

Dental Therapist Foundation Training Scheme – Handbook



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Introduction

The Dental Therapist Foundation Training Scheme (DTFT) has been developed to help ease the journey of the newly qualified dental therapist from undergraduate to working successfully in a general dental practice environment.

The scheme places particular emphasis on providing continued support and education for newly qualified dental therapists in a clinical environment, as well as assisting the development of personal skills and knowledge through the educational programme. Therapists will be encouraged to further develop critical thinking and evidence-based practice during the scheme.

This handbook is designed to provide an insight into the NW Dental Therapist Foundation Training Scheme.

The scheme covers the whole of the North West Region (South Cumbria, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Merseyside) and is open to newly qualified Dental Therapists who graduated in the last 2 years.

Outline of the Scheme

This section provides an insight into the format of the scheme. Any further questions should be directed to the Training Programme Manager.

Where will I work? The Training Practice

You will be based in a high street General Dental Practice. You will be supported by an Educational Supervisor (ES) who are all experienced dentists or Dental Therapists, and many have been Dental Foundation Trainers

The role of the ES on the Foundation Therapist Training scheme is to provide you with mentorship and guidance; this will be in the form of clinical support where necessary in the surgery, one to one teaching in the form of tutorials as well as advice and assistance with non-clinical issues in general practice.

How many days will I be involved with the scheme?

The scheme is for 2-3 days a week for 12 months and has one intake per year from 1st September to 31st August. Your commitment to the scheme is for 2-3 days only, therefore you are free to work elsewhere for the time that you are not committed to the scheme. This will allow you maximum choice, flexibility and income. You will, however, still be expected to attend the mandatory study days which may fall outside of your foundation practice days.

What days will I work on?

The days you work are negotiable with your training practice and will depend on surgery capacity.

What is the salary and employee entitlements?

This is an employed position and as such you will be employed on a formal training contract with the practice. The salary is £136.00 per day / £68.00 per session. Holiday entitlement, sickness and maternity pay is usually statutory and will be determined by the practice.

What if I change my mind after accepting a placement?

Once you have accepted a placement, you will be required to sign a training contract. This means you have committed to undertake your placement and the practice will start to

allocate you patients from an agreed date. If you change your mind, you will have to provide written notice to the practice and work an agreed notice period, usually 1 month.

The Study Day Programme

The study day programme forms part of the educational element of the programme where you will build on knowledge gained at university. The study days are not just sources of new information but an important part of the process by which you can learn to assess yourself in relation to your peers.

Venue

Study sessions will generally take place at the North West Dental Training Hub, 3rd Floor, Altrincham Health and Wellbeing Centre, 33 Market Street, Altrincham, WA14 1RZ. Although some study sessions may be held as a webinar via MS Teams. The day usually starts at 9:30am and finishes by 4:30pm.

Format

There will be a mixture of lectures, group workshops and hands-on sessions.

Study Day Content

Examples of study day topics:

- Restorative techniques
- Paediatric operative dentistry
- Radiography
- Oral cancer
- CPR and First Aid
- Finance for the DT
- Posture and prevention of MSDs
- Periodontology
- Implant care and maintenance
- Caries management
- Managing the patient with special needs

- Occlusion and Management of patients with TMD
- Communication skills – role play
- Managing your learning and development
- Well-being and resilience
- Career development
- Therapist-related updates
- CV writing and interview techniques
- Case study presentations

In addition to the above, access will be given to any of the therapist relevant courses on Maxcourse, free of charge. Prior approval will be required from the Training Programme Manager.

When are the study days held?

These are normally held on a Wednesday (but may vary) for a minimum of 18 whole days. Some study days will be joint with Foundation Dentists.

Who pays for the study days?

The courses are funded by NHS England. A day rate can be claimed for study day attendance on a non-foundation day. Travel expenses from the practice to the study day can also be reclaimed up to a maximum of £25.

What if I fail to attend a study day session?

Attendance at study day sessions is compulsory to receive your completion certificate at the end of the year. A record of attendance is kept, and verifiable education certificates are issued. Holidays, interviews etc. should be arranged outside the organised educational programme.

How will I know how I am progressing?

