



Advice for SHOs (Senior House Officers)

A Guide to applying for a Specialist Registrar post in Orthodontics

This document has been produced by the British Orthodontic Society

BOS

Congratulations on making the fantastic choice of a career in the specialty of orthodontics. It is a rewarding, fulfilling and enjoyable specialty and you will not regret it. Now all you need to do is get on a training course! This handbook has been compiled by the Training Grades Group of the British Orthodontic Society, with assistance from the Consultant Orthodontic Group. This handbook is intended to be a brief guide to guide prospective applicants with competitive entry into an orthodontic StR post. It is by no means a definitive guide and prospective applicants are encouraged to refer to the websites provided and seek advice from individual orthodontists, training programmes and elsewhere as there is diversity in the training programmes throughout the UK.

We hope that the handbook will provide a useful starting point to guide your application into an orthodontic training programme.

Wishing you the best of luck!

Hemendranath Shah

TGG Chairman

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Glossary of Terms

BOS	British Orthodontic Society
CCST	Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training
COG	Consultant Orthodontic Group
DwSI	Dentist with Specialist Interest
FTTA	Fixed Term Training Appointment (Senior Registrar)
GDC	General Dental Council
Non-NTN	Self funded trainee studying equivalent course without accrediting with a CCST
NTN	National Training Number
SAC	Specialist Advisory Committee
StR	Speciality Registrar / Trainee
TGG	Training Grades Group
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment

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Introduction

In a recent TGG survey it was found that there are around 250 orthodontic trainees in the UK at the current time. These include:

- 129 NTN Specialist Registrars in post
- 48 FTTA Registrars (post CCST level) in post
- 73 Non-NTN (over-seas) trainees in post

There are at present 16 specialist orthodontic training programs in the UK with the highest concentration of these in the South East. All UK units are associated with well established training programs and tend to have a high degree of retention of trainees in proximity of the training programs

- Salary scale £28K to £45K
- Research costs incurred by trainees range from £3K to £24K over two to three years (not subject to tax relief)

The Training Grades Group

The Training Grades Group (TGG) is part of the British Orthodontic Society and membership is open to all UK and GDC registered international trainees on recognised training programmes in the UK. This includes all orthodontic postgraduates, specialty registrars and those on Fixed Term Training Appointments leading to the award of the MOrth and ISFE qualifications.

What is the benefit to you?

We are an organisation that represents the interests of orthodontic trainees in all aspects of training and assessment. TGG membership also ensures discounted rates at the BOS meetings and annual conference as well as at numerous courses organised by orthodontic trade companies. We regularly update our membership with various job opportunities both in specialist practice and in the hospital service.

How do I get involved?

We are always keen to have our membership involved in helping us serve the needs of the over 230 trainees we represent. At a local level you can volunteer to be a TGG representative for your training programme. This involves disseminating information about courses, conferences and job opportunities to fellow trainees as well bringing training issues to the attention of the committee.

TGG Committee

The TGG Committee is made up of trainees who are members of the BOS. The committee changes each year.

You can find details of the current committee by clicking on this link: [TGG Committee](#)

TGG Representatives (Reps):

Our reps this year are: These often change each October. Details for the most current TGG representative for each training programme can be obtained from the TGG secretary, tggsec@hotmail.com.

Training Programme	Representative	Grade	Contact e-mail
Belfast	No rep		
Birmingham	Lorraine Barreto	FTTA	lorrainebarreto@yahoo.co.uk
Bristol	Ansa Akram	SpR	Ansa.akram@bristol.ac.uk
Cardiff	Sheelagh Rogers	FTTA	sheelaghohare@hotmail.com
Dundee	Louise Greene	FTTA	louise.greene@nhs.net
Eastman	Sarah Lee	FTTA	sarah.lee@ucl.ac.uk
Edinburgh	Sat Bhopal	FTTA	satbhopal@hotmail.com
Glasgow	Imran Shafi	SpR	imranshafi777@hotmail.com
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Manchester	Ailbhe McMullin	FTTA	Ailbhemcmullin@googlemail.com
Newcastle	Sarah Henwood	FTTA	sarahenwood@yahoo.co.uk
Royal London	Roz Walker	SpR	roz_walker@hotmail.com
Sheffield	Madhura Vasanth	SpR	madhurabl@yahoo.com

TGG Meetings

TGG Spring meeting 31 January 2010 - Mandec, Manchester Dental School

This is an opportunity to meet colleagues training in units across the country and hear lectures aimed at clinical and training aspects.

