

# ROUTES TO REGISTRATION

## Five years on

Nine years since *Vital* originally published a flowchart mapping the routes to registration for DCPs (then known as PCDs), and five years since GDC registration started, we take a look at the qualifications currently accepted for registration, along with each DCP group's scope of practice.

### DENTAL NURSES

#### QUALIFICATIONS LEADING TO REGISTRATION

**England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales**  
NEBDN National Certificate – Dental Nursing

**England and Wales**  
City & Guilds Level 3 NVQ in Dental Nursing and the Level 3 Award in Dental Nursing (VRQ)  
City & Guilds Level 3 Diploma in Dental Nursing (QCF)

**Scotland**  
SVQ Oral Healthcare: Dental Nursing Level 3 and the PDA in Dental Nursing

**Cardiff University**  
Certificate of Higher Education in Dental Nursing

**Barts and The London NHS Trust**  
Diploma in Dental Nursing

**University of Northampton**  
Foundation Degree in Dental Nursing

**Portsmouth University**  
Certificate of Higher Education in Dental Nursing

**Teesside University**  
Certificate of Higher Education in Dental Nursing

### DENTAL HYGIENE AND DENTAL THERAPY

#### QUALIFICATIONS LEADING TO REGISTRATION

**Queen's University Belfast**  
Diploma in Dental Hygiene

**Birmingham Dental Hospital**  
BSc Dental Hygiene and Therapy

**Bristol Dental Hospital and School**  
Diploma in Dental Therapy (conversion course)

**Bristol Dental School and Hospital**  
Diploma in Dental Hygiene and Therapy  
Diploma in Dental Hygiene

**Cardiff University**  
Diploma in Dental Hygiene  
Diploma/BSc (Hons) Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy

**Defence Dental Services Training Establishment**  
Diploma in Dental Hygiene

**University of Dundee**  
BSc Oral Health Sciences (Hygiene and Therapy)

**Edinburgh Dental Institute**  
Diploma in Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy  
BSc Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy

**University of Essex**  
Foundation Degree in Oral Health Science (Hygiene)

**Glasgow Dental Hospital and School**  
Diploma in Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy

**University of the Highlands and Islands  
– Inverness College**  
BSc in Oral Health Sciences (Hygiene and Therapy)

**University of Leeds**  
Graduate Diploma in Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy

**The University of Liverpool Dental Hospital**  
Combined Diploma in Dental Hygiene/Dental Therapy

**Barts and the London**  
Diploma programme in dental hygiene and dental therapy

**Eastman Dental Hospital**  
Diploma in Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy

**King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust**  
Diploma in Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy  
Diploma in Dental Therapy (conversion course)

**University of Manchester**  
BSc Oral Health Sciences (Hygiene and Therapy)

**The Dental Hospital, Newcastle**  
Diploma in Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy

**University of Portsmouth**  
BSc (Hons) Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy

**The Greater Manchester School for Dental Care Professionals**  
Diploma in Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy  
Diploma in Dental Therapy

**University of Sheffield**  
Diploma in Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy

**Teesside University**  
BSc (Hons) Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy

**SCOPE OF PRACTICE: DENTAL NURSES**

- Prepare and maintain the clinical environment, including the equipment
- Carry out infection control procedures to prevent physical, chemical and microbiological contamination in the surgery or laboratory
- Record dental charting carried out by other appropriate registrants
- Prepare, mix and handle dental materials
- Provide chairside support to the operator during treatment
- Keep full and accurate patient records
- Prepare equipment, materials and patients for dental radiography and process dental radiographs
- Monitor, support and reassure patients
- Give appropriate advice to patients
- Support the patient and their colleagues if there is a medical emergency
- Make appropriate referrals to other health professionals.

*Additional skills dental nurses could develop:*

- Further skills in oral health education and oral health promotion
- Assisting in the treatment of patients who are under conscious sedation
- Further skills in assisting in the treatment of patients with special needs
- Intra-oral photography
- Shade taking
- Placing rubber dam
- Measuring and recording plaque indices
- Pouring, casting and trimming study models
- Removing sutures after the wound has been checked by a dentist
- Applying fluoride varnish as part of a programme which is overseen by a consultant in dental public health or a registered specialist in dental public health
- Constructing occlusal registration rims and special trays
- Repairing the acrylic component of removable appliances
- Tracing cephalographs.

