

PUBLIC HEARING

Registrations Appeal Committee Registrations Appeal Hearing

13 March 2026

Name: WASIQ, Sahar

Case number: CAS-212384-N2W7Z0

General Dental Council: Peta-Louise Bagott, counsel
Instructed by Lauren Francis IHLPS

Appellant: Present
Represented by Revd Dcn Joice James Pallickamyail

Outcome: Appeal Allowed in relation to Matter C, Remitted back to the Registrar in relation to matter D

Committee members: Diane Meikle (Chair and Lay Member)
Jake West (Dentist Member)
Karen Suarez (Dental Care Professional Member)

Legal adviser: Stephen Bate

Professional Adviser: John Darby

Committee Secretary: Kate Anderson

Ms Sahar,

1. This Registrations Appeal Committee (RAC) has convened in accordance with the 'General Dental Council (Registration Appeals) Rules 2006' ('the Appeal Rules'), pursuant to Schedule 4A of the 'Dentist s Act 1984' (as amended) ('the Act').
2. The purpose of the hearing is to consider your appeal against the decision taken by the GDC's Registrar to reject your application for entry to the register as a dental therapist.
3. You were present at the hearing and represented by Revd Dcn Joice James Pallickamyilil. Ms Peta-Louise Bagott, Counsel, appeared on behalf of the General Dental Council (GDC).
4. The hearing was held remotely on Microsoft Teams.

Legal framework and background

5. The Committee had regard to the legal framework and factual background to this appeal, as set out in the written case summary provided by the GDC dated 10 February 2026, and as outlined by Ms Bagott in her opening submissions.
6. On 7 March 2023, the GDC received an application from you for registration as a dental therapist. In making your application, you relied on your Bachelor's Degree in Dental Surgery obtained in Pakistan in 2008.
7. It is noted in the GDC's case summary that there has been a change in the law since 8 March 2023, in relation to how applicants with overseas diplomas in dentistry can join the DCP Register. Prior to 8 March 2023, an applicant who held an overseas diploma in dentistry was able to apply to join the DCP Register. However, applicants can no longer rely on diplomas in dentistry, and must now hold a relevant DCP qualification in order to join the DCP Register.
8. As your application was received by the GDC on 7 March 2023, which was a day before the change in legislation, it was processed in accordance with the legislative framework in place at that time. Therefore, in setting out the law in this case, the GDC has referred to the relevant parts of the Act that were in force at the time your application was received.
9. Accordingly, it is noted that your application for registration was made under Section 36C of the Act. Sections 36C(1) to (2) and (4) to (6) of the Act, as they were at the material time, stated as follows:

Dentist's Act 1984 (as amended) ("the Act")

Section 36C of the Act sets out the requirements for qualification for registration in the dental care professionals register. Sections 36C(1)-(2) and (4)-(6) states the following:

- (1) Subject to the provisions of this Act, a person shall be entitled to be registered under a particular title in the dental care professionals register if she satisfies the registrar—
 - (a) of matter A or C, and
 - (b) of matter D.
- (2) Matter A is that the person holds a qualification or qualifications approved by the Council under section 36D(2) in relation to the profession, or class of members of a profession, to which the title applies.
- (4) Matter C is that the person—
 - a. holds a qualification or qualifications granted by an institution or institutions outside the United Kingdom relevant to the profession complementary to dentistry, or class of members of such a profession, to which the title applies (in this section referred to as “relevant qualifications”); and
 - b. has satisfied the Council that she has the requisite knowledge and skill to practise as a member of the profession or class to which the title applies.
- (4A) Subsection (4)(b) does not apply to a person whose application for registration is made in reliance on a relevant qualification that—
 - (a) was granted in a relevant European State, and
 - (b) demonstrates, in the opinion of the Council, a comparable level of knowledge and skill to that demonstrated by a qualification approved (or qualifications together approved) in respect of the same profession or class under section 36D(2).
- (5) For the purpose of establishing whether a person has the requisite knowledge and skill for the purposes of subsection (4)(b), the Council—
 - (a) shall take into account all that person’s relevant qualifications, and all relevant knowledge or experience, wherever acquired, and
 - (b) may determine that a person must perform to the satisfaction of the Council in any test or assessment specified in the determination.
- (6) Matter D is—
 - (a) the person’s identity;
 - (aa) that she has the necessary knowledge of English;
 - (b) that she is of good character; and
 - (c) that she is in good health, both physically and mentally.

10. Your application for registration is made under Matter C and D.

11. You are relying on your Bachelor of Dental Surgery BDS obtained in Pakistan in 2008.
12. The only matter under consideration in this appeal is whether you possess the requisite knowledge and skill to practise as a dental therapist. In reaching that determination the Committee is required to take into account all your relevant qualifications and all relevant knowledge or experience, wherever acquired.

