

Assessment Plan

Dental Practice Manager Apprenticeship

Introduction

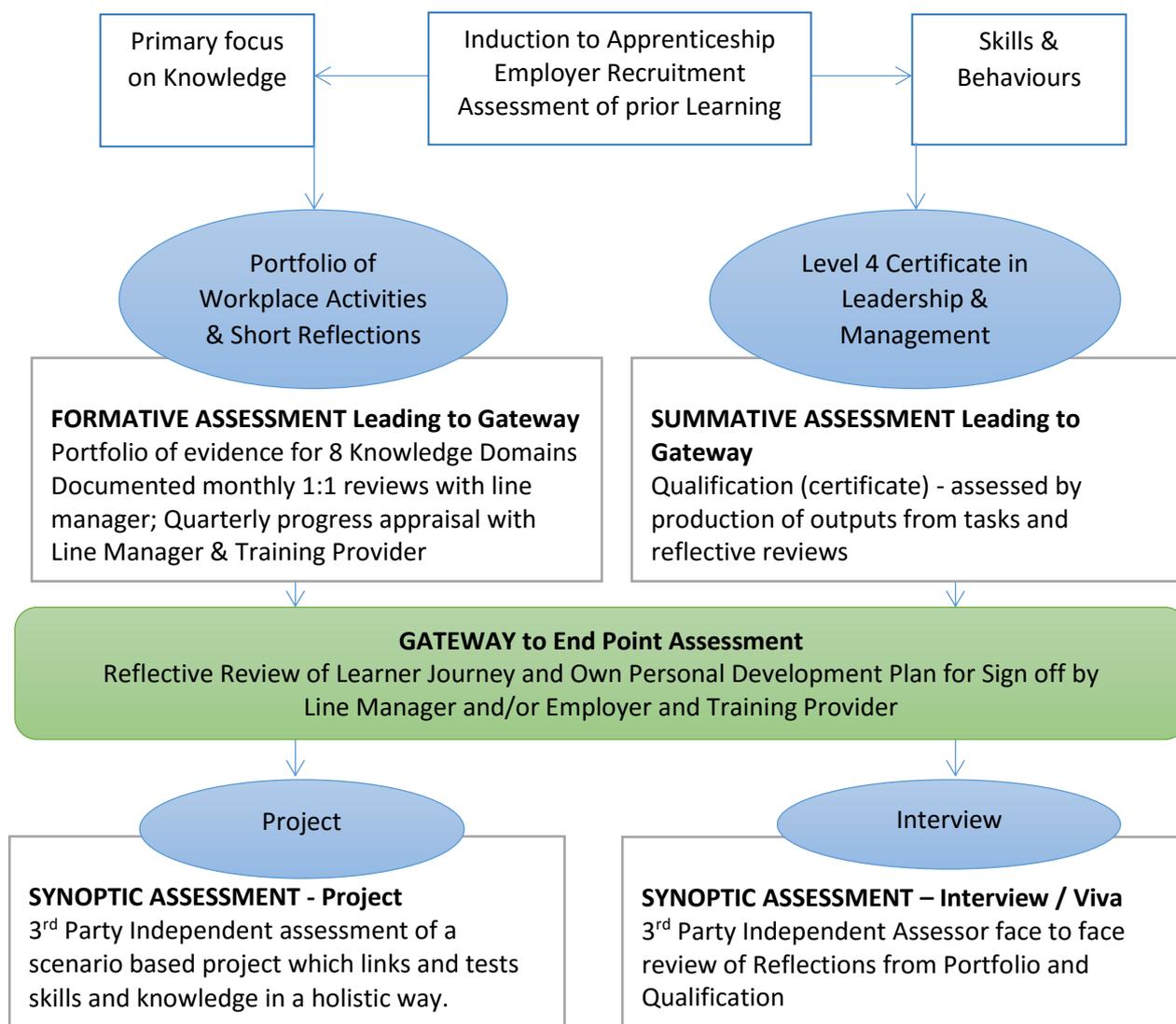
This is an apprenticeship, designed as entry level training for the role of Dental Practice Manager. There are approximately 8000 dental practices across the United Kingdom, and this role is applicable to both large corporate dental bodies and single dental practices. The model has been driven by an employer steering group, and then challenged and refined through a development group consisting of training & assessment experts including apprenticeship training providers & professional bodies.

