

Dental Public Health Dentistry Specialty Training Syllabus

2026

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1. **Syllabus development**

The syllabus has been developed to align with the revised curriculum for Dental Public Health, which has been approved by the General Dental Council (GDC) in March 2023. The syllabus development has been led by the Specialty Advisory Committee with input from Consultants in Dental Public Health, academics and trainees.

A syllabus is a specification of the content of a course of instruction and lists what will be taught and assessed. Curriculum development is a more comprehensive process than syllabus design (Burton J & McDonald S, 2001). The syllabus provides guidance on different examples of activities/projects that a trainee is expected to undertake in demonstrating knowledge and skills attainment and ultimately achievement of learning outcomes. The syllabus is intended to be flexible and adaptable, depending on the context of the learning environment and the needs of the local population/services/academic institution. The learning outcomes are aligned to examples of outputs and the list is not exhaustive. Each example of output is coupled with a Potential Assessment Method. Some of the examples of outputs may be related to a number of learning outcomes depending on the nature of the project.

2. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

It is therefore important to consider GDC principles in relation to:

- **Equality:** Everybody is entitled to equal opportunity to fulfil their potential.
- **Diversity:** Recognising that everybody is different and that we are stronger for it.
- **Inclusion:** Removing barriers to ensure differences are valued, and ensuring everyone has the opportunity to contribute.

The Diversity in Dentistry Action Group (DDAG) was originally created by the Office of the Chief Dental Officer in 2020 before becoming an independent stakeholder group to advocate for a sector-wide collective approach to drive three priorities : (i) Creating a diverse, inclusive and representative workforce; with equal opportunities in the workplace, (ii) creating diverse, inclusive and representative educational environments and (iii) ensuring equitable access to dental care for patients and the public. The [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Dentistry Report](#) (2021) highlights that these principles are central to dental care and are part of core standards for all dental professionals.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the growing health inequalities which are rooted in structural racism and its impacts on health outcomes. The Faculty of Public Health has endorsed a statement on racism and health inequalities, which stemmed from the Disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19 Report and stakeholder engagement.

It is important that we promote equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the training programme but also consider it as a pillar in all the projects we undertake with the ultimate aim of improving health outcomes for the populations we serve.

3. Learning and Assessments

Section D – The Specialty Specific Content for Dental Public Health addresses Domain 5 – key clinical skills for dental public health, which is comprised of seven domains covering the following learning outcomes:

Domain 5.1: Secure/create and interpret appropriate data to assess population health and well-being

Domain 5.2: Assess and interpret the evidence on risk and effectiveness to provide expert advice on interventions, programmes and services intended to protect and improve the oral and general health of populations and address oral health inequalities

Domain 5.3: Use strategic leadership skills to protect and improve the oral health of the population by working across the whole of the health and social care system including statutory and non-statutory bodies and organisations

Domain 5.4: Influence, develop and implement strategy and policy as a specialty and in collaboration with partners to promote, maintain and improve oral health and general health

Domain 5.5: Tackling oral health inequalities at a community/population level

Domain 5.6: Health Protection

Domain 5.7: Health and Care Public Health

The following tables provide examples of outputs and potential assessment methods. The [Assessment Strategy for Dental Public Health Specialty Fellowship Examinations](#) outlines the different methods of assessment both in the workplace and through examination within the relevant training programme. These will be used, along with other evidence (outlined in the [Dental Gold Guide](#)) to determine a candidate's progression within training as part of the RCP process.

3. Learning and assessments

Domain D5.1

Key area: Secure/create and interpret appropriate data to assess population health and well-being

Aim: to be able to synthesise data into information about population’s health needs from a wide range of sources that is communicated clearly to different stakeholders to inform action plans or activities to improve population health outcomes

