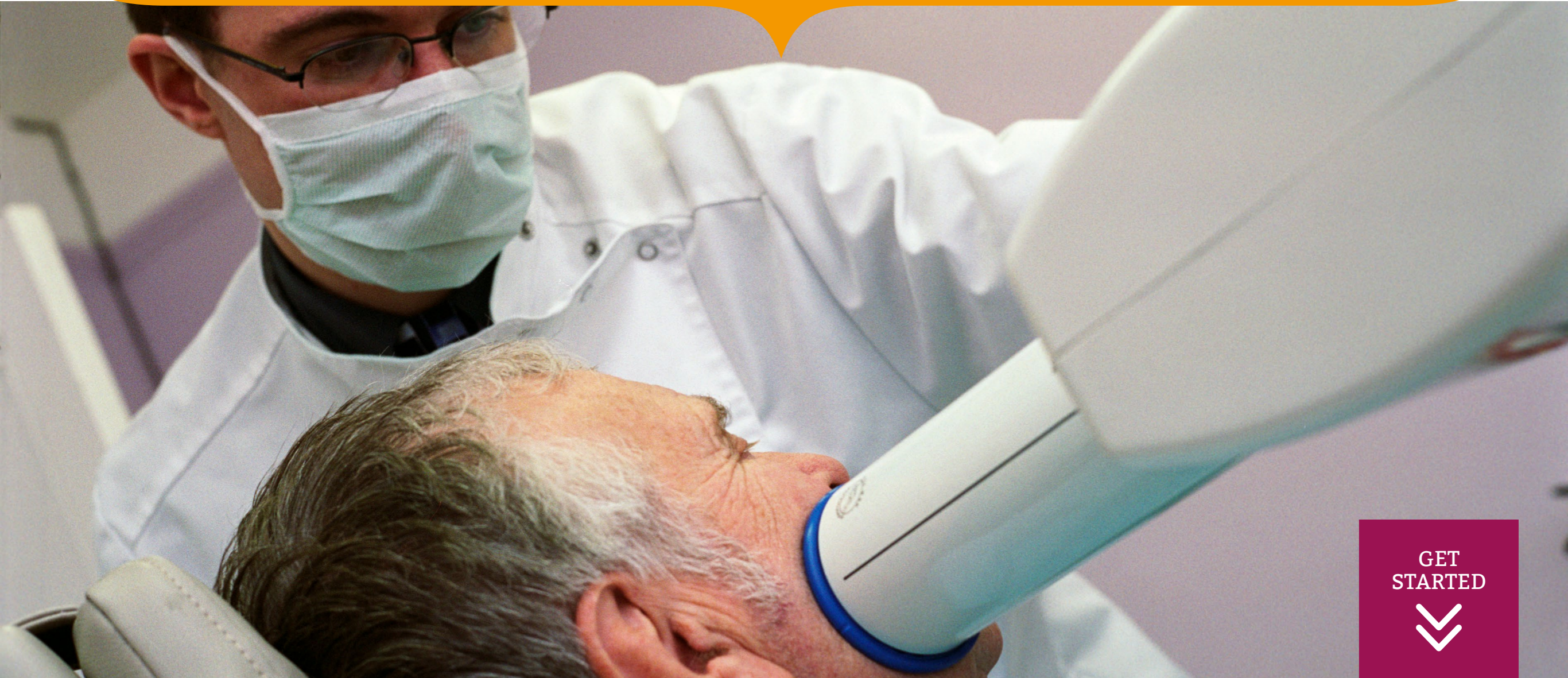


Filling you in

Dental Work Experience Toolkit



GET
STARTED



What's in the toolkit?

