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College of Alberta  
Dental Assistants

# **Continuing Competence Program Policies**

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# Introduction

Competent Dental Assistants possess the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and judgement required to provide professional services. Dental Assistants engage in continuing competence activities to enhance the delivery of services to their patients and to remain current in knowledge and application of that knowledge. Completion of the College's Continuing Competence Program (CCP) components does not directly reflect a Dental Assistant's competence. However, self-assessing, completing learning activities and analyzing outcomes that CCP participation requires is considered an indirect display of competence.

These policies were developed to complement the College's Standards of Practice by defining operational terms of reference for the College and its regulated members.

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The CCP Policies are subject to change without notice.

The current policies are available on the College's website [www.abrda.ca](http://www.abrda.ca).

# Continuing Competence Program

## CCP1 Annual Requirements

Policy Type: Continuing Competence Program	Policy Number: CCP1
Approval Date:	Scheduled Review:
Revised Date(s):	

### Policy Statement

Regulated members with an active permit must participate in the Continuing Competence Program (CCP) annually.

### Indicators

- (1) Regulated members must begin participating in the CCP in their initial registration cycle.
- (2) Regulated members with an active practice permit must annually:
  - (a) complete a self-assessment;
  - (b) create a learning plan with a minimum of two learning objectives;
  - (c) compile a list of learning activities completed with supporting documentation;
  - (d) provide verification of practice hours; and
  - (e) meet any other requirements approved by Council.
- (3) Regulated members must retain CCP records for five (5) years.
- (4) Non-compliance with the CCP may result in the regulated member being referred for unprofessional conduct.

# Continuing Competence Program

## CCP2 Self Assessment

Policy Type: Continuing Competence Program	Policy Number: CCP2
Approval Date:	Scheduled Review:
Revised Date(s):	

### Policy Statement

Regulated members with an active practice permit must complete an annual self-assessment based on the competencies within their current role or career goals.

### Indicators

- (1) Regulated members self-assess to identify learning needs.
- (2) Regulated members should annually assess “Safety” and “Professionalism” competencies and place them as a higher learning priority over other areas.

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# Continuing Competence Program

## CCP3 Learning Plan

Policy Type: Continuing Competence Program	Policy Number: CCP3
Approval Date:	Scheduled Review:
Revised Date(s):	

### Policy Statement

Regulated members must submit a proposed learning plan for the upcoming registration cycle prior to applying for practice permit renewal.

### Indicators

- (1) An acceptable proposed learning plan includes:
  - (a) a plan year;
  - (b) a minimum of two valid learning objectives;
  - (c) a related competency number for each objective; and
  - (d) proposed learning activities for each objective.
  
- (2) A valid learning objective will:
  - (a) relate directly to the Competency Profile for Alberta Dental Assistants;
  - (b) state a clear learning/enhancing focus; and
  - (c) enhance and/or impact the regulated member's area of practice or relate to a future career goal.

# Continuing Competence Program

## CCP4 Learning Objectives

Policy Type: Continuing Competence Program	Policy Number: CCP4
Approval Date:	Scheduled Review:
Revised Date(s):	

### Policy Statement

Regulated members must complete a minimum of two learning objectives during each registration cycle (in whole or part) which they hold an active practice permit.

### Indicators

- (1) Individual learning objectives may not be repeated within a five-year period unless there is evidence of significant changes or reasons for revisiting an area.
- (2) Any combination of cardiopulmonary resuscitation and/or first aid and/or automated external defibrillator training or recertification may be considered as one (1) learning objective and may only be used once every five (5) years.
- (3) Completed learning objectives qualify only for the plan year in which they were completed.
  - (a) The plan year aligns with the annual registration cycle of December 1 through November 30.

# Continuing Competence Program

## CCP5 Learning Plan Changes

Policy Type: Continuing Competence Program	Policy Number: CCP5
Approval Date:	Scheduled Review:
Revised Date(s):	

### Policy Statement

Learning plans are meant to help regulated members focus on their individual competency and learning needs.

### Indicators

- (1) Regulated members may postpone or cancel their learning objectives and create new learning objectives during the plan year if:
  - (a) area of practice changes;
  - (b) new career goals are identified and immediately pursued;
  - (c) new technology, new procedures or new products directly affecting the registrant’s practice require new or further education and/or training;
  - (d) research identifies new areas of education/skills;
  - (e) legislation/regulation changes; or
  - (f) education in their first learning area choice is not accessible during the year.

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# Continuing Competence Program

## CCP6 Learning Activities

Policy Type: Continuing Competence Program	Policy Number: CCP6
Approval Date:	Scheduled Review:
Revised Date(s):	

### Policy Statement

Regulated members must undertake learning activities to achieve their learning objectives.

