



Moving Upstream

Data Supplement

January 2019

**General
Dental
Council**

protecting patients,
regulating the dental team

Moving Upstream Data Supplement

This supplement presents analysis of the following data sets:

- the GDC's Registers of dentists and dental care professionals (DCPs) operating in the UK
- student places (past and future) provided by the UK's 16 dental schools.

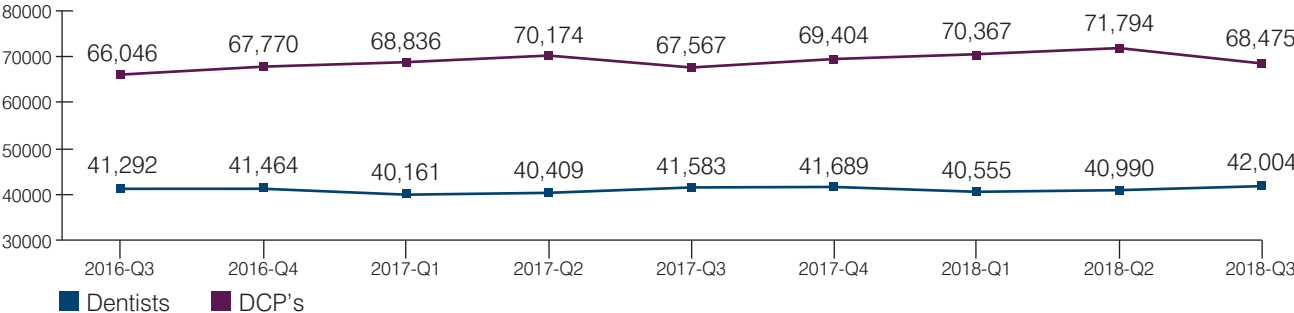
Analysis of GDC Registers

Number of dental professionals

Our registers provide a snapshot of the number of dental professionals, both dentists and DCPs, available for work, and an understanding of the composition of the dental workforce¹. Overall, the number of people

on the GDC's registers has remained consistent over the past two years, with slightly higher counts in both registrant categories in Quarter 3 2018, compared to Quarter 3 2016 (fig 1).

**Figure 1 – Number of dentists and DCPs measured by quarter
September 2016 to September 2018**



¹ The sample dates for the graphs in this section are 16 September 2016, 14 September 2017, and 17 September 2018. These dates have been selected to provide the optimal sample data for the registers. Sampling in this way provides a view that includes those DCPs most likely to be working for the following registration period.

Composition of dental professionals

Dental nurses comprise the largest population in the DCP category, (fig 2), followed by hygienists, technicians, therapists, orthodontic therapists and clinical dental technicians (fig 3).

N.B. Because some DCPs are registered under more than one title, the figures below represent the total number of titles, not individual registrants².

Figure 2 – Number of dental nurses compared to other DCPs, September 2016 to September 2018