Learning outcome	Examples of outputs	Potential Assessment Method							
		Exams		WBA					
		Academic exam MSc	DSFE	DOPs	Published report/paper	CBD	ES, CS, AS and TPD report	Appraisal using MSF	OSDPHA
<p>Secure/create and interpret appropriate data to assess population health and well-being.</p> <p>They should do this by demonstrating the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify appropriate sources of data which inform on the health and wellbeing of populations • show a critical approach to health services data, use and interpretation • develop, quality assure, analyse and interpret dental surveys in line with best practice • critically appraise, select and then undertake an appropriate method of oral health needs assessment • monitor and evaluate oral health inequalities • contribute to the dental public health evidence base • share best practice through publication and dissemination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing a local or regional issue such as high hospital admission rates for GA for children and young people for dental reasons with a focus on tackling oral health inequalities 	x	x		x		x		x
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence review to inform the development of a service specification or oral health action plans or a public health intervention or programme 	x		x	x	x			x
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide strategic advice on suitability and use of surveillance and or service data with strengths and weaknesses of data sources 			x		x	x		x
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking a health equity audit and/or a project/s to support delivery of a dental epidemiology programme 			x	x	x		x	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing a chapter for a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Public Health Report using local, regional, national and global data from the Global Burden of Disease Study 	x			x	x			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking mixed methods evaluation of services to reflect the experiences of patients, and the workforce 	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an infographic to highlight a public health issue regionally or locally or nationally 			x		x			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting a report on an important public health issue locally or regionally 			x	x	x			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of report findings tailored to a wide range of stakeholders and audience 	x		x		x		x	x
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking an oral health/health needs assessment 	x		x	x	x			x
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile health and oral health profiles to inform oral health actions plans or service development 	x			x				

Domain D5.2

Key area: Assess and interpret the evidence on risk and effectiveness to provide expert advice on interventions, programmes and services intended to protect and improve the oral and general health of populations and address oral health inequalities

Aim: To understand the use of a range of resources to develop and communicate evidence-based recommendations to improve population health

Learning outcome	Examples of outputs	Potential Assessment Method								
		Exams		WBA						
		Academic exam MSc	DSFE	DOPs	Published report/ paper	CBD	ES, AS, CS, TPD Report	Appraisal using MSF	OSDPHA	
<p>Assess and interpret the evidence on risk and effectiveness to provide expert advice on interventions, programmes and services intended to protect and improve the oral and general health of populations and address oral health inequalities</p> <p>They should do this by demonstrating the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply insights from multiple sources of information and data including research, health surveillance, needs analysis, health economics (e.g. return on investment), service monitoring and evaluation • communicate evidence in a meaningful way for commissioners, policy makers, the public and other stakeholders • assimilate and interpret evidence to influence strategy and policy development • provide clinical advice to inform decision making for oral health improvement and service planning/innovation • contribute to evidence based clinical or public health guidelines and policies • give a clinical dental and public health perspective on population oral health measures and dental service planning, providing constructive challenge when required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence briefing on a health improvement/health protection and or health care intervention 	X		X	X	X			X	X
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing to any health protection outbreaks that may impact dental service provision 	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing paper to advocate a health improvement or health protection approach by reviewing the available evidence and national and international guidelines 	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a clinical guideline or a behaviour change guidance/toolkit/programme 	X			X					X
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-designing or developing a clinical care or prevention pathway 	X			X		X			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To conduct a literature review to inform quality improvement in service development 	X	X	X	X					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing a briefing paper for health and scrutiny committee, inquiries or drafting a response to consultation on relevant topic/area 		X		X	X	X	X	X	X

Domain D5.3

Key area: Use strategic leadership skills to protect and improve the oral health of the population by working across the whole of the health and social care system including statutory and non-statutory bodies and organisations

Aim: To utilise effective leadership skills in a variety of public health contexts, advocating for oral health and working collaboratively with partners to achieve positive public health outcomes

Learning outcome	Examples of outputs	Potential Assessment Method							
		Exams		WBA					
		Academic exam MSc	DSFE	DOPs	Published report/ paper	CBD	ES,CS,AS and TPD report	Appraisal using MSF	OSDPHA
<p>Use strategic leadership skills to protect and improve the oral health of the population by working across the whole of the health and social care system including statutory and non-statutory bodies and organisations. They should do this by demonstrating the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • act as a system leader by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ understanding the key networks across the health and social care system and the specialty's role and relationship to them ○ leading across organisational boundaries ○ using influencing and negotiating skills in a setting where they do not have direct authority ○ advocating for action on a public health issue of local and/or national importance ○ demonstrating appropriate personal attributes and leadership skills ○ advocating for disadvantaged groups • work effectively with clinical and non-clinical colleagues, understanding the context and language of both clinical dentistry and the wider health and social care system • demonstrate appropriate decision making and judgement 	Analysis of personal leadership styles using a validated tool, reflection and action resulting from the reflection		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Strategic leadership by working collaboratively with a range of partners including public and non-public health colleagues across organisational boundaries and in a variety of settings including outside health services	X	X	X		X		X	X
	Using influencing and negotiating skills to advocate for a public health issue of local, regional or national importance.	X	X	X		X		X	X
	Planning changes to health services or public health programmes to improve health/oral health outcomes with a focus on disadvantaged groups	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
	Management of health protection cases within dental settings	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
	Developing a business case for service development by ensuring appropriate decision making		X	X	X	X			X
	Persuading a working group that a strategy should include a preventive population wide approach to address a public health issue	X						X	X
	Demonstrating political literacy in influencing and negotiating with policy makers	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
	Drafting a press release for the media	X		X	X	X		X	X
	Demonstrate effective team-working balancing the needs of team members, the team and the task	X		X				X	X

