

Dentist

What Does a Dentist Do?

Dentists diagnose and treat diseases, injuries and abnormalities of primarily the teeth and gums. The World Health Organisation defines Dentistry as “the science and art of preventing, diagnosing and treating disease, injuries and malformations of the teeth, jaws and mouth.

What do I study to become a Dentist?

There are two main ways to be qualified as a dentist.

There are some undergraduate courses that usually take five years. Admission is very competitive and often has a high cut-off and you must also perform well in the Undergraduate Medicine and Health Sciences Admission Test (UMAT) alongside a host of prerequisite subjects and usually an interview.

There are also post-graduate course which take 4 years. These courses usually require that you sit the Graduate Medical School Admissions Test (GAMSAT) as well as satisfactory performance in a qualifying bachelor's degree indicated by your grade point average (GPA).

Personal requirements

- Good communication skills
- Have concern for the general health of the community
- Concentration skills
- Ability to deal with occasional conflict situations
- Empathetic
- Willingness to relate to people from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds
- Good eye-hand coordination and ability to do precise and detailed work

Career Opportunities

- Private practice
- Public dental clinic
- Teaching and research
- Specialisation in a field of practice such as Orthodontics, Periodontics, Paediatric Dentistry, or Endodontics