



# MODERN APPRENTICESHIP IN DENTAL NURSING

## Overview

This apprenticeship is designed to support the development of individuals who are interested in pursuing a career as a Dental Nurse in the dental sector. Employment can be on a part-time or full-time basis within several sectors including; General Dental Practice, Public Dental Service, Dental Hospitals, General Hospitals or Armed Forces. All new entrants to the sector need to access quality assured training programmes in order to achieve the standard required for inclusion on the register as a Dental Nurse, held by the General Dental Council (GDC). This is recognised within this MA by inclusion of both an SVQ and a Professional Development Award (PDA) as mandatory components.

## Duration

The apprenticeship is expected to take up to 12 months to complete.

## Level

SCQF Level 7. More information on SCQF can be found [here](#).

## Qualification achieved

The apprentice will achieve a qualification specific to their occupation.

- SVQ in Dental Nursing at SCQF Level 7 (GV94 23)
- Professional Development Award (PDA) at SCQF Level 7 (GV8T 47)

**INTRODUCTION**

**THE APPRENTICESHIP**

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**Apprenticeships aim to provide mixture of on-the-job (in the workplace) and off-the-job (through day or block release) learning to enable people to develop the knowledge, skills and expertise required by businesses today.**

Designed by employers to attract new talent, tackle critical skills shortages and develop existing workforces, apprenticeships can both help people to enter the world of work and develop the skills of those already in work.

## About Scottish Apprenticeships

**Scottish Apprenticeships** are for everyone and reflect the Government's commitment to promoting a world-class, inclusive, work-based learning system. They are administered by **Skills Development Scotland**, the National Skills Agency. Skills Development Scotland has a remit to contribute to the nation's economic growth and it does this by supporting individuals and businesses alike to develop and apply their skills in the workplace.

The Scottish Apprenticeship system focuses on three specific key elements:

- the **learning outcomes** aligned to the specific work situations of an apprentice's job;
- the **knowledge, skills and behaviours** that will be developed by apprentices, enabling them to work competently and confidently; and
- the **meta-skills** that will be developed by apprentices to help them to manage themselves, collaborate with others and interact with change.

Throughout their apprenticeship, apprentices will be supported and guided by their employer, mentor and learning provider, and will have their growing competence measured by an assessor to ensure they can perform their job to the standard required. On successful completion, apprentices will be awarded nationally recognised competence-based and/or professional qualifications in their chosen field.

## About this standard and framework document

Working in partnership with businesses and stakeholders, this standard and framework document has been written to provide apprentices and employers with an overview of the key features of this apprenticeship. Please read this alongside the **Dental Nursing Occupation Profile**.

**Find further information on apprenticeships [here!](#)**

This apprenticeship is designed to support the development of individuals who are interested in pursuing a career as a dental nurse in the dental sector, and towards gaining professional registration with the GDC as a dental nurse.

Further information on becoming a member of the dental and student professionalism whilst in training can be found here [link to: <https://www.gdc-uk.org/education-cpd/students-and-trainees/becoming-a-member-of-the-dental-team>]

The apprenticeship will provide apprentices with the skills and knowledge required to become competent in dental nursing and includes the development of knowledge, skills and behaviours across the four domains defined by the General Dental Council (GDC): clinical, interpersonal, professionalism and self-management, to ensure new dental nurses meet the expectations of the dental profession's regulatory body, GDC, as safe practitioners.

All units are **mandatory** within the apprenticeship. They are:

- Maintain personal and professional practice for dental care professionals
- Provide basic life support
- Prepare and maintain safe working practices in clinical dental environments
- Provide information and support to individuals on oral health
- Provide chairside support during oral health assessment procedures
- Contribute to producing dental radiographic images

- Provide chairside support during periodontal and restorative procedures
- Provide chairside support during prosthetic procedures
- Provide chairside support during endodontic procedures
- Provide chairside support during extraction and minor oral surgery procedures

Additionally, the apprentice must achieve the following **mandatory** PDA units:

- Prevention and Management of Common Oral Diseases
- Dental Radiography
- Principles of Oral Health Assessment and Treatment Planning
- Principles of Infection Prevention and Control in the Dental Environment

**This apprenticeship is designed to develop apprentices' careers by developing their knowledge and understanding of their role, by increasing their skills and by enhancing their behaviours.**

The purpose of this programme is to support individuals to demonstrate, on successful completion that they have met the knowledge skills and behaviours required for registration as a dental professional with the GDC to practise safely, effectively and professionally as a Dental Nurse.

