ABC Adult School
Dental Assistant Instructional Plan
2025 - 2026

Revised: 8/7/2025

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Mission of ABC Adult School is to provide quality education to our diverse community with meaningful opportunities for success in career, academic, and personal goals.

1. PROGRAM/COURSE IDENTIFICATION

- **Program Title:** Dental Assistant
- **Program Length/Duration:** 1010 hours
- **Target Audience:** Individuals seeking to obtain the necessary skills and knowledge for entry-level positions as Dental Assistants in general or specialty dental practices.
- **Prerequisites:** High school diploma/High school equivalency certificate
- **Funding Model:** This is a fee-based course, with any other expenses funded through the general Adult School budget.
- **Class Content Breakdown:**
  - Each class is 130 hours (plus 20 hours of Infection Control and 210 hours of Externship).
  - The Modules are as follows:
    - Introduction to Dental Assisting
    - Clinical Dentistry and Dental Materials
    - Preventive Dentistry and Dental Health
    - Dental Radiology and Safety
    - Dental Laboratory and Procedures
    - Dental Specialties and Administrative Billing and Coding
    - Externship

2. PROGRAM GOALS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Overall Program Objective: The objective of the Dental Assistant program is to provide the student with the appropriate didactic theory and hands-on skills required and necessary to prepare them for entry-level positions as dental assistants in today's modern health and dental care offices, dental clinics, and facilities. Students will study diagnostic and procedural terminology as it relates to the accurate completion of dental examinations, procedures, and daily tasks.

- The combination of introduced skills taught in this program will prepare students for the ever-changing field of dentistry and orthodontics. Students study dental radiography, dental sciences, operatory dentistry, laboratory procedures, dental anatomy and orthodontics, and dental health.
- Completion of the Dental Assistant Program, which includes classroom training and an externship, is acknowledged by the awarding of a diploma.

Terminal Performance Objectives (TPOs): Upon successful completion of this program, students will be able to:

    A. Communications:
- Interpret verbal and nonverbal communications effectively and respond appropriately in a professional dental office setting.
- Follow verbal and nonverbal instructions accurately and communicate effectively with dentists, patients, and other dental staff.
- Read, understand, and accurately follow dental procedures, patient charts, and office protocols.

    B. Career Planning and Management:

- Identify personal interests, aptitudes, and necessary skills for informed career decision-making within various dental assisting pathways.
- Utilize information and communication technology (ICT) to research and explore training and job opportunities in the dental field.
- Create professional correspondence, manage schedules, and prepare presentations relevant to dental office operations.

    ○ **C. Problem Solving and Critical Thinking:**

- Identify and ask significant questions to clarify the dental procedure challenges and effectively solve problems encountered in a dental office.
- Use systems thinking to analyze how various dental office components (e.g., equipment, patient flow, scheduling) interact to produce efficient and safe outcomes.
- Demonstrate the ability to create correspondence, write formulas, and create presentations.

    ● **D. Health and Safety:**

- Understand and adhere to all federal, state, and local health and safety regulations, including OSHA standards, regarding dental office operations, infection control, radiography, and hazardous materials management, to ensure the safety of patients, dental staff, and oneself.
- Interpret policies, procedures, and regulations that govern the workplace environment, including both employer and employee responsibilities.
- Demonstrate how to prevent and respond to work-related accidents or injuries, including an understanding of ergonomics. Students will receive instruction and demonstrations on how to sit correctly and perform regular stretching exercises to prevent back and hand injuries.

