



NHS Education for Scotland (NES)

Becoming a Vocational Trainer

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Numerous links to additional information are available within the booklet. These provide additional information for those unfamiliar with the processes and new trainers, in particular will, find it valuable to read the information provided by these links.

Introduction

The purpose of Vocational Training is to allow a new graduate to learn under the supervision of an experienced general practitioner for 12 months in the General Dental or Public Dental Services. This learning will be complemented by an educational course, which is arranged on a day or block release basis and will support the transition to unsupervised competent practice in the National Health Service (NHS).

This booklet aims to give you all the information you will need to meet the requirements to become a trainer for Dental Vocational Training (DVT). It is not unusual for new prospective trainers to have to carry out a significant amount of work in order to meet the requirements for VT but hopefully the focus on this aspect does not detract from the enjoyment of training a new graduate within the practice and the sense of fulfilment that this brings to trainers.

The aim of this booklet is to provide information in chronological order; that is, the order of the content mirrors the sequential order of the processes necessary for a practitioner to become a trainer.

The information is therefore set out to cover the following areas in order

- Mentoring and eligibility, including some explanation of the criteria for trainership
- The application and appointment processes
- Trainee selection
- Allowances relating to VT

(Please note that it is mandatory for all new trainers to attend the START training programme in addition to compulsory attendance at the trainer induction course.)

The ethos of VT is one of helping a new dental graduate in the early stages of their career. Experienced dentists often do not realise how much they have to offer a new graduate in respect of learning and experience and invariably this role provides trainers with a rewarding sense of fulfilment when they observe the fruits of their efforts at the end of the training period.

Additionally, trainers are integral to the VT assessment process which in turn results in the awarding of Satisfactory Completion of VT, a significant milestone in the career development for almost all dental graduates. Training for trainers in the skills of assessment are provided as part of the START course which all prospective Scottish trainers must undertake before adopting this role.

Once you have read over this document, if you have any questions, please contact the VT Hub or Dental Recruitment team at vthub@nes.scot.nhs.uk or dental_recruitment@nes.scot.nhs.uk.

Thank you for your interest in Vocational Training (VT) in Scotland.

Preparing dentists for a training role through mentoring

A mentoring visit will be carried out as part of the START programme for dentists new to the role of vocational trainer. The purpose of this visit is to provide support for applicants by covering the main elements of the role, answering questions from applicants and explaining the criteria that applicants are expected to meet in order to progress their application.

This initial session is carried out in the practice because, although this is not directly linked to the three-yearly health board inspection, the visitor, who will be one of the VT Advisers, Assistant Deans or Associate Postgraduate Dental Deans will also be able to offer some advice to applicants who are unfamiliar with the CPI. Applicants should however become familiar with the inspection requirements as mentors are not involved in the inspection process.

Mentors will be able to offer advice on workload, appointments, staff involvement etc as they relate to vocational training. Prospective trainers can get guidance on the expected standards of materials and equipment required for VT by [clicking here](#).

This mentoring process involves a considerable use of Adviser time and although practice facilities are not the only area of focus, it is expected that applicants will be familiar with health board inspection paperwork at the time of the mentoring visit. Mentoring of a practice new to training will normally take up to three hours. This session is funded for new trainers and it is expected that the prospective trainer will be available, without interruption, throughout this session. This supportive visit is primarily aimed at practices that are new or returning to Vocational Training. Requests for mentoring visits from existing training practices can also be granted. Please note that undertaking the mentoring process will not guarantee the granting of satisfactory status at CPI as all practice/clinic inspection requirements will need to be met.

Any shortcomings involving items of equipment can be noted at this time in case the practitioner wishes to access Determination X funding from their NHS Board. Determination X funding is explained later in this document.

Other areas are discussed at mentoring and it is worth noting the following points so applicants can assess their suitability for their role as a VT Trainer:

- The practice should ensure that adequate support to the VDP will be provided by the Trainer for no less than the time stated in their contract, e.g. 3 days (21 hours) per week for a full-time trainer. Treatment should only be provided at the premises visited and approved for VT. If more than one site is used for training, all locations need to be visited and approved separately.
- There should be good support from reception/secretarial staff, and the VDP should have exclusive assistance from a GDC registered and, preferably, qualified Dental Nurse. VDPs must be chaperoned at all times with special arrangements for domiciliary and out-of-hours on-call surgery re-openings, if these are undertaken.

