

# Dental therapist

A dental therapist does some of the more straightforward work undertaken by a dentist.

## Working life

More dental surgeries have dental therapists working for them to do routine dental work. As a therapist, you'll have independence without the full responsibility of running a practice. You can also provide treatment in other parts of the community, such as schools and care homes.



Health education would be an important part of your role such as offering advice to patients on looking after their oral health. You'll also carry out a range of procedures including:

- scaling and polishing
- applying materials to teeth such as fluoride and fissure sealants
- taking dental x-rays
- taking impressions of teeth
- undertaking routine dental fixes of baby and permanent teeth
- putting in crowns
- extracting teeth

Dental therapists can also develop additional skills including:

Dental therapists may treat patients who have high treatment needs.

- carrying out tooth whitening
- removing sutures after a dentist has checked the wound

You'll treat a range of patients with different treatment needs including those who:

- are dentally anxious
- have learning or physical disabilities
- have high levels of untreated decay
- are unable to access regular dental care in the general dental service

## **Entry requirements**

To practise as a dental therapist, you must obtain a diploma or degree in dental therapy and be registered with the General Dental Council [1].

You'll need five GCSE subjects at grade 4-7 or A to C, plus two A-levels or a recognised qualification in dental nursing. You may also be required to have some experience of dental nursing before taking the course.

## **Must have skills**

You will patience and excellent communication and interpersonal skills. You'll need empathy and be caring approach along with proficient, highly technical clinical skills. You'll need to be confident to work on your own and be able to put even the youngest of patients at ease. Good time management and organisational skills are essential, along with attention to health and safety procedures. At all times, a dental therapist needs to be mindful of the need for patient confidentiality.

## **Training and development**

The diploma in dental therapy course takes about 27 months, depending on the dental hospital at which you study. Some dental schools offer part time courses for dental hygienists wishing to qualify as dental therapists.

Subjects studied include:

- preventive dentistry
- dental health education
- dental pathology
- simple restorative procedures for both deciduous and permanent teeth
- the extraction of deciduous teeth (previously known as baby teeth)
- radiography and pharmacology

## **Career development**

You'll be expected to keep up to date with the latest techniques and developments, including best practice. Your professional development will be identified through performance reviews and will be part of your mandatory requirements for General Dental Council register.

With experience, you can progress to become a practice manager or move into research. You could move into teaching roles or become an orthodontic therapist.

## Pay and benefits

Dental therapists 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 [2] pay scale. You'll typically work 37.5 hours a week.

- Expand / collapse  
Live vacancies
  - View Vacancy [3]

### Dental Therapist

Barnstaple, EX32 7BH

- **Salary:**  
  
£31,365 - £37,890 per annum pro rata
- **Type:**  
  
Permanent
- **Employer:**  
  
Northern Devon Healthcare Trust

- View Vacancy
- View Vacancy [4]

### Bank Orthodontic Dental Therapist

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, London, SW10 9NH

- **Salary:**

£23

■ **Type:**

Bank

■ **Employer:**

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

- View Vacancy
- View Vacancy [5]

### **Practitioner Psychologist / CBT Therapist (Band 8a) for Dental Psycho**

Guy's & St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, Guy's Hospital (London Bridge), London, SE1 9RT

■ **Salary:**

£52,643 - £58,558 p.a. inc. HCA (Pro rata)

■ **Type:**

Fixed term

■ **Employer:**

Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

- View Vacancy

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Expand / collapse

Find your course to become a dental therapist

Region

Type of qualification

Full or part time

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  
[6]

Region **London**

Type of course  
**Undergraduate**

Full or part time  
**Full time**

Duration  
**3 years**

Contact details  
e.c.philogene@qmul.ac.uk [7] **020 7882 8157**

Course webpage <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/undergraduate/coursefinder/courses/2020/oral-health/> [6]

Admissions address

2 Newark Street  
Whitechapel  
London  
E1 2AT

Course webpage <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/undergraduate/coursefinder/courses/2020/oral-health/> [6]

## **BSc Oral Health Sciences**

Edinburgh, University of

View course Opens in a new window  
[8]

