

Technical Standards & Essential Functions

Categories of Essential Functions	Definition	Functional Abilities	Activity/Attribute Examples (not all-inclusive)
Observation	Ability to participate actively in all demonstrations, laboratory exercises, and clinical experiences in the professional program component to assess and comprehend the condition of all clients assigned to him/her for examination, diagnosis, and treatment. Such observation and information usually requires the functional use of visual, auditory, and somatic (body) sensations.	Visual	A dental hygienist must be able to: • Visually assess detail in client conditions which include the general appraisal as well as detail such as the shape of tissues in the mouth • Possess depth perception (binocular vision with discrimination/perception to see 1.0 mm markings or better) • Possess a peripheral vision • Distinguish color (deficiencies should be limited to a single color) • Distinguish color intensity
		Hearing	A dental hygienist must be able to: • Hear normal speaking level • sounds • Hear faint voices • Hear faint body sounds (as when taking blood pressure) • Hear in situations when he/she cannot see the speaker's lips (as when using masks) • Hear auditory alarms • Hear telephones
		Smell	A dental hygienist must be able to: • Detect odors from client • Detect smoke • Detect gas or noxious smells
Communication	Ability to communicate effectively in English using verbal, non-verbal, and written formats with faculty, other students, clients, families, and all members of the healthcare team.		A dental hygienist must be able to: • Teach a concept (such as oral health education to a client) • Explain procedures • Provide oral reports • Incorporate acceptable verbal and nonverbal behaviors • Speak on the telephone • Direct activities of others • Convey information accurately through writing (medical and dental chart records) • Speak clearly and distinctly (so that vital information is not misinterpreted)

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Motor	Sufficient motor ability to execute the movement and skills required for safe and effective care and emergency treatment	Physical Endurance	A dental hygienist must be able to: • Sit for a sustained duration (at the client's side during procedures) • Sustain repetitive movements (as needed for calculus removal and CPR) • Complete tasks in a timely fashion
		Physical Strength	A dental hygienist must be able to: • Lift 25 pounds (strength to assist a patient in transferring into a dental chair) • Move light objects up to 10 pounds (i.e., x-ray equipment) • Defend self against a combative client • Use upper body/strength (as for CPR, or needed to restrain client) • Use their hands, wrist, and forearms for extended periods (instrumentation)
		Mobility	A dental hygienist must be able to: • Twist and bend at the waist (to accommodate varying positions needed to access the mouth) • Move quickly (as when managing a medical emergency)
		Gross Motor Skills	A dental hygienist must be able to: • Move within confined spaces (as found in a typical dental hygiene treatment environment) • Sit and maintain balance • Reach above his/her shoulders (to operate the equipment. i.e., dental light) • Reach below his/her waist (to access dental unit controls) • Demonstrate hand-eye coordination

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Motor continued	Sufficient motor ability to execute the movement and skills required for safe and effective care and Emergency treatment	Fine Motor Skills	A dental hygienist must be able to: • Push, pull, and rotate their hands at the wrist • Push, pull, and rotate their forearm and shoulders • Grasp small objects and dental instruments with both hands • Write clearly and neatly with a pen or pencil • Key-in information/type (use a computer keyboard) • Demonstrate a pinch grasp, pinching the thumb to each one of the other fingers on the same hand • Coordinate the small muscles in the hands, synchronizing the hands and fingers with the movements of the eyes. • Demonstrate fine motor skills with both hands
		Tactile	A dental hygienist must be able to: • Feel sensations in the finger pads • Discern vibrations (such as a patient's pulse) • Detect temperature changes • Discern differences in surface characteristics (oral tissues) • Discern differences in unseen root surfaces (tactile sensitivity)
Intellectual	Ability to collect, interpret and integrate information and make decisions.	Reading	A dental hygienist must be able to: • Read and interpret dentists' orders • Read and comprehend written documents • Read and interpret physicians' recommendations for client treatment
		Arithmetic Competence	A dental hygienist must be able to: • Read and interpret columns of writing • Interpret digital displays (i.e., x-ray dosage) • Calibrate equipment • Interpret graphs (such as periodontal and dental charting)

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Intellectual Continued		Arithmetic Competence Continued	• Tell time • Measure time (duration) • Count rates (pulse rate) • Use measuring tools (thermometer) • Read measurement marks (such as the calibrated periodontal probe) • Add, subtract, multiply, divide • Compute fractions (as needed for dosage calculations) • Write numbers in records
		Analytical Thinking	A dental hygienist must be able to: • Transfer knowledge from one situation to another • Process information • Evaluate outcomes • Prioritize tasks • Delong-term long term memory • Demonstrate short-term memory
		Critical Thinking Skills	A dental hygienist must be able to: • Identify cause-effect relationships • Plan/control activities for others • Synthesize knowledge and skills • Sequence information
Behavioral and Social Attributes	Possess emotional health and stability are required for full utilization of the student's intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all academic and patient care responsibilities, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with clients and other members of the health care team.	Emotional Stability	A dental hygienist must be able to: • Establish therapeutic boundaries • Provide the client with emotional support (demonstrate empathy) • Adapt to a changing environment/stress • Deal with the unexpected (such as a crisis situation) • Focus his/her attention on the task • Monitor his/her own emotions • Perform multiple responsibilities concurrently • Manage strong emotions (such as grief and anger)

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Behavioral and Social Attributes Continued	Possess the ability to tolerate taxing workloads, function effectively under stress, adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in clinical settings with patients. Possess compassion, integrity, concern for others, and motivation. Possess the ability to Demonstrate professional behaviors and a strong work ethic.	Interpersonal Skills	A dental hygienist must be able to: • Manage interpersonal conflict • Provide treatment and services to all clients without discrimination • Treat others with respect • Establish rapport with clients and clients' families when indicated • Establish rapport with coworkers/peers • Work effectively as a team member with dentists, dental staff and clients