

# DELIVERING LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR FOUNDATION DENTISTS

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## Background

A need for leadership training for newly graduated dentists undergoing foundation training was established to equip them for clinical roles by increasing self-awareness and reflection, as well as gain an understanding relevant leadership models and concepts in order for them to create a meaningful leadership PDP.

An initial programme was developed and training was linked to national leadership standards and assessment for the ILM Level 5 Award in Leadership and Management. The assessment was undertaken by independent ILM assessors.

## Further Programme

A further programme was offered in late 2021 for a smaller cohort leading to the more extensive ILM level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management, held over 15 months. This comprised workshops, tutorials, and a series of 6 facilitated Action Learning Sets.

Candidates were assessed for the Diploma on their presentation skills, their understanding of leadership styles, a robust evidenced assessment of their leadership abilities, the development and implementation of a leadership PDP over 6 to 12 months and completion of and reflection on a series of action learning sets, assessed via a portfolio.

## Conclusions

The initial programme identified a need for formal leadership training for recently graduated dentists, with a low awareness of existing NHS leadership support.

The subsequent programme has highlighted that recently graduated dentists demonstrate some challenges in self-reflection and developing a PDP.

Leadership competences prior to the programme rarely formed part of PDPs. The project has highlighted a need for assisting graduates in their understanding of their leadership responsibilities as professionals, and further educational opportunities in communications, notably assertiveness and giving feedback.

## Method

In early 2021, Foundation dentists were invited to apply for a leadership programme which included a series of 6 participative workshops culminating in assessment for the ILM level 5 Award in Leadership and Management.

Assessment was via a presentation and viva on the candidates' development of leadership ability and their ability to motivate and gain commitment to objectives and values, together with a reflection on areas for further leadership development. The assessment results indicated majority had greater confidence in leadership and how to create a robust personal development plan

The evaluation was carried out through survey feedback on the programme, the percentage achieving the qualification, and the individual reflection which formed part of the assessment.

## Feedback

Individual benefits reported in this evaluation vary considerably but include:

- a greater levels of reflection
- improved communication
- better planning
- greater understanding of how to implement leadership models
- increased understanding of how to create a meaningful PDP
- knowledge of how to implement change.
- skills for leadership in dentistry

## Results

134 Foundation dentists attended the first programme of whom 110 applied for the Level 5 Award in leadership and management. Of these, 103 presented for assessment and 101 achieved the qualification (98% pass rate). The initial survey evaluation had an 80% response rate.

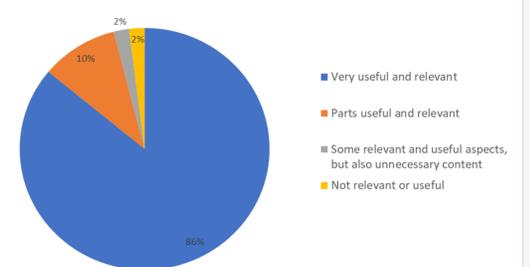
Did you gain new knowledge and understanding from the course?



Was the mode of delivery (online) effective for the content of the course?



How useful and relevant was the content of the course



*"This course was a unique opportunity to further understand the meaning of what leadership entails and its significance to dentistry. I found it extremely beneficial to learn about the different types of leadership positions that are associated with dentistry such as taking part in local dental networks, learning more about clinical fellowship roles regarding leadership and in general what qualities are required to ensure that you have what it requires to be an effective leader. I feel that I have in the past had limited opportunities to demonstrate leadership abilities but as a dentist, leadership is a key trait that is required for effective management of a team which the dentist is the natural leader of. Moreover I was also interested by how much variety and scope there is within the dental profession and the many avenues and routes you can go down to diversify your job role and gain transferable skills and develop those further."*