Professional Doctorates

Programme specification

Programme definition (approved by Senate June 2014)
A professional doctorate is defined as a programme that requires the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research, advanced scholarship and innovations in professional practice. A professional doctorate programme differs from a 'traditional-route' research degree programme (a PhD) in that candidates are required to make both a theoretical and applied (within the context of the relevant profession or specialism) contribution to knowledge.

Programme Title	**Doctorate in Clinical Dentistry in Clinical Oral Microbiology**
Duration/mode of study	**FT – 3 years**
Name of final award	**DClinDent**
FHEQ level of final award	**8**
Name of interim awards	**PG Certificate in Clinical Dentistry (60 Credits)** **PG Diploma in Clinical Dentistry (120 Credits)** **MSc in Clinical Dentistry (180 Credits)**
FHEQ level of interim/exit award	**8**
Proposed start date for first cohort	**September 2022**
Responsible school(s)/institute(s) (please identify lead dept)	**SMD – Institute of Dentistry**
Subject Examination Board (that will confirm taught module results)	**Dentistry (Clinical)**
Name & contact details person responsible for the management of the programme	**Dr Noha Seoudi** **n.seoudi@qmul.ac.uk** **020 7882 6345**

Programme Outline and Aims

Please provide a brief description of the programme, summarising the programme content, and he distinctive features it offers students. This should be consistent with the programme descriptions in handbooks, website(s) and prospectus.

Programme outline

This programme is jointly accommodated by the Institute of Dentistry, Barts and The London School of Medicine & Dentistry, and Barts and The London Dental Hospital, Barts Health NHS Trust.

The aims of the programme are to:

- develop qualified dentist's clinical practice and academic knowledge to a FHEQ level 8 according to the framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (2014)

- meet the national and international need for more Clinical Oral Microbiology clinical academics
- offer comprehensive, contemporary and novel knowledge in Clinical Oral Microbiology comparable to specialist level
- provide advanced training to dentists wishing to attain clinical expertise and proficiency in Clinical Oral Microbiology
- enhance dentists' everyday clinical practice satisfaction through higher expertise for service delivery comparable to a specialist level
- promote a critical approach to evaluating relevant literature so as to enable evidence-based practice and novel practices in Clinical Oral Microbiology
- instil the need for continuing professional development and lifelong learning
- develop advanced clinical audit and research skills
- enable students to make both a theoretical and applied contribution to knowledge at doctoral level

Learning Outcomes
The learning outcomes reflect the Curriculum for Specialist Training in Clinical Oral Microbiology approved by the General Dental Council (UK) (https://www.gdc-uk.org/docs/default-source/specialist-lists/oral-microbiology-curriculum-2013.pdf?sfvrsn=f910a694_2), the relevant QAA benchmark statement for Dentistry and the UK Quality Code for Higher Education Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (2014) and are guided by the Queen Mary Statement of Graduate Attributes. This course, however, does not automatically allow graduates to join the GDC Specialist List in Clinical Oral Microbiology.

Aims of the Programme
By the end of the programme students are expected to achieve:

Academic Content:
- demonstrate the possession of in-depth and extensive current knowledge in Clinical Oral Microbiology comparable to a specialist level;
- undertake independent, proficient and advanced clinical practice of Clinical Oral Microbiology including management of head and neck infections, infection prevention and control, and antimicrobial stewardship in either primary or secondary care settings;
- relate Clinical Oral Microbiology practice to other dental and medical specialties.

Disciplinary Skills:
- utilise problem-solving and decision-making skills to assess, diagnose and treatment plan advanced, multi-disciplinary and complex cases in head and neck and systemic infections;
- accept secondary referrals for advice and treatment in Clinical Oral Microbiology;
- understand and critically appraise the literature and the research bases for evidence-based clinical care;
- plan and perform research and clinical audits;
- communicate effectively and interact with patients and colleagues in other dental and medical specialties.

Other Professional Qualifications:
- None.