July 2011- ISFE day. Date and venue to be confirmed.

This is a day for FTTAs and 3rd year trainees as well as consultant trainers to learn about the structure of the ISFE exam as well as hear the experiences of people who have recently taken the exam. There are often presentations from examiners about the organisation and level of the exam.

September 2011- AGM at the BOS conference - Harrogate

At the AGM we hope to hear reports from committee members who have represented the TGG on various BOS committees. This will also be the opportunity for nominations for elections of committee members for the next year.

What the BOS can do for you?

The British Orthodontic Society (BOS) is the umbrella organisation for a number of constituent orthodontic groups, including the Training Grades Group (TGG).

The Training Grades Group represents all Specialty Registrars (StRs) and Fixed Term Training Appointments (FTTAs) in the UK.

The Definition for membership of the TGG is:

Membership of the Training Grades Group shall be open to members holding an appointment in an orthodontic training grade post approved by the relevant SAC (or equivalent body) or working on an approved course in the United Kingdom leading towards a recognised post-graduate qualification in orthodontics which entitles the holder to a Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training and registration by the GDC as a specialist in orthodontics. Membership shall also open to non-EU nationals who are attending an equivalent course to the above in parallel with EU nationals.

Members elected to the Group Committee before the end of their training may extend their membership of the group for up to two years after they complete their training and pay the postgraduate rate of subscription during this period provided they also join the Group appropriate to their current field of practice.

BOS Background:

The BOS is a Charity, limited by guarantee.

It is governed by a Board of Trustees, which meets 5 times a year. The Chairperson of the TGG is a Trustee, thereby guaranteeing representation at the very highest level of BOS.

The Chair, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and CEO of BOS form an Executive who look after the day to day running of BOS but have no decision making powers,

Below the Board of Trustees is a Representative Body, which meets twice a year. The Rep Body is made up of the Board of Trustees and the Chairpersons of the 11 Committees, which cover all the activities undertaken by BOS. The TGG sends an additional representative to the Rep Body and has representatives on most of the Committees.

Core Activities

The main core activities of BOS are the administration of the Society; the background organisation of educational events; the production of Society publications; the provision of advice to the public and membership, and the financial well being of the Society.

This is provided by a HO team of Dr Les Joffe, CEO; Mrs Ann Wright, Administrator; Mrs Ann Humphreys, Assistant Administrator; Ms Jaki Walker, Office Assistant; Mr Tony Kearny, Office Manager and Mr Gavin Lee, Meetings Manager.

Charitable activities

The central reasons for BOS are its charitable activities:

Education: BOS provides education through an annual Conference; 6 Group meetings; a variety of supplementary courses; distance learning via a virtual learning environment (VLE) site for StRs and FTTAs; and CPD for all members through meetings and VLE.

Communication: 12 Patient Information Leaflets; 28 Advice Sheets; 5 various Guidelines; 3 BOS Newsletters; 2 Orthodontic Business Supplements; IOTN, Orthognathic, Patient Guidance and Referring Dentist Guidance DVDs; a Website and Public Relations consultant.

Research: Projects awarded by the British Orthodontic Society Foundation; 4 Journal issues; 2 Audit Newsletters; and 12 Awards.

All of these activities are provided within the context of good Charitable Governance, focused Public Benefit and absolute Transparency, and all are available to members of the TGG.

BOS ensures that the Training Grades Group is a well run Group within a well organised Profession: Orthodontics.

The TGG Section of the BOS website

The Training Grade Group (TGG) website is an invaluable tool whilst completing your orthodontic training pathways. It is especially useful around the time of examinations or interviews. Features include:

- Find out about the TGG committee, what they do and how to contact them.
- Download Topas database which is a particularly useful logbook for cases you treat during your training.
- Access to past ISFE questions.
- Access to past FTTA interview questions.
- Updates to abridged TGG committee meetings.
- Downloads to application forms for TGG events.
- Access to surveys carried out by the TGG.

[Orthodontic Trainees Discussion Forum](#) which allows the exchange of information between trainees and could prove a valuable resource especially around exam times.

