The Supplemental Application for Dental Hygiene Applicants consists of a personal essay which includes input from an Observation experience. Directions for the Personal Essay are listed below.

**Personal Essay Directions:**
All applicants to the Dental Hygiene Program must submit a personal essay which answers the questions listed below. In this essay you have the opportunity to share any experiences or background that illustrates your qualifications. The personal essay will be read by an admissions selection committee.

The committee will evaluate the personal essay based on the following criteria:
1) knowledge of the role of the dental hygienist and
2) an awareness of how the hygienist works with others as a health care provider and
3) an awareness of the challenges of the dental hygiene program

Guidelines for the Personal Essay: The Personal Essay must respond to the following questions, be approximately 1-2 pages, typed and double spaced. Please submit your essay on a separate sheet of paper and be sure to include your name and student number at the top of the page.

1. What are your expectations of the Dental Hygiene Program? Please describe the expectations you have for yourself, your peers, and your instructors.
2. Describe the role of the Dental Hygienist as you understand it based on your experience and your observation of a registered Dental Hygienist. Be sure to take into consideration the standard skills of a hygienist that are listed on the reverse side of the Observation Report Notes.
3. Which qualities do you think you possess that would fit well with the role of a health care provider? Share any experiences or background that illustrates your qualifications.
4. Explain how you envision yourself impacting your patient’s oral health as a member of the dental hygiene profession and the oral health team.

**Preparing for Your Observation**
All applicants to the Dental Hygiene Program must document a four hour observation of a Registered Dental Hygienist in a private practice setting. The objective of this observation is to give applicants the opportunity to observe the daily routine of the Dental Hygienist and to determine if they wish to pursue the necessary education required for an associate degree in Dental Hygiene.

- Make an appointment to observe a Registered Dental Hygienist. (Do not observe a Dentist performing the functions of a Dental Hygienist)
- Familiarize yourself with the list of the Standard Skills for Dental Hygiene listed on the reverse side of the Observation Report Notes form.
- Read the guidelines for the personal essay listed above and take the Observation Report Notes with you to the observation.

**During the Observation You Must:**
1. Observe the various procedures performed by the hygienist.
2. Observe hygienist and patient interaction.
3. Ask questions of the hygienist so you can gain an increased understanding of both the rigors and responsibilities of the profession as well as the education needed to become a hygienist.
4. Dress appropriately and maintain proper decorum during the observation.
5. Take notes, using your Observation Report Notes form, that will help you develop well written responses for your Personal Essay.
Please note: This form is for your records and should not be submitted with your application. Use this page to take notes during your observation.

1. List some of the daily responsibilities of the Dental Hygienist that you observed. What were some of the responsibilities that surprised you?

2. Describe how the Dental Hygienist met the standard skills listed on the reverse side of this form.

3. What did you value most about this observation experience? Explain how this visit has reinforced your reasons for choosing this field.

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**Standard Skills for Dental Hygiene**

- Lift, carry and move equipment and supplies of up to ten pounds.
- Comprehend textbook material at the 11th grade level.
- Retrieve dental supplies from storage areas at different heights.
- Stand for a minimum of two hours.
- Sit for up to four hours at a time.
- Walk for a minimum of six hours, not necessarily consecutively.
- Stoop, bend and twist for a minimum of 30 minutes at a time and be able to repeat this activity at frequent intervals.
- Use upper body movements (up to 5 ft.) to grasp, push/pull, reach overhead equipment, and rotate/reach laterally.
- Perform for a prolonged period without breaks, e.g., typical shift of eight hours.
- Manipulate mechanical and patient care equipment, i.e. dials, switches, push buttons, keyboards, syringes, and blood pressure equipment.
- Maneuver in tight quarters common to dental offices.
- Respond to body sounds through stethoscope.
- Demonstrate sufficient manual dexterity with two hands to manipulate instruments with precision and control in the oral cavity without causing damage to tissues.
- Determine by touch: hotness/coldness, wetness/dryness, hardness/softness and demonstrate the ability to palpate oral tissues appropriately.
- Differentiate among subtle shades of gray as seen in radiographs.
- Wear protective equipment such as gloves, face masks, face shields, and protective eye wear.
- Exhibit the visual acuity with or without corrective lenses to identify changes in oral tissues, such as color, texture and shape of tissues.
- Initiate and use clear, concise oral English communication within a conversational setting: comprehend and clearly and effectively communicate instructions and information in written, oral, and electronic form.
- Respond to requests and directions in a professional manner.
- Gather, analyze, and draw conclusions from data.
- Use appropriately (with appropriate safe-guards) some hazardous materials such as dental materials, disinfecting chemicals, radiographic rays, blood and body fluids.
- Maintain cleanliness and personal grooming consistent with close personal contact.
- Exhibit appropriate professional and social skills in all interactions.
- Function without causing harm to self or others.