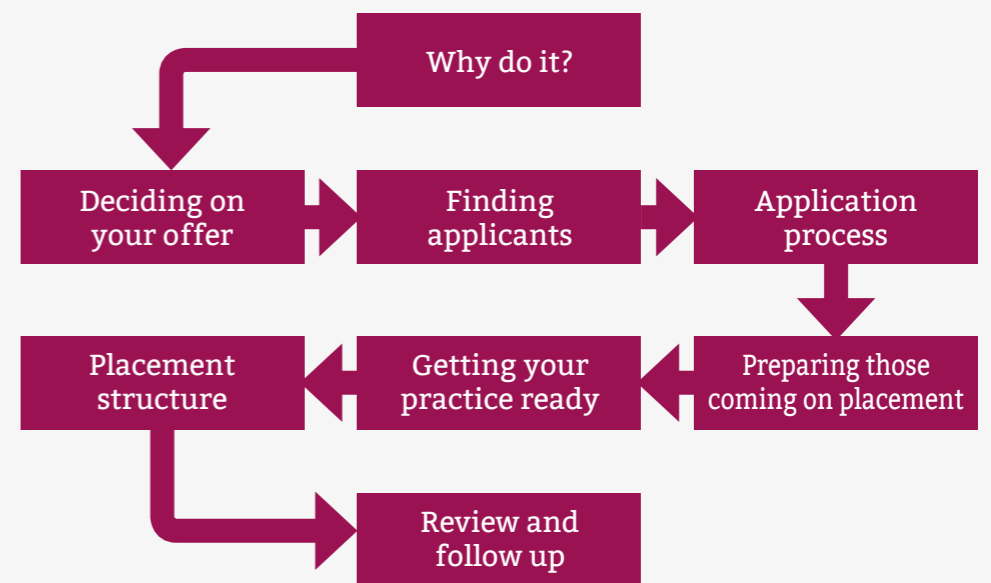
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This toolkit provides you with all you need to run a successful work experience programme, whether you offer private or NHS services. It has been designed to take you step by step through the process. Many elements such as the placement structure are there to provide some ideas on what to offer. You can follow them exactly or develop it to fit into your practice.

The toolkit focuses on work experience for those that are seeking a clinical career in dentistry or dental care. We are particularly interested in dentistry as that is the area in which we wish to grow the number of work experience opportunities.

This toolkit builds on the NHS guidance **'More than photocopying (Work experience - a toolkit for the NHS)'**.

Outline process



Why do it?

The dentists that offer work experience say they do it to support the future workforce and encourage the right people into the profession. Many also say they offer it in order to enhance their reputation within the community and the profession. Whatever your reasons for offering work experience it will make a huge difference to those on placement - helping them to make informed decisions about their future.

“ Few things are more rewarding than discovering the remarkable achievements of new people when they are given a chance to show their skills for care and compassion. This toolkit will help you to get the very most out of your work experience programme - how to recruit the best people, advice on setting work plans and tips on celebrating your outcomes. Thank you for taking these steps and good luck in your ventures towards helping the next generation of dental professionals take that first step.”

Ian Cumming, Chief Executive, Health Education England.

“ At the Dental Schools Council we value work experience in all its forms. Work experience is important to the future of our profession to build interest in what we do and encourage talented and committed individuals to join our workforce. Observing and shadowing a dentist and the wider team provides a real sense of what happens in a practice demonstrating how interesting, complex and challenging the role is, as well as experiencing the rewards that come from improving patients’ oral health. We want our applicants to understand what practicing dentistry is really like and work experience is one key way in which they can really see what happens.”

Professor Callum Youngson, Chair, The Dental Schools Council

“ The British Dental Association acknowledges that it is important for work experience to be provided in dental practice as it can help young people applying to dental schools. This toolkit will help dentists consider the aspects of offering such posts. We are happy to advise members further on any questions they might have with regard to providing work experience placements.”

Judith Husband, Chair of Education, Ethics and the Dental Team, British Dental Association.



There should be no barriers to you providing work experience. MDDUS, Dental Defence Union and Dental Protection all offer support to their members who provide work experience. For more information on indemnity see [page 7](#).

We hope that you join us in supporting work experience and opening up opportunities to all those who can make a real contribution to the profession.

Deciding on your offer

Make the decisions before you start about what you want to offer and what will work the best for you and your practice. We have several suggestions regarding how you set up work experience that will make it easier.

