**Information for Dental Students – Western Australia, Interstate & Overseas.**

**A. Final Year Dental Students - UWA (Western Australia) and LaTrobe (Victoria)**

**B. Final Year Dental Students - Interstate**

**C. Dental Students - all states, all years**

**D. Dental Students - overseas**

1. **Final Year Dental Students – University of Western Australia & La Trobe University (Victoria).**

Joining CHAT on a mission to Vietnam is a final year option/elective for dental students at UWA and at La Trobe University.

You must have the support of your Dental School for joining CHAT.

We aim to take 2 students per trip.

Final year dental students joining CHAT (from UWA & La Trobe Dental Schools) will have indemnity insurance covered by their university.

Students MUST complete an assignment.

Supervision will be by committee member Chris Lee, not your Trip Leader – queries and submissions to [media@chatinc.org.au](mailto:media@chatinc.org.au)

You must -

* propose this assignment and have it approved.
* Commence their assignment PRIOR to departure and commencement of work in Vietnam.
* Complete their assignment within 14 days after the end of the trip.

Exception: Poster assignments need to be completed prior to departure and before commencement of work in Vietnam.

No joint assignments allowed; rather each student does their own assignment.

Students MUST also provide a short article – see (c).

Assignment requirements:

a) Poster(s) -

A DHE (dental health education) or general health educational poster to be shown and left at Vietnamese schools and institutions.

If your choice is a DHE poster, talk to a paediatric dentist for ideas and suggestions. Chris Lee can place you in contact with such specialist dentists at UWA.

* Posters MUST be bright and colourful, attention seeking, with large print and simple to understand as you are conveying your message to children.
* Posters need to be written and presented in both English and Vietnamese.
* For handing out in Vietnam, your poster MUST be in Vietnamese font. Students can email their finished project in English to a CHAT committee member who is able to translate the English version into Vietnamese, after which the translated version is emailed back to the student.
* A translated version MUST be downloaded on a computer that has a Vietnamese font application – an Anglicised font is not acceptable. Download the Alegreya Sans font.
* You are required to provide 10 laminated copies of your assignment poster – give 2 to the manager or person in charge at each place visited during your CHAT trip (2 copies each day for 5 days). The manager or person in charge should be advised to file one copy and use the other copy as a poster.
* Our aim is for you to be involved with educating and motivating managers, teachers, nurses, others in authority - at schools, temples, hospitals and/or institutions we visit. Learn and practise motivational techniques so these leaders will then continue our DHE message after we leave.
* A half hour, at least, should be allowed for your presentation.

**OR**

b) A project other than a) e.g. research, observations etc

**AND**

c)

A short article (half A4 page) with photos for ADAWA’s newsletter (Western Articulator) for submission in their next issue(s).

Power point presentations, brochures, blog entries, video blog entries, short video clips, information sheets or flyers are permissible.

Suggested areas to cover:

o Where did you go?

o How long for?

o Who did you help?

o What skills did you gain?

o Why should people volunteer their time for CHAT

o Your overall experience

Your assignment or project and your short article may be used in the future for CHAT to use as part of our advertising or marketing to promote CHAT in such places as our website, social media, dental (e)magazines in different states, and by completing your assignment requirements, you are agreeing to this.

You must email a copy to our Secretary, Melanie Chen - [secretary@chatinc.org.au](mailto:secretary@chatinc.org.au) for our records.

**NOTE:**

A Vietnamese font keyboard application is available on a UWA Dental School laptop kept in the office of Admin Coordinator – Dentistry. Students are advised to come and borrow this laptop.

At CHAT HQ (Vietnam) in the DHE box, you’ll find laminated CHAT DHE posters (size A3), General Health posters (size A4) plus DHE Teacher’s Classroom Kits (each kit is 9 x A4 posters in a plastic envelope) – these posters and kits are in Vietnamese and available to hand out one of each to the manager at each place we visit, together (if applicable) with your own poster assignment.

**Assessment**

Final year UWA and LaTrobe students will be given a ‘CHAT Clinical Assessment - Pre-Graduation Interns Vietnam Option’ form.