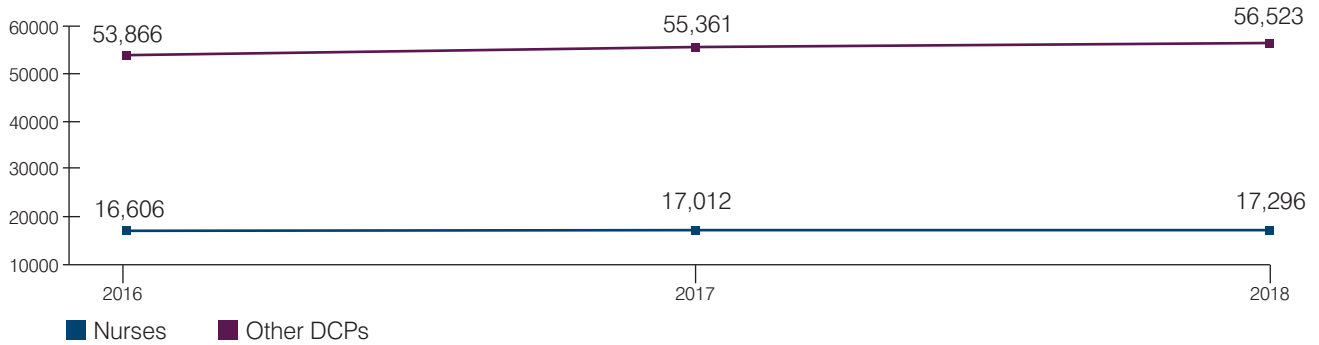
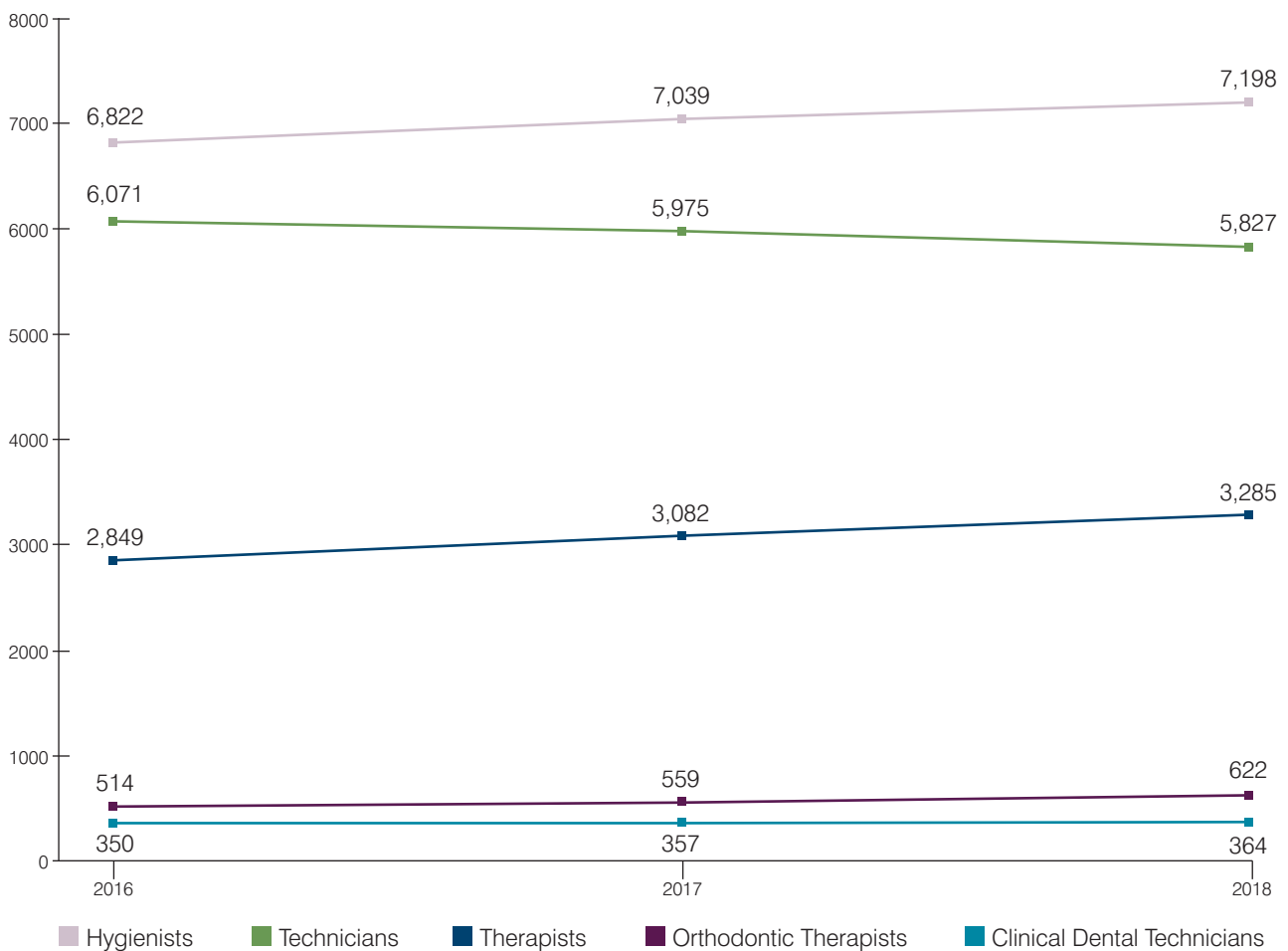


