

Becoming a dentist: characteristics, experiences and
performance of students in the early years of the Adelaide
dental course



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List of achievements and professional development activities – Dimitra Lekkas
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Research and Teaching grants

- Lekkas D, Townsend GC, Winning TA and Mullins G (2001) Australian and Dental Research Foundation (ADRF). *Progress of students through a PBL dental course* (\$4,000).
- Lekkas D (2002) School of Dentistry, The University of Adelaide. Internal Research Grant. *Progress of students through the Adelaide BDS course* (\$4,000).
- Lekkas D (2002) Colgate International Association of Dental Research (IADR). Post-graduate student travel award (Reimbursement for conference cost and air-fares).
- Lekkas D, Winning T, Townsend G, Kaidonis J, Ranjitkar S (2003-04) Learning and Teaching Development Grant, The University of Adelaide. *Professional development for post-graduates in their role as clinic teachers* (\$22,226).
- Winning T, Suksudaj N, Lekkas D, Townsend G and Kaidonis J (2006) School of Dentistry, The University of Adelaide. Internal Research Grant. *Development of clinical skills in dental students* (\$3,000).
- Winning T, Lekkas D and Townsend G (2006) School of Dentistry, The University of Adelaide. Internal Research Grant (Top-up funding). *Improving clinical performance in undergraduate dental students by supporting them to become effective self-assessors* (\$3,452).
- Winning T, Lekkas D and Townsend G (2006) Australian and Dental Research Foundation (ADRF). *Improving clinical performance in undergraduate dental students by supporting them to become effective self-assessors* (\$5,000).
- Winning T, Suksudaj N, Lekkas D, Townsend G and Kaidonis J (2007) Australian and Dental Research Foundation (ADRF). *The development of psychomotor skills in dental students* (\$12,499).
- Suksudaj N, Winning T, Lekkas D, Townsend G and Kaidonis J (2008) Education Research Group Grant (IADR). *Psychomotor skills development in preclinical dental students* (\$US1,000).
- Winning T, Suksudaj N, Lekkas D, Townsend G and Kaidonis J (2007) Australian and Dental Research Foundation (ADRF). *Factors influencing dental students' learning of psychomotor skills* (\$8,500).

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- Winning T, Lekkas D and Townsend G (2007) Developing clinical self-assessment skills in first-year dental students. From the *REAP International Online Conference on Assessment Design*. http://www.reap.ac.uk/reap07/Portals/2/CSL/t2%20-%20great%20designs%20for%20assessment/raising%20students%20meta-cognition/Developing_clinical_self_assessment_skills_in_1st_year_dental.pdf
- Winning T, Lekkas D and Townsend G (2007) Supporting undergraduate dental students to become effective self-assessors in clinic. In: *Enhancing Higher Education, Theory and Scholarship*. Proceedings of the 30th Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERSDA) Annual conference 8-11 July, Adelaide, South Australia p245.
- Winning T, Needleman M, Rohlin M, Carrassi A, Chadwick B, Eaton K, Hardwick K, Ivancakova R, Jallaludin RL, Johnsen D, Kim J-G, Lekkas D, Li D, Onisei D, Pissiotis A, Reynolds P, Tonni I, Vanobbergen J, Vassileva R, Virtanen J, Wesselink P and Wilson N (2008) Evidence-based care and the curriculum. *European Journal of Dental Education* 12 (Suppl 1): 48-63.
- Redwood C, Winning T, Lekkas D and Townsend (2009) Assisting the development of clinical self-assessment skills of first year dental students. *European Journal of Dental Education* (in press).

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- Lekkas D, Townsend G, Winning T and Mullins G (2002) Experiences of dental students undertaking a hybrid PBL course. *Journal of Dental Research* 82 (Spec Issue C):C-78.

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 - Winning T, Lekkas D, Redwood C and Townsend G (2009) Improving clinical assessment: Evaluating student's perceptions, knowledge and ability to identify and apply clinical criteria. In: *Feedback and flexible learning of the 4th Education Research Group of Adelaide (ERGA)*, Adelaide, The University of Adelaide, 24-25 September, p72.

