

2026

Substantial Equivalency Assessment Guide

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1. Purpose of the Guide

This guide explains how the Federation of Dental Hygiene Regulators of Canada™ (FDHRC™) reviews the education and qualifications of people who graduated from dental hygiene programs that were not accredited in Canada or the United States. It outlines:

- Why the substantial equivalency assessment exists
- Who should apply
- What documents applicants must provide
- The steps from starting an application to becoming eligible for certification exams

1.1. Who should use this Guide

Any individual who is a graduate of a dental hygiene program that was NOT accredited by the [Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada \(CDAC\)](#), or the [American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation \(ADA/CODA\)](#) on the date of the Applicant's graduation AND meets the eligibility criteria in [section 4](#).

2. Glossary of Terms

Accredited Dental Hygiene Program	A post-secondary dental hygiene program that is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC) or the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation (ADA/CODA).
ADPIE	Assessment, Dental Hygiene Diagnosis, Planning, Implementation and Evaluation. See Dental Hygiene Process of Care.
Applicant	A person who has applied for a Substantial Equivalency Assessment.
Canadian Performance Exam in Dental Hygiene™	A Performance-Based Assessment that consists of two parts. Only available in English.
Certified/Official Translator	Someone who has been recognized by a government agency or other organization as having the skills and qualifications needed to translate written documents or spoken words from one language into another.
Continuing Education	Education taken after individuals have left the formal education system, consisting typically of short or part-time courses.
CPEDH™	See Canadian Performance Exam in Dental Hygiene™.



Dental Hygiene Process of Care	Is comprised of the Assessment, Dental Hygiene Diagnosis, Planning, Implementation and Evaluation (ADPIE) phases. Each phase is a key component of the overall treatment. The utilization of each step is essential to the safe and effective delivery of dental hygiene services and programs.
Entry-to-Practice Canadian Competencies for Dental Hygienists	A detailed description of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours, and judgment required at entry to practice for dental hygienists in Canada, regardless of the practitioner's level of education or previous experience
EPCCoDH	See Entry-to-Practice Canadian Competencies for Dental Hygienists.
National Dental Hygiene Certificate Exam™	Computer-based multiple-choice exam that measures the knowledge of graduates from accredited and non-accredited dental hygiene programs for entry-to-practice in Canada. Available in English and French only.
NDHCE™	See National Dental Hygiene Certification Exam.
Non-Accredited Dental Hygiene Program	A post-secondary dental hygiene program offered by a university or other institution that, at the time of the Applicant's graduation, was not accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC) or the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation (ADA/CODA).
Notary Public	A licensed public officer who serves as an impartial witness to the signing of documents and establishes the authenticity of the signatures and photos for identification.
Notarized	A document that is signed by a Notary Public in order to make it official or legal.
Performance Criteria	Each competency is broken down into performance criteria detailing the behaviours required.

3. Purpose of the Assessment Process

The Federation of Dental Hygiene Regulators of Canada™ (FDHRC™) reviews the education and qualifications of people who graduated from Non-Accredited Dental Hygiene Programs. The FDHRC™ completes this assessment on behalf of the dental hygiene regulators in each province and territory.

The purpose of the assessment is to decide whether an applicant's dental hygiene education and experience are **substantially equivalent** as those of someone who



graduates from an accredited dental hygiene program in Canada. The assessment is guided by two Canadian standards:

- A. [Entry-To-Practice Canadian Competencies Dental Hygienists \(2021\)](#) ; and,
- B. [CDAC Accreditation Requirements for Canadian Dental Hygiene Programs](#)

3.1. Principles of Assessment

The FDHRC™ substantial equivalency assessment process is built on the following principles:

A. Dental hygiene is a regulated health profession.

It includes theory and practical work in oral therapy, prevention, health education, health promotion, and managing a dental hygiene practice.

B. Dental hygiene has its own body of knowledge and national standards.

Dental hygienists have specialized skills, national competencies, and a national Code of Ethics.

C. Dental hygienists in Canada work both independently and with others.

The education and experience of dental hygienists must prepare them to work independently and in a collaborative relationship with the client, other health care professionals and stakeholders, without the direct supervision of a dentist.