You need to consider:

- the areas within your practice that will offer work experience
- eligibility criteria
- the number of placements and when they will take place
- length of the placement

Areas that offer work experience.

Work experience can build knowledge and understanding in:

- dentistry, what it is like being a dentist from treating patients to your role in the community
- clinical roles that support dentists, the role of a dental therapist, hygienist or nurse within the practice
- medical administration, the work that is involved in running a practice

We would suggest that any placement for dentistry contains elements of all three areas so that they build an understanding of the dental team.

In clinical areas the work experience takes the form of observation and shadowing. Those on work placement cannot get involved in any clinical activities, such as cleaning teeth, or taking impressions.

Work experience should help people to understand the nature of the role and its variety as well as how everyone works within a wider dental team.

Eligibility criteria

In order to ensure you get the applicants you want you may wish to build in eligibility criteria.

We recommend that placements be for those:

- aged 16 years or older
- who have not received any placements elsewhere

There is a shortage of work experience placements in dentistry. We would encourage you to ensure there are opportunities for people who do not have any family working in dentistry as they can often find it very difficult to find a placement.



We have found that the vast majority of placements go to those who already have connections with dental practices - we would like to open this out. We would like you to consider other criteria to ensure we broaden diversity within dentistry these are:

- young people who have been eligible for free school meals and/or pupil premium
- the first generation of their family to apply to university
- those attending a school where at least 30% of pupils were eligible for free school meals
- those not in education, training or employment (NEETs)

Number of placements and when they take place

This is entirely up to you. We would suggest you do not offer more than one placement at a time and stagger them throughout the year. The summer

period (June to July) is often the best time for schools and colleges as examinations have finished and there is some flexibility in the school timetable to accommodate work experience. You may not wish to have your placement starting on a Monday, or following any days your practice has been closed.

Length of placement

For work experience it is definitely quality over quantity.

We recommend that your work placements last three to five consecutive days. This gives enough time for those on work experience to gain an understanding of the work in your practice and gain a useful understanding of the profession to help with their application for further study.

Finding applicants

There are two main approaches to finding work experience applicants:

- Asking a school, college or employment organisation (such as Job CentrePlus) to find people for you
- Dealing with direct applicants

Working with another organisation, such as a school or college, can help in many ways, they can:

- identify individuals who are interested, highly motivated and would value the placement
- prepare individuals for the placement
- find people from outside your catchment area (thus alleviating some of the concerns regarding confidentiality)
- provide support if any issues arise during placement.

We suggest you speak to the Head of Sixth Form or equivalent in the school or college just outside your area. By going outside your area you are reducing the risk of interest from within your locality (and the associated issues of patient confidentiality).

Let them know what you are offering including how many placements, type (is it for those interested in dentistry, nursing or administration), eligibility criteria, placement duration and times of the year as well as your application process.

Be clear that this can be part of an on-going relationship.



Case study: Moreton Dental Care

Moreton Dental Care has been offering work experience placements since 1991. Since then dozens of people have spent up to a week in the practice understanding the role of a dentist and what it is like to be part of a team caring for the dental health of their patients. Dr Paul Sherrard runs the practice and explained that he offers work experience 'to keen motivated individuals as I feel a moral responsibility to do so. I run a happy successful practice and want to share a positive vision of well-run dental practice with dentists of the future'.

Paul interviews all those interested in work experience 'I want empathetic and caring people, who take the responsibility of being in the practice seriously'.

The patients at Moreton Dental Care welcome the students as Paul asks every student to introduce themselves to the patient, explain why they are there and ask if they are happy for them to observe.

As Paul finds 'We have good feedback from the students, many of whom keep in contact many years later after graduation. I feel this helps the reputation of our practice too. In summary, it is the right thing to do. Many students have tried many practices with no success so it is good to help'.

'I've had a wonderful career from dentistry and want to share that enthusiasm for the profession.'

Application process

This is an opportunity for you to find out more about those wishing to come on placement and whether they would be suitable. It also gives you an opportunity to collect the information you need prior to them coming on placement for risk and insurance purposes.

