

## Entry requirements and training (dentistry)

This page has information on the entry requirements and training needed for a career in dentistry.

Becoming a dentist involves at least five years' study at dental school, followed by one or two years of supervised practice. There is intense competition for places at dental schools. Most entrants will require three As at A-level, although one year pre-dental courses are offered by some dental schools which broadens access to other students.



If you decide to train as a dentist, as well as meeting academic entry requirements, you'll need a willingness to learn about human anatomy and oral disease. All members of the dental team are now required to learn this to an extent. However, a dentist's knowledge is required to be especially thorough. Throughout your career, scientific knowledge will need to be updated as methods and theories of disease change.

You'll need to be able to put patients at ease, gain their confidence and deal sympathetically with their fears. You will hold a position of trust, so you will need to behave with integrity, tact

and understanding. You will need to be able to communicate well with everyone from toddlers to the elderly.

It's also important for you to be able to lead your team effectively, so good managerial and administrative skills are essential.

## Training and development

Dental education comprises three stages:

- undergraduate dental education
- postgraduate dental training
- continuing professional development

### Undergraduate dental education

To qualify as a dentist you must complete five years' training for a degree at university. You will spend much of the five years learning practical skills as well as attending academic lectures and seminars. You will get experience of a range of hospital and community clinics where you will treat patients under close supervision.

### Financial support while studying at university

Find out about financial support while studying dentistry at university <sup>[1]</sup>

### Postgraduate dental training

This comprises dental [foundation training](#) <sup>[2]</sup>, dental core training and specialist training.

### Continuing professional development

Once you have successfully completed your undergraduate dental education, you will need to register with the General Dental Council (GDC) so that you can practise as a qualified dentist. As soon as you have registered with the GDC and throughout your career, you will need to undertake continuing professional development to be allowed to continue to practise.

## The General Dental Council (GDC)

The GDC sets the standards for UK dental education at undergraduate and postgraduate level. It publishes its requirements on the content and scope of undergraduate dental degree programmes (and of dental hygiene, dental therapy and dental nursing courses).

All new degree programmes and courses must meet these requirements and be GDC-approved.

## Want to learn more?

- Find out more about studying dentistry at university <sup>[3]</sup>.
- The Studying Healthcare website <sup>[4]</sup> which is supported by the Dental Schools Council,

has detailed information, tips and resources for those applying for dentistry.

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**Source URL:** <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/roles-dental-team/dentist/entry-requirements-and-training-dentistry>

#### **Links**

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/study-and-training/considering-or-university/financial-support-university/funding-through-nhs/financial-support-medical-and-dental-2>

[2] [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Foundation\\_training](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Foundation_training)

[3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university/studying-career-dental-team>

[4] <https://studyinghealthcare.ac.uk/>