

Programme Regulations: 2026/27

BSc (Honours) in Dental Therapy Code: A207

Notes:

- (i) *These programme regulations should be read in conjunction with the University's Taught Programme Regulations.*
- (ii) *The BSc (Hons) in Dental Therapy is a non-modular programme leading to a professional qualification. The degree is equivalent to Level 6 on the University Qualification and Credit Framework.*
- (iii) *As the BSc (Hons) in Dental Therapy is a qualification leading to professional registration, the University has an overriding duty of care to ensure that all students graduating from the programme not only meet the academic and clinical requirements of the course, but are also physically and mentally fit to practise and are of good character. The case of any student whose fitness for professional practice is a matter for concern shall be considered under the University's Fitness to Practise Procedure.*
- (iv) *Students will be required to undergo appropriate DBS and Healthcare checks as stipulated in University and School policies.*
- (v) *Students will be required to fulfil all requirements for placements (including clinical access) as dictated by the relevant Care Quality Commission Regulated provider.*
- (vi) ***In order to make up any deficit in clinical experience, clinical training may be extended.***
- (vii) *The BSc (Hons) in Dental Therapy is an attendance-based programme and is principally delivered face to face at the Newcastle City campus and associated clinical locations. Although some teaching and structured guided learning may be delivered online, due to the clinical and integrated structure of the programme, sessions planned for face to face delivery cannot be substituted by other forms of delivery, including blended, online, and remote.*

1. Programme Structure

- (a) The programme is only available for study in full-time mode.
- (b) The period of study shall be three years.
- (c) The BSc (Hons) in Dental Therapy is divided into three Stages, corresponding to the three years of the programme with courses of work as follows:

Stage One

In the first year of the programme students will undertake taught sessions and self-directed learning to gain an understanding of the concept of professionalism, oral, dental & craniofacial anatomy, physiology, oral diseases, dental materials science, interpersonal communication skills and behavioural sciences. Students will develop key clinical skills in a simulated environment in preparation for clinical attachments in year 2.

Stage Two

In the second year of the programme students will be formally introduced to the clinical environment before starting longitudinal attachments to the periodontology and paediatric clinics of Newcastle Dental Hospital. Students will undertake taught sessions and self-directed learning to gain an understanding of human diseases and pharmacology and their impact on the practice of dentistry. They will gain experience in critically appraising scientific evidence and in presenting their work to their teachers and peers.

Stage Three

In the final year of the programme students will continue with clinical attachments to periodontology and paediatric clinics within Newcastle Dental Hospital. In addition, they will attend clinics in the community and gain experience of working with children under sedation. They will undertake taught sessions in extraction technique, radiology and simple diagnostic skills. They will increasingly work alongside dental students and dental specialists to deliver holistic care to their own patients.

2. Assessment methods

a) A full description of the assessment process is provided on the Virtual Learning Environment. Different methods of assessment are used to assess acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriately matched to the learning outcomes of the Stage of study:

(b) **Knowledge and Learning:** Written /online examinations are used to assess retained factual knowledge, understanding and analysis and provide an opportunity to demonstrate learning beyond the core material with Single Best Answer (SBA) and Structured Short Answer (SSA) question styles primarily used. They are also used to assess the ability to apply knowledge, solve problems and test clinical reasoning.

(c) Examinations, each of which includes elements of in-course assessment, shall be held as follows:

Stage 1 Biomedical & Biomolecular Sciences, Oral Biology, Dental Sciences, Key Clinical Skills

Stage 2 Clinical Dental Subjects and Human Diseases

Stage 3 Clinical and Applied Dental Sciences (Final BSc Examination)

(d) **Skills:** Simulated Clinical Assessments, Clinical Assessments, Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) and Case Based Discussions (CBDs) are used to assess practical and clinical skills and other tasks.

A wide variety of written assignments, group work, project reports, case reports and portfolios, case-based discussions and oral presentations are used to assess the critical skills of retrieval, organization and analysis of information, reasoning, deduction and critical evaluation of evidence, written and oral communication, and attitudinal objectives. Structured clinical assessments determine ability to perform a variety of clinical and technical procedures.

Clinical examinations assess skills in communication, application of knowledge, diagnosis, treatment planning, treatment and patient management.