**SCOPE OF PRACTICE: DENTAL HYGIENISTS***Under prescription from a dentist:*

- Provide dental hygiene care to a wide range of patients
- Plan the delivery of care for patients to improve and maintain their periodontal health
- Obtain a detailed dental history from patients and evaluate their medical history
- Complete periodontal examination and charting and use indices to screen and monitor periodontal disease
- Provide preventive oral care to patients and liaise with dentists over the treatment of caries, periodontal disease and tooth wear
- Undertake supragingival and subgingival scaling and root debridement using manual and powered instruments
- Use appropriate anti-microbial therapy to manage plaque related diseases
- Adjust restored surfaces in relation to periodontal treatment
- Apply topical treatments and fissure sealants
- Give patients advice on how to stop smoking
- Take, process and interpret various film views
- Give infiltration and inferior dental block analgesia
- Place temporary dressings and recement crowns with temporary cement
- Take impressions; place rubber dams
- Identify anatomical features, recognise abnormalities and interpret common pathology, and carry out oral cancer screening
- If necessary, refer patients to other healthcare professionals.

*Additional skills on prescription of a dentist:*

- Taking radiographs
- Applying topical anaesthetic
- Constructing mouthguards, bleaching trays and vacuumed formed retainers
- Taking impressions.

*Additional skills dental hygienists could develop:*

- Tooth whitening to the prescription of a dentist
- Prescribing radiographs
- Administering inhalational sedation
- Removing sutures after the wound has been checked by a dentist.

**SCOPE OF PRACTICE: DENTAL THERAPISTS***Under prescription from a dentist, dental therapists cover the same areas as dental hygienists but also:*

- Carry out direct restorations on permanent and primary teeth
- Carry out pulpotomies on primary teeth
- Extract primary teeth
- Place pre-formed crowns on primary teeth
- Plan the delivery of a patient's care.

*Additional skills dental therapists could develop:*

- Varying the detail of a prescription but not the direction of a prescription.

DENTAL TECHNOLOGY

**QUALIFICATIONS LEADING TO REGISTRATION**

**Belfast School of Dentistry**  
BTEC National Diploma in Dental Technology

**Birmingham Metropolitan College**  
Foundation Degree in Dental Technology  
BTEC Extended Diploma in Dental Technology

**Cardiff Metropolitan University**  
BSc (Hons) Dental Technology  
Foundation Degree in Dental Technology

**Telford College**  
Diploma in Dental Technology

**Leeds Dental Institute**  
Diploma in Dental Technology

**Liverpool Community College**  
Foundation Degree in Dental Technology

**Lambeth College**  
Foundation Degree in Dental Technology  
BTEC Extended Diploma in Dental Technology

**Manchester Metropolitan University**  
BSc (Hons) Dental Technology  
Foundation Degree in Dental Technology

**South Nottingham College**  
Foundation Degree in Dental Technology

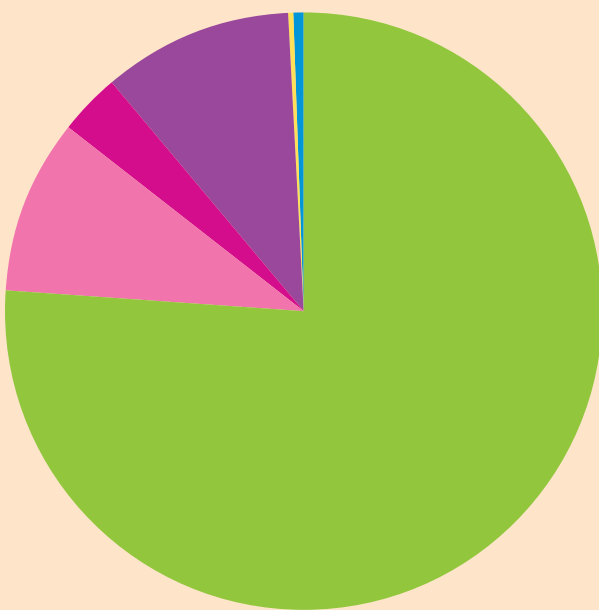
**The Sheffield College**  
BTEC National Diploma in Dental Technology  
BTEC Extended Dipoma in Dental Technology



**BREAKDOWN OF GDC DCP REGISTRANTS  
JANUARY 2013**

- Dental nurse, 49,359
- Dental hygienist, 6,250
- Dental therapist, 2,064
- Dental technician, 6,649
- Clinical dental technician, 230
- Orthodontic therapist, 284

