



Dentist- Professional Qualifications Requirements

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Definitions:

Authority: National Health Regulatory Authority.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD): A range of learning activities through which healthcare professionals maintain and develop their knowledge and skills throughout their career to ensure that they retain their capacity to practice safely, effectively and legally within their evolving scope of practice. CPD is also referred to as Continuing Medical Education (CME).

Credentialing: A process whereby specific licensing title is assigned to a healthcare professional based on recognized and accredited qualifications, training, experience and current practice.

Experience: Hands on clinical experience gained by a licensed healthcare professional during a salaried employment/contractual period and it excludes volunteer jobs, observer-ship, or clinical attachment.

Fitness to practice: A status where the healthcare professional is able to consistently demonstrate ability to practice without any impediments i.e. physical or others.

Discontinuity of Practice: A defined period of discontinuation of clinical experience/ practice.

Certificate of Good Standing (CGS): A certificate showing evidence that the healthcare professional is competent to practice the profession, has not been found guilty of unprofessional conduct, and that there are no pending or previous disciplinary orders or criminal proceedings against the healthcare professional.

Healthcare Profession: A field of healthcare recognized by the Authority.

Healthcare Professional: A person who by education, training, certification and licensure is qualified to provide healthcare services.

Internship: A period of supervised structured clinical practice pursued by graduates of healthcare programs to consolidate the knowledge & skill gained during their recognized college study provided the internship is done in a university affiliated/ accredited educational Hospital/ Center.

License: A permission granted by the authority to practice a healthcare profession.

Licensing: A process of granting a legally protected professional title by the authority.

Licensure Examination: Licensure is a process every dentist must go through at least once during his/her professional life to practice dentistry.

Primary Source Verification: A process of validating documents required for licensure from the issuing organization.

Qualification: An educational evidence granted by universities, colleges, academic institutes or schools that are nationally accredited or formally recognized.

Re-Categorization: The process of application and assessment for the issuing of a license from one license category to a higher category, or from one specialization to another. This is usually following assessment by a NHRA dental advisory committee.

Tier: A term used to indicate a category of post graduate qualifications for physicians and dentists based on the level and the presence of the following:

- Structure of the academic program
- Training governance
- Training curriculum **when needed**
- Entry level examination
- Defined program competency framework
- Competency based assessment during training
- Hands-on training and independent practice
- Progression of responsibility during training and measurable outcomes at each level
- Final certifying exam
- Independence to practice post qualification
- Requirement to maintain the licensing/ qualification

Acronyms:

BDLE: Bahrain Dental Licensure Examination

BLS: Basic Life Support

BDS: Bachelor of Dental Surgery

CGS: Certificate of Good Standing

CPD: Continuing Professional Development

GDP: General Dental Practitioner

HEC: Higher Education Council

MOE: Ministry of Education

NHRA: National Health Regulatory Authority

NSE: NHRA Specialist Examination

PQR: Professional Qualification Requirements

PhD: Doctor of philosophy

SCH: Supreme Council of Health

Preface:

The Supreme Council of Health (SCH) in the Kingdom of Bahrain is pleased to present the revised dentists PQR. The first dentists PQR was published on March 17th, 2017 as the Healthcare Professional Licensing Standards: Dentists. This 2021 revision was necessary to keep up with global changes and progressions in dental healthcare, to ensure the quality of services provided for the public in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

This document applies to all dental healthcare facilities both in the governmental and in the private sectors. It is to standardize assessment of documents submitted by applicants within their geographical jurisdiction to ensure safe and competent delivery of services. Moreover, it places an emphasis on educational standards, clinical experience, and licensure requirements for healthcare professionals to be licensed to practice safely in the Kingdom of Bahrain and in accordance with Bahrain laws and benchmarked international best practices.

The SCH would like to acknowledge the efforts of the Dental Advisory Committee members who have taken the time to revise the whole document and update it and would like to thank them for their dedicated efforts and assistance.

1. Licensure General Requirements

- All applicants must fulfill all the following requirements in order to qualify for licensure
- Non-Bahraini dentist applying for a license must be no more than 65 years of age – Certain cases may be exempted by the SCH.