The principles driving the design of the assessment plan are as follows:

1. Maximum relevance to the job.
2. Integration with approved standards (see Appendix).
3. Add value to the apprentice's journey, both during and at the end of the apprenticeship.
4. Achievement of the Level 4 Certificate in Leadership & Management

A standardised approach to this apprenticeship will promote, upon completion, higher quality Apprentices leading and managing dental services. Additionally providers will be clear on the required rigour, robustness, breadth and depth of development that will enable the industry to meet economic and educational challenges this area of skills shortage currently present across the country.

Overview



1 – FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

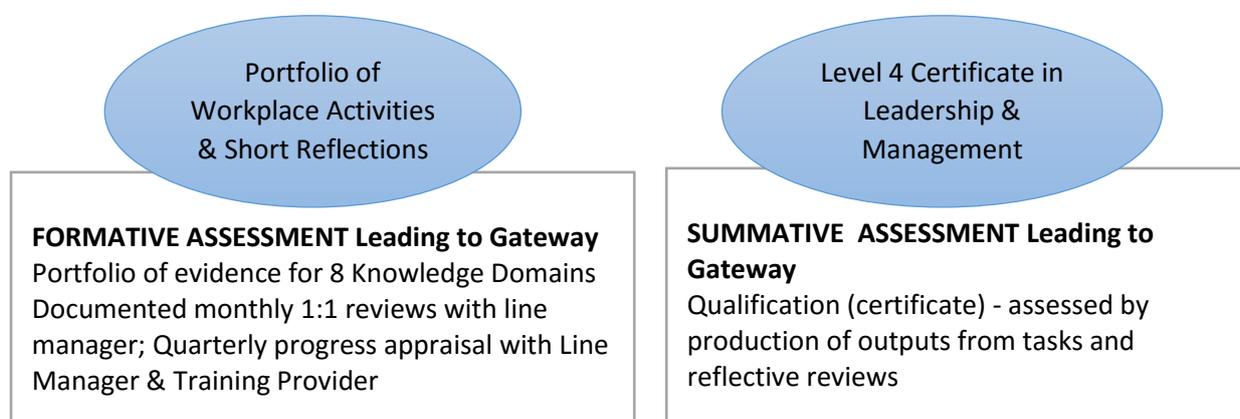
Assessment

The combination of two assessment methods in the formative assessment phase and two assessment methods in the final summative assessment ensures that the assessment of each apprentice is based on their performance and reflects accurately the quality of their work and the application of skills, knowledge and behaviours specified in the Standards.

Taken together, the four assessments build a cumulative picture of performance against the Standards. They all require apprentices to demonstrate the application of skills, knowledge and behaviours in an integrated manner to deliver the required outcomes, enabling the independent assessor to make a holistic judgement about how well the apprentice meets or exceeds the Standards.

Formative Assessment

Our approach to ensuring that the apprentice is on track is based on a combination of an externally validated qualification and an in house Performance Management (PM) process.



Level 4 Qualification – Certificate in Leadership & Management

An example of unit combinations is:

Skills & Behaviours	Credits	Unit Description
Leading with Vision & Values	2	Understanding patient) service standards & requirements
Leadership & Communication	2	Leading and Motivating a team effectively
Leadership & Management	4	Planning and Leading a complex team activity
Proactive Management	3	Managing risk in the workplace
Efficient Management	2	Understanding the Management Facilities

The comprehensive well known **Knowing-Being-Doing** framework recognises and maps the fundamental management and leadership capabilities required from the apprentice:

- Knowing – underpinning knowledge which leads to key competencies such as self-management and team-building skills, awareness of customer requirements and the value proposition, awareness of inter-personal dynamics
- Doing – putting it into practice by being able to understand how a team works, plan day-to-day workload, allocate and monitor tasks, resolve problems, communicate effectively, support change, brief and motivate a team and achieve expected outcomes.

- Being – changing behaviours by being aware of how their own values and goals align to the organisation; understanding the people they lead; managing their workloads and responsibilities.

Portfolio of Workplace Activities

The portfolio of evidence demonstrates competence in knowledge, skills and behaviours included in the standard which are not covered by the assessed qualification.