(e) **Professionalism:** Professionalism is monitored for dental students and assessed in the Gateway elements of the examinations, as detailed in the Stage regulations. A candidates' overall performance in all forms of assessment, attendance record, feedback from their tutor and their approach to clinical work including acting within the GDC Standards provide the School with information relevant to a candidate's progress and about their overall professionalism.

3. Progression and Assessment

- (a) For each stage of the year students will pass / fail. The outcome is based upon a combination of grades as detailed in the individual stage regulations. Exceptional performance is also recognised as detailed in point (n) below.
- (b) Academic components of assessment are graded on a four point marking scale:
- M – Merit (Pass)
 - S – Satisfactory (Pass)
 - B – Borderline (Fail)
 - U – Unsatisfactory (Fail)
- (c) Clinical components of assessment including INCCAs are generally graded on a 4 point scale:
- 4: Indicates you are currently working above the level of a 'Safe beginner' and would require very minimal/no supervision if you were to repeat that clinical encounter again.
 - 3: Indicates you are currently working at the level of a 'Safe beginner' and would require minimal supervision if you were to repeat that clinical encounter again.
 - 2: Indicates you are currently working just below the level of a 'Safe beginner' and would require supervision if you were to repeat that clinical encounter again.
 - 1: Indicates you are currently working well below the level of a 'Safe beginner' and would require constant supervision if you were to repeat that clinical encounter again.
- (d) In all objective modes of assessment (e.g. SBA, SSA, OSCE), progress is measured according to threshold marks specified for each grade.
- (e) Candidates must demonstrate competence in both the knowledge and skills elements of the programme and be in good standing professionally in order to progress from one stage to another and to be awarded the Degree of BSc (Honours) in Dental Therapy. The criteria for passing individual assessments, stages and the award can be found in the individual stage examination regulations.
- (f) Candidates who are unsuccessful at first attempt will normally be permitted two resit opportunities. The first resit opportunity will normally be held within the academic year of study. If a candidate fails the first resit, and a second resit opportunity is permitted – see Section (g), the candidate will normally be required to complete an additional period of study, by repeating the year of study as an internal candidate.
- (g) A maximum of two additional resit years, with attendance, is permitted across the programme as a whole. Candidates exceeding this regulation will be unable to continue their studies and, where appropriate, will be considered by the Board of Examiners for an appropriate exit award.

- (h) Candidates who fail the first resit in Year 1, will register as an internal repeat candidate; full attendance is required, and attendance must be in person. In exceptional circumstances and with explicit permission from the Board of Examiners, a candidate may be granted permission to complete the second resit as an external candidate.
- (i) Candidates who fail the first resit* in Years 2 and 3 will register as an internal repeat candidate; full attendance is required, and attendance must be in person.
*In-year resits are not offered for Year 3 clinical assessments. Candidates who fail clinical assessments at first attempt will be required to repeat the year as an internal candidate – this applies to both resit opportunities.
- (j) All candidates undertaking internal repeat years will be liable for the full tuition fee.
- (k) Resit assessments will be capped at the Satisfactory grade.
- (l) Candidates who have taken an interruption of study will not normally be allowed to resume their studies if they are more than two years in arrears, this applies to both pre-clinical and clinical years of the programme. In recognising that there are various reasons for taking an interruption of study, such decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Board of Examiners, in conjunction with the PEC committee (if appropriate), taking into consideration the student's individual circumstances, academic and clinical profile and University and GDC Preparing for Practice / Safe Practitioner Framework Regulations. In consultation with the Student Progress Service and Student Health & Wellbeing Service, the Board of Examiners may override previous decisions made by the PEC or Fitness to Practise committees where it is felt student and patient safety may be at risk. Where it is agreed that a candidate cannot continue on the programme an appropriate exit qualification will be awarded.
- (m) Candidates who are resitting or are returning after interruption of study may be required by the Board of Examiners to retake and pass clinical and pre-clinical (INCCA) assessments that they may have previously passed. This is to ensure candidates' clinical competences still meet the requirements of the programme and the GDC's Preparing for Practice / Safe Practitioner Framework.
- (n) Stage Merits and Distinctions are awarded in order to recognise excellence in Stage Examinations and can only be awarded on the first attempt at an examination. Stage Merits and Distinctions result in the award of points which may contribute towards the award of BSc (Hons) in Dental Therapy with Honours with Distinction or Merit. In any Stage Examination, a Distinction is equivalent to 3 points and a Merit to 1 point.
 - i. Candidates will be considered for the award of BSc Honours (with Distinction) if they achieve at least 6 points in total across all Stage examinations including at least an overall merit grade in BOTH the knowledge and clinical components of their Stage 3 Examination.
 - ii. Candidates will be considered for the award of BSc Honours (with Merit) if they achieve at least 5 points in total across all Stage examinations including at least ONE overall merit in EITHER the knowledge or clinical components of their Stage 3 Examination OR achieve at least 4 points in total across all Stage Examinations including at least an

overall merit in BOTH the knowledge and clinical components of their Stage 3 Examination.