1.1 Educational Qualifications

- Academic qualifications must be nationally accredited by MOE/HEC.
- Qualifications must be issued by institutions/ colleges recognized in home country.
- Dental Schools should be listed in the ‘World Directory of Medical / Dental Schools’.
- At the entry level, minimum qualification requirement is high school certificate as per country specific education.
- Professional Qualifications are evaluated in accordance to the following criteria:
 - The country and institution from which the qualification was awarded.
 - The level of national categorization of the qualification.
 - The duration and content of study, and the presence of clinical practice/ practical training.
 - Qualifications acquired through honorary nature, correspondence or distance learning are not counted towards the PQR.
- Qualifications not mentioned in this document may be evaluated and reviewed by NHRA which may grant the applicant with the appropriate title.

- Specialty certificates will be accepted with the following conditions and respective tier allocation:
 - Must be obtained after a full-time structured clinical residency program of minimum **three (3) years** course duration.
 - Clinical Master degree of minimum two (2) years of full-time course duration.
 - Clinical PhD of minimum three (3) years of full-time course duration.
 - Holders of these qualifications must provide proof that at least 70-75% of the program is delivered as supervised clinical training
- All Tier 1 and 2 qualifications are exempted from NHRA Specialist Examination.
- All Tier 3 qualifications must pass NHRA Specialist Examination.
- Non-Bahraini's must fulfill all the required post-qualification experience prior to applying for a license in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

1.2 Professional Experience

1.2.1: Internship

- All Dentists are required to successfully complete **12 months internship** post- graduation.

1.2.2: Experience:

- The applicant's experience must be relevant to the category applied for, and must have been accomplished in an appropriate setting licensed by the professional regulatory and licensing authority in the country of practice.
- Bahraini nationals, new graduates are exempted from experience requirements for the basic entry level.
- All other applicants are required to fulfill experience as per their relevant titles according to the PQR

1.3 Professional License and Good Standing Status

- The applicant must be registered and have a valid professional license to practice, or registration from home country and/or country of last employment.
- The applicant must provide evidence of meeting the minimum required experiences for the applied title.
- Certificate of Good Standing (CGS) must meet the following requirements:
 - Valid and not older than **six (6) months** at the time of application for licensure
 - Issued by the professional regulatory and licensing authority in the country(s) of last employment.
- NHRA may request more evidence or conduct investigations if deemed necessary to prove the status of good conduct of the healthcare professional.
- The applicant must declare that he/she has never been convicted with any legal cases, medical malpractice during his/her practice of the healthcare profession or he/she is currently under investigation.

1.4 Primary Source Verification

- The documents required for licensing shall be verified directly from the original or primary source
- These documents include but not limited to: educational qualification(s), experience certificate(s), professional license(s) and/or any other documents deemed necessary by NHRA.

1.5 Bahrain Dental Licensure examination (BDLE)

- Dentists are required to pass NHRA's BLE in order to obtain the professional license in the Kingdom of Bahrain
- Dentist should provide proof of successful completion of their internship post- graduation prior to BDLE.

BDLE Exemption Policy

Only Bahraini or GCC nationals who hold a valid GCC License will be exempted from the licensure examination

BDLE Attempts

Dentist have a total of six examination attempts provided the following conditions are adhered to:

- Each Dentist may attempt the examination four consecutive times provided the attempts are done within a maximum of three years from the date of the first attempt.
- If the Dentist does not pass the exam after the fourth attempt, he/she is required to go through a period of training in a licensed Facility for a minimum of six months.
- After proof of completion of training, two more consecutive exam attempts may be permitted provided that the attempts are within two years from the date of completion of training.

1.6 NHRA Specialist Examination (NSE):

- All Tier 3 qualification holders must pass an NHRA specialist examination.
- The NSE examination is provided either electronically or by other means including but not limited to written exams, short cases, or interviews.
- Bahraini Dentists applying for a specialist license but who have not completed the required years of experience post-qualification will be required to pass the specialty examination, however they will be not granted specialist license until they complete the required years of experience under supervision of consultant as per this PQR.
- Non Bahraini Dentist applying for specialist license should complete the required years of experience post qualification to attempt the specialist examination.

NSE Attempts:

Dentist have a total of six examination attempts provided the following conditions are adhered to:

1. Each Dentist may attempt the examination four consecutive times provided the attempts are done within a maximum of three years from the date of the first attempt.
2. If the Dentist does not pass the exam after the fourth attempt, he/she is required to go through a period of training in a licensed Health Facility for a minimum of six months.
3. The training should cover the field of specialty only under supervision of a consultant of the same specialty.
4. After proof of completion of training, two more consecutive exam attempts may be permitted provided that the attempts are within two years from the date of completion of training.
5. Candidates may apply for the NSE directly after obtaining their qualification.
6. Specialist or consultant licenses will not be granted except after completion of the required years of experience required as per this PQR.