The formative portfolio will take approximately 12 - 18 months to complete. It is based on a spectrum of real-work activities which, conducted alongside and/or after the qualification, cover the totality of the standard, and provide a demonstration of the application of knowledge and competence in the work environment. This is a key factor for employers in the validity of the final assessment decision.

The portfolio should include a personal statement on progress and any difficulties experienced by the learner, prepared in the form of a 'weekly reflection'. Written reflection will encourage the learner to engage in self-evaluation which is recognised to be a valuable and effective way to deepen learning.

The portfolio should also include agreed records of monthly meetings between the apprentice and line manager and of quarterly reviews with the line manager and training provider. It therefore serves as a record of experience for:

Knowledge	Skills	Behaviours
Workplace activities in:	Written Feedback and	Written Feedback and Reflective
1. Human Resources	Reflective Reviews about own:	Reviews about own:
2. Patient Care	• Leadership	• Professionalism
3. Clinical	• Management	• Ethics
4. Marketing	• Communication	• Commercial astuteness
5. Risk Management		• Passion
6. Quality Assurance	In relation to activities	• Responsibility
7. Finance		• Reflection, self-awareness
8. Dental Industry		

- Minimum content for the Portfolio is shown in Appendix 2.
- The Line Manager uses the Performance Management process which includes monthly 1:1 meetings to discuss learner progress, provide feedback and guide development. This process will also track progress against all elements of the standard within the timescales allowed.
- Three monthly meetings between the Apprentice, the Line Manager and the Training Provider (aligned with the Performance Management process) will take place to ensure that the apprentice is on track and agree how any issues will be addressed.

2 – GATEWAY

Gateway to End Point Assessment

The apprentice has to satisfactorily complete the portfolio and the Qualification in order to progress through the gateway on to the end-point assessment. If the candidate does not satisfactorily complete

both components then remedial action based on feedback would be required to achieve a pass in assessment, before progressing to the project and Interview.

The portfolio review is not part of the end-point assessment, nor the Qualification. It is a means to progress through the gateway to the endpoint assessment which will consist of a project and an interview. In order to proceed to the synoptic assessment, which forms 100% of the assessment of the apprenticeship, the apprentice has to write a final reflective review of the Learner Journey against his/her initial Personal Development Plan, and identify further training needs. This has to be signed off by the employer and reviewed and scored by the training provider.

The Awarding Organisation will call for a random selection of assessments from each Training Provider and they will then meet on one given day together. On this date, they will discuss each candidate's submission, ensuring standardisation to ensure that all Training Providers are marking in a standard, equal manner. The Awarding Organisation will implement an appropriate quality assurance practice to award the qualification and is a major feature of the gateway process. Through this process both standardisation and consistency will be maintained as the Training Provider will submit evidence to the Awarding Organisation.

Role of the Training Provider

Note: The Training Provider must be selected only from approved bodies, registered with the Skills Funding Agency.

The training provider will play an important part in:

- i) Ensuring that (prior to starting the apprenticeship), both employer and apprentice understand the detail of the learning journey and their respective commitments to this
- ii) Ensuring that the requirements of the apprenticeship are fully reflected in the Performance Management process, with any gaps being filled through their work with the apprentice
- iii) Supporting the apprentice throughout the learning journey, providing advice and guidance on learning strategies and tools that will support individual learning styles and improve learning agility
- iv) Supporting the line manager in their commitments to the apprenticeship and providing any training required.
- v) Assessing readiness for progression to end point assessment

We are confident that this is an effective process as this style of performance management is an accepted norm across the sector, therefore providing a consistent and reliable approach to all apprentices.

Unanimous assessment

It will be the responsibility of the Employer and Training Provider to ensure that marking of all formative/summative assessments in the portfolio is completed and subjected to robust internal and external verification processes.

3 – SYNOPTIC END POINT ASSESSMENT

Synoptic Assessment

The synoptic assessment will contain 2 components - both components must be passed for the apprentice to be deemed competent.



The focus of the synoptic assessment is on the apprentice being able to prove their competence in the role of Dental Practice Manager, through the work they have done. This entails demonstrating competence in defined learning outcomes derived from the competencies set out in the standard; see appendix 1.