### Indicators

(1) Acceptable learning activities include:

- (a) formal education;
- (b) workshops/seminars/conferences;
- (c) industry sponsored events;
- (d) mentoring/tutoring;
- (e) study groups/committees/clubs;
- (f) self-directed study; and
- (g) activities approved by Council.

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# Continuing Competence Program

## CCP7 Results Statements

Policy Type: Continuing Competence Program	Policy Number: CCP7
Approval Date:	Scheduled Review:
Revised Date(s):	

### Policy Statement

Regulated members analyze the outcome of their learning to confirm they met their learning needs; they use this information to form their results statement.

### Indicators

- (1) A results statement is written for each learning objective achieved.
- (2) Acceptable results statements:
  - (a) indicate how the learning has enhanced or impacted practice; and
  - (b) explain what the regulated member can now do because of the learning achieved.

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# Continuing Competence Program

## CCP8 Verification of Learning

Policy Type: Continuing Competence Program	Policy Number: CCP8
Approval Date:	Scheduled Review:
Revised Date(s):	

### Policy Statement

Regulated members must provide proof of learning activities completion.

### Indicators

- (1) Acceptable verification of learning includes:
- (a) signed and dated certificate/letter;
  - (b) copy of brochure/agenda from event;
  - (c) textbook or Journal references;
  - (d) website address or link;
  - (e) signed Verification of Learning Form;
  - (f) receipts; and
  - (g) other documentation approved by Council.

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# Continuing Competence Program

## CCPg Practice Hours

Policy Type: Continuing Competence Program	Policy Number: CCPg
Approval Date:	Scheduled Review:
Revised Date(s):	

### Policy Statement

Regulated members must provide credible evidence of current practice in the form of 300 hours ‘actively engaged in dental assisting practice’ within the three (3) years preceding application for annual practice permit renewal.

### Indicators

- (1) “Actively engaged in dental assisting practice” implies that the professional services being performed by the regulated member are directly connected to the dental industry and either require or benefit from a dental assisting background.
- (2) Practice hours can be attained through employment or volunteer opportunities.
- (3) Acceptable volunteer hours include:
  - (a) holding positions as board or committee commitments with local, provincial, or national dental assisting organizations; and
  - (b) dental assisting for dental service organizations.
- (4) Verification of hours must be available for review upon request as part of the Continuing Competence Program (CCP) audit process. Regulated members are encouraged to upload verification of hours to the CADA Portal annually.
- (5) Acceptable verification of hours include:
  - (a) a copy of payslips;
  - (b) a copy T4s or records of employment; and
  - (c) the Practice Hours Verification form signed by a supervisor or employer.
- (6) In lieu of practice hours, a regulated member may demonstrate current practice by meeting one of the following:
  - (a) graduating from a dental assisting (or other oral health program) within the last three (3) years;
  - (b) completing a recognized Clinical Refresher Course within the last three (3) years;
  - (c) holding current practice rights as a dental assistant in a Canadian province where dental assisting is regulated; or

- (d) having other qualifications that show practice is current (substantial equivalence), such as having completed the National Dental Assisting Examining Board clinical practice evaluation within the last three (3) years.

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# Continuing Competence Program

## CCP10 Audit

Policy Type: Continuing Competence Program	Policy Number: CCP10
Approval Date:	Scheduled Review:
Revised Date(s):	

### Policy Statement

The College will select a minimum of five percent (5%) of regulated members with active practice permits to participate in the Continuing Competence Program (CCP) audit annually.

### Indicators

- (1) Regulated members are selected for audit based on any of the following:
  - (a) random sampling;
  - (b) being new to the CCP in the previous registration cycle; and
  - (c) need for previous CCP audit remedial activities.
- (2) Regulated members selected for CCP audit are notified by email. The notification email will identify:
  - (a) what CCP records are being reviewed;
  - (b) the years of CCP records being reviewed, include the preceding year plus one additional year as determined by the Competence Committee; and
  - (c) the date which the CCP records must be received by the College.
- (3) CCP records reviewed through the audit process may include:
  - (a) completed learning plans;
  - (b) verification of learning activities;
  - (c) results statements;
  - (d) verification of practice hours; and
  - (e) any other documentation to determine compliance with the CCP requirements as requested by the Competence Committee.
- (4) Regulated member CCP records are assessed against the CCP Policies and the criteria in the Competence Manual to determine compliance with the audit requirements.
- (5) Audit reviews are concluded within the same registration cycle.

