

Professional Doctorates

Programme specification

Programme definition (approved by Senate June 2014)

A professional doctorate is defined as a programme that requires the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research, advanced scholarship and innovations in professional practice. A professional doctorate programme differs from a 'traditional-route' research degree programme (a PhD) in that candidates are required to make both a theoretical and applied (within the context of the relevant profession or specialism) contribution to knowledge.

Programme Title	Doctorate in Clinical Dentistry in Oral Medicine
Duration/mode of study	FT – 3 years
Name of final award	DClinDent
FHEQ level of final award	8
Name of interim awards	PG Certificate in Clinical Dentistry (60 Credits) PG Diploma in Clinical Dentistry (120 Credits) MSc in Clinical Dentistry (180 Credits)
FHEQ level of interim/exit award	8
Proposed start date for first cohort	September 2025
Responsible school(s)/institute(s) (please identify lead dept)	SMD – Institute of Dentistry
Subject Examination Board (that will confirm taught module results)	Dentistry (Clinical)
Name & contact details person responsible for the management of the programme	Prof. Anwar R Tappuni a.r.tappuni@qmul.ac.uk 020 7882 8655

Programme Outline and Aims

Please provide a brief description of the programme, summarising the programme content, and the distinctive features it offers students. This should be consistent with the programme descriptions in handbooks, website(s) and prospectus.

Programme outline

The programme aims to promote learning and research enriched by original scholarship to enable students to develop advanced clinical audit and research skills and to become skilled practitioners in Oral Medicine. Students will accept responsibility for their own learning and will be encouraged to develop skills of critical thought and reflection. Key skills in oral and written presentations will be enhanced. The course will offer students the opportunity to improve their knowledge and clinical skills in Oral Medicine and become familiar with the issues of study design, data analysis, critical thinking and writing for research. Assessments are outlined below.

This programme is delivered by the Institute of Dentistry (part of the Barts and The London School of Medicine & Dentistry) and Barts and The London Dental Hospital (part of Barts Health NHS Trust).

The aims of the programme are to:

- develop qualified dentist's clinical practice and academic knowledge to FHEQ level 8 according to the framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (2014);
- meet the national and international need for more Oral Medicine academics and practitioners;
- offer comprehensive, contemporary and novel knowledge in Oral Medicine comparable to specialist practitioner level;
- provide advanced training at doctoral level to dentists wishing to attain clinical expertise and proficiency in Oral Medicine;
- enhance dentists' everyday clinical practice satisfaction through higher expertise for high standard service delivery;
- promote a critical approach to evaluating relevant literature so as to enable evidence-based practice and novel practices in Oral Medicine;
- instil the need for continuing professional development and lifelong learning;
- develop advanced clinical audit and research skills;
- enable students to make both a theoretical and applied contribution to knowledge at doctoral level.

Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes reflect the Curriculum for Specialist Training in Oral Medicine approved by the General Dental Council (UK) (https://www.gdc-uk.org/docs/default-source/specialist-lists/oralmedicinecurriculum.pdf?sfvrsn=8a9b42fa_2), the relevant QAA benchmark statement for Dentistry and the UK Quality Code for Higher Education Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (2014). This course, however, does not automatically allow graduates to join the GDC Specialist List in Oral Medicine.

Students that successfully complete the programme will be able to:

- foster development of critical analysis and research skills to prepare graduate students to become independent researchers;
- demonstrate the possession of in-depth and extensive current knowledge in Oral Medicine comparable to a specialist practitioner level; demonstrate a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry;
- undertake independent, proficient and advanced clinical practice of Oral Medicine in either primary or secondary care settings;
- relate Oral Medicine practice to other dental and medical specialties;
- utilise problem-solving and decision-making skills to assess, diagnose and design a treatment plan for advanced, multi-disciplinary and complex cases in Oral Medicine;
- accept and manage secondary referrals for advice and treatment in Oral Medicine;
- make informed judgements on complex issues in Oral Medicine, often in the absence of complete data;
- critically appraise the literature and the research bases for evidence-based clinical care;
- plan, perform and lead clinical audits;
- conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding in Oral Medicine;
- communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively and interact with patients and colleagues in other dental and medical specialties.