Synoptic Project

A multi-dimensional scenario based project will be undertaken over 4 months and is worth **65% of the final grade**. This links the different skills in a holistic way and gives apprentices the chance to demonstrate that they can apply the knowledge, skills and behaviours they have learned in controlled conditions, without the conflicting pressures often present in everyday work environments. This provides a relatively high degree of consistency and comparability, increasing the accuracy of the assessment decision.

The project will be reviewed and scored by the Independent Assessor ahead of the Independent Assessor Interview. The project must cover two of the skills elements highlighted in the standard (one of which must be communication skills) and will:

- Either be set by the Awarding Organisation who will have either a bank of tasks from which to choose/random allocation or pre released at regular intervals
- Or be designed by the Training Provider and Employer against Awarding Organisation criteria and approved by the Awarding Organisation

Independent Assessor Interview

The final interview with an independent assessor is worth **35% of the final grade**, and allows apprentices to demonstrate how they have carried out their work. This increases accuracy and validity by providing an opportunity to assess depth and breadth in the application of underlying knowledge, skills and behaviours.

The behaviour of each candidate would need to be assessed in order to ensure that they follow the Dental Practice Manager standards set out in Appendix 1. Therefore, throughout the work-based placement the candidate will have to ensure they display these behaviours in order to provide evidence to pass the Apprenticeship. A formal observation of the candidate in a work-based placement will be carried out by the learning supervisor at least once a month and the observation and subsequent meeting will be formally written up and added to the portfolio. The candidate should then appropriately archive these observations in a folder which should later be referred back to as Standard Evidence. As part of the formal submission process, the candidate will devise evidence of standards by referencing them on a document in order for them to be looked at by the Awarding Organisation.

Synoptic Assessment timings & activities

The process of setting up the synoptic assessment will begin 4 months before the completion of the apprenticeship as shown below. All components should be overseen and approved by the Independent Awarding Organisation:

Timescale	Activity
4 months before completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review progress and ensure on track as part of regular Performance Management process. • Line Manager and Training Provider identify any gaps and create a plan for the final 3 months to complete the learning • Line manager, Apprentice and Training Provider meet to review requirements for synoptic assessment and ensure the portfolio includes a full record of achievement, including completed tasks, weekly reflections, records of monthly supervision meetings with line manager and training provider, the final reflective review and Personal Development Plan • Training Provider arranges synoptic assessment
3 months before completion (subject to 'gateway' decision by Line Manager and/or Employer and Training Provider that apprentice is ready to progress to synoptic assessment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line Manager and Training Provider sign off the agreed components and outline content of the scenario based project • Apprentice completes the work on the scenario based project, with support from Line Manager and Training Provider. • Apprentice submits scenario based project for marking by the Independent Assessor. A sample of assessments will then be called for by an Awarding Organisation who will mark a sample to ensure standardisation. • When submitting the scenario based project, the apprentice will be required to submit a declaration that the work is that of their own.

The Training Provider Role

The training provider will play a key part in overseeing the synoptic assessment process by:

- i) Taking responsibility for organising and coordinating the process
- ii) Providing training in the assessment process (including use of tools and application to ensure consistency) for assessors involved in end point assessment

Training Providers and Assessment Organisations have been involved in the development of this assessment plan and feel that this is an area where they can bring their experience to bear and really add value to the employer. This activity would be included in the commercial terms agreed in contracting between the employers and training provider.

The Independent Assessor will have the final decision making authority at the end point assessment.

Ensuring Independence/Impartiality

The independent assessor will be the only party involved in the Final (synoptic) assessment. The role of the third party independent assessor in the final judgement is designed to drive impartiality and independence.

Assessor roles:

Assessor	Role
1. Line Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brings a view of the apprentice from the Performance Management process and working with them in the workplace through the apprenticeship
2. Training Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brings a view of the apprentice from supporting them through the apprenticeship.
3. Independent 3 rd party assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent view of the apprentice and their progress. Brings added rigour & consistency to the assessment through their wider industry perspective, knowledge & experience Scores all components of the synoptic assessment and makes the final decision. Assesses against Pass, Distinction & Fail criteria
4. Independent Awarding Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External & independent assessment of knowledge competence through the qualification requirement, during formative assessment gate The Awarding Organisation moderates and samples the end point assessor's decisions.

