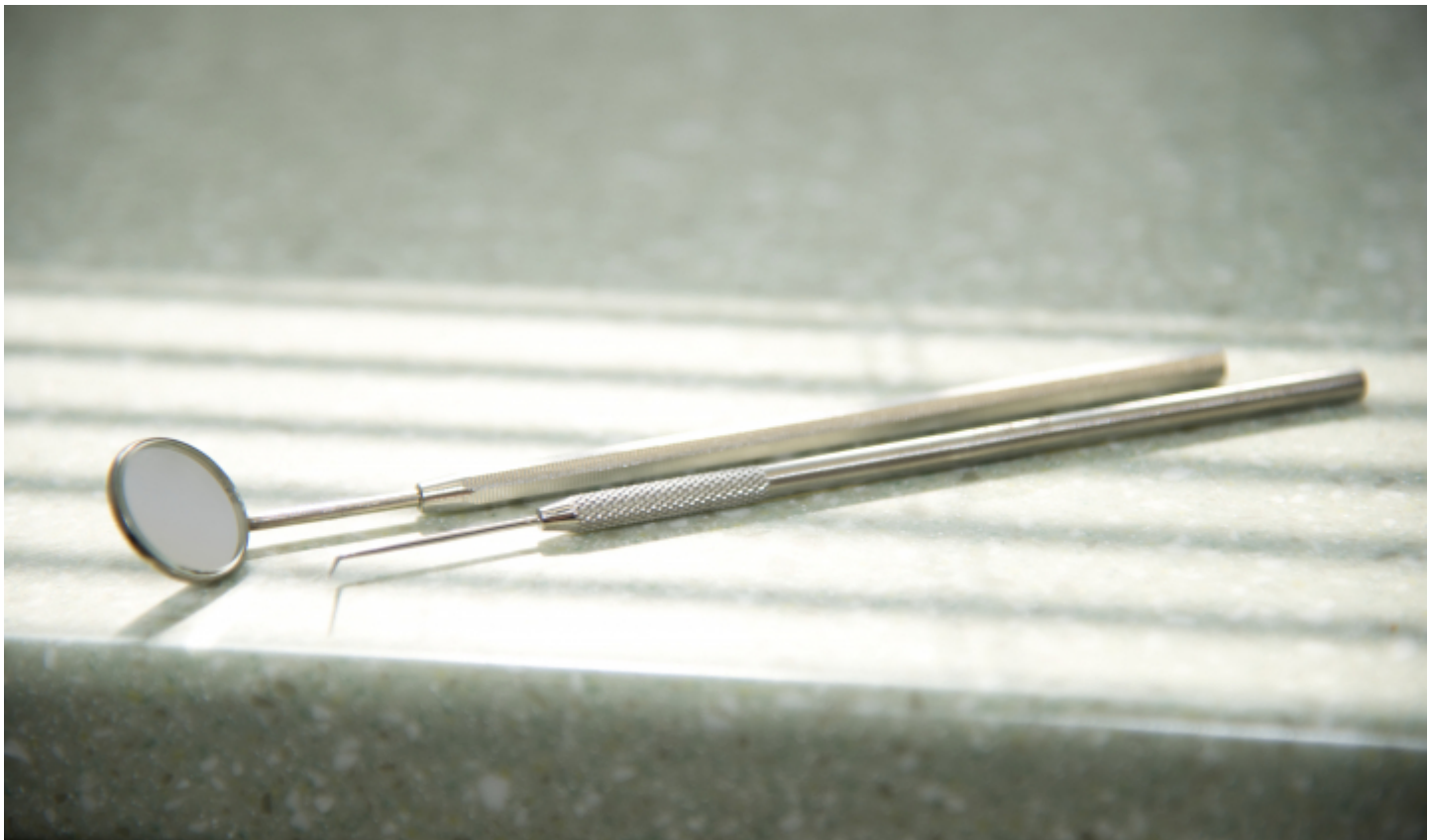


Dental hygienist

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 6 - 10 of 21 matches

BSc Oral Health Sciences

Dundee, University of Opens in a new window

View course Opens in a new window

^[4]

- Region
 - Scotland
- Type of course
 - Undergraduate
- Full or part time
 - Full time
- Duration
 - 3 years
- Contact details
 - contactus@dundee.ac.uk ^[5]
 - 01382 38 38 38
 - More information regarding the course webpage <http://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/ug/oral-health-sciences/> ^[4]