How is the Programme Structured

The structure of the programme should be described in detail. Precise details of the modules can be given in a table. All programme proposals must demonstrate how they will meet the requirements of the Queen Mary Professional Doctorates Framework, and that the elements of independent research provide sufficient opportunity for the candidate to be able to demonstrate the depth of research expected of doctoral level studies.

The programme is full-time over three calendar years.

It consists of six modules which are all core modules and must be passed for progression from one year to the next and for the final award of DCLinDent.

The programme is delivered through these components:

The programme is delivered through a variety of teaching, learning and self-directed study methods to enable students to develop and demonstrate advanced skills and knowledge in clinical practice, clinical audit and independent research:

- Lectures classes and seminars (average of 15.5 hours/week) in Oral Medicine and related subjects, research methods, and clinical audit, given by experts in their field. The self-directed study time is used to prepare for, and follow-up of, didactic and clinical teaching;
- Pre-clinical laboratory practice sessions – demonstrations, practical exercises, discussion of complex cases and their treatment planning and outcomes;
- Supervised clinical practice with patients in which treatment planning and clinical procedures are performed for selected cases, including a number of complex treatments;
- A self-directed research investigation identified by the student and supervised by research active staff, leading to a dissertation in which the candidate is required to demonstrate the application of scientific method to a problem of relevance to the subject area;
- Presentations of cases and the research project;
- A clinical audit project to define a service quality improvement process through systematic review of care against explicit criteria, to identify the changes necessary to implement to improve patient care and outcomes
- The support of a personal tutor;
- Reading lists of books and journal papers. Students will receive a course booklist at the start of teaching.
- E-learning (using QMPlus for teaching material).

Study skills sessions are offered by Queen Mary, for example academic writing sessions to support the writing of the research thesis.

The three years of full-time study will provide 540 credits of which 270 credits are directed study element and 270 credits are research element. The indicative components are in the following table. In addition to the formal seminar and clinical programme, there are sessions for particular readings and reviews, discussion and problem solving for student research projects, for innovative practical exercises, clinical audit and for feedback and evaluation of the course itself. Some time is spent working alongside hospital trainees (Speciality Registrars and Foundation trainees).

The course aims to offer a high teacher/student ratio so that access to advice and ease of communication can be assured. Clinical sessions will be supervised by experienced clinical academics and NHS staff. Two staff members will supervise each student research project.

Module Number	Title	Credit value	FHEQ Level	Year of study
1 – DIN7825	Core Knowledge and Clinical skill in Oral Medicine	60	7	1
2 – DIN8101	Research I – Research Project progression report I + Clinical Portfolio initial report	30	8	1
	TOTAL	90		
3 – DIN8502	Advanced Clinical Skill and Science and in Oral Medicine	90	8	1-2
4 – DIN8103	Research Project Progression Report II, Clinical Portfolio and Service Evaluation Preliminary Reports	30	8	1-2
	TOTAL	120		
5 – DIN8504	Consolidated Clinical Skill and Science in Oral Medicine	120	8	2-3
6 – DIN8105	Research III – Dissertation – Research Project Final Report + Service Evaluation Final Report + Clinical Portfolio Final Report	210	8	2-3
	TOTAL	330		

Modules and Assessment

Please ensure that you identify the core modules that will be necessary for progression on to subsequent years. If students are able to exit the programme with an interim award, please ensure that the core modules needed to be eligible for this award are clearly indicated. Please include any compulsory placements/practice-based modules that need to be undertaken.

Please include the credit value of each module, both taught modules and the research dissertation / research elements.