Conference/workshop presentations by Dimitra Lekkas

- 3rd Asia Pacific Conference on Problem-based learning (PROBLARC) (2001) *Evaluation, staff development, curriculum planning and student learning*. Yeppoon, Queensland, Australia, 9-12 December. Oral presentation, *Experiences of dental students undertaking a hybrid PBL course*.
- International Association for Dental Research (IADR) Australian and New Zealand Division 42nd Annual Scientific Meeting (2002): Science Meets Clinic, Sydney, Australia, September. Poster presentation, *Experiences of dental students undertaking a hybrid PBL course*.
- 3rd International Symposium on Problem-based learning in Dental Education (2003). Victor Harbour, South Australia, 19-23 January. Poster presentation, *Initial report of dental students' approaches to learning after 1 and 3 years of a hybrid PBL program*.
- International Association for Dental Research (IADR) Australian and New Zealand Division 43rd Annual Scientific Meeting (2003): From benchtop to community, Melbourne, Australia, September. Oral presentation, *Experiences of students in a hybrid PBL course: the second year challenge*.
- Colgate Australia Clinical Research Centre Research Day (2004), School of Dentistry, The University of Adelaide, 20 August. Oral presentation, *What determines academic success in the early years of dentistry? A preliminary analysis*.

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- The Association for Health Professional Education (ANZAME) Annual Conference (2004) Adelaide South Australia, 24-27 June. Poster presentation, *What determines academic success in the early years of dentistry?*
 - Learning and Teaching Development Unit Seminar Series, Current Issues in Higher Education (2004) The University of Adelaide, 17 August. Oral presentation with T Winning and F Greenwood, *Professional development for postgraduate students in their role as clinic teachers: using clinical scenarios in a tutor development program.*
 - The 84th General Session and Exhibition of the International Association for Dental Research (2006) Brisbane, Australia 27 June-1 July. Poster presentation, *Student progression following changes to a curriculum and admission process.*
 - Colgate Australia Research Day (2006) School of Dentistry, The University of Adelaide, 18 August. Poster with oral presentation, *Adelaide dental students: factors associated with progress and success in the early years.*
 - 'Say it write' Tri-symposium (2006) The University of Adelaide, Flinders University and the University of South Australia. Attendance and participation in 3 x workshops including writing a 5000 word draft paper for publication and oral presentation. *A new dental curriculum and admission process: are student characteristics and performance affected?*

Other professional development activities (as a researcher)

- Co-supervision of postgraduate students/undergraduate student research projects
 - Undergraduate dental education student vacation research project: Keith Lew (2002-03) *Estimation of patients' dental developmental age through the analysis of radiographic images: development of an online teaching resources* (Winning T, and Lekkas D).
 - Honours candidate: Anthony Puljich (2003-06) *Supporting student learning of alginate impression taking and study cast construction* (Winning T and Lekkas D). (incomplete).
 - 5th year undergraduate selective project: Julie Vo and Alice Tsang (2006) *Investigation of the effectiveness of implementation of DentSim teaching lessons* (D Lekkas).
 - 5th year undergraduate selective project: Ying Guo (2007) *Student Teaching: Observation & Analysis of Laboratory Tutoring process in DCP II BDS* (D Lekkas).

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- Honours: Christopher Redwood (2007-08) *Assisting the development of clinical self-assessment skills of first-year dental students* (Winning T and Lekkas D). (Awarded second class honours).
 - PhD candidate: Nattira Suksudaj (2006-to current) *Psychomotor skill development in preclinical dental students* (Winning T, Lekkas D, Townsend G and Kaidonis J).
 - 5th year undergraduate selective project: Hannah Prouse (2009) *Characteristics of effective DCP tutors: perceptions of students and tutors* (D Lekkas).

