Orthodontics
Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan
November 2022

Faculty / Affiliated University College	Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry	
Degrees Offered	Master of Clinical Dentistry (MCID)	
Date of Last Review	2013-2014	
Approved Fields	N/A	
External Reviewers	Dr. Carlos Flores-Mir, School of Dentistry University of Alberta	Dr. Sunjay Suri, Faculty of Dentistry University of Toronto
Internal Reviewers	Dr. Kamran Siddiqui, Associate Dean (Graduate) Faculty of Engineering	
Date of Site Visit	August 17 and 19, 2022	
Date Review Report Received	August 30, 2022	
Date Program/Faculty Response Received	October 24, 2022	
Evaluation	Good Quality	
Approval Dates	SUPR-G: November 28, 2022 ACA: January 11, 2023 Senate (for information only): January 20, 2023	
Year of Next Review	Year of next cyclical review: 2028-2029	
Progress Report	June 2025	

Overview of Western's Cyclical Review Assessment Reporting Process

In accordance with Western's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), the Final Assessment Report (FAR) provides a summary of the cyclical review, internal responses, and assessment and evaluation of the Orthodontics Program delivered by the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry.

This FAR considers the following documents:
- the program's self-study brief;
- the external reviewers' report;
- the response from the Program; and
- the response from the Dean, Schulich School of medicine and Dentistry.

This FAR identifies the strengths of the program and opportunities for program enhancement and improvement and details the recommendations of the external reviewers – noting those recommendations to be prioritized for implementation.

The Implementation Plan details the recommendations from the FAR that have been selected for implementation, identifies who is responsible for approving and acting on the recommendations, specifies any action or follow-up that is required, and defines the timeline for completion.

The FAR (including Implementation Plan) is sent for approval through the Senate Graduate Program Review Committee (SUPR-G) and ACA, then for information to Senate and to the Ontario Universities' Council on Quality Assurance. Subsequently, it is publicly accessible on Western's IQAP website. The FAR is the only document from the graduate cyclical review process that is made public; all other documents are confidential to Western's Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry, the Orthodontics program, the School of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS), and SUPR-G

Executive Summary

Established in 1973, the Graduate Orthodontics Program was the first graduate clinical program in Dentistry at Western University and is one of five in all of Canada. The program is 36 consecutive months (9 terms), admitting three students and graduating three students each year with a Master of Clinical Dentistry degree (M.Cl.D.).

The purpose of the program is to provide the academic background and clinical experience appropriate to the Specialty of Orthodontics. The program is fully accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC). Graduates are eligible for licensing in Canada and the United States, as well as in Australia and Ireland, after completion of the required licensing examinations.

Initiated at a program faculty retreat in December 2020, the self-study was conducted with participation from both full-time and part-time faculty. Topics associated with the enhancement of the program included: appointing a new Chair of the program and hiring a second full-time faculty member, increasing the number of enclosed rooms in the clinic, prospectively developing a course on the “Business of Orthodontics” in partnership with the Ivey Business School.

The external reviewers shared a positive assessment of the Orthodontics Program. They offer five recommendations for further enhancement and several suggestions for consideration.

Strengths and Innovative Features Identified by the Program

- Faculty and students of the Graduate Orthodontic pProgram pursue multidisciplinary research opportunities, in both basic science and clinical disciplines, with departments across campus.
- Availability of funding for students to attend conferences, and hands-on technique courses, is provided by the divisional budget, as well as support from the American Association of Orthodontists, the Canadian Association of Orthodontists, and corporate sponsorship.
- The biennial Alumni Meeting brings in prominent orthodontic speakers to provide a day-long continuing education program to program alumni and current residents.
- A robust process for ongoing evaluation which includes regularly scheduled meetings with full-time faculty, staff, and students to discuss program and clinic operations issues in addition to the formal evaluations done biannually.
- The newly established Antonios Mamandras Endowed Chair in Graduate Orthodontics – the first endowed chair of its kind in Canada.

Concerns and Areas of Improvement Identified and Discussed by the Program

- Recruit additional full-time faculty members to assist existing faculty members in their educational and research undertakings.
- Explore opportunities to increase fields of study offered by the program.

Review Process

As part of the external review, the review committee, comprising two external reviewers, one internal reviewer and a graduate student reviewer, were provided with Volume I and II of the self-study brief in advance of the scheduled review and then met virtually (due to pandemic restrictions) over two days with the:

- Vice-Provost of the School of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies
- Associate Vice-Provost of the School of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies
- Vice-Provost, Academic Planning, Policy and Faculty
- Dean, Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry
- Associate Dean, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
- Vice Dean and Director, Dentistry
- Program Director and Assistant Dean, Postgraduate Dental Education
- Associate University Librarian
- Graduate Program and Department Staff
- Program Faculty Members
- Graduate Students

Following the virtual site visit, the external reviewers submitted a comprehensive report of their findings which was sent to the Program and Dean for review and response. Formative documents, including Volumes I and II of the Self-Study, the External Report, and the Program and Decanal responses form the basis of this Final Assessment Report (FAR) of the Orthodontics Program. The FAR is collated and submitted to the SGPS and to SUPR-G by the Internal Reviewer with the support of the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement.