- It is strongly advised that, although not mandatory, where possible dental units and VDP surgeries can be adapted for use by left-handed trainees. Ensuring that such flexibility is in place will protect the trainer against enforced limitation of choice of VDP at the time of recruitment. Det X funding used for the purchase of dental chairs and units will only be offered for equipment which can be adapted for right or left-handed use.
- VT practices must have broadband internet access within the practice, suitable for trainees to use at any time without disruption.
- There will be no upper or lower limit placed on the gross earnings of a VDP. The workload of the practice/clinic is of importance and account will be taken of the balance between ensuring that the Trainer has adequate time to meet the training commitment and, on the other hand, that the practice/clinic can provide sufficient clinical experience for a VDP. It is recognised that the range, quantity and pattern of work will vary between individual practices/clinics. It is expected that within a reasonable period of time after joining the training practice/clinic, VDPs will have access to new patients and that they would not normally be restricted in their prescribing by their trainer. VDPs should be encouraged to provide the full range of treatment of which they are capable under NHS regulations, with a minimum of 90% of the VDP's time spent on NHS work.

It is emphasised that if, at the end of the year, the trainer and VDP wish to continue their association, the trainer's participation in future VT schemes will not be jeopardised.

Trainer Criteria

In order to be selected as a vocational trainer, you must meet the criteria of the person specification for a VT trainer. The essential points of this are noted below. (Note - common areas which applicants have to address prior to trainership are highlighted in bold and have been positioned at the top of the list.)

A trainer must: -

- **be an experienced dentist with high clinical and ethical standards, providing a wide range of NHS treatments.**
- **have normally four years full-time equivalent experience in NHS Primary Dental Care – excluding time spent in Vocational Training or Dental Foundation/Core Training**
- **have significant previous experience in DVT for multiple training**
- **have management experience appropriate to service type (GDS/PDS), and be able to demonstrate involvement in and influence on decisions about e.g. staff recruitment and or training, purchasing etc. (Associates with managerial responsibility are also acceptable.)**
- **NES will seek reassurances from practice owners that any trainer appointed by NES will have managerial autonomy in relation to their obligations to NES and the trainee.**

- meet NES CPD requirements over the five complete calendar years preceding the relevant VT year. (see link on page 7 for details)
- Where possible, have undertaken a minimum of 50% of CPD in this period by face to face attendance at recognised courses. It is recognised that the COVID 19 pandemic may have made this difficult.
- have attended a minimum of two hours CPR training within the calendar year preceding the relevant VT year
- have a written personal development plan that demonstrates a balance between requirements for clinical and educational roles
- have evidence, where applicable, of activity to meet criteria for compliance with NHS Terms of Service with respect to Clinical Audit for the period 2016 – 2019, including leading or co-leading in the design of an audit project
- have attended a recognised course in recruitment and selection within the last five years and by the start of the visitation period
- have completed training in Equality & Diversity by the start of the visitation period
- be based in the training practice for a minimum number of hours based on the type of training e.g. 21 hours per week for DVT; 28 hours per week for multiple training. Part-time / joint / shared training is also acceptable on a pro-rata basis.
- have satisfactory DRO and Health Board reports that confirms no more than 2 Grade 3/Grade C scores in aggregate, and no grade 4 scores and no Health Board issues, within the 3 complete calendar years preceding the relevant VT year. This must be supported by evidence of sufficient NHS treatment to generate DRO reports. *(If associate with restricted management authority, principal(s) to meet VT DRO criteria also.)*
- Have no adverse health board or PSD reports or GDC Fitness to Practise outcomes.
- BDS or equivalent
- Knowledge of the educational requirements around Lifelong Learning set out by the GDC
- Awareness of current priority issues within NHS dentistry
- Evidence of team working and inter-professional learning within primary dental care
- IT proficiency
- Ability and willingness to undertake assessment of trainees and to give quality feedback

- Demonstrable knowledge and skills required to train in the clinical context of primary dental care
- Effective communication skills
- Ability to motivate, engage and influence others
- A base in NHS general/salaried dental practice which meets current vocational training standards
- Practice NHS earnings of at least £27,800 (current at 01/12/2020) in the relevant period
- Willingness to provide access in privacy to internet at the practice during working hours

As noted earlier, an applicant must possess a positive report from a health board led combined practice inspection which has been carried out within the last 3 years.