Employers and key stakeholders from across the dental sector have helped to identify the key knowledge, skills and behaviours that apprentices working in the sector need to develop. Throughout their apprenticeship, apprentices should be regularly assessed to ensure they can demonstrate both know-how and ability in each of these areas; a high-level summary is provided below.

A full list of the **knowledge, skills and behaviours** can be found in the associated [Dental Nursing Occupation Profile](#).

## Knowledge

- Following workplace procedures, relevant legislation and regulations
- Potential transmission routes, principles of infection control/ decontamination
- Use of ionising radiation and legislation that informs safe working practices
- Different types and functions of dental records and charts for assessment
- Basic structure and function of oral and dental anatomy
- Cause and progression of oral and dental diseases, diagnosis, prevention and treatment options
- Range of materials, equipment, instruments used in dentistry
- Signs/ responding to emergencies

## Skills

- Communicating appropriately and effectively
- Working effectively within a team and supporting colleagues
- Preparing and maintaining safe working practices in the clinical dental environment
- Recording dental charting and oral health assessment
- **Providing chairside support**
- Preparing equipment, materials and patients for clinical dental procedures
- Contributing to production of dental radiographic images
- Monitor, support and reassure patients
- Responding to medical emergencies

## Behaviours

- Following workplace procedures, relevant legislation and regulations
- Communicating with care, compassion, empathy and respect
- Maintain effective working relationships and support wellbeing of staff and others
- Displaying integrity and professionalism
- Treating all patients and colleagues with dignity and respect, without discrimination
- Adapting to unexpected situations
- Using feedback and reflective practice to identify future development needs

**Meta-skills sit alongside and complement technical knowledge, skills and behaviours. As technology, society and the way we work change at an ever-increasing pace, so meta-skills are the overarching and future-focused attributes that enable other skills to be developed through consideration, reflection and implementation.**

Meta-skills support improved performance and productivity, greater adaptability and resilience to change. For apprentices, meta-skills are a critical asset, supporting their ability to cope and excel in the face of change, to solve problems, to collaborate with others and to create successful futures. There are three categories, each with four meta-skills.

**Managing yourself** - focus, integrity, adaptability and initiative

**Connecting with others** - communication, feeling, collaboration and leadership

**Interacting with change** - curiosity, creativity, sense-making and critical thinking



## Developing meta-skills in Dental Nursing

Supported by their employer, mentor and learning provider, apprentices should consider, practise and reflect on their use of meta-skills during their apprenticeship, building those skills to enhance their personal effectiveness in their present role and their future careers.



## Managing yourself

A clear **focus** is required during dental procedures, this is a fundamental requirement, to ensure a consistently high standard of patient care. **Integrity** is essential when interacting with others, especially when dealing with patients and upholding the values and codes of conduct set out by the GDC. **Adaptability** is essential when responding to changes in treatment plans. **Initiative** is critical when thinking for yourself and solving problems, working proactively within the limits of your own responsibility and competence.



## Connecting with others

Clear and concise **communication** is fundamental when listening to patients needs and providing the best care possible. Being able to share information but also to listen and build relationships with colleagues is one of the most important aspects of this role; **feeling** is needed to show empathy and be respectful of others; skills in **collaboration** are vital when working effectively with colleagues to get the job done on time and maintain standards as set out by the GDC; and strong **leadership** qualities are developed through setting a good example and helping others where appropriate.



## Interacting with change

A keen sense of **curiosity** is a critical asset when asking questions to get a better understanding of a task, seeking clarification or support when required; **creativity** may be required when thinking of improvements to tasks and more efficient ways of doing things; **sense-making** comes into play when interpreting and understanding GDC values and codes of conduct; and **critical thinking** is key when providing patient care and putting the best interest of the patient first.