To access the TGG section you need to:

Access the BOS website at www.bos.org.uk

Login using your BOS login and password (You will obtain this when you become a BOS member)

Click on The BOS

Click on Committees

Click on Groups

Click on Training Grades Groups

If you are searching for specific items the Search engine is an excellent way of finding what you need.

If you have any ideas on how you would like to develop the site further please contact the TGG Secretary.

Applying for Specialty Training

The Specialty Registrar Grade was introduced in Orthodontics on 1 July 1998 comprising a three year training programme. Entry to the training programme in orthodontics is highly competitive. Structured training takes place in hospital departments linked to university dental schools. Table 1 shows the distribution of posts in the UK at the time of the last survey. The trainee pays course fees to the university. The total payable is variable between the different training programmes.

Table 1: Distribution of UK training posts

	NTN	Non-NTN	FTTA
Belfast	3	0	0
Cardiff	5	2	3
Dundee	5	0	1
Edinburgh	3	4	0
Glasgow	3	3	3
Eastman	8	5	7
KCL Dental Institute; London Bridge	12	28	4
Kings KCL Dental Institute Denmark Hill	7	8	2
Royal London	12	6	3
Bristol	9	1	4
Birmingham	11	0	5
Leeds	8	1	5
Liverpool	2-3/year	1-2/year	3
Manchester	7	8	4
Newcastle	7	2	3
Sheffield	5	3	4

Eligibility for application for training varies but the essential criteria include holding a dental degree registered with the GDC (usually UK or EU), completion of a period of vocational training and achievement of a post-graduate qualification (MFDS / MJDF), whilst gaining experience in a broad range of dental specialities.

The three year training programme involves completion of a University higher postgraduate degree, which incorporates a research component. Successful completion of training is assessed through ARCP (Annual Review of Competence Progression) throughout the three years. On completion of training and achievement of the IMOrth or MOrth the General Dental Council (GDC) awards a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCST) in order to become a GDC accredited specialist in Orthodontics.

The University fees for the higher postgraduate degree vary and it would be sensible to enquire about the expected fees for the University that you will be applying to, so you know what to budget for. A recent review of fees varied greatly from around £5,000 to £30,000 for NTN home or EU students and for overseas students it is considerably more. Fees can be subject to annual increases which need to be factored in.

Once on the specialist list a number of career choices are available. A specialist may:

Work in the primary care setting within: specialist / general practice / the salaried service (Community Service).

Or

Continue training in a Fixed Term Training Appointment (FTTA), to further develop their skills in managing more complex orthodontic cases and hospital management, to become an NHS Hospital Consultant or University based Academic Consultant. Or work in a combination of these positions.

Where to Apply For Orthodontic Training

Orthodontic training in Deanery approved posts are affiliated to the following Universities and their associated dental schools and hospitals:

Belfast	Kings College London
Birmingham	Leeds
Bristol	Liverpool
Cardiff	Manchester
Dundee	Newcastle
The Eastman Dental Institute, University College London	Queen Mary and Westfield College, the Royal London
Edinburgh	Sheffield
Glasgow	

Some training schemes advertise posts on a yearly basis and other schemes take new registrars once every 3 years. The number of posts available on each occasion may also vary. Most posts are split between a dental hospital and a district general hospital. Jobs are advertised in the British Dental Journal, and adverts tend to appear from November to June with training beginning in October. It is therefore worthwhile checking the jobs section of the BDJ regularly to ensure that the advertisement for the position you would like is not missed.

When thinking of where to apply, most people's overriding concern is location. Some may be unable to move from their current home and are therefore restricted to only applying to nearby units. This obviously makes the choice quite simple, but does reduce the odds of successfully gaining an orthodontic training post in any given year.

If you are fortunate enough to have more flexibility there are many factors to take into account. It is worthwhile looking online, talking to peers as well as visiting each unit (generally after short-listing) to find out more about each individual course. Specialist Registrars currently in training are valuable

sources of information so it is useful to try to “interrogate” them on such open days.

Type of Course/Learning Structure

Some courses offer teaching by problem based learning, whereas others provide more didactic style teaching. A certain teaching style may better suit your method of learning and hence this is an important factor to take into account.

Alongside this, training courses often join forces to provide some elements of their teaching on a regional basis. Therefore the universities based in the North of England participate in the Northern Universities Consortium (NUC), hosting several teaching days each year around the region. As well as providing teaching such programmes are a fantastic opportunity to meet trainees on other programmes. The Royal London and Guys, Kings and St Thomas’s (GKT) run a combined academic teaching programme called the pan London lecture programme that invites speakers to lecture the StRs and Postgraduates. Teaching is usually held on Fridays either at the Royal London Hospital or at Guys Hospital.