D. Dental hygiene care follows a clear, step-by-step process.

The practice of Dental Hygiene uses a systematic approach to dental hygiene care called the Dental Hygiene Process of Care. It involves five key behaviours or steps: Dental Hygiene **A**ssessment, Dental Hygiene **D**iagnosis, Dental Hygiene **P**lanning, **I**mplementation and **E**valuation of treatment and services (ADPIE).

E. All applicants must meet the same standards as graduates of accredited programs.

Applicants need to demonstrate the same level of education and competence as someone from an accredited dental hygiene program in Canada.

F. Every application is reviewed individually.

Each person's education and experience are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

G. The assessment is only used to determine exam eligibility.

The FDHRC™ assessment of educational credentials and qualifications exists for the sole purpose of determining eligibility to write the NDHCE™ and CPEDH™. The evaluation of educational credentials and qualifications does not establish the equivalency of a Non-Accredited Dental Hygiene Program to an Accredited Dental Hygiene Program, but rather, recognizes that the Applicant has achieved a level of dental hygiene education equivalent to that of dental hygiene graduates from programs accredited by CDAC/CODA or another FDHRC recognized accrediting body.



Applicants are responsible for any and all costs associated with obtaining, verifying, and translating required documents.

4. Assessment Eligibility

In order to be considered for an equivalency assessment of educational credentials and qualifications, an Applicant must be able to provide evidence of minimum educational requirements. In its assessment process, the FDHRC™ uses four (4) minimum criteria that **MUST** be met before it can proceed further:

Criterion 1:

The Applicant must have graduated with a **diploma or degree** (or its equivalent), **in dental hygiene**.

Criterion 2:

The dental hygiene program must be established as a separate school, faculty, division or department recognized by the appropriate government agency in the country/jurisdiction where the program is established at a **post-secondary institution** which is also recognized by the appropriate government agency.

Criterion 3:

The program must consist of a **minimum of two (2) full time academic years of formal dental hygiene education** in a recognized Dental Hygiene program, including a clinical component with direct client care supervised by dental hygiene faculty.

Criterion 4:

The program must have **learning outcomes/competencies and evaluation criteria** set out in a clear, concise, and detailed manner to the satisfaction of the FDHRC™.

4.1. Graduates of Non-Accredited Dental Hygiene Programs

Those who have graduated from a Non-Accredited Dental Hygiene Program in Canada, the US, or internationally should first contact the regulatory college in the province where they plan to work to confirm all requirements for licensure. Then, they should apply to the FDHRC™ for an equivalency assessment.

4.2. Graduates of Dentistry, Dental Surgery, etc.

In Canada, dental hygiene is considered a separate and distinct health profession from dentistry, dental surgery, dental therapy, dental technology, etc. Therefore, individuals who **do not** have a degree or diploma **in dental hygiene** are **not eligible** for an equivalency assessment.

Applications received from individuals who have graduated from a program other than dental hygiene will be cancelled and the individual refunded the application fee minus a non-refundable administration fee. See the fee schedule on the [FDHRC™ website](#).



5. Application Process

The FDHRC™ equivalency assessment process is to determine eligibility to challenge the certification examinations (NDHCE™ and CPEDH™). If successful at the exams, candidates will then need to apply for licensure in the province where they want to practice, which can include additional requirements set out by the regulator.

Being found eligible to challenge the certification exams does not guarantee the ability to register for licensure in all provinces/territories.

Prior to applying for an equivalency assessment, Applicants should contact the regulator in the province or territory where they want to work to find out what licensure requirements must be met to work there.

See [Appendix G](#) for a map of the equivalency assessment process from application to decision.

5.1. Applying for an equivalency assessment of credentials

An Applicant that graduated from a Non-Accredited Dental Hygiene Program that wishes to become registered as a dental hygienist in Canada must first apply to the FDHRC™ for an equivalency assessment of their educational credentials and qualifications. The application form can be found on the FDHRC™ website. Please note that Canada has two official languages, English and French. Individuals may apply in either of those two official languages.

Before applying, Applicants should ensure they meet the criteria listed under [Section 4. Assessment Eligibility](#). Applications received that do not meet the eligibility requirements will be cancelled and Applicants refunded the application fee minus the non-refundable administration fee. See the fee schedule on the [FDHRC™ website](#).

5.2. Fees

The current fees associated with an equivalency assessment can be found in the most current [FDHRC™ Fee Schedule](#).

5.3. Timelines

Once the FDHRC™ has received the application for an equivalency assessment, the FDHRC™ will send correspondence to the Applicant confirming that an official file has been opened, documentation has been received (if any), what is still required, and next steps.