The following passages explain individual requirements for trainership more fully.

Satisfactory CPD record

As part of the application process, applicants will be required to self-certify that they have met the minimum levels of verifiable CPD compliance in the 5 calendar years preceding training, or since the completion of their own VT or LDFT training. Although VT and Dental Foundation Training (DFT) training programmes all contain verifiable CPD, any hours gained during the applicant's own VT or LDFT training cannot be included in the total number of hours required to become a VT Trainer.

N.B. A practice development plan is now compulsory.

Guidance on CPD requirements is available [via this link](#).

We will require copies of certain relevant CPD course attendance / completion certificates to be forwarded if the core topic courses have not been run by NES. Similarly, there may be a requirement to provide certification as proof of the mandatory 100 hours of verifiable CPD. Applicants will be advised what certificates are required.

An audit process will also be applied to some applications and self-certifications during each round of recruitment and this may necessitate the submission of certificates.

For your information, details of your attendance at courses provided by NES can be found in your CPD record within Portal.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY AND EMPLOYMENT LAW TRAINING: -

Another requirement is evidence of completion of Equality & Diversity and Employment Legislation training. Applicants will be advised by NES of the required online training and must produce evidence of completion of this by the commencement date of the visitation period and must repeat this training at least every three years.

NES will provide trainers with usernames and passwords in order to access this programme. Completion of these modules will be accepted as verifiable education for the trainer's own CPD requirement.

In relation to employment legislation, **New** Trainers on the START course will undertake this within the course. **Current and Returning** Trainers must confirm their completion of this training in the self-certification section of the application and must read the update document which will be issued in due course. Any **Returning** trainers who have not previously attended this training must attend a session on employment legislation which is run as part of the START course for new trainers.

FUTURE CPD DEVELOPMENTS FOR VT PRACTICE STAFF: -

Requirements for trainership are constantly changing to keep in line with VT developments and recommendations on best practice. In order that trainers may plan ahead, it is suggested that, although not currently, the following may be requirements in the future:

- CPD on Oral Cancer is required as part of the CPD history for a trainer
- Periodic training in Child Protection is required as part of the CPD history for both the trainer and all members of the practice team.
- A member of the practice has undertaken the Decontamination e- learning programme.

Satisfactory Practice Inspection

In order to progress an application, prospective trainers must have obtained a valid pass of the Combined Practice Inspection (CPI). This pass will be issued by health boards and should be current (issued within the last 3 years). NES will seek confirmation of inspection status from the relevant health board. The same inspection criteria and documentation are used throughout Scotland. The CPI documentation is available at <http://www.scottishdental.org/professionals/126-2/>

Useful guidance and support for dentists undertaking the CPI can be obtained from SDCEP's Practice Support Manual. This can be accessed at <http://www.sdcep.org.uk/published-guidance/practice-support-manual/>

Examples of the additional requirements of the CPI when compared to past Health Board inspections are illustrated [here](#).

Applicants should note that the CPI normally takes about four hours due to significant expansion in the requirements when compared to previous health board or VT inspections.

The purpose of the practice inspection is to ensure that all Vocational Training practices/clinics attain a minimum standard that is compatible with training in General Dental Practice. As Vocational Dental Practitioners (VDPs) are employees of the practice or Health Boards, every effort must be made to ensure that the practice/clinic complies with current requirements with regard to Health & Safety at Work and other statutory regulations. This standard applies throughout Scotland to all applicants.

