

PUBLIC HEARING

Registration Appeals Committee

11 July 2025

Name: PARAJULI, Aparna

Case number: CAS-210062-L3H3X8

General Dental Council: Tom Stevens, Counsel
Instructed by Noranne Griffith, IHLAS

Registrant: Present
Unrepresented

Outcome: Appeal dismissed

Committee members: Jacky Hart (DCP) (Chair)
Arif Sadikot (Dentist)
Catherine Pease (Lay)

Professional Adviser: Malcolm Smith

Legal adviser: Paul Kilcoyne

Committee Secretary: Paul Carson

Mrs Parajuli,

1. This is an appeal against the registrar's decision not to grant you registration on the DCP register under the titles of Dental Hygienist and/or Dental Therapist. The issue on appeal is whether you demonstrate the requisite knowledge and skill to practise as a member of the profession under either or both titles in accordance with the requirements of section 36C(4)(b) of the Dentists Act 1984 (the "Act").

Background

2. You graduated in April 2018 from the B.P Koirala Institute Of Health Sciences, Dharan, Nepal, with the degree of Bachelor of Dental Surgery followed by a one-year clinical internship. You thereafter practised as a dentist in Nepal for approximately seven months. From early 2019 you commenced work in the United Kingdom as trainee Dental Nurse and subsequently qualified as a Dental Nurse. You had also returned to Nepal for approximately 3 weeks in January-February 2023 to practise as a dentist, in respect of which you obtained a clinical reference.
3. You informed the Committee that it is your long-term intention to sit the Overseas Registration Examination or the Licence in Dental Surgery in order to become registered as a dentist with the General Dental Council (GDC). On 12 December 2022, you submitted applications to the GDC for registration under the titles of Dental Hygienist and Dental Therapist in the intervening period, relying on your Bachelor of Dental Surgery degree and the provisions of section 36C of the Act (as in force at the time), which require you to satisfy the registrar of a number of matters, including, so far as is relevant to this appeal, "Matter C".
4. Section 36C(4) provides that:

"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 he has the requisite knowledge and skill to practise as a member of the profession or class to which the title applies."*

5. The GDC does not dispute that your Bachelor of Dental Surgery degree is a "relevant qualification" for the purposes of section 36C(4)(a). The issue for the Committee to decide is whether you demonstrate that you have the requisite knowledge and skill to practise under the titles of Dental Hygienist and/or Dental Therapist in accordance with section 36C(4)(b). When determining whether an applicant has the requisite knowledge and skill, section 36C(5)(a) of the Act requires the Council to take into account all the applicant's relevant qualifications, and all relevant knowledge or experience, wherever acquired.
6. Your applications for registration were considered on paper by panels convened by the registrar to assess your qualification, training and experience against the Learning Outcomes which are required for Dental Hygienists and Dental Therapists. The panels met on 12 March 2024 and 24 June 2024 with the ultimate outcome of this assessment

process being a decision that a number of the Learning Outcomes did not appear to have been covered as part of your training or professional experience.

7. Accordingly, the GDC wrote to you on 07 August 2024 refusing your applications for registration as a Dental Hygienist and a Dental Therapist.
8. On 5 September 2024 you lodged your appeal against this decision.

The appeal hearing 11 July 2025

9. The Committee met today over Microsoft Teams to consider your appeal. The Committee had regard to all the documentary evidence you provided in support of your appeal and to the oral evidence which you gave today. You answered questions from the Professional Adviser and Committee relating to your professional and academic background and to the clinical role of a Dental Hygienist and a Dental Therapist.
10. The Committee had regard to the submissions made on behalf of the registrar by Mr Stevens and to the submissions which you made on your own behalf.
11. Mr Stevens submitted that the assessment panels had reached their decisions correctly based on the evidence before them. He submitted that it is a matter for the Committee to decide whether the further evidence available on appeal means that you now demonstrate the requisite knowledge and skill for registration under either or both titles.
12. You submitted that you demonstrate the requisite knowledge and skill for registration as a Dental Hygienist and a Dental Therapist.

Decision

13. The Committee accepted the advice of the Professional Adviser.
14. The Committee accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser.
15. The Committee carefully examined the outstanding Learning Outcomes for the titles of Dental Hygienist and Dental Therapist against all the available evidence. The only additional evidence which you provide on appeal is the oral evidence which you gave today. You have not provided the Committee with any further documentary evidence beyond that which was before the assessment panels.
16. In respect of your Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activity, you stated that you had undertaken CPD courses but chose not to submit evidence of this. You also stated that you had not undertaken any written reflections on your learning from your recent CPD courses to submit to the Committee.
17. The Committee had careful regard to the oral evidence which you gave and to the documentary evidence which was before the assessment panels. Having comprehensively examined this, the Committee was not satisfied that you demonstrate that you meet the requirements of knowledge and skill for a Dental Hygienist or a Dental Therapist. The Committee acknowledges that you have been unable to undertake further experience to obtain a more recent professional reference. However, the burden is on you to satisfy this Committee that you have the requisite knowledge

and skill to practise as a Dental Hygienist and/or Dental Therapist. In the Committee's opinion, you have not provided sufficient evidence to discharge that burden. The answers you gave in oral evidence were not always specific to the role of a Dental Hygienist or Dental Therapist. Whilst you were able to articulate the role of a Dentist from your own experience of practice you did not clearly distinguish this from the Scope of Practice of a Dental Hygienist or Dental Therapist. You seemed unable to reference relevant guidelines or treatment protocols for the diagnosis and treatment of gum disease and did not appear to understand the scheme of Direct Access, which was introduced in 2013. The absence of any documentary evidence, such as recent CPD records and, importantly, your reflections on your learning from each CPD activity, meant that the Committee could not be reassured that you have maintained an up to date understanding of the skill and knowledge of the work of Dental Hygienists and Dental Therapists in the UK.

18. The Committee also had regard to your relatively limited clinical practicing experience as a dentist in Nepal. You only have seven months experience of clinical practice in 2019 since graduating and completing your clinical internship followed by 3 weeks of clinical practice in early 2023.
19. Having regard to the entirety of the evidence now available on appeal, the Committee determined that you do not demonstrate the requisite knowledge and skill for registration as a Dental Hygienist and/or Dental Therapist and that you therefore do not satisfy the registrar of "Matter C" in respect of this title.
20. The registrar's decision is therefore upheld and your appeal is dismissed.
21. The Committee notes your eventual intention to sit the ORE or LDS in order to register as a Dentist and wishes you success in this regard.
22. That concludes this determination.