An application for an assessment of educational credentials and qualifications to determine equivalency is valid for one (1) year from the date the application form and payment was received by the FDHRC™. After one (1) year, if the Applicant has failed to meet ALL the requirements for a completed application, the file will be closed, and no refund will be issued. All contents of the Applicant's file will be retained in the FDHRC™ office for one (1) year. Original documents will only be released to the Applicant if they selected and paid for their return at the time of application.



If an Applicant wishes to reactivate their file, they are required to complete a new application including payment of fees.

How quickly an application file is completed varies by file and depends on the Applicant's ability to obtain and submit all documentation. The FDHRC™ tracks the documentation received and will send periodic updates to the Applicant confirming what documents are completed and what remains outstanding. Applicants may also email or phone the FDHRC™ office to inquire about the completeness of their application file.

Once the FDHRC™ receives all documents in the format required, the FDHRC™ will update the application status and inform the Applicant, via email, that their file is complete and has been sent to the Equivalency Evaluation Committee for review.

The Committee reviews the file and the FDHRC™ will communicate the decision to the Applicant usually within 8 to 10 weeks after the file has been completed. A review may take longer than 10 weeks only if the Committee requests additional information from the Applicant or the Applicant's educational institution.

5.4. Applicant Personal Information

The status and results of an Applicant's file and evaluation will only be discussed with the Applicant directly. No information will be shared with a third party (i.e. parent, spouse, etc.) unless written authorization has been provided by the Applicant.

If an Applicant gets to the point of licensure in a Canadian province/territory, the FDHRC™ will, with the Applicant's written consent, share copies of official documents with the provincial/territorial regulator to complete their licensure requirements. Any expenses associated with the transmission of the documentation are the responsibility of the Applicant.

Please refer to the [FDHRC™ Privacy Policy](#) found on the website for more information on the collection and security of personal information.

5.5. Translation Policy

All documents must be submitted to the FDHRC™ **in the language of instruction**. If the language of instruction is not English or French, the Applicant must have the documents translated into either English or French at their own cost.

If the Applicant's educational institution has an official translation in either English or French of the required documents, the institution must send the documents to the FDHRC™ in their original language of instruction and attach the official signed translation in either English or French.

If the Applicant's educational institution does not have an official translation, and the FDHRC™ receives documents from the institution in a language other than English or French, the FDHRC™ will paginate these documents and send a copy back to the Applicant for translation. It is then the responsibility of the Applicant to have these documents translated **word for word** by a Certified/Official Translator.



The Certified/Official Translator must then send the translated documents directly to the FDHRC™ and not to the Applicant. All translated documents need to have the seal of a Certified/Official Translator to be considered. The FDHRC™ reserves the right to audit or verify translated documents for accuracy.

The FDHRC™ will accept electronically submitted translations if they are accompanied by a signed letter, embossed with the professional Certified/Official Translator's seal. Alternatively, documents can be mailed directly from the Certified/Official Translator to the FDHRC™ office.

6. Required Documentation

All required documents **MUST** be sent directly to the FDHRC™ office by mail, courier service or email, depending on the document. Documents received via email will only be accepted if the originator of the material can be determined without a doubt by the FDHRC™.

The document list below specifies in what format the document will be accepted by the FDHRC™. Incorrectly submitted documents will lead to delays in file completion and evaluation.

In order to process any application, the FDHRC™ needs all the required documents listed on the *Required Document Checklist for Applicants* (see [Appendix A](#)). If any of the documents listed are in a language other than English or French, they must be submitted in the original language, and it will be the responsibility of the Applicant to have a certified word for word translation done and sent to our office as per our Translation Policy.

In order to complete the assessment of educational credentials and qualifications, the FDHRC™ reserves the right to contact any relevant institutions and its representatives listed on the signed *Educational Program Documentation* ([Appendix B](#)) for verification purposes and/or to request additional information. If the Applicant attended more than one institution in order to complete their dental hygiene studies, each institution must be sent a signed copy of the [Appendix B](#) to be filled out by the institution and returned to the FDHRC™ office with the requested supporting documentation.

REMINDER: No assessment will be started until all the required documentation and payment of fees have been received.

