Dental hygiene
Undergraduate
Dental hygienists work as part of a dental team playing a pivotal role in the prevention, treatment and management of oral disease. Specialising in the treatment and monitoring of periodontal (gum) health, they are responsible for developing patients’ oral hygiene practices. Undertaking detailed clinical procedures and using a variety of instruments to remove deposits from the teeth, the dental hygienist ensures that patients are educated and motivated to maintain their periodontal and oral health.

Dental hygienists are able to undertake a number of other clinical procedures, which include applying fissure sealants and fluoride preparations, taking dental radiographs, placing temporary fillings and taking dental impressions.

The full scope of practice of a dental hygienist can be found on the General Dental Council website: www.gdc-uk.org.

The Dental Care Professional (DCP) School at Bristol has its own dedicated clinical environment, which is adjacent to dental undergraduate clinics, and facilitates an integrated team approach to patient care.

Why study dental hygiene at Bristol?

There is an excellent student-to-staff teaching ratio and all training is delivered in newly refurbished clinics and teaching laboratories. Teaching is primarily delivered via lectures and small-group seminars, principally by DCP School tutorial staff and undergraduate University staff.

£15m invested in 2006/7 in refurbishing state-of-the-art teaching and research facilities.

bristol.ac.uk/ug-study
What will I study?

Dip Dental Hygiene, two years, direct entry

The first three months of pre-clinical training are based in the Clinical Skills Laboratory within the dental hospital and school. Intensive academic lectures and seminars are taught alongside practical teaching on manikin heads. You will learn general and regional (head and neck) anatomy and physiology and will be introduced to oral and systemic diseases.

At the end of the pre-clinical training you will have sufficient knowledge to start treating patients on the periodontal clinic at Bristol Dental Hospital. For clinical procedures your competency will be assessed in the Clinical Skills Laboratory prior to treating patients.

At the end of year one you will have developed a thorough understanding of the field of periodontology and will be able to apply theoretical knowledge to clinical situations. You will be able to carry out treatment for patients who present with a range of medical and social histories, requiring individual assessment and careful treatment planning. Some of these patients include those who are medically compromised, those with physical or learning disabilities or mental health problems, and those who require domiciliary care. You will also complete a small research project or simple audit and present your findings to colleagues and peers within the DCP School.

Assessment

We use various methods of assessment throughout your training, with regular formative assessments set throughout the course to encourage reflection and feedback. There are two summative assessments; the first at three months, which comprises an electronic short answer paper, objective clinical structured examinations (OCSE) and practical skill competency tests.

Assessment at the end of year one comprises written essay papers and a clinical case presentation. These are progression examinations which allow you to complete the full Diploma in Dental Hygiene.

The final examination comprises written essay papers and case presentation of a patient you have been treating throughout your training programme.

With regards to clinical sessions, all contact with patients is recorded and graded as a continuous clinical assessment, with reflection statements documented by both staff and students. Clinical sessions are recorded in a log book which provides documented evidence of your clinical portfolio on completion of the course.

Dip Dental Therapy, two years, direct entry

This is a two-year, part-time course (two days per week) that allows qualified dental hygienists to extend their clinical skills to provide treatment such as fillings for both adults and children, and preformed metal crowns or pulp therapy for deciduous teeth.

Once qualified and registered with the General Dental Council, dental therapists may work in all aspects of the dental sector.

142 dental operating units/treatment stations
People who study dental hygiene like to work with the general public, have a good level of manual dexterity and have an interest in and commitment to delivering effective oral health care and advice.

Daily interactions with patients to motivate and inspire behaviour change, together with the provision of advanced clinical treatments to prevent gum disease and tooth loss, make dental hygiene a rewarding career. On qualification, students register with the General Dental Council and are able to work in various areas of the dental sector including general practice, community dental clinics, hospitals, specialist practices, teaching hospitals and dental schools, research and industry or the armed forces.

Post-qualification, a dental hygienist can further develop their skills to include tooth whitening and inhalation sedation. They may also choose to apply to programmes such as Orthodontic Therapy or Dental Therapy.

What are my career prospects?

1,100+ dental care professionals trained since 1960, making Bristol the UK’s largest training provider.

Making your application

Please apply directly to the DCP School by completing an application form, available online or from the school administrator.

To enhance your application we advise you to gain experience in a dental practice setting and to be familiar with the work and remit of a dental hygienist. Use the personal statement on your application form to outline your personal attributes and skills and reflect on your experiences in a dental setting. We invite shortlisted candidates to interview, which includes a formal interview followed by a written and practical test and will offer places to approximately eight candidates.

Further information

If you would like to visit the School for a ‘taster session’ to view the facilities, meet the tutoring team and participate in a practical task in our clinical skills laboratory, please contact our school administrator Donna Parkin:
Donna.Parkin@uhbristol.nhs.uk or call 0117 342 4136

Find out more about the Bristol School of Dental Care Professionals:
bristol.ac.uk/dental/courses/dcp.

Typical offer for Dip Dental Hygiene*

Visit bristol.ac.uk/ug17-dentalhygiene for other qualifications

A-levels CC to include Biology/Human Biology

IB Diploma 18 points overall including 5 in Higher Level Biology

English Language Profile B†

GCSEs A minimum of five GCSEs or equivalent at grade C or above, including English and Double Science. If a single science is offered, Biology is preferred

†For details of English language profiles, visit bristol.ac.uk/ug-language-requirements

Selection Application to DCP School and Multiple Mini Interview

Deferred entry Not accepted

*The typical offer is indicative only and the University accepts a wide range of qualifications. The information is correct at the time of printing (June 2016), however, we recommend you check the University’s website for the most up-to-date information: bristol.ac.uk/ug-study.
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University guide to the city of Bristol
bristol.ac.uk/citybristol

Undergraduate study website
bristol.ac.uk/ug-study

@ChooseBristolUG
bristol.ac.uk/vip
bristoluniversity
UniversityofBristol

4th most targeted university by top UK employers

Photography: Liz Eve, fotohaus; Jon Jerrome; Dan Rowley;
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This leaflet contains information for students planning to start university in autumn 2017. We have made every effort to ensure all details are correct at the time of going to press (June 2016). However, since this information is subject to change, you are advised to check the University’s website for the latest updates: bristol.ac.uk/ug-study.