

**Registrations Appeal Committee
Registrations Appeal Hearing****1 September 2026****Name:** Ajnakina, Anastasia**Contact number:** CAS-215064-K0K4M7

General Dental Council: Peta-Louise Bagott, Counsel
Instructed by Needa Bhatti, IHLPS**Appellant:** Present and unrepresented

Decision: Appeal dismissed

Committee members: Jill Crawford (Chair, Lay Member)
Gill Jones (Dentist Member)
Clare McIlwaine (Dental Care Professional Member)**Legal Adviser:** Gerry Coll**Professional Adviser:** Malcolm Smith**Committee Secretary:** Jamie Barge

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 36J of the '*Dentists Act 1984*' (as amended) ('the Act'). The purpose of the hearing is to consider your appeal against the decision taken by the GDC's Registrar to your application for entry to the register as a dental hygienist.
2. The members of the Committee, as well as the Legal Adviser, Professional Adviser and the Committee Secretary, conducted the hearing remotely via Microsoft Teams in line with current General Dental Council (GDC) practice.
3. You were present at the hearing and unrepresented.
4. Ms Peta-Louise Bagott, Counsel, appeared as case presenter on behalf of the GDC.

Background

5. On 3 February 2023, the Council received applications from you for registration as a dental hygienist and a dental therapist.
6. You first registered with the Council as a dental nurse on 31 October 2018. Your registration as a dental nurse is based on your obtaining the National Diploma in Dental Nursing NEBDN in 2018.
7. The only matter being considered as part of this appeal is whether you have satisfied the Registrar of Matter C.
8. In support of your applications, you submitted documentation to the Council. Between 6 March 2024 – 21 August 2024 there was communication between you and the Council to ensure that the application contained the relevant information and also to provide an extension of time to submit the documents.
9. On 9 April 2024, the Council wrote to you confirming your applications were ready for the June 2025 Registration Assessment Panel ("Panel") and that a decision would be made by the Registrar in due course.

First assessment and decisions

10. Your applications were assessed by the Panel on 13 June 2024. The assessors noted learning outcomes that were not sufficiently covered in the application, along with suggestions for evidence that would demonstrate the learning outcomes. Having considered the available evidence, the Panel did not recommend entry onto the register for these applications. Thereafter, your applications were sent for a further assessment by the Panel on 17 October 2024.
11. Under cover of an email on 29 October 2024, the Council notified you that your applications for registration as a dental hygienist and a dental therapist had been refused. The Council relied on the Panel's recommendations and confirmed the decisions that you were not eligible for registration because you had not satisfied the Registrar that you had the requisite knowledge and skill to practise using these titles. Between 13 November 2024 – 23 January 2025, you and the Council were in correspondence in relation to arrangements/updates for the further assessment of the applications.
12. On 6 February 2025, the Council informed you that your applications had now been listed for a further assessment by a Panel.

Second assessment and decisions

13. Your applications were assessed by the Panel on 9 April 2025. The assessors noted learning outcomes that were not sufficiently covered in the applications, along with suggestions for evidence that would demonstrate the learning outcomes. Having considered the available evidence, the Panel did not recommend entry onto the register for your applications.
14. Under cover of an email on 23 April 2025, the Council notified you that your applications for registration as a dental hygienist and a dental therapist had been refused. The Council relied on the Panel's recommendations and confirmed the decisions that you were not eligible for registration because you had not satisfied the Registrar that you had the requisite knowledge and skill to practise using either title. Between 17 May 2025 – 9 June 2025, you and the Council were in correspondence in relation to arrangements/updates for the further assessment of the applications. During this period, you also provided further information to the Council – Certificates of Good Standing, a letter from your University, a CPD certificate and self-reflections to support your request for a re-assessment.
15. On 12 June 2025, the Council informed you that your applications had now been listed for a further assessment by a Panel.

