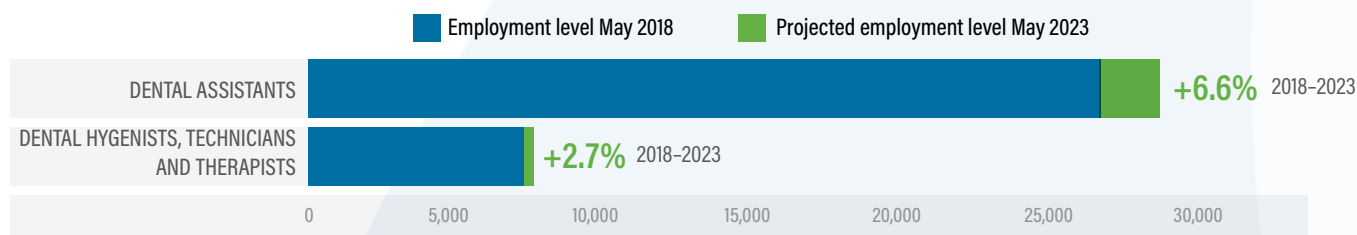
Traits	Average age	Gender - female	Location	
Dental Assistants	29 years (National average 40 years)	98.4% (National average 46.7%)	NSW – 27.3% VIC – 17.3% QLD – 32.5% SA – 6.3%	WA – 12.2% TAS – 1.9% NT – 1.0% ACT – 1.4%
Dental Hygienists, Technicians and Therapists	42 years (National average 40 years)	74.9% (National average 46.7%)	NSW – 27.3% VIC – 21.5% QLD – 19.4% SA – 1.7%	WA – 25.8% TAS – 3.1% NT – 1.1% ACT – 0.0%

Source: Department of Jobs and Small Business – Job Outlook, ANZSCO 4232 Dental Assistants and ANZSCO 4112 Dental Hygienists, Technicians and Therapists [Accessed 29 March 2019]

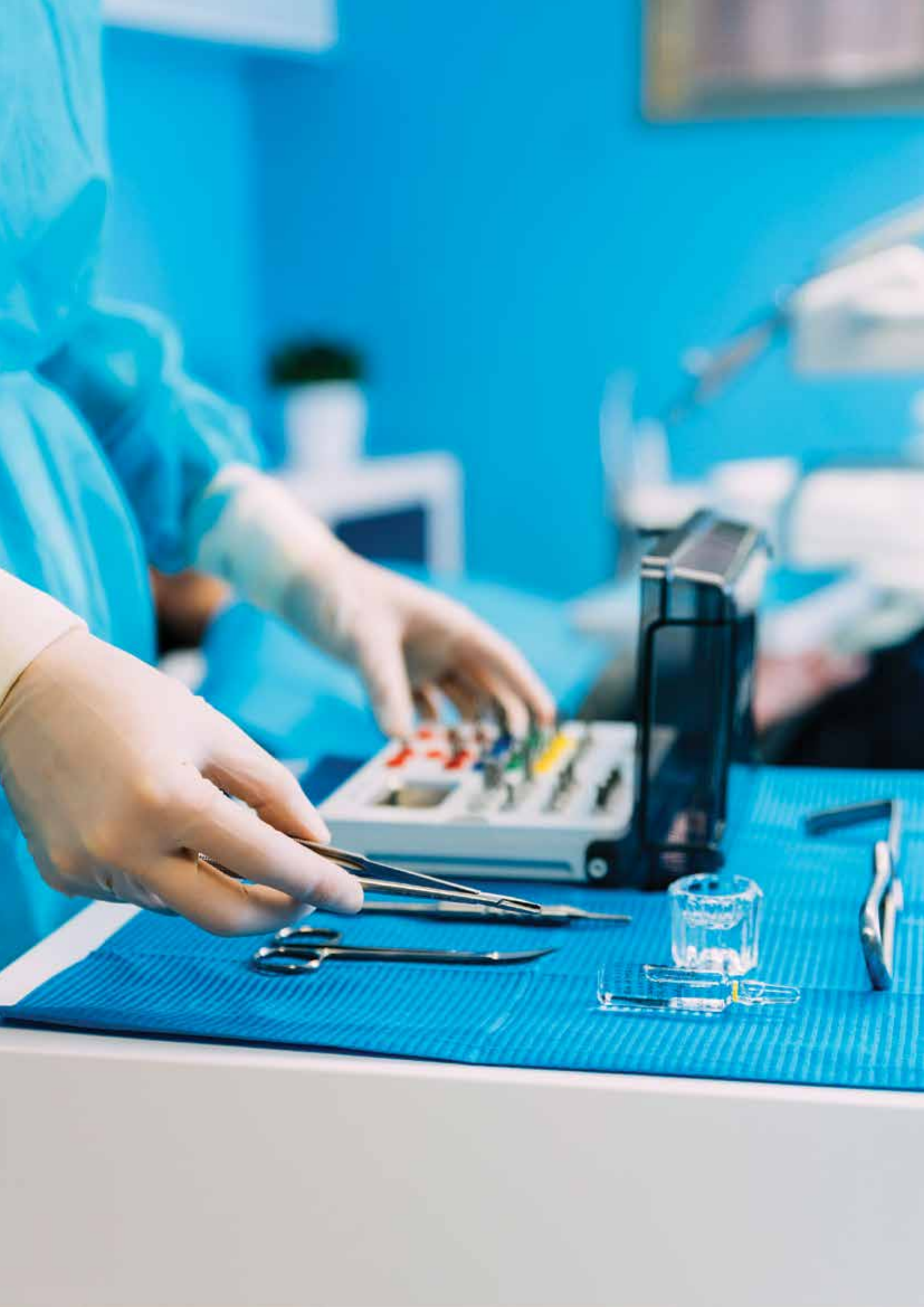
The Dental Assistant workforce is expected to experience moderate job growth of 6.6% over the next five years (see Figure 6) and to reach a total number of 28,400 by