Each student must ensure they receive this form from the Admin Coordinator / Student Outreach Coordinator– Dentistry - before departure.

If this form is not given to you, ask for one!

The student must hand this form onto the CHAT Trip Leader for assessment of their work and performance while with CHAT.

On completion of the trip, the completed assessment form is returned by the Trip Leader to the final year Dental School Coordinator.

**Before Departure for Vietnam**

* (April trip students only) - Allow a half day orientation at Gabby Ly’s surgery, 11 Victoria Rd, Westminster. Phone: 0400 567 217. You will be shown basics on how to operate and maintain suction machines, dental units and how to handle instruments properly.
* If travelling by budget airline, you will need to pay for 10-15 kg extra preferably when booking your flight as this is cheaper. If you are unable to take our required supplies and equipment, we ask you pay $50 extra on top of your membership fee and ground costs fee, as others will need to take your share and may exceed their luggage limit, incurring excess luggage fees.
* Observe email etiquette by acknowledging emails. Occasionally our emails may end up in your Spam box due to volume mailing – please check.
* Familiarize yourself with the way our clinics are run by diligently completing before departure our required pre reading of Handbooks, protocols, working day duties etc, watching our videos demonstrating clinic setup and sterilizing procedures before departure. This may take 2 to 3 hours.
* Attend our pre-departure meeting held about a month before departure. These are based in Perth; interstate students are encouraged to join online – check with Jennifer Chan - [president@chatinc.org.au](mailto:president@chatinc.org.au)
* Read our handbook Your Vietnam Adventure to orientate yourself as to weather, humidity, local culture, etc.

**In Vietnam**

Overview,

During a trip, we will most likely visit schools in poor areas which are rural and remote. Sometimes we visit orphanages, special needs and other institutions, Buddhist temples, hospitals but this is not guaranteed.

The focus and priority of each CHAT trip is to provide dental health education and dental treatment to poor, needy and disadvantaged children and their carers.

Vietnam is a rapidly developing country however there remain many people who live in poor conditions. A CHAT experience is very unique and interesting. There are challenges, with long workdays totalling up to 10 hours including travel to site, cultural differences, excess noise in clinics, but the experience is very rewarding and worthwhile. Vietnamese people are very warm and friendly and so grateful for CHAT’s help.

Each final year student will have an experienced dentist allocated to supervise them. The dentist may change throughout the trip.

If you feel you need more supervision by your allocated dentist, please let your Trip Leader know.

The Trip Leader will allocate applicable tasks/jobs to the student for the daily workplace. Duties are subject to discretion of Leaders – i.e. whether you assist dentists, assist each other, provide Dental Health Education, do sterilising area duties, do tasks associated with your assignment or do ‘hands on’ treatment, etc.

**DO NOT EXPECT YOUR WORK TO BE ALL HANDS-ON CLINICAL TREATMENT.**

The Trip Leader can restrict or exclude a dental student from undertaking clinical work if the consensus of the Leader and another dentist is that the clinical performance of the student is not to an adequate standard.

On arrival in Vietnam, on the first Saturday morning orientation session, final year dental students: -

* MUST familiarize themselves with features of our dental equipment – including the setting up, running & packing up of dental units and suction units,
* MUST attend a demonstration on how to use our sterilisers and discussion on CHAT steri procedures,
* Familiarize with Occupational Health and Safety documents (go to medical doctor/Medical Box 2 for required information),
* Will be delegated jobs to prepare & pack for the trip – including making up oral hygiene gift bags, packing toys for gifts to children post treatment, checking supplies in DHE boxes are ready for the trip, plus help with any other duties as delegated by the Trip Leader or Head Dental Assistant.
* At the end of your trip – a similar unpack of units and inventory of gift bags and toys is required.
* Plus help with any other duties – ask your Trip Leader or Head Dental Assistant.

On arrival at each work location, first thing in the morning, as matter of priority, final year dental students set up a dedicated DHE/OHI area, then with assistance of an interpreter, start OHI (oral health instruction) lessons with children i.e. give each patient a OHI gift bag & follow CHAT OHI instructions which will have been emailed to you prior to your trip – importantly, please include parents, carers, teachers, managers, supervisors, nurses, other adults, if present. sCopies of OHI instructions are also kept in the DHE box.