An **application form** is included, which uses best practice from other dental practices. It includes the basic information you need to gather. You may wish to add other information.

It is your decision whether you wish to interview. We would suggest a brief telephone call, so you can ask them any questions arising from their form. Asking them to contact you to arrange an interview and getting them to ring (or turn up) at the agreed time can be a useful first indicator as to their suitability for the placement.

Preparing those coming on placement

It is important that you help those coming on placement to prepare. We suggest you send them:

- a **welcome letter** outlining the timing of the placement, who to contact and your expectations. It also includes tips on how to make the most of the placement.
- a **placement agreement** outlining the terms of their placement within the practice

If you are working with a school, college or other organisation please send this information to your link person as well.

Example **letters and forms** are included in this toolkit.



Getting your practice ready

Risk

In clinical areas the work experience takes the form of observation and shadowing. Those on work placement cannot get involved in any clinical activities, such as cleaning teeth, or taking impressions. As an employer, you have primary responsibility for the health and safety of the individual and should be managing any significant risks. It's easy to do this, by:

- explaining the risks during induction, checking that they understand what they have been told and know how to raise health and safety concerns
- ensuring your checks are proportionate to the environment the placement will be working in.

Simplified health and safety guidance make it clear that if you already employ young people you won't need to repeat risk assessments for work experience placements.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is crucial and should be covered in induction so as to check their understanding of the subject and make them fully aware of your confidentiality protocols. Remind them that confidentiality extends not only to the patient's treatment, but also to the fact that someone is a patient of the practice.

Issues of confidentiality extend to access to the patient records and to the appointment book. We would suggest you ask them to turn off their mobile phones and leave it in the practice office.

Patient dignity and confidentiality is written into their **signed agreement**.

Patients should be consulted about the presence of work experience placements but usually are more than happy to have them around. We suggest that you ask those on work experience to introduce themselves to the patients, explain what they are doing and ask if they are happy for them to be there. Their agreement is enough. However, we have also included a **patient consent form**.



Insurance and indemnity

Insurance

Individuals on work experience are covered by your existing employers' liability insurance policy, provided your insurer is a member of the Association of British Insurers. The Association of British Insurers, the British Insurance Brokers Association and Lloyds of London have agreed that, as a matter of convention, individuals on work experience placements should be treated as employees for the purposes of insurance against bodily injury (that is, they will be covered by your employers' liability policy), where the employer is legally liable for a loss.

You only need to notify your insurer of the sorts of activities that individuals on work placement will undertake if those activities are onerous or different from the normal business activities of your organisation.

If you are running any work experience placements that last longer than two weeks, there should be no problem but you may need to provide more detailed information to your insurer.

For more information visit the **Association of British Insurers**.

Indemnity

Many indemnity organisations view the supervision of work placement as part of the role of being a dentist. People who undertake work placements must be given an appropriate induction to explain risks, information about confidentiality and sign an undertaking to keep all information they learn, including the identity of patients, confidential.

When interacting with patients they may only observe members of the practice, with appropriate consent from patients who must understand the status of the work placement person (they are not a dental student). The benefits of indemnity would apply to members only and would not extend to the provision of assistance to those on work placement if a claim were made directly against them. As work placement is purely observational it is unlikely that those on work placement would find themselves facing such an action.

DDU

'The DDU regards supervision of work placements as a normal part of the work of a dentist. This is included within our standard subscriptions and members who offer work placements do not need to tell us. If a dentist member of the DDU were to encounter problems as a result of such activities they could approach us for advice or assistance. Examples of assistance that might be sought could include advice about confidentiality, supervision and/or delegation or assistance with allegations made in respect of the care provided to an individual patient when the work placement person was present.'

Dental Protection

'Dental Protection takes the view that the provision of work experience opportunities is a recognised activity in many professional settings and no additional subscriptions are required by practice owners. We expect that those on work experience placement will not undertake any clinical work but instead observe and shadow your professional practice. Members are welcome to contact Dental Protection for advice about obtaining patient consent and confidentiality agreements as well as other aspects of induction for a practice visit.'

