



Dental Assisting

SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Overview

Our Dental Assisting program emphasizes patient-centered practices to enhance oral health and well-being.

Dental assistants are key players in the dental health team, and our program is tailored to ensure you're ready to work in various settings, including private practices, specialist offices and community health centers.

You will combine classroom theory with hands-on learning in a dental clinic setting at SAIT campus.

In this program, you will:

- learn the principles of providing compassionate care that respects the individual needs of patients
- learn how to perform intra and extra-oral imaging
- perform laboratory procedures
- learn about infection prevention as well as control and safety protocols
- practice management skills.

You'll participate in an unpaid practicum to apply your dentistry assistant skills in a real-world dental office environment.

Attending your classes is mandatory to successfully complete the program. Your active involvement in both theoretical and practical sessions is expected.

At graduation, you will emerge as a skilled dental assistant, ready to positively impact patient health and confidently step into your professional role to meet the demands of the dental industry.

Traits, skills and aptitudes

Dental assistants tend to be methodical, social and objective.

You need:

- attention to detail
- fine motor skills
- the ability to put patients at ease
- good communication and people skills
- the ability to remain calm under pressure
- critical thinking skills
- the ability to be organized and manage time well
- to be comfortable sitting for long periods
- the ability to work as part of a team
- professionalism and the ability to regulate your emotions
- to be comfortable around human blood and tissue
- knowledge of disease transmission and infection control.

Dental assistants must wear personal protective equipment (PPE) for long periods. This includes tolerating latex and other disinfection chemicals.

Some dental assistants work extended hours and shifts, including nights and weeks.

You are strongly encouraged to refer to the [ALIS website for career, learning, and employment information for dental assistants](#) to ensure you can successfully meet the occupational requirements for the program and profession.

Professional designations and certifications

The Dental Assisting program is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada.

Graduates must write the National Dental Assisting Examining Board exam to be registered in Alberta. Graduates are eligible to obtain a provisional licence upon completion of the program.

Credentials

After successfully completing this program, you'll receive a SAIT Dental Assisting certificate.

Practicum, Co-op and Work Integrated Learning

In this program, you will complete a required practicum in a dental office, where you will apply the skills you have learned in class in a real-world setting.

You will be assigned practicum placements with consideration given to your preference of location. However, due to limited availability in Calgary, it might be necessary for you to travel or relocate outside the city. Special considerations will not be accommodated.

In compliance with the practica agreements with our clinical partners, you will be required to provide specific documentation before you can participate in your practicum. [Find out what requirements you need for this program.](#)

Your pre-practicum requirements and dental health examinations are required by the first day of class.

Admission requirements

Applicants educated in Canada

All applicants must demonstrate [English language proficiency](#) and have passed the following course requirements or equivalents, with an overall average of at least 60%:

- Math 30-1 or Math 30-2, and
- English Language Arts 30-1 or English Language Arts 30-2, and
- Biology 30, and
- Chemistry 30.

SAIT accepts [high school course equivalents](#) for admission for applicants educated outside Alberta.

Applicants educated outside of Canada

All applicants who were educated outside of Canada must demonstrate [English language proficiency](#) and provide proof they meet the program admission requirements with an international document assessment. [Find accepted educational documents and assessment options.](#)

SAIT may also accept courses completed at certain [international post-secondary institutions](#).

Costs

2024/25 tuition and fees

The following estimated costs are effective as of July 1, 2024.

Domestic Students

| Year | Number of semesters | Tuition fees | Additional fees | Total per year |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1 | 3 | \$8,626.50 | \$2,070* | \$10,698.50 |
| Total cost: | | | | \$10,698.50 |

The estimated total cost of tuition and fees for domestic students is based on the recommended course load per year.

*You will be ineligible for the UPass during the third semester of your first year.

International Students

| Year | Number of semesters | Tuition fees | Additional fees | Total per year |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1 | 3 | \$24,502.50 | \$2,072* | \$26,574.50 |
| Total cost: | | | | \$26,574.50 |

The estimated total cost of tuition and fees for international students is based on the recommended course load per year.

*You will be ineligible for the UPass during the third semester of your first year.

Books and Supplies

Books and supplies are approximately \$1,000 - \$1,500 per full-time year.

This is a bring-your-own-device program with a standard computer hardware and software requirement. See the specific requirements on our [computers and laptops page](#).

An Apple or Android laptop is preferred over other device types. Tablets and phones are not suitable.

Find your booklist on the [SAIT Bookstore's](#) website. Booklists are created by semester and available approximately two weeks before classes begin.

Required personal protective equipment (PPE) and uniform

The industry-approved PPE and uniform you'll need will be discussed during your orientation.

Dental assistants must wear safety glasses or face shields during dental procedures. Safety glasses must have solid side shields and cannot be regular prescription glasses. Prescription lenses can be placed in safety glass frames, or you can wear safety glasses which fit over prescription glasses or a face shield over safety glasses.

Personal protective equipment will cost \$50 or more, depending on your individual requirements.

Additional fees

- A fee is associated with obtaining a police information check, including a vulnerable sector check, payable to the police or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).
- You must have your immunizations reviewed by the SAIT Health Clinic. There is a \$75 charge to review vaccine history. Any vaccines you need to be administered will result in additional charges.
- A fee of approximately \$50 to \$100 is associated with an electronic student permit checking submission required for clinical practicum placements, payable to Synergy Gateway through the Verified software platform.
- Basic Life Support (BLS) Provider (Level C) CPR annual updates are required. All CPR courses must be from the Heart and Stroke Foundation.
- You are responsible for additional expenses related to your practicum, including pre-practicum requirements and relocation costs to practicum sites outside of Calgary.
- The National Dental Assisting Examining Board exam fee is approximately \$450. The annual dues of the College of Alberta Dental Assistants are approximately \$300.