Course Fees

This is covered in a later section on the cost of orthodontic training.

Type of Postgraduate Degree offered

All registrars will be expected to undertake a postgraduate degree as part of their training. There are a variety of degrees on offer across the different training schemes at either Master’s or Doctorate level including MPhil, MSc, DDS or DDSC. Information can generally be found on each university website. Some higher level degrees are taught and others are research based; this will affect the length of the dissertation and also whether exemption for the written section of MOrth/IMOrth examination will be provided.

Distance between Units

Most trainees will be based in two sites, generally a dental hospital and district general hospital. When considering applying for positions it is important to consider the amount of travelling that will be required; some posts can be separated by over an hours commute. Some schemes however, have put in place measures to reduce travelling for registrars such as providing web-based teaching.

Number of Other Trainees & Yearly Intake vs. 3 Yearly Intakes

The value of training alongside your peers cannot be underestimated. Participating in a training programme in orthodontics can be hard work and having friends on hand who are also undergoing the same difficulties and stresses is so important. Therefore, it is important to consider the trainee numbers within a training scheme and the availability of support from peers.

Alongside this some units take on new trainees on a yearly basis, whereas other units take on a larger cohort every 3 years. Both methods have their advantages and disadvantages, such as the lack of support from more senior registrars contrasting with the support provided by a larger cohort in a year group. Such factors would have to be weighed up on an individual basis.

Peer Recommendation

Talk to current and former trainees – their advice is invaluable! The Training Grades Group of the British Orthodontic Society can be contacted for advice and this group also runs an annual course for potential orthodontic registrars. Gain input from as many people as possible and you will make the correct decision for you.

Writing your CV

In order to be considered for an interview for specialist training in orthodontics you need to submit an application which is scrutinised by the appointment panel. Candidates are then short listed and ask to attend for interview. For orthodontic speciality training there is often a large number of applicants and therefore it is essential you present yourself well.

In recent years there has been a move towards more objective assessment of candidates' qualities. Appointment panels have been encouraged to use a structured application form and points system to grade applications to remove the subjective assessment of a CV. Short-listed applicants are often asked to submit their CV prior to the interview. A research study has been undertaken to determine which aspects of CV content are most important to training programme directors. The results are summarised below (Ellis *et al.*, 2002).

General Layout

- Aim to limit your CV to five or six pages
- Include a separate title page
- Include a summary statement at the start outlining your present position and immediate and long term aims
- Make use of bullet points and bold to improve presentation
- Use one and half spacing of text
- Choose either chronological or reverse chronological order for job history
- Consider using a table to summarise your job history
- Check carefully for spelling and grammatical errors

Essential Items

- Date of birth
- Time left on visitors permit (if from overseas)
- Undergraduate career: university, qualification, year of qualification and prizes/awards
- Postgraduate career: qualification(s), institute(s), date(s)
- Publications: papers published, papers in press, papers submitted
- Presentations given: name and dates of meeting(s)
- Research including unpublished material
- Audit projects completed
- Management courses attended
- Committee experience: past and present positions
- A complete job history with any gaps in employment documented and explained
- A brief outline of leisure activities
- A statement of ambitions
- Referees

Desirable items

- Personal details: age, e-mail address and possession of a driving license
- Positions of responsibility at school
- Undergraduate experience: travel and a summary of student elective
- Postgraduate experience: courses attended e.g. research methods course or courses specific to the specialty applied for and postgraduate travel
- Society membership: BDA and specialist societies

- Additional details on publications, research and audit including: work in progress, acknowledgements received, abstracts published and supervision of projects by junior staff/students

Items to exclude

- A photograph
- Personal details: smoker/non smoker, marital status and dependent children
- Details of school career
- VT and FHSA numbers
- A list of strengths and weaknesses

Once you have drafted your CV, make sure you thoroughly check it for spelling and grammatical errors. Ask your consultant/trainer/friends to proof read your CV to make sure there are no errors and it reads well. A well presented CV gives a good impression of you, a poorly presented CV does not!

Further Reading

Bulstrode C, Pearson C, Hunt V. *Appointing doctors*. Oxford: Sumit, 1998.

