APPLIED DENTAL PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Advanced and Specialist Healthcare MSc – Medway
INTRODUCTION

The MSc in Advanced and Specialist Healthcare (Applied Dental Professional Practice) is a flexible, part-time programme designed specifically for qualified, registered dental professionals, who wish to develop their academic skills alongside their professional role.

About the programme
Taught by expert academics and clinicians in Kent’s Centre for Professional Practice (CPP), the programme allows you to broaden your expertise, deepen your knowledge and hone your research skills while gaining a recognised qualification to help progress your career.

Teaching is structured around a series of extended taught weekends, consisting of formal lectures, seminars, guest speakers and action learning sessions.

During the sessions, you explore your existing work practice, with modules designed to help you review and analyse current debates and professional challenges relevant to the specific area and dental context in which you work. You also have the opportunity to develop the academic and professional skills necessary to meet the evolving needs of patient care in contemporary dental practice.

Studying within CPP, you benefit from a transdisciplinary learning environment, access to the University’s extensive resources and guidance from specialist academics and professional staff.

Academic excellence
Kent has an excellent reputation in terms of the quality of its teaching and research. This is further confirmed by the ratings it receives in independent surveys, such as the Research Excellence Framework, the National Student Survey and the UK university league tables.

CPP is a transdisciplinary academic department focused on flexible work-related learning within higher education and has established itself as a leading centre for education, research, design and development.

We work with a wide range of external partners and employers to create distinct and original work-based and work-related developmental and educational solutions, which respond to the unique workforce challenges experienced by employees and organisations across the region and beyond.

Our programmes are designed to enhance career progression and foster intellectual and professional development and practice.

Expert staff
Taught sessions are delivered in a welcoming, supportive and flexible academic environment, by an academic team with extensive professional practitioner experience.
Career development
Students are successfully using this innovative programme to develop clinical, educational and policymaking career pathways in the dental sector at local, regional and national levels.

Flexible study
At CPP, we recognise the individual needs and working circumstances of professionals, the diverse nature of the workplace and the obstacles professionals may face in taking up learning opportunities.

Our programmes provide inclusive, coherent educational and work-related opportunities. We specialise in flexible, part-time programmes that acknowledge the competing priorities experienced by professionals during the course of their working lives.

We also offer an approach to learning that enables you to take single modules or work towards a postgraduate degree.

A global outlook
Our students benefit greatly from the diversity of the University community. Around 41% of our academic staff are from overseas and there are 149 nationalities represented at Kent, reinforcing our international reputation and creating a student body of which 27% are international students.

Key facts
• Flexible, work-related programme for dental professionals
• Transdisciplinary learning environment
• Fosters academic and professional skills development
• Part-time study over three years
• Modular structure
• Accreditation of Prior Experiential and/or Certificated Learning (APEC L) may be available

Accreditation of Prior Experiential and/or Certificated Learning (APEC L)
As a student on the Applied Dental Professional Practice pathway, you are encouraged to convert prior learning achievements (for example, completion of FGD P courses) into University of Kent academic credit via Accreditation of Prior Experiential and/or Certificated Learning. To be eligible for accreditation, prior learning must be at the appropriate level and relevant to the programme’s learning outcomes. For further information, visit www.kent.ac.uk/cpp/programmes/apecl.html
Kathryn Marshall is studying for an MSc in Advanced and Specialist Healthcare (Applied Dental Professional Practice). She is currently Practice Development Tutor at Wales Dental and Medical Deanery.

What attracted you to studying this programme at Kent?
Mainly the opportunity to study a subject that is closely related to my work (which is helping dental teams to develop).

What are your initial impressions of the programme?
Very good. There is a flexible, mature approach to all the subjects studied.

What have you particularly enjoyed so far?
The library is great and I have been really impressed by the enthusiasm of the tutors.

What about the teaching?
It’s outstanding. The taught sessions are always cutting edge and the teaching staff really know their subjects.

Do you feel well supported in your studies?
Yes, whatever I ask for, I am pointed in the right direction.

How do you manage the balance between work and study?
This takes some juggling. However, learning to prioritise, remaining focused and keeping in touch with other students for mutual support all helps. In addition, my employers are very supportive of my studies and keen for me to do well.

What do you feel you have gained from your studies so far?
My studies have allowed me to become more confident when discussing and debating the issues that affect today’s dental profession. I feel I now know how and where to look for the evidence that underpins my professional practice.

How do you think your studies will help you in your career?
In addition to giving me more confidence when applying for promotion, gaining the MSc will really put me in a different arena as a dental care professional.

Can you offer any advice to those thinking about taking this course?
Don’t wait, do it now! This course is ideal for dental care professionals who wish to increase their level of knowledge and skills in professional practice.

Jacqui Elsden is studying for an MSc in Advanced and Specialist Healthcare (Applied Dental Professional Practice). She is currently a Dental Education Facilitator with Health Education England.