The independent 3rd party assessor will be selected by the training provider in consultation with the employer from a Professional or Awarding Organisation or a different Training Provider, and must have:

- i) The appropriate experience in the dental management sector to understand the role
- ii) A recognised assessor qualification
- iii) Proven competence in assessment (ideally with a development/education background)

Delivering Consistent (Reliable) Judgments

The standards will be assessed comprehensively as follows:

Qualification:	Skills and Behaviour - Covers part of the standard.
Portfolio:	Skills, Knowledge and Behaviour - Covers the whole standard.
65% Project:	Skills and Knowledge - Covers a part of the standard.
35% Independent Interview/Viva:	Skills, Knowledge and Behaviour - Covers the whole standard

The workplace focus of the formative portfolio and synoptic project in this apprenticeship means that the evidence provided will vary depending on the role that each apprentice has within their employer. At the core of ensuring that judgments on role competence are consistent, will be the Detailed Standard (see Appendix) which defines what is required for each of the Knowledge and Skill areas to be assessed.

A robust scoring matrix will be created by the Awarding Bodies that will be used by all assessors to evaluate each of the assessment components cumulatively against learning outcomes derived from the Detailed Standard. Again this method has been chosen as employers are used to this approach which is accepted best practice for assessing performance in the sector. This process will contain detailed guidance on what is required to pass the apprenticeship for the defined learning outcomes of knowledge, skills and behaviour. Each area will be scored to identify how well the apprentice has met the learning outcome.

The Independent Awarding Organisation will be responsible for approving Independent Assessors and Training Providers as well as approving curricula, and checking sample portfolios and projects.

The sources from which the 3rd party assessor could be selected are deliberately wide at this stage and could be reduced after the experience of running the pilot. This is because the market is still responding to the Apprenticeship reforms and we cannot therefore say that all professional bodies will want to provide this service. Moreover, by having this initial wide selection, costs of additional resources will be driven down by competition.

The Independent Awarding Organisation will also be responsible for providing the final judgement with regards to the success of an apprentice. In order to ensure standardisation across Training Providers, the Independent Awarding Organisation will obtain a sample of scenario based projects from each Training Provider and examine this selection to ensure marking and grading is standardised across the country.

An example scale is shown below:

The apprentice will have to score 3 or above in each of the competencies to achieve a Pass.

1	2	3	4	5
Significant gaps in their ability to demonstrate the standard	Minor gaps in their ability to demonstrate the standard	Fully meets the Assessment Criteria	Some examples of exceeding the standard in some areas; meets in all other areas	Consistently exceeds the standard across most of the areas

The apprentice will have to score 5 in each of the competencies identified in Appendix 1 to achieve a Distinction.

Delivering Accurate (Valid) Judgments

Consistency of approach by assessors will be achieved through training of all assessors involved by the Awarding Organisation. This will cover an understanding of the overall apprenticeship; knowledge of the detailed standard; the scoring matrix; examples of evidence relevant to that particular employer and sample scoring exercises. The Awarding Organisation will implement an appropriate quality assurance model which will underpin a level of robustness to reliability and consistency.

The entire synoptic assessment is focused on the competence of the apprentice in the role, as evidenced by their ability to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and behaviours as set out in the Detailed Standard. Both components of the synoptic assessment builds a cumulative picture of competence against the Detailed Standard. In addition, the use of the in house Performance Management process during the apprenticeship will drive a focus on building competence throughout the 24 months of the apprenticeship.

Synoptic Assessment

The components of the synoptic assessment being used in this apprenticeship require the apprentice to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and behaviours in an integrated manner to deliver the learning outcomes required to meet the standard.

The assessors will build a cumulative and holistic picture, from both components of the synoptic assessment, of how well the apprentice meets or exceeds the standard.

The focus of the synoptic assessment will be on the Higher Order Skills from the standard.

Higher Order skills

We have determined that the Higher Order Skills within this apprenticeship are the 3 skills and 6 behaviours that make up the standard.