P.E.Ellis, S.G.S.Ellis, K.D.O'Brien and R.I.Joshi. So you want to be a specialist registrar? What to put in your CV. *Br Dent J* 2002;**192**:133-136.

The extra that could win you that job. Successful CVs. Guide to CV success. *Hospital Doctor* 18th February 1999; 35–36.

Do I need publications on my CV?

The need for publications when applying for orthodontic SpR training is a hotly debated issue! Although it is not essential to have publications on your CV, it will be looked on very favourably if you do. It is important that your publications are reported accurately and you are aware of phrases associated with publications:

- In Preparation - still writing the manuscript;
- Submitted - actually received in the editorial office of the journal;
- In Press - accepted by the journal although not published.

Some who scrutinise these applications do not consider 'in preparation' or 'submitted' as these do not guarantee a publication. Abstracts can count but need to be correctly referenced as do full papers. Ideally the person who does the work should be first author.

Job descriptions typically include a person specification, and publications are normally listed as 'desirable'. Everyone applying for orthodontic SpR posts will have similar qualifications and experience, so publications are a key factor in helping your CV stand out from the rest – meaning you are more likely to get shortlisted for the post you want.

In summary – it is a very good idea to have a least one publication on your CV when applying for an orthodontic SpR post!

What should I do?

Don't panic! No-one expects you to have completed and published a multi-centre randomised controlled trial in the short time since you qualified.

Before you do anything else, it is worth speaking to the orthodontic consultants in your region, to see if they would like any help with research they are carrying out, or whether they have any small projects waiting to be undertaken. Doing this has two advantages: firstly you will get a publication for your CV and secondly, it gives you the opportunity to let the orthodontists

in your region know that you are interested in applying for an orthodontic StR post.

Important: it doesn't matter if your publications are not based on orthodontic research projects. The people short listing for interviews are looking to see that you have an interest in research and audit, not that you have done orthodontic research.

You may already be involved in a research project in your department. If so, make sure you take an active role in writing the project up for publication so that your name is included. If not, don't worry – there are several simple ways of getting publications onto your CV. Below are a few suggestions:

A case report write-up

You may have seen an interesting or unusual case recently, and if so, ask your supervisor whether you could write this up as a case report.

If you have not seen any interesting cases yourself, ask your senior colleagues or a local orthodontist. It is likely that at least one of them will have seen something interesting, and they will usually be only too glad to let someone else do the donkey work in writing it up for them!

Good examples of case reports can be found in the journal Orthodontic Update and Dental Update.

An audit project report

No doubt you will have been involved in audit projects in your department and if your audit project is of sufficient quality, why not write it up for publication?

The British Orthodontic Society produces a biannual Clinical Effectiveness Bulletin (CEB) composed of orthodontic audit reports. If you would like to undertake an orthodontic audit, ask a local orthodontic consultant. They will usually be happy for someone to help them carry out an audit and write it up for publication in the CEB.

If you have carried out an audit in another specialty, there may be similar journals or bulletins – ask your senior colleagues. Alternatively, you could

consider sending your audit write-up to journals such as Annals of the Royal College of Surgeons.

A poster presentation at a conference

If your project is simple or if you are having trouble getting it accepted for publication, you may be able to use your findings for a poster presentation at a conference.

To apply for a poster to be accepted for a conference, you will need to submit an abstract in advance. Abstracts for posters accepted for presentation are published as a supplement to the main journal associated with the conference. For example, if your poster is accepted for presentation at the British Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons conference, your accompanying abstract will be published in a supplement of the British Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery. You can then put this on your CV as a publication, plus you get a poster presentation for your CV too!

Note: abstracts for poster presentations usually need to be submitted at least 3 months in advance of the conference, so make sure you don't get caught out and miss the deadline. Instructions on completing abstracts can normally be found on the conference website. Follow the instructions carefully or your poster will not be accepted!

Ask to write up a project for someone else

Sometimes, people complete research projects, but don't have time to write them up. Ask around – it may be that someone that you work with has just such a project. Normally, people are only too happy for you to do the hard work for them in writing the project up. You will also get to put your name on the publication.

How to list publications on your CV

It is good practice to list your publications as they would appear in a reference list in a journal. For example:

Smith AB, Jones CD. Age at presentation for orthodontic SpR interviews: a cross-sectional survey. Annals of Interesting Facts 2009;1(4): 234-236.