Third assessment and decisions

16. Your applications were assessed by the Panel on 16 July 2025. The assessors noted learning outcomes that were not sufficiently covered in the applications, along with suggestions for evidence that would demonstrate the learning outcomes. Having considered the available evidence, the Panel did not recommend entry onto the register for your applications.
17. Under cover of an email on 17 July 2025, the Council notified you that your applications for registration as a dental hygienist and a dental therapist had been refused. The Council relied on the Panel's recommendations and confirmed the decisions that you were not eligible for registration because you had not satisfied the Registrar that you had the requisite knowledge and skill to practise using either title. Between 16 August 2025 – 4 September 2025, you and the Council were in correspondence in relation to arrangements/updates for the further assessment of the applications. During this period, you also provided further information to the Council – a supporting letter from the Romanian Ministry of Health, a supporting letter from the Clinical Hygeea and materials from your university course including an internship notebook and logbook to support your request for a re-assessment.
18. On 19 September 2025, the Council informed you that your applications had now been listed for a further assessment by a Panel.

Fourth assessment and decisions

19. Your updated applications were assessed by the Panel on 7 January 2026. The assessors noted learning outcomes that were not sufficiently covered in the applications, along with suggestions for evidence that would demonstrate the learning outcomes. Having considered the available evidence, the Panel did not recommend entry onto the register for your applications.
20. Under cover of an email on 9 February 2026, the Council notified you that your applications for registration as a dental hygienist and a dental therapist had been refused. The Council relied on the Panel's recommendations and confirmed the decisions that you were not eligible for registration because you had not satisfied the Registrar that you had the requisite knowledge and skill to practise using these titles. Both letters explained that you had been asked to provide further information about your primary qualification and that the additional evidence that had been provided did not satisfy equivalence to a UK training programme and would not be suitable for registration with the Council.

The Council also detailed the information that was requested and set out how the material provided by you did not answer the Council's request,

21. The letters notified you of the right to appeal the decisions and that such an appeal should be submitted within 28 days of the date of the letter.
22. On 17 February 2026 the Council received an email from you in which you stated that you wished to challenge the Council's decision. You stated that you were submitting a letter from Associate Professor Dr Francesco Inchingolo, Università Degli Studi Di Bari Aldo Moro dated 7 August 2025 which provided further clarification and directly addressed all of the deficient learning outcomes identified by the Council in its decisions. The Council however notes that this document was not received. You also responded to the deficient learning outcomes identified by the Council.

Notice of Appeal

23. On 1 March 2026, the Council received an email from you attaching your Notice of Appeal ('NOA') in which you confirmed your wish to appeal the decision of 9 February 2026 to refuse your registration in the DCP register as a dental hygienist.
24. Within the NOA, you stated you were appealing the decision in relation to the title of dental hygienist only. You stated that you were submitting a letter from Associate Professor Dr Francesco Inchingolo, Università Degli Studi Di Bari Aldo Moro dated 7 August 2025 which provided further clarification and directly addressed all of the deficient learning outcomes identified by the Council in its decisions. The Council again notes to date this document was not received.
25. You believed that the assessment of your application involved procedural irregularities, a failure to properly consider the entirety of your evidence including that from her university, Università Degli Studi Di Bari Aldo Moro as well as a concern that the evidence from the institution may not have been considered impartially or fairly. You were concerned that the Council's assessment of your application had not been undertaken in accordance with the requirements that a public body act lawfully, rationally and fairly.
26. You stated that if the Council wished to continue to raise questions about the university and its teaching methods it had a duty to undertake its own visit and quality assurance of the course. You also requested a full re-assessment of your application by a panel not previously involved in the decisions; confirmation that all your evidence (including the Learning outcomes form and university's clarifications) would be reviewed in accordance with the Council's criteria; and assurance that the assessment would be conducted in accordance with legal standards of fairness, impartiality, equal treatment, legitimate expectation and rational decision making. You also stated your application had been under consideration for an extended period of time exacerbated by the Council's requests for documents not ordinarily issued by the relevant institutions.
27. Between 30 March 2026 – 2 July 2026, you and the Council were in correspondence in relation to your concerns over the registration process.