Figure 3 – Number of DCPs, excluding dental nurses, September 2016 to September 2018



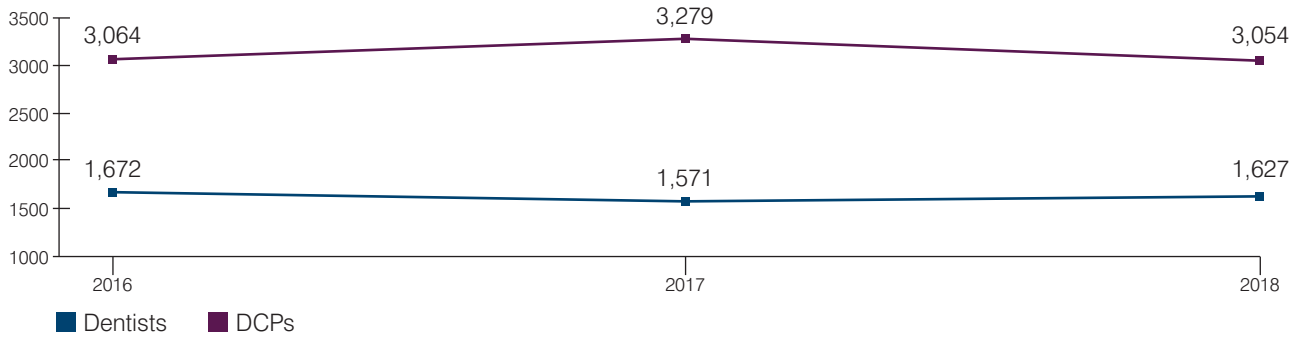
² GDC Registration Report, December 2018, number of DCPs with more than one title on 11 December 2018 was 6,196. GDC, 24 January 2019, <https://www.gdc-uk.org/about/who-we-regulate>.

Number of new entrants

The number of new entrants (registrants new to the registers) across the period has remained stable. In 2017 there was a slight increase in DCPs and a small

decrease in dentists, but in 2018 the numbers in both categories were similar to 2016 levels. (fig 4).

