

Fiona Blinkhorn
Associate Professor Oral Health
Discipline of Oral Health
School of Health Sciences
University of Newcastle NSW

A Dental Therapy Program with a Difference

The Graduate Diploma in Dental Therapy commenced at the University of Newcastle, on the Central Coast Campus in January 2010. This exciting and innovative program provides graduates with a clinical qualification that will enable registration and employment as a Dental Therapist in Australia. The program is a one-year full time competency-based 4 course, 80 unit Graduate Diploma delivered over 3 Trimesters.

The program has a student-centred curriculum, based in a reflective paradigm, and is structured to support the development of an adaptable, motivated, and competent oral health practitioner with a commitment to excellence in patient care, with a population health approach to oral health care. Students are encouraged and supported to develop realistic self-appraisal skills enabling them to further develop their knowledge and clinical skills.

The students attend clinical placement in several community sites across Northern Sydney Central Coast Area Health Services and Westmead Hospital, whilst continuing to attend lectures and clinical sessions at the University of Newcastle. This is a new and exciting development in the teaching of Dental Therapy students.