

# Work of a Dentist

## Dentist

**Dentists are healthcare professionals who are experts in the diagnosis and treatment of a range of problems that affect the mouth and teeth.**

### The work of a dentist

Dentists provide a wide range of services, including:

- care and treatment of oral diseases
- preventative treatments
- oral health advice
- emergency dental services
- provision of dental appliances

The majority of dentists work in General Practice. However, many opportunities also exist within hospital and community settings. Dentists often manage a team of people encompassing dental nurses, dental hygienists, dental therapists and dental technicians.

### Skills required

Dentists are required to have a number of specific skills and personality traits. You should have a good capacity to learn and make sense of scientific knowledge and an ability to apply that knowledge in a clinical setting. You should also have:

- good social and interpersonal skills
- good manual dexterity (be good with your hands)
- an ethical approach to people
- confidence to make decisions
- good administrative skills
- good managerial and leadership skills

### Career pathway

Queen's University Belfast offers a Bachelor of Dental Surgery, a full time, five-year programme. For information on the entry requirements and the selection process, contact the university directly. For undergraduate full-

time programme, application should be made through [Universities and Colleges Admissions Service \(UCAS\)](#).

- [BDS Bachelor of Dentistry](#)(external link opens in a new window / tab)

While the majority of graduates become general dental practitioners, a proportion pursue an academic career. As a result of this, Queen's graduates hold many senior university posts in the UK.

Others are attracted by the prospect of a hospital career and apply for house surgeon positions within hospitals in Northern Ireland.

The Community Dental Service also provides a further interesting and rewarding opportunity for graduates.

## Professional recognition

On successful completion of your degree of Bachelor of Dental Surgery (QUB) you will be immediately eligible to register with the [General Dental Council](#)(external link opens in a new window / tab) (the professional regulator for dentists). This is a full qualification for dental practice.

However following graduation, most dentists will join a Vocational Training (VT) scheme to undertake a further period of training of one year. This will permit you to work as a principal in general dental within the health service.