Figure 4 – New entrants, September 2016 to September 2018

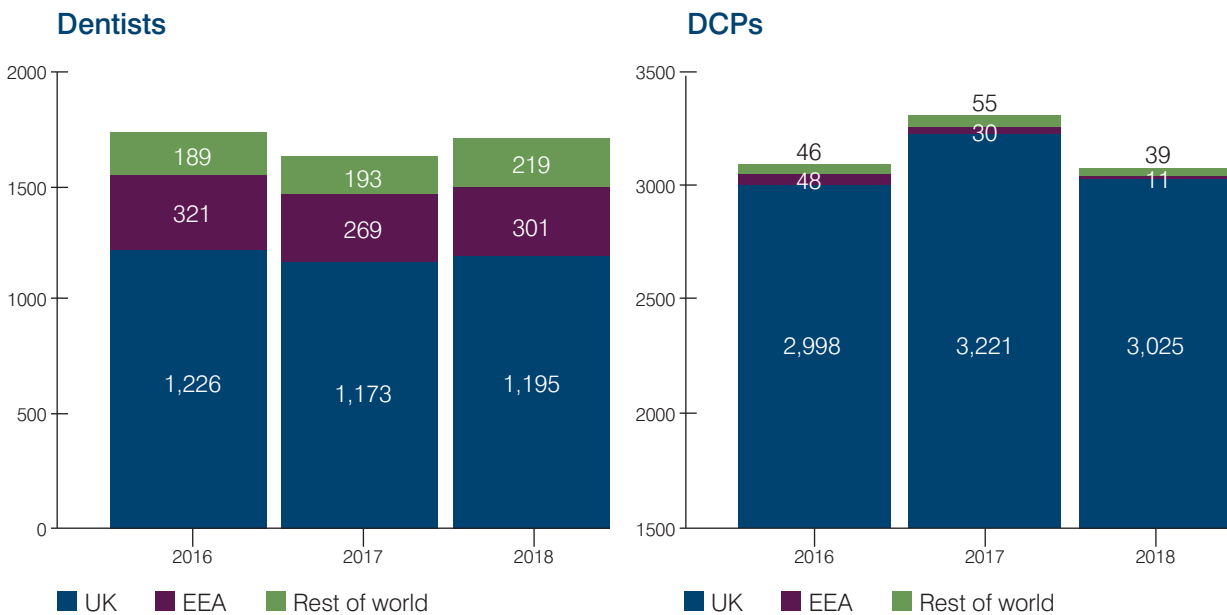


Origin of new entrants

Most new entrants are from the UK, but the pattern is different between dentists and DCPs (fig 5). For dentists a larger number of non-UK registered dentists come from the European Economic Area (EEA),

compared to those who come from the rest of the world. The reverse is true, albeit on a smaller scale, for DCPs in 2017 and 2018.

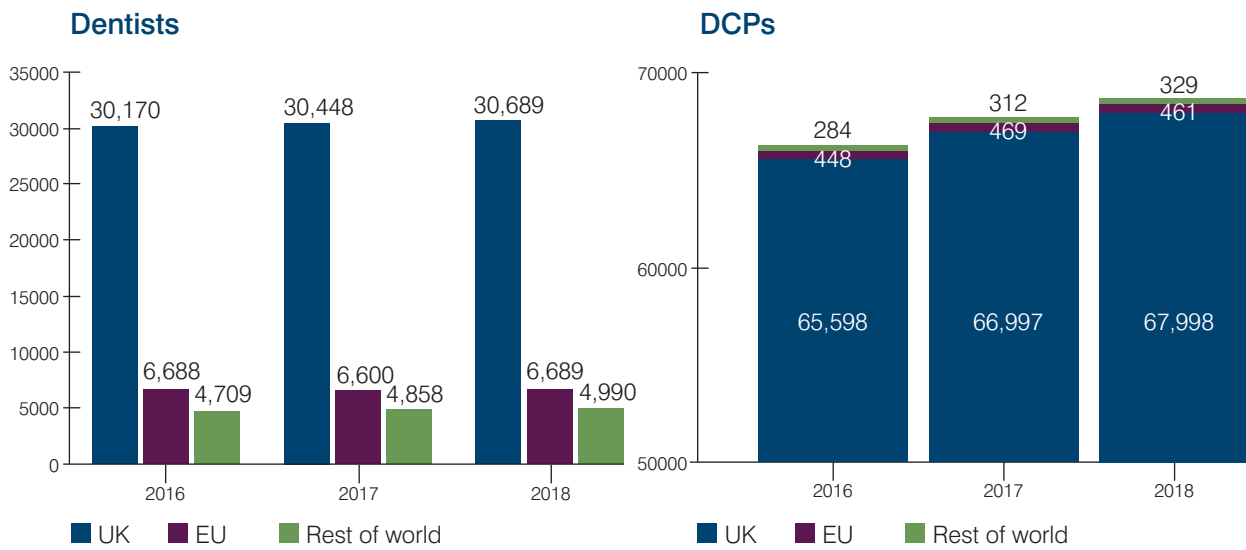
Figure 5 – New entrants, DCPs and dentists, by region, September 2016 to September 2018



Most registrants, both dentists and DCPs, are qualified in the UK. However, there is a greater number, and strikingly a much larger proportion, of non-UK qualified dentists than DCPs (fig 6). It is worth noting that currently the Mutual Recognition of Professional

Qualifications Directive (MRPQ) provides EEA-qualified dentists and DCPs with a simpler route to practising in the UK than those who qualified in countries outside of the EEA.

