

HEARING HELD IN PUBLIC

Registration Appeals Committee Registration Appeal Hearing

25 March 2026

Name: Ashraf, Tanzeena

Case number: CAS-212486-G8S2H9

General Dental Council: Omar Soliman, Counsel
Instructed by Sushuma Chandrasekhar, ILAS

Registrant: Present
Not represented

Outcome: Appeal allowed in respect of Matter C
Remitted back to the Registrar in respect of Matter D

Committee members: Gaon Hart (Lay) (Chair)
Stacey Firby (Dental Care Professional)
Sarah Benton (Dentist)

Legal adviser: Paul Kilcoyne

Professional Adviser: John Darby

Committee Secretary: Jamie Barge

Mrs Ashraf

1. You are in attendance at this appeal hearing before the Registration Appeals Committee (RAC). You are not represented. Mr Omar Soliman of Counsel appears for the GDC.

Purpose of hearing

2. This appeal hearing has been convened in accordance with the Appeal Rules, pursuant to Section 36C and Schedule 4A 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 Registrar not to grant your applications for entry to the register as a dental hygienist.

Background to the appeal

3. Your application for registration as a Dental Hygienist was received by the GDC on 6 March 2023.
4. A Registration Assessment Panel ('the Panel') considered your application on 8 April 2025 and determined that you had not demonstrated the requisite knowledge and skill to be registered as a dental hygienist. These requirements derive from Section 36C (4) of the Act. The Panel identified a number of deficiencies (22) in your knowledge and skill across your primary dental qualification, and your other knowledge and experience. Accordingly, the Panel recommended that your application for registration as a dental hygienist be refused. You asked for your application to be reassessed, and you provided further documentation in support of your renewed application.
5. On 18 May 2025 you emailed the Council attaching self-reflections along with a professional reference (undated, no wet signature) from Dr S C, Associate GDP, Bupa Dental Care. You indicated that the Council would also receive a professional reference from India where you had worked as a dentist. On 18 May 2024 Dr A E, a dentist in India, emailed a reference for you.
6. On 27 May 2025, the Council emailed you to state that a professional reference had to be wet signed and dated and sent directly to the Council's caseworker. You agreed to do so and on 30 May 2025 Dr S C emailed the Council enclosing a professional reference relating to you. In addition, on 31 May 2025 Dr A E emailed the Council enclosing a revised professional reference relating to you.
7. The Panel reconsidered your applications and made a further decision on 9 July 2025. The Panel, having taken into account all of your qualifications, knowledge and experience, remained of the view that you had again not demonstrated that you possess the requisite knowledge and skill to be registered as a dental hygienist. The GDC wrote to you to communicate this decision, and in so doing set out a number of outcomes (19) which the Panel had determined you had not covered as part of your training and professional experience.
8. On 22 July 2025 you emailed the Council offering to provide more references or undertake any other matter that could elicit a positive response to your application. On 29 July 2025 you emailed the Council to ask for more detailed feedback and to indicate that you wished to appeal against the decision.
9. On 30 July 2025 the Council emailed you to state that no further feedback could be provided beyond the decision letter and advised you that, should you wish to appeal, you would need to follow the guidance set out in the decision letter.

10. On 20 August 2025 you appealed against the Registrar's decision to refuse your application for registration. You stated the self-reflection document was completed in full but due to an oversight it was unintentionally omitted from the submitted portfolio. You stated that you accept full responsibility for this mistake and attached the self-reflection for review.
11. As regards clinical professional references, you stated that you misunderstood the definition of "recent" and therefore some references were older than expected. You noted that, although unable to work as a clinician due to registration limitations, you have engaged in unpaid voluntary clinical work on visits to India and have also worked as a dental nurse in the UK for 18 months. You stated that these activities have helped maintain your professional skills and stay active in the dental field.