**A number of different parties will be involved in the delivery, management and assessment of a successful apprenticeship. As well as the apprentice, key roles include employer, mentor, learning provider and assessor. Each has a specific set of responsibilities during the apprenticeship.**

## **Apprentice Responsibilities**

In their day-to-day roles, apprentices have the same responsibilities to their employer as any other employee but they have additional and specific responsibilities for their own learning and development too.

- Undertaking an initial assessment and agreeing a learning plan with all parties involved and following it through
- Committing to learning throughout the duration of apprenticeship
- Participating in progress meetings with employer and learning provider representatives
- Participating in off-the-job learning where required
- Reflecting on performance and on development of skills, knowledge and behaviours required of the role
- Agreeing new goals to progress learning with all parties involved
- Remaining in employment to undertake on the job learning

## **Employer Responsibilities**

- Providing apprentices with a contract of employment, a job description and an induction Programme
- Paying apprentices in line with company policy, current legislation, fair work principles, and equality and diversity expectations

- Ensuring a safe working environment
- Agreeing learning needs and a learning and development plan with the learning provider and apprentices including
  - agreeing when off-the-job learning will be required and releasing apprentices for this as required
  - making on-the-job learning arrangements
  - identifying additional support requirements and agreeing actions to implement these
- Providing a quality work-based learning environment for apprentices, including the facilities and training necessary to demonstrate competence and succeed in the apprenticeship
- Providing the support of a mentor, who has relevant industry experience and is familiar with the employer's business, to support apprentices' development
- Contributing to the ongoing assessment of occupational competence, including observing performance, verifying evidence and profiling meta-skills
- Meeting with apprentices and learning providers to review apprentices' progress and set future goals
- Providing an environment that supports apprentices to take responsibility for their own learning and development
- Supporting and encouraging apprentices during their apprenticeship
- Recognising the achievements of apprentices in career management and progression
- Providing constructive feedback to the learning provider on the quality of their service delivery to inform continuous improvement of both the Scottish Apprenticeships system and apprentices themselves

## Mentor Responsibilities

- Helping new apprentices orientate into the workplace
- Providing information, advice and guidance relating to the learning and assessment aspects of the apprenticeship
- Supporting apprentices to define meta-skills in their shared work context
- Working with apprentices, employers and learning providers to ensure problems are resolved quickly
- Acting as an expert witness for apprentices
- Providing support to apprentices as they adjust to the workplace and progress in their career

## Learning Provider Responsibilities

- Providing an appropriate apprenticeship programme for apprentices and employers
- Allocation of Assessors to apprentices
- Conducting an Initial Assessment and agreeing the learning needs with the apprentices to create a learning plan,
- Ensuring apprentices have access to the best quality learning opportunities available
- Ensuring apprentices and employers fully understand the principles and processes of competence-based assessment
- Registering apprentices through MA Online and with relevant awarding bodies, sector skills organisations and Skills Development Scotland as appropriate
- Defining when off-the-job learning will be required and the roles and responsibilities for this with relevant parties

- Compiling and agreeing learning and development plans and assessment plans with apprentices and employers
- Completing assessment records and submitting records and evidence for verification/moderation
- Reviewing apprentices' progress at regular intervals with the employer
- Supporting apprentices to develop their reflective practice
- Advising apprentices who to approach for support, advice and encouragement both within and outwith the workplace
- Seeking and providing feedback from and to employers and apprentices to inform continuous improvement of the Scottish Apprenticeships system and apprentices themselves
- Compliance with Skills Development Scotland and Awarding Body quality assurance requirements

## Assessor Responsibilities

- Meeting with apprentices, mentors and employers to plan learning and review progress
- Monitoring apprentices' progress against learning and development plans
- Assessing apprentices in the workplace and judging whether their work meets the competence requirements set by the qualification awarding body
- Assessing different types of evidence from apprentices
- Providing constructive feedback on performance and offering suggestions for improvement
- Maintaining current knowledge of industry standards and seeking innovative new methods of work-based learning delivery

**The recruitment of apprentices is primarily the responsibility of the employer and, before an apprenticeship starts, consideration should be given to entry requirements and also to ensuring that the workplace adheres to fair work, inclusion and diversity principles.**

## English Language Competence

To practice safely in the UK, all dental professionals must have the necessary knowledge of English. The GDC require that members of the dental team are sufficiently fluent in written and spoken English to communicate effectively with patients, their relatives, the dental team and other healthcare professionals in the United Kingdom.' Communication is speaking, reading, writing and listening.