Figure 6 – Country of qualification, September 2016 to September 2018

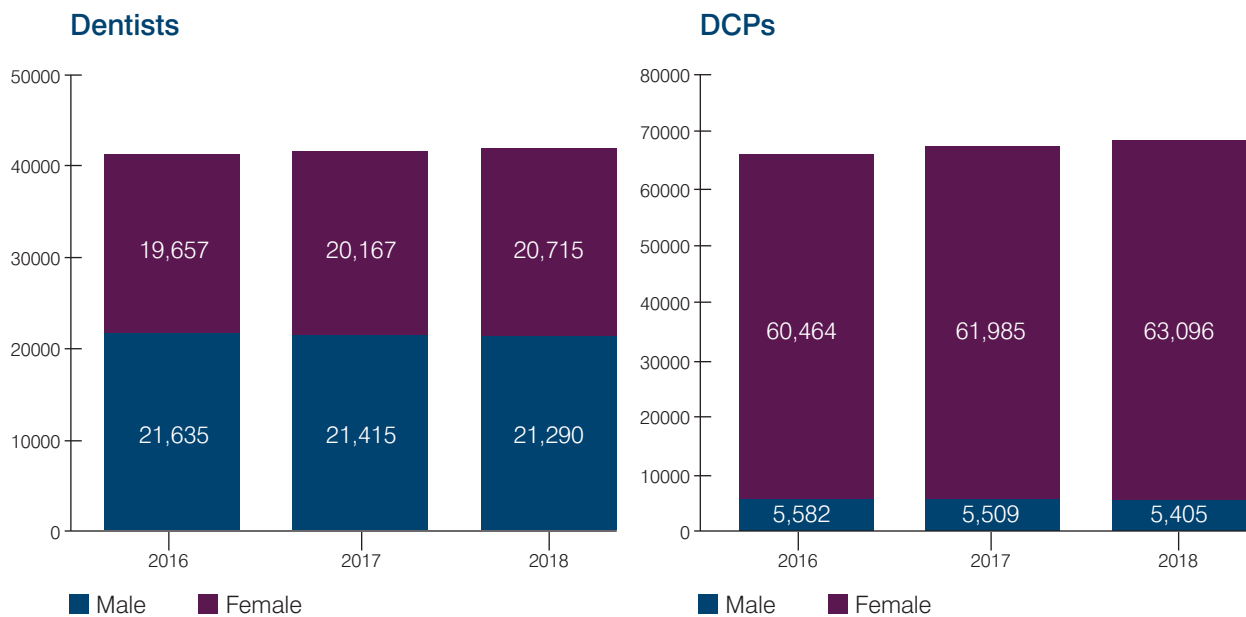


Gender composition

The gender composition of our registrants is illustrated in the charts below (fig 7). The data suggests that a gradual equalisation is taking place for male and

female dentists. However, the DCP register remains almost entirely female, making dentistry as whole a predominately female profession.

Figure 7 – Gender profiles for dentists and DCPs, September 2016 to September 2018



Diversity

Dentists and DCPs have a similar diversity profile, which has been largely maintained, across the three years included in the analysis (fig 8 and fig 9). Most registrants, of either category, identify as white British, with Asian/Asian British being the next largest category.

While this analysis is derived from 'voluntarily' provided data, it is notable for both registrant groups, that there are proportionately smaller numbers of registrants identifying as 'Black/Black British' on the Registers, than the UK population³. In the 2011 Census, 3% of the population identified as 'Black/African/Caribbean/Black British', compared to 1% of dentists on the Register in 2018; a figure that has not changed significantly over the three-year period. This is also true for DCPs, at 2%, of those registered in 2018.

