Background

SA Dental Service is a health unit within the Central Adelaide Local Health Network. We provide a range of dental services for eligible children and adults through a variety of clinical settings across the metropolitan and country areas. Some clinics are located in hospitals or community health centres whilst others are located in school grounds or are discrete dental facilities. We also work in partnership with the University of Adelaide to educate and train many of the State’s dental professionals, including dentists and dental therapists.

The Service consists of 2 clinical Divisions –

**Adelaide Dental Hospital** – is a provider of specialist services as well as the centre for undergraduate dental education in South Australia in conjunction with the University of Adelaide.

**Statewide Dental Services** – provides dental services across South Australia with clinics in the metropolitan area and throughout the country areas of South Australia. The Division has two branches:-

- **School Dental Service** – all South Australian children (aged up to 17 years) are eligible for oral health care with the School Dental Service.
- **Community Dental Service** – provides eligible adults with a range of general, emergency and removable prosthetic dental services. Adults (or their adult dependents) with a current welfare recipient card are eligible to receive Community Dental Clinic services.

Dental Assistant positions

Dental Assistants in SA Dental Service are classified under the SA Health “Operational Services” (OPS) stream.

The classification levels for Dental Assistants positions are at the OPS1, OPS2 and OPS3 levels. Within each classification level there are a number of salary increments.

- **OPS 1 & 2** level positions are general DA positions (more responsibility involved with the OPS 2 level positions).
- **OPS Level 3** positions are Senior Dental Assistant roles which have responsibility for staff supervision and running of clinics in the organisation in addition to general responsibilities.

The starting classification and increment level for a newly qualified Dental Assistant is at the OPS1-05 increment level.

The relevant increment for other candidates is determined having regard to the classification level of the position and the experience/skills of the dental assistant.
Recruitment

SA Dental Service recruits experienced Dental Assistants two to three times a year depending on staffing requirements for the DA Candidate pool and the DA casual Pool.

The recruitment process aims to find suitable candidates for permanent and contract DA roles at the OPS1 and OPS2 level for the DA Candidate Pool as well as candidates interested in casual DA work.

Refer to the information on page 5 for information on the SA Health “Job Alert” system to keep updated on the release of any Dental Assistant adverts.

The Recruitment Process

Step 1 : Application

All vacancies are advertised on the SA Health Careers website [www.health.sa.gov.au/careers](http://www.health.sa.gov.au/careers). Applications for SA Dental Service Dental Assistant positions can only be completed and lodged electronically through this website when the application period is open; therefore you will need to have email and internet access.

The electronic application form in the advert requires applicants to include information regarding education, employment and to provide the names and contact details (during business hours please) of 3 references. You will also be required to attach a current resume to your application.

Step 2 : Reference Checks

All applicants will be required to provide at least one reference from a Dental Professional in Australia who the applicant has worked with as a Dental Assistant. If an applicant has worked previously for SA Dental Service, it is expected the applicant will supply the details of a SA Dental Service Manager or Senior Dental Assistant to be contacted for a reference. Reference checks will be utilised to shortlist applicants before appointments are offered for written and practical testing.

Step 3 : Written and Practical testing

All applicants who pass the reference check stage will be required to participate in Written and Practical Test and need to achieve a pass mark of 70% to be offered an interview for the DA Candidate Pools.

Step 4 : Interviews

Candidates are invited to participate in an interview undertaken by the DA Selection Panel. Interviews can be undertaken in person or via phone where it is difficult for a candidate to attend in person.