You can include publications on your CV even if they haven't been published yet. If you have sent a paper to a journal and are waiting to hear whether it has been accepted, you can list the paper as 'submitted'. For example:

Smith AB, Jones CD. Facial features of an individual with Ortho-Trainee syndrome: a case report. *Journal of Weird Syndromes* (submitted)

If your paper has been accepted but not yet published, list it as 'in press'. For example:

Smith AB, Jones CD. An audit of satisfaction levels amongst SHOs using the BOS guide to applying for an SpR post in orthodontics. *Journal of Exciting Audit Projects 2009* (in press)

Please make sure that your references are accurately cited in your CV. You may also be asked to bring along your published/accepted publications, so get them printed on high quality paper using a colour printer.

A final word of caution

Don't be tempted to "enhance" your CV by including information that is not truthful, you will be caught out and it will not enhance your professional reputation!

The Costs of Orthodontic Training Courses

Introduction

Since the inception of the modern Specialist Registrar Post in 1998 all specialist training posts are subject to competitive entry to salaried posts. The salary scale should follow national pay scales, although on occasion some pay protection may be possible. The current salary range progresses from £26k to £46k in 9 annual increments, although most trainees will not exceed point 5 on the scale (£38k). The costs incurred by potential trainees are variable from scheme to scheme, with absolute figures unavailable we can offer a guide to approximate course fees and also highlight some additional costs that may be payable throughout training.

Academic Fees

Orthodontic trainees are registered as full time or part-time postgraduate students at their respective dental schools or affiliated universities to undertake a masters (or doctorate) level post-graduate degree. The fees for these degrees are payable to the individual universities and generally comprise two components: bench fees and course fees. The cost of both components is set centrally by the individual university and varies from course to course, and fees may be payable over either a two or a three year period.

The Training Grades Group of the British Orthodontic Society reviewed these fees in 2010 and found great variations nationally (Table 2). The total fees ranged from £1,000 - £9,690 per year or from £3,000 - £24,000 for the entire duration of the training programmes. Eight programmes charge fees over 3 years and the remaining nine charge fees over a 2 year period. You are advised to review the fees on the appropriate website of the relevant University to ensure the most up to date information.

Training Scheme	Total Course Fees (£)
Belfast	£3,000
Birmingham	£9,600
Bristol	£21,000
Dundee	£10,470
Eastman	£20,000
Edinburgh	£28,950
GKT	£29,310
Glasgow	£9,750
Leeds	£25,000
Liverpool	£15,000
Manchester	£21,900
Newcastle	£21,075
Royal London	£30,000
South Wales	£27,000
Trent	£11,500

Table 2 – Total course fees 2010

Additional Costs

In addition to the expense of the university fees StRs may incur other costs over their training period. We will try to illustrate some examples of these, and this is neither an exhaustive list nor does it apply to all schemes.

- **Computers**

Trainees may be expected to purchase an appropriate lap-top computer.

- **Photography**

Some schemes provide access to appropriately trained medical photographers for SpR patients, others provide clinical cameras whilst some expect trainees to provide their own clinical cameras. The use of digital photography has removed some processing costs, however there are additional problems in relation to the storage and transfer of digital images. The one off cost of an SLR digital camera can be in the region of £750 to £1300 or even more depending on the specification. This is a very expensive undertaking and StRs are well advised to extensively research the market and speak to senior colleagues for advice before purchase. Discounts maybe available from retailers if a group purchase is arranged. StRs are also advised to insure their camera on purchase.

- **Travel costs**

Some training schemes are spread over a large area with great distances between many peripheral units and the central base. This will have an impact in transport costs. Some schemes now use internet based conference teaching to limit some of the difficulties with this.

- **Photocopying and printing**

All universities have access to a wide range of on-line medical and dental journals. However there is always a need for photocopying and the majority of this will be charged to the students.

- **Books**

Many common orthodontic texts are reasonably priced, but some may be in excess of £100. Not all are necessary and will depend on local recommendations or personal choice.

- **Tax**

Some incurred costs, such as books and photocopying may be subject to tax relief by HMRC. Course fees are usually not exempt from tax-relief. However

we would recommend seeking professional accounting advice prior to commencing the course; it is difficult to obtain receipts in retrospect.