2023. Dental Hygienist, Technician and Therapist roles are expected to experience a steady growth of 2.7% over the next five years, growing to 7,400 jobs in 2023.

Figure 6: Employment levels (May 2018 and May 2023) and forecasted % growth to May 2023 - selected occupations



Sources: Department of Jobs and Small Business - Job Outlook, ANZSCO 4232 Dental Assistants and ANZSCO 4112 Dental Hygienists, Technicians and Therapists [Accessed 10 December 2018]



Future Skills

Note: These findings are based on desk research as well as SkillsIQ's 2019 Future Skills Survey (conducted between November 2018 and January 2019) which has been filtered to include stakeholders from the dental services sector only. Insights and advice from IRC members and public consultation have also been used to compile and validate the information provided.

The work environment across all industries is continuously evolving to adapt to external and internal industry trends. Technology, automation, Artificial Intelligence (AI),

globalisation, an ageing population, shifts in workforce demographics and industry (i.e. the transition from manufacturing and production to a largely service-based economy)¹⁹ are just some of the ongoing trends driving change.

The dental services sector like others, has been impacted by these trends and, as a result, so too have the skills needs of the workforce. Whilst technical skills to perform job tasks is imperative, employers in the short-to-medium future will be looking beyond this and have indicated that it will be important for workers in their organisations to be **equipped with key soft skills:**



**TEAMWORK AND
COMMUNICATION**



**TECHNICAL /
JOB-SPECIFIC SKILLS**



**RESILIENCE, STRESS
TOLERANCE AND
FLEXIBILITY**



**PROBLEM
SOLVING**



**SELF-
MANAGEMENT**

These results are in line with wider studies, including the World Economic Forum and its Future of Jobs Survey 2018 which indicates that the top skills in demand in 2022 will include **analytical thinking, innovation, creativity, originality, initiative, critical thinking, complex problem-solving, leadership** and **emotional intelligence**.²⁰

The VET system plays a pivotal role in supporting employers and employees in adapting to technologies and changes in the workplace. Its role in providing the workforce with current and emerging skills will only grow more strongly in the future as it continues to support individuals entering the workplace or transitioning into different roles.²¹

The 12 generic skills listed below, including the descriptors, were provided by the Department of Education and Training for the purpose of being ranked by industry representatives. For the 2019 ranking exercise, an 'Other' generic skill option was included in the list to capture any additional key skills considered important for an industry. Please note that, in this case, no other generic skills were identified.