 - Conference/workshop attendance
 - 30th Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australia (HERDSA) Annual Conference (2007) *Enhancing Higher Education, Theory and Scholarship*, Adelaide, 8-11 July.
 - 9th Pacific Rim First Year in Higher Education conference (2006) *Engaging students*, Gold Coast, 12-14 July.
 - Education Research Group of Adelaide: The University of Adelaide (2006) *Building higher education that works*, Adelaide, 21 September.
 - University of Adelaide Graduate Centre: Research education programs. Attendance to two workshops (2006). 'What are examiners looking for when they assess a research thesis?' 24 May and 'Producing a thesis in the sciences' 3 October.
 - Journal review sessions conducted by Craniofacial and Biology Research Group and Dental Education Research Group, School of Dentistry, The University of Adelaide (2000-2006).

Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Bridging course	Pathway for overseas qualified dentists to gain a dental degree that allows registration to practice in Australia. The Adelaide School of Dentistry bridging course was a two-year course which articulated with the fourth and fifth year Adelaide Bachelor of Dental Surgery course.
Bridging student	An overseas qualified dentist who was admitted to the Adelaide School of Dentistry bridging course.
Conventional curricula (traditional)	Discipline-based or discipline-organised dental or medical curricula that are often divided into preclinical and clinical subjects or training periods.
Course	In this thesis, the term 'course' is used to refer to the entire five-year Adelaide dental course. 'Program' may also be an alternative term.
Deferred-entry student	Someone who has taken time out from an academic year but not due to academic failure. These students usually return to continue their dental studies.
International (overseas) student	For the purpose of the current study international students were those who were not Australian permanent residents. This includes students who were residents of New Zealand. International (excluding New Zealand residents) were admitted to the Adelaide dental course via the international student admission process.
Government secondary school	An Australian government/tax-payer funded secondary education institution.
Later-year entry student	Someone who has commenced a dental course in another Australian dental school and transferred to the Adelaide School of entry, most often in a year level other than first year.
Local/domestic/home student	For the purpose of the current study local students were those who were Australian permanent residents.
MATE student	Adelaide dental students who were admitted via the Malaysian-Australia Tertiary Education Scheme. These students were not admitted via the multifaceted admission process as per students for entry during 1998-2001.
Metropolitan/urban student/residence	An Australian tertiary student who comes from an area that has been determined a metropolitan/urban location based on postcode of home residence.
Non-government secondary (independent) school	An Australian secondary education institution that is predominantly funded by private school fees with some government funding.
Non-school leaver	A student who has completed or partly completed a previous tertiary Bachelor degree or higher level course of study at an Australian or overseas university.

Term	Definition
Repeating student	Student who has failed the year due to academic reasons and had to repeat the same year.
Residence/place of residence	The place at which a tertiary student has been or is residing. Two categories of residence are to be distinguished: Semester/term residence – the residence in which a tertiary student lives during the semester or term. This may not be the same as the student's permanent home address. Permanent home address – the place a student regards as being their permanent home residence. This may not be the same as the student's semester/term home address.
Rural student/residence	An Australian tertiary student who comes from an area that has been determined a rural location based on postcode of home residence.
School leaver	A student who has not commenced, completed or partly completed a previous tertiary Bachelor degree or higher level course of study at an Australian or overseas university.
Soup kitchen	A centre or place that offers meals, at no cost or a subsidised rate. Such activities are organised usually by charities or church groups.
Subject	In this thesis, the term 'subject' is used to refer to a unit of study that may run for a length of one semester or an entire academic year. 'Course' may also be used as an alternative term.
Swot vac	Study ('vacation') period prior to an examination period.
Tertiary Entrance Rank (TER)	The measure/score used by Australian tertiary institutions for admission purposes. Tertiary entrance scores are equivalent in all states of Australia (equivalent except for Queensland). The scores are made equivalent by procedures developed by the Australian Tertiary Admission system taskforce which developed the Equivalent National Tertiary Entrance Rank (ENTER) scores. Before the ENTER was developed it was difficult to judge performance of interstate applicants. The measure ranges from zero to 99.95. In South Australia the measure is referred to as Tertiary Entrance Rank (TER). For the purpose of this study this nomenclature is used to refer to previous academic achievement of Australian school leavers (Marks et al. 2001).
Transfer student	Student who commenced a dental course in another Australian dental school and has been admitted to an appropriate year level, as determined by the Adelaide School of Dentistry, Admissions committee. Places for such students are limited.