IMPORTANT: If an Applicant submits fraudulent, forged, altered or irregular documents, the FDHRC™ will neither continue nor complete the assessment of credentials of the Applicant. A letter outlining the findings will be sent to the Applicant, fees will not be refunded, and all the documents received will become the property of the FDHRC™. The Applicant will no longer be eligible for an equivalency assessment. The FDHRC™ reserves the right to notify all provincial and territorial Canadian dental hygiene regulatory authorities and all recognized evaluation services. The FDHRC™ also reserves the right to notify the institution(s) and/or board(s) which had purportedly issued the documents.



6.1. Proof of legal name change

If an Applicant has legally changed their name, an original or Notarized copy of proof of the name change (i.e., marriage certificate, divorce certificate, etc.) must be sent to the FDHRC™.

This document must be sent to the FDHRC™ either directly from the official issuing source (i.e. government agency) or directly from the Notary attesting to its validity.

If the Applicant has not changed their name, and all the documents that the FDHRC™ will receive reflect their current legal name, this documentation is not required.

6.2. Dental Hygiene Diploma

An original of the Applicant's **dental hygiene diploma**, showing they have graduated from a dental hygiene program must be sent to the FDHRC™ **directly from the official issuing source** (i.e. post-secondary institution)¹. The FDHRC™ will not accept an original or (Notarized) copy of the diploma from the Applicant.

If not in English or French, the FDHRC™ will send the Applicant an electronic copy of the diploma and it will be the Applicant's responsibility to have it translated by a Certified/Official Translator. The translated document, along with the copy of the original, must be sent directly to the FDHRC™ from the Certified/Official Translator. This can be done through mail or electronically, as long as the FDHRC™ can without a doubt confirm the source of the electronic file.

6.3. Legal Description

A **legal description** of the practice of dental hygiene in the jurisdiction/country of education outlines the competencies/skills dental hygienists are permitted and not permitted to perform in the jurisdiction/country of practice.

This document must be sent to the FDHRC™ **directly from the official issuing source** (i.e. dental hygiene regulatory authority in the country of graduation). The FDHRC™ will not accept an original or (Notarized) copy of the document from the Applicant.

If not in English or French, the FDHRC™ will send the Applicant an electronic copy of the legal description and it will be the Applicant's responsibility to have it translated by a Certified/Official Translator. The translated document, along with the copy of the original, must be sent directly to the FDHRC™ from the Certified/Official Translator. This can be done through mail or electronically, as long as the FDHRC™ can without a doubt confirm the source of the electronic file.

6.4. Transcripts

An official **transcript** of grades/mark sheets/academic records must be submitted directly to the FDHRC™ office **directly from the official issuing source** (i.e. post-secondary

¹ Depending on the level of Educational Credential Evaluation (See Section 6.5) completed by the Applicant, they may not be required to submit separately their dental hygiene diploma. The FDHRC™ will notify the Applicant after receiving the Educational Credential Evaluation if the diploma needs to be submitted.

institution)². The FDHRC™ will not accept an original or (Notarized) copy of the transcript from the Applicant.

If not in English or French, the FDHRC™ will send the Applicant an electronic copy of the transcript and it will be the Applicant's responsibility to have it translated by a Certified/Official Translator. The translated document, along with the copy of the original, must be sent directly to the FDHRC™ from the Certified/Official Translator. This can be done through mail or electronically, as long as the FDHRC™ can without a doubt confirm the source of the electronic file.

6.5. Educational Credential Evaluation

The FDHRC™ requires a report for post-secondary **educational credential evaluation**, which includes the country of education, the name of the institution(s) attended, the year and the specific credential received (degree, diploma or certificate), the length of the program, the area(s) of specialization and the Canadian equivalency, prepared and submitted directly to the FDHRC™ by one of the following external credentialing agencies approved by the FDHRC™:

- [World Education Services \(WES\)](#)
- [International Credential Evaluation Service \(ICES\)](#)
- [International Qualifications Assessment Service \(IQAS\)](#)

There are different types of evaluation that the Applicant can have completed by each of these organizations. While the FDHRC™ does not require a specific type of evaluation from these organizations, it does recommend the following:

- **WES Course-by-course evaluation:** in obtaining this type of evaluation the Applicant may not be required to provide their Official Transcripts and Diploma to the FDHRC™ directly³.
- **ICES Comprehensive Report:** in obtaining this type of evaluation the Applicant may not be required to provide their Official Transcripts and Diploma to the FDHRC™ directly⁴.