Domain D5.4

Key area: Influence, develop and implement strategy and policy as a specialty and in collaboration with partners to promote, maintain and improve oral health and general health

Aim: To influence and act on the broad determinants and behaviours influencing health and wellbeing at a system, community and individual level

Learning outcome	Examples of outputs	Potential Assessment Method								
		Exams		WBA						
		Academic exam MSc	DSFE	DOPs	Published report/	CBD	ES,CS,AS and TPD report	Appraisal using MSF	OSDPHA	
<p>Influence, develop and implement strategy and policy as a specialty and in collaboration with partners to promote, maintain and improve oral health and general health.</p> <p>They should do this by demonstrating the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> influence national/regional/local policy on health/oral health or healthcare develop and implement oral health strategies or plans in collaboration with partners and address inequalities demonstrate knowledge of appropriate local and national policies and relevant legislation identify, consult and engage with appropriate stakeholders in policy and strategy development understand the factors considered in decision making processes within relevant organisations and their financial and planning cycles, including priorities and opportunities to influence manage and implement change across multiple organisations locally and nationally 	Develop an oral health policy, campaign or strategy, taking into account cultural and religious needs and socioeconomic disadvantage of the local population.	x	x		x	x	x			
	Coordinate a regional/local response to national policy consultation e.g. a relevant green paper	x	x	x	x					
	Present to ICBs/ICPs/Director of Public Health/Health Overview and Scrutiny Panels or equivalent groups/forums	x	x	x				x	x	
	Drafting a section about a particular population group for the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment or equivalent.	x	x		x	x				
	Advocacy for proposals to meet the health needs of a disadvantaged group in the local population.	x	x	x	x		x		x	
	Contribute to the development of a Director of Public Health Annual report highlighting the health needs of a particular population or subgroup or inequalities in oral health		x		x	x				
	Contribute to the design and implementation of a community stakeholder survey and feedback to that community.	x	x		x			x	x	
	Support the development of JSNA or equivalent and oral health action plans	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	Develop a policy/programme such as Making Every Contact count policy across community services teams	x	x	x		x			x	
	Influence commissioners to embed health promoting activities into provider contracts when they are developed, reviewed or renewed.		x	x				x		
Stakeholder analysis, mapping, engagement and networking for development and/or implementation of a policy/strategy/plan/programme/pathways	x	x		x			x			

Domain D5.5

Key area: Tackling oral health inequalities at a community/population level

Aim: To improve oral health and reduce oral health inequalities at a community/population level

Learning outcome	Examples of outputs	Potential Assessment Method								
		Exams		WPBA						
		Academic exam MSc	DSFE	DOPs	Published report/ paper	CBD	ES,CS,AS and TPD report	Appraisal using MSF	OSDPHA	
<p>Improve oral health and reduce oral health inequalities at a community/population level</p> <p>They should do this by demonstrating the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advise on and implement effective and equitable methods of oral health improvement design, monitor and evaluate programmes and services to improve oral health and reduce inequalities understand factors influencing behaviours and apply this knowledge in oral health improvement programmes identify opportunities for action to bring about oral health improvement advocate for oral health improvement within a general health improvement context influence and act on the determinants of health and oral health demonstrate a balance between the evidence base and pragmatism 	Development or evaluation of a tender for a project/programme to develop a new service or a programme	x	x	x	x	x			x	
	Contribute to the evidence-based design/redesign of a commissioned service or a programme	x	x	x	x		x		x	
	Addressing discrimination or cognitive bias related to race, ethnicity, gender, disability, caste or religion, or migratory status by conducting a health equity audit OR Equality and health inequalities impact assessment	x		x	x	x		x	x	
	Coordinate departmental/organisation's response to national policy consultation e.g. a relevant green paper	x	x		x				x	
	Advocacy for proposals to meet the oral health needs of a disadvantaged group in the local population.	x	x	x		x	x		x	
	Make a major contribution to, or lead, a participatory exercise for gathering information from population groups or specific community groups	x		x		x				
	Support the co-design of community-centred health improvement services and influence the content of a service specification as a result.	x	x	x		x			x	
	Influence commissioners to embed health promoting activities into provider contracts when they are developed, reviewed or renewed.	x		x			x	x		
	Evaluation of specific health improvement programmes and preventative services	x	x		x	x			x	
	Be significantly involved in the development or evaluation of a tender for, or a project/programme to develop, a new service	x		x			x			

Domain D5.6

Key area: Health Protection

Aim: To identify, assess and communicate risks associated with hazards relevant to health protection, and to lead and co-ordinate the appropriate public health response.