Submissions

28. You provided oral evidence under affirmation at today's hearing. You stated in your oral evidence that you have provided additional information in which supports your application. You stated that you qualified in Romania in 2022 and undertook an internship within the 2-year training period. You stated you have been working since 2018 as a dental nurse in the UK. You stated you have appropriate experience in providing dental hygienist procedures and have completed relevant and appropriate

Continuing Professional Development (CPD), including hygienist courses. You stated you are passionate about dentistry and you feel you have provided necessary evidence to demonstrate that you have the requisite knowledge and skills as a dental hygienist.

29. Ms Bagott, on behalf of the GDC, submitted that the application for entry onto the DCP register was thoroughly assessed by the Panel whose recommendations were accepted by the Council.
30. Ms Bagott submitted that the Assessment Panels considered the entirety of your application. She submitted that the issue for the Committee to determine is whether you possess the requisite knowledge and skill for registration in the dental hygienist title. She stated that the Committee may take into account the documentation contained in the Registration Appeal Bundle, in addition to any further evidence provided before or at the hearing.
31. As this is your appeal, Ms Bagott reminded the Committee that the burden is on you to satisfy the Committee that your qualification demonstrates a comparable level of knowledge and skill to that demonstrated by a qualification in respect of the same profession or class, and also that you have the requisite knowledge and skill for registration as a dental hygienist under section 36C of the Act.
32. Ms Bagott stated that following the Panel assessment, the Registrar also reviewed the application taking into account the recommendations of the Panel and the additional information provided by you.
33. The Committee was also assisted by the Professional Adviser, who questioned you in relation to a number of matters regarding dental hygienist practice. The Committee also asked you a number of questions in relation to your appeal.

Committee's decision and reasons on application

34. In coming to its decision, the Committee considered all the evidence before it today. It took account of the submissions made by both parties and accepted the advice of both the Professional Adviser and the Legal Adviser.
35. The Committee is not bound by the assessment of the previous assessment panels and considered your application for the registration on the basis of all the information and evidence now available on appeal.
36. The Committee first considered whether your qualification demonstrates a comparable level of knowledge and skill to that demonstrated by a qualification in respect of the same profession or class, satisfying section 36C(4A) of the Act. The Committee determined that the course material provided by you and the Università Degli Studi Di Bari Aldo Moro appears to be relevant to a UK training programme.
37. The Committee then considered whether you have the requisite knowledge and skills to practise as a member of the profession to which the title applies.
38. The Committee took into account the answers you provided to the Committee members' questions and those of the Professional Adviser in your oral evidence. It noted that, when questioned, there were a number of answers regarding your knowledge of the role of a dental hygienist, which were not up to date with current practice and that your responses were aligned with your role as a dental nurse rather than that of a dental hygienist. It considers your knowledge was limited and you struggled to answer adequately a number of questions from the Committee and Professional Adviser. You were unable to provide examples of the range and breadth of clinical procedures you have previously undertaken in the scope of practice as a dental hygienist. The Committee did not consider that you have demonstrated sufficient knowledge and understanding of the roles and responsibilities a dental hygienist undertakes in the UK.

39. Having considered all the evidence provided, both documentary and oral, the Committee was not satisfied that you have sufficiently demonstrated that you have the understanding and clinical experience in the scope of practice of a dental hygienist, nor have you demonstrated appropriate knowledge of the procedures that fall within the duties of a dental hygienist.
40. The Committee bore in mind the GDC's overarching objective, which includes the protection of the public and the maintenance of public confidence in the dental professions. The Committee was not satisfied that you have been able to sufficiently demonstrate that you would be able to practise safely and effectively as a dental hygienist in the UK.
41. Whilst the Committee recognised the efforts you have made and the commitment you have shown to gain registration as a dental hygienist in the UK, it concluded that you have not demonstrated the requisite knowledge and skills to practise safely as a dental hygienist in the UK.
42. In all the circumstances, the Committee determined to refuse your appeal for registration as a dental hygienist in the Dental Care Professionals Register. This will be confirmed to you in writing in accordance with the Act.
43. That concludes this determination.