Key Generic Skills – Ranked in Order of Importance

1	Learning agility / Information literacy / Intellectual autonomy and self-management - Ability to identify a need for information. Ability to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively use and cite the information. Ability to discriminate and filter information for importance. Ability to do more with less. Ability to quickly develop a working knowledge of new systems to fulfil the expectations of a job.
2	Communication / Collaboration including virtual collaboration/ Social intelligence - Ability to understand and apply the principles of creating more value for customers with fewer resources (lean manufacturing) and collaborative skills. Ability to critically assess and develop content that uses new media forms and leverage these media for persuasive communications. Ability to connect to others in a deep and direct way, to sense and stimulate reactions and desired interactions.
3	Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) - Foundation skills of literacy and numeracy.
4	Technology use and application skills - Ability to create and/or use technical means, and understand their interrelation with life, society, and the environment. Ability to understand and apply scientific or industrial processes, inventions, methods, etc. Ability to deal with increasing mechanisation and automation and computerisation. Ability to do work from mobile devices rather than from paper.
5	Customer service / Marketing - Ability to interact with other human beings, whether helping them find, choose or buy something. Ability to supply customers' wants and needs both via face-to-face interactions or digital technology. Ability to manage online sales and marketing. Ability to understand and manage digital products.
6	Design mindset / Thinking critically / System thinking / Solving problems - Ability to adapt products to rapidly shifting consumer tastes and trends. Ability to determine the deeper meaning or significance of what is being expressed via technology. Ability to understand how things that are regarded as systems influence one another within a complete entity, or larger system. Ability to think holistically.
7	Financial - Ability to understand and apply core financial literacy concepts and metrics, streamlining processes such as budgeting, forecasting, and reporting, and stepping up compliance. Ability to manage costs and resources, and drive efficiency.
8	Managerial / Leadership - Ability to effectively communicate with all functional areas in the organisation. Ability to represent and develop tasks and work processes for desired outcomes. Ability to oversee processes, guide initiatives and steer employees toward achievement of goals.
9	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) - Sciences, mathematics and scientific literacy.
10	Entrepreneurial - Ability to take any idea, whether it be a product and/or service, and turn that concept into reality and not only bring it to market, but make it a viable product and/or service. Ability to focus on the very next step to get closer to the ultimate goal.
11	Environmental and Sustainability - Ability to focus on problem solving and the development of applied solutions to environmental issues and resource pressures at local, national and international levels.
12	Data analysis skills - Ability to translate vast amounts of data into abstract concepts and understand data -based reasoning. Ability to use data effectively to improve programs, processes and business outcomes. Ability to work with large amounts of data: facts, figures, number crunching, analysing results.



A.3 Key Drivers for Change Overview

Key Drivers

There is no Training Package development work proposed for 2019–2020. Training Package Products under the scope of the Dental IRC regarding dental laboratory assistance and dental prosthetics are proposed for review in 2020–2021. These Training Package Products were initially scheduled for review in 2019–2020, but industry noted that it was vital to allow for the proper implementation and use of the Training Package Products which predominantly came into effect in 2015 (after an extensive review had been conducted in that same year).

Current Work in Progress

Update work is currently being conducted on the following Training Package Products:

- HLT35015 Certificate III in Dental Assisting
- HLT45015 Certificate IV in Dental Assisting.

A.4 Consultation Undertaken

A widespread **multichannel consultation** involving the following stakeholders has been conducted to identify and substantiate the key skills gaps and training needs of the sector, and to determine whether or not there is a need to update the respective Training Package Products:

- All Dental Industry Reference Committee (IRC) members representing the following key bodies:
 - Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET)
 - Australian Dental and Oral Health Therapists' Association (ADOHTA)
 - Australian Dental Association (ADA)
 - Australian Dental Prosthetists Association (ADPA)
 - Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF)
 - Central Queensland University
 - Dental Health Services Victoria
 - Dental Hygienists Association of Australia Ltd (DHAA)
 - Dental Assistants Professional Association Inc (DAPA)
 - Directorate of Defence Force Dentistry (Department of Defence)
 - Hunter New England Oral Health (Centre for Oral Health Strategy NSW Health)
 - Oral Health Professional Association (OHPA)
 - Precision Smiles
 - TAFE South Australia.
- Networks of the Dental IRC members
- A national online survey distributed via the SkillsIQ database between November 2018 and January 2019 that sought to identify top skills needs and priority industry issues
- Public consultation on the draft Industry Skills Forecast, which was publicised by e-mail to over 17,000 stakeholders registered in SkillsIQ's database network
- The Industry Skills Forecast, including the Proposed Schedule of Work, which was promoted to stakeholders and made available via SkillsIQ's website.