The Standards for the Dental Team also highlight the need for dental professionals to be able to document their work clearly and accurately. If dental professionals do not have the necessary knowledge of English, they are unlikely to fulfil these requirements. Find out more here [link to <https://www.gdc-uk.org/docs/default-source/registration/english-language-controls/gdc-guidance-on-english-language-controls>]

The GDC guidance on employing trainee dental nurses must also be adhered to.

The GDC also provides a wide range of information and guidance for trainees on professionalism, fitness to practice, and raising concerns.

The recommended entry requirements for this apprenticeship are:

- Be able to acquire the broad range of skills, knowledge and understanding, and behaviours required in the apprenticeship, through employment as a trainee dental nurse in Scotland

- Be able to complete the relevant SCQF Level 7 qualification
- Have a professional and positive attitude towards learning and undertake the requirements on and off the job training
- Keen to work in the dental sector and achieve professional registration with the GDC

Employers can also consider existing workplace skills and experiences, where apprentices are either changing careers or upskilling. Being open to alternative assessment methods and relevant experience, instead of qualifications, can help to broaden the pool of potential applicants.

## Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG)

Since February 2011, it has been necessary for new clinical staff undertaking regulated work to join the PVG Scheme for both the Children and Protected Adults workforces to demonstrate to their employer that they are not barred from working with children and protected adults. Employers will provide information and guidance on this.

## Recognition of Prior Learning

Individuals applying for an apprenticeship will undergo selection based on the employer's existing HR processes. Learning providers should take account of this and liaise with employers to provide advice and guidance on any RPL and experience that will be accepted for entry onto the programme.

It is recommended that a flexible approach to RPL is adopted, on a case-by-case basis, with all relevant experience as well as any previous qualifications considered. Learning providers should always consider how they can best recognise apprentices' prior learning to minimise repetition of content.

You can find more information on RPL [here](#).

## Apprenticeship agreement and employment status

All post-school apprentices must hold a contract of employment for the period of the apprenticeship.

In addition, an apprenticeship agreement, confirming the commitment of the employer, the apprentice and the learning provider to the agreed apprenticeship must be signed by all parties. This agreement forms part of the individual employment arrangements between the apprentice and the employer; and of the learning arrangements between the learning provider, the employer and the apprentice.

## Registration and certification

Registration and certification of apprenticeships is undertaken through [Modern Apprenticeship Online](#).

It is the responsibility of the learning provider to ensure that the registration of apprentices is completed within four weeks of the start of their apprenticeship.

## Fair work, inclusion and diversity

The Scottish Apprenticeships system aims to embed fair work principles. Fair Work First is the Scottish Government's flagship policy for driving high quality and fair work across the labour market in Scotland by applying fair work criteria to grants, other funding and contracts being awarded by and across the public sector, where it is relevant to do so. Through this approach the Scottish Government is asking employers to adopt fair working practices, specifically:

- appropriate channels for effective voice, such as trade union recognition;
- investment in workforce development;
- no inappropriate use of zero hours contracts;
- action to tackle the gender pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workplace; and
- payment of the real Living Wage.

Further guidance on Fair Work First is available from <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-work-first-guidance-support-implementation/>

The design and development of Scottish Apprenticeships aims to embed these principles in practical ways by including opportunities for feedback from apprentices as well as the availability of clear pathways into future opportunities beyond the apprenticeship itself.

### Protected characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 includes nine protected characteristics, which are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sex and sexual orientation. It is against the law to discriminate based on these protected characteristics. Skills Development Scotland is a Corporate Parent and, to that end, includes 'care experienced' in a similar way to protected characteristics in all its funded programmes and services.