First Panel Assessment of Application

13. Three assessors formed a Registration Assessment Panel ("Panel") on 9 April 2025 and conducted an assessment of your application. On the basis of the information provided by you, the Panel was not satisfied that the content of the training course which led to the award of your qualification met the standard in preparing to practice. Further, having taken into account the information you provided about your professional experience and any additional training undertaken, the Panel were not satisfied that this experience covered the shortfalls identified.
14. Having considered all of your qualifications, knowledge and experience wherever acquired, the Panel did not consider that you had demonstrated the requisite knowledge and skill to be eligible for registration as a dental therapist. On this basis, the Panel did not recommend your entry onto the register.
15. The Registrar relied on the Panel's recommendation and wrote to you providing the outcome of your application by email. The letter, dated 6 May 2025, advised that should you have any new or additional information which would address the deficiencies identified by the Panel, you could submit these documents within one month (20 working days) of the date of the letter for a reconsideration of your application.

Correspondence

16. Between 6 May 2025 and 27 May 2025, the Council received additional information in support of your application.
17. On 27 May 2025, the caseworker on behalf of the Council confirmed via email to you that your reassessment documents had been received and listed for consideration by the Panel in July 2025.

Reassessment

18. Three assessors formed a Panel on 9 July 2025 and conducted a reassessment of your application. The application pack put before the Panel included documents provided in support of your reassessment application.

19. Taking into account your qualification, professional experience and additional training, the Panel considered that you did not demonstrate the requisite knowledge and skill to be eligible for registration as a dental therapist with the Council. Therefore, the Panel recommended that you be refused registration under this title.
20. The Committee will note that the Panel again considered that your knowledge and skill was deficient in your primary dental qualification, and professional experience and additional training.
21. The Registrar relied on the Panel's recommendation and wrote to you by letter dated 15 July 2025, with the outcome of the assessment and refusing your application for registration in the dental care professionals register under the title dental therapist.
22. You were informed that you were not eligible for registration as a dental therapist as you had not satisfied the Registrar that you had the requisite knowledge and skill. The letter detailed the learning outcomes that appear not to have been covered as part of your training and/or professional experience.
23. The letter advised you of your right to appeal the decision.

Notice of Appeal

24. On 15 August 2025, the Council received a Notice of Appeal ("NOA") from you via email.
25. You submitted that you wish to appeal the decision on the basis of seven grounds, namely:
 1. The clinical experience evidence provided was overlooked.
 2. That your relevant clinical work history evidences the outstanding competencies
 3. Competency based assessment should prevail over raw duration/recency
 4. There is no published policy setting out minimum duration/recency for registration under Matter C
 5. No stated requirement for 'recent practice' at the time of application
 6. Your formal competence was assessed and ratified at graduation.
 7. You have ongoing simulated practice to maintain hands-on skills.
26. Further, you listed additional courses undertaken as part of your professional development.

Evidence

27. The Committee was provided with a number of additional documents alongside your original application documents, including the GDC's case

summary, certification of qualifications, CPD certification, self-reflections, and professional work references.

28. You gave oral evidence under affirmation and provided details regarding your training and your experience working as a dentist in Pakistan. You also gave evidence on your knowledge relevant to the role of dental therapist in the UK, and your understanding of the role for which you are appealing the registration refusal.

Today's hearing

Initial submissions on behalf of the Registrar

29. Ms Bagott, on behalf of the GDC, submitted that the Registrar's position was detailed in the Case Summary and referred the Committee to this document. She submitted that today's Committee must consider the matter afresh. She submitted that the onus was on you to satisfy the Committee that you have the requisite knowledge and skill to register as a dental therapist, and that the Committee should consider all of the evidence before it. Ms Bagott submitted that there was additional information in front of today's panel including evidence of CPD courses undertaken, your dental licence from Pakistan, and a clinical reference dated 1 March 2026. She submitted that these addressed the deficient areas identified in the previous refusal letter.
30. Ms Bagott submitted that should the Committee be satisfied as to matter C, the case will need to be remitted back to the Registrar for matter D.

Your Oral Evidence

31. In your oral evidence you answered questions from Rev Dcn Pallickamyilil. These questions related to the learning outcomes that had been identified by the previous assessment panels as areas in which they assessed that you did not demonstrate the requisite knowledge and skill to be registered as a dental therapist in the UK.
32. You detailed the training that you had carried out for your degree in dentistry in Pakistan. You submitted that you worked for 3 years in private practices in Dubai following your internship. You told the Committee about your Masters Degree in Healthcare management from Ireland completed in 2020, your Masters Degree in Science and Health Technology from Bristol in 2022, and your work in Bristol university hospital in a non-clinical role alongside days of observation within the hospital. You provided the Committee with details of the work you have undertaken in your recent employment as a dentist in Pakistan between 21 July 2025-28 August 2025 and 29 October 2025-15 February 2026. You worked in practice 6 days a week, treating around 15 patients a day with a variety of treatment needs.
33. While answering questions, you detailed the procedures and treatments you have carried out including the instruments you have used, explained your process in treating anxious patients, pain management, your process of referring to a specialist and treating patients who smoke. You also referred to treating periodontal disease,

managing caries, how you would advise patients, matters of consent, matters of cost, treating children, and radiographic practice.