**Total = 62,042 DCPs**



NB: Some registrants may have more than one title

CLINICAL DENTAL TECHNOLOGY

**QUALIFICATIONS LEADING TO REGISTRATION**

**Edinburgh Dental Institute**  
Diploma in Clinical Dental Technology

**Kent, Surrey & Sussex Postgraduate Deanery**  
Diploma in Clinical Dental Technology

**University of Central Lancashire**  
Diploma of Higher Education in Clinical Dental Technology



ORTHODONTIC THERAPY

**QUALIFICATIONS LEADING TO REGISTRATION**

**Bristol School for Dentistry**  
Diploma in Orthodontic Therapy

**Edinburgh Dental Institute**  
Diploma in Orthodontic Therapy

**Coatbridge College, Glasgow**  
Diploma in Orthodontic Therapy

**University of Leeds**  
Diploma in Orthodontic Therapy

**University Dental Hospital of Manchester**  
Diploma in Orthodontic Therapy

**University of Central Lancashire**  
Diploma in Orthodontic Therapy

**Royal College of Surgeons, England**  
Diploma in Orthodontic Therapy

**The University of Warwick**  
Diploma in Orthodontic Therapy



**SCOPE OF PRACTICE: DENTAL TECHNICIANS**

*Under prescription from a dentist or clinical dental technician:*

- Review cases coming into the laboratory to decide how they should be progressed
- Work with the dentist or CDT on treatment planning and outline design
- Design, plan and make a range of custom-made dental devices according to a prescription
- Repair and modify dental devices
- Carry out shade taking
- Carry out infection control procedures to prevent physical, chemical and microbiological contamination
- Keep full and accurate laboratory records
- Verify and take responsibility for the quality and safety of devices leaving a laboratory
- Make referrals to other healthcare professionals
- Repair dentures direct for members of the public.

*Additional skills dental technicians could develop:*

- Working with a dentist/CDT in the clinic assisting with treatment by:
  - Taking impressions
  - Recording facebows
  - Carrying out intraoral and extraoral tracing
  - Carrying out implant frame assessments
  - Recording occlusal registrations
  - Carrying out intraoral scanning for CAD/CAM
  - Helping dentists to fit attachments at chairside
- Tracing cephalographs
- Taking intraoral photographs.

**SCOPE OF PRACTICE: CDTs**

*CDTs are qualified dental technicians. Patients with natural teeth or implants must see a dentist before the CDT can begin treatment. CDTs refer patients to a dentist if they need a treatment plan or if the CDT is concerned about the patient's oral health. CDTs also:*

- Take detailed dental history and relevant medical history
- Perform technical and clinical procedures related to providing removable dental appliances
- Carry out clinical examinations
- Take and process radiographs and other images related to providing removable dental appliances
- Distinguish between normal and abnormal consequences of ageing
- Recognise abnormal oral mucosa and related underlying structures and refer patients if necessary
- Fit removable appliances
- Give appropriate advice to patients.

*Additional skills clinical dental technicians could develop:*

- Oral health education
- Providing sports mouth guards
- Re-cementing crowns with temporary cement
- Providing anti-snoring devices on prescription of a dentist
- Removing sutures after the wound has been checked by a dentist.

**SCOPE OF PRACTICE: ORTHODONTIC THERAPISTS**

*Under prescription from a dentist:*

- Clean and prepare tooth surfaces ready for treatment
- Identify, select, use and maintain appropriate instruments
- Insert passive removable orthodontic appliances
- Insert active removable appliances adjusted by a dentist
- Remove fixed appliances, orthodontic adhesives and cement
- Take impressions; pour, cast and trim study models
- Make a patient's orthodontic appliance safe in the absence of a dentist
- Fit orthodontic headgear; fit orthodontic facebows which have been adjusted by a dentist
- Take occlusal records including orthognathic facebow readings
- Place brackets and bands
- Prepare, insert, adjust and remove archwires
- Give advice on appliance care and oral health instruction
- Fit tooth separators and bonded retainers
- Make appropriate referrals to other healthcare professionals.

*Additional skills orthodontic therapists could develop:*

- Applying fluoride varnish to a dentist's prescription
- Repairing the acrylic component part of orthodontic appliances
- Measuring and recording plaque indices and gingival indices
- Removing sutures after the wound has been checked by a dentist.

Information sourced from the General Dental Council website in January 2013. For DCPs from overseas, please visit the GDC website to find out more about registration [www.gdc-uk.org](http://www.gdc-uk.org).