Welcome to our University

Thank you for your interest in the Bachelor in Dental Surgery (BDS) course run from the School of Clinical Dentistry at The University of Sheffield. This prospectus gives you an overview of the BDS course and will answer many of your questions and will help you to make the important decision as to where you will study dentistry. We hope the University of Sheffield will be your choice and that you will become one of the large number of students who always remember their years here in Sheffield as happy and fulfilling ones.

Our history

The Dental School in Sheffield was first established in the late 1890s and Sheffield University has been awarding a degree in Dental Surgery since 1922.

Our School and Dental Hospital

The School enjoys a national and international reputation for the quality of its teaching and research. Ninety two percent of our research was graded as ‘world leading’ or ‘internationally excellent’ in the recent Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014.

The School of Clinical Dentistry is linked to the Charles Clifford Dental Hospital where the majority of clinical teaching takes place. The School and Hospital underwent a multi-million pound redevelopment between 2008 to 2010 to provide first class teaching, research and clinical facilities.

At Sheffield we recognize the importance of training the dental team together and there is a strong belief in integrating the BDS students with the Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy students whenever it is appropriate to do so. The School provides its students with an opportunity to learn and develop in a friendly, caring and professional environment. The pass rate for our course is high and our graduates can launch themselves into the responsibilities of working life with confidence and competence.
Our BDS course

The Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) degree is a five year full time programme which upon graduation is recognised by the General Dental Council of the United Kingdom as giving immediate licence to practice dentistry in the UK.

The course is divided up into nine integrated themes. Throughout the course we aim to teach you the theory alongside clinical practice so you’ll develop an understanding of the science alongside its clinical application.

Year 1 - The Human Body

This theme introduces you to the structure and function of the human body with particular importance being paid to those systems relevant to clinical dental practice.

You will receive lectures, seminars and tutorials on the structure and function of cells, the chemical reactions within cells and the major systems of the human body. The cardiovascular, respiratory, nervous and renal systems are studied in considerable detail but again particular attention is paid to relating these systems to clinical practice, especially in experimental physiology classes. Practical dissection sessions enhance anatomy teaching and virtual microscopy classes help to clarify the relationship between structure and function.

You will visit dental clinics and learn about the dental team, how to set up a dental unit, and importantly about sterilisation, disinfection and cross-infection control. You will attend First Aid and CPR training and learn about health informatics.

Our virtual reality suite, with eight simulators providing a computer-generated mouth, enable you to learn core clinical skills with full, real-life, visual, auditory and tactile sensory feedback.

Finally you will also be introduced to the concept of professionalism, a concept you will then be expected to develop throughout the rest of the curriculum. This will include the ethics of dental practice and your legal responsibilities and begins with behaving in a professional manner, whilst studying dentistry as an undergraduate student, in line with directives issued by the General Dental Council.

The integrated curriculum at the Dental School means that Special Care Dentistry is taught throughout all years.
Year 1 - The Oral Cavity in Health and Disease
This theme introduces you to the structure and function of the healthy mouth and structures of the head and neck relevant to the practice of clinical dentistry. You will be introduced to some of the common diseases affecting the head, neck, teeth and oral cavity.

You will study development, structure and function of teeth and their supporting tissues through lectures and practical microscopy classes. You will also have the opportunity to dissect the head and neck in detail.

In clinics you will learn how to take case histories and perform dental charting, clinical photography, impression taking and how to carry out a 'scale and polish'. You will receive an intensive course on some basic restorative dental techniques which will reinforce much of the study of structure and function you have already studied.

Year 2 – Basic Oral and Dental Care
This theme consolidates and extends the understanding of diseases of the teeth and supporting tissues learnt in Year 1, and prepares you for clinical practice by providing training to undertake basic oral and dental procedures. The theme commences with simulated clinical training in a laboratory environment to introduce you to a range of skills (Basic Clinical Skills). Following satisfactory completion of the Basic Clinical Skills Course, you learn the skills and acquire the knowledge to undertake basic oral and dental procedures safely and effectively on patients.

Year 2 – Growth, Development, Ageing and Nutrition
This theme integrates basic science and clinical practice to encourage a holistic learning approach. The overall aim is to provide you with understanding of the basic biological principles governing growth, development, ageing and nutrition at different stages during life. Disturbances to normal processes will also be described.

