

A NEW BEGINNING

Dr Andrea Ogden, BDA Undergraduate and Career Development Lead, introduces you to what you can expect from our dedicated careers section.

It is a great pleasure to introduce you to *BDJ Student's* careers section. Welcome to the start of the next chapter of your undergraduate journey! For some of you, your journey is just beginning, with the exciting prospect of a challenging and rewarding road ahead. For others, it is a time to embrace the challenge of further increasing your clinical skills and knowledge whilst breathing a sigh of relief that your days of memorising the Krebs cycle are long behind you. At dental school we often become very focused on the next goal, be it exams or clinical requirements, and although this focus is necessary, it can sometimes be hard to imagine what life will look like after graduation.

The options open to you are incredibly wide and varied and part of that challenge is gaining an understanding as to just how wide those options are and at this early stage keeping as many doors open as possible. With this in mind, we have an article on intercalating, which is an interesting opportunity for anyone wanting to broaden their scope and outreach by adding skills within another academic year.

Straight after graduation it is likely that you will be going onto complete Dental Foundation Training. As a previous Foundation Training Programme Director, I know the leap from the undergraduate environment to the professional world is a big one. It is a time when you will develop from

a 'safe beginner' to a confident professional clinician. Getting the most out of this year is imperative, as the name implies, it is the foundation upon which your career will be built. I'm pleased to see the top tips from a previous foundation dentist on how they achieved this.

After Foundation Training there is the option to go into Dental Core Training. It is important to have an understanding of what types of jobs are available. What skills are required and how you will develop them to achieve your career goals. Dental Core Training is often a bit of a mystery to newly qualified dentists. It is great to see so many of those questions answered from the article in this section from the application process to the reality of doing the job.

We also have the second part of three articles on the Clinical Senate. I very much enjoyed reading the first part by Elizabeth Gonzalez Malaga on obtaining her role as an East Midlands Clinical Senate Fellow and what the Clinical Senate is. Clinical fellowships are a relatively new programme designed to identify leaders of the future and allow them to develop skills and experience under the mentorship of senior staff in strategic and leadership positions within the NHS. This is a very exciting and highly competitive opportunity that reflects the changing nature of the profession and the way that we work and are likely to work in the future.

Having variety within your work, regardless of what type of work you choose to do has been shown to be one of the primary factors that helps prevent burnout. It also leads to a more interesting working life! This is something all the authors of the articles in this section have in common. They have looked outside the 'traditional dentistry box' to increase their knowledge, skills and experience. As a result, this has led to increased variety and opened doors that have not previously been explored.

I hope by reading this section it inspires you to think more about what your own professional journey might be after the milestone of graduation and that the possibilities within the profession are immense.

For all of our authors, taking a leap of faith and pushing themselves outside their comfort zones has resulted in fantastic learning experiences and future opportunities.

We are always looking to feature articles that focus on different career aspects within dentistry. So, if there is a type of role or pathway you would like to see featured, please do get in touch!

Good luck for the new academic year!

Dr Andrea Ogden ■

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