B. Proposed Schedule of Work

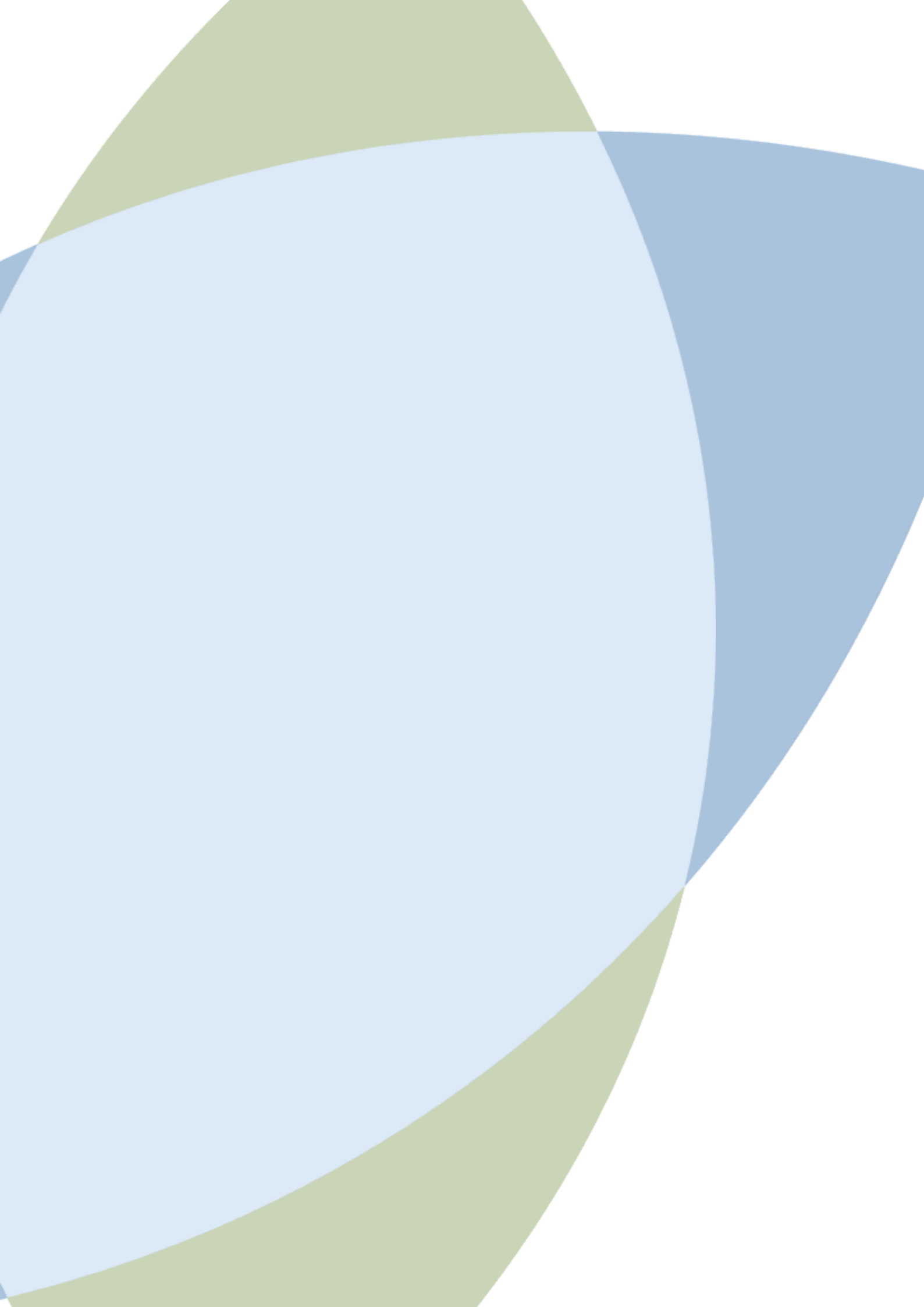
2020–21

YEAR	PROJECT TITLE AND DESCRIPTOR
2020–21	<p>Dental Laboratory Assistant</p> <p>The IRC proposes to update the following qualifications and any associated skill sets and Units of Competency relating to Dental Laboratory Assistant job roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HLT35115 Certificate III in Dental Laboratory Assisting <p>This update is designed to reflect current industry practice and to ensure skills and knowledge are meeting industry needs. This will also include updating skills to assist with digital dental restorations and appliances using Computer-Aided Design and Computer-Aided Manufacturing procedures that were recently included in the new Diploma of Dental Technology which was endorsed in 2018.</p>
2020–21	<p>Dental Prosthetics</p> <p>The IRC proposes to update the following qualifications and any associated skill sets and Units of Competency relating to the Dental Prosthetist job role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HLT65015 Advanced Diploma of Dental Prosthetics <p>This update is designed to ensure this qualification meets the requirements of current and future industry work practices.</p>



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