

POLICY

JANUARY 2026

LEARNER SUPPORT AND WELLBEING POLICY



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INTRODUCTION TO THIS POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

The DNA aims to support learners to develop their knowledge, skills, behaviours, experiences and personal attributes which will enable them to become qualified dental professionals by successful study of the course prescribed by DNA leading to NEBDN qualification in Dental Nursing.

The DNA is focused on maximising the potential of each individual learner, as measured by learner progression rates, through providing appropriate learning and pastoral support.

This policy sets out a common framework for learner support and guidance to ensure that our approach continues to operate across the Dental Nurse Academy (DNA).

PURPOSE

The aims of the policy are to:

- Ensure that learners are aware of the nature, extent, purpose and location of all the services and facilities for guidance and support and how best to access and benefit from this provision when needed;
- Enhance learners' overall experience of studying with the DNA
- Ensure learners are made aware of their first contact points for information on student support and guidance services;
- Raise awareness among learners and staff of the nature and availability of support services;
- Encourage learners to be pro-active in using the services;
- Encourage successful completion of studies.

STAKEHOLDERS

This policy applies to all learners who come into contact with the DNA. This includes:

- I. Learners (current and prospective)
 - a. Apprenticeship learners
 - b. Diploma learners

DEFINITIONS

GENERAL DEFINITIONS

- (i) **DNA** means the Dental Nurse Academy.
- (ii) **Employers** means the employer (Dental Practice) of an Apprentice or National Diploma student who is registered with the Dental Nurse Academy.
- (iii) **Learners** means Apprentices and National Diploma learners.
- (iv) **Staff** means The Board, Senior Managers, Employees, Self Employed, Agency Staff and Volunteers acting on behalf of the Dental Nurse Academy.
- (v) **Third Parties** means Employers, Sub-Contractors to the DNA and Suppliers to the DNA

DEFINITIONS SPECIFIC TO THIS POLICY

- (i) There are no definitions specific to this policy

RELATED POLICIES AND ARRANGEMENTS

All DNA policies and arrangements have a bearing on this topic. In particular:

- POL-I-1 Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy
- POL-I-2 Health and Safety Policy
- POL-I-3 Safeguarding and Prevent Duty Policy
- POL-I-4 Complaint Policy
- POL-I-23 Employer Engagement Policy
- POL-I-32 Supervision of Learners Policy

The DNA's policies will be reviewed regularly (on an annual basis) and any identified elements which breach or risk deviation from this policy shall be removed.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

There is no legal framework associated with this policy.

OUR COMMITMENT

Once learners have been accepted on a learning programme with the DNA, the DNA has a duty of care towards them. This responsibility lies with all staff to exercise. This duty of care is enhanced in the case of more vulnerable groups of learners. There is also legislation, for example, for disability and racial equality, which requires the DNA to meet specific obligations to ensure that learners can successfully benefit from study with the DNA.

Learning material should be available 24/7 and 365 days in the year. If this is not the case for whatever reason, learners should contact the admin team, who will act as quickly as possible to help.

This policy applies to offer support and guidance for a wide range of academic and non-academic issues provided by staff in various roles in the DNA.

Support and guidance may be sought by learners on specific academic issues or on more general learning support; on careers or specifically the NEBDN assessments leading to qualification, and on more personal issues if required.

We commit to provide a consistent level of support for all learners, though we recognise that every learner's needs are individual. Therefore support will be provided as reasonably appropriate and where support needs are identified. It is also recognised that learner problems are often complex, with personal issues having an impact on academic performance and vice versa, so the boundaries between academic and non-academic support will inevitably be blurred to some extent. It is often the case that learners approach a member of staff for support with whom they feel comfortable, rather than the relevant designated person, so we commit that all staff should be able to refer learners to the most appropriate point of contact as needed.

Implementation of the policy is underpinned by five principles. Support and Guidance from the DNA should be:

LEARNER CENTRED

Any information, guidance and advice provided should be aimed at enhancing learners' capability and fostering their personal autonomy;

CONFIDENTIAL

The services offered should operate within established conventions of confidentiality on all personal and academic issues;

IMPARTIAL

Support and guidance should be equitable, impartial and include referring the student on to other sources where appropriate;

ACCESSIBLE

Guidance and support should be accessible to all learners at all stages of their programme of study;

EQUAL AND DIVERSE

Support and guidance should be offered in accordance with the DNA's policy on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

PROMOTION AND COMMITMENT

PROMOTING THIS POLICY

All stakeholders (defined above) are required to engage with this policy and the procedures described.

This policy is promoted via the Staff Handbook, the Student Handbook and is readily available on the DNA website at www.dentalnurseacademy.com.

