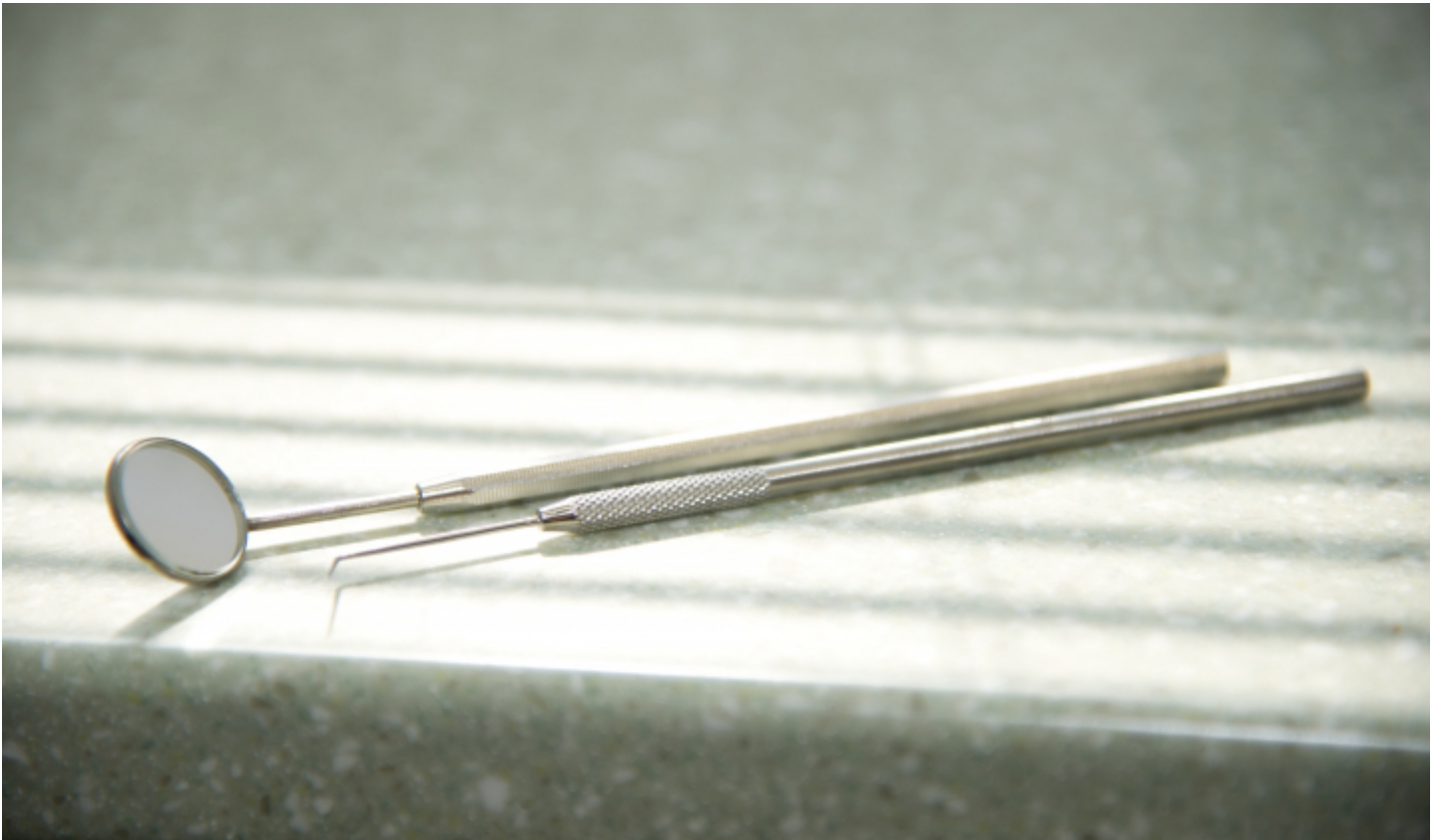


Dental hygienist

Dental hygienists are an important part of the dental team, preventing dental problems in adults and children.

Working life

You'll help children and adults look after their teeth and gums. Sometimes you might be working on a one-to-one basis while on occasion you'll work with groups of people.



You'll carry out procedures such as:

- scaling teeth (at times under local anaesthetic)
- polishing teeth
- applying topical fluoride and fissure sealants

You are likely to work in general dental practices but there are job opportunities in hospitals and community dental services .

Your work as a dental hygienist will save teeth by preventing and treating gum disease, helping people get rid of associated problems like bad breath. The dentist will usually advise you and help direct your work,

although it's now possible for hygienists and therapists who have extra training to set up their own practices or work independently in a dental practice so they can see patients without them seeing a dentist first.

In the community, you could work with people with a wide range of special or additional needs. If you are based in a hospital, you will help patients who may have had major surgery or complicated orthodontic treatment or have particular medical conditions. The hospital patients you see may be very ill, apprehensive or unsure after life-changing surgery.

Entry requirements, skills and interests

You'll need five GCSE subjects graded 4-7 or A-C, plus two or three A levels (depending on the university) or a recognised dental nursing qualification to get on to a dental hygiene course. Good people and communication skills are very important and as you might work in different settings, you'll need to enjoy a job with plenty of variety.

Training

To practise as a dental hygienist, you need to take a course approved by the General Dental Council (GDC) [1] and then need to register with the GDC.