○

Admissions address

Dundee Dental School
Park Place
Dundee
DD1 4HN

- Course webpage (All course links open in new window)
More information regarding the course webpage (link opens in new window)
<http://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/ug/oral-health-sciences/> [4]

DipHE Dental Hygiene

Cardiff University Opens in a new window

View course Opens in a new window

[6]

- Region
 - Wales
- Type of course
 - Undergraduate
- Full or part time
 - Full time
- Duration
 - 2 years
- Contact details
 - dentalugadmissions@cardiff.ac.uk [7]
 - 029 2074 2468
 - More information regarding the course webpage
<https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/2021/dental-hygiene-diplom...> [6]
- Admissions address
 - Heath Park
 - Cardiff
 - CF14 4XY
- Course webpage (All course links open in new window)
More information regarding the course webpage (link opens in new window)
<https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/2021/dental-hygiene-diplom...> [6]

BSc (Hons) Dental Therapy and Dental Hygiene

Cardiff University Opens in a new window

View course Opens in a new window

[8]

- Region
 - Wales
 - Type of course
 - Undergraduate
 - Full or part time
 - Full time
 - Duration
 - 3 years
- Contact details
 - dentalugadmissions@cardiff.ac.uk ^[7]
 - 029 2074 2468
 - More information regarding the course webpage
<https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/2021/dental-therapy-and-hy...> ^[8]
- Admissions address
 - Heath Park
 - Cardiff
 - CF14 4XY
- Course webpage (All course links open in new window)
 - More information regarding the course webpage (link opens in new window)
<https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/2021/dental-therapy-and-hy...> ^[8]

BSc Oral Health Science

Manchester, University of Opens in a new window

View course Opens in a new window

^[9]

- Region
 - North West
 - Type of course
 - Undergraduate
 - Full or part time
 - Full time
 - Duration
 - 3 years
- Contact details
 - ug.dentistry@manchester.ac.uk ^[10]
 - 0161 306 0231
 - More information regarding the course webpage
<https://www.manchester.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/2020/00626/bsc-oral-hea...> ^[9]
- Admissions address

Higher Cambridge Street
Manchester
M15 6FH

- Course webpage (All course links open in new window)
More information regarding the course webpage (link opens in new window)
<https://www.manchester.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/2020/00626/bsc-oral-hea...> [9]

FdSc Oral Health Science

Essex, University of Opens in a new window

View course Opens in a new window

[11]

- Region
 - East of England
- Type of course
 - Undergraduate
- Full or part time
 - Full time
- Duration
 - 2 years
- Contact details
 - admit@essex.ac.uk [12]
 - 01206 873666
 - More information regarding the course webpage
<https://www.essex.ac.uk/courses/ug00320/1/fdsc-oral-health-science> [11]
- Admissions address
 - Southend Campus
 - Elmer Approach
 - Southend on Sea
 - Essex
 - SS1 1LW
- Course webpage (All course links open in new window)
More information regarding the course webpage (link opens in new window)
<https://www.essex.ac.uk/courses/ug00320/1/fdsc-oral-health-science> [11]

This course qualifies you to register with the General Dental Council as a dental hygienist.

- Load more Loadmore Page [13]

Other roles that may interest you

- Dental nurse ^[14]
- Dental support worker ^[15]
- Dentist ^[16]
- Dental technician/dental technologist ^[17]

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/roles-dental-team/dental-hygienist?page=1>

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] <http://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/ug/oral-health-sciences/>

[5] [mailto: contactus@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:contactus@dundee.ac.uk)

[6] <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/2021/dental-hygiene-diploma>

[7] [mailto: dentalugadmissions@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:dentalugadmissions@cardiff.ac.uk)

[8] <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/2021/dental-therapy-and-hygiene-bsc>

[9] <https://www.manchester.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/2020/00626/bsc-oral-health-science/>

[10] [mailto: ug.dentistry@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:ug.dentistry@manchester.ac.uk)

[11] <https://www.essex.ac.uk/courses/ug00320/1/fdsc-oral-health-science>

[12] [mailto: admit@essex.ac.uk](mailto:admit@essex.ac.uk)

[13] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/printpdf/72?page=2>

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

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

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

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