This Professional Doctorate Programme would differ from a PhD programme in its high level of patient clinical contact, a high proportion of taught module content and differing assessment expectations, especially with respect to the final thesis. This programme will develop students to have both a

theoretical and applied contribution to knowledge of Clinical Oral Microbiology according to the QMUL Framework for Specialist Doctorates.

There are several drivers for this programme:

1. It would form a logical development of the Institute's overall postgraduate course portfolio, which currently includes the Diploma, MSc, DClinDent and the PhD programmes.
2. It would maintain the Institute's position in the postgraduate recruitment market.
3. It would anecdotally, lead to an improvement in the quantity of high quality applications for the Institute's clinical postgraduate programmes.
4. It would enable a review of longstanding programme structures, which may no longer be 'fit for purpose'.
5. It would bring benefits for the student (securing sponsorship and visas), the Institute (more transparent financial planning, better use of the limited clinical space available for postgraduate activity) and QMUL (administration of admission letters and the student information system).
6. It would fulfil the Tier 4 Visa requirement.

How is the Programme Structured

The structure of the programme should be described in detail. Precise details of the modules can be given in a table. All programme proposals must demonstrate how they will meet the requirements of the Queen Mary Professional Doctorates Framework, and that the elements of independent research provide sufficient opportunity for the candidate to be able to demonstrate the depth of research expected of doctoral level studies.

The programme is full-time over three calendar years. It consists of six modules which are all core modules and must be passed for progression from one year to the next and for the final award of DClinDent.

The components of the programme are:

- A programme of seminars, practical classes and other didactic sessions commencing with an introductory course and reviewing the clinical and scientific scope of the subject to determine its evidence base.
- Supervised clinical and as appropriate laboratory practice in which treatment planning and clinical procedures are performed for selected cases, including a number of complex treatments.
- A research investigation leading to a dissertation in which the candidate is required to demonstrate the application of scientific method to a problem of relevance to the subject area.
- Audit or service evaluation project in relation to the Clinical Oral Microbiology practice including antimicrobial stewardship, and infection prevention and control.

The three years of full-time study will provide 540 credits of which 270 credits are directed study element and 270 credits are research element. The indicative components are in the following table. Please note that in research degrees, credits are not given for research. Hence, "notional credits" are allocated to give an indication of time and effort spent by students.

Module Number	Title	Credit value	FHEQ Level	Year of study
1. DIN7828	Core Knowledge and Clinical skill in Clinical Oral Microbiology	60	7	1

2. DIN8101	Research I – Research Project progression report I + Clinical Portfolio initial report	30	8	1
	TOTAL	**90**		
3. DIN8802	Advanced Clinical Skill and Science and in Clinical Oral Microbiology	90	8	1-2
4. DIN8103	Research Project Progression Report II, Clinical Portfolio and Service Evaluation Preliminary Reports	30	8	1-2
	TOTAL	**120**		
5. DIN8804	Consolidated Clinical Skill and Science in Clinical Oral Microbiology	120	8	2-3
6. DIN8105	Research III – Dissertation – Research Project Final Report + Service Evaluation Final Report + Clinical Portfolio Final Report	210	8	2-3
	TOTAL	**330**		

Modules and Assessment

Please ensure that you identify the core modules that will be necessary for progression on to subsequent years. If students are able to exit the programme with an interim award, please ensure that the core modules needed to be eligible for this award are clearly indicated. Please include any compulsory placements/practice-based modules that need to be undertaken.
Please include the credit value of each module, both taught modules and the research dissertation / research elements.

The programme aims to promote teaching, learning and research enriched by original scholarship to encourage students to become independent learners. Students will accept responsibility for their own learning and will be encouraged to develop powers of critical thought and reflection. Key skills in information technology and oral and written presentations will be enhanced. The course will offer students the opportunity to enhance their knowledge and clinical skills in Clinical Oral Microbiology and become familiar with the issues of study design, data analysis and critical thought. Assessments are outlined below.

