Miss Ashleigh Clark (CEO ADTA)
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27/07/2026

Steve Whan
Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education
213 Crawford Street
QUEANBEYAN NSW 2620

Re: Urgent Review of Training Hours and Quality of Dental Technology Education in Australia

Dear Minister,

We write to formally endorse the concerns and recommendations raised by the Australian Dental Technicians Association (ADTA) regarding the current structure, delivery in particular the consistent decrease in nominal hours of dental technology education across Australia.

The dental technology profession is a highly skilled and specialised component of the Australian health workforce. Dental technicians play an essential role in the manufacture of dental devices that directly contribute to patient care.

However, the industry is increasingly concerned that the current training framework does not provide sufficient time or opportunity for students to develop the depth of practical, technical and digital competency required to enter the profession as safe and work-ready dental technicians.

Declining Training Hours
Since the early 1980s, training hours have been significantly reduced, with historical programs requiring approximately 3,700 hours of structured training compared with approximately 1,200 hours in current delivery models.The industry considers this reduction to be disproportionate to the breadth and complexity of contemporary dental technology.

The substantial reduction in training time has created serious concerns regarding graduate competency, public safety, work-readiness, employer expectations and the long-term sustainability of the Australian dental technology workforce.

Modern Dental Technology and Digital Skills
The profession has undergone significant technological transformation.
Contemporary dental laboratories increasingly utilise:

- CAD/CAM systems;
- Digital design;

- 3D printing;
- Advanced materials;
- Digital denture workflows; and
- Other rapidly developing technologies.

Industry supports the ADTA's position that digital dental technology must be appropriately embedded within dental technology education and that graduates should have meaningful exposure to the technologies and workflows they will encounter in modern laboratories. Digital skills should form a core component of contemporary dental technology education rather than being treated as an optional or peripheral skill.

Impact on Graduates and Employers
Employers across Australia are increasingly required to provide significant additional training to graduates to bridge the gap between qualification outcomes and the skills required in commercial laboratory environments.While employers will always have an important role in supporting new graduates, industry should not be required to compensate for fundamental gaps in vocational education.

Current insufficient training is affecting:
- Graduate confidence and competence
- Public safety
- Workforce retention
- Quality of dental appliances
- Industry standards
- The future sustainability of the Australian dental technology workforce.
- Industry Position

We support the ADTA's call for a comprehensive national review of dental technology education and, in particular, whether the current nominal and contact hours adequately reflect the breadth and complexity of the competencies contained within the relevant qualifications.

We support:
- A substantial increase in training hours for the HLT55118 Diploma of Dental Technology.
- Consideration of at least 1,000 additional training hours, appropriately distributed across the qualification.
- Greater integration of CAD/CAM and digital dental technology into formal dental technology education.
- Greater consistency in training delivery across Australia, ensuring students receive an appropriate standard of education regardless of the state or territory in which they undertake their qualification.
- Improved work placement, mentoring and traineeship opportunities to support the transition from education into employment.
- Adequate staffing, teaching resources and leadership to support quality delivery of dental technology qualifications.

Our Request
We believe that appropriately trained dental technicians are essential to the delivery of high-quality safe dental prostheses, restorations and appliances and that investment in their education is an investment in the broader Australian health workforce.

We therefore endorse the ADTA's position that the current training arrangements require urgent review and that substantially greater training time must be provided to ensure dental technology graduates are competent, safe, confident and genuinely work-ready.

We call upon the Australian Government and State and Territory Governments to work with the dental technology industry to develop a nationally consistent, adequately resourced and contemporary training model that reflects the realities of modern dental technology.

We respectfully request that this matter be given urgent consideration as part of the current review of dental technology qualifications and training packages.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Ashleigh Clark
CEO
Australian Dental Technicians Association

On behalf of the Australian Dental Technology Industry

INDUSTRY ENDORSEMENT

Name & Position: _____

Dental Laboratory / Organisation: _____

State/Territory: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____