Evidence and submissions

12. The Committee considered all the evidence provided to it, including the oral evidence that you gave. The Committee also considered the submissions made by Mr Soliman, and those made by you.
13. Mr Soliman provided a background to your application and summarised the GDC's current position on your appeal. The GDC's position is that you have not demonstrated that you possess the requisite knowledge and skill to be registered as a dental hygienist, and that accordingly your appeal should be dismissed. He stated that both Panels considered that you were not eligible for registration as a Dental Hygienist as you had not demonstrated that you possess the requisite knowledge and skill under section 36C(4) of the Act. Mr Soliman referred in particular to a number of deficiencies in your knowledge and experience and the need of a renewed certificate of good standing.
14. Mr Soliman submitted that on 7 March 2026 you emailed the General Dental Council with further evidence in the form of a professional work reference from Dr A E dated 8 January 2026. However, the Registrar's position remained the same as in the case summary dated 2 March 2026, namely that you are not currently eligible for registration as a Dental Hygienist.
15. You stated in evidence that when you applied for registration as a dental hygienist you followed the steps required by the GDC, and that in your view you met the GDC's requirements concerning knowledge and skills. You have been a Dental Nurse in the United Kingdom for 18 months but have lived here longer. You stated that you can't work as a clinician unless you are registered by the GDC. You have undertaken some work experience in the UK as a student Dental Nurse. You stated you learnt a lot and your mentors praised your work. You attended a Back to Practice for Dental Hygienists course in 2022, and in between you have travelled to India for various periods, recently December 2025 to January 2026 to obtain clinical experience whilst working as a Dentist in unpaid voluntary work. You have provided references from the dental colleagues in India you worked with that praise your clinical work and professionalism.
16. You stated you have worked as a dental nurse in the UK to get some exposure to the UK dental processes in order to further your dental career. You are confident you have the necessary dental skills and experience and exposure of how UK dental services works. You stated that by allowing your application as a Dental Hygienist, it will further your dental career.
17. You went on to answer a number of questions from the independent Professional Adviser present and also from the Committee. These included questions in relation to your undergraduate experience in India. This included work on how to cut cavities on teeth whilst using phantom heads. You confirmed to the Professional Adviser that, as an undergraduate,

you had to pass tests before being assessed as competent to treat patients. You also explained that, during your undergraduate studies, whilst seeing patients in clinics, you were supervised at each stage of a patient's treatment by your professors. You further outlined your undergraduate experience in relation to fillings, root canal treatment and extractions.

18. In addition, you spoke about your internship for a year, and provided examples of your work, such as obtaining histories and informed consent. Throughout this you would discuss your learning with colleagues. You then discussed your recent clinical experience when you returned to work voluntarily as a Dentist in India for a month. You stated that you were working independently with a dental nurse to assist you. You set out the work that you had undertaken within the scope of practice of a Dental Hygienist, including treatment in the areas of periodontology, and oral hygiene advice, and scaling and root planing. You stated that your work practice in India during this time resulted in you seeing 4-5 patients a day, some of which were complex cases.
19. In relation to your scope of practice you acknowledged you are not permitted to perform extractions, root canal treatment and fillings. You stated you are aware of what direct access means and what is the difference between the role of a Dentist and that of a Dental Hygienist. You acknowledged that you have not done any hands on practical courses since 2022, and when asked why you haven't done any since, you stated that you were working in an intense role as a Dental Nurse in the UK as well as bringing up a young family. You stated that you are not working at the moment due to having recently having a family. Finally, you described your experience observing clinicians whilst you have been working in both the UK and India, including Dentists and Dental Hygienists. You stated that you had had the opportunity to reflect after speaking to the clinicians about your observations, and that you considered yourself confident and competent to undertake the required scope of practice of a Dental Hygienist.

Closing submissions made by the parties

20. Following your oral evidence, the Committee heard closing submissions from both parties.
21. Mr Soliman reminded the Committee that the burden was on you to demonstrate that you possess the requisite knowledge and skill to practise as a Dental Hygienist. He also asked the Committee to bear in mind that your limited clinical practice both in India and in the UK. Mr Soliman reminded the Committee that if it determined that it was satisfied that you do have the requisite knowledge and skill for registration under the title (Matter C), it should give consideration to remitting this case back to the Registrar in relation to the outstanding criteria under Matter D.
22. You stated that you can provide a certificate of good standing and that you hope to satisfy the Committee of your hard work and clinical experience, despite your limitations here in the UK.