# Continuing Competence Program

## CCP11 Audit Extension

Policy Type: Continuing Competence Program	Policy Number: CCP11
Approval Date:	Scheduled Review:
Revised Date(s):	

### Policy Statement

Regulated members experiencing extenuating circumstances may request an extension to submit their Continuing Competence Records (CCP) for audit.

### Indicators

- (1) A written request for audit extension must be submitted to the Registrar, or their delegate, on or before the CCP audit deadline.
- (2) The audit extension request must include:
  - (a) the regulated member's name, registration number, and contact information;
  - (b) a statement addressing the reason and circumstances of the perceived need for an extension;
  - (c) a description of the steps taken to meet the deadline; and
  - (d) the anticipated date which the regulated member can comply with the audit.
- (3) The Registrar, or their delegate, will review and provide a response to the extension request within ten (10) business days.
  - (a) The Competence Committee may be consulted as part of the extension request review and decision.

# Continuing Competence Program

## CCP12 Remedial Process

Policy Type: Continuing Competence Program	Policy Number: CCP12
Approval Date:	Scheduled Review:
Revised Date(s):	

### Policy Statement

The remedial process will be activated when a regulated member fails to comply with Continuing Competence Program (CCP) requirements as identified through the audit process.

### Indicators

- (1) When the audit process identifies regulated members are not in compliance with the CCP requirements, the audit reviewer will initiate remedial actions to assist the regulated member with understanding the requirements and enabling the regulated member to meet the requirements within the registration cycle.
- (2) The remedial process is meant to ensure regulated members have the necessary information and opportunity to comply with the CCP audit.
- (3) When remedial action is required, the audit reviewer will notify the regulated member via email, mail and/or phone. The notice will offer remedial assistance.
  - (a) Remedial assistance may be provided in the form of:
    - (i) reflective self-assessment mentoring;
    - (ii) coaching;
    - (iii) further education on the Continuing Competence Program;
    - (iv) identification of learning opportunities accessible to the registrant; and
    - (v) any other suggestions or assistance deemed prudent by the reviewer.



# Continuing Competence Program

## CCP13 Conduct Referrals

Policy Type: Continuing Competence Program	Policy Number: CCP13
Approval Date:	Scheduled Review:
Revised Date(s):	

### Policy Statement

Regulated members who fail to meet the Continuing Competence Program (CCP) audit through the remedial process during the allotted time in the review year may be referred by the Registrar for unprofessional conduct.

### Indicators

- (1) Audit reviewers will notify the Registrar of any regulated member who fails to meet the CCP requirements through the remedial process. Audit reviewers will provide the Registrar with the following:
  - (a) the regulated member's name and registration number;
  - (b) a description of the outstanding CCP requirements;
  - (c) the dates and details of contact with the regulated member regarding the audit;
  - (d) copies of any correspondence with the regulated member regarding the audit; and
  - (e) a description of the remedial actions taken to meet the deadline.
- (2) The Registrar will review the matter and contact the regulated member via registered mail regarding the outstanding requirements.
- (3) The Registrar may refer the regulated member for unprofessional conduct when the regulated member:
  - (a) demonstrates a possible public safety issue;
  - (b) does not engage with the Registrar or their delegate;
  - (c) is non-compliant with a remediation plan; or
  - (d) does not engage with the remediation process.

# Continuing Competence Program

## CCP14 Appeals

Policy Type: Continuing Competence Program	Policy Number: CCP14
Approval Date:	Scheduled Review:
Revised Date(s):	

### Policy Statement

A regulated member not satisfied with a decision regarding a Continuing Competence Program (CCP) audit may appeal to the Competence Committee.

### Indicators

- (1) Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Competence Committee within 30 days from the date the audit decision is given to the regulated member.
- (2) The appeal must include:
  - (a) the regulated member's name, registration number, and contact information; and
  - (b) set out the reasons why the audit decision should be reconsidered.
- (3) The Competence Committee will review the appeal and provide an appeal decision to the regulated member within thirty (30) days of receiving the appeal.
- (4) The appeal decision of the Competence Committee will be final.

# Continuing Competence Program

## CCP15 Material Review

Policy Type: Continuing Competence Program	Policy Number: CCP15
Approval Date:	Scheduled Review:
Revised Date(s):	

### Policy Statement

The Competence Committee will review the Continuing Competence Program (CCP) materials annually.

### Indicators

- (1) CCP materials are reviewed for currency, relevancy, and effectiveness.
- (2) The CCP material reviews will include:
  - (a) CCP Policies;
  - (b) Competence Program Manual; and
  - (c) CCP content on the College's website.
- (3) Recommendations for revisions to CCP Policies are presented to Council for consideration, as necessary.

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