Summative Assessment Methods and Procedure

The assessment structures are outlined in the table below:

Module Number	Title	Credit	Assessment
1 – DIN7825	Core Knowledge and Clinical skill in Oral Medicine	60	Written examination – 100%
2 – DIN8101	Research I – Research Project progression report I + Clinical Portfolio initial report	30	Research Project Protocol, 2,000 words 30% Research Protocol 25 minute viva 30% Clinical portfolio - log book (incl 2 case reports), 5,000 words 20% Clinical Portfolio 20 minute viva 20%
3 – DIN8502	Advanced Clinical Skill and Science and in Oral Medicine	90	Written examination – 75% Oral examination (Diagnostic) – 25%
4 – DIN8103	Research Project Progression Report II, Clinical Portfolio and Service Evaluation Preliminary Reports	30	Service evaluation interim report (15%) Service evaluation viva (15%) Interim clinical portfolio (15%) Clinical portfolio viva (15%) Research project interim report (20%) Research project viva (20%)
5 – DIN8504	Consolidated Clinical Skill and Science in Oral Medicine	120	Written examination – 50% Oral examination (Diagnostic)– 50%
6 – DIN8105	Research III – Dissertation – Research Project Final Report + Service Evaluation Final Report + Clinical Portfolio Final Report	210	Service evaluation final report (10%) Service evaluation viva (10%) Final clinical portfolio (20%) Clinical portfolio viva (20%) Final research dissertation (20%) Research dissertation viva (20%)

The summative assessments used in the programme are:

- written examination
- oral examination
- the submission of a research thesis of up to 50,000 words with an oral examination on the thesis (the viva)
- the submission of a clinical audit / service evaluation report
- the submission of a reflective logbook
- patient case studies

Formative assessment is provided through written essays, practice in oral examinations (vivas) and other tests.

The assessments take place over three years for full-time students.

For the taught component, the students will be examined according to the Academic Regulations for postgraduate taught students. For the research elements, the students will be examined according to the Academic Regulations for research degrees, including annual progression review in the first 2 years, and a final research dissertation at the end of the third year.

All the components of all the modules are core modules and students must pass all the components of the modules to be awarded the DClinDent in Oral Medicine. The intended award of DClinDent is not classified. If students do not meet the criteria for the DClinDent award they will be considered for the interim / exit awards of PG Certificate, PG Diploma or MSc in Clinical Dentistry. An award will be made where the criteria are met.

Module results are reviewed and confirmed by the Queen Mary PG Dentistry (Clinical) Subject Examination Board.

The award of DClinDent is considered and confirmed by the Queen Mary Research Degrees Programmes and Examination Board, Interim / exit awards are considered and confirmed by the Queen Mary PG Dentistry (Clinical) Subject Examination Board.

Grading Criteria for Summative Assessments:

- Each assessment will have a clearly defined marking criteria which will be made available at the start of each module. These criteria are used by both internal markers and the external examiner.

Appointment of external examiners:

- The appointment of an external examiner will be made in accordance with existing Queen Mary procedures, which adhere to the QAA Quality Code.

Marking and Moderating:

- Students will submit written work through the anti-plagiarism software Turnitin, with the exception of the final thesis and draft sections of the thesis, and the audit report. Students will also be given access to their Turnitin reports.
- All assessments, with the exception of the final thesis, are double marked by two internal examiners and reviewed by an external examiner. The oral examinations for the PGT and PGR components will be marked by one internal and one external examiner.
- Assessments are managed by the QMUL examination board and an external examiner (appointed according to QMUL regulations) will moderate achievement within and between different courses.

Feedback to Students:

- Formative assessment exercises, with feedback, are carried out during the programme.
- Summative assessment will be used to help with learning and knowledge acquisition, and developing skills in professional and academic writing. This may include, for example, short essays of up to 2,000 words or writing up a clinical case report. Students will be given clear guidance on summative assessments at the beginning of each module. In addition to summative assessments all students will have to carry out clinical work based assessments such as a reflective log. The students will have opportunity to give oral presentations based on progress in the research projects, clinical audits and clinical works. Candidates will have regular 1:1 contact with clinical tutors and supervisors where their reflective logs will regularly be reviewed and discussed. Clinical supervisors will also monitor that candidates have an appropriate case load and patient mix in line, where required, with Royal College and NHS Guidelines.

Extensions and Deferrals, and Extenuating Circumstances:

The programme will follow existing procedures for the consideration of extenuating circumstances. Where appropriate the Research Degree Programme and Examination Board will consider requests in line with Research Degree Regulations.