The knowledge competencies have been reviewed by a Professional Organisation during the preparation of the standard and they have confirmed that knowledge areas fall into 2 categories; generic and dental practice specific. Generic knowledge will be fully covered by the assessment required in the standard, whilst company specific will be acquired by the apprentice within their role and their day to day work.

The apprentice will therefore acquire the knowledge requirements of this standard during the formative stage of the learning journey (with satisfactory progress being assessed by the line manager as part of Performance Management) which are then assessed through the synoptic assessment stages of assessment.

Graded Assessments

Our standard says that we will have 2 levels of achievement within this apprenticeship: Pass and Distinction.

Affordability and Flexibility:

In developing this assessment approach employers have consistently sought to keep the approach simple but effective, to use existing work-based performance assessment wherever possible and to avoid duplication or the need for adding additional personnel into the assessment process.

This has led to a well-defined, cost-effective and deliverable process that employers will find easy to understand and apply to their practice environment. Where additional support is required (for instance, in small practices where Performance Management processes may not be as well defined, or line management skills may be less developed) the Training Provider can step in to offer their expertise.

The flexibility built into this assessment model is critical to its ability to cater for both large and small practices. The following key points deliver this flexibility:

- Use of the portfolio of evidence in the synoptic assessment
- Option to flex the amount of support required from the training provider – can be discussed and tailored (utilising the training provider's expertise) during contract discussions

This flexibility, plus the additional payment that the Government is proposing to provide to small businesses offering apprenticeships, will make this an affordable apprenticeship model for small and large businesses alike.

With regards to the end-point assessment, it is anticipated that the following percentages of funding will be assigned to each individual element, bearing in mind that twenty percent of the total funding received will go on the final assessment.

Of this twenty percent:

- Fifty-five percent on Project Marking.
- Forty-five percent goes towards the Interview Process

Furthermore it is anticipated that costs will be minimised by the use of remote learning and assessment where appropriate (both in training the assessors and working with apprentices). Again the apprenticeship sector is well used to utilising eLearning and video conferencing technology.

Quality Assurance:

Quality of the Apprenticeship will be assured by the Independent Awarding Organisation who will be responsible for ensuring standardisation throughout the Apprenticeship by quality assuring marking and finalising progression of candidates.

All Independent Awarding Organisations must continually meet Ofqual's regulatory requirements to ensure that their qualifications are valid and fit for purpose.

Manageability / Feasibility:

This apprenticeship has been designed to be viable for both large corporate dental environments and small dental practices. This means that there could be large numbers and/or wide geographical take up. This assessment model is a relatively simple one to administer:

- Assessors will attend a training event, provided by the Independent Awarding Organisation, shortly before they commence any engagement with the synoptic assessment process. This will be face-to-face or virtual, depending on the location of individuals.
- Assessors will travel to the location of the synoptic assessment on the day (wherever appropriate).
- Final agreement between the assessors will be decided at a discussion that takes place at the end of the day or at a subsequent conference call, with notes documented to provide an audit of the final decision.

The Training Provider and Awarding Organisation will have a key role to play, working with the employer, providing training as required, and organising/administering the synoptic assessment. Standardisation/moderation will be carried out by an Awarding Organisation for Dentistry who will lead on quality assurance for the Apprenticeship. Further to this, the Awarding Bodies will also meet to quality control. The Awarding Organisation will be independent from those who lead and deliver the Apprenticeship and this would therefore ensure that their moderation and standardisation of the Apprenticeship would stem from a neutral body.

Professional Recognition:

Many competent individuals have been involved & contributed to the design of this apprenticeship throughout the development process and have confirmed their support of this standard and assessment plan.

Progression:

This is a middle level management role within a practice which provides the foundation knowledge, skills and experience for progression into a number of career paths including senior management, operations and integrations. In addition, the role may require completion of an exam specific to the line of business worked in e.g. customer service, human resources, NHS rules & regulation, management & motivation models and theories.

Appendix 1 – The 28 Learning Outcomes for synoptic assessment (all need to be competently demonstrated to pass the apprenticeship)

Learning Outcome

Competence

Skills

Quality service delivery

Consistently develops and delivers excellent service to customers, colleagues & advisers, supporting the products / services provided and adhering to 'Treating Customers Fairly' principles at all times

1. Responds to customers, colleagues & advisers in a timely, accurate fashion, within service standards.
2. Takes ownership of issues, escalating those which cannot be solved and follows through to ensure action has been taken
3. Is realistic when agreeing actions, explains what can be achieved and by when. Provides regular progress updates
4. Represents the values and ethics of the firm.