MDDUS

'Dentist membership of MDDUS includes access to indemnity in respect of the practice's clinical liability for work experience and other student placements. Our members do not need to inform us if they are offering work experience placements. We expect members to follow relevant guidance and in particular, to tailor the placement to the stage and maturity of any candidate. As with all student interactions, patients must be given advance notice of a work placement student being present during consultations and their right to ask the student to leave at any time.'

Disclosure and Barring Service

No DBS is required for supervisors

The Disclosure and Barring Service, or DBS (formerly CRB) check is not compulsory for staff supervising young people aged 16–17.

In the case of work experience, a DBS check may be required for a person who supervises a student under the age of 16. This will be required where the person providing the training or supervision to the child is unsupervised and is providing the training or supervision frequently (at least once a week or on more than three days in a 30 day period). In these circumstances, the work is likely to be regulated activity and the education provider can request a DBS check for that supervisor.

You have the right to refuse requests by the education provider that checks are carried out for those supervising students aged 16–17. For more information, visit the government's **disclosure and barring service**.

No DBS is required for those on placement

It is not necessary for those on work experience to complete a DBS check as they must be supervised at all times.

In the case of work experience placements which are part of a study programme or traineeship, students over the age of 16 who intend to undertake work experience in the health care sector may need to have a DBS check before starting on the placement. If you do not currently employ a young person or haven't done so in the last few years or you are taking on a work experience student for the first time, you should review your risk assessment before the student begins their placement. You may wish to discuss the placement in advance with education provider in order to take account of any particular needs of the student and their physical and psychological capacity.



Placement structure

During the placement you should introduce the variety of roles in your practice. Through this they will get a wider appreciation of the range of the different aspects of dentistry, and the importance of teamwork.

When planning your placement:

- ensure that they are in the company of a member of staff at all times
- be clear on the start and end times
- identify the main contact that they can go to in the event of a query or concern.

We have provided two example work placement timetables, one for those interested in a future clinical role (for example as a dentist or dental therapist) or those interested in administration.

For those that are interested in dental work experience it is important that they experience the different roles within the practice.

It is important for those coming on placement to be encouraged to reflect on their experience.

We have included a reflective diary sheet for those on placement to complete.

For a three-day clinical work experience placement we would suggest:

Day one

Morning: Introduction to the team and expectations.

This should include:

- confidentiality
- how to act within a consultation
- how the practice works and the different roles
- introduction to the team
- who to speak to if you have any concerns or questions
- what to do if you cannot attend
- what to do for lunch and refreshments
- discussion on what they hope to get out of the placement
- understanding if there is anything specific they wish to see
- timetable for the week.

Afternoon: Understanding how the practice works

This should include:

- working in reception - understanding the process of receiving patients, and understanding their needs
- working alongside the practice manager - understanding how the organisation works

Day two

Morning: Dental consultations

This should include:

- shadowing a dentist during their morning practice.

Afternoon: Dental consultations

This should include

- shadowing a member of the dental clinical team such as a hygienist or nurse. This is important for them to understand the breadth of the practice in the surgery and how a dentist is part of a team.

Day three

Morning: Dental Consultations

This should include:

- shadowing a different dentist during their morning practice.

Afternoon: Reflection and Questions

This should include:

- an opportunity for those on placement to reflect on their experience and ask questions. All staff should set aside time so that they can respond to questions. We would suggest that you may prompt a few questions and these are included in welcome letter.
- an opportunity for them to see part of the practice or the work that they have not yet had an opportunity to see.

Placement structure

For a three-day administration work experience we would suggest:

Day one

Morning: Introduction to the team and expectations.

This should include:

- confidentiality
- how to act on reception
- what role everyone does
- who to speak to if you have any concerns or questions
- what to do if you cannot attend
- what to do for lunch and refreshments
- understanding if there is anything specific they wish to see

Afternoon: Understanding how the practice works

This should include:

- working in reception - understanding the process of receiving patients, and understanding their needs

Day two

Morning: Practice management

This should include:

- shadowing the practice manager in their meetings.