GAINING COMMITMENT TO THIS POLICY

Confirmation of engagement is required by all stakeholders. Our contracts and agreements require agreement to this Policy's acceptance:

- a. Employee Contract (employees)
- b. Employer Agreement (employers i.e. dental practices)
- c. Apprenticeship Commitment Statement (Apprenticeship learners)
- d. Student terms and conditions (National Diploma learners)
- e. Sub Contracting Agreement (suppliers)

Learners and employers are made aware of the Policy on joining and have to commit to accepting the policy as a condition of joining.

All members of staff are required to attest to their having read, understood and commit to this policy.

1. Upon joining the Dental Nurse Academy, new staff members complete policies and procedures training as part of their induction. Attestation is completed via the web form
2. Each year on an annual basis, all staff members must renew their attestation via the web form.

Web form for staff attestation: www.dentalnurseacademy.com/staff-attestation-form
(staff only)

TRAINING

INITIAL TRAINING

Training on this policy is included as part of the induction process when new starters join the Dental Nurse Academy.

REFRESHER TRAINING

Training regarding this policy is repeated annually.

Training is provided for managers on this policy and the associated arrangements.

MONITORING

This policy is monitored by the Management Team.

MANAGING CONCERNS

RAISING CONCERNS

To raise a concern, contact the Senior Lead in the first instance. If that person is not available, please contact the Deputy Senior Lead. In the event of neither being available please escalate to the point of escalation. Full contact details are described below for each of these individuals.

All concerns should be raised formally by email to raisingconcerns@dentalnurseacademy.com

RECORDING CONCERNS

Concerns are recorded in the DNA's Policy Concerns Log, which is stored securely on our HR server. Access is restricted to this folder so that only relevant persons can access the log. It is the responsibility of the Senior Lead to record all concerns and action taken.

All log files are kept in accordance with UK law and best practice and will be deleted in the appropriate timeframe.

INVESTIGATING CONCERNS

We aim to objectively assess every concern, evaluating its severity in the context of this policy. We aim to apply common sense and judgement, and commit to deal with allegations as quickly, fairly and consistently as is reasonably practicable. Our process will always involve two (2) senior management team members in any investigation, as well as a relevant Manager as appropriate.

1. Ensure the log is completed for this concern
2. Categorise the concern level of the allegation
3. Create an initial response to the allegation
4. Ensure the full facts are presented to the investigation team
5. Seek advice from regulatory/government body if appropriate
6. Reach decision
 1. Where “no further action” is the outcome:
 1. The record log must be updated including the justification for the decision
 2. A response will be put in writing to the individual concerned
 2. Where “further enquiry” is the outcome:
 1. A schedule for review will be created to determine frequency for updates
 2. An action plan for next steps will be created
 3. The record log will be updated accordingly

RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of this policy rests with the Chief Executive. Partners and Managers will ensure that they and their staff operate within this policy and arrangements, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to ensure continuity plans and contingencies are in place on an ongoing basis. Each partner will ensure that:

- All staff are aware of the processes and arrangements referenced in this policy;
- Proper records are maintained.

The person responsible for monitoring the operation of the policy, including periodic departmental audits, and with responsibility for considering and taking action if any instances breach this policy is detailed below (“Senior Lead”)

GETTING SUPPORT OR GUIDANCE

SUPPORT

Support with any requirements relating to this policy should be obtained from the Senior Lead, detailed below.

GUIDANCE

Guidance on this topic can be obtained from the NEBDN

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

SENIOR LEAD FOR THIS POLICY

- Name: Demelza Owen
- Title: Operations Director
- Email address: demelzao@dentalnurseacademy.com
- Telephone number: 020 4591 2333

DEPUTY SENIOR LEAD FOR THIS POLICY

- Name: Elaine Mustoe
- Title: Course Director
- Email address: elainem@dentalnurseacademy.com
- Telephone number: 020 4591 2333

POINT OF ESCALATION FOR THIS POLICY

- Name: Rob Mustoe
- Title: MD
- Email address: consultant@dentalnurseacademy.com
- Telephone number: 020 4591 2333

NEBDN (AWARDING BODY)

- Name: Customer support
- Email address: customersupport@nebdn.org
- Telephone number: 01772 429 917

GENERAL DENTAL COUNCIL (GDC)

- Email address (<https://www.gdc-uk.org/contact-us> - use contact form)
- Telephone number: 0207 167 6000

REVIEW

This policy is fully supported by senior management (The Board at the DNA).

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed annually under the direct supervision of the Chief Executive/MD, to ensure alignment with current GDC guidelines and educational best practices.

LAST REVIEWED

January 2026

Reviewed by: Rob Mustoe, MD



NEXT REVIEW

January 2027