- (o) Candidates who wish to withdraw from study may be considered for one of the following exit awards on the recommendation of the Board of Examiners, upon withdrawal of studies:
 - i. Candidates who have satisfied the examiners for the Stage 1 BSc examination may be awarded without further examination, a Higher Education Certificate in Oral Health Studies.
 - ii. Candidates who have satisfied the examiners for Stages 1 and 2 BSc examinations may be awarded without further examination, a Higher Education Diploma in Oral Health Studies.
- (p) Candidates exiting with the above awards will not be permitted to resume their studies for the degree of BSc (Hons) in Dental Therapy. Neither of the exit awards listed above are registrable qualifications with the GDC.
- (q) Further guidance for candidates is available in the Programme Handbook and Stage Guides.
- (r) In Stage 1 of the programme there may be limited opportunity for eligible students to transfer to the beginning of Stage 1 BDS (A206) after completion of Year 1 of the BSc (Hons) in Dental Therapy programme. Eligibility criteria are provided in Stage 1. Opportunities to transfer to other degree programmes may be available and should be discussed on an individual basis.

4. Exemptions to the University's Taught Programme Regulations

- (a) Due to the *integrated* nature and requirements of the award, the following variations to the University Regulations have been approved:

Non-modular structure

The programme does not operate a modular credit-based system, and instead uses an integrated approach to teaching, learning and assessment. Programme regulations therefore appear different in style and substance from other programmes of study. Regulatory requirements in relation to module and credit are not applicable.

Taught Programme Regulations (Undergraduate) – Return of Marks

Use of an Alternative marking scheme / Use of Standard Setting

BSc (Hons) in Dental Therapy uses an alternative method of marking assessments. Each component of assessment does not necessarily carry a percentage mark and assessments are not weighted.

Standard setting, used to determine the required passing threshold needed to judge a student to have reached the level of a 'safe beginner'*/'safe practitioner'** with respect to knowledge or skill or professionalism, is used for several assessments. The passing threshold for such assessments will vary depending on the individual assessment. Further information on Standard Setting can be found on our Virtual Learning Environment.

Taught Programme Regulations (Undergraduate) - Principles of Discretion

Taught Programme Regulations (Undergraduate) - Progression from One Stage to Another

Taught Programme Regulations (Undergraduate) - The Award and Classification of Degrees and Use of Discretion

Taught Programme Regulations (Undergraduate) - Principles of Compensation

In order to meet professional standards and ensure attainment of all learning outcomes students must pass all Stages. To meet these requirements discretion and compensation is not used by the Board of Examiners.

Each component of assessment does not necessarily carry a percentage mark and assessments are not weighted therefore progression and award requirements are individual to the programme. The overall Stage mark is recorded as pass or fail, however candidates may be awarded Merit or Distinction for Stage Examinations. The programme is an honours award. Classifications are not standard, however the Board of Examiners can award the BSc (Hons) in Dental Therapy with Merit and Distinction.

Taught Programme Regulations - Reassessment

Candidates who are unsuccessful at first attempt will normally be permitted two resit opportunities. Resit arrangements for this programme may vary and where candidates have failed clinical aspects of the programme they may be required to resit these assessments with attendance.

- (b) In the event of any inconsistency between the programme and University regulations in relation to the above section, the programme regulations take precedence over the University regulations. Further guidance is provided in Programme and Year handbooks which are available on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

* GDC Preparing for practice [https://www.gdc-uk.org/docs/default-source/qualityassurance/preparing-for-practice-\(revised-2015\).pdf](https://www.gdc-uk.org/docs/default-source/qualityassurance/preparing-for-practice-(revised-2015).pdf)

** GDC Safe Practitioner Framework (relevant to Stage 1 from 2025 intake) https://www.gdc-uk.org/docs/default-source/education-and-cpd/safe-practitioner/spf-dental-therapist.pdf?sfvrsn=15a19fd0_6