

Invitation

Views of patients and the public about Bristol Dental School's new curriculum

Please help us to shape tomorrow's dentists

- We would like you to help us plan the way we educate dental students at Bristol Dental School
- Please come to our Patient and Public Consultation Event:
4pm, 6th December 2018
The Chapter House, behind Bristol Dental Hospital
Lower Maudlin Street, BS1 2LY
We will serve light refreshments
- This invitation gives you some background on teaching dentistry, it outlines some of our ideas and then tells you about our consultation.
- After that we ask you to think about how we should teach our students. Although we must make sure that they can practice dentistry when they graduate, you might want us to teach them in a particular way, or you may want them to work focus on different aspects of being a dentist.
- You can answer these questions by coming to our event, or by writing to us at kate.lucas@bristol.ac.uk
- At our event we will tell you a little about our School and our curriculum, but most of all we want to hear what you think.
- You do not need to book a place. You can just turn up on the day. However, having an idea of how many people are coming will help us know how much tea to order! If you would like to tell us that you are coming please contact: kate.lucas@bristol.ac.uk

Introduction

1. The main task of Bristol Dental School is to educate students to help them graduate as dentists with a Bachelors in Dental Surgery (BDS) degree.
2. By the time they graduate, new dentists must be able to provide most treatments as an independent safe beginner.
3. Like all schools, we must review our teaching to make sure we are covering the right subjects in the right way, whilst being sustainable for students and staff.
4. The School last reviewed its curriculum in 2006, although it was refreshed in 2012. Since then dentistry has advanced, dental health has improved and the requirements of the General Dental Council have changed.
5. The Dental School started to think about its dental curriculum in 2016 and began a review in 2017. In addition, a new course for a BSc in Dental Hygiene and Therapy will launch in 2019.
6. Involving patients and the public in planning the new curriculum will help us prepare the type of dentists needed by ordinary people. Before you tell us your thoughts, this document sets the scene for dental education in general, and at Bristol in particular.

UK dental schools

7. Most dental schools have the same main role; to prepare students to graduate as dentists. Most schools also carry out research, teach other dental care professionals and teach advanced topics to people who are already dentists.
8. UK dental schools are strictly regulated by the General Dental Council (GDC). For instance, all courses to study dentistry last five years.
9. The knowledge and skills needed by dentists are also set by the GDC. These 'Learning Outcomes' cover clinical work, communication, professionalism and management & leadership.
10. The Learning Outcomes make sure that dentists from one school have broadly the same knowledge and skills as dentists from other schools.

Bristol Dental School

1. Bristol Dental School is part of the University of Bristol but shares buildings with University of Bristol Dental Hospital. Students undertake most of their clinical learning in the Hospital. Dentists on the School staff have contracts to work for the hospital, and vice versa.
2. We accept 70 students each year. They then spend most of their first year learning basic science in the main University.
3. Our students work very hard, without the long holidays of other students. Our clinical students must attend for 42 weeks a year. They have 23-30 hours of teaching every week and study in the evening to prepare for exams.
4. We can see that our students work too hard. Some of them get stressed and anxious.
5. The School has 130 staff, although many are part time. Forty-eight are dentists. The others are scientists, technicians, administrators and managers.
6. We are very proud of our main Hospital building, but it is starting to feel as though we have grown out of it. Both the School and the Hospital have expanded over the years.
7. There's a lovely video of our students at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PK59zoGSjT8>

The principles of our new curriculum

Aims of dental education in Bristol

The aim of the Bristol BDS Curriculum is to help its student body graduate to fulfil its potential as future practitioners, leaders, teachers, researchers, oral public health advocates and agents of change at a local, national or international level. Our students will be able to synthesise evidence-based dentistry with the concept of whole patient care and appreciate the social determinants of health so that they enhance their communities.

As well as meeting the requirements of their registering body, the curriculum will be socially accountable, enabling our graduates to be skilled, adaptable, resilient and confident. They will be able to reconcile the competing demands of their work as ethical and reflective decision makers.

Dental education in Bristol will be characterised by

- Learning that is active and informed by current research
- Learning and teaching that is integrated where possible, by early introduction of clinical activity, between basic sciences and clinical teaching and between professional groups
- A balance of academic excellence and sustainability
- Harnessing the potential of online learning

We will nurture the well-being of our students by

- Working with them to co-create a curriculum that is sustainable
- Providing high quality student support
- Focussing on their needs and valuing their active participation in their learning.
- Building a curriculum with flexible entry and exit points to support a diverse student body

Content & Structure

- A focus on patient and population need that increases students' core experience and confidence via more clinical, primary care dentistry, treatment planning and the skills to manage an aging population with complex medical problems and increasing patient demands.
- Integrating Evidence-Based Dentistry with patient-centred care
- Community training that relates care to population needs and maximises student experience
- Building student learning in professionalism, leadership and time management

We will give our students earlier and greater clinical experience by:

- Maximising the use of Primary Care Unit for undergraduate teaching
- Ensuring the consistency of their clinical experience by increasing patient flow, optimising timetabling and evenly distributing opportunities
- More time spent on specialist / consultant clinics to improve diagnosis and treatment planning

The School will use examinations and assessment to support learning by

- Reducing the load of assessment
- Making assessments programme-based
- Revising the final examination to achieve the best balance between academic rigour and student burden while maximising student advantages in gaining their first jobs.
- Making best use of feedback from assessment
- Utilising assessment by peer, patient and dental team members where appropriate

Things to think about

We would be happy to hear any of your views about teaching dental students. Here are some ideas to set you thinking.

What should we focus on?

When they graduate, dentists must have all the knowledge and skills to work independently as safe beginners. The GDC tell us new dentists must have learned about clinical work, communication, professionalism and management & leadership.

Are there any aspects of dentistry that you think we should concentrate on?

Are there any aspects that we should concentrate less on?

Teaching subjects separately or together?

Until now taught subjects separately. Students mostly learn science in the first year and then learn one clinical subject after another. We've also kept different types of students, like dental and hygiene students separate.

This may not be the right way to do things. Patients often have several different problems. Students need to know their science when they are learning their clinical work. They will need to be able to work together in teams when they qualify, so we could teach them in those teams

Do you think we should separate everything, or should we integrate subjects?

Involving patients

Our students already learn by treating patients in the dental hospital, but there are many other ways in which patients could be involved. For instance, they could give grades for how well students look after them, they could help us select new students for the School or they could teach our students.

What roles do you think patients could play in preparing our students?

Finally

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about educating dental students in Bristol?

Thank you very much!