- **E. Technology Orientation & Foundational Skills:**

  - **Welcome & Course Introduction:** Greet students and introduce yourself. Provide a brief overview of course objectives, weekly routine, classroom rules (including tech use etiquette), and types of projects/tools they'll use.
  - **Technology Orientation:** Guide students through the login process and troubleshoot issues. Conduct a tour of classroom technology, identifying computer components (monitor, CPU, keyboard, mouse, etc.) and demonstrating how to turn systems on/off properly.
  - **Platform Access:** Show students how to access the class website or LMS (e.g., Google Classroom, Canvas), email accounts (if used), and any key applications/software (e.g., dental practice management systems, Dentrix Software).
  - **Hands-On Task: "Getting to Know the Computer":** Facilitate a simple task-based activity where students create a folder with their name on the desktop, open a word processor, and type their name, why they are taking this class, and one thing they want to learn, then save the file in their folder.
  - **Basic Digital Citizenship Intro:** Discuss safe and responsible tech use, including password safety, appropriate online behavior, and respecting school computer use policies.
  - **Wrap-Up:** Answer questions, remind students of what to bring and remember for the next class, and provide a brief preview of the upcoming session.
- **F. Dental Assisting Clinical Skills:**
  - Prepare and maintain dental treatment rooms, instruments, and equipment by infection control standards.
  - Assist the dentist efficiently during various dental procedures, including restorative, surgical, and preventative treatments.
  - Expose, process, and mount dental radiographs safely and accurately, adhering to radiation safety protocols.
  - Perform basic laboratory procedures such as pouring models and fabricating temporary crowns.
- **G. Dental Office Administration & Patient Care:**
  - Manage patient records, schedule appointments, and handle billing and insurance procedures using Dentrix software.
  - Provide patients with adequate education on oral hygiene, post-operative care, and treatment plans.
  - Demonstrate professionalism, empathy, and ethical conduct in all interactions with patients.

3. INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES AND DELIVERY METHODS

Instructional Approach: A blend of theoretical lectures, extensive hands-on lab exercises, interactive demonstrations, simulated clinical scenarios, and an externship for real-world application.

Teaching Methods:

- **Direct Instruction:** For foundational concepts in dental anatomy, dental/medical infection control, dental radiography principles, coronal polishing, pit, and fissure sealant, basic life support, and CPR.
- **Demonstrations:** Live demonstrations of chairside assisting techniques, instrument handling, radiographic procedures, and dental material mixing.
- **Guided Practice:** Supervised lab sessions for hands-on practice of clinical skills on dental mannequins and simulated patients, including four-handed dentistry.
- **Role-Playing:** Simulations of patient interactions, communication scenarios, and administrative skills.
- **Case Studies:** Analysis of patient cases to apply knowledge of dental conditions, treatment plans, and patient education.
- **Technology Integration:** Extensive use of dental practice management software, digital radiography systems, and Denstrix software.

Differentiation and Support: Instructors will provide individualized feedback during lab sessions and externship, offer varied learning materials, and adapt instruction to meet diverse learning needs, including those of English Language Learners who are advanced ESL level students, and students with disabilities

Initial Technology Orientation: A comprehensive initial orientation will guide students through login processes, classroom technology components, platform access (LMS, email, key applications), and be reinforced with hands-on tasks.

- **Materials/Tools Checklist for Orientation:** Student login credentials, working computers/devices, projector/screen for demonstration, internet access, access to LMS, Google Workspace, and Dentrix software.

4. INDUSTRY ALIGNMENT AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

Occupational Advisory Committee (OAC) Review: The program outline undergoes an annual evaluation by the Occupational Advisory Committee. This committee, comprising experienced dentists, dental assistants, office managers, and program alums, meets annually to:

- Review program objectives and curriculum content to ensure alignment with current dental practice standards, emerging technologies, and employer expectations for dental assistant roles.
- Provide recommendations on instructional materials, dental equipment, software versions, and new technologies in dental care.
- Assess the appropriateness of instructional methods and student evaluation criteria, particularly for hands-on clinical skills.
- Ensure the program effectively prepares students with the essential clinical skills, administrative abilities, and professional attitudes required for success in the dental assisting field.

Student Outcome Data Review: Annual review of student achievement data, including state licensure/certification exam pass rates, externship performance, completion rates, employment rates in relevant dental settings, and feedback from employers. This data is critical for identifying areas for program improvement and ensuring continuous quality enhancement in alignment with COE standards.