Satisfactory DRO references / Disciplinary actions / NHS gross

DRO REFERENCES: -

This is based on nationally agreed criteria, using your DRO reports within the 3 complete calendar years preceding the relevant VT year. DRO references are sought since they are the only clinical quality assurance system to which there is access. By submitting an application, potential trainers agree to NES requesting and receiving a report from PSD confirming the applicant's DRO grades for the previous 3 years. The criteria required for appointment as a VT trainer are:-

- No disciplinary action or significant numbers of complaints against the practitioner in the last 3 years.
- None of the following within the 3 complete calendar years preceding the relevant VT year: -
 - a) more than two Grade '3' post treatment DRO reports,
 - b) more than two Grade 'C' pre-treatment DRO reports,
 - c) more than a combined total of 2 grades at Grade '3' or Grade 'C',
 - d) any grade 'D' or '4' DRO reports

If you have been awarded a DRO grade or grades which precludes you from meeting the required standard and the grade(s) responsible for this were fully or in part acquired directly for your own treatment, you will not be eligible to become a trainer.

If such a grade or grades were fully attributable to work carried out by an assistant, including a Vocational Dental Practitioner, under a second personal list number, consideration will be given to this fact in the selection process.

Please note that NES cannot change a DRO grade or be part of any appeal process as this is not within NES's remit. Disputes over awarded DRO grades should be raised directly with the DRO service.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: -

Any disciplinary or probity actions initiated by the GDC and/or health board will be taken into account when suitability to become, or remain as, a trainer is being assessed. This may impact on the outcome of the review panel decision on appointability. Submission of an application also acts as agreement by the practitioner to allow NES to request information from the DRO service, health boards or the GDC.

NHS GROSS EARNINGS: -

GDS applicants must work in a practice with overall annual NHS gross earnings of a minimum of £27800 in the financial year up to April 2021.

Applying to be a Trainer

After checking eligibility to be a trainer, applicants can apply to be a trainer by electronic submission of an application through the NES Portal which can be accessed directly at www.portal.scot.nhs.uk. This is a nationally managed process which requires applicants to create an account initially if this has yet to be done. Having an account is necessary in order to access and submit the application form.

Details of the application process and a direct link to the portal can also be obtained via the NES website at www.nes.scot.nhs.uk. Alternatively, queries regarding trainer recruitment can be emailed to dental_recruitment@nes.scot.nhs.uk.

