



Allied Health Division Technical Standards

Dental Hygiene

Purpose Statement

All students in the Dental Hygiene Program are expected to meet certain technical standards which are essential for successful completion of all phases of the program, and which reflect industry requirements and standards. To verify the student's ability to perform these essential functions, students may be required to demonstrate the technical standards below.

Meeting these technical standards does not guarantee employment in this field upon graduation. Ability to meet the program's technical standards does not guarantee a student's eligibility for any licensure, certification exam, or successful completion of the program.

Technical Standard	Definition of Standards	Examples
Critical Thinking/Problem Solving Skills	Ability sufficient for clinical judgment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify cause and effect relationship in clinical situations. • Develop dental hygiene care plan. • Assimilate knowledge from lecture, laboratory and clinical arenas. • Utilize basic mathematical skills.
Interpersonal Skills	Abilities sufficient to interact with individuals, families and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish rapport with clients, families and colleagues. • Respect and care for clients whose appearance, condition, beliefs, and values may conflict with your own.
Communication Skills	Abilities sufficient for interaction with others in verbal and written form.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document and interpret actions and client responses in a clear, professional, and timely manner. • Give verbal directions or follow verbal directions from other members of the dental team. • Explain treatment procedures and oral health instruction as well as document treatment procedures and client responses.
Coping Skills	Ability to maintain a state of harmony.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solves personal and interpersonal problems. • Minimizes stress and conflict. • Balances internal needs and external demands.
Mobility/Motor Skills	Physical abilities sufficient to move in one's environment with ease and without restriction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move around clinical operatories, dark room, sterilization room, and other treatment areas. • Position chairside in close proximity to patient.

Technical Standard	Definition of Standards	Examples
	Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective dental hygiene skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administer CPR and BLS procedures. • Reach radiographic equipment which is approximately 5-6' off floor. • Transfer patients from wheel chairs to dental chairs and back. • Move, calibrate, and use equipment, dental materials and supplies including sharp instruments during operative procedures. • Use ancillary aids chairside – mannequins, small equipment, etc. • Hand / eye coordination.
Auditory Skills	Auditory abilities sufficient to monitor and assess health needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hears patients, cries of distress, sound of instruments being properly utilized, sound of slow/high speed hand piece, and monitor vital signs.
Visual Skills	Visual ability sufficient for observation and assessment necessary in dental procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observes client responses such as skin color and facial expression. • Monitors vital signs. • Notes gingival description and pocket depths (read probe) – healthy vs disease state including color changes. • Evaluates radiographs for technical quality including density, contrast and distortion. • Reads records. • Note color changes in dental materials which indicates reactions occurring.
Tactile Skills	Tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performs palpation techniques (EO/IO exam), functions of a dental hygiene exam and/or those related to therapeutic intervention, e.g. scaling, root planning and deposit assessment.
Environmental	Possess the ability to tolerate environmental stressors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safely work with potentially harmful chemicals used in dental settings. • Practice Standard Precautions in the dental setting. • Work in areas that are close, crowded, and/or noisy. • Anticipate exposure to communicable diseases, body fluids, and toxic substances.
Emotional/Behavioral	Possess emotional stability sufficient to maintain composure in stressful situations and assume responsibility / accountability for actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt rapidly to changing environment and/or stress. • Calmly receive feedback. • Demonstrate honesty and integrity beyond reproach.

In the case of an otherwise qualified individual with a documented disability, appropriate and reasonable accommodations will be made unless to do so would fundamentally alter the essential training elements, cause undue hardship, or produce a direct threat to the safety of the patient or student.

Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College is invested in full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Support Services is part of Student Services and is located in the K. Ray Bailey Student Services Center. For detailed information or to request accommodations visit www.abtech.edu/supportservices. An appointment is recommended prior to enrollment in order to discuss any special concerns.