

NEBDN LEVEL 3 DIPLOMA IN

DENTAL NURSING (RQF)

Course Information Pack 2026/27

Online (Distance Learning)

THE SCHOOL OF DENTAL NURSING

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Online (Distance Learning)

Train as a dental nurse from anywhere in the UK while you earn in a dental practice.

Course Overview

The NEBDN Level 3 Diploma in Dental Nursing (RQF) is awarded by the National Examining Board for Dental Nurses (NEBDN) and regulated by Ofqual (England) and CCEA (Northern Ireland). It covers all the learning outcomes of the GDC Safe Practitioner Framework. When you pass, you can apply to register with the General Dental Council (GDC) and start a respected, rewarding career.

The School of Dental Nursing is an NEBDN-accredited training provider and has trained dental nurses since 2006. Our online route lets you study at your own pace around your work. You can start at any time, and only the NEBDN assessments are set for fixed dates. The Diploma also carries UCAS points, which can support your progression to higher education.

Course Key Information

STUDY MODE **Online (distance learning)**	DURATION **Most learners complete in 12–18 months**
START DATE **Flexible – start any time**	ACADEMIC LEVEL **Level 3 Diploma (RQF)**

AWARDED BY	National Examining Board for Dental Nurses (NEBDN)
COURSE FEE	£1,790, payable by instalments: £390 deposit, then 8 monthly payments of £175 The deposit is included in the course fee and is refundable only if you cancel before the course starts.
EXAMINATION FEE	£545 examination and administration fee, paid separately Covers NEBDN registration and your first attempt at the Knowledge Test and Professional Discussion. Resit and other charges are listed on our Schedule of Fees.
WHO IT'S FOR	Aged 16 or over, living in the UK with the right to work, with good spoken and written English, and working as a trainee dental nurse for at least 15 hours a week.

100% **Pass rate for our first Level 3 Diploma cohort.** All 10 learners in our first cohort passed NEBDN's first Knowledge Test for the new qualification in April 2026.

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Key Features

Your own personal tutor
Guidance on your portfolio and both assessments

Earn while you learn
Train in a paid trainee role

Study online, any time
Lessons and resources on our eTrain platform

Assessment preparation
Mock tests and revision support

Job search and career advice
Help finding a trainee role, CV and interview support

Clear, affordable fees
Interest-free monthly instalments

Prefer a classroom? The same Diploma is also taught face-to-face at our centre in Acton, West London.

Entry Requirements

No formal qualifications are needed. You must be able to read, write, speak and understand English well enough to communicate with patients, the dental team and other healthcare professionals.

- You must be aged 16 or over to study online.
- Before the course starts, you must be employed as a trainee dental nurse in a UK dental practice for at least 15 hours a week. Practices that only provide orthodontic treatment are not suitable.
- Your practice must provide a GDC-registered professional who can supervise you and confirm the evidence in your portfolio.
- You must live in the UK and have the right to work here.

Not working in a dental practice yet? Our free job search and career advice can help you find a trainee role before you start.

What qualities make a good dental nurse?

A good dental nurse is well organised, pays attention to detail and is confident with members of the public. You'll need a caring outlook, the ability to work as part of a team, and the judgement to use your initiative when needed.

What prior experience do I need?

Many of our successful learners start with little or no work experience. Others are changing career, and experience in a people-facing job such as retail, transport, tourism or hospitality is particularly useful.

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How Is This Qualification Structured?

The NEBDN Level 3 Diploma in Dental Nursing (RQF) covers the knowledge, skills and professional behaviours you need to practise safely and competently as a dental nurse. You'll study the theory online and apply it at work in your dental practice, building your digital Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) as you go, with support from your tutor to prepare for the Knowledge Test and Professional Discussion.

Qualification Units

Learners must achieve all units in this qualification, which are listed in the table below.

Unit	Summary of units
1	Professional Practice within the Dental Setting
2	Leading, Managing and Team Working within the Dental Setting
3	Communication in the Dental Setting
4	Inclusive Practice
5	Clinical and Technical Practice – Assessment and Diagnosis of Patients
6	Clinical and Technical Practice – Treatment Planning and Onward Referring
7	Promoting Oral Health
8	Health and Well-being – Own and Others in the Team
9	Continued Professional Development
10	Respond to Risks and Medical Emergencies

All 10 units are mandatory. Each unit is assessed through the three components described on the next page: your Portfolio of Evidence, the Knowledge Test and the Professional Discussion.

How We Support You

While you study

A personal tutor, online lessons, homework and feedback on eTrain, portfolio guidance, revision materials and mock assessments before each stage.

At work

Guidance for you and your practice on building your Portfolio of Evidence, plus job search and career advice if you're looking for a trainee role.

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How Is The Course Assessed?

The qualification is assessed through three components.

1 Portfolio of Evidence (PoE)

A digital portfolio completed on PebblePad, showing your knowledge and practical skills at work. You build it over a minimum of six months in your dental practice, with evidence confirmed by your workplace supervisor. It is assessed by your training provider and is subject to internal and external quality assurance.

2 Knowledge Test

An online examination set and marked by NEBDN, made up of 65 multiple-choice questions in 90 minutes. It is held on set dates each year; your tutor will confirm your date.

3 Professional Discussion

An online assessment with an NEBDN examiner, lasting 60 minutes plus 10 minutes' reading time. It explores your knowledge and practical experience in relation to the duties of a dental nurse.

✓ **You must complete your Portfolio of Evidence and pass the Knowledge Test before taking the Professional Discussion. All three components must be passed to achieve the qualification, which is graded Pass or Fail.**

Employment Experience

All learners must work in a dental practice as a trainee dental nurse throughout the course, for at least 15 hours a week. This can be your current practice. If you're new to dentistry, our free job search and career advice can help you find a trainee role. We can't guarantee a job, but we'll support you at every step.

Where Can The Diploma Take You?

Once you're registered with the GDC, you can extend your skills with NEBDN post-registration qualifications, each equivalent to Level 4:

- › Certificate in Dental Radiography
- › Certificate in Oral Health Education
- › Certificate in Fluoride Varnish Application
- › Certificate in Orthodontic Dental Nursing
- › Certificate in Dental Sedation Nursing
- › Certificate in Special Care Dental Nursing
- › Certificate in Dental Implant Nursing

Offered by the School of Dental Nursing

With experience, dental nurses also move into roles such as practice management or teaching, or go on to degree-level study in dental hygiene and therapy or dental technology. The Diploma carries UCAS points, which can support an application to higher education.

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HOW TO APPLY

Applying takes just a few minutes. Here's what happens next.

STEP 1

Submit your online application

Scan the code or visit our website.

STEP 2

We check your eligibility

We confirm you meet the entry requirements, including your trainee role and working hours, and answer any questions.

STEP 3

Send your documents and pay your deposit

Once you've enrolled, you'll get access to eTrain and meet your tutor at induction.

Funding Your Course

Because you work as a paid trainee while you study, you can pay your course fees from your salary, using our interest-free instalment plan. Some dental practices also contribute to their trainees' fees, so it's worth asking yours. You qualify without building up student debt.

Need help or advice?

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Fees and dates are correct at the time of publication (2026) and may change. Please check our website for the latest information.