Summary

Orthodontic training can incur a significant financial burden, which can be exacerbated by higher living costs particularly in larger UK cities. However the long term earning potential for an orthodontic specialist makes specialist orthodontic training a good investment.

Previous experience and exams prior to applying for a Specialty Registrar post in Orthodontics

After completing your 5 year undergraduate training in dentistry and obtaining your BDS degree, it is preferable for you to obtain a wide experience in dentistry which would involve working in hospital, community and general dental practice.

Initially, you will start by completing dental foundation/ vocational training (1 year) or general practitioner training (GPT) scheme (2 years) which will help you gain some of the necessary experience. During this time you will gain your VT Number, which you will need if you eventually want to work in the primary care services.

You will also be advised to study for the MJDF/MFDS/MFD examination, which will take about 2 to 3 years to achieve if you are thinking of pursuing specialist training in any dental specialty in the future. However, this qualification is no longer essential to enter specialist training but the majority of applicants will have this diploma and it is desirable to have it before you start applying for a specialist registrar post.

General professional training (GPT) in dentistry has become well established in the UK and has provided a broad based clinical training in primary and secondary care dentistry to prepare the newly qualified dentist for subsequent training in the career of their choice.

In 2006, the Committee of Postgraduate Dental Deans and Directors (COPDEND) published the new Curriculum for Dental Foundation Training to match the concept of a two year foundation programme published in 2004 'Modernising Medical Careers – The Next Steps'.

Modernising Dental Careers will have an impact on all training grades and is delivered through structured programmes. The first year following graduation, Foundation Year 1 (FY1) is spent in dental vocational training based in General Dental Practice. The second year, Foundation Year 2 (FY2) is spent in a combination of primary or secondary care. The main idea behind the

remit behind ‘Modernising Dental Careers’ is to provide improved care for patients, improved training opportunities, flexible training pathways and streamlined training. The curriculum is based on four domains: clinical, management & leadership, communication and professionalism. These domains may be further divided into major competencies. The competencies will be assessed by a variety of methods such as directly observed procedures and patient interactions by nominated trainers, patient questionnaires or by means of an online test of knowledge.

The Faculties of Dental Surgery and General Dental Practice (UK) of The Royal College of Surgeons of England have introduced a new examination, Membership of the Joint Dental Faculties (MJDFRCS Eng) to replace the existing MFDS and MFGDP. This new examination reflects the changes in the first two years following primary qualification and aims to assess knowledge after completion of a two-year foundation programme.

Further information on MJDF/MFDS/MFD can be found at:

<http://www.mjdf.org.uk/> (Royal College of Surgeons England)

<http://www.rcsed.ac.uk> (Royal College of Surgeons Edinburgh)

<http://www.rcpsg.ac.uk/Examinations/Dental/> (Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons Glasgow)

<http://www.rcsi.ie> (Royal College of Surgeons Ireland)

Further information:

Becoming An Orthodontist: www.bos.org.uk

Career Advice for Dentistry – General Professional Training:

<http://www.rcseng.ac.uk/fds/careers-in-dentistry>

Curriculum for UK Dental Foundation Programme Training:

Committee of Postgraduate Dental Deans and Directors www.copdend.org

Audits and Presentations

Audit is an integral component of Clinical Governance and in the UK all dentists have a requirement to carry out audit. As part of your General Professional Training, you will have participated in audit projects taking place in your clinical environment.

When applying for a StR post, it will be important to highlight the types of audit projects you have been involved with. You should also be clear about your level of participation in any particular project. For example, whether you were involved in data collection only, data processing or involved in the completion of the entire project and the audit cycle.

The projects you may have participated in will range from small local projects, for example an audit of the availability of patient notes in a department, to larger projects such as those dealing with the implementation of national guidelines. You may have also taken part in national audit projects.

The key principle in any audit activity is that it should result in improved quality of care for patients. Therefore, when applying for a training post, it is important to highlight how your audit has contributed to achieving this. The project may have resulted in direct improvement in clinical practice, increased efficiency or more cost-effective service. Ideally, you will have 'closed the audit loop', repeating the audit project to demonstrate that change has been achieved.

You should be able to differentiate between audit and research. Audit aims to improve patient care by checking that we are following the 'best way'. The purpose of research is to find 'the best way'.

It is important to formally report the findings of all audit activity so that the results can be acted upon. This also provides opportunities for learning for all staff involved in the care of patients. You may have had the opportunity to do this as a verbal presentation at your departmental audit meetings, practice meetings or training days. You may have also reported your work as a poster presentation at a conference or as a publication.