² Depending on the level of Educational Credential Evaluation (See Section 6.5) completed by the Applicant, they may not be required to submit separately their dental hygiene transcripts. The FDHRC™ will notify the Applicant after receiving the Educational Credential Evaluation if transcripts need to be submitted.

³ The FDHRC™ reserves the right, and at their own discretion, to request official copies of documents after receiving the Educational Credential Evaluation regardless of the level of evaluation completed for the Educational Credential Evaluation.

⁴ The FDHRC™ reserves the right, and at their own discretion, to request official copies of documents after receiving the Educational Credential Evaluation regardless of the level of evaluation completed for the Educational Credential Evaluation.

- **IQAS Specialized Assessment:** in obtaining this type of evaluation the Applicant may not be required to provide their Official Transcripts and Diploma to the FDHRC™ directly⁵.

Application forms for the reviews are available on the websites linked above. This document must be sent to the FDHRC™ directly from the official issuing source (i.e. WES, ICES, or IQAS). The FDHRC™ will not accept an original or copy of the document from the Applicant.

6.6. Educational Program Documentation

Appendix B Education Program Information and Document Release Form: The Applicant is required to complete page 1 of [Appendix B](#) giving permission for their post-secondary institution to provide the supporting documentation about their dental hygiene program of study. After completing page 1, the Applicant must have their educational institution complete the rest of [Appendix B](#) and have the educational institution submit all official course syllabi/outlines/course descriptions from the years of study of the Applicant.

The course syllabi/outlines/descriptions must include:

- A program catalogue or a list of each course taken in the dental hygiene program and the weighting factors for each course (total number of hours/hours per week);
- Year the course was offered (i.e. the course descriptions must be from the year(s) the Applicant studied – not the most recent versions).
- Course details, including:
 - A detailed course description;
 - A detailed course content/objectives/learning outcomes/competencies;
 - The number of hours for each course in terms of theory, laboratory, preclinical and clinical hours;
 - A description of practical preclinical/laboratory experiences;
 - A description of practical clinical experiences including location, number of hours, types of direct client care dental hygiene services provided and average number/types of clients/patients treated while a student and applicable clinical reports/evaluation report cards (NOTE that direct client care activities can be in the school dental hygiene clinic, specialty practices, in long-term care facilities, in hospitals, in public health settings, in educational institutions, etc.); and,
 - A description of the methods of evaluation for each course (e.g. by examination, projects, weekly tests).

⁵ The FDHRC™ reserves the right, and at their own discretion, to request official copies of documents after receiving the Educational Credential Evaluation regardless of the level of evaluation completed for the Educational Credential Evaluation.

These documents must be sent to the FDHRC™ directly from the official issuing source (i.e. dental hygiene educational institution of graduation). The FDHRC™ will not accept any educational documents from any other source than the Applicant's dental hygiene educational institution and its representative(s). The FDHRC™ will not accept an original or copy of the documents from the Applicant.

All required documents MUST be sent directly to the FDHRC™ office by mail, courier service or via email. It is recommended that this information be submitted in electronic form even if mailed (i.e. USB key).

Any documents received via email will only be accepted if the originator of the material can be verified without a doubt by the FDHRC™.

IMPORTANT: Documentation must be submitted in the original language of instruction. If not in English or French, the FDHRC™ will send the Applicant a paginated electronic copy of the course documents and it will be the Applicant's responsibility to have it translated by a Certified/Official Translator. The translated document, along with the copy of the original, must be sent directly to the FDHRC™ from the Certified/Official Translator. This can be done through mail or electronically, so long as the FDHRC™ can without a doubt confirm the source of the electronic file.

6.7. Statement re. established dental hygiene program

This is only required for individuals who have graduated from a Non-Accredited Dental Hygiene Program in Canada.

An official statement from a government recognized post-secondary institution that confirms the dental hygiene program is established as a separate school, faculty, division, or department and has been recognized by the appropriate government agency in the province/territory where the program is established.

This document must be submitted directly by the dental hygiene program/post-secondary institution or the government agency. The required document MUST be sent directly to the FDHRC™ office by mail, courier service or via email. Any documents received via email will only be accepted if the originator of the material can be determined without a doubt by the FDHRC™.

6.8. CDAC

This is only required for individuals who have graduated from a Non-Accredited Dental Hygiene Program in Canada.

