



**College of Alberta
Dental Assistants**

Request for Proposal

Program Approval Review 2025

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Introduction

The College of Alberta Dental Assistants (the College) is seeking proposals from qualified consultants and firms to conduct a comprehensive review of our Program Approval function. The goal is to ensure the framework and processes are modern, transparent, and aligned with legislative requirements, regulatory best practices, and the College's public interest mandate. This review will involve stakeholder engagement, comparative research, and making recommendations for enhancing efficiency and clarity in Program Approval.

About the College

The College is the regulatory body for over 7,200 dental assistants in Alberta. We protect and serve the public by regulating the dental assisting profession.

College Mission

Under the *Health Professions Act* we ensure patients receive safe, competent and ethical oral health care by Registered Dental Assistants.

We do this by setting and enforcing education and practice standards, providing fair and transparent registration and complaints processes, and proactively adapting to the evolving needs of oral health care.

College Vision

We are a trailblazing and trusted regulator.

College Values

The College upholds the values of accountability, ethics, inclusivity, and innovation. These core values are integral to the Program Approval process, ensuring that dental assisting programs in Alberta provide education that aligns with the College's mission and vision.

College Values in Relation to the Program Approval Review

Accountable – *taking responsibility for the work we do*

A review of the Program Approval function demonstrates accountability by ensuring that the College's oversight of educational programs is rigorous, transparent, and consistent with legislative requirements. By commissioning an external review, the College is taking responsibility for evaluating whether the current framework and processes are effective, efficient, and in the best interest of Albertans. Accountability also means ensuring that graduates from approved programs are fully prepared to meet the entry-to-practice competencies, providing assurance to the Public that the College is fulfilling its mandate.

Ethical – *acting with personal and professional integrity*

Ethics are at the core of regulating education. A fair and unbiased Program Approval process is essential to maintaining integrity in the pathway to professional practice. An external review will safeguard against conflicts of interest, ensure that decisions are based on evidence and standards rather than convenience or tradition, and reinforce the principle of doing the right things for the right reasons. By applying ethical scrutiny, the College upholds public trust in the profession and ensures equitable treatment for all programs seeking approval.

Inclusive– *honouring human diversity*

An inclusive Program Approval framework and process acknowledges the diversity of learners, educators, and communities that dental assistants serve. This review will explore whether the process accounts for different program delivery models, geographic realities (urban, rural, and remote), and diverse student populations, including newcomers to Canada and internationally educated dental assistants seeking to upgrade. It will also examine how our Program Approval function can support equitable access to the profession, ensuring the regulatory framework does not unintentionally create barriers. By engaging stakeholders broadly in the review, the College ensures that diverse perspectives shape the future of dental assisting education.

Innovative– *leading by learning*

A review of the Program Approval function is an opportunity to innovate. This involves learning from best practices in other professions and jurisdictions, exploring digital solutions for more efficient oversight, and adopting forward-looking criteria that anticipate changes in oral health care and education. By leading with a mindset of growth and improvement, the College can design a Program Approval framework and processes that not only meets today's needs but is adaptable to future demands. This reflects a commitment to continuous learning, both within the College and across the profession.

The College's values are deeply embedded in the Program Approval function. By emphasizing accountability, ethics, inclusivity, and innovation, the program ensures that Alberta dental assistants are well-prepared to provide exceptional care and uphold public trust.

Background

The College's current Program Approval function is due for comprehensive review and update. It was created within an existing system of third-party involvement. Program Approval is critical to ensuring that graduates meet the competencies required for safe, effective practice.

Over the last decade, the regulatory and educational landscape has evolved:

- Updates and new legislation (*Health Professions Act, Fair Registration Practices Act, Labour Mobility Act*).
- Shifts in societal expectations regarding transparency and equity.
- Changes in infection prevention and control, patient safety standards, and technology.
- Evolving learner expectations and student profiles.
- Growing needs to align with national and international best practices.

Systematic reviews have been successfully completed in other key areas of College responsibility (i.e., Continuing Competence, Governance, Communications). This review will ensure that the Program Approval process is also effective, efficient, and future-ready.

Expectations

Review the Program Approval Framework and Processes

- Conduct a thorough review of the current policies, procedures and tools.
- Compare with provincial/national/international regulatory best practices in health program accreditation/approval.
- Assess alignment with the College's Competency Profile, Standards of Practice, Code of Ethics, and legislative requirements.

Engage Stakeholders

- Gather input from Council, Committees, the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC), the National Dental Assisting Examining Board (NDAEB) and dental assisting educators.
- Use interviews to understand stakeholder experiences with the Program Approval process.

Develop Recommendations

- Identify gaps, overlaps, or inefficiencies in the current process.
- Recommend updates to strengthen alignment with the College's mandate.
- Provide options for modernization (e.g., reduction in duplication, transparent criteria, streamlined timelines).

Scope of Work

PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

- Develop a detailed review project plan outlining the methodology, timelines, and key milestones.
- Maintain regular communication with the College project team.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Conduct interviews with administration, committee, CDAC, NDAEB and dental assisting educators.
- Analyze feedback to inform the report recommendations.