Emphasis is placed on the challenges of providing comprehensive care for both young patients with developing dentitions as well as for elderly patients with age-related changes in oral health status. A further aim is to introduce you to complete denture prosthetics which has a particular clinical relevance for the dental care of older people.
Years 2 and 3 – Integrated Human Disease

The Integrated Human Diseases Theme (IHD) is designed to gather together, coordinate and integrate elements of anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, pathology, medicine, surgery, pharmacology, immunology and microbiology within the dental undergraduate curriculum. Areas covered include pathology, microbiology, immunology, pathology, systemic disease and its relevance to dentistry.

Year 3 – Intermediate Oral and Dental Care

This theme consolidates and extends the understanding of diseases of the teeth and supporting tissues learnt in years 1 and 2, and introduces you to a wider number of disciplines and clinical practice. In the second semester the theme includes simulated clinical training to enhance your range of skills.

Years 3 and 4 – Oral Disease

Towards the end of year 3 and in the first half of year 4 you learn more about oral diseases of the mouth, face and jaws; their causes, how they develop, and how your recognise, diagnose and prevent them.

You will be taught how to manage these diseases and how they respond to treatment in particular the surgical procedures of exodontia and minor oral surgery and the use of drugs in their treatment and prevention. You will have the opportunity to examine abnormal and diseased features using microscopic techniques. You will also learn about radiography.
Years 4 and 5 – Outreach and Elective

Outreach
During the second semester of year 4 and the first semester of year 5, you will attend three placements of at least six weeks each where you will gain practical experience of dentistry within the community. You will be placed in a dental access centre, general dental practice or community practice. The placements are mainly within South Yorkshire and are all accessible by public transport. Outreach provides you with a real working environment to encourage professional development. Work is undertaken in small groups to ensure an individual approach to learning.

Whilst on outreach, you will focus on your professional responsibility, on team working, on public health dentistry, issues associated with being in a practice environment, e.g. health and safety at work and clinical governance, and on developing your clinical and communication skills. You will also gain hands-on experience of treating people with disabilities during your outreach placements.

Elective
During the second semester of year 4, when you are not on outreach, you will undertake an Elective Project. This project allows you to choose the area of dentistry you wish to study and to plan your study independently.

There are several types of elective available and some students opt to undertake their study abroad whilst others opt to stay in Sheffield or elsewhere in the UK. It is your choice.

During the second semester of year 4 you will also undertake a two week residential placement in a regional hospital where you will have exposure to emergency facial surgery.

Years 4 and 5 – Integrated Clinical Practice

This theme consolidates your clinical skills and introduces you to more advanced and specialist clinical work so you continue to develop a holistic approach to patient care. You will develop your understanding of disease processes and the concepts of evidence based dentistry which informs your diagnostic and management skills and enables you to formulate appropriate treatment strategies for patients at an individual and population level. As such you develop the skills to enable you to practice as competent caring dental health care professionals.

The theme enables you to appropriately manage medical emergencies arising in the dental surgery; to adhere to the safe working practices, to understand and apply the principle of cross-infection control and patient confidentiality. You
will work as part of a team and continue to develop your communication skills.

The theme will consolidate your understanding and management of diseases and conditions of the teeth and supporting tissues in patients of all ages; and enables you to develop an evidence based and holistic approach to the management of patients of all ages and needs.

You will undertake integrated management of oral and dental conditions in patients of all ages, in primary and secondary care settings. You will also be introduced to the management of more complex oral and dental conditions in secondary and tertiary care settings within the Charles Clifford Dental Hospital, the Royal Hallamshire Hospital and the Sheffield Children’s Hospital. You will understand and be able to adhere to the legal, ethical and clinical governance framework, which apply to dental health care professions and will appreciate the importance of improving oral health for the individual and at population level.

Our teaching methods
We believe the BDS course in Sheffield delivers traditional teaching in a modern environment. You will be taught through a combination of lectures, small group seminars, tutorials, clinical skills laboratory sessions, virtual reality simulation and supervised clinical activity.

You will be required to undertake a significant amount of independent study to revise and consolidate your knowledge. To help you, the School has significant on-line resources to support your guided learning.

Much use is also made of contemporary methods of learning such as virtual microscopy, podcasts and on-line assessment.

We do not have a problem based curriculum, but PBL is used as appropriate and particularly in teaching clinical skills, in problem solving and diagnosis.

We will provide you with feedback every time you treat a patient or carry out a procedure and will expect you to reflect on what you have learnt and how you feel you could improve. You will discuss this with your tutor so that each experience will enable you to continue to develop your skills and technique.

