Clár Oiliúna Náisiúnta na hÉireann d'Altraí Déidliachta

National Dental Nurse Training Programme of Ireland

Course Outline 2026/2027

Cork University Dental School & Hospital
University College Cork
and
Dublin Dental University Hospital
Trinity College Dublin

Introduction

The National Dental Nurse Training Programme of Ireland (NDNTP) was developed in 2004 as a joint initiative between Cork University Dental School & Hospital and the Dublin Dental University Hospital.

This programme is specifically designed to meet the needs of the general dental community to standardise dental nurse training in Ireland.
Successful completion of this programme will permit entry onto the Voluntary Register for Dental Nurses with the Dental Council of Ireland.

Course Overview

The course aims to provide the practicing trainee dental nurse with the practical skills supported by the theoretical knowledge for the understanding of the dental nurses' role and responsibilities as part of the dental team.

Course Duration

This is a sixteen-month programme commencing at the end of August of each year.

Course Award

Registered candidates who have:
- successfully completed and passed all required assessments and examinations, including the Student Portfolio
- shown proof of sixteen months chairside experience (with a minimum of 2000 hours completed within this period) in a dental practice within the Republic of Ireland
- completed a recognised Basic Life Support (BLS) Provider certificate (AHA 2020 Guidelines) accredited by the Irish Heart Foundation

will be awarded a Diploma (level 7) in Dental Nursing by the University College Cork or Trinity College Dublin – depending on which governing centre the student is registered.

Course Delivery

All academic sessions (lectures, demonstrations, tutorials) will be delivered using a range of appropriate teaching methodologies e.g. online learning and in class teaching.

Computer and broadband internet access is essential, All lecture notes will be made available on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) called Blackboard Learn TCD for Dublin students or Canvas System (Instructure), UCC for Cork students.
All students will be given access to the relevant website on commencement of the course.

Each student will be given a valid college email address.
Students affiliated with the Cork centre will also receive UCC credentials to access the course website once registration has been completed in full.

The programme lectures are held on Wednesday evenings from 6.30pm to 9.30pm, with occasional Friday morning sessions and all day Saturday sessions.

It is the **sole responsibility of the student to download/print notes prior to each lecture**.

Practical sessions will be delivered via workshops in the dental schools during a week-long 'Practical Week' in March/April, (check timetable for dates). **Attendance at this workshop is essential and no student will be granted permissions to be absent.**

A recommended reading list will be provided for all students upon commencement of the programme.

Assessments

The programme assessments are scheduled throughout the programme to assess students on a continuous basis using a combination of written examinations and practical competence examinations that are held in the Dental School.

Written and Practical examinations may take place on Fridays and/or Saturdays during the programme.

Students are required to complete the Student Portfolio which is a record of the student's clinical experience gained while enrolled in the National Dental Nurse Training Programme of Ireland.
It is a critical component of assessment, used to enhance the students learning and reflect on clinical experience.
Students are required to complete the Student Portfolio while under the guidance of the supervising dentist which then must be submitted for assessment to the Dental School to which the student is registered.

Written assignments are also required to be submitted which should display a competent understanding of dental nursing as a profession. Topics will be given to students on commencement of the programme.

Entry Requirements

The following requirements are necessary for entry into the programme:

- A student must be employed as a trainee dental nurse at time of application.
                                    AND
- Have passed a Leaving Certificate with a minimum of a Grade O6 in five subjects.
                                    OR
- Be a minimum 23 years of age on 1st January 2026 and be employed at the time of application. Such students may be interviewed at the discretion of the Dental Schools.

Students undertaking the programme and that are not employed full time will be required to complete practical/clinical experience equivalent to 2000 hours, within two programme cycles from the date of commencement to successfully complete the programme.

If for any reason employment ceases, the student must inform their tutor and will be given a time period appropriate to the situation to resume employment.

Students with other qualifications (e.g. qualifications from outside Ireland) will be considered on an individual basis and may be interviewed.

During the programme, all students are required to have access to and engage with the relevant website for essential course information, lectures and updates, on a regular basis. A valid email address is essential for this access.

Student Garda Vetting

Students applying to the Cork centres may be required to undergo Garda Vetting. You are being vetted because as part of your placement and/or research and/or some other UCC related activity, you will be working with children or vulnerable adults. Information will be sent to you directly from the Admissions Office via email. Please see more information on UCC's Student Vetting Policy https://www.ucc.ie/en/study/undergrad/admissionspolicies/.

