

# Unqualified dental assistants have six months to register

Unqualified, but experienced dental assistants have six months from 7 April 2017 to register with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), or face not being able to practise at all in South Africa.

This follows the Supreme Court of Appeal in November 2015, confirming the decision of the North Gauteng High Court that dental assistants have to be regulated in order to protect the public and themselves.



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As a result, the Professional Board for Dental Therapy and Oral Hygiene submitted a recommendation to the minister of health that would allow for unqualified yet experienced dental assistants to register with the HPCSA.

The condition of such registration would be that these dental assistants would have a period of six months from the date of promulgation of such regulations in which to register, and a further proviso would be that they have a period of two years from the date of their registration to successfully complete a board examination.

Candidates will be offered a defined number of opportunities to write the exams, which will be offered in all provinces on numerous occasions.

Failure to successfully complete the board examination after the two-year post-registration period will see the dental assistant registered in this category being unable to renew their registration, and thus be unable to practise as a dental

assistant in South Africa.

The required application form and examination guidelines are available on the HPCSA [website](#).

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