

# My dream career: dental hygienist

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Dentistry plays a central role in transforming an individual's smile as harm to teeth can have a detrimental effect on an individual's appearance and self-confidence. Being part of a team that helps individuals look after their teeth and being part of the journey to see their confidence flourish is something that I aim to do in this profession.

My initial interest to become a dental hygienist and therapist grew stronger during my work placement which provided me with close-up experience of the profession and where I saw the constructive impact of oral health to an individual. Having observed many dental hygienists and therapists I noticed how fulfilling and impactful the career is which is something I am determined to do.

Due to my interest in dental hygiene and therapy, I specifically choose to study Biology, Chemistry, and Sociology at A-level because it was a broad subject combination providing a good basis for this degree through the varied range of skills, I will attain by studying these subjects.

Sociology has helped in developing my methodical skills as well as a cross-cultural understanding; whereas biology and chemistry have assisted in improving my written communication, patience, motivational and listening skills. These skills are vital for this field because you need to be able to effectively interact and work closely with others for a more efficient and accurate diagnosis.

Last summer I did a work placement at a dental practice, where I had the chance to observe a range of diverse treatments, oscillating from composite and amalgam fillings to deep cleans. Whilst shadowing the dental hygienist

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and therapist I gained a lot of knowledge about the career overall from the skills needed to the variety of treatments that they can conduct. I discovered the importance of developing a rapport with the patient as well as developing a fluent and cordial approach with every patient because unlike GP practices, a dentist can build genuine and reliable relationships with patients through their routine visits.

I also experienced the necessity of the hard skills required such as using dental tools which displayed the importance of having intricate manual dexterity skills which I have developed through baking as well as carrying out titrations in chemistry. Through this placement, I saw various clinical procedures and I was particularly fascinated by periodontal disease and how it is caused and treated.

Immersing myself into a range of extracurricular activities has enhanced my knowledge as well as allowed me to gain invaluable, diverse life experiences. Volunteering at Locala gave me an insight into working in a health care professions whilst learning the importance of empathy, respecting others and attentiveness as well as developing effective communication skills; these skills are vital for a dental hygiene and therapist, as they will allow an individual to conduct a more fluent and operative treatment.

Working at a charity shop has led to me interacting with a wide variety of people, building my self-confidence and enhancing my ability to work effectively as part of a team which are essential skills for this profession. Additionally, being a chemistry mentor has allowed me to improve my interpersonal skills which will allow me to explain and educate patients in a

calm and comforting manner on how to maintain good oral health. Moreover, I also enjoy baking, going to the gym and art which further enhances my precision and creativity.

Ultimately, through being considerate and diligent I am determined to prosper in this degree and then the career of a dental hygienist and therapist. I look forward to a career that will allow me to deliver innovative healthcare and make a positive transformation to an individual's life. It is the challenge, gratification, and consummation of being a dental hygienist and therapist that inspires me. I would love the opportunity to embark on this rewarding and valuable profession.