1.7 Discontinuity of Practice

This section applies to Bahrainis ONLY

- Healthcare professionals who discontinue their practice of at least **three (3) years** and opt to be licensed in Kingdom of Bahrain must follow the CME/CPD requirements below
- All CME/CPD credits must be related to practice specialty of the healthcare professional, and according to the CME/CPD specific requirements of NHRA
- All applicants are required to complete a clinical training program which shall be determined by NHRA in the specialty field.
- All clinical training programs shall be carried out in an approved practice setting by NHRA on a full-time basis (7 hours a day/ 5 days a week).
- All applicants after completion of CME/CPD credits and clinical training program are required to pass NHRA licensure assessment (BDLS or NSE) to obtain the license to practice.
- Candidates are required to submit the following:
 1. Reference letters from allocated clinical supervisor.
 2. Logbook for the period of training.
 3. Evidence of on-call duties when applicable.

Discontinuity of Practice	Requirements
From three to less than four years	60 CME/CPD credits 6 months of training
From four to less than five years	90 CME/CPD credits 8 months of training
From five to less than six years	120 CME/CPD credits 10 months of training
From six years onwards	150 CME/CPD credits 12 months of training

2. Renewal of Licenses

- Dentists must accumulate a minimum of 30 CME/CPD hours annually.
- CME/CPD must be relevant to the field of the specialty
- CME/CPD hours should be submitted annually to NHRA even if the license is renewed for more than one year.
- Bahraini dentists who are issued licenses without the specification of a facility must:
 - Renew their license for one year at a time
 - Prove the continuity of their practice (must provide proof of a minimum of one full year of practice during the three years (continuous or intermittent)
 - Failure to provide continuity of practice will lead to the dentist being considered in a gap of practice and will need to fulfill the discontinuity of practice requirements as per the requirements of this PQR prior to their license being renewed.
- License can be renewed up to a maximum of 3 years each time.
- Health fitness certificate is required every three years at the time of license renewal

3. License re-categorization

- Dentists may apply for a re-categorization of their license supported by the following documents:
 - A formal competency letter from the allocated clinical supervisor.
 - Additional qualification obtained.
- All re-categorization applications must fulfill the years of experience required per tier.

4.General Regulatory Items

- Health care facilities should not employ a health care professional at a higher category than that given by NHRA.
- License categories are independent from employment grade, titles, and vacancies in the facility.
- All professionals holding administrative, academic, and other non-clinical positions will not be licensed by NHRA unless they prove continuity of clinical practice.
- For dentists who hold Tier Two qualifications and go through a structured fellowship training of no less than one year, the period of the fellowship will be calculated as part of the clinical experience required for that tier for the general specialty.
- Private dental clinics may be operated by a dentist who holds a general license and has a minimum of five years of clinical experience post-internship.
- NHRA may re-assess a dentist's competencies if it deems necessary.
- NHRA reserves the right to re-evaluate any healthcare professional should the need arise.
- Bahraini's who are issued licenses without the specification of a facility must:
 - Apply for a transfer of their license as soon as they obtain an offer letter
 - They should not start their practice in the prospective facility except after the transfer of the license
- Performing surgical/dental interventions under general anesthesia must be ONLY under the supervision of a consultant.
- This PQR shall be reviewed once every three years.

Qualification and Experience Requirements for dental Licensure

Hospital Title	License Category	Qualifications	Experience & Other Requirements		
Intern	No license or registration is required for this category	Bachelor's degree in Dentistry/Dental Surgery or equivalent qualification from an accredited and recognised institution	No Experience Required		
Resident	General License	Bachelor's degree in Dentistry/Dental Surgery or equivalent qualification from an accredited and recognised institution	For Bahrainis , successful completion of internship and passing BDLE licensure examination [<i>note: A General Dental License is reserved for Bahrainis only</i>]		
Senior Resident		Bachelor's degree in Dentistry/Dental Surgery or equivalent qualification from an accredited and recognised institution <i>and</i> have an international entry degree such as membership certificates or First Board exam	For Bahrainis , two (2) years of clinical experience and successful completion of two years of a residency program or equivalent [<i>note: A General Dental License is reserved for Bahrainis only</i>]		
Chief Resident	Specialist	Bachelor's degree in Dentistry/Dental Surgery or equivalent qualification from an accredited and recognised institution <i>and completion</i> of specialty qualification as per the Recognized Specialty Certificate table	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
			No Experience Required	Two (2) years of experience post qualification	Three (3) years of experience post qualification
Consultant	Consultant	Bachelor's degree in Dentistry/Dental Surgery or equivalent qualification from an accredited and recognised institution <i>and completion</i> of specialty qualification as per the Recognized Specialty Certificate table	Two (2) year of experience post qualification	Four (4) years of experience post qualification	Cannot Attain the Title