Customer communication & relationships

Develops effective relationships with customers & key contacts, handling & resolving issues through effective verbal/written/IT skills.

5. Builds rapport with customers and demonstrates empathy and understanding when dealing with them
6. Delivers effectively to customers' satisfaction
7. Demonstrates consistent accurate & appropriate communication through all relevant media

Team working & collaboration

Understands role within team & impact on others. Consistently endeavours to support colleagues & collaborate to achieve results

8. Is an enthusiastic and positive team member
9. Shares knowledge, ideas and experiences with the wider team to assist in continuous improvement.
10. Demonstrates an open and honest communication style
11. Asks questions and challenges others positively

Planning & prioritising

Successfully analyses and plans in order to deliver good outcomes for the business

12. Consistently prioritises time and activities accordingly, managing resources as appropriate
13. Takes ownership & commits to delivery
14. Flags concerns before crisis arises, when concerned about workloads or timescales

Using systems & Processes

Consistently adheres to systems & processes using proficient IT skills, including risk, regulatory and governance requirements.

15. Consistently utilises systems accurately and appropriately
16. Demonstrates proficient use of IT systems and ensures that regulatory requirements are met

Behaviours

Honesty & integrity

Truthful, sincere in their actions and doing the right thing (even when not the easiest).

17. Demonstrate integrity and ethical behaviour in the way they do their job
18. Act in an open and honest way

Adaptability

Willingness to accept changing priorities and

19. Demonstrate a flexible approach

Enthusiasm	<p>work patterns when new jobs need to be done, or requirements change. Shows drive and energy in their work, when things are going well and when challenges arise.</p>	<p>20. Respond positively to change & shows willingness to refocus priorities when required</p> <p>21. Consistently demonstrates a positive approach to work</p> <p>22. Do what needs to be done to get the job done</p> <p>23. Suggest ways to improve how work is done</p>
Dependability	<p>Meets personal commitments and expectations, eg completing work, timekeeping.</p>	<p>24. Be at work and engaged in work when required</p> <p>25. Take ownership in their job</p>
Personal commitment	<p>Proactive in their own development; commitment to the job and the business.</p>	<p>26. Take ownership & seek ways in which to develop own knowledge and skills within the role</p> <p>27. Share knowledge and experiences with others to assist in their learning journey</p> <p>28. Progressively develop their own career as they learn more about the job and the business</p>

Appendix 2

Minimum requirements we expect to see in the Portfolio:

1. Human Resources
 - a. Reflective account of selecting and appointing a member of staff (if possible) including copies of selection criteria, interview notes, etc.
 - b. Evidence of 121 performance coaching meetings and follow up action / monitoring
 - c. Example of formal performance review meetings
 - d. Example of staffing efficiency improvements – making the best use of the team
 - e. Evidence of dealing with a poor / needs improvement performance issue
 - f. Example of supporting team member development
2. Patient Care
 - a. Practice protocols for customer service
 - b. Evidence of how they differentiate their practice (service) from the competition
 - c. Patient feedback samples
 - d. Evidence of successfully managing patient complaint
3. Clinical
 - a. CPD examples re. dental diseases (courses attended, online training certificates, etc)
 - b. Account of role played in conducting a clinical audit and ability to articulate the purpose and benefit of the audit
4. Marketing
 - a. Analysis of their local market (SWOT)
 - b. Evidence of growing the patient base – how, and with results
 - c. Evidence of local outreach activities – with rationale and outcomes
5. Risk Management
 - a. Risk management policies, procedures and implemented action plans from risk assessments in the areas of health and safety, fire, radiation, infection control and formation governance
 - b. evidence of regulatory compliance for their practice
6. Quality Assurance
 - a. Evidence of quality Assurance policies, procedures and implemented action plans arising from audits for ensuring high quality care
 - b. Evidence of implementing continuous improvement
 - c. Example of improvement as a result of feedback, focus groups, complaints and incidents
 - d. evidence of regulatory compliance for their practice