



THE SOUTH AFRICAN DENTAL TECHNICIANS COUNCIL

DIE SUID AFRIKAANSE RAAD VIR TANDTEGNICI

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Dear Registered Member

Although we are already at the end of the second month of the year 2023, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you, your staff and your loved ones a very happy and prosperous 2023 and trust that you have had a well-deserved rest. The SADTC believes that a sustainable regulatory council is derived from and maintained by fostering good relations with you, our valued registered members. Thank you for your support in 2022 and we look forward to another productive and prosperous 2023.

As always, I will update you on the progress of various matters and activities at the South African Dental Technicians Council (SADTC).

Disciplinary Matters

The Disciplinary Committee finalised most of its cases in October 2022. Two members were charged with unprofessional conduct and pleaded guilty to most of the charges against them. The committee had a noticeable success rate in its cases thus far, and is hard at work in dealing with errant registered professionals who are found to be in breach of the Act. Please visit our website (under legal and compliance located on the home page) regularly for findings of disciplinary hearings. Registered persons are reminded to comply with the Dental Technicians Act and the Regulations without fail.

Ethical guidelines, duties and code of conduct

Council approved this document on 2nd of December 2022 and members are referred to the website to view this document. The voluntary association, DENTASA, was consulted during the formulation of these guidelines, and any further comments are always welcomed. Policies of this nature are in any case, revised regularly by Council.

Complaints procedure

Any member of the public may lay a complaint against a dental technician/technologist who they believe is in contravention of the Act and or regulations. A complaint against a registered person should be submitted in writing by way of an affidavit under oath. The affidavit should include an overview of the alleged issue of concern and the timeframe of events. Members of the dental technology profession may also lodge a complaint against another member who is registered with the Council. It is also

possible for members to lay a complaint (which can be anonymous) with the Health Professions Council of South Africa if there are concerns with a dentist or dental therapist.

Regulations

Please visit the Council's website for the full set of regulations.

The following Regulations have been published for implementation:

- Regulations relating to the conduct of the business of the South African Dental Technicians Council and related matters.
- Regulations relating to acts or omissions of dental technicians and technologists in respect of which the Council may take disciplinary actions.
- The Scope of Practice for the Professions of Dental Technicians and Dental Technologists. We have noted the error with the insertion of the word "Health" and have since notified the National Department of Health.

The Following Regulations have been published for public comment.

- Regulations Relating to the Institution of Enquiries Held in Terms of Section 35 of the Act
- Regulations relating to the Undergraduate Curricula and Examinations in Dental Technology
This set was published incomplete, and we have notified the National Department of Health of this error.

Education Matters.

Control of education and training is regulated by Section 16 of the Dental Technicians Act, of 1979. As indicated above, the regulations in terms of how students are registered and trained have been reviewed.

The existence of so-called 'pipeline' students remains a challenge. These are students who the Universities of Technology (UoTs) graduated, knowing that they had failed according to the Council examiners, and therefore cannot be registered with Council. The Minister of Health requested Council to devise a solution to this dilemma, and has approved the Council's compromised solution. This entails students to be placed in commercial or state laboratories for an internship once the UoTs have registered them for non-degree purposes. The full details setting out the processes have been communicated to all the UoTs.

Council remains committed to ensuring that the standards and quality of the education and training of dental technicians/technologists are never lowered to increase pass rates. A resolution has therefore been taken that recommendation for withdrawal of accreditation for all programmes will be made to the Minister for any UoT which continues to graduate un-registrable students in future.

Council continues to assist the UoTs in refining the assessment procedures for the final practical exit-level examination and has held many workshops to aid in attaining a common understanding and application of the objective criteria for assessing the work. Council is hoping that, for a period of time, perhaps until a National Professional Registration Examination is in place, the University and Council examiners will work together. TUT is to be commended for already having put this in place and we hope the other UoTs will do the same. The assessment methods were- discussed with all UoTs and members of the profession at a recent workshop in Cape Town and refinements to the assessment of practical

work will be made in due course, and each year this system will be discussed and further refined as necessary.

National Professional Registration Examination

As a result of the ongoing challenges with the assessment of the final practical exit-level examinations, Council has embarked on defining procedures and requirements for a National Professional Registration Examination. This will not detract from the standards required for the final practical exit-level examination at the Universities, which will continue to be monitored as part of the accreditation process. After graduation from the University, though, a new registration category of “candidate dental technician/technologist” will be created to enable graduates to work in commercial laboratories for at least 6 months before taking the national examination. Council has drawn up a policy for this and is finalising regulations which will be published for public comment. The time frame for this, though, is dependent on the legal department of the National Department of Health.

Governance Matters

Resignation of Dr Anisa Vahed

Dr Anisa Vahed



The Council sadly takes leave of Dr Vahed who has formally resigned as a member of the Council with effect from 1st of March 2023. Dr Vahed was appointed to serve on the Council as a dental technician/technologist attached to a training institution where dental technicians/technologists are trained as per section 5 (1) (b) (ii). As an accomplished educator, she has made a valuable contribution towards the training of dental technicians/technologists in the profession of dental technology. Dr Vahed represented Council on several portfolios including being the Chairperson of the Education Committee, and a member of various task teams of the Council.

We wish to thank Dr Vahed immensely as she has served Council with distinction and the contribution she has made to Council and the profession is invaluable. Dr Vahed has been offered a career-changing opportunity abroad and will leave the country sometime in March. Council may in future co-opt Dr Vahed virtually into its committees due to her invaluable knowledge of the profession.

Concluding Remarks

Council is determined to continuously and relentlessly strive to serve the interests of the profession as much as it serves those of the public at large. Council intends to continue to be responsive to all the challenges facing the profession of dental technology ... so, let us do this together as a collective.