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## DENTAL HYGIENE – General Information

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Dental Hygiene is an Associate in Applied Science Degree program offered on the Grand Strand Campus of Horry-Georgetown Technical College. The program is five (5) semesters in length with classes and clinicals being held during the day and students are required to attend class year-round, including summer, once accepted into program.

A dental hygienist is the only other licensed professional in the dental office besides the dentist. In the corporate world, dental hygienists can work as sales representatives, product researchers, and corporate educators.

In the public health domain, dental hygienists provide care to those who otherwise would not have access to dental care; such as Head Start programs, local health departments, school sealant programs, or rural or inner-city community clinics. As a researcher, a dental hygienist can work with colleges and universities and dental companies conducting surveys and analyzing results, as well as testing new products and procedures. Additional education, such as a bachelors or master's degree may be required for some of the career pathways; however, an associate degree will allow you to work as a clinician in many different venues.

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## DENTAL HYGIENE – College Admission Requirements

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To be admitted into the Dental Hygiene program a prospective student must complete the following College Admission requirements:

- Submit HGTC application;
- Pay the \$30 application fee;
- Submit official high school with graduation date or copy of GED;
- Submit official college transcripts of any other college(s) attended;
- Sign and Submit the Additional Admission/Placement Requirements Affidavit.

Please Note: Student should NOT complete the Background Check or Drug Screen process until after receiving notification of when to do so until being accepted into the program.

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## DENTAL HYGIENE – Program Admission Requirements

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Admission into the Dental Hygiene AAS program is based on weighted criteria. The 20 students with the highest number of points are accepted each year. The number of points needed for selection will vary each year. Acceptance depends on your points versus the points of the other applicants at the time therefore admissible points may change each review period. See the Associate Degree Dental Hygiene Program Admission Application for a complete breakdown of criteria and points.

To be considered for admissions into the Dental Hygiene Program a student must complete the following:

- Complete the four (4) prerequisite courses: ENG 101, MAT 101, BIO 210 (5 year time limit) and CHM 105 or CHM 110 with a grade of C or higher and within the departmental required time limits
- Achieve Required Placement Test Scores or Degree
- Achieve a 2.75 GPA or higher on all prerequisite/core courses completed.
- Review the Dental Hygiene information in this guide and click the link on the last page to submit name and information.
- Complete fifteen (15) hours of observations in a private dental office and submit completed observation form to the Admissions office on any campus or by fax to 843-349-7501.
- Submit completed program admission application to the Admissions Office on any campus by the application deadline of **May 15**.

Students have the following options for increasing their points for Program Admission:

- Apply for and obtain residency status.  
Go to <http://www.hgtc.edu/admissions/residency.html> for residency application.  
Obtain a South Carolina driver's license and car registration. Read application and instructions carefully.
- Apply with the best grades possible. Always check with financial aid before retaking any course.

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## DENTAL HYGIENE – Requirements After Acceptance to Program

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Once the College has notified you have been accepted into the program the following items must be completed in a timely manner. Failure to complete these requirements within the designated

time frame will prohibit your progression into the program. These are out of pocket expenses not covered by financial aid.

- Submit \$500.00 deposit to reserve your seat.
- Submit Certified Background Check and Drug Screening. Cost is \$112. The return of an unfavorable CBS and/or UDS may result in a student being removed from the desired program. Clinical sites/facilities determine applicant's eligibility to participate in clinical studies based on their policies.  
**NOTE:** If you complete the background check before being instructed to do so you will have to redo the process with an additional cost of \$112.
- The Certified Background Check and Drug Screening with payment of \$112 is required each semester while in the program.
- Complete a Health Physical and submit proof of required immunizations. Cost varies.
- Show proof of current Health Care Providers CPR.
- Supplies and fees: Students are responsible for items above and beyond tuition, such as uniforms, clinical supplies, etc. (To see a complete list of program costs on the program web page under Student Resources. These figures are approximations and additional expenses may be incurred.)

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## DENTAL HYGIENE – Licensure to Practice

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All dental hygienists in the United States must pass two licensing exams to practice.

- National Board Dental Hygiene Exam
  - 350 question multiple-choice exam
  - Covers all courses from general sciences (A&P and Micro)
  - Fully computerized
  - Given at the Pearson Professional Testing Centers located in Charleston, Columbia or Wilmington, NC
  - Must pass with a 75% or higher
  - Every dental hygiene student in the country takes this exam
  - This exam will be taken during your last semester or right after graduation
- Clinical Regional or State Licensing Exam
  - This exam is offered at HGTC through CDCA.
  - Every candidate must secure a patient that meets the state requirements.
  - The candidate will clean the patient's teeth and be graded by the dental examiners.
  - Must make a 75% or higher to pass.
  - The exam is usually scheduled the end of May each year.

After successfully passing the National Board and the Clinical Licensing exams, the graduate will then apply for Regional or State licensure.

- This license fee is currently \$150
- A dental hygiene license also requires a valid social security number.

Please note the following statement from the South Carolina Board of Dentistry:

According to the South Carolina State Board of Dentistry Rules and Regulations #40-15-190, *"any person convicted of a felony or other crime involving moral turpitude or controlled substance may not be granted a license to practice dental hygiene in the State of South Carolina even if the dental hygiene curriculum is successfully completed."*

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## DENTAL HYGIENE – Healthcare Worker Risks

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As dental hygienists work with very sharp instruments and needles, there is always a risk of a needle/instrument stick. This could place the student at risk for HIV and/or Hepatitis C as there are no vaccines for these diseases.

There is also a risk for Hepatitis B; however, the student is required to take the Hepatitis B vaccination series to be protected against this disease. If the student does not wish to take this series, the student **MUST** sign a Declination Form which will be kept in the student's personal file in the Program Director's office. (When the student declines the vaccination series, he/she should also realize if the student was to do a clinical rotation outside of the HGTC Dental Hygiene Clinic, the dental facility may not allow the student to rotate through their clinical setting.)

Throughout the program, each student will receive appropriate education on the Bloodborne Standards and Infection Control (per OSHA and CDC guidelines) utilized in the treatment of dental patients. The student will be tested on this material and **MUST** demonstrate classroom/laboratory and clinical competency prior to patient treatment.

After you have read the above information and program requirements, you must click this [LINK](#) and enter your name, email address, student ID or birthdate and program in order to complete this admission's requirement.

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## PROGRAM CONTACT

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For questions contact Michelle Meeker at 843-839-1091 or michelle.meeker@hgtc.edu.

Horry-Georgetown Technical College reserves the right to change program admission requirements at any time. You will be required to adhere to any changes made at the time you submit your application