

Dental Therapy Foundation Training (DTFT) | Admissions Policy

Region: Yorkshire & Humber

Owner: NHS England – Workforce, Training & Education (WTE)

Effective date: Monday 24 November 2025

Next review: Monday 2 November 2026

Purpose

This policy sets out a clear, fair, and consistent process for admission to the DTFT scheme. It explains eligibility, assessment, offers, and placement allocation, ensuring decisions are transparent and in the best interests of foundation therapists, dental practices, educational supervisors, and patients.

Scope

This policy applies to all applicants to DTFT in Yorkshire & Humber, programme staff, interview panel members, and participating practices. It does not govern employment by the dental practice; DTFT is a training scheme, and practices employ trainees directly after acceptance.

Principles

- **Fairness & Consistency:** All applicants are assessed against the published criteria.
- **Transparency:** Criteria, timelines, and decisions are communicated clearly.
- **Merit & Suitability:** Selection considers professional readiness, potential, and alignment with programme aims.
- **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI):** Decisions do not discriminate; EDI data is monitored separately and anonymously.
- **Safeguarding & Professionalism:** Fitness to practise, patient safety, and ethical conduct are paramount.
- **Data Protection:** Personal data is processed lawfully, securely, and proportionately in line with GDPR and NHS England policies.

Eligibility Criteria

Essential:

- Hold (or be completing) a recognised UK Dental Hygiene & Therapy qualification enabling GDC registration as a Dental Therapist by Tuesday 01 September 2026.
- Provide a valid GDC number (or “000” if pending); proof of registration required before programme start.
- Hold current Basic Life Support (BLS) training within 12 months of programme start.
- Supply two professional references:
 - Reference 1: Programme Lead/Principal Tutor or current clinical employer
 - Reference 2: Tutor, previous employer, or clinical supervisor
- Complete Fitness to Practise & Criminal Investigations declarations truthfully.
- Submit a complete application by the published deadline.

Applicants who **qualified more than two years ago** may apply if they have less than two years of clinical restorative experience. Evidence such as CPD logs or supervised practice records will be required.

Desirable:

- Evidence of reflective practice
- Teamwork and collaboration
- Commitment to service values
- Experience in quality improvement
- Dedication to NHS care

Person Specification

Applications are mapped against the person specification. All criteria must be evidenced for applicants to proceed to interview. Notifications of success or rejection will be sent via email after the closing date, once applications have been quality assured.

Qualifications:

- Hold a recognised UK qualification in Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy within the last 24 months and have registration with the General Dental Council as a Dental Hygienist and Therapist; OR
- Be enrolled at a recognised UK Higher Education Institution, in the final year of study, for a qualification in Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy and be eligible for initial registration with the General Dental Council.

Clinical:

- Basic Life Support within the last 12 months (or confirmation that training will be completed before 01 September start date)
- Understanding of clinical risk management
- Appropriate level of clinical knowledge
- Clear, logical thinking, showing an analytical/scientific approach
- Good manual dexterity and hand/eye coordination

Communication:

- Ability to communicate with clarity in written and spoken English
- Ability to build rapport, listen, persuade, and negotiate

Management and Leadership:

- Ability to prioritise clinical need
- Ability to organise oneself and own work
- Experience and ability to work in multi-professional teams
- Ability to take responsibility and make decisions
- Information technology skills

Professionalism:

- Uses non-judgemental approach to patients and colleagues, regardless of sexuality, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs, or financial status
- Meets professional health requirements
- Strong interpersonal skills (empathy, cooperation, openness, sense of humour)
- Knowledge of evidence-informed practice
- Awareness of own limitations

Application Process & Required Evidence

- Applications open **at midnight (start of day) on Friday 02 January 2026**.
- Applications close **at midnight (end of day) on Monday 02 February 2026**.
- Application form via Microsoft Forms.
- Personal statement (max 1,000 words).
- Applicants must declare their level of AI use in the personal statement section (none, minimal, moderate, extensive). This ensures transparency and fairness.
- References collected by the NHS England, Workforce, Education & Training, to support suitability.
- Applicants will need to provide a CV to support their employment with the training practice.
- Acknowledgement of receipt and indicative timelines provided.
- Outcome notification via email after quality assurance.

Interview Information

- **Date:** Friday 27 March 2026
- **Format:** Online via Microsoft Teams
- **Panel Composition:** Training Programme Director, External NHSE employee, Educational Supervisor and/or Foundation Therapist
- **Assessment Focus:** Professional readiness, communication skills, clinical knowledge, teamwork, and alignment with programme aims.
- **Outcome:** Applicants notified of success or rejection after quality assurance.

Placement Allocation & Priority Rules

Placement allocation occurs after interview and practice approval visits.

Priority Hierarchy:

1. Applicants who meet all essential and desirable criteria AND select Yorkshire as their only region.
2. Applicants who meet all essential criteria AND select Yorkshire as their only region.
3. Applicants who meet all essential and desirable criteria AND apply to more than one region but indicate Yorkshire as their first preference.