Recognized Dental Specialty Certificates:

Country	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Algeria		Postgraduate medical diploma from Ministry of Higher Education (Diploma D'etudes Medicales Speciales)	
Australia	Fellowship of the Royal College/Colleges Note: fellowship should be by Exam and not by		Master of Dental Surgery
			Doctor of Clinical Dentistry
			Membership of the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons
Arab Countries		Arab Board with a fellowship of a minimum of one-year duration	Arab Board
Bahrain		Bahrain Speciality Dental Residency Program SDRP followed by Specialized Membership of the Royal College of Surgeons	
Belgium		Specialization certificate issued by a Belgian university in Orthodontics and Periodontics	
Bulgaria			Evidence of successful completion of the State Exam in Orthodontics/Oral Surgery/Pediatric Dentistry/ Periodontics/ Prosthodontics/ Endodontic
Canada	Evidence of passing the National Dental Specialist Examination (NDSE).		Master in one of the dental specialties

Country	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Croatia			Certificate from Zagreb or Rijeka University in Orthodontics/Oral Surgery/Pediatric Dentistry/ Periodontics/Prosthodontics/ Restorative Dentistry & Registration from Croatian Dental Chamber with Specialist Title issued by the Ministry of Health
Denmark		Specialist Certificate in Maxillofacial Oral Surgery issued by the State Board of Health (only for five (5) years course duration) Specialist Certificate in Orthodontics issued by the State Board of Health (only for three (3) years course duration)	Master degree and Certificate awarding the right to use the specialty title issued by Sundhedsstyrelsen (State Board of Health) Oral Surgery: Attestation in oral and maxillofacial surgery Diplom Specializaci (vorort oralni a maxillofacial Chirurgie) & Registration in the Czech Republic Dental Chamber
Egypt			Master in one of the dental specialties
Estonia			Degree of Specialist in Orthodontics Specialist in Oral Maxillofacial Surgery issued by a University and registration with Healthcare Board or Dental Council.
Finland		Specialist Certificate in Orthodontics or Oral Surgery	

Country	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
France		Diplôme D'Etudes Spécialisées En Chirurgie Buccale (D.E.S.C.B) (Certificate of Specialised Studies in Oral Surgery)	Diploma d'Universitees (DU) (Title of specialist issued by the National Council of the College of Dental Surgeons) DIU (Diplômes inter-universitaires)
		Chirurgien-dentiste specialist qualifie en orthopedie dento-faciale” (CECSMO) (Certificate in Orthodontics)	Diplôme Interuniversitaire de Spécialité (DIS) (Interuniversity Diploma of Dental specialty)
Germany		Fachzahnärztliche anerkennung issued by Landes Zahnärztekammern	
		Periodontics: Certificate of Periodontics issued by Zahnärztekammer Westfalen-Lippe	
Hong Kong			Master of Dental Surgery
Hungary			University Certificate in: <u>Orthodontics</u> , with the title: Fogszabalyozo szakorovs
			<u>Periodontology</u> , with the title: Parodontologus <u>Pediatric Dentistry</u> , with the title: Gyermekfogorvos

Country	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
India			Master of Dental Surgery (MDS)
Iran			Iranian Specialty Certificate issued by the Iranian Ministry of Health
Iraq			Master Degree in one of the dental specialties
Ireland	Certificate of Completion Specialist Training by the Dental Council & Inclusion on the Irish GDC Specialist Register	Specialized Fellowship / Specialized Membership of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	
Italy			University Certificate: Orthodontics: Diploma di Specializzazione in “Ortognatodonzia”
			Oral Surgery: Diploma di Specializzazione in “Chirurgia Odontostomatologica”
Jordan		Jordan Medical Board	Master in one of the dental specialties
KSA	Saudi Board		Master in one of the dental specialties