Hepatitis B Vaccination

In accordance with the current guidelines issued by the Dental Council of Ireland (Code of Practice relating to Infection Prevention and Control 2015 p6), **vaccination against the Hepatitis B virus (HBV) is strongly recommended for all clinical dental personnel.** Vaccination is also advised against tuberculosis, varicella, influenza, measles, mumps and rubella.

All applicants are to comply with the Health Screening requirements of the programme as set out on Pages 7 and 8.

Selection Process

Successful applicants will be offered a place on the programme and must confirm their acceptance by a specified date which will be given in their letter/email of offer.

Applicants will then be required to submit tuition fees to hold their place on the programme, which must be paid prior to commencement of the programme.

All candidates are required to submit a personal statement with their application. Decisions on entry will be made on the basis of this statement for candidates who meet the Leaving Cert or mature requirements as set out above.

In certain cases, applicants may be required to attend for individual interview and will be advised in due course. All interviews will take place in the dental schools.

Training Centres

This programme may be delivered to a number of regional training centres outside of the Cork University Dental School and Hospital and the Dublin Dental University Hospital. When submitting your application, you should clearly indicate the training centre that you wish to attend.

Each training centre is affiliated with a Dental School. Students affiliated with the Cork University Dental School and Hospital will be awarded a Diploma by the University College Cork, and those students affiliated with the Dublin Dental University Hospital will be awarded a Diploma by Trinity College Dublin.

It is essential that you register with the correct Registering Body.

Training Centre	Registering Body
Dublin	Dublin Dental University Hospital
Galway (Outreach centre)	Dublin Dental University Hospital
Cork	University College Cork
Waterford, Limerick, Tralee (Outreach centre)	University College Cork

Please note the lectures for the 2026/27 programme will take place online. Further details to follow.

Course Content
- Dental Anatomy and Physiology (Oral & Systemic) for Dental Nursing
- Microbiology and Infection Prevention & Control for Dental Nursing
- Ethical Issues in the provision of Dental Care
- Dental Pathology and Disease
- Restorative Dentistry for Dental Nurses
- Oral Surgery for Dental Nurses
- Medical Emergencies for Dental Nurses
- Oral Health and Development for Dental Nurses
- Dental Practice Administration
- Student Portfolio
- Dental Research Based Project

Applications
The closing date for receipt of completed applications (application and supporting documentation) is 4pm on Wednesday, 11 March, 2026. **Late submissions will not be accepted**.

For Cork, Waterford, Limerick and Tralee (online) centres:
The online application form is available at:
https://www.ucc.ie/en/dipdentnurs/
Or contact:
Ms Siobhán Shakeshaft
Tel: 021 4901160 /087 1431228; Email: Siobhan.Shakeshaft@ucc.ie
Ms Karen Hennessy, Email: khennessy@ucc.ie

For Dublin and Galway centres:
The online application form is available on the website:
http://www.dentalhospital.ie/education/undergraduate-students/dental-nursing/national-dental-nurse-training-programme-of-ireland/
Or contact:Nursing Administrator, Phone: (01) 612 7340 Email: DentalNurseTutor@dental.tcd.ie

Programme Fees

All applications must be accompanied by a non-refundable application fee of €50. UCC applicants will pay an application fee to submit their application that is incorporated into the UCC APPLY platform.

Applicants for the Dublin centres, payment is to be made to the Dublin Dental University Hospital by Electronic Transfer.

2026/27 Course Fee: €3,000

Evidence of completion of a Basic Life Support (BLS) for the Healthcare Provider (accredited by the Irish Heart Foundation) must be provided to complete the programme. **The cost of the BLS course is not included in the course fee and is the responsibility of the student to complete.**

Fees may be required should a student complete a supplemental exam during the programme. Details of supplemental fees will be provided on commencement of the programme.
In the case of a student being unsuccessful in a supplemental written exam (autumn exams), the student must repeat the associated module group the following year. In the event of a student having to repeat a module group in the next programme cycle, they will be required to pay a repeat fee and complete all components within the relevant modules. This includes any additional requirements as deemed necessary by the course tutor.
Details of repeat fees will be provided on commencement of the programme.

