



**Danielle Dodgson** tells us about her career as

a dental nurse so far and why she decided to study for a qualification in dental radiography.

**D**anielle Dodgson qualified as a dental nurse in March 2017 and gained the BDA Education Certificate in Dental Radiography in September 2018. Danielle achieved the highest mark out of 757 students who sat the Radiography exam last year, and was subsequently awarded the 'BDA Education Outstanding Radiography student of 2018'.

#### What inspired you to become a dental nurse?

I always knew that I wanted to work in a caring profession, and when I got my current job working alongside dentist Mike Powell at Briercliffe Road Dental Practice in Burnley, dentistry became a passion of mine.

#### What is your favourite part of your job?

I love all aspects of my job. There is such a wide range of things we do here at the practice, from meeting new patients who are extremely nervous when coming in for the first time and watching them grow in confidence as we get closer to finishing their treatment, to the support I receive from my practice in my learning and development as a dental nurse, and gaining more knowledge in different areas such as radiography.

#### How did it feel to be awarded the BDA Education Outstanding Radiography Student of 2018?

I felt extremely proud of my achievement, to know that all the hard work and effort I put into my studying and revision had worked.

#### What inspired you to gain a Radiography qualification and why did you choose the BDA's qualification?

Once I qualified as a dental nurse, I knew I

*'I felt extremely proud of my achievement'*

wanted to extend my knowledge. I had an interest in radiography from seeing other members of my team taking X-rays, and asked my practice manager if it was something we could consider to enable me to gain another qualification. She agreed and told me to find the course I wanted to do, which was when I discovered the BDA's online Radiography qualification. With some research I found that this was the best option for me, as it allowed me to continue working five days a week and study in my own time.

**What did you think of the BDA Radiography qualification?**

I found the course extremely good – the online resources were easily accessible. The support I received was amazing – if at any point I was stuck or unsure of anything, all I had to do was email the tutors and they would respond with any advice they could offer.

**How did you feel about taking the qualification online rather than face to face?**

Doing the qualification online and not having to sit in a classroom after a hard day at work made the whole experience much more relaxed, and I found I learned better this way. Instead I could just log onto the site to do some revision and as soon as I'd had enough that day, I knew I could go back and carry on with it the next day.

**How have you used your Radiography qualification and how has it benefitted your career?**

Since passing I have been able to progress in my career by taking on more responsibility at the practice. As I'm now qualified to take x-rays of patients I'm more involved in their treatment planning, which has given me more confidence as I have a better understanding of their treatment, the process of taking radiographs, and can explain to them what is going on and the reasons why. I've also taken on the responsibility of undertaking the weekly checks and tests on the x-ray equipment.

**Did you get a pay rise upon qualifying?**

Yes, I received a slight pay rise.

**What advice would you give to anyone thinking of applying for the qualification?**

Do all the research you can beforehand to ensure it's the right decision for you. The course isn't easy and is very intense so will take up a lot of your time, especially after a long day at work – coming home to study might seem like the last thing you want to do! You need to be



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well motivated and ensure you plan your revision and stick at it. When you first start the course with little to no understanding of this side of dentistry you may wonder what you've signed up to, but as you make your way through the course everything starts to make sense.

**Do you plan to undertake further courses to develop your career in the future?**

I would like to do more courses to extend my knowledge in the profession, and while this is something I would consider in the future, for now I'm happy with where I'm at in my career.

**What would you like to be doing five years from now?**

I would like to be a senior nurse in a practice where I can train others to help them grow and develop, just like I've been given the opportunity to.

**Further information**  
 For more information on the BDA Education Certificate in Dental Radiography, visit <https://cpd.bda.org/course/index.php?categoryid=10>.

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