

Standard in development

L4: Orthodontic Therapist (GDC 2023)

Title of occupation

Orthodontic Therapist (GDC 2023)

UOS reference number

ST1434

Core and options

No

Level of occupation

Level 4

Typical duration of apprenticeship

0 months

Target date for approval

01/01/0001

Resubmission

No

Would your proposed apprenticeship standard replace an existing framework?

No

Does professional recognition exist for the occupation?

Yes

Occupation summary

This occupation is found in Dentistry.

The broad purpose of the occupation is to become a registered professional who fits, adjusts and removes braces to patient's teeth, working to the prescription of an orthodontist or dentist competent in orthodontics. They provide holistic advice on maintaining oral and general health for patients who are undergoing orthodontic treatment.

In their daily work, an employee in this occupation interacts with with patients of all ages who present with dental malocclusions, problems with the development, alignment and the way teeth fit together, the wider orthodontic and dental team, parents, guardians and carers.

An employee in this occupation will be responsible for for undertaking reversible orthodontic procedures, which include bonding brackets on the teeth, fitting and changing wires and accessories that connect to the brackets, fitting removable appliances and retainers, following an appropriate prescription. They will respond appropriately to a treatment plan from the orthodontist, gaining valid consent from the patient and guardian, and giving appropriate advice. They will be able to make appliances safe in the absence of the dentist and respond appropriately to emergencies.

The scope of practice for orthodontic therapists is set out by the General Dental Council who regulate this occupation. Further details of the regulatory requirements can be found in the following General Dental Councils documents: 'Preparing for Practice,' 'Standards for Education' and 'Standards for the Dental Team'.

Orthodontic Therapists work as part of wider dental team that includes dentists or orthodontists, dental nurses, dental hygienists, dental therapists, dental technicians, clinical dental technicians, practice managers, administrators and laboratory staff. Depending on the practice they work in, Orthodontic Therapists may supervise colleagues, trainees or students. The dentist or orthodontist prescribes the treatments that an Orthodontic Therapist will carry out, including taking impressions, placing fixed brackets and arch wires on teeth, fitting tooth separators, undertaking radiographs and occlusal bite registration.

During the apprenticeship apprentices must be supervised by a suitably trained orthodontist on the specialist list maintained by the General Dental Council. They must be a Registered General Dental Council dental nurse, dental hygienist, dental therapist or dental technician prior to commencing this apprenticeship

Typical job titles

Orthodontic therapist

Are there any statutory/regulatory or other typical entry requirements?

Yes

Entry requirements

Must be registered on the General Dental Council Register as a registered dental nurse, dental hygienist, dental therapist or dental technician. Employers usually require applicants to have a period of clinical post-qualification experience (usually at least 2 years).

Occupation duties

DUTY	KSBS
Duty 1 Undertake routine orthodontic therapy procedures and tasks relevant to the assessment and diagnosis of patients.	K1 K2 K3 K4 K5 K6 K7 K8 K9 K10 K11 K12 K13 K14 K15 S1 S2 S3 S4 S5 S6 S7 S8 B1 B2
Duty 2 Undertake routine orthodontic therapy procedures and tasks relevant to treatment planning, patient management and onward referral of patients.	K16 K17 K18 K19 K20 K21 K22 K23 K24 K25 K26 S9 S10 S11 S12 S13 S14 S15 S16 S17 S18 S19 B1 B2
Duty 3 Undertake routine orthodontic therapy procedures and tasks relevant to orthodontic treatment.	K27 S20 S21 S22 S23 S24 S25 B1 B2
Duty 4 Communicate effectively, maintaining confidentiality and records appropriately.	K28 K29 K30 K31 K32 S26 S27 S28 S29 S30 S31 B1 B2
Duty 5 Provide professional leadership within the team working in partnership with patients, dental teams, other health and social care professionals.	K33 K34 K35 K36 K37 K38 K39 K40 K41 K42 K43 S32 S33 S34 S35 S36 S37 B1 B2
Duty 6 Practise as an autonomous professional exercising judgement and integrity, keeping within the scope of practice and the legal and ethical boundaries of the profession.	K44 K45 K46 K47 K48 K49 K50 S38 S39 S40 S41 S42 S43 S44 S45 S46 S47 S48 S49 B1 B2
Duty 7 Practise in a non-discriminatory and inclusive manner recognising the impact of culture, equality and diversity.	K51 K52 K53 S50 S51 S52 B1 B2
Duty 8 Promote oral health to individuals and the wider population and raise awareness of its role in preventing ill health amongst communities.	K54 K55 K56 K57 K58 K59 K60 K61 K62 K63 S53 S54 S55 S56 S57 B1 B2
Duty 9 Reflect on, review and develop the quality of own practice.	K64 K65 K66 K67 K68 K69 K70 K71 S58 S59 S60 S61 S62 S63 S64 S65 S66 S67 B1 B2
Duty 10 Manage own health and well-being and promote the well-being of others in the team.	K72 K73 K74 K75 S68 S69 S70 B1 B2