Summative Assessment – External Reviewers' Report

"The reviewers were unanimous in noting that the overall sentiment of the members of the program, including its graduate students, staff and faculty members was positive and supportive of the program's goals and success."

Strengths of the Program

- Candidates routinely complete the program within the stipulated time of 36 months and are successful in the National Dental Specialty Examination.

- Clinical, didactic and research components of the program run concurrently, ensuring that students are constantly engaged in all these aspects of the program throughout their training.
- An improvement in the publication of the degree program thesis in peer-reviewed journals.
- In comparison with other Canadian Graduate Orthodontic Programs, a significant strength of Western's program is the unwavering support and commitment from their Alumni.

Areas of Concern or Prospective Improvement

1. A clear distinction of roles and assigned tasks for the Program Chair, Program Director, Clinic Director and faculty members will be important.
2. Supervisory loads are inequitably distributed as there is only one primary faculty member who is handling nearly the entire supervisory load.
3. Due to pandemic-related challenges, the present cohort commenced in September instead of the historical June start. A consultation process, involving internal stakeholders and School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, is needed to identify the best start date for future cohorts and to clarify program milestones, which should be provided to the current and future graduate students in a timely manner.
4. Where the program assistant is presently located is less readily accessible to the students and staff of the program.
5. There is a need for additional capacity among the specialized Orthodontic Assistants.
6. Further consideration should be given to the distribution of course workload, in particular term 3 appears to be disproportionally overloaded with course work.
7. Greater collaboration among supporting faculty members can further enhance research possibilities and experiences for students in the future.

Summary of the Reviewers' Recommendations and Program/Faculty Responses

The following are the reviewers' recommendations in the order listed by the external reviewers. Recommendations requiring implementation have been marked with an asterisk (*).

Reviewers' Recommendation	Program/Faculty Response
1. That at least one more full-time faculty member with a primary faculty member appointment be recruited, with clearly defined sharing of teaching, scholarly, clinical and administrative responsibilities between the program chair/director and the new faculty member.	**Program:** The process to recruit a new Chair and Program Director is almost complete; this will restore the full-time faculty compliment in the program to two members, which is in line with the educational standards of other Graduate Orthodontic Programs. **Faculty:** This was the main issue identified in the review and was fully expected by the program. The second full-time faculty member was the model previously planned, but the pandemic and other complications including filling the program lead position (now solved) slowed the replacement process. The program is to be commended for making this a priority as there are market forces in Orthodontics that will make filling the position challenging. The faculty fully supports the effort of Dentistry to fill the human resource gap.
2. That the program develops a clear start and end date of the 36-month program after consulting with faculty members, students and staff and then communicate these dates effectively to the students.	**Program:** After consultation with various stakeholders to determine the optimal start and end date of the program, it has been decided that a Fall Term start date in early September (with orientation to start in late August), and a middle July end date (to allow completion of board exams, clinical transfers and paperwork) is the optimal solution for the program. This maintains the 9 term (36 month) program with a few weeks of preparation time in the summer to prepare for the new Incoming Class (after the Graduating Class leaves in July). **Faculty:** The faculty reports that the program has already made the decision on a September 1st start date and will implement that as a permanent change for the next student cohort.
3. That the previous balance of three clinic assisting staff specialized in orthodontic assisting duties be restored. *	**Program:** The program agrees that the staffing of knowledgeable and well-trained dental assistants specialized in orthodontics is important to the successful running of a graduate orthodontic program and clinic; and is in an active discussion with the Dean's Office to return to the previous complement of three permanent and specialized orthodontic assistants in the Graduate Orthodontic Clinic. The Director of Dentistry is in full support of this plan. **Faculty:** The faculty supports the program's proposed efforts to fill this important human resource gap.