Attracting the best people into apprenticeships involves ensuring that barriers are removed. Receiving the right support at the right time unlocks the potential of people who could otherwise be denied the opportunity to go on and become valued employees. Supporting people to feel confident about disclosing their protected characteristics in a safe and respectful way allows employers and learning providers to put the right conditions in place to unlock that potential; the right time for this is often at the start of an apprenticeship or even at the recruitment stage. In practice, it might involve ensuring that reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate apprentices, where that is possible and to help them make the most of their apprenticeship journey. Examples might include (but are not limited to) supporting people with sensory impairments, supporting people for whom English is not their first language and supporting people who are care experienced (for example, through fostering, adoption or residential care).

### Diversity in Dental Nursing

Evidence shows males are underrepresented in the dental nursing workforce compared to the female dental nursing workforce. The GDC registration reports (December 2024) detailed 1.74% of the dental nursing workforce in the UK were male. To ensure equity, diversity and inclusion when accessing a career in dental nursing employers and training providers welcome prospective apprentices regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/ civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The GDC guidance for employers' states 'Before appointing an individual to work as a trainee, you should ensure the individual is capable of enrolling on a course recognised for registration'. Individuals must be able to perform the requirements of the role safely in order to contribute to the provision of provide safe and effective high quality patient care, and in order to successfully achieve the qualification requirements and registration with the regulatory body. Recruitment and delivery of this framework should consider the need to be flexible and adapt to support different needs of learners. These guides contain practical steps to make sure recruitment is more inclusive. <https://employers.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/talent-attraction/inclusive-recruitment>

Everyone needs support from time to time. There are a number of readily available resources that can be accessed during the apprenticeship.

## Mental wellbeing support for apprentices

Work can contribute positively to mental wellbeing by providing things such as friendships, meaningful activity and learning opportunities. However, sometimes work brings pressures which can either create or add to problems with mental health. When experiencing difficulties with mental health, work can sometimes feel like an additional pressure even if there are no direct issues at work. When working towards an apprenticeship, the challenges of combining studying for a qualification alongside work may at times add to those pressures. Skills Development Scotland, working in partnership with Penumbra, have developed a number of resources that aim to support apprentices in seeking help for mental health difficulties. More information is available from

<https://www.apprenticeships.scot/become-an-apprentice/mentalhealth-resource>

## Fair working conditions

Working conditions should always be fair. Fair work is work that offers all individuals an effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment and respect. Find out more about fair work while you're working as an apprentice in Scotland from

<https://www.apprenticeships.scot/support-during-apprenticeship/fairworking>

## Disability support

The Equality Act 2010 protects disabled people. Employers, colleges, universities or learning providers:

- Cannot treat an apprentice less favourably than others for any reason connected to a disability
- Must make reasonable adjustments to make sure apprentices are not seriously disadvantaged during the course

More information on the sources of disability support that is available to apprentices is available from

<https://www.apprenticeships.scot/support-during-apprenticeship/disability-support>

## Money and funding

Apprenticeships allow an apprentice to work for an employer and earn a wage. More information on money or funding is available at

<https://www.apprenticeships.scot/support-during-apprenticeship/money-and-funding>

## Support for care-experienced apprentices

Support is available for care-experienced apprentices. More information including insights from apprentices who have experience of the care system is available from

<https://www.apprenticeships.scot/support-during>

Once the apprenticeship starts, there are a number of key considerations, tasks and milestones that apprentices, employers, learning providers, mentors and assessors should undertake to optimise a successful outcome for all parties.

## Work-based Learning

Work-based learning – aligned to and assessed against both the **learning outcomes** and the **knowledge, skills and behaviours** of the apprenticeship – is the central and most significant component of an apprenticeship and is based on apprentices' real-life experiences in the workplace. Work-based learning is a partnership between apprentice, employer and learning provider and all apprentices must have the support of a mentor in the workplace.

Get more information on work-based learning [here](#).

## Meta-skills Development

To effectively develop the meta-skills outlined earlier, apprentices must first understand what they are and how they might apply them in their role.