KSBS

Knowledge

K1: Aetiology, pathogenesis and epidemiological trends of oral and dental disease and their application to patient management.

K2: Describe the clinical presentations of oral and dental diseases relevant to the role of an orthodontic therapist and explain the principles underpinning their diagnosis, prevention, and treatment.

K3: Variance in disease presentation across diverse cultural and social groups, and those with protected characteristics, and how this impacts diagnosis, prevention, and treatment.

K4: General and systemic diseases and psychological conditions, and their relevance to oral health and impact on clinical treatment, patient compliance, self-care, and outcomes.

K5: The relevance to patient management of dental, oral, craniofacial, and general anatomy, recognising the diversity of anatomy across the patient population.

K6: Relevant physiology and its application to patient management.

K7: Psychological and sociological concepts and theoretical frameworks of health, illness, behavioural change and disease, and how these can be applied in clinical practice.

K8: Potential routes of transmission of infectious agents in dental practice, mechanisms for the prevention of infection, the scientific principles of decontamination and disinfection and their relevance to health and safety.

K9: The need for effective recorded maintenance and testing of equipment and requirements for appropriate storage, handling, and use of materials.

K10: Scientific principles of medical ionizing radiation and statutory regulations, and how these are applied to clinical practice.

K11: Principles of obtaining valid patient consent.

K12: Importance of each component of the patient assessment process.

K13: Signs of abuse, neglect or emotional trauma, local and national systems that safeguard the welfare of children and adults and understand how to raise concerns and act accordingly.

K14: Developmental or acquired occlusal abnormalities.

K15: How to undertake an orthodontic assessment and how treatment need is assessed.

K16: How to provide appropriate advice and support including signposting or referral for health risks from the use of prescribed, non-prescribed and recreational drug use and misuse on oral and general health.

K17: Scientific principles underpinning the use of materials and biomaterials used in orthodontics.

K18: Principles of preventive care.

K19: Importance of achieving a healthy oral environment prior to introduction of orthodontic treatment.

K20: How diet and nutritional status can influence oral and general health and how to provide appropriate advice and support.

K21: Common signs and symptoms of oral cancer and the importance of raising a concern and early referral.

K22: Range of contemporary orthodontic treatment options, their impact, outcomes, limitations, and risks.

K23: Principles of timely interception and interceptive orthodontics.

K24: Roles and organisation of various referral networks, clinical guidelines and policies and local variation.

K25: Responsibilities of the dental team as an access point to and from wider healthcare.

K26: Risks within and around the clinical environment.

K27: How to manage urgent limited orthodontic appliance procedures.

K28: Use of a range of communication methods and technologies and their appropriate application in support of clinical practice.

K29: Importance of non-verbal communication, including listening skills, and the barriers to effective communication.

K30: Professional expectations, potential impact, and consequence of using social media as a communication tool.

K31: Importance of contemporaneous, complete and accurate patient records in accordance with legal requirements and best practice.

K32: Legal responsibilities of maintaining and protecting patients' information.

