

DENTAL ASSISTANT PROGRAM FAQs

Is the Dental Assistant Program Accredited?

The program in dental assisting is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation *[and has been granted the accreditation status of “approval without reporting requirements”]*. The Commission is a specialized accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of Education. The Commission on Dental Accreditation can be contacted at (312) 440-4653 or at 211 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611. The Commission’s web address is: <https://www.ada.org/en/coda>

Why is accreditation important?

“Accreditation in higher education is a self and peer assessment that ensures improvement of academic quality and public accountability”. It also ensures educational standards are being met and allows our graduates to sit for the Dental Assisting National Board exam upon graduation.

What does a Dental Assistant do?

The Dental Assistant Program prepares graduates to work with dentists as they examine and treat patients. Dental Assistants with documented skills also may carry out a variety of laboratory, clinical and office duties. Some dental assistants manage the office and are responsible for patient scheduling and bookkeeping functions. Graduates receive a technical diploma and are eligible to write the certification examination of the Dental Assisting National Board. Most dental assistants work in general or specialized dental offices, either for individual dentists or for groups of dentists. Some dental assistants may choose to work for insurance companies, dental laboratories, or dental supply companies. The dental assistant also may find employment with federal agencies such as the Veterans' Administration, United States Public Health Services, the Armed Forces, or a state, county, or city health facility.

What are typical working conditions like?

Dental Assistants work in a well-lighted, clean environment. Their work area is usually near the dental chair so that they can arrange instruments, materials, and medication and hand them to the dentist when needed. Dental Assistants **must** wear gloves, masks, eyewear, and protective clothing to protect themselves and their patients from infectious diseases. Following safety procedures also minimizes the risks associated with the use of radiographic (x-ray) equipment.

What is the average salary for a Dental Assistant?

Wages vary for Dental Assistant depending upon where they work and their level of experience. According to the U.S. Department of Labor Dental Assistant wages range between \$13.45 & \$27.37. Visit the website for more information: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/dental-assistants.htm>

What is the employment outlook for Dental Assistants?

“Employment of dental assistants is projected to grow 7 percent from 2019 to 2029, faster than the average for all occupations. Ongoing research linking oral health and general health will continue to increase the demand for preventive dental services according to the U.S. Department of Labor. You can view more information [online](#) and search Dental Assistant.

Can I work as a Dental Assistant in Wisconsin and Minnesota if I attend Northwood Tech's Dental Assistant program?

No, MN has additional requirements. See [online](#) for more information on the requirements for each state.

How can I learn more about this profession and related organizations?

Click on the following websites to gain more insight into the dental assistant profession and related professional organizations:

- [American Dental Assistant Association](#)
- [American Dental Association](#)
- [U.S. department of Labor](#) and search for Dental Assistant

Are there specific requirements? / Who is eligible?

This program is open to anyone, who is at least 18 years of age, with an interest in helping people as a healthcare professional and possessing the ability to be flexible, empathic, non-judgmental, able to handle emotional situations, display a caring attitude, handle many hours of physical work, organize time and tasks effectively, and communicate effectively.

Please note: A *Criminal Background Check* will be required of all students. Students with arrest and conviction records may not be hired in hospitals, clinics, and other workplaces with such requirements or policy guidelines and may be prevented from participating in this program.

How long will it take to complete?

This is a 33-credit program that runs for 2 full semesters.

When do classes meet?

Class meeting times vary, however core courses run Monday-Thursday. Please contact an Admissions Advisor for more specific information.

Is there a lot of homework?

Reading and studying are necessary to learn the skills necessary to correctly and safely complete the Dental Assistant program. Students will be given assignments to complete outside of class and be assessed on their instructional and clinical knowledge.

What are the attendance requirements? / Will an absence affect my grade?

In many courses, students will be assessed on their contribution, or class participation. Students cannot be graded on attendance; however, attendance **is expected for all classes**. The value of student participation will be assessed. If the student is absent, they will not receive the participation points. The loss of these points will reflect a lower grade. Much of what will be learned in the classroom is instructional and “hands-on” practice. Students cannot learn when they are not present in class.

Will there be an advisor available to help me?

One of the Dental Assistant instructors will be the academic advisor to the program students. Office hours will be posted for individual assistance and advice for each of the instructors teaching in the program.

What are the costs?

Each year, the Northwood Tech Board announces the credit costs for classes. Students are charged tuition based upon the number of credits they are enrolled in. Additional costs may be assessed for background checks, lab fees, required personal equipment, or special clothing. This depends upon the program and course. A cost sheet for this program is available and is included in the orientation packet.

Would I be eligible for financial aid?

The Dental Assistant program qualifies for Financial Aid assistance. See [Northwood Tech's website](#) for financial aid information and online FASFA application. Or come to any campus Student Services office to pick up informational pieces and paper financial aid forms.

When do I have to pay for the classes?

Students must pay for any course that they are registered in before they attend. Currently, students must pay seven days prior to the start of the semester. If you are registering within a week of the semester start, payment or financial arrangements must be made at the time of registration.

Will I have the same campus privileges as other students?

All Northwood Tech students are treated with respect and hold the same privileges.

When do classes start?

A full schedule of the classes is available from Student Services.

What is the registration deadline?

We accept registrations up to the first day of class. If you wait too long, classes may be filled. We encourage you to apply early and meet with a counselor. ***If you wish to receive financial aid you must begin this process at least 4 weeks before the beginning of the semester.*

What do I need to do to sign up? / What's the next step?

Stop in or call the Admissions Advisor at your local Northwood Tech campus to begin the admissions process. You may also begin the admissions process [online](#). The Application is available online. You will complete the application for Northwood Tech, pay a non-refundable admission fee, complete an admissions test, and meet with a Counselor to discuss goals and academic strengths. You may also receive Financial Aid information and have questions answered.

Whom should I contact for more information?

Interested students should contact the Admissions Advisor at their local campus. 800-243-9482