Afternoon: Clinical exposure

This should include

- shadowing a dental hygienist or nurse. This is important for them to understand the breadth of the practice and how they are part of a team.

Day three

Morning: Reception

This should include:

- working within reception.

Afternoon: Reflection and Questions

This should include:

- an opportunity for those on placement to reflect on their experience and ask questions. Time should be set aside by all the staff involved in the placement so that they can ask questions. We would suggest that you may prompt a few questions and these are included in the welcome letter.
- an opportunity for them to see part of the practice or the work that they have not yet had an opportunity to see.



Review and follow up

It is important that you review the work experience placement. This does not need to be onerous but will tell you whether all the effort you have put into organising and running the placement has been worthwhile.

Ask those on work experience placement to complete a survey. Analysing the placement survey results will help you critically evaluate your programme.

A **template evaluation form** is included.

If you are working with a partner, such as a school, then do speak to them about the onward progression of those that have been on placement.



Forms and templates

1. Application form
2. Welcome letter
3. Placement agreement form
4. Patient consent form
5. Reflective diary
6. Evaluation form

Application form

Contact details

Surname/Family name:	
First name:	
Address including postcode:	
Home telephone:	
Date of Birth	

Have you already had (or secured) a placement in a dental practice or dental hospital? Yes No

What is the name and address of the Dental Practice you a registered as a patient at?

We are trying to build diversity within dentistry, please tell us all that apply to you:	
Do you have any family working in dentistry? If so what do they do?	
Were you eligible for free school meals?	
Has anyone in your immediate family gone to university? If so, who?	
Are you not in education, training or employment?	
Are you seeking to return to work following an extended period of unemployment due to incapacity and ill health or carer responsibilities?	



Application form

Please indicate in 150 words why you are interested in work experience?

I confirm that the information within this form is true and that these are my own words

Signed: _____

Print name: _____ Date: _____

Welcome letter

Dear

We are pleased to confirm that we would like to offer you a work experience placement in our practice.

Take time to read this letter and complete and return a signed copy of the placement agreement form. We also ask that you contact us to arrange a convenient time for your placement. Contact _____ as soon as possible to arrange your placement start date. We will let you know what time to arrive and who your main contact will be.

We are a very busy practice so you will need to fit in around our schedule. We will give you the opportunity to observe dentists doing consultations with patients and to come into contact with other members of the team such as the hygienists.

On your first day we will provide you with an induction. This will allow you to find out a little more about the practice and to outline what you will be doing during the rest of your time with us.

We want you to make the most out of your work placement so here are a few tips:

- Your placement is not to learn about dentistry but to learn about what dentists and other members of the dental team do.
- To get the most out of this placement please make time after each day to reflect on what you have learnt and put these thoughts into the diary (attached)
- Asking questions is a good thing! Think about what you want to learn before your come on placement and discuss this at your induction. What do each of the members of the team do? How do they interact with each other? What are their work patterns?
- When interacting with staff and patients you should be polite at all times and you should introduce yourself as someone on work experience. Please wear the badge that we will provide.
- Remember that you are there to observe and so do not expect to carry out clinical tasks such as cleaning teeth.

We want you to enjoy your placement however it can also be a very intense experience. If anything concerns or upsets you then do speak to us. You will be supervised at all times during a clinical session.

Please speak to us if you are unsure about any of the information provided, or about the placement you have been offered.

We look forward to hearing from you and welcoming you at the Practice.

Placement agreement

The following information should be read carefully. If you are unsure about any part of the form please speak to . Please send one signed copy of this form to and keep the other for your information.

Confidentiality

It is natural to wish to discuss your experience on a work placement with friends and family. However, you must ensure that you do not disclose confidential information that could identify an individual patient or member of staff. Issues of confidentiality extend to access to the patient records and to the appointment book. You must also let your supervisor know immediately if you know any patient personally.