K33: Responsibilities and limitations of delegating to other members of the dental team.

K34: The role and professional responsibilities associated with appraisal; training and review of colleagues; provision of and receipt of effective feedback in the context of developing members of the dental team.

K35: Roles of dental and other healthcare professionals in the context of learning and working in a dental and wider healthcare team.

K36: The contribution that team members and effective team working makes to the delivery of safe and effective high-quality care, including the benefits of working in culturally diverse teams.

K37: Team working guidance provided by the GDC and other relevant bodies.

K38: Impact of Direct Access on each registrant group and the impact on the application of each group's scope of practice.

K39: Scope of practice of each member of the dental team and how the roles interact for effective teamwork and patient care.

K40: The need to ensure that those who raise concerns are protected from discrimination or other detrimental effects.

K41: Differences between management and leadership.

K42: Own management and leadership role and the range of skills and knowledge required to do this effectively.

K43: How to take responsibility for the quality of services and devices provided to the patient as relevant to your scope of practice.

K44: Importance of having appropriate indemnity arrangements in place for both the professional and patient.

K45: Importance of candour and effective communication with patients when things go wrong or when dealing with a complaint.

K46: How and where to report any patient safety issues which arise.

K47: Personal responsibility and the mechanisms for raising concerns about your own or others' health, behaviour or professional performance as described in GDC guidance.

K48: Attributes of professional attitudes and behaviour in all environments and media, including interaction with social media.

K49: Principles and procedures for good complaints handling.

K50: The responsibility that dental practices and individual practitioners have in compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks.

K51: Diversity, equality, inclusion and discrimination and the underpinning legislation, and explain how to apply these principles to manage patients with protected characteristics and work within the dental team, noting that this legislation may differ in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

K52: Cultural competence and its relevance in assessing the needs and planning care for patients from diverse backgrounds.

K53: The GDC's expectations and requirements as set out in regulations and guidance and other relevant laws, ethical guidance and systems, in addition to the above legal frameworks.

K54: The basic principles of a population health approach including demographic and social trends, UK and international oral health trends, determinants of health and inequalities in health, and the ways in which these are measured and current patterns.

K55: Dental and wider healthcare systems dental professionals work within including local and national health policy and organisations, delivery of healthcare and equity.

K56: Role of health promotion in terms of the changing environment, community and individual behaviours to deliver health gain.

K57: Principles of planning oral health care for communities to meet needs and demands.

K58: Principles and limitations of the currently available options for funding of dental healthcare provision for individual patients.

K59: Ethical challenges associated with providing patient care within the current dental healthcare systems.

K60: The considerations of the management of resources in provision of care decisions including appropriate use of primary and secondary care networks.

K61: Importance of collaboration across the health and social care sector for the benefit of communities and individual patients.

K62: Barriers and challenges which prevent sections of the population accessing oral healthcare, including patients from marginalised populations and patients with protected characteristics.

K63: Main principles relating to sustainable oral health care, both environmentally and in terms of patient compliance, and the factors that might affect implementing a sustainable approach.

K64: The term insight in the context of professional practice.

K65: Why insight is important in ensuring safe and effective patient care, and to personal development.

K66: Principles of an evidence-based approach.

K67: Model for self-reflection and how this process can be used to inform personal development, viewpoint, preconceptions, bias and behaviour.

K68: Importance of assessment, feedback, critical reflection, identification of learning needs and appraisal in personal development planning.

K69: Importance of and requirement for commitment to lifelong learning.

K70: Principles of personal development planning, recording of evidence, and reflective practice.

K71: Opportunities for improvement of a clinical service or to manage and or mitigate risks.

K72: Ways of self-monitoring, self-care and routes of seeking appropriate advice in terms of personal wellbeing.

K73: Strategies to identify and manage the personal and emotional challenges of work, teamwork and workload.

K74: Strategies to identify and manage the personal and emotional challenges of uncertainty and change.

K75: The role of coping strategies for practice, such as reflection, self-acceptance, debriefing, handing over to another colleague, peer support and asking for help in responding to challenges and setbacks.

