

Aspiring

Dentists >>



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Aspire



This booklet is for students considering applying to Reigate College that are interested in a Career in Dentistry, and their parents. It is also a useful source of information for students embarking on A levels in appropriate subjects who are in the early stages of considering whether Dentistry might be for them.

Contents

- What does being a dentist actually involve?
- How do I decide whether Dentistry is the right career path for me?
- What qualifications do I need in order become a Dentist?
- What subjects should I study at college if I want to study Dentistry at university?
- What support does Reigate College offer to aspiring dentists?



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What does being a dentist actually involve?

Most dentists are self-employed and work as general dental practitioners (GDPs) providing dental care to the public. You could do this work privately or for the NHS, or both.

You'll keep records for each patient. You'll tell them how to care for their teeth and provide treatment for any problems that occur. Your services might include:

- dental treatments like fillings, extractions and fitting dentures and bridges
- teeth whitening
- taking X-rays and giving local anaesthetics
- referring patients to a dental hygienist or dental therapist

If you're running your own practice, you'll be responsible for the day-to-day management of the business and dental team.

As well as general dental practice, you could also work in:

- the community dental service (CDS) – providing treatment to people with special needs, young children and the elderly
- hospitals – carrying out specialised dental work, such as restorative dentistry, orthodontics and oral surgery
- dental public health - improving the dental health of your local area, rather than treating individuals
- the armed forces – providing dental treatment for services personnel, including those in combat zones

You'll use a range of dental and surgical techniques and instruments. In a hospital you'll carry out some procedures in an operating theatre.

You'll work with other dentists, NHS professionals, government departments and related agencies.

(Source: National Careers Service Website)

How do I decide whether Dentistry is the right career path for me?

1 Do your research

There are many useful sources of information on line:

<https://www.themedicportal.com/application-guide/dentistry/>

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/job-profiles/dentist#>

<https://bda.org/students/careers-education/becoming-a-dentist>

<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/dentist/entry-requirements-and-training-dentistry>

<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/after-gcses/find-career-ideas/explore-jobs/job-profile/dentist>

<https://www.gdc-uk.org/>

Read about the latest dental advances, news and ethical issues

<https://www.dentalhealth.org/news>

<http://www.dentistry.co.uk/>

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/categories/dentistry>

https://www.sciencedaily.com/news/health_medicine/dentistry/

<http://www.dental-tribune.com/articles/news/uk/index.html>

2 Speak to Healthcare Professionals

Don't be shy! Contact your Dental surgery and ask if you can speak to the practise Manager, Dentist or Dental Nurse about a career in dentistry.

Ask family, friends and acquaintances if they know anyone who works in the profession in any capacity who would be happy to talk to you. Think about what you would ask them – for instance about workload, ethical issues, working environment.



3 Arrange Work Experience

You will be required to have done at least 2-3 weeks relevant work experience before you submit your application in the September of Year 13.

This can be at:

- General Dental Practice
- Private Dentists
- Orthodontists
- Dental Hospitals
- Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

Additional work experience volunteering with children, the disabled and the elderly, would be beneficial.

Volunteering opportunities

Volunteering Website

<https://do-it.org/>

British Red Cross

<http://www.redcross.org.uk/Get-involved/Volunteer>

St John's Ambulance

<http://www.sja.org.uk/sja/volunteer.aspx>

Royal Voluntary Service

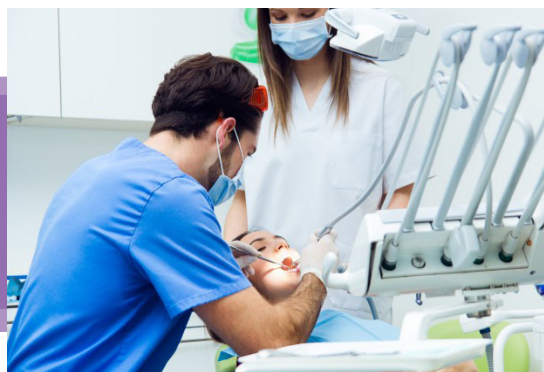
<https://www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/>

Mayday NHS Volunteering

http://www.maydayhospital.org.uk/page_pageid_24.html

Keep a diary of ALL experiences that would be relevant to your application to medical school

- A Action** (what you did/saw)
- B Benefit** (what you gained/learnt from the experience)
- C Course Relevance** (relate it back to the course requirements)



What qualifications do I need to become a Dentist?

In order to become a dentist you will need to:

- complete a 5-year degree in dentistry approved by the General Dental Council (GDC)
- register with the GDC
- complete up to 2 years of postgraduate dental training

If you've a degree in biology, chemistry or a biomedical subject (2:1 or higher), you may be able to apply for a 4-year dental degree course.

There's a lot of competition for places at dental schools.

When you apply you'll take the [UK Clinical Aptitude Test \(UCAT\)](#) or the [Biomedical Admissions Test \(BMAT\)](#) to test your reasoning and decision-making skills.

You may be able to get [NHS funding](#) to pay for your course fees and help with your living expenses.

The [British Dental Association \(BDA\)](#) and the [General Dental Council](#) have information on dental training.

[Health Careers](#) has information on becoming a dentist.

GCSEs

Dentistry is an academically challenging subject and you will be expected to have high GCSE results ranging from 7-9. Minimum expectations will be Biology, Chemistry, English and Maths - most typically at 7-9 grade. Physics is also well regarded though not essential.

What subjects should I study at college if I want to study Dentistry at university?

Chemistry A level is considered essential by all UK universities. The most common combination of subjects for a Dentistry degree is A levels in Chemistry, Biology and Maths. However Chemistry and Biology with either Physics or a non-science based academic subject is also considered a valuable combination by many universities. We advise you to check university websites before making your final A level choices.

It would be a good idea to supplement your programme of study with one of the additional courses we offer, which typically include a level 2 qualification in Latin, an Extended Project Qualification or an AS in Further Maths.

What support does Reigate College offer to aspiring dentists?

1 Aspire University Pathway

The Aspire University Pathway has been designed to provide high-achieving students with targeted advice, support and guidance to enable them to make successful applications to the most competitive courses at the most prestigious universities. As an aspiring dentist on the Aspire Pathway you will have the opportunity to explore the range of degree courses available. You will also complete the wider reading and research needed in order to be able to demonstrate a genuine interest in dentistry, which is essential for a successful application.

2 The Medicine Veterinary Science and Dentistry (MVD) Society

Run by our MVD co-ordinator the MVD society meets weekly and offers a range of support to students applying for MVD courses, including:

- Talks by an extremely wide range of visiting medical professionals
- An 'Operating Theatre Live' event
- Help choosing the right Dentistry courses for you to apply for
- Advice on personal statement writing
- Help preparing for admissions tests and interviews

3 Support finding work experience

The College has extensive links with employers and organisations offering work experience to students who attend our MVD society, for example, dental surgeries offering placements for selected applicants.

4 Additional forms of support

Additional Qualifications

Students will have the opportunity to study extra qualifications where appropriate, including the EPQ (Extended Project Qualification), L2 Latin or AS Further Maths.

Oxbridge Support

The College runs a comprehensive programme of support for those thinking of making an Oxbridge application. Students are given a specialist subject mentor and are encouraged to attend a range of conferences run by Oxbridge academics.

Specific Enrichment Activities

For subjects such as Medicine and Law, the College offers supported discussion groups (e.g. Medicine Society and Law Society) through the College's wider Activities Programme.

General Enrichment Activities

The Activities Programme also incorporates more general activities (such as Debating and Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award) that are designed to equip students with the skills and knowledge to help them stand out from the crowd.



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