It is the responsibility of the student or prospective student to ensure that all course fees are paid on schedule.
It is the policy of the Dental Schools that all matters relating to fee payments, will only be discussed with the student directly and not a third party.
UCC refund policy is available at the following link:
https://www.ucc.ie/en/financeoffice/fees/feepayments/feerefundspolicy/

The Refund policy for the Dublin centres is available from the Nursing Administrator.
Enquiries

Nursing Administrator	Dental Nurse Tutor
Dublin Dental University Hospital	Cork University Dental School & Hospital
Lincoln Place	Wilton
Dublin 2	Cork
Telephone: 01 612 7340	Telephone: 021 490 1160
E-mail: DentalNurseTutor@dental.tcd.ie	E-mail: Siobhan.Shakeshaft@ucc.ie

Health screening requirements:

For Students in the Cork (UCC) centre <u>ONLY</u>:

All students in UCC College of Medicine and Health must be immunised against Hepatitis B.
All students, except those who have confirmed acquired natural immunity through previous infection, are also recommended to have completed full courses of vaccines against Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella Zoster, and Tuberculosis.

This infectious disease screening and immunisation programme is provided by the Student Health Department, which is responsible for certifying your immunity status prior to entry into the clinical component of your course. It is essential that you fully comply with all aspects of the programme, to protect you, your future patients and the clinics and hospitals you will be attached to.

<u>All students (regardless of where you are in the vaccination process) must attend Student Health for their first appointment with their completed online paperwork and you will be advised individually what is required of you.</u> They may require vaccines and/or blood test on that day depending on their previous vaccination history. This will be assessed by Student Health on attendance. All students are required to complete the immunisation programme with Student Health or with their GP in certain circumstances (again this can be discussed with Student Health on attendance) but **<u>must</u>** attend Student Health to have their post-immunisation blood tests taken as per the Infectious Diseases Screening and Immunisation Policy for UCC Healthcare Students, available at https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/studenthealthservice/InfectiousDiseaseScreeningImmunisationPolicyincludingBBVv4.pdf

Current fee for this service is 110 Euro and must be paid by all students in advance, at the commencement of the course. This fee will cover mandatory blood testing for Hepatitis B, Anti HBF and Hepatitis C. It covers personal certificates of immunity and personal and class reports of immunity status.

Any vaccination carried out by UCC Student Health for Hepatitis B, Varicella Zoster and Tuberculosis will incur extra costs if they are required.

For students of the Dublin centre <u>ONLY</u>:

Hepatitis B & C Documentation:
Candidates will be requested to send the above blood test results at a later stage of application – should the first part of the application be successful. It is recommended that applicants have these blood test results ready for the next stage of application in April.

Applicants must provide **all** of the following three blood test results (a copy of laboratory results) as part of the application:
1. **Proof of non-infection with Hepatitis B.** This must be dated within six months of starting the programme.
   Candidates should ask their GP to carry out the following tests: HBsAg and HBcAb. **The result should be negative.** (In the presence of positive HBsAg or positive HBcAb, a negative HBeAg and negative HBV-DNA viral load result will be required).

2. **Proof of non-infection with Hepatitis C.** This must be dated within six months of starting the programme.
   Candidates should ask their GP to carry out the following tests**:** hepatitis C antibody test. **The result should be negative.** (In the presence of a positive hepatitis C antibody test result, a negative PCR test for hepatitis C RNA will be required).

3. **Proof of Hepatitis B immunity**. Candidates should ask their GP to carry out the following test: anti-HBs. **The result should be greater than 100 mIU/mL.** (If the result is less than 100 mIU/mL, please contact DentalNurseTutor@dental.tcd.ie for further information).

For further information about these requirements for healthcare providers, candidates should consult the following:
- Immunisation Guidelines for Ireland 2013: Chapter 4: *Immunisation and Health Information for Health Care Workers and Others in 'At Risk' Occupations*: http://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/guidelines/

- The Prevention of Transmission of Blood-Borne Diseases in the Health-Care Setting (Department of Health and Children 2006) https://www.hpsc.ie/A-Z/Hepatitis/BloodborneVirus/File,4352,en.pdf

Candidates should print and/or show the above requirements to their GP to ensure that **all three blood tests** are carried out. Failure to provide any of the above may result in the application being rejected.

A copy of the original Laboratory results is required; a GP surgery printout is not acceptable.

If you are currently completing a course of Hep B vaccinations, proof of the Lab vaccinations, and when the vaccination course is due to be completed may be sent for consideration.

Please wait until you receive a request to submit your blood test results as part of the 2nd stage of the application.