

Dental Technician

Dental technicians make and repair dental appliances, such as false teeth, crowns, bridges, implants or braces. Dentists use these appliances to replace or improve their patients' teeth, speech, appearance or ability to chew.

The Work

You could be:

- following written instructions from a dentist, giving exact details of the appliance to be made
- designing and making the item, using materials such as metal, plaster or plastic
- carving, moulding, casting, grinding and polishing the item, often using complex equipment
- checking that the finished item is correct in colour and design, looks attractive and will not damage teeth, gums or other parts of the mouth
- adjusting or repairing dental appliances
- keeping patient records.

After training, you could go into one of the three following specialisms:

- removable prosthodontics – design and make dentures
- fixed prosthodontics – specialise in crown and bridge work
- orthodontics – make braces to correct the position of teeth.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of the company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

Dental technicians' pay can start at around £23,000 a year, rising with experience to between £30,000 and £40,000 year.

Dental technicians who work with the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change scale. The current pay scales are from April 2025. Qualified technicians start on Band 5, £34,494 to £42,977 a year. Dental technician specialists and those with management responsibilities are on Band 6, £43,169 to £52,603 a year.

Higher specialist dental technicians are on Band 7, £52,769 to £61,377 a year.

Conditions

- You would work in a laboratory in a hospital or commercial business, and sometimes in a dentist's surgery.
- You may work alone or in a small team.
- You have contact with dentists but usually not with patients.

- Working hours are normally regular, but in some hospital departments you may need to attend emergencies.
- You would wear protective clothing and sometimes other safety equipment such as an eye-shield.

Getting In

- You would study for an approved pre-registration programme whilst employed as a trainee dental technician in an MHRA (Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency) registered laboratory.
- The only course available in Scotland is the online DipHE (SCQF Level 8) in Dental Technology at the University of Aberdeen.
- For entry you must be employed as a trainee dental technician, and have 2 Highers including a science subject plus English at National 5.
- In order to work as a dental technician you must be registered by the [General Dental Council \(GDC\)](#).
- You will require a satisfactory criminal record check from Disclosure Scotland to show that you are suitable for this type of work. Contact [Disclosure Scotland](#) for details on the type you would need.

You can find jobs with the NHS and in private practice. There are also opportunities with the armed services.

What Does It Take

You should be:

- accurate, to make items fit the patient comfortably and properly
- practical with a high level of manual dexterity
- able to follow technical instructions
- artistic, to make items visually pleasing
- careful and methodical
- able to concentrate on close work
- able to work on your own and in a team.

Training

- Once you are registered with the GDC, you are required to undertake Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in order to keep your skills and knowledge up to date. You must complete at least 150 hours every 5 years.

Getting On

- In hospitals you would probably move on to a senior technician's job.
- In a commercial laboratory you might move into management or quality control.
- You could take further qualifications and specialise in making a particular type of dental appliance.
- With experience and specialist training, dental technicians can become Clinical Dental Technicians (training not currently available in Scotland).
- You could set up your own business.

Contacts

British Dental Association (BDA)

Tel: 020 7935 0875

Email: enquiries@bda.org

Website: www.bda.org

X: @TheBDA

Facebook: www.facebook.com/thebritishdentalassociation

NHS Scotland Careers

Website: www.careers.nhs.scot

Website (2): jobs.scot.nhs.uk

Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.