Learning outcome	Examples of outputs	Potential Assessment Method							
		Exams		WPBA					
		Academic	DSFE	DOPS	Published report/ paper	CBD	ES,CS,AS and TPD report	Appraisal using MSF	OSDPHA
<p>1. Identify, assess and communicate risks or hazards in the dental setting to protect the health of the public and provide an appropriate public health response. They should do this by demonstrating the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply current regulation, guidance and best practice in managing common risks across dental services • provide leadership and support to dental and public health incidents • identify and work with appropriate partners in the management of risk • undertake risk management in the context of infection control in dentistry • provide appropriate advice and facilitate decision making relating to patient and public safety • support the response to national and global threats to public health as part of the public health workforce 	Effective application of knowledge and awareness of health protection hazards in acute response.	x		x		x	x	x	x
	Deliver teaching/ tutorial to peers/medical/dental students or trainees on health protection topic for example COVID 19, local or national health protection policies and guidance, AMR	x		x	x			x	
	Understanding healthcare associated infections and antimicrobial resistance	x	x			x	x		x
	Ascertain appropriate clinical, demographic and risk factor information along with situational context when handling health protection cases	x		x		x			
	Identify and manage close contacts associated with a case of bacterial meningitis/COVID 19 within an appropriate timeframe			x		x			x
	Demonstrate appropriate escalation of a case / enquiry, showing an understanding of the range of factors that need to be considered (e.g. the infection, the setting, the local and national context, safeguarding issues, agencies involved)	x		x		x		x	
	Outbreak or incident control team minutes and actions produced and disseminated as per outbreak plan.	x		x		x			x
	Participation in multi-agency meetings e.g. Working across agencies on strategic plans and involving the correct agencies in acute response work or development of local/national guidance.	x	x					x	
	Understanding of and participation in Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning	x					x		
	Working in healthcare settings to address health protection concerns and understanding of stakeholders and agencies involved in acute and strategic health protection work e.g. Healthcare associated infections (HCAIs), risks of infection from environment from healthcare workers (Bloodborne viruses, vaccine-preventable infections),new and emerging infections	x	x	x			x	x	x

Domain D5.7

Key area: Health and Care Public Health

Aim: Advise on the development and monitoring of quality and outcomes of dental services

Learning outcome	Examples of outputs	Potential Assessment Method							
		Exams		WPBA					
		Academic exam MSc	DSFE	DOPs	Published report/	CBD	ES,CS,AS and TPD report	Appraisal using MSF	OSDPHA
<p>1. Advise on the development and monitoring of quality and outcomes of dental services</p> <p>They should do this by demonstrating the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advise on workforce planning including workforce development and health and wellbeing of the workforce advise on patient, professional and public engagement and involvement in service development and improvement advise on all stages of the commissioning cycle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide advice relating to levels of need and appropriate service requirements advise on quality assurance processes and quality and outcome measures for dental services and oral health improvement services facilitate the procurement of dental and oral health improvement services develop or advise on service specifications provide advice on the prevention and management of poor quality or safety of clinical services design and undertake review, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and services to ensure acceptability, accessibility, affordability, effectiveness, efficiency and equity advise regarding the management and improvement of dental contract/services performance influence commissioning/planning processes to ensure evidence-based commissioning, transparency and value understand and manage/challenge conflicts of interests appropriately advise on reducing inequalities in access to services and programmes and the outcomes of these 	Commissioning plan for a service	x	x		x	x			x
	Assess risks related to withdrawal of services – e.g. safeguarding				x	x	x		x
	Convening and chairing a working group between agencies and shaping its agendas and work plan			x				x	
	Contribute to the implementation of a new Dental programme or changes to an existing one	x	x	x	x	x			x
	Costing the resources needed for a project	x			x				
	Influence the planning, commissioning and evaluation of specific health improvement programmes and preventative services			x		x			
	Seeking patient/public feedback on existing services or co-developing new services			x			x	x	
	Appraise the evidence for alternative models of reducing admissions from the community to secondary care	x			x				x
	Undertake an appraisal of the literature exploring innovation to inform recommendations into the development of services locally.	x			x				
	Propose plans and develop supporting products (such as service specifications and commissioning policies) for service configuration to address population health needs.			x	x		x		x

References

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