4. That the workload and physical location of the program assistant be reviewed so that there is adequate support with ease of access to the students, staff and faculty members. *	**Program:** The Program Administrator's role for Post-Graduate Dental Education (PGDE) - which includes Graduate Orthodontics, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, and General Practice Residency - will be reviewed to clearly define and update the responsibilities of the role. Space allocation at the Dental School will also be reviewed to allow the PGDE Program Administrators office to be located closer to the Graduate Orthodontic Program, so that it is nearby and easily accessible to students, staff, and faculty. This will help facilitate the program with close and timely administrative support. The location of the office will also be closer to the University Hospital bridge and its Dental Department, which houses the two other Post-Graduate dental programs at the school (GPR and OMFS), which the role also supports. **Faculty:** The faculty supports the changes proposed by the program to better locate the various program constituents. The faculty will aid in the training of any new administrative hires in the requirements and supports available to work with graduate programs.
5. Regarding the application information listed on the website: a. Clarify that if a candidate does not provide class ranking, they would not qualify for application. It is listed as a requirement. Most dental programs do not provide class ranking. b. Wording about "accredited dental school" should be edited. Accredited only in USA and Canada? It is stated that graduates of "unaccredited" programs will have to provide GRE records but only applicants from "accredited dental programs" can apply according to the initially provided information.*	**Program:** **a.** The Class ranking is asked for, but because some schools do not provide it, the program does not disqualify applicants for non-submission. The program prefers to continue requesting class ranking as it helps the admissions committee understand how well applicants did academically relative to their peers, which is important information for a competitive program like this one. To simplify and clarify the admission requirements, it would be removed as a "requirement", but still "request" that applicants provide it or consent for the program to obtain it directly from the Dean of their dental school. The program website admission requirements will be modified to reflect this change. **b.** Since this is a clinical training program, applicants are required to obtain a dental license to practice in Canada. This is automatic with candidates that graduate from "accredited" dental programs recognized by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC), which currently includes schools from Canada, the USA, Australia, New Zealand, and Ireland. However, the program also accepts applications from those that graduate from "non-accredited" international dental programs not recognized by CDAC, as long as they have successfully completed a Qualifying Program from a Faculty of Dentistry in Canada or have successfully completed the National Dental Examining Board of Canada (NDEB) Equivalency Process. The wording on the website will be updated to clarify these requirements. **Faculty**: The program has provided a detailed response that the faculty supports. The program is working hard to balance the ability to recruit from a diverse pool of applicants, including international ones, while recognizing the necessity of having the student accredited to work with patients. The faculty will help ensure the wording for the requirements reflect those efforts.

Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan provides a summary of the recommendations that require action and/or follow-up. In each case, the Graduate Program Chair, in consultation with the SGPS and the Dean of the Faculty is responsible for enacting and monitoring the actions noted in Implementation Plan.

The number of recommendations prioritized for implementation has been reduced as some are already being actioned, as described in the program and faculty responses above. As a result, the recommendations not appearing in the implementation table are recommendations #1 and the first part of #2.

Recommendation	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
Recommendation #2: Communication of program start/end dates to students, in particular as these relate to the timing of the board exams.	Develop a clear communication plan regarding how program dates and schedules will be shared with students. Make particular reference to the provision of time for students to prepare for the board exams.	Program Director	March 1, 2023
Recommendation #3: That the previous balance of three clinic assisting staff specialized in orthodontic assisting duties be restored.	Finalize a plan and timeline with the Dean's Office to hire an additional specialized Orthodontic Assistant for a total complement of three permanent Orthodontic Assistants in the Graduate Orthodontic Clinic.	Program Director Dean Director of Dentistry	July 1, 2023 (for the plan)

Recommendation #4: That the workload and physical location of the program assistant be reviewed so that there is adequate support with ease of access to the students, staff, and faculty members.	The Program Administrator's role for Post-Graduate Dental Education (PGDE) will be reviewed to: • define and update the responsibilities of the role and ensure adequate training. • relocate the PGDE Program Administrators office closer to the Graduate Orthodontic Program and the Dental Department, which houses the GPR and OMFS programs.	Program Director Dean Director of Dentistry	July 1, 2023
Recommendation #5: Regarding application information on the website: **a.** Clarify if a candidate does not provide class ranking, they would not qualify for application. **b.** Wording about "accredited dental school" should be edited.	**a.** Update the admission requirements on the program website by removing class-ranking as a "requirement" and list it as a "request" that this be provided, or that applicants consent for the program to obtain this directly from the Dean of their dental school. **b.** Revise the wording on website to explain that candidates who: • graduate from "accredited" dental programs recognized by CDAC automatically qualify to obtain a dental license. • graduate from "non-accredited" international dental programs not recognized by CDAC are still eligible as long as they successfully complete a Qualifying Program from a Faculty of Dentistry in Canada or have successfully completed the National Dental Examining Board of Canada (NDEB) Equivalency.	Program Director	February 1, 2023

Other Opportunities for Program Improvement and Enhancement Suggested by the Reviewers

- To create more applied content for graduate orthodontic students, a greater collaboration of clinical faculty members with the course directors from medical sciences such as anatomy is suggested.
- Consider providing a suitable period of time (10-14 days) to graduate students in the third year to prepare and appear in the National Dental Specialty Examination.
- Consider ways of increasing the clinical experience in interceptive orthodontic treatment and digital orthodontic treatment.
- Adjunct and supporting faculty renewal should be deliberately planned, including periods of overlap between the existing and new adjunct faculty.
- Development of a more detailed mapping and visual representation of the program curriculum and how it relates to the Program's Learning Outcomes.