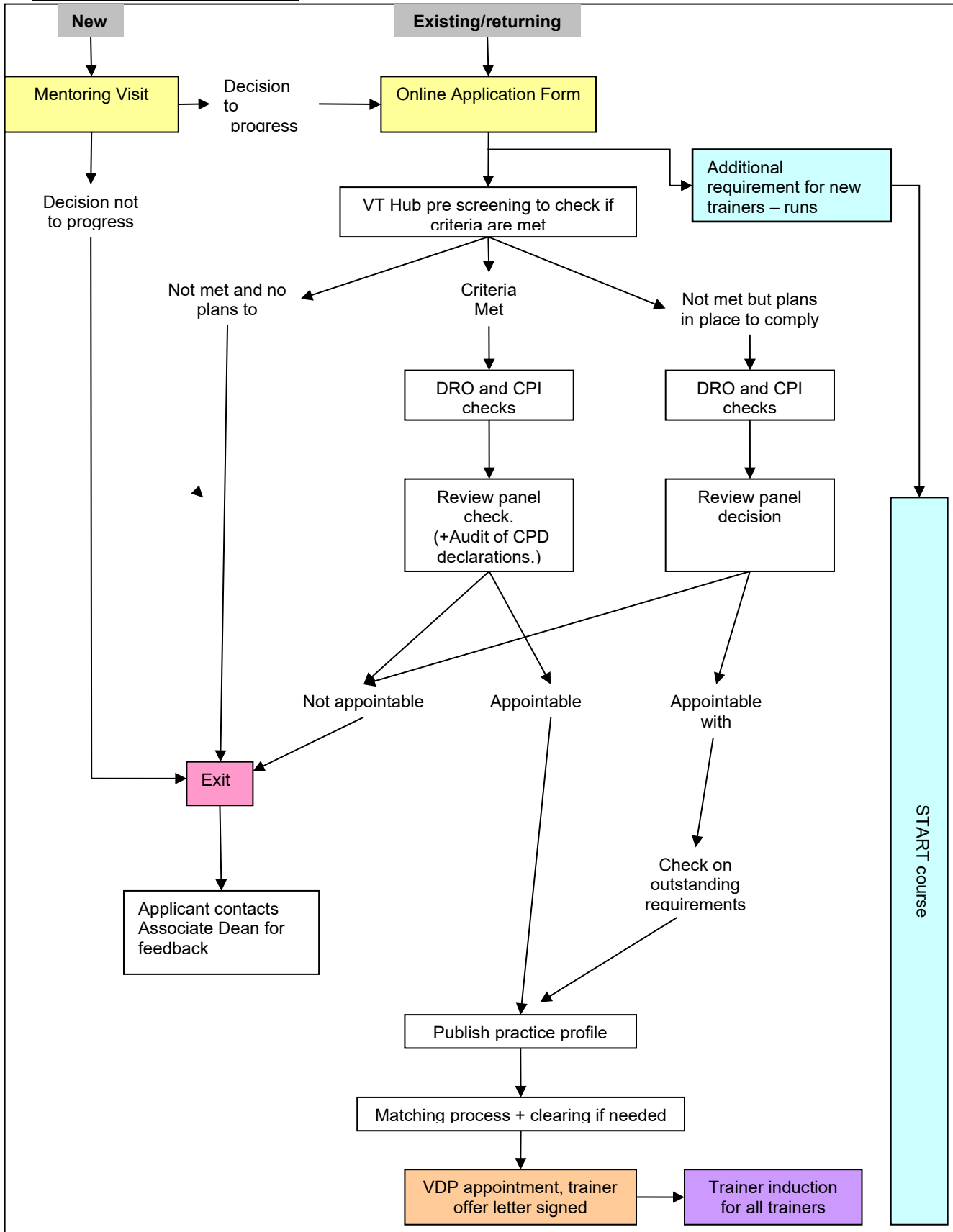
Appointment of a Trainer

Once applications for trainership (DVT and TVT) are submitted via the NES portal, the VT Hub will check the applicants to ensure that they meet the criteria for becoming a trainer. They will subsequently provide an indication of the status of the applicant (in relation to the criteria) to a national panel who will review all applications taking into account DRO grades, PSD and health board reports, GDC outcomes and mentoring reports/adviser statements. A decision will be made as to whether the applicant is appointable or not and the decision will be final. In recent years, there have been more appointable applicants than vacancies and NES has applied a scoring system. [Click here](#) to view the scoring matrix.

If an applicant has any concerns regarding the NES Dental Recruitment process, he/she should contact Dental Recruitment at dental_recruitment@nes.scot.nhs.uk to be advised of the next steps. The national selection panel will be composed of the National Lead for VT or a deputising Director, a dentist external to NES and a lay representative who has considerable experience of VT. The Associate Postgraduate Dental Dean for VT will provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants as required and rejection will not prohibit future application. Arrangements following appointment will be a matter for the Associate Postgraduate Dental Dean for VT.

Upon application a dentist will be expected to demonstrate a commitment to Continuing Professional Development and following appointment would be liable for involvement in 14 sessions of appropriately organised educational sessions during the year; reduced pro-rata for part-time or shared trainers. Trainers would be subject to the trainer obligations stated in the offer letter issued to appointable trainers who obtain a trainee. These obligations should be read and fully understood before the offer letter or contract is signed.

Trainer Selection Flowchart



Note that being appointable does not necessarily guarantee appointment if number of appointable trainers exceeds the requirement for VT or the funding available to NES.

Selection and Obligations of VDPs

Trainers will select VDPs using the National Trainer-VDP matching system.

Once a dentist has been deemed appointable they will be notified to this effect and invited to complete a practice prospectus on Dental Training Information System (DTIS). This is the dentist's opportunity to "market" their practice to trainee applicants. DTIS is the medium used for this as it ensures that all registrants for traineeship have access to the information provided by the trainer.

A visitation period is set by NES and during this time, potential VDPs are invited to contact trainers with view to arranging attendance at open days, interviews etc. At the end of this period, both trainers and trainees are asked to submit their selection preferences and training pairs are matched according to these preferences. All communication, preference submission etc is via Dental Training Information System (DTIS) From time to time, NES may allow direct appointments out with the matching process, and details of any such arrangement will be advised by Dental Recruitment.

Once confirmed, the selection period is ended. Where initial matches cannot be established, a clearing process is put in place until all available posts are filled.