When presenting your audit project, the key points to highlight will include the aims, gold standards (best practice derived from research, local or national standards), sample details, data collection methods, main results, actions implemented and how this has resulted in improvements in patient care. Best practice can be identified from NICE Guidelines, National Service Frameworks, local guidelines, critically appraised research, feedback from patients and from clinicians' experience.

There will be an opportunity to list your involvement in audit activity in your application form. At your interview, you are likely to be asked to discuss these and possible questions might relate to your direct involvement, your findings and how you applied your findings to improving clinical practice. Equally publication of an audit can also be considered in an application.

Further information

Royal College of Surgeons, Faculty of Dental Surgery. Methodologies for Clinical Audit in Dentistry. January 2000:

http://www.rcseng.ac.uk/publications/docs/methodologies_dentistry.html

National Clinical Audit Advisory Group (NCAAG), Department of Health:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/ab/NCAAG/DH_097286

The National Clinical Audit Support Programme (NCASP):

www.ic.nhs.uk/services/national-clinical-audit-support-programme-ncasp

National Service Frameworks:

www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/NSF/Pages/Nationalserviceframeworks.aspx

NICE Guidelines: www.nice.org.uk

The Interview

The interview can be a stressful process but do not forget that you have already passed the first hurdle of being shortlisted. In order to do your best, then you, the candidate will have to impress the interview panel and good preparation is the key.

Try not to see the interview as an examination. Be relaxed, confident and smile.

Keep a copy of your CV and application form. This will allow you to look back over the information that you have given the interviewer. Try to look at your CV /application form from an interviewer's point of view. Asking a colleague or consultant for an opinion is generally useful and they may pick out different factors which you may not have considered.

Do read over each section. You may have made minor mistakes and knowing this in advance will help you to stay calm.

Some sections may require clarification in the interview e.g. what role did you play in the audit/research project. You may be asked to expand on sections relating to past responsibilities or management experience. Expecting certain questions will allow you to be prepared.

Make sure you know where and when the interview is being held. You don't want to turn up late or flustered. Arrive early.

The interview may be divided into separate sections such as previous posts/past experience and audit/research. If one section does not go as well as anticipated, move on and start afresh on the next section.

When answering questions, try to be specific. Answering in the 1st person (I carried out an audit, I coordinated the on-call rota) appears much more confident and self assured than saying "we".

Prepare for questions in advance. Many questions are repeated so ask colleagues. e.g.

- Tell us about yourself

- Walk us through your application form
- What makes you think you are right for this post
- What are your career objectives
- What are your strong points

Don't draw attention to your weaknesses. On the other hand, you must be truthful. If they do come up, try and turn any negatives into positives. Again, prepare in advance and this will happen naturally.

Do not be fazed by awkward/tricky questions. Make sure you practice out loud and to friends and colleagues. If you have concerns about specific questions, make sure to ask for advice on how best to answer before you attend your interview.

You may be asked how you would cope in a given situation. In this case, you may be able to give an example of circumstances you found yourself in. Practice as many scenarios as possible with your colleagues/consultants.

You may be asked to prepare a topic for presentation. Make sure you understand your presentation. Carefully rehearse it, including timings. Make sure you are familiar with any PowerPoint features. Remember, the computer on the day may not have audiovisual effects so beware of making the presentation too complicated.

If you don't fully understand a question you are asked, don't attempt to answer it. Ask for clarification.

Be aware of current hot topics in orthodontics. You may be asked generally about the topic or asked for your opinion on it, for example, the 18 week referral to treatment time (RTT) is impacting on orthodontics. This is in secondary care at present and has great implications for orthodontics in the man power sector

<http://www.18weeks.nhs.uk/Content.aspx?path=/>

Useful websites:

www.dh.gov.uk

www.gdc-uk.org

www.bos.org.uk

www.bda.org

At the end of the interview, you may be asked if you have any questions. Only ask if it is relevant.

Throughout the interview, be confident. Remember, the interview panel are also looking for someone they can work with. Eye contact is important and be aware of any distracting habits that you might have e.g. clasping/unclasping hands, overzealous hand gestures/waving. Do not interrupt or criticise previous colleagues/employers.

SMILE. When leaving the room, thank the panel for their time.

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