34. You stated that you know the difference in your scope of practice working as a dentist in Pakistan and working as a dental therapist in the UK. You explained the differences in how you would practise in these separate roles. You detailed your recent work as a dentist in Pakistan and submitted that you had focused primarily on treatments and procedures which would apply to the role of a dental therapist in the UK .
35. You further answered a number of questions from the independent Professional Adviser present at these proceedings. These included questions in relation to your clinical experience in your undergraduate degree and your internship year, and the knowledge and skill that you had to prove in order to pass your degree. In response to further questions, you explained to the Committee how you developed your reflective practice.
36. You also responded to questions from the Professional adviser who asked questions relating to your understanding of relevant topics applicable to a dental therapist in the UK, about your knowledge of radiographic practice in the UK, and your understanding of Direct Access and Patient Group Directives.
37. The Professional Adviser asked you about the most recent professional reference you had provided dated 1 March 2026, new to this Committee, based upon your work as a dentist in Pakistan between 21-July 2025- 28 August 2025 and 29 October 2025- 15 February 2026. You confirmed that this was written by the dentist himself, and it was fully detailed. You confirmed that he had good knowledge of the UK dentistry field, having worked here.
38. In addition to the questions put to you by the Professional Adviser, you answered a number of questions from the Committee in relation to your understanding and treatment of topics identified by previous assessments as missing in the learning outcomes. The Committee asked questions in relation to radiographic practice whilst working as a dentist in Pakistan and how this compares to the UK, and asked you about the use of IRMER guidelines. The Committee also asked questions relating to the guidance you would use while treating patients in the UK. The Committee finally asked questions on the use of Amalgam, including when you would use it and your awareness of restrictions in the UK. You responded to all of the questions.

Closing Submissions made by the parties

39. Following your oral evidence, the Committee heard closing submissions from both parties.

40. Ms Bagott submitted that the Committee had now heard your oral evidence and seen the evidence of CPD training that you had undertaken since the previous reassessment panel. She submitted that there were concerns in relation to your clinical experience identified by the previous assessment panel, but that the Committee now had your professional clinical reference and your response to the questions asked at today's hearing to consider. Ms Bagott therefore submitted that the Committee are in a better position than the assessment panel to consider your knowledge and skill.
41. Ms Bagott submitted that you had taken the time to attend today's hearing and noted that you are in Dubai where the situation is currently difficult. She submitted that you had answered the questions in a particularly impressive manner.
42. Ms Bagott submitted that should the Committee be satisfied that you had the knowledge and skill as dealt with in matter C, then it could remit the matter back to the Registrar in relation to matter D.
43. Revd Dcn Pallickamyail submitted that you had confidently answered all of the questions asked of you at today's hearing. He submitted that given your recent clinical experience working in Pakistan and the professional reference from this experience, as well as the CPD you have undertaken and submitted to the Committee, that you have the knowledge and experience to be registered as a dental therapist. He therefore requested that the Committee allow your appeal.

Committee's consideration

44. The Committee has taken into account all the evidence provided to it, both documentary and oral. It took account of the submissions made by both parties.
45. The Committee accepted the advice of the independent Professional Adviser, who confirmed that the knowledge and skill you learned in completing a BDS in Pakistan would include the knowledge required of a dental therapist in the UK. He confirmed that you had demonstrated in answering questions today and in your documentary evidence that you have the clinical skills that were identified as missing by the previous reassessment panel. The Committee also accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser, who confirmed that the correct legal framework in respect of this appeal is as set out in the GDC's case summary of 10 February 2026.
46. The Committee bore in mind that the burden was on you to satisfy it that you have the requisite knowledge and skill required by section 36C(4) of the Dentist's Act (Matter C) for registration as a dental therapist. The Committee also remained mindful of the overarching statutory objective of the GDC and its task in assessing whether you would be a safe and competent practitioner working under the title.
47. The Committee considered that your oral evidence today alongside the detailed professional reference provided after your most recent period of work as a dentist in Pakistan, demonstrated that you have the appropriate standard of knowledge and

skill to the level that would be expected of a dental therapist in the UK. The Committee accepted the advice of the Professional adviser who advised there were no apparent shortfalls in your knowledge and skill. It also noted that your recent clinical experience in Pakistan had focused specifically on the knowledge and skill required of a dental therapist. The Committee considered your evidence in relation to the creation of the professional clinical reference, and determined that this was a reliable document.

48. The Committee noted your commitment and dedication to the dental profession and to maintaining your dental skills by returning to Pakistan to work as a dentist. It recognised that you have completed two master's degrees in healthcare. The Committee noted that it appeared you had done all you could in order to satisfy it that you were eligible to be registered in the UK as a dental therapist.

Committee's Decision

49. It was the conclusion of the Committee, having carefully considered all the evidence presented, both oral and documentary, that you have demonstrated that you have the requisite knowledge and skill to be registered as a dental therapist.

50. Accordingly, the Committee determined to allow your appeal and to quash the decision appealed against in relation to matter C. In accordance with the normal registration process of the GDC, matter D, which relates to your identity, character, knowledge of English and health, potentially remains outstanding.

51. Therefore, the Committee remits the case to the registrar with directions that:

1. you meet the requirements of matter C in respect of the title of dental therapist, and
2. your application for registration be granted subject to satisfying the requirements of matter D.

52. That concludes this determination.