Country	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Lebanon			Dental Master degree with minimum of two (2) years course duration Diploma d'Universites (DUs) – with three (3) years specialist training under supervision
Latvia			Certificate Issued by “The Riga Stradins University’s Faculty of Stomatology
Lithuania			Certificate Issued by “ The Kaunas University of Medicine” or “The University of Vilnius”
Netherlands		Specialization Certificate issued by the Specialist Registration Board (SRC) in: Orthodontics: Getuigschrift van erkenning en inschrijving als orthodontis in het specialistenregister	
		Oral and Maxillo-Facial Surgery: Getuigschrift van erkenning en inschrijving als Kaakchirurg in het specialistenregister	
New Zealand	Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons		Master of Dental Surgery
			Doctor of Clinical Dentistry
			Membership of the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons

Country	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Norway			Certificate Issued by “Oslo” or “Bergen” University & Registration in the Specialist Registration Committee of the Norwegian Dental Association
Pakistan			Fellowship of the College of Physicians and Surgeons (F.C.P.S.)
Oman			Oman Medical Specialty Board Certificate issued by the Ministry of Health [Maxillofacial Surgery]
Philippines			Philippine Board
Poland			Evidence of registration as a Specialist by the Medical Centre for postgraduate Training & Voivodeship centres for postgraduate training
Portugal			University Certificate in: Orthodontics: Especialistaem Ortodontia & Must be registered with the Ordem dos Medicos Dentistas
			Oral Surgery: Especialistaem Cirurgia Oral (Oral Surgery) & must be registered with the Ordem dos Medicos Dentistas Faculty & Must be registered with The Romanian Collegiums of Dental Physicians

Country	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Russia			Kandidata Nauk Magista PhD
Slovakia			Certificate of specialization in: Orthodontics (CelustynOrtoped)
			Maxillofacial Surgeon (Maxilofacialny Chirurg)
			Paediatric dentistry (Pedostomatolog)
Singapore		Specialization certificate issued by the Dental Specialist Accreditation Council	
South Africa	MChD Degree (Master of Dentistry) & Registration with the Healthcare professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA)		
Sudan			Clinical MD in any dental specialty issued by Sudan Medical Specialization Board
Sweden		Certificate issued by the Swedish Board of National Health and Welfare (Training program must be conducted in Sweden).	
Switzerland		Fachzahnarzt anerkennung	

Country	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Syria			Higher Study Certificate issued by Ministry of Higher Education
			Syrian Specialization Certificate issued by the Specialist Training and Rehabilitation Authority
			Master Degree in one of the dental specialties.
			Syrian Board
Tunisia			Specialty Certificate issued by the National Authority
Turkey			Doctor of science in one of the recognized specialties from a Doctorate Program
United Arab Emirates			Clinical Master program accredited by MOHESR and recognized by Authorities in the UAE
United Kingdom	Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST) AND Inclusion on the specialist register of GDC	Specialized Fellowship/ Specialized Membership of the Royal College of Surgeons with structured, accredited, recognized clinical training. Intercollegiate Specialty fellowship	
United States of America	American Board Certificate (Diplomate) issued by one of the American Boards of Dental Specialties		

Country	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Venezuela			Completion of a university specialization degree “Título de Master” in a dental specialty with at least Two (2) years course duration
Others	For qualifications not listed in the table, the qualifications would be reviewed after providing the required documents by the NHRA ‘Dental Advisory Committee’		

Recognized Specialties Titles for Licensing

Specialty Licensing Titles
Conservative dentistry
Dental Public Health
Endodontics
Implantology
Geriatric dentistry
Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
Oral Medicine
Oral Radiology
Oral Surgery
Orthodontics
Pediatric Dentistry
Periodontics
Primary Care Dentistry
Prosthodontics
Restorative Dentistry
Special needs Dentistry

Visiting Dentists:

Health care facilities may apply for dentists to visit their institution and provide health care services to patients within a specified period of time provided the following conditions are met:

1. Full application form and required documents are submitted to NHRA at least two week prior to the scheduled visit
2. In some cases, visiting dentists who do not fulfill the categorization criteria of a consultant may be granted a visiting license if they are categorized as a specialist and in certain conditions for example:
 - a) If the specialty needed is rare in kingdom of Bahrain.
 - b) If there is a paucity in the number of consultants in a certain specialty in kingdom of Bahrain
 - c) If the visiting dentist has been requested to share his clinical and academic experience and has distinctive work such as obtaining a patented technology in dentistry and such cases will be studied individually.
3. The NHRA may grant visiting licenses to any dentist based on the review of individual applications