

# **DENTISTRY**

## **Sector Background**

Dentistry is the branch of medicine concerned with the teeth and gums and health of the mouth. Dentists provide general dental health care, prevention and maintenance work. In Ireland, dental healthcare is provided by a combination of community dental services through the HSE, and private/general dental practitioners. A General Dentist is similar to the GP in medicine. Once qualified, many dentists enter general practice. Postgraduate qualifications are required for specialist dentistry practices, such as orthodontics.

A small number of graduates find opportunities in the dental hospitals as house officers or registrars, perhaps with postgraduate qualifications leading to consultant positions. A university teaching career for those with a good academic record is another possibility. Teaching is always combined with opportunities for research. Many large companies sponsor dental clinics for their employees and a career as an Industrial Dentist has the attraction of enabling the practitioner to run an efficient clinic based on the resources of a large organisation.

## **Typical Roles**

<b><u>Dentistry</u></b>	<b><u>Dental Support Roles</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">General Dentist</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Orthodontist</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Periodontist</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">Dental Hygienist</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Dental Nurse</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Dental Technician/ Technologist</a></li> </ul>

## **Entry Routes**

### **Dentistry**

To become a General Dentist, it is necessary to complete a full-time five-year degree programme. There are only two colleges in Ireland offering undergraduate dental training that will qualify graduates to practise as a professional Dentist. These are Trinity College ([TR052](#)) and UCC ([CK702](#)).

Both programmes also offer a Mature Student entry route;

1. The Dental Hospital/TCD Dental Science [Mature Student Entry](#)
2. Dental Science UCC [Mature Student Entry](#)

Because of the demand for places, students often also apply to Dental Schools in the UK through the [UCAS](#) system.

### **Dental Nursing**

The main duties of a Dental Nurse include infection control, chair-side assistance, preparation and maintenance of the dental surgery, and patient care. Dental Nursing can be studied in [Trinity College](#), [UCC](#), [Athlone I.T.](#), [Marino College of Further Education](#) and [Drogheda Institute of Further Education](#).

### **Dental Hygiene**

Dental Hygienists are concerned with the general health of people's teeth and gums. The Dentist sees the patient first and then, if it is appropriate, passes them on to the Hygienist to carry out treatment. Graduates in the Republic of Ireland require the Diploma in Dental Hygiene, which is a two year course. [The Irish Dental Hygienists Association](#) lists course providers. In Northern Ireland a two-year course approved by the [General Dental Council](#) is necessary. Dental hygienists must be registered in order to practise.

### **Dental Technology**

Dental Technicians make and repair crowns, bridges and other dental appliances using prescriptions and impressions taken by a dentist. They use a wide range of materials such as gold, porcelain and plastic. Dental technicians need to have a detailed knowledge of the composition and use of these materials, in order to design and make dental appliances.

In Ireland, [Dental Technology](#) can only be studied in Trinity College Dublin and this is at Level 7.

## ***Relevant Bodies & Professional Associations***

<p><a href="#">Dental Council of Ireland</a></p> <p><a href="#">Dental Health Foundation Ireland</a></p> <p><a href="#">Dublin Dental University Hospital</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Health Service Executive</a></p> <p><a href="#">Irish Dental Association Ltd.</a></p> <p><a href="#">Orthodontic Society of Ireland</a></p>
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