



FACTSHEET

Working and Postgraduate Training as a Dentist in the UK

Some frequently asked questions and useful sources of information

What do I need to do to work as a dentist in the UK?

In order to work as a dentist anywhere in the UK you would need to first register with the General Dental Council (GDC). If you have not qualified as a dentist in the UK or EEA, you would normally have to pass the Overseas Registration Examination (ORE) or the LDS Examination from the Royal College of Surgeons of England to be eligible to gain full registration.

A small number of training posts in hospitals are suitable for temporary registrants and you should check the job description and person specification carefully when considering applying for individual training posts.

Check the GDC website for full details of how to apply for either full or temporary registration. (www.gdc-uk.org).

Where can I find information about work permits and visas?

UK and EEA citizens do not need a work permit to practise as a dentist in the UK. Nationals from other countries should be aware that an appropriate and current visa is a legal requirement.

The situation is complex and COPDEND cannot provide individual advice.

If you have already been offered a post on a Deanery approved postgraduate dental training programme, you should seek advice from the local Postgraduate Dental Dean/Director or your employer.

Full information and application forms you should consult the UK Government website <https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas>

How easy is it to find a job as a dentist in the UK?

There has been a large increase in the number of dentists registered to work in the UK in recent years. A review of the dental workforce was carried out for the Department of Health in England in 2014 which found that there is no shortage of dentists in the UK and that because of the significant improved oral health of the UK population, resulting in less need for dental treatment overall, there were too many dentists being trained. The situation can vary over time and it may be easier to find a job in more remote areas.

I want to work in NHS general dental practice, what do I need to do?

Once fully registered with the GDC, if you want to work in a NHS general dental practice you will need to join the NHS Dental Performers List (England) or equivalent in Wales, Scotland



and Northern Ireland, where there are slightly different arrangements. It is usual to apply after you have been offered a job.

You should look at the following websites for further information

England <https://www.performer.england.nhs.uk/>

Wales <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/health/cmo/professionals/dental/regulations/>

Scotland http://www.nhsnss.org/pages/services/practitioner_services.php

Northern Ireland <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2470.htm>

Do I need to complete foundation (vocational) training to work in NHS general dental practice?

As an overseas qualified dentist, you would need to complete foundation training and if you have some after qualification experience, in England and Wales it is possible to do this “by equivalence (assessment)”. In Scotland and Northern Ireland it is possible to work as a salaried assistant.

What is Foundation Training by Equivalence (Assessment)?

If you are unable to provide evidence that you have equivalent experience to a dentist who has completed dental foundation training, you first need to find a job in a dental practice with an NHS contract that is willing to offer you training and support. As part of application to join the NHS Performers List, your application will be referred to the local Postgraduate Dental Dean/Director and the practice will be invited to apply for approval as a suitable environment to provide supervision.

Practices are not obliged to offer supervision for dentists without a Performer Number wishing to undertake Foundation Training by Equivalence and it can be very difficult to find a suitable vacant position in some areas of the country.

Please note that neither COPDEND nor individual Postgraduate Dental Deans can find you a job as a dentist. Deans cannot advise in advance whether a particular practice will be suitable for foundation training by equivalence (assessment).

I am an EEA national. Do I need to do Foundation Training?

EEA nationals who are registered with the GDC are exempt from dental foundation training. As part of Performers List application, your individual experience as a dentist will be reviewed and you may be asked to undertake some specific additional training courses to enable you to practise safely within the NHS.

How do I apply for Dental Core Training posts (formerly known as Dental SHO posts or Dental Foundation Year 2 posts)?

Dental Core Training posts (formerly known as DF2 or Dental SHO posts) are normally advertised in the British Dental Journal (<http://www.nature.com/bdj/index.html>) or on the NHS jobs website (<https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/>). Not all posts are suitable for temporary registrants and you should check the person specification for individual posts carefully. It is not possible to gain temporary GDC registration unless the training post has been approved by the Postgraduate Dental Dean/Director.



Please note that neither COPDEND nor individual Postgraduate Dental Deans can arrange temporary registration or find posts for individuals.

How do I apply for specialty training posts?

Posts are normally advertised in the British Dental Journal (<http://www.nature.com/bdj/index.html>) or on the NHS jobs website (<https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/>). Application is by open competition. Not all posts are suitable for temporary registrants and you should check the job description and person specification for individual posts carefully.

Please note that neither COPDEND nor individual Postgraduate Dental Deans can arrange temporary registration or find specialty training posts for individuals.

I am already a specialist and want to be recognised in the UK

Details of specialty training curricula and application forms for entry to the General Dental Council Specialist Lists are on the GDC website.

<http://www.gdc-uk.org/Dentalprofessionals/Specialistlist/Pages/Specialist-list-application-pack.aspx>

Where can I get further advice about postgraduate training as a dentist in the UK?

You may find it helpful to look at the National Advice Centre for Postgraduate Dental Education website (www.rcseng.ac.uk/fds/nacpde).