Dental nurse

A dental nurse supports the dentist in all aspects of patients’ dental care.

Working life

You may help with reception work and could help any member of the dental team - dentists, clinical dental technicians/technologists, hygienists and therapists – treat patients of all ages.

Some patients will be there for a check-up while others will have more complicated treatment. You’ll need to reassure people and put them at ease, while supporting the team in all aspects of patient care.

In a dental practice, you'll welcome patients and provide direct support with the treatment itself:

- taking responsibility for the decontamination of instruments
- maintaining dental operating equipment
- ensuring that all relevant materials and supplies are in place
- looking after patient records – including making notes when the dentist is examining a patient
- working closely with the dentist [1], responding quickly to requests and generally keeping the surgery ready for use

You'll also be responsible for ensuring high standards of cleanliness and control of infection.

Entry requirements

You can usually work as a trainee dental nurse without academic qualifications but to progress to being a qualified dental nurse, you’ll need to study for a course in dental nursing, either part or full time, that is approved by the General Dental Council [2]. Exact course requirements will vary from provider to provider, but a minimum 2 GCSEs (4/C grade or above) in English language and maths or a science subject are usually required for part-time courses.
Full-time degree level courses may require A-levels or equivalent level 3 qualifications. A level 3 apprenticeship in dental nursing is an additional way to gain the required qualifications in dental nursing.

**Must have skills**

Tact and discretion are important qualities for a dental nurse - you will be handling confidential patient information and caring for people who may be anxious. You must be happy to work as part of a team and willing to learn and understand the science behind dentistry. You’ll be dealing with a broad range of people, each with their own characteristics and concerns so you’ll need to be tactful and friendly and able to offer advice and educate others. You will often need to follow instructions from the dentist.

You’ll need to reassure people and put them at ease.

You also need to be able to demonstrate the values of the NHS Constitution [3].

**Career development**

With extra training you could take x-rays and clinical photographs, take impressions, make models of teeth and apply fluoride varnish to prevent tooth decay. With experience you could training to be a dental hygienist [4], dental therapist [5] or orthodontic therapists. You can also acquire additional skills such as impression-taking and providing fluoride varnish as part of dental public health programmes.

**Pay and benefits**

Most dental nurses in the NHS work standard hours, which are likely to be around 37.5 a week. They may work some evenings. Your starting salary will usually be between band 3 and band 4 of the Agenda for Change pay rates [6] but some senior dental nurses will start at band 5 or higher.

Terms and conditions may vary for those dental nurses not directly employed by the NHS.

- Live vacancies
  - View Vacancy [7]

**Trainee Dental Nurse**

Exeter, EX2 4SG

- **Salary:**

  National Minimum Wage
Trainee Dental Nurse

Exeter, EX2 4SG

Salary:
National Minimum Wage

Type:
Fixed term

Employer:
Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise Community Interest Company

Dental Nurse

Mansfield, NG18 5QJ

Salary:
£21,892 – £24,157 per annum, pro rata

Type:
Fixed term
Employer:
Community Dental Services CIC

Dental Nurse
Oxford, OX4 1XD

Salary:
£21,892 - £24,157 per annum

Type:
Permanent

Employer:
Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust

Dental Nurse
Derbyshire, S40 2AB

Salary:
£21,892 – £24,157 per annum

Type:
Permanent

Employer:
Community Dental Services CIC
Dental Nurse
Noriwch, NR2 3TU

- **Salary:**
  
  £21,892 – £24,157 per annum

- **Type:**
  
  Permanent

- **Employer:**
  
  Community Dental Services CIC

- View Vacancy

Find your course to become a dental nurse

Expand / collapse

Region
- Any -

Type of qualification
- Any -

Full or part time
- Any -

Search

Displaying 1 - 5 of 11 matches

**CertHE Dental Nurse Practice**

Teesside University

View course  Opens in a new window

[12]

Region **North East**

Type of course **Undergraduate**

Full or part time **Full time**
Duration
1 year

Contact details
shlsadmissions@tees.ac.uk [13] 01642 384110

Course webpage http://www.tees.ac.uk/prospectus/ug/UG_course.cfm [14]

Admissions address
Middlesbrough
Tees Valley
TS1 3BA

Course webpage http://www.tees.ac.uk/prospectus/ug/UG_course.cfm [14]

**NEBDN National Diploma in Dental Nursing**

National Examining Board for Dental Nurses (NEBDN)

View course Opens in a new window [15]

Region All UK

Type of course
Undergraduate

Full or part time
In service

Duration
Various

Contact details
info@nebdn.org [16] 01772 429917


Admissions address
110 London Street
Fleetwood
Lancashire
FY7 6EU

The NEBDN National Diploma in Dental Nursing is delivered by a large number of training centres across the UK. For further information about the qualification and to get the details of the training centres registered with NEBDN to deliver them, please visit the NEBDN website above.

**FdSc Dental Nursing**

Northampton, University of

View course Opens in a new window [17]

Region **East Midlands**

Type of course **Undergraduate**

Full or part time **Full time**

Duration **2 years**

Contact details
study@northampton.ac.uk [18] **0300 303 2772**

Course webpage http://www.northampton.ac.uk/study/courses/dental-nursing-fdsc/ [17]

Admissions address

Park Campus
Kelmarsh Building
Boughton Green Road
Northampton
NN2 7AL

Course webpage http://www.northampton.ac.uk/study/courses/dental-nursing-fdsc/ [17]

**CertHE Dental Nursing**

Cardiff University

View course Opens in a new window [19]

Region **Wales**

Type of course **Undergraduate**
Full or part time

**Part time**

Duration

2 years

Contact details
dentalugadmissions@cardiff.ac.uk [20] 029 2074 2468

Course webpage https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/2020/dental-nursing-certif… [19]

Admissions address

Cardiff
Wales
CF10 3AT

Course webpage https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/2020/dental-nursing-certif… [19]

**CertHE Dental Nursing**

Portsmouth, University of

View course  Opens in a new window [21]

Region **South East**

Type of course

**Undergraduate**

Full or part time

**Full time**

Duration

1 year

Contact details

admissions@port.ac.uk [22] 023 9284 5566

Course webpage https://www.port.ac.uk/study/courses/certhe-dental-nursing [21]

Admissions address

Science Faculty Office
St. Michael's Building
White Swan Road
Portsmouth
Other roles that may interest you

- Dental support worker [24]
- Receptionist [25]
- Dental therapist [26]
- Dental hygienist [27]

Source URL: https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/roles-dental-team/dental-nurse

Links
[13] mailto: shlsadmissions@tees.ac.uk
[16] mailto: info@nebdn.org
[18] mailto: study@northampton.ac.uk
[19] https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/2020/dental-nursing-certificate
[20] mailto: dentalugadmissions@cardiff.ac.uk
[21] https://www.port.ac.uk/study/courses/certhe-dental-nursing
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[23] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/printpdf/73?page=1