We aim for our DHE message to carry on after we leave. It’s important for parents, carers, teachers, managers & others in authority to be teaching correct tooth-brushing technique and dental health education, after we leave.

Meanwhile other volunteers will set up clinic for the day’s work ahead.

At the end of the day – we ask that you and the trip doctor arrange collection of Patient Record Cards for each site for their stats and immediate return to Perth at the end of the trip for archiving. Please keep these cards crease free so they can be scanned easily. Duties also include helping to clean and pack up the clinic to load onto the bus, ready to set up again next morning at a different location.

We also ask of you -

* Students need to realise that a CHAT experience can prove both physically and emotionally challenging or even overwhelming for some. A lot of hard work is involved – some days can be as long as 10 hours (work and travel). This information is not given to dishearten you but rather to prepare you for the experience.
* You must be ready to improvise, be adaptable and to work as a team member under all circumstances. You must be flexible, resilient and prepared to deal with conditions which are not planned for. CHAT working conditions are very different than working in a purpose-built dental clinic in Australia with air conditioning, good lighting, etc. Our places of work in Vietnam will very likely not be air-conditioned, will lack good lighting, have no dental chairs (we improvise with benches and tables), and be noisy. The weather is almost always hot, often wet, very humid and sticky. The workload is busy and demanding - often with so many children and adult carers to be seen and treated. The clinic may be set up in a large room/hall – otherwise in unused room(s), or possibly on an outside veranda.

**Summary:**

Before departure –

1. Check indemnity insurance covered by your university.
2. Propose assignment, get approval, start assignment.
3. Research motivational techniques to aid in your DHE/OHI demonstrations.
4. Pack clinical assessment form for your CHAT Trip Leader to fill in.
5. (April trip) – Local orientation at Gabby Ly’s practice – dental units, suction machines, use of instruments.
6. Allow for carrying 10 to 15 kg of CHAT supplies and equipment when booking airfares.
7. Read pre trip CHAT information/documents and watch videos on clinic workings.
8. Attend pre departure meeting, either in person or online.

On return –

1. Arrange for Patient Record Cards to go with a trip member back to Perth for scanning/archiving
2. Complete assignment(s) within 14 days – items b) and c) above if applicable and submit to CHAT Secretary.

**B. Final Year Dental Students – Interstate:**

Joining CHAT on a mission to Vietnam may become a final year option/elective for Australian interstate dental students.   
To date, arrangements outside Western Australia exist only with LaTrobe Dental School (Victoria), whereby 2 final year dental students join CHAT as a clinical elective each CHAT September trip.

All other states final year dental students join as a “dental assistant”.

Relevant for you to read (above sections):

1. [Before Departure for Vietnam](#bookmark=id.m47vyw4l3yvd) – as for UWA students
2. [In Vietnam](#bookmark=id.ubcx8u24zjq)

**C. Dental Students - (all years/all states):**

May apply to join a CHAT trip to Vietnam, during their vacation time, but only with the knowledge and prior approval of your Dental School.   
**On these visits you are a “dental assistant”. NO hands-on patient treatment is permitted.**

CHAT would need direct communication from your Dental School that they approve your participation.

Relevant for you to read (above sections):

1. [Before Departure for Vietnam](#bookmark=id.m47vyw4l3yvd) – as for UWA students

2. [In Vietnam](#bookmark=id.ubcx8u24zjq)

**D. Dental Students – Overseas:**

May apply to join CHAT in Vietnam working as a “dental assistant”, but only with the knowledge and prior approval of your Dental School. CHAT would need direct communication/approval from your Dental School before you join.

**NO hands-on patient treatment is permitted.**

Relevant for you to read are sections for UWA students/LaTrobe students:

1. [Before Departure for Vietnam](#bookmark=id.m47vyw4l3yvd) – as for UWA students

2[. In Vietnam](#bookmark=id.ubcx8u24zjq)

*Last updated August 2023*