4. Applicants who meet all essential criteria AND apply to more than one region but indicate Yorkshire as their first preference.
5. Any other applicant who meets all essential and desirable criteria.
 - a. *Includes applicants who qualified more than two years ago, provided they evidence less than two years' experience in clinical restorative dentistry and meet desirable criteria.*
6. Any other applicant who meets all essential criteria.
 - a. *Includes applicants who qualified more than two years ago, provided they evidence less than two years' experience in clinical restorative dentistry and meet essential criteria*

Notes:

- Priority does not guarantee a placement; allocations depend on practice capacity and approval.
- Programme leads across regions maintain open communication to honour preferences where possible.
- Practice approval typically completes in April and May; provisional practice lists may be shared for interview preparation with sites subject to approval clearly marked.

Employing Practices – Responsibilities

As the employer, practices must:

- Receive successful candidates after deanery allocation and matching.
- Conduct all **HR and pre-employment checks**, including right to work, occupational health, and DBS clearance.
- Request a **CV** from applicants if desired.
- Accept references collected by the deanery as part of suitability checks.
- Request further references from applicants if desired.
- Participate in **preferencing**: submit preferences for candidates within the same timeframe as applicants.
- The educational supervisor and practice manager to host practice visits arranged directly by successful candidates after acceptance.
- Ensure contracts and agreements are completed and returned by the published deadline.

- Provide appropriate supervision, induction, and a supportive training environment as per terms in the educational agreement.

Timelines & Communications

- **Applications open:** Friday 02 January 2026, 00:00 (midnight, start of day)
- **Applications close:** Monday 02 February 2026, 23:59 (midnight, end of day)
- **Invitation to interview:** Saturday 28 February 2026
- **Interviews:** Friday 27 March 2026 (see Interview Information section)
- **Acceptance confirmed via email:** Saturday 04 April 2026
- **Practice visits arranged by applicant:** After acceptance; preferences submitted by Saturday 30 May 2026
- **Confirmation of placement:** Tuesday 30 June 2026
- **Contracts and agreements exchanged:** After placement confirmation, submission Tuesday 14 July 2026
- **Scheme induction day (Leeds):** Tuesday 01 September 2026

Additional Sections

Appeals & Complaints Process

- Appeals or complaints should be submitted in writing to either the **Training Programme Director (TPD)** or the **Associate Dean**.
- Grounds for appeal include:
 - Procedural error in the admissions process
 - Evidence of unfair treatment or discrimination
 - New information not available at the time of application
- Appeals must be submitted within 10 working days of outcome notification. The Deanery will aim to resolve appeals within 20 working days.
- Appeals will be acknowledged within 5 working days and reviewed by the TPD/Associate Dean.
- Outcomes will be communicated in writing, with a clear rationale provided.

Withdrawal & Deferral Policy:

- Applicants may withdraw their application at any stage **before contracts and agreements are returned** by notifying the Deanery in writing.

- If withdrawal occurs **after contracts and agreements are returned**, the employing practice must also be notified immediately, and the Deanery will review the impact on placement allocation.
- **Deferrals are not permitted** due to changes in funding and practice availability each year.
 - This includes applicants who are required to **retake exams during the university retake period**. Retakes may delay GDC registration, and the Deanery has **no influence over GDC registration timelines**. Applicants affected are encouraged to reapply in the next cycle once registration is confirmed
- If registration is not achieved by **01 September 2026**, the applicant will **not be able to commence training** and must reapply in a future cycle once registration is confirmed.
- Applicants cannot hold placements in more than one training scheme. Acceptance of a placement in any region automatically voids applications to all other regions.

Support & Guidance Contacts

- Applicants requiring support with the application process should contact the **Training Programme Director (TPD)** directly.
- The TPD can advise on eligibility, application requirements, and interview preparation.
- For technical issues with the application form, applicants should contact the Deanery's administrative team.
- Accessibility or reasonable adjustment requests should also be directed to the TPD.
- **For accessibility adjustments or queries, contact Joanne Ward at joanne.ward37@nhs.net**

Data Handling Transparency

- Personal data collected during the admissions process will be processed lawfully, securely, and proportionately in line with GDPR and NHS England policies.
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) data will be collected anonymously and used only for monitoring and reporting purposes.
- References will be collected by the Deanery and shared with employing practices to support HR checks.
- Practices may also request **additional references** directly from applicants if required.

- Data will not be shared with third parties outside the admissions and employment process.

Practice Expectations

Employing practices must:

- Conduct all HR and pre-employment checks (e.g., right to work, DBS, occupational health).
- Accept references collected by the Deanery and may request further references or a CV directly from applicants.
- Provide a safe, supportive training environment with appropriate supervision.
- Submit placement preferences within the published timeframe.
- Confirm contracts and agreements by the stated deadline.
- Ensure trainees are inducted into the practice and supported throughout the programme.

Contingency Planning

- If practice capacity is lower than expected, the Deanery will work with practices and applicants to reallocate placements fairly.
- If timelines shift due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g., regulatory changes, delays in practice approval), applicants and practices will be notified promptly.
- In the event of withdrawal by a trainee or practice, the Deanery will attempt to re-match applicants and practices where possible.
- Contingency arrangements will prioritise patient safety, fairness to applicants, and continuity of training.