Region **Scotland**

Type of course  
**Undergraduate**

Full or part time  
**Full time**

Duration  
**4 years**

Contact details

oralug@ed.ac.uk [9] **0131 242 6407**

Course webpage <http://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/undergraduate/degrees/index.php> [10]

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> [10]

## **BSc Oral Health Science**

Glasgow Caledonian University

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

Region **Scotland**

Type of course  
**Undergraduate**

Full or part time  
**Full time**

Duration  
**3 years**

Contact details

studentenquiries@gcu.ac.uk [12] **0141 331 8630**

Course webpage <http://www.gcu.ac.uk/study/courses/details/index.php/P02679> [11]

Admissions address

Cowcaddens Road  
Glasgow  
G4 0BA

Course webpage <http://www.gcu.ac.uk/study/courses/details/index.php/P02679> [11]

## **BSc (Hons) Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy**

Teesside University

View course Opens in a new window  
[13]

Region **North East**

Type of course  
**Undergraduate**

Full or part time  
**Full time**

Duration  
**3 years**

Contact details  
shlsadmissions@tees.ac.uk [14] **01642 384110**

Course webpage [http://www.tees.ac.uk/prospectus/ug/UG\\_course.cfm](http://www.tees.ac.uk/prospectus/ug/UG_course.cfm) [15]

Admissions address

Centuria Building  
Middlesbrough  
Tees Valley  
TS1 3BA

Course webpage [http://www.tees.ac.uk/prospectus/ug/UG\\_course.cfm](http://www.tees.ac.uk/prospectus/ug/UG_course.cfm) [15]

## **BSc (Hons) Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy**

Leeds, University of

View course Opens in a new window  
[16]

Region **Yorkshire and The Humber**

Type of course  
**Undergraduate**

Full or part time  
**Full time**

Duration  
**3 years**

Contact details

denadmissions@leeds.ac.uk [17] **0113 343 9922**

Course webpage <https://courses.leeds.ac.uk/i125/dental-hygiene-and-dental-therapy-bsc> [16]

Admissions address

Clarendon Way

Leeds

LS2 9LU

Course webpage <https://courses.leeds.ac.uk/i125/dental-hygiene-and-dental-therapy-bsc> [16]

- Load more [18]

## Other roles that may interest you

- Dental hygienist [19]
- Dental support worker [20]
- Dental nurse [21]
- Dental technician/dental technologist [22]

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



## Links

- [1] <http://www.gdc-uk.org/Pages/default.aspx>
- [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/working-health/working-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates>
- [3] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916405417>
- [4] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916402850>
- [5] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916398635>
- [6] <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/undergraduate/coursefinder/courses/2020/oral-health/>
- [7] [mailto: e.c.philogene@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:e.c.philogene@qmul.ac.uk)
- [8] <http://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/undergraduate/degrees/index.php?action=programme&code=A900>
- [9] [mailto: oralug@ed.ac.uk](mailto:oralug@ed.ac.uk)
- [10] <http://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/undergraduate/degrees/index.php?action=programme&code=A900>
- [11] <http://www.gcu.ac.uk/study/courses/details/index.php/P02679>
- [12] [mailto: studentenquiries@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:studentenquiries@gcu.ac.uk)
- [13] [http://www.tees.ac.uk/prospectus/ug/UG\\_course.cfm?courseid=593&fos=9&fossup=25](http://www.tees.ac.uk/prospectus/ug/UG_course.cfm?courseid=593&fos=9&fossup=25)
- [14] [mailto: shlsadmissions@tees.ac.uk](mailto:shlsadmissions@tees.ac.uk)
- [15] [http://www.tees.ac.uk/prospectus/ug/UG\\_course.cfm?courseid=593&fos=9&fossup=25](http://www.tees.ac.uk/prospectus/ug/UG_course.cfm?courseid=593&fos=9&fossup=25)
- [16] <https://courses.leeds.ac.uk/i125/dental-hygiene-and-dental-therapy-bsc>
- [17] [mailto: denadmissions@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:denadmissions@leeds.ac.uk)
- [18] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/printpdf/75?page=1>
- [19] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/roles-dental-team/dental-hygienist>
- [20] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/Explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/dental-support-worker>
- [21] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/roles-dental-team/dental-nurse>
- [22] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/roles-dental-team/dental-techniciandental-technologist>