Subjects studied include:

- anatomy and physiology [2]
- preventive dentistry
- dental health education
- dental pathology
- the management and care of patients

Several dental schools offer courses combining dental hygiene and dental therapy.

Career development

With experience, you can progress to become a practice manager, train other dental hygienists or develop further skills such as sedation or tooth whitening. You could also work as an orthodontic therapist.

Pay and benefits

Dental hygienists may be self-employed or employed directly by a dental practice so your working hours and pay will vary but some evening or weekend work may be required.

If you work for the the NHS in a hospital or community clinic, your starting salary might be at bands 5 or 6 of the Agenda for Change [3] pay scale. You'll typically work 37.5 hours a week.

-

Find your course to become a dental hygienist

Expand /
collapse

Region

- Any -

Type of qualification

- Any -

Full or part time

- Any -

Search

Displaying 1 - 5 of 21 matches

BSc (Hons) Oral Health

London, Queen Mary, University of London (Barts and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry)

View course Opens in a new window
[4]

Region **London**

Type of course
Undergraduate

Full or part time
Full time

Duration
3 years

Contact details
e.c.philogene@qmul.ac.uk [5] **020 7882 8157**

Course webpage <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/undergraduate/coursefinder/courses/2020/oral-health/> [4]

Admissions address

2 Newark Street
Whitechapel
London
E1 2AT

Course webpage <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/undergraduate/coursefinder/courses/2020/oral-health/> [4]

BSc Oral Health Sciences

Edinburgh, University of

View course Opens in a new window
[6]

Region **Scotland**

Type of course
Undergraduate

Full or part time

Full time

Duration

4 years

Contact details

oralug@ed.ac.uk [7] **0131 242 6407**

Course webpage <http://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/undergraduate/degrees/index.php> [8]

Admissions address

The Chancellor's Building, 2nd Floor

49 Little France Crescent

Edinburgh

EH16 4SB

Course webpage <http://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/undergraduate/degrees/index.php> [8]

BSc Oral Health Science

Glasgow Caledonian University

View course [Opens in a new window](#)

[9]

Region **Scotland**

Type of course

Undergraduate

Full or part time

Full time

Duration

3 years

Contact details

studentenquiries@gcu.ac.uk [10] **0141 331 8630**

Course webpage <http://www.gcu.ac.uk/study/courses/details/index.php/P02679> [9]

Admissions address

Cowcaddens Road

Glasgow

G4 0BA

Course webpage <http://www.gcu.ac.uk/study/courses/details/index.php/P02679> [9]

BSc (Hons) Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy

Teesside University

View course [Opens in a new window](#)
[11]

Region **North East**

Type of course
Undergraduate

Full or part time
Full time

Duration
3 years

Contact details
shlsadmissions@tees.ac.uk [12] **01642 384110**

Course webpage http://www.tees.ac.uk/prospectus/ug/UG_course.cfm [13]

Admissions address

Centuria Building
Middlesbrough
Tees Valley
TS1 3BA

Course webpage http://www.tees.ac.uk/prospectus/ug/UG_course.cfm [13]

BSc (Hons) Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy

Leeds, University of

View course [Opens in a new window](#)
[14]

Region **Yorkshire and The Humber**

Type of course
Undergraduate

Full or part time
Full time

Duration

3 years

Contact details

denadmissions@leeds.ac.uk [15] **0113 343 9922**

Course webpage <https://courses.leeds.ac.uk/i125/dental-hygiene-and-dental-therapy-bsc> [14]

Admissions address

Clarendon Way

Leeds

LS2 9LU

Course webpage <https://courses.leeds.ac.uk/i125/dental-hygiene-and-dental-therapy-bsc> [14]

- Load more [16]

Other roles that may interest you

- Dental nurse [17]
- Dental support worker [18]
- Dentist [19]
- Dental technician/dental technologist [20]

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/roles-dental-team/dental-hygienist>

Links

[1] <http://www.gdc-uk.org/Pages/default.aspx>

[2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Physiology>

[3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/working-health/working-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates>

[4] <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/undergraduate/coursefinder/courses/2020/oral-health/>

[5] [mailto: e.c.philogene@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:e.c.philogene@qmul.ac.uk)

[6] <http://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/undergraduate/degrees/index.php?action=programme&code=A900>

[7] [mailto: oralug@ed.ac.uk](mailto:oralug@ed.ac.uk)

[8] <http://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/undergraduate/degrees/index.php?action=programme&code=A900>

[9] <http://www.gcu.ac.uk/study/courses/details/index.php/P02679>

[10] [mailto: studentenquiries@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:studentenquiries@gcu.ac.uk)

[11] http://www.tees.ac.uk/prospectus/ug/UG_course.cfm?courseid=593&fos=9&fossb=25

[12] [mailto: shlsadmissions@tees.ac.uk](mailto:shlsadmissions@tees.ac.uk)

[13] http://www.tees.ac.uk/prospectus/ug/UG_course.cfm?courseid=593&fos=9&fossb=25

[14] <https://courses.leeds.ac.uk/i125/dental-hygiene-and-dental-therapy-bsc>

[15] [mailto: denadmissions@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:denadmissions@leeds.ac.uk)

[16] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/printpdf/72?page=1>

[17] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/roles-dental-team/dental-nurse>

[18] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/Explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/dental-support-worker>

[19] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/roles-dental-team/dentist>

[20] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/roles-dental-team/dental-techniciandental-technologist>