Step 5 : Outcome

- Successful – included in the candidate and/or casual pool
- Unsuccessful – candidates are welcome to reapply in the next selection process
Outline of the Dental Assistant Candidate Pool

SA Dental Service Dental Assistant Candidate Pool

- SA Dental uses the Dental Assisting Candidate Pool to fill vacancies across the organisation for temporary and ongoing OPS 1 and OPS 2 Dental Assistant positions.
- As staffing in any organisation is rarely static, vacancies can arise at any time and therefore it is useful to have a pool of candidates to directly approach who have been selected as suitable (via merit based selection process) to fill vacant positions.
- This is more efficient than having to conduct a separate selection process each time a vacancy occurs.
- Candidates are considered for suitability for OPS1 level or OPS2 level roles and are ranked in the selection process by the panel according to their interview scores and reference checks for the DA Candidate Pool.
- Candidates are advised of the outcome of the selection process at the conclusion of the selection process.
- If successful their details are included in the DA Candidate pool for 12 months
- When DA vacancies occur, the manager of the area will contact the highest ranked candidate available on the relevant OPS classification list to discuss if they are interested in the role.
- Candidates who are not interested in the position remain on the candidate pool for any further vacancies.
- If a Dental Assistant gains a permanent DA position with SA Dental Service their details are removed from the DA Candidate pool.
- Where Dental Assistants gain a temporary position their details are retained on the DA Candidate pool listing for the 12 month period
- There is no guarantee an OPS 1 or OPS2 Dental Assistant role will be offered to candidates in the pool during the 12 month period.
- After 12 months candidates in the pool will be invited to reapply in order to be considered for future permanent or temporary roles.

Outline of the Casual Dental Assistant Pool

SA Dental Service Casual Dental Assistant Pool

- Casual Dental Assistants are utilised on a sessional basis in all SA Dental Service clinics.
- Casual Dental Assistants nominate days which they are available to work and the SA Dental Service Clinics which they would like to work in.
- The information is collated and forwarded to SA Dental Service Managers who communicate directly with the Casual Dental Assistants to arrange casual work sessions.
- Casual Dental Assistants are paid the usual OPS 1 level pay rate plus 24% in lieu of annual leave and sick leave entitlements.
- For candidates who are not available or interested in a casual session / day they remain in the pool for any further opportunities.
- Every 3-4 months an update form is sent out to all casual dental assistants listed to make sure details are up to date.
- There is no guarantee of Casual Dental Assistant sessions being offered to Casual Dental Assistants.
Pre-employment

Successful applicants will be sent the necessary documentation to complete the two pre-employment screening checks listed below:

- **Health and Immune State review** – it is a requirement to provide the SA Dental Service Staff Health Nurse with documented evidence of immunisations and blood test results for immunity to Hepatitis B as well as having a consultation with the Staff Health Nurse. Immunization boosters may be required to complete the Pre-employment Health and Immune State review and gain a clearance to work with SA Dental Service.

- **DCSI Screening Unit check** – for Child-related Employment Screening. National Police Checks are not sufficient to gain employment with SA Dental Service.

If you are not given clearance in either of these mandatory checks, your application will be deemed unsuccessful.

Once clearances have been confirmed, successful applicants will be added to the DA Candidate and / or DA Casual Pools.

When a candidate is offered and accepts a position, arrangements are made for Induction, site orientations and training in Titanium (the SA Dental Service charting, recording and appointing system)

Candidates can apply for any advertised SA Dental Service Dental Assistant promotional positions (generally OPS 2 or OPS 3 level) at any time whilst they are in the Candidate Pool.

Recommended action

To keep updated on DA Selection processes we recommend registering for a “Job Alert” on the SA Health Careers website.

- When the page is loaded, select the “Job Alert” button on the left hand side.
- Enter your email address
- Keywords : Dental Assistant
- Tick the following items to ensure that all dental advertisements are drawn to your attention :
  - Categories : Select All
  - Locations : Select All
  - Work Type : Select All

The job alert will last 90 days and the details can be updated if required.

As positions are advertised, registered users will be sent an email to your nominated email address which will then provide information of the positions available and will usually provide a link to the position’s online application form.

For more information

Attraction & Retention Unit
SA Dental Service
Roma Mitchell House 136 North Terrace Adelaide 5000
GPO Box 864 Adelaide 5001
Telephone: 7117 0119
HealthSADSAttraction&Retention@sa.gov.au

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