Queen Mary has a central Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) that offers support for all students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties and mental health issues. The DDS supports all Queen Mary students:

- full-time, part-time, undergraduate, postgraduate, UK and international at all campuses and all sites.
- Students can access advice, guidance and support in the following areas:
- Finding out if you have a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia
- Applying for funding through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)
- Arranging DSA assessments of need
- Special arrangements in examinations
- Accessing loaned equipment (e.g. digital recorders)
- Specialist one-to-one "study skills" tuition
- Ensuring access to course materials in alternative formats
- Providing educational support workers (e.g. note-takers, readers, library assistants)
- Mentoring support for students with mental health issues and conditions on the autistic spectrum

Supervision: Academic and Clinical:

- The research components will be supervised by QMUL research active academic staff. The taught and clinical components will be supervised by both QMUL and Barts Health clinical specialists.
- All students will have a personal tutor from the programme teaching staff, and a minimum of two supervisors who are research active members of Queen Mary academic staff as specified in the Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes. Students meet regularly with their personal tutor to reflect on their directed study and professional practice and for pastoral support, and meet regularly with their research supervisors to discuss their research projects, set goals and review progress.

Research

Please cover:

- *Description of research components and how this meets the Qualification Descriptors for a research degree*
- *Explain how the elements of independent research provide sufficient opportunity for the candidate to be able to demonstrate the depth of research expected of doctoral level studies.*
- *Supervision of research dissertation / projects*
- *Expectations of the dissertation / research project portfolio (e.g. maximum word limit)*

The research component in this programme differs from that of the traditional hypothesis driven PhD format as it has an application of knowledge to clinical practices. The final submission will be composed of the following three parts:

1. Research project report of a maximum of 50,000 words – the candidates are to produce a traditional research thesis to demonstrate they can critical review scientific literature and carry out a hypothesis base research. They must produce dissertations that are of publishable standard. Two supervisors will be assigned for each student. The project may include development of a new dental material, dental caries progression and prevention, dental genetics, meta- analysis and systematic reviews, and other related projects that fulfil the QAA level 8 criteria.
2. Clinical portfolio report of a maximum of 15,000 words.– the candidates are to produce a portfolio report covering the full breadth and depth of oral medicine of patients whom

they have treated during their training, including 4 clinical case reports to include detailed documentation of the clinical case and the clinical management that they have provided, a critical appraisal, including evidence base analysis, of the treatment, evaluation of its success and proposal of future management plan.

3. Service evaluation report of a maximum of 5,000 words - the candidates are to produce a service evaluation report (e.g. clinical audit) that they have designed and carried out. This report must include aims, methods, results and discussion with proposal for future audit and research in the field. Two cycles of audits should be completed, whenever possible.

Entry Requirements

Provide the entry requirement for the proposed programme as agreed at Part one stage and published on the course finder. This should include the level of English Language and any selection criteria for admission?

- A recognised dental degree (BDS or equivalent).
- Two years full-time (or equivalent) post qualification clinical practice of dentistry, including evidence of specific relevant experience in oral medicine.
- An IELTS score of 7.0 is required including a minimum score of 6.0 in writing and a minimum score of 6.0 in either reading, listening or speaking. (A minimum IELTS score of 6.5 is required at the point of submission in order for an application to be considered, but an IELTS score of 7.0 must be achieved before the course starts. Pre-sessional English course is available to improve the score by 0.5 if a conditional offer is given)

Links with External Partners

N/A

Links to Queen Mary Policies

The programme should be designed and administered with reference to the following documents:

[Academic Regulations](#)

[Code of Practice for Research Degree Students](#)

[Support for students with disabilities, SpLD and mental health issues](#)

[Student Appeals and Complaints Policy](#)

Person completing programme specification	Mrs Lorraine Low, Quality & Assessments Officer
Person responsible for management of research degree programme	Prof Anwar R Tappuni
Date programme specification produced/amended by School/Institute/Lead Department	31 October 2024
Date programme specification approved by Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board	