What attracted you to studying this programme at Kent?
Not only was the programme pathway related specifically to my profession, it was also offered on a part-time basis, enabling me to fit my studies around work commitments.

What are your initial impressions of the programme?
Excellent. The programme is clearly explained in advance of each taught weekend and is then recapped when you are in attendance. Each module provides the building blocks for the next, so it progresses in a very logical manner.

What have you particularly enjoyed so far?
The sense of peer support at Kent has been great. My classmates keep me on track and I really enjoy their company.

Do you feel well supported in your studies?
Yes, most definitely. My tutor is very approachable and supportive; the same can also be said for the
external teachers. Nothing is too much trouble for the staff. In addition to the academic support I have received, the administrative staff and other student support services, such as the Student Learning Advisory Service, have all been helpful during my studies.

How do you manage the balance between work and study?
It can be challenging at times, but I make sure that I plan ahead and discuss any time conflicts with the relevant parties in advance.

What about the facilities?
The facilities offered at the Drill Hall Library are excellent. The staff are very supportive and the library itself is vast. As I do not live locally to the campus, the option to reserve and renew books online has been particularly beneficial.

What do you feel you have gained from your studies so far?
The course has allowed me to become more confident in conducting myself among dental professionals in a way that respectfully challenges and addresses opinion and conflict with conviction. It has also encouraged me to question everything I read – I now ask “Where’s the proof?”

Can you offer any advice to those thinking about taking this course?
Go for it! It’s hard work but the rewards you gain from this course are immensely satisfying.

Professor Mike Mulcahy is studying for an MSc in Advanced and Specialist Healthcare (Applied Dental Professional Practice). He is currently Course Director of several academic programmes, including the MSc in Restorative Dentistry at FGDP (UK).

What attracted you to studying this programme at Kent?
Despite having a number of other qualifications, a Master’s degree was missing from my CV. Using Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning, this course gave me the opportunity to undertake valid study and research appropriate to my workplace setting.

CPP offered the right amount of flexibility (with modules running over a weekend) and the chance to meet students from other professions.

What has been the highlight so far?
I have relished being part of the whole student experience once again later in my professional life.

What about the teaching?
As an experienced teacher myself, I think the teaching team at CPP has been brilliant. The level of support I have received has also been first class.

I have particularly enjoyed the Evidence-Based Practice module, which has given me the chance to find the evidence base (or lack of it) behind a topic relevant to me.

How would you describe your fellow students?
As a group of us enrolled together, assimilation was easy, but getting to know people from other professions has been a real bonus.

What about the facilities?
Although I have not made extensive use of all the student services available, the library resources have been excellent.

How do you think your studies will help you in your career?
Completing this Master’s programme will definitely give me more academic credibility.

Can you offer any advice to those thinking about taking this course?
Do it, you will have no regrets!

A TOP 20 UK UNIVERSITY

Kent is a leading university and is ranked among the top 20 in the UK according to The Guardian University Guide 2015.
The Advanced and Specialist Healthcare (Applied Dental Professional Practice) MSc programme is designed to be completed over three years of part-time study, consisting of compulsory modules, plus a choice of optional modules. A final dissertation allows you to carry out an independent research project to explore a particular area of interest.

**Course content**

**Stage 1**
- Evidence-Based Practice (15 credits)
- Dentistry in a Contemporary Context (15 credits)
- Professional Standard Setting for Dental Professional Practice (30 credits)

**Stage 2**
**Compulsory modules**
- Inter-Professional Working (15 credits)
- Research Skills (15 credits)

**Optional modules**
You select 30 credits from a range of options from within CPP or across the University, subject to availability, including:
- Addressing Barriers to Learning (15 credits)
- Advancing Dental Professional Practice (30 credits)
- A Thinking School: Transforming Learning (30 credits)
- Developing Dental Practice through Mentorship and Coaching (30 credits)
- Learning and Development in Organisations (30 credits)
- Power Dynamics within Professional Practice (30 credits)
- Qualitative Research Methods Applied to Professional Practice (15 credits)
- Quantitative Research Methods Applied to Professional Practice (15 credits)
- Special Area of Study (30 credits).

**Stage 3**
- Dissertation (60 credits)

**Teaching methods**
CPP’s teaching is structured around the programme’s extended taught weekend sessions, which typically run from Friday to Sunday. These sessions include lectures, seminars, action learning sessions and one-to-one supervisions.

During the seminars and action learning sessions, you are expected to share your own experiences and expertise. All of the programme’s compulsory modules are delivered on the University’s Medway campus. Depending on your choice of optional modules, you may have the opportunity to attend the University’s Canterbury campus.

**Assessment**
Assessment includes written assignments, work-based projects, oral presentations, coursework assignments and portfolio assessment.