Skills

S1: Identify the clinical presentations of oral and dental diseases relevant to the role of an orthodontic therapist.

S2: Identify relevant and appropriate dental, oral, craniofacial, and general anatomy, recognising the diversity of anatomy across the patient population.

S3: Adopt an evidence-based approach to clinical practice.

- S4:** Obtain, record, and interpret a comprehensive and contemporaneous patient history, taking into account social and or cultural sensitivities.
- S5:** Assess patients' levels of anxiety, experience, and expectations in respect of dental care and oral health.
- S6:** Contribute to relevant special investigations and diagnostic procedures.
- S7:** Undertake an orthodontic assessment.
- S8:** Obtain valid consent from patients explaining all the relevant factors and taking into account the legal requirements where appropriate within scope of practice.
- S9:** Evaluate the health risks of prescribed, non-prescribed and recreational drug use and misuse on oral and general health.
- S10:** Evaluate the limitations and selection of materials and biomaterials used within orthodontics.
- S11:** Underpin all patient care with a preventive approach, that takes account of patient compliance and self-care, to contribute to the patient's long-term oral and general health.
- S12:** Describe, take account of and explain to the patient the impact of their periodontal health, including compliance with oral healthcare advice, potential effect on general health and the need for self-care in the overall treatment plan and how this influences their treatment outcome.
- S13:** Identify the signs of normal and abnormal facial growth, physical, mental and dental development milestones and explain their significance.
- S14:** Identify timely interception and interceptive orthodontics, and refer when and where appropriate.
- S15:** Assess own capabilities and limitations and refer patients for treatment or advice when and where appropriate.
- S16:** Manage patient anxiety appropriately, effectively, and safely.
- S17:** Monitor and review treatment outcomes and patient response to advice, providing aftercare, follow-up and ongoing preventive advice and intervention.
- S18:** Identify the risks within and around the clinical environment and manage these in a safe and effective manner.
- S19:** Implement, perform, and manage effective decontamination and infection control procedures according to current guidelines.
- S20:** Identify changes in the patient's reported oral health status and take appropriate action.
- S21:** Identify, assess, and manage medical emergencies.
- S22:** Manage patients' acute oral conditions ensuring involvement of appropriate dental team members.
- S23:** Provide patients and or carers with comprehensive, personalised preventive advice, instruction and intervention in a manner which is accessible, promotes self-care and motivates patients and or carers to comply with advice and take responsibility to maintain and improve oral health.
- S24:** Identify common problems related to orthodontic treatment and take appropriate action.
- S25:** Undertake orthodontic procedures as prescribed by the referring practitioner.
- S26:** Communicate effectively and sensitively, tailoring to context, by spoken, written and or electronic means with all patients, including patients whose first language is not English, using representatives or interpreters where necessary, in relation to patients with anxious or challenging behaviour or special considerations such as emotional trauma, difficult circumstances, such as breaking bad news, or discussing issues such as alcohol consumption, smoking, or diet.
- S27:** Communicate effectively and sensitively by spoken, written and electronic means with the public.

S28: Communicate effectively by spoken, written and electronic means with colleagues from dental and other healthcare professions in relation to: the direct care of individual patients, oral health promotion and raising concerns when problems arise, including where patients cause distress to staff.

S29: Communicate appropriately and effectively in professional discussion and transactions.

S30: Communicate with care, compassion, empathy and respect in all professional interactions with patients, their representatives, the public and colleagues.

S31: Maintain contemporaneous, complete and accurate patient records in accordance with legal requirements and best practice.

S32: Give feedback effectively to other members of the team.

S33: Respect the roles of dental and other healthcare professionals in the context of learning and working in a dental and wider healthcare team.

S34: Demonstrate effective team working.

S35: Contribute to your team in providing dental care for patients.

S36: Take a patient-centred approach to working with the dental and wider healthcare team.

S37: Where appropriate manage and refer and or delegate work according to the scope of practice of members of the dental team, in line with competence and professional practice.