In addition to the formal seminar and clinical programme, time is set aside for particular readings and reviews, discussion and problem solving for student research projects, for innovative practical exercises, clinical audit and for feedback and evaluation of the course itself. Some time is spent working alongside hospital trainees (Speciality and Foundation trainees) in multidisciplinary environment. Students will receive a course booklist at the start of teaching.

The course aims to offer a high teacher/student ratio so that access to advice and ease of communication can be assured. Clinical sessions will be supervised by experienced clinical academics and NHS staff. Two staff members will supervise each student research project.

Summative Assessment Methods and Procedure

Assessments are managed by a QMUL examination board and an external examiner (appointed according to QMUL regulations) will moderate achievement within and between different courses. As this is a hybrid programme, assessment procedures will be managed internally both by the teaching and research faculties and externally through an external examiner. The assessments take place over

three years for full time students. For the taught component, the students will be examined at the end of each year according to PGT regulations. For the research element, the students will be examined in a manner similar to the 9 and 18 months progressions in the first 2 years, and the final Dissertation at the end of the third year, according to the PGR regulations.

All the components of all the modules are core and students must pass all the components of the modules to gain an overall pass.

The assessment structures are in the following table.

Module Number	**Module**	**Credit**	**Assessment**
1. DIN7828	Core Knowledge and Clinical skill in Clinical Oral Microbiology	60	Written examination – 100%
2. DIN8101	Research I – Research Project progression report I + Clinical Portfolio initial report	30	Research Portfolio – 60% Clinical Portfolio – 40%
3. DIN8802	Advanced Clinical Skill and Science and in Clinical Oral Microbiology	90	Written examination – 75% Oral examination (Diagnostic) – 25%
4. DIN8103	Research Project Progression Report II, Clinical Portfolio and Service Evaluation Preliminary Reports	30	Service Evaluation Portfolio – 30% Research Portfolio – 40% Clinical Portfolio – 30%
5.DIN8804	Consolidated Clinical Skill and Science in Clinical Oral Microbiology	120	Written examination – 50% Oral examination (Diagnostic)– 50%
6. DIN8105	Research III – Dissertation – Research Project Final Report + Service Evaluation Final Report + Clinical Portfolio Final Report	210	Service Evaluation Portfolio – 20% Research Portfolio – 40% Clinical Portfolio – 40%

Grading Criteria for Summative Assessments:

- The grading criteria for the taught components will follow the QMUL regulations. However, as this is a research degree, there is no final classification mark, the final award will either be a pass or fail. The need to award module marks is for the purposes of progression and for exit awards only.

Appointment of external examiners:

- The appointment of external examiner(s) will follow QMUL procedures.

Marking and Moderating:

- Students will be required to make clear declarations as to the originality of the work submitted for the in-course assessment and the project dissertation.
- The written examination paper will be doubled marked by two internal examiners and moderated by an external examiner. The oral examinations for the PGT and PGR components will be marked by one internal and one external examiner. At the discretion of the examiners and providing the examination regulations allow, a student may be given credit for one part of the examination and asked to redo the others.

Feedback to Students:

- Formative assessment exercises with feedbacks are carried out during the course. Students will have to carry out clinical work base assessments. They may be required to submit several short essays (up to 2000 words) on a variety of topics to be determined by teaching staff. The students will have opportunity to give oral presentations based on progress in the research projects, clinical audits and clinical works. Candidates will have regular 1:1 contact with clinical tutors and supervisors. Their reflective logs will regularly be reviewed and discussed. Clinical supervisors will also monitor that candidates have an appropriate case load and patient mix in line, where required, with Royal College and NHS Guidelines.