Risk

Shadowing dentist or other member of the team carries with it an element of risk. By following the instructions of the person supervising you risk will be minimised. Please make sure that you therefore listen to and follow instructions at all times, particularly when these relate to health and safety issues.

In order to minimise risk of infection, you must follow instructions given by members of staff at all times. You must also ensure that your standards of personal hygiene are very high. It is essential that you wash your hands at the beginning and end of each session, and should you use the toilet facilities.

In order to minimise risks of cross infection clothes should be changed daily.

You must not under any circumstances handle sharps (needles or other sharp objects) and when in clinical areas should take extreme care where you put your hands, and check before you sit down.

Sickness Arrangements

If you are unable to attend because of sickness you should inform the practice as soon as possible.

Security Badges

A badge will be issued to you and should be worn at all times on your placement. This will help patients and staff identify who you are and your role on placement.

Dress Code

You will be expected to wear smart clothes on placement.

I accept this placement on the terms and conditions outlined and have retained a copy.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Print name: _____

Patient consent form

Introduction

This Practice has work experience placement working with us. They will be shadowing members of the team. The placement occurs under the supervision of staff in this Practice; and is not offered as a substitute for your usual care, but an addition to it. They are here to observe and will be not playing an active role in your care.

Informed Consent and Privacy

Those on placement have been notified that at all times they are expected to maintain dentist-patient confidentiality.

Please inform the reception staff if you would rather not have those on work placement sit in for all or part of your consultation. This decision will in no way affect your dental care.

I _____ have read the information provided and consent to having someone on work experience observe during my consultation today. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Print name: _____

Reflective diary

Name: _____

	Who I shadowed	What I learned
Day 1 Morning		
Day 1 Afternoon		
Day 2 Morning		
Day 2 Afternoon		
Day 3 Morning		
Day 3 Afternoon		

Evaluation form

Please fill in the following questions to let us know how you found your work experience.

This information will be used to develop the programme.

1. What did you hope to learn from your placement?
2. Has this been achieved? Yes No (Please tick appropriate box).
3. Do you feel your placement has given you a better understanding of the work that is undertaken in our organisation?
 Yes No If No please give details:
4. Do you feel the structure of the programme was: Satisfactory Unsatisfactory
5. Do you feel the length of each session was: Satisfactory Too long Too short
6. Which sessions did you find most interesting?
7. Which sessions did you find least interesting?
8. Are there any additional sessions which you feel should be included in the programme?
 Yes No If yes, please give details:
9. Do you feel it would have been useful to have been provided with any more information before your placement?
 Yes No If yes, please give details:
10. Has your placement influenced your choice of career in any way?
 Yes No If yes, please give details:
11. Please add any other comments you feel would be helpful:

Thank you for your help in completing this form.

Please return to:

Acknowledgements

Our thanks must go to all those in dental practices across the UK who support work experience placements.

Your contribution is making a real difference to people's lives and futures. In putting together this guide we must thank those who gave up their time to read the document and provide comment. Your contribution helped shape the toolkit but of course any mistakes remain our own. Particular thanks must go to Dr Judith Husband (Non-Executive Director, British Dental Association) for her enthusiastic support and help from day one, Dr Paul Sherrard (Moreton Dental Care), Aubrey Craig (MDDUS), Stephen Henderson and David Croser (Dental Protection) and Mary-Lou Nesbitt (Dental Defence Union) and Mary-Lou Nesbitt (Medical Defence Union).

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Disclaimer

The information contained in this toolkit is for general guidance purposes only. We do not accept and, to the extent permitted by law, exclude liability to any person for any loss which may arise from relying upon or otherwise using the information contained in the toolkit. Whilst every effort has been made when producing this toolkit to help the user in planning and support work experience, no liability is accepted for any error or omission. Should you have a particular query or issue which is not covered in the toolkit then we would strongly advise you to seek legal or other professional advice, rather than relying on the information in this toolkit. In the toolkit, we have recommended that you visit other websites for further information. Whilst we strive to provide only links to useful websites, we have no control over the content and accuracy of information on these websites.