PROCESS REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

- Assess current Program Approval processes against regulatory and accreditation best practices.
- Review alignment with the College's Standards of Practice, Competency Profile, National Dental Assisting Examining Board processes, Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada processes, legislative obligations, and the College's strategic goals.

DRAFTING AND VALIDATION

- Provide recommendations that explore options to strengthen or, where appropriate, re-envision the Program Approval framework, to be considered in collaboration with the College's Program Approval Committee and Administration.
- Facilitate validation sessions with key stakeholders to refine the draft framework.

FINALIZATION AND PRESENTATION

- Present a report with the final recommendations to Council.

Budget

The maximum total budget for this project is \$40,000.00 including all disbursements and contingencies. The budget does not include applicable goods and services tax (GST).

Proposal Content

Proposals must include all the information requested and, in the order, described below.

- Cover Letter – Statement of interest, understanding of project scope, and any deviations from the RFP.
- Proposed Project Plan – Detailed steps, methodology, and timelines.
- Project Resources – Qualifications, roles, responsibilities, and experience.
- References – Contact information for at least two comparable clients.
- Costs & Charges – Inclusive fixed cost quote in Canadian funds, including all fees, contingencies, and taxes.

Proposal Submission

You are invited to submit a proposal, via email, in accordance with the terms and conditions detailed in this RFP.

Inquiries and proposals are to be directed to:

College of Alberta Dental Assistants

Attention: April Slotsve, Education & Practice Director via email to aslotsve@abrda.ca

Deadline for proposal submission is October 17, at 11:59 am Alberta Time.

RFP Schedule

We may at any time suspend, cancel, or alter all or any portion of the anticipated RFP schedule below.

Task	Date
RFP release date	September 15, 2025
Last day for questions	October 14, 2025
RFP closing date	October 17, 2025 (11:59 am)
Proposal review and successful proposal selection	October 20-24, 2025
Potential requests for further information or meetings/calls with prospective service providers	October 27-29, 2025
Final report and recommendations due	February 16, 2025

Process Overview

The College will review all proposals for completeness. Only complete proposals will be considered. Eligible proposals will be evaluated based on the proposal content and financial competitiveness.

Selection will be based on qualifications and knowledge; related work experience and depth of experience; overall strength of proposal; reputation; and proposed remuneration.

Proponents may be required to participate in a brief interview prior to awarding the contract. Our Registrar & CEO will have the final approval.

We will negotiate a contractual agreement with the preferred proponent. If we are unable to negotiate an acceptable contractual agreement with the preferred proponent, then the second preferred proponent may be selected, and a contractual agreement developed. The College at any time and without liability, may withdraw from negotiations with any potential service provider.

Terms and Conditions

By submitting a proposal, each proponent acknowledges and confirms that they have read, understand, and accept the information contained in this RFP and agrees as follows:

Eligible Proponents

This RFP is open to all qualified vendors and individuals.

Proposals

Must be in electronic format.

Late Proposals

Proposals received and marked late may not be considered or evaluated.

Debriefing

We will notify all proponents when the RFP process has concluded.

Expenses

Proponents are solely responsible for their own expenses in participating in the RFP process, including costs in preparing and submitting their proposal.

Conflict of Interest

On or before the closing date, proponents must fully disclose in writing to the College the circumstances of any actual, possible, or perceived conflict of interest in relation to the proponent and the College, including plans to mitigate the conflict. The College may reject any proposal where, in the opinion of the College, the proponent is, could be, or could be perceived to be in a conflict of interest.

Ownership of Proposals

All proposals and accompanying documents submitted to the College in relation to this RFP become the property of the College and, subject to the provisions of the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* and this RFP, will be held in confidence. They will not be returned.

No Commitment to Contract

Submission of a proposal will not obligate, nor should it be construed as obligating the College to accept any such proposal or to proceed further with the project.

The College reserves the right to accept or reject, in whole or in part, any or all proposals.

The College also reserves the right to suspend, cancel and/or re-issue all or any portion of this RFP at any time for any reason without penalty.

The proponent's proposal will form part of the contractual agreement by attachment and will be incorporated by reference. Claims made in the proposal will constitute contractual warranties. Any provision in the proposal may be included in the contractual agreement as direct provision thereof.

The RFP process, including the selection of any proposal by the College does not create a contract or agreement of any kind between the College and the proponent. The College will not be obligated in any matter whatsoever to

any proponent until a written contractual agreement between the College and the proponent has been duly executed.

Confidentiality

All proposals and communications between each company and the College relating to the RFP process are confidential and shall be kept secure by the College. Notwithstanding the previous sentence, information collected by the College through the RFP process may be disseminated to any person or entity responsible for administering the RFP process.

The proponent must identify any information in its proposal that it considers to be confidential or proprietary.

Compliance

The College reserves the right to waive minor non-compliance by a proponent with the requirements of the RFP. This will allow the College to consider and possibly accept any proposal which is advantageous even though the proposal may be non-compliant in some minor respect.