Contracts are issued immediately prior to commencement of training.

Applicants will be provided with further information on elements of the above process by NES HR and VT Hub. This includes online resources which lead those new to this process through the various necessary stages involved in securing a VDP.

VDPs will be employed as assistants within the practice/clinic from 1st August for a period of one year.

VDPs will be required: -

- To enter into and abide by the terms of a legal contract for full-time employment with the trainer or practice owner, or for an agreed part-time equivalent. The Trainer-Trainee contract issued will define the part-time nature of the employment where applicable.
- To attend the day or block release course or other courses as set out in the published programme, and to undertake surveys from time to time, as required by NES. Absence from the course for any reasons will be authorised only in exceptional circumstances. VDPs must apply for leave from day or block release course to the Associate Postgraduate Dental Dean or VT Adviser in writing and in advance. All missed days must be made up with suitable education, which is agreed with the Adviser. The programme will be equivalent to at least 25 working days educational activity over the training year, and include a mixture of seminar presentations, workshops and hands on courses. The programme is arranged by the VT Adviser in consultation with trainers and VDPs.
- To take holidays out with the educational programme. Unexplained absence from the course would imply withdrawal from the scheme by both VDP and trainer.
- To complete such educational studies as may be required.
- To inform the VT Adviser of any alteration in the circumstances of the practice/clinic, the trainer or self which might alter the contract of employment as a VDP.

Legal Obligations

VDPs will be employed as assistants in the trainer's practice/clinic and the trainer will be responsible for their work. It should be emphasised that all assistants, including VDPs, work under their trainer's list number, so the trainer is responsible to the NHS for all acts or omissions of their assistant. The trainer will have to answer to any complaints and receive the penalties imposed. Poor DRO grades will be placed on the trainer's record.

Financial Arrangements

A Training Grant will be paid to the trainer. The VDP will receive a salary administered through NHS Education for Scotland. This salary will be paid by PSD directly to VDPs in the GDS and via the Health Board's payroll system for those in the PDS. All fees earned by the VDP will accrue to the training practice/clinic (GDS) or Health Board (PDS). The financial arrangements, set by Scottish Government Health Department, are: -

- (As of 1st August 2021), Trainer's grant of £14,004 or £15,000 (determined by training experience level) for GDS trainers. (**Note no trainer grant is available for Senior Salaried GDPs)
- (As of 1st July 2021), VDP's salary of £32,746
- 100% of the VDP's gross earnings will accrue to the training practice/ clinic or Health Board in the case of an PDS post.

Determination X Practice Improvement Grants for those in GDS

Prospective trainers are advised to read the appropriate sections of the Statement of Dental Remuneration (SDR). Determination X of the Statement of Dental Remuneration allows for grants to be made to:

Dentists wishing to establish new vocational training surgeries (Part II of Determination X); and existing vocational training practices (Part III of Determination X); where improvements are required in order to meet or continue to meet vocational training standards.

Determination X funding is not available to trainers in the PDS.

- New to Vocational Training Practices (maximum claimable allowance of £10k): -
As stated in the Determination, grants under Part II require NES to provisionally assess the suitability of those wishing to become Vocational Trainers. Therefore, in order for NES to be able to provide support for your application for Determination X funding, you should already have met the other requirements for trainership relating to practice inspection, CPD, DRO references and Equal Opportunities training. The purchase of equipment for practice improvements can be supported with the Determination X funding.
- Established Vocational Training Practices (maximum claimable allowance of £6k): -
In the case of existing practices, wear and tear, breakdown etc may necessitate upgrading/replacing equipment in order to maintain a minimal standard for a training practice. Periodically (once every 5 years) existing trainers will be eligible to access Determination X funding to support purchases which have been approved by a NES representative. Priority will be given to the purchasing of certain items of equipment. Allowances can only be approved for replacing / upgrading of equipment in the trainee's surgery.
- NB – for those practices who recruit a left-handed trainee but do not currently have a suitable chair, additional funding is available through NES for modifications to be made to the chair at the beginning of training and reversed at the end. For information, contact VT Hub.

For guidance on criteria for Accessing Determination X Funding and the Process Flowchart, [click here](#).