Extensions and Deferrals, and Extenuating Circumstances:

- http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/policy/ (policy document containing information on handling such circumstances).
- Students with disability will be offered assistance by QMUL Disability & Dyslexia Service.
- Extenuating circumstances will be considered by the relevant examinations board. This applies to both the modules and the final submission of the thesis where only RDPEB can authorise the extension.
- In extreme circumstances, where medical circumstances may have adversely affected examination performance, a medical certificate should be presented to the Course Organiser. Any other extenuating circumstance for extensions and deferrals must be submitted to the Subject Examination Board for consideration according to the QMUL regulations.

Supervision: Academic and Clinical:

- The research components will be supervised by QMUL research active academic staff. The taught and clinical components will be supervised by both QMUL and Barts Health NHS Trust clinical specialists and staff.

Research

Please cover:

- *Description of research components and how this meets the Qualification Descriptors for a research degree*
- *Explain how the elements of independent research provide sufficient opportunity for the candidate to be able to demonstrate the depth of research expected of doctoral level studies.*
- *Supervision of research dissertation / projects*
- *Expectations of the dissertation / research project portfolio (e.g. maximum word limit)*

This professional doctorate programme follows the FHEQ level 8 descriptor which is to:

'make a significant and original contribution to a specialised field of inquiry, demonstrating a command of methodological issues and engaging in critical dialogue with peers and accepting full accountability for outcomes'.

The research component in this programme differs from that of the traditional hypothesis driven PhD format as it has an application of knowledge to clinical practice. It is composed of three parts:

1. Research project report – the candidates are to produce a traditional research thesis to demonstrate they can critical review scientific literature and carry out a hypothesis base research. They must produce dissertations that are of publishable standard. The dissertation must not exceed 50,000 words. Two supervisors will be assigned for each student. The project may include development of a new antimicrobial stewardship intervention, dental material with antimicrobial properties, understanding dental caries and periodontal disease

progression and prevention, understanding the microbial aetiology of oral disease, meta-analysis and systematic reviews, and other related projects that fulfil the QAA level 8 criteria.

2. Clinical portfolio report – the candidates are to produce a portfolio report of 4 clinical cases covering the full breadth and depth of clinical oral microbiology of patients whom they have treated during their training. The portfolio must include detail documentation of the treatments that they have provided, a critical appraisal, including evidence base analysis, of the treatments, the novelty of the treatments, evaluation of its success and proposal of future follow-up. A summary of how their cases contribute to the advanced/innovative practice in clinical oral microbiology. This report must not exceed 15,000 words.
3. Service evaluation - the candidates are to produce a service evaluation report (e.g. clinical audit) that they have designed and carried out. This report must include aims, methods, results and discussion with proposal for future audit and research in the field. Two cycles of audits should be completed, whenever possible. This report must not exceed 5,000 words.

Entry Requirements

Provide the entry requirement for the proposed programme as agreed at Part one stage and published on the course finder. This should include the level of English Language and any selection criteria for admission?

- A recognised dental degree (BDS or equivalent).
- Two years full-time (or equivalent) post qualification clinical practice of dentistry is required, including evidence of specific relevant experience in either Oral Medicine, Dental Public Health or Oral Pathology.
- Where English is a foreign language the entry requirement will be IELTS: 7.0 including 6.5 in Writing , and 5.5 in Reading, Listening and Speaking. (A minimum IELTS score of 6.5 is required at the point of submission in order for an application to be considered, but an IELTS score of 7.0 must be achieved before the course starts. Pre-sessional English course is available to improve the score by 0.5 if a conditional offer is given)..

Links with External Partners

N/A

Links to Queen Mary Policies

The programme should be designed and administered with reference to the following documents:
Academic Regulations
Code of Practice for Research Degree Students
Research Degrees Code of Practice for Students 2021-22
Support for students with disabilities, SpLD and mental health issues
Student Appeals and Complaints Policy

Person completing programme specification	Mrs Lorraine Low, Quality Assurance & Assessments Officer
Person responsible for management of research degree programme	Dr Noha Seoudi
Date programme specification produced/amended by School/Institute/Lead Department	2 February 2022
Date programme specification approved by Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board	