S38: Provide the best possible outcome for your patients by using your knowledge and skills, acting as an advocate for their needs where appropriate.

S39: Speak up to protect others from harm.

S40: Raise concerns where appropriate about your own or others' health, behaviour or professional performance.

S41: Comply with systems and processes to support safe patient care.

S42: Act in accordance with current best practice guidelines.

S43: Act in accordance with national and local clinical governance and health and safety requirements.

S44: Act within the legal frameworks which inform personal behaviour, the delivery of healthcare and the protection and promotion of the health of individual patients.

S45: Act with integrity and ensure your actions maintain the trust of colleagues, patients, and the public in you, your team, and the profession across all environments and media.

S46: Proactively address discriminatory language, behaviour and microaggressions from colleagues, patients and other professionals.

S47: Demonstrate personal accountability to patients, the regulator, the team and wider community.

S48: Work in partnership with colleagues to develop and maintain an effective and supportive environment which promotes the safety and wellbeing of the patient and dental team.

S49: Where appropriate lead, manage and take professional responsibility for the actions of colleagues and other members of the team involved in patient care.

S50: Treat your patients, members of the public and your colleagues with dignity and respect and without discrimination.

S51: Support patients to make informed decisions about their care, making their interests your first concern.

S52: Demonstrate cultural competence, accepting and respecting the diversity of patients and colleagues.

S53: Evaluate the role of health promotion in terms of the changing environment, community and individual behaviours to deliver health gain.

S54: Evaluate evidence-based prevention at a community and or population level.

- S55:** Where appropriate support patients to negotiate the barriers and challenges which prevent sections of the population accessing oral healthcare, including patients from marginalised populations and patients with protected characteristics.
- S56:** Evaluate and apply the evidence base in relation to the environmental impacts of common treatment methods and approaches to the delivery of oral healthcare.
- S57:** Contribute positively to the healthcare communities of which you are a part.
- S58:** Evaluate an evidence base.
- S59:** Utilise the receipt of effective feedback in the professional development of self.
- S60:** Demonstrate personal development planning, recording of evidence, and reflective practice.
- S61:** Evaluate the impact of new techniques and technologies in clinical practice.
- S62:** Accurately assess your own capabilities and limitations in the interest of high-quality patient care and seek advice from supervisors or colleagues where appropriate.
- S63:** Recognise personal assumptions, biases and prejudices and manage the impact of these on patient care and professional behaviour with colleagues, patients and wider society.
- S64:** Recognise the impact of contextual factors on the health care environment and patient safety and manage this professionally.
- S65:** Demonstrate own professional responsibility in the development of self.
- S66:** Develop and maintain professional knowledge and competence.
- S67:** Demonstrate appropriate continuous improvement activities.
- S68:** Demonstrate engagement with systems and personal strategies which promote and maintain physical and mental wellbeing.
- S69:** Recognise when and how to take action if wellbeing is compromised to a point of affecting an individual's role or professional relationships.
- S70:** Effectively manage your own time and resources.

Behaviours

- B1:** Act in a manner consistent with the GDC standards for the dental team which include communication, professionalism, teamwork and clinical skills.
- B2:** Act in a non-discriminatory manner respecting diversity and upholding the rights, dignity and autonomy of others.

Qualifications

English and Maths

Apprentices without level 2 English and maths will need to achieve this level prior to taking the End-Point Assessment. For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement, the apprenticeship's English and maths minimum requirement is Entry Level 3. A British Sign Language (BSL) qualification is an alternative to the English qualification for those whose primary language is BSL.

Does the apprenticeship need to include any mandated qualifications in addition to the above-mentioned English and maths qualifications?

Yes

Other mandatory qualifications

Diploma in Orthodontic Therapy accredited by the General Dental Council

Level: 4

Professional recognition

This standard aligns with the following professional recognition:

- General Dental Council for General Dental Council for 4

Consultation

Progression Routes

Supporting uploads

Mandatory qualification uploads

Mandated degree evidence uploads

Professional body confirmation uploads

Involved employers

Subject sector area