If a program is in the process of becoming accredited or was given a non-accredited standing from CDAC, the post-secondary institution should include CDAC's recommendations and the institution's response as well as measures taken or to be taken since CDAC's report.

This document must be submitted directly by the dental hygiene program/post-secondary institution. The required document MUST be sent directly to the FDHRC™ office by mail, courier service or via email. Any documents received via email will only be accepted if the originator of the material can be determined without a doubt by the FDHRC™.



6.9. Self-Assessment of Educational Credentials, Work Experience and CE Activities

The self-assessment is meant to assist the Applicant in identifying and demonstrating how their post-secondary studies, previous work experience, and post-graduation Continuing Education opportunities align to the competency requirements for Canadian dental hygienists.

Post-secondary Studies: Once the educational documents (course outlines/program information) have been received by the office, the FDHRC™ will combine the documents (if necessary) and paginate them. A paginated copy of the course/program information will then be sent to the Applicant for use in completing this document.

Continuing Education: If the Applicant attended recognized Continuing Education courses since graduation, the course name and a line or two of what the course covered and how it aligns with the competency requirements for Canadian dental hygienists should be included in this document. For more information on providing proof of CE completion, see section 6.10 and [Appendix E](#).

The self-assessment document ([Appendix D](#)) **MUST** be completed directly by the Applicant. The Applicant cannot request or hire another individual to complete the document for them. The required document should be sent directly by the Applicant to the FDHRC™ office by mail, courier service, or via email.

IMPORTANT: The self-assessment must be completed **AFTER** the educational documents have been received and a paginated copy of the course/program information has been sent to the Applicant from the FDHRC™. If submitted before this, the Applicant will be required to update the information to align with the official paginated copy of the documents sent to them by the FDHRC™.

Tips for Completing Appendix D:

The Applicant must map their program content, CE activities and work experience to the Performance Criteria in the [2021 Entry-to-Practice Canadian Competencies for Dental Hygienists \(EPCCoDH\)](#). The Applicant should use the [EPCCoDH](#) as they complete [Appendix D](#) as it contains many definitions and clarifications. If the Applicant wants to use the same proof for multiple Performance Criteria, they must copy and paste the information in the template provided. See Appendix C for a sample.

6.10. Continuing Education Activities Report

The Applicant is expected to list each Continuing Education activity they have completed since graduating from their dental hygiene studies.

Continuing Education activities can include college/university certificates or diplomas that are not from the Applicant's dental hygiene program, online or in-person courses, published articles/papers, etc.

The Applicant must submit proof of completion of the Continuing Education activities with the [Appendix E](#). This proof can include letters of validation, certificates of completion, etc.



If the Applicant has not completed any Continuing Education post-graduation, the declaration at the top of the document must be signed attesting to this and the document submitted to the FDHRC™.

The document and all proof of completion of activities can be sent directly by the Applicant to the FDHRC™ office by mail, courier service, or via email. The FDHRC™ reserves the right to seek further validation of completion of the Continuing Education activities, should questions arise of the validity of the Continuing Education completed.

6.11. Current and Former Employers Report

The Applicant is expected to list each employer and position in dental hygiene that they have held since graduating from their dental hygiene studies.

If the Applicant has not worked as a dental hygienist post-graduation, the declaration at the top of the document must be signed attesting to this and the document submitted to the FDHRC™.

The document can be sent directly by the Applicant to the FDHRC™ office by mail, courier service, or via email. The FDHRC™ reserves the right to seek further validation of employment history, should questions arise around the validity of the provided information.

6.12. Notarized photograph

One current Notarized and signed, passport-compliant photograph.

A passport-style photograph is one which has a plain background, shows the full face, and with no hats/headwear (exception for religious headwear only). A Notarized photo is certified by a Notary Public, a licensed public officer who serves as an impartial witness to the signing of documents and establishes the authenticity of the signatures and photos for identification.

Candidates also need to sign, in ink, the reverse of the photograph before sending it to the FDHRC™ office. Candidates need to ensure that the photograph is a current likeness of themselves. The photo must have been taken and dated within the last 6 months.

If found equivalent the Notarized photo is used in part to confirm the identity of the Applicant on exam day. Should an Applicant drastically change their appearance between when the photo was taken and when they have been found equivalent and apply to take the NDHCE™, the FDHRC™ will require a new Notarized photograph that is a true representation of how the Applicant will look on the exam day. Additionally, the FDHRC™ reserves the right to request a new Notarized photo if the one on file is more than two years old at the time of examination application.