All your clinical experience is captured on our on-line Dental E-Portfolio which provides you with a comprehensive list of the treatments and procedures you have undertaken, the feedback you received and how well it was undertaken. It enables you to compare your performance with that of your colleagues. When you graduate and move into dental practice, you can take your E-Portfolio with you as a comprehensive record of the work you have completed.

Our assessment
Throughout the course you will be assessed by a variety of methods. Formal professional examinations include multiple choice questions, structured short answer questions, Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE), essays, projects, poster presentations, video diaries and achievement of clinical competencies.

We also provide opportunities for formative assessment where the marks don’t count towards your professional examinations but they do indicate to you how well you are progressing and how much you have learned. We expect you to undertake these assessments as we want you to learn throughout the year, and not just to ‘cram’ for exams.
Opportunities to Intercalate

Some of our students choose to take a year out of their BDS studies between years 2 and 3 to undertake a research degree (BMedSci). They remain based in the Dental School and alongside their research study, they also continue to attend clinics and treat patients. This year provides them with opportunities to work alongside our leading research academics, provides them with an insight into academic dentistry and develops their research writing and presentation skills.

Support

We have a Personal Tutor system for all students. You will be allocated a personal tutor at the start of your course who meets you at least once per semester and is always available for advice and mentoring. Meetings are formally recorded through your personal E-Portfolio and you will be guided to develop a personal development plan throughout the course.

As well as your Personal Tutor, you will also have close contact and access to many of the staff who teach on your course.

The majority of teachers on the BDS course are based in the School or the Dental Hospital enabling easy interactions.

Your Feedback

Your feedback is important to us.

As a student you will elect two representatives each year who attend meetings on your behalf with the staff who teach your course to provide us with feedback. We also ask you to provide us with individual feedback at several points in the year, so you can let us know how things are going and what things you like or don't like.

Our final year students complete the National Student Survey (NSS) each year. The 2016 National Student Survey returned a score of 92% overall satisfaction for our course.

The profession

After graduation, most students opt to apply for a Dental Foundation (DF) training programme for one year. This provides you with a supportive environment where you can continue to develop your skills and experience to the point where you become an independent practitioner. Successful completion of the DF year enables you to work in an NHS practice.

After their DF year, most graduates find work in general dental practices, in the community dental service or sometimes in the armed forces. Some choose to undertake further specialist training to enable them to become specialty dentists, hospital or academic consultants or to become researchers. A number of our graduates choose to return to the School later in their careers to teach.

Admissions

So now you really want to come and study in Sheffield, how do you apply?

You need to apply through UCAS. Our course code is A200 and The University of Sheffield’s code is S18 SHEFFD
http://www.ucas.com/students/apply/

You will also need to take the UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT). www.ukcat.ac.uk/

For up to date information on our entry requirements, have a look at our website:

www.sheffield.ac.uk/dentalschool
Medical Requirements
As part of your entry onto the BDS course, because you will be treating patients you must undergo health screening. This will include checking that you are not an infectious carrier of Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV or tuberculosis. If you are infected with these viruses or you are unable to demonstrate immunity to Hepatitis B, in some circumstances you may not be able to train as a dentist. Because of this, it is important that you know as early as possible whether you do have immunity to Hepatitis B and can therefore start training. We suggest you consult your GP who may be able to offer you this vaccination.

If you have any serious health issues, it’s worth contacting us before you apply so that you can be properly assessed for your future profession.

Health requirements for dentistry do change so it is always a good idea to check our website for up to date information.

Educational Support Requirements
If you have any educational support requirements, the University of Sheffield has a Disability and Dyslexia Support Service who can offer a friendly and confidential service. They provide support and advice to students with disabilities to aim to enable them to access their studies. Again, you may want to contact them before you apply to ensure that we can offer you the support you need.

Clinical Student Entry Agreement
We hope you will take your responsibilities as a trainee dentist seriously and as such, ask you to sign up to our codes of professional behaviour. You can find these on our website. We also expect that all applicants’ values will align with those of the NHS Constitution.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this prospectus, the University can accept no responsibility for any errors or omissions. The content of our courses is reviewed annually to make sure it’s up-to-date and relevant. This is in response to discoveries through our world-leading research; funding changes; professional accreditation requirements; student or employer feedback; outcomes of reviews; and variations in staff and student numbers. Changes may be made to themes and entry requirements between the date of publication and the start of your course.
Impact through teaching and research excellence