You also undertake preparatory tasks and reading prior to attending modules. All preparatory assessment tasks are carefully designed to allow you to develop expertise in the application of dental professional practice within the context of your work and subject interest.

In the final stage of the programme, you complete a dissertation of 10-12,000 words.
Below is an overview of the Applied Dental Professional Practice pathway modules.

**Compulsory modules: Stage 1**

**Evidence-Based Practice**
You focus on developing your skills as a professional healthcare practitioner to become an effective user of research findings, with a view to enhancing quality service outcomes. Sessions concentrate on the analysis of literature in order to inform evidence-based practice. You become familiar with critical appraisal tools and the statistical principles used to analyse data. The module culminates in an assignment designed to consider the extent of external evidence available and how this can be applied to improve outcomes within your area of professional practice.

**Dentistry in a Contemporary Context**
Here, you address current practice within the wider context of social policy and contemporary influence. You critically examine the background and current position of health, and investigate issues linked to the effects of socio-political environments, public health and community structures, agendas and policy in the dental sector. The module also explores the role and contribution of all the dental professions in relation to the delivery of dental services, and as part of an integrated response to broader health-related issues. Finally, you consider the oral health of the population through oral health education and collaborative links with other healthcare agencies and the Government’s healthcare strategy.

**Professional Standard Setting for Dental Professional Practice**
This module covers themes considered fundamental to competent and safe practice. It outlines the principles of professional standard setting and uses audit to explore professional working within a dental context. You gain a critical understanding of the processes and protocols required when conducting audits within your dental workplace setting and the challenges associated with bringing about change that you may encounter.

**Compulsory modules: Stage 2: Inter-Professional Working**
This module raises awareness of working with others as an increasingly important part of workplace culture, through examination, discussion and reflection on emerging collaborative practices. You also explore the role of research in, and its impact on, interdisciplinary and collaborative working. The overall theme of the module stresses the importance of building on experiential learning when working together with others, while developing critical perspectives in an inter-professional context.
PROGRAMME MODULES (CONT)

Research Skills
As an evidence-based approach to professional working increases throughout organisations, there is a need for professionals to evaluate their own practice. This module prepares you to construct a small research project related to your own workplace and/or professional context. You critically analyse research methodology and appraise the ever-increasing body of literature to facilitate an evidence-based approach and enhance professional effectiveness. You are able to develop a research proposal relevant to your professional context.

Optional modules: Stage 2
Below is an indicative list of optional modules offered by CPP:
• Addressing Barriers to Learning
• Advancing Dental Professional Practice
• A Thinking School: Transforming Learning
• Developing Dental Practice through Mentorship and Coaching
• Learning and Development in Organisations
• Power Dynamics within Professional Practice
• Qualitative Research Methods Applied to Professional Practice
• Quantitative Research Methods Applied to Professional Practice
• Special Area of Study.

Compulsory module: Stage 3
Dissertation
The dissertation enables you to undertake a short research project related to your own professional context. Based on your research proposal developed in Stage 2, you critically examine, in depth, a question relevant to your own practice. This should be supported by a critical review of the literature, a statement of the methodology and methods, an analysis of the data and an extended discussion of the findings.

“The programme equips dental professionals with the skills to build a knowledge base related to their professional practice, with a mix of professional and academic development modules.”

Debbie Reed
Programme Director

Please note, module listings are subject to change. You can find full details of all of the optional modules listed above at www.kent.ac.uk/courses/modulecatalogue
HOW TO APPLY

Entry requirements
The programme is suitable for dentists, dental nurses, dental hygienists, dental therapists, clinical dental technicians, orthodontic therapists and dental technicians.

Applicants should hold one of the following:
• an existing professional qualification with registration to the General Dental Council
• a professional qualification in a related field, for example, dental practice management, dental public health or dental health promotion studies.

English language
The University requires all non-native speakers of English to produce evidence of proficiency in written and spoken English. For details, see www.kent.ac.uk/ems/eng-lang-reqs

Making an application
You can apply online at www.kent.ac.uk/courses/postgrad/apply

Tuition fees
For the most up-to-date information on tuition fees, visit www.kent.ac.uk/finance-student/fees

Centre enquiries
If you would like an informal discussion about joining this programme, you may contact the Programme Director via CPP (see right).

Admissions enquiries
T: +44 (0)1227 827272

Come and visit us
We hold Open Days and postgraduate events throughout the year. For details, see www.kent.ac.uk/visit

Location
Medway

Faculty
Faculty of Social Sciences

Centre
Centre for Professional Practice

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www.kent.ac.uk/cpp

Applications
Online at www.kent.ac.uk/courses/postgrad/apply

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Data protection: for administrative, academic and health and safety reasons, the University needs to process information about its students. Full registration as a student of the University is subject to your consent to process such information.
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www.kent.ac.uk/visit