Committee's consideration

23. As set out above, the Committee has taken into account the oral and written evidence provided to it, and the submissions made by you and Mr Soliman. The Committee has accepted the advice of the Professional Adviser who questioned you in relation to your university experience, which he advised was similar to the UK. It also accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser.

24. The Committee's powers when considering such appeals are set out at paragraph 4 (8) of Schedule 4A of the Act. The Committee may, in short, decide to dismiss the appeal, allow the appeal and thereby quash the decision appealed against, substitute for the decision appealed against any other decision that the Registrar could have made, or remit the case to the Registrar for disposal in accordance with any directions that it may wish to give.
25. In determining your appeal, the Committee has considered whether you have demonstrated that you have the necessary knowledge and skill to register as a Dental Hygienist in the UK, having taken into account all of your dental qualifications, knowledge and experience. The Committee is cognisant that this is the sole issue in contention at this appeal. It notes that the Registrar has not made a decision about whether you have satisfied the requirements as to identity, knowledge of English, your good character and your health, pursuant to Section 36C (6) of the Act, and that it is not for this Committee to address that requirement. The Committee recognises that, were it to allow your appeal, the case would need to be referred back to the Registrar so that the proper consideration of those additional requirements can be made.

Committee's decision

26. The Committee noted that the matter to determine upon, was whether you possess the requisite knowledge and skill to be registered as a Dental Hygienist. It considered all the evidence before it, including your oral evidence. It took account of the submissions made by Mr Soliman on behalf of the Registrar and those made by you.
27. 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 Dentists Act (Matter C) for registration as a Dental Hygienist. 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 under the relevant title.
28. The Committee took into account that the primary reason for the refusal of your applications was the limited nature of your recent clinical experience. The Committee noted that you have undertaken 4 weeks clinical practice in India between December 2025 and January 2026. Prior to that, you had undertaken 2 weeks in 2024 and 3 weeks experience in 2022. In addition, you have only completed one hands on course in 2022. However, the Committee had regard to your most recent work in India 2025-2026, where you were seeing 4-5 patients a day, and half of them required periodontal dental treatment. Although your recent references do not cover all of the identified learning outcomes, the Committee is satisfied they demonstrate and confirm your clinical capabilities. In addition, it noted your honest and credible demeanor during your oral evidence, where you accepted the limitations of your dental experience. It noted your personal challenges at the material time. During your oral evidence you demonstrated an extensive knowledge of all areas of dentistry and demonstrated this in answering a number of questions from the Professional Adviser.
29. The Committee took into account that your application for registration was considered and refused by two qualified assessment panels. However, the Committee had before it today, evidence that was not before the assessment panels, which included your oral evidence. The Committee found you to be a credible witness and it was reassured by your honest and detailed answers to the questions that were put to you. It found that you demonstrated considerable knowledge in relation to the scope of practice of a Dental Hygienist and it was evident that you have a real desire to work in the dental profession here in the UK.
30. It was the conclusion of the Committee, taking into account all the evidence presented, both oral and documentary, that in addition to the periods that you have practised in India

particularly recently between December 2025 and January 2026, you have made real efforts to ensure that you have kept your skills up to date. The Committee was satisfied, on the basis of the evidence received at this appeal, that you have met all the learning outcomes relevant to the practice of a Dental Hygienist. The Committee was satisfied that you would be a safe and competent addition to the DCP register.

31. For all these reasons, the Committee was satisfied that you have provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate that you have the requisite knowledge and skill to be registered as a Dental Hygienist with the GDC as required under Section 36C(4) of the Act.
32. Therefore, in accordance with paragraph 4(8) of Schedule 4A of the Act, the Committee has determined to allow your appeal in respect of Matter C.
33. However, the Committee was mindful that before you are eligible to be entered on the DCP register as a Dental Hygienist, you would also need to satisfy the Registrar of all the other requirements for registration as stated under Matter D. The Committee, therefore, directs that your application is remitted back to the Registrar for this assessment to take place.
34. That concludes this determination.