The unit SFHOH34 Maintain personal and professional practice for dental care professionals from the mandatory SVQ has been fully mapped against the SDS Specification: Developing meta-skills and personal professionalism and meets all the performance and knowledge and understanding criteria. The mapping confirms that evidence of **ALL** the meta-skills performance and knowledge and understanding criteria can be drawn from the evidence provided for SFHOH34. Further guidance on this which include specific evidence requirements for unit SFHOH34 has been provided in the Assessment Strategy for the SVQ in Dental Nursing at SCQF level 7.

Setting development goals, action planning and regularly reflecting on progress will help apprentices to develop their meta-skills and it is vital to provide the time and space for reflections to take place. Naturally occurring opportunities to discuss and reflect on meta-skills might inductions, initial assessment, progress review meetings, undertaking activities and progression within the role.

Skills Development Scotland have produced a range of tools which may be used to support assessment. The meta-skills tools are available from Skills Development Scotland by request to [apprenticeshipdevelopment@sds.co.uk](mailto:apprenticeshipdevelopment@sds.co.uk)

## Delivery of Training

Consultation indicated that on the job learning for this apprenticeship should take place within the workplace by aligning work activities to the apprenticeship outcomes. This is a real working environment that reflects typical occupational conditions that are relevant to the work activities being assessed. Additional off the job learning, through the completion of the SVQ & PDA qualifications, will be out with the workplace, and assessed by an approved SDS and SQA Training Provider.

An initial assessment and learning plan must be developed to identify any additional needs and provide apprentices with the appropriate support or adaptations required to successfully complete their apprenticeship. The initial assessment should take account of the Apprentice's job role and the employer's business and skills requirements. During the initial assessment, relevant evidence e.g. from aptitude and skills tests, interview, prior learning, CV, etc should be used. Other areas that should be considered are the Apprentice's potential, interests and motivation, and the suitability of the job role to their learning opportunity, digital skills, meta skills, additional support needs, personal effectiveness, and personal circumstances.

## Approaches to Assessment

Apprentices are expected to provide evidence of meeting the learning outcomes and the knowledge, skills and behaviours required of this apprenticeship; also, evidence to demonstrate that they are competent in the workplace. It is important for apprentices to recognise how they have developed skills and understanding along the way, and where these still need to be developed.

Apprentices will be expected to demonstrate competence in the required mandatory units. They must also be able to perform to the required standard over a period of time. Assessment must be in accordance with the awarding body requirements.

Apprentices must be working in a relevant job role in an appropriate work placement, providing chairside support during a wide range of clinical dental procedures throughout the period in which they undertake the qualification, and assessment of learner's performance must take place during the course of their day-to-day work.

All the units in this qualification are designed to reflect the expected performance of practitioners in real workplace situations and settings.

Apprentices will be expected to demonstrate competence in the required mandatory units. Assessment must be in accordance with the awarding body requirements.

Assessment of the apprentice's performance must take place during the course of their day-to-day work. Observations should be of naturally occurring practice within the learner's work role and include demonstration of application of knowledge and understanding. This principle will apply to all units except where simulation has been deemed acceptable, as detailed in the table on page 16.

## Holistic Assessment

The holistic approach allows larger pieces of work to evidence a number of learning outcomes, rather than a piecemeal process of finding separate evidence for each outcome and/or its associated **knowledge, skills and behaviours**.

Assessment should be undertaken both in a controlled environment and through work related activity depending on what is being assessed, however most assessment should take place in the workplace.

## Quality assurance

Skills Development Scotland is responsible for making sure all funded learning is of high quality and benefits the apprentice. A **quality assurance framework** is in place to cover the delivery of work-based learning in an apprenticeship and is designed to demonstrate how effectively learning providers and employers support this by ensuring apprentices:

- Receive appropriate support and guidance to enable them to become successful apprentices and confident individuals;
- Receive quality learning and develop their skills to achieve their learning goals;
- Are treated with dignity and respect in a way that promotes equality and inclusion; and
- Work towards successful outcomes, leading to future employment or further appropriate career progression.

The relevant awarding and accreditation bodies will undertake the quality assurance of the assessment of competence-based and professional qualifications. qualifications

## Qualification Requirements

### Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ)

During their apprenticeship, apprentices must complete the **Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) in Dental Nursing at SCQF Level 7 (GV94 23)**. This competence-based qualification brings together the development and assessment of all the **mandatory outcomes and knowledge, skills and behaviours** including meta-skills and core skills required of the apprenticeship.

