

Dental Hygiene Candidate's Questionnaire (CQ)

The CQ started in 1996 at the School of Dental Hygiene at Dalhousie University and in 2002 at VCC. Results of recent studies suggest that testing prior knowledge of the profession and the program on the CQ influences students' performance levels positively in the first year of the program. In their first year, among students with high GPA, those with medium or high CQ perform significantly better than those with low CQ.¹

The CQ also assesses writing abilities to first year university level on one question

Five trained and experienced Dental Hygiene educators score the questionnaires. The assessors do not know your academic or work background. Only your ID number appears at the top of the page. If CQ assessors even suspect they know who you are they must remove themselves from the scoring of your questionnaire.

Answers are norm-referenced: The questions remain the same or similar every year because the answers are norm referenced. The assessors read all the responses for the question they will score before assigning a grade to it. This means that assessors determine what criteria are for the **ideal answer** based upon the best answer this year.

All questionnaires are taken apart and divided among the five assessors. One assessor grades all of one question in isolation from the others. Assessors do not get together after grading and review the final score. The CQ is then totalled out of 25.

- **Below average answer scores 1:** Meets below an average number of criteria for the ideal answer.
- **Average answer scores 3:** Meets an average number of criteria for the ideal answer.
- **Above average answer scores 5:** Meets an above average number of criteria for the ideal answer.

Questionnaires are not re-scored. If an assessor were to re-score even one questionnaire to include different criteria then all questionnaires would have to be re-scored and the list would have to be re-ranked. This is not a valid or a fair way to proceed. Final scores are carefully checked for quality assurance.

- The highest CQ score possible is 25 added to the highest possible GPA of 43.3
- The highest total score possible is 68.3
- The top applicants are offered a seat in the Dental Hygiene program (minus up to five UBC Faculty of Dentistry Direct Entry reserved seats and possible VCC re-entry students).
- Each year there are different applicants so memorizing rankings and scores from this year does not inform future CQ performance.

¹ Mitchell TL, Dunham DW & Murphy HJ. Candidate's Questionnaire: An Alternative to an Admissions Interview for Applicants to a Dental Hygiene Program; CJDH 2006 40 (2) 57-67.

Dental Hygiene FAQs Candidate's Questionnaire

Competitive Selection: Dental hygiene has a competitive selection admissions process. You will only be called if your place on the ranked list changes and you are accepted into one of the programs. You will be notified by phone if offered a seat.

Confidentiality: All ranked lists, names and status of all Dental Hygiene applicants are kept in the admissions area and maintained in strict confidentiality.

Counsellors will tell you the minimal grade point average and CQ score that was accepted into the VCC Dental Hygiene program that year and will tell you your score.

1. Applicants may **not** see the **criteria** that were included in scoring to maintain the fairness of the questionnaire.
2. Applicants may **not** review or discuss the **questions** with counsellors or advisors.
3. Applicants may **not** see the ranked list (with or without names) that contains the scores or the ranking placement of others.
4. VCC Admissions policy is at: http://www.vcc.ca/deptUploads/policies/D_03_06.pdf

Frequently asked questions

1. How can I improve my score on the CQ if I do not know the ideal answer?

Answer: Because the CQ is looking for current knowledge of the dental hygiene profession there is no ideal answer. There are ways to improve your knowledge of the dental hygiene profession. One is to attend one of the three Dental Hygiene information sessions held each year in October, January and April. Another is to read library books or websites on the profession of dental hygiene. A third is to either interview or job shadow a registered dental hygienist in your community.

2. Why doesn't the VCC Dental Hygiene Department just have a wait list like some of the other programs?

Answer: The VCC Dental Hygiene program gets over 150 qualified applicants a year. It is only funded for 22 in the full time program and 16 in the Dental Hygiene Access Program for CDAs (DHAC). Your Grade Point average in the first year university studies and your CQ scores are related to completion of the program. Dental Hygiene has a **competitive selective admissions process** that is the fairest process to assure that the top students are accepted in to the program each year and successfully graduate.

3. I think I did very well on the questionnaire and yet I received a low mark.

Answer: All CQ assessors are experienced dental hygiene educators with many years of experience. If you received a low mark it is because your answer was below average for that year and did not contain as many of the ideal criteria as the persons with whom you were competing. You will need to research and understand the Profession of Dental Hygiene more effectively if you choose to score higher if you re-apply.

Thank you for your interest in the
VCC Dental Hygiene Program