7. Application Complete – Next Steps

7.1. Decision Communication

One copy of the assessment report result will be issued to the Applicant or their agent. A successful assessment result establishes eligibility for the Applicant to apply to write the NDHCE™ within a period of **three (3) years from the date of approval**.

When an Applicant's assessment of educational credentials and qualifications is deemed equivalent, a letter to the Applicant will outline the process on how to apply for the examination (NDHCE™). The letter will also include the date of the next scheduled examination for which the Applicant is eligible to apply. To apply for the NDHCE™, the Applicant must complete the NDHCE™ application form and pay the appropriate examination fee and applicable taxes.

An Applicant who did not have their educational credentials and qualifications deemed equivalent to those of a graduate of a Canadian Accredited Dental Hygiene Program will NOT be eligible to write the NDHCE™ and CPEDH™. The assessment report sent to the Applicant will outline specific deficiencies and suggest other mechanisms that may be available to pursue eligibility to write the NDHCE™ and the CPEDH™ in the future. Once an Applicant has been notified that their educational credentials and qualifications are not equivalent, the Applicant's assessment of credentials' file is closed. If the Applicant wishes to reactivate the file, a new application, appropriate fees, and proper supporting documentation must be submitted.

Assessment decisions and reasons reports may differ over time as the FDHRC™'s dental hygiene program assessment decisions are based on the most recent Canadian educational standards for the profession.

7.2. NDHCE™

Applicants from Non-Accredited Dental Hygiene Programs who have been granted equivalency must successfully complete the NDHCE™ as the first step prior to registering to practice as a dental hygienist in Canada. Individuals should check with the Regulator in the province in which they wish to register to confirm their additional requirements to practice.

The NDHCE™ tests the level of knowledge, judgment, and skills of Canadian Dental Hygienists that are expected at the entry-to-practice level. The NDHCE™ is constructed in such a way that it respects diversity in terms of culture, provincial/territorial regulations, language, and special needs.

The NDHCE™ administrations are scheduled three (3) times per year in January, May and September. Examinations are administered in most major cities across Canada through Meazure Learning. The NDHCE™ is only be offered in testing centres in Canada. Individuals can learn more about the NDHCE™ on the [FDHRC™ website](#).



7.3. CPEDH™

Applicants from Non-Accredited Dental Hygiene Programs who have been granted equivalency and have passed the National Dental Hygiene Certification Examination™ (NDHCE™), must also successfully complete the Canadian Performance Examination in Dental Hygiene™ (CPEDH™) before they can register to practice in most provinces. Individuals should check with the Regulator in the province in which they wish to register to confirm their requirements to practice.

The CPEDH™ is a practical examination that assesses an Applicant's clinical skills. The purpose of this exam is to ensure that all candidates possess the breadth and depth of clinical skills to safely and effectively enter professional dental hygiene practice in Canada. The CPEDH™ is a two-part performance-based assessment, which will assess the competency of an entry-to-practice dental hygienist's knowledge and/or skills in both a simulated-based setting and an authentic clinical context delivered over two days.

The CPEDH™ is delivered yearly in a central location and as of 2022, is administered by the Federation of Dental Hygiene Regulators of Canada™ (FDHRC™). Individuals can learn more about the CPEDH™ on the [FDHRC™ website](#).

7.4. Reassessment

Any Applicant whose file was found not equivalent can [apply for a reassessment](#) of their file by completing the reassessment application and payment of fees.

To be considered for a reassessment the Applicant must provide additional documentation that was not included in their original application. This new/updated documentation must provide new supporting evidence of their equivalency. This documentation should explicitly address the gaps highlighted in the decision rationale provided by the Committee to the Applicant.

The reassessment is carried out by the same Committee using the same methodology as the original assessment. If an individual applies for a Reassessment of their application but is unable to provide additional or new documentation the application will be cancelled, and the fees refunded minus a non-refundable administration fee.

7.5. Appeals

An equivalency assessment applicant may submit a request for Appeal if: (i) they were found not substantially equivalent by the FDHRC; and (ii) the denial of substantial equivalency was unreasonable in the circumstances or based on an alleged administrative or procedural error in the evaluation process. Please contact the FDHRC office for more information.



APPENDIX G Equivalency Assessment Process Map