### Other awards, qualifications, or training programmes

The following must also be achieved:

- The Professional Development Award (PDA) at SCQF Level 7, (code TBC), 40 SCQF credit points
- This PDA will enable those working as dental nurses or trainee dental nurses, to develop the knowledge which underpins the SVQ in Dental Nursing. Successful completion of this PDA in conjunction with the practice-based qualification (the SVQ in Dental Nursing) meets the requirements for a Dental Care Professional (DCP) and will allow candidates to apply for registration with the General Dental Council.

### Core Skills

Core Skills are broad transferable skills, which can be used in addition to meta-skills, to help apprentices learn how to manage and adapt how they respond to a changing society. The five Core Skills are: Communication, Numeracy, Information and Communication Technology, Problem Solving and Working with Others.

As core skills are all embedded, there is no need to certificate separately.

## Approaches to Assessment

Apprentices are expected to provide evidence of meeting the **learning outcomes** and the **knowledge, skills and behaviours** required of this apprenticeship; also, evidence to demonstrate that they are competent in the workplace. It is important for apprentices to recognise how they have developed skills and understanding along the way, and where these still need to be developed.

Assessment Methods	Observation of practice	Product evidence	Questioning	Online assessment	Witness testimony	Professional discussion	Personal statements	Reflective accounts	Simulation
Maintain personal and professional practice for dental care professionals	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Provide Basic Life Support		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maintain safe working practices in clinical dental environments	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Provide information and support to individuals on oral health	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Provide chairside support during oral health assessment procedures	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Contribute to producing dental radiographic images	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Provide chairside support during periodontal and restorative procedures	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Provide chairside support during prosthetic procedures	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Provide chairside support during endodontic procedures	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Provide chairside support during extraction and minor oral surgery procedures	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

## Pathways and Progression

A successfully completed apprenticeship, including the achievement of competence-based and professional qualifications, opens the door to a number of opportunities for progression in both work and further learning.

### Career advancement

There are a number of post registration development opportunities available for registered dental nurse. These include post registration qualifications, awarded by SQA, that reflect the General Dental Council's Scope of Practice for Dental Nurses. These include Professional Development Awards in:

- Dental Reception Skills at SCQF 6
- Dental Nursing: Delivering Oral Health Interventions at SCQF Level 8
- Dental Nursing: Supporting Special Care Provision at SCQF Level 8
- Intravenous Sedation for Dental Nurses at SCQF Level 8
- Inhalation Sedation for Dental Nurses at SCQF Level 8
- Orthodontic Dental Nursing at SCQF Level 8
- Dental Care Professionals: Dental Laboratory Skills at SCQF Level 8
- Recording Patient Assessment for Dental Care Professionals at SCQF Level 8
- Dental Practice Management at SCQF Level 8
- Education, Training and Assessment at SCQF Level 8
- Managing Quality Improvement in Dental Practice at SCQF Level 8
- Dental Radiography (Operator) for Dental Care Professionals at SCQF Level 9

In addition, there are opportunities to undertake the HNC (SCQF 7) and or HND in dental nursing (SCQF 8).

There are other credit rated education and training programmes, for example, Childsmile programme credit rated at SCQF 8 that enable registered dental nurses to extend their scope of practice to be able to practice the application of fluoride varnish under the Childsmile programme.

Other career pathways in dentistry could include:

- Dental Receptionist
- Practice Manager
- Orthodontic Therapist
- Dental Technician
- Therapist
- Dentist

The achievement of the pre-registration dental nurse qualification and the knowledge, skills and behaviours obtained from working as a dental nurse, can lead into other roles within health and social care.

## Professional Registration

Upon successful completion of the SVQ and PDA in Dental Nursing individuals must promptly register with the General Dental Council in order to work as a dental nurse.

All dental professionals need to undertake CPD. It is a vital part of the regulatory system that protects the public and patients.

CPD is a compulsory part of GDC registration. Not meeting minimum CPD requirements can put your ability to practise dentistry at risk.

Version Number	Date	Description