• E-Portfolio

A learning portfolio will be used throughout the training scheme. This has various elements, commencing with an agreed record of discussion between you and your ES at the start of the training, where each notes their expectations of what is to be achieved. There will be progress reviews at intervals during the scheme both with the ES and Training Programme Manager. You will also complete an initial record of clinical experience to help identify areas where you may wish to have more experience

or assistance. Clinical experience during the scheme, ES tutorials and self-reflection are also captured by the portfolio.

- ***Educational Assessments***

During the scheme, you will carry out self-assessments and be assessed by the ES and other colleagues using nationally recognised workplace-based assessment tools. These are to ensure that you receive regular structured feedback and are aware of your own progress.

- ***Clinical Audits***

As part of your development process, you will be required to complete a simple clinical audit at your foundation practice. This will be discussed with your ES and uploaded to the e-portfolio.

- ***Case Presentation***

As part of your training, you will be required to present a PowerPoint of a patient you have treated on the programme to your peers. You will receive a grade and feedback from assessors.

- ***Oral Health Promotion Activity***

As part of your training you will be required to carry out a community-based OHP activity and upload a report to your e-portfolio.

- ***Review of Competence Progression***

During the scheme, at various stages, you, your ES and your Training Programme Manager will have the opportunity to feedback and assess your progress to date. This is a formal process and is designed to highlight any areas where you may need more help or targeted training. If further training is required, an action plan will be developed and implemented. This process is designed to support you and your ES during the year.

Completion

At the end of the programme, provided all necessary work is completed and evidenced in the portfolio, the Postgraduate Dental Dean will issue a certificate of completion, which will include any verifiable education hours awarded.

Application

How do I apply?

Expressions of interest will open on 28th January 2026 and will close at the end of February. A link to the form can be found on the website: [Dental Therapist Foundation Training Scheme | NHS England – North West, Postgraduate Medical and Dental Education](#)

Once we have received your expression of interest, we will contact you with further details of the next stage.

If you require further information in the meantime, please contact england.dental.nw@nhs.net or Training Programme Manager:

Tracy Thompson
Tracy.thompson31@nhs.net

How do I get appointed?

Once the application process is complete, all applicants will be sent a list of available practices for the programme for you to pick your top 3 choices. Each practice will then be sent a list of interested therapists for them to contact and arrange an interview. The outcome of interviews will be fed back to NHS England North West and placements will be confirmed at the end of May (date TBC). Please note, there are no guarantees of you gaining an interview or a place on the scheme.

Before commencement on the scheme, you must have GDC Registration as a Dental Therapist and your own appropriate indemnity insurance.

What if I have problems?

If you do have concerns about your training, it is important that you contact your ES immediately. If you are still not happy after having spoken to your ES, please contact your TPM.

NHS England North West and your employer both have responsibilities and generally you should first work with your employing organisation, keeping your TPM informed.



What if I want to stay in the practice at the end of the Training Contract?

At the end of the scheme, your contract is complete, and any continuation of employment is by mutual consent and separate agreement.

Dental Therapist Foundation Trainee Person Specification

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Employment Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK National or visa that allows employment • Disclosure and Barring Service clearance in full 	
Qualifications / Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible for registration with the GDC as a Dental Therapist • BSc/Diploma in Dental Therapy • Graduation within the last 2 years 	
Clinical Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent clinical practice • Basic life support skills • Good manual dexterity • Appropriate level of clinical knowledge • Clear, logical thinking • Approach to tasks with an analytical / scientific style 	
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high level of communication and language skills • High level of written and spoken English 	
Management & Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to prioritise clinical need • Ability to organise own work and environment • Ability and willing to work in multi- 	

	<p>professional teams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisiveness / accountability for actions • Complies with GDC standards and meets deadlines 	
Professionalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good time keeping • Ability to maintain professional manner when under pressure • Shows awareness of own limitations • Use of a non-judgemental approach to patients and colleagues • Shows knowledge of evidence-informed practice • Probity – displays honesty, integrity, awareness of ethical dilemmas and respect of confidentiality 	
Personal Characteristics	<p>Must be able to demonstrate experience or capability of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility • Excellent interpersonal skills • Ability to reflect on feedback • Able to attend all study days and complete the educational programme • Able to undertake assessment components 	
Physical Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets professional and health requirements 	