The GDC registers show a workforce that does not reflect the diversity found in the UK population. Many factors affect an individual's route into dentistry, but the lack of diverse representation is certainly worthy of further consideration by those providing training and education for dentists and DCPs.

Going forward, as the professional regulator for registrants and dental education and training, the GDC would like these findings to inform a debate across the sector. It is hoped that this will provide an impetus for further research, to help us understand what the reasons are for the disparity in ethnicity, and as importantly, where solutions might be found.

Figure 8 – Registered dentists by ethnicity

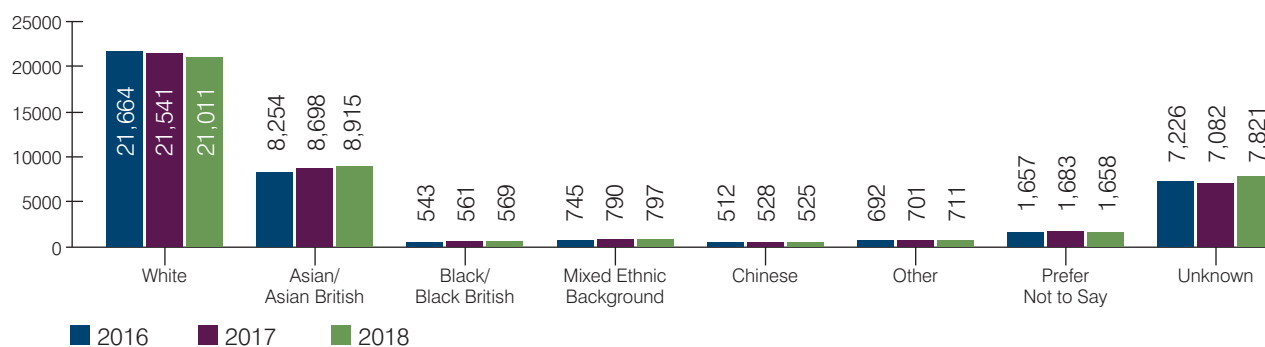
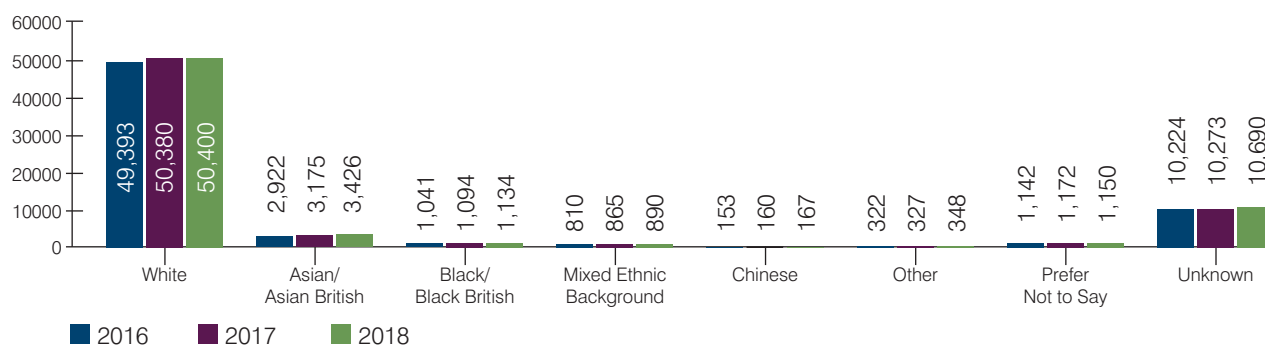


Figure 9 – Registered DCPs by ethnicity



³ Office of National Statistics (ONS), 2011 Census, UK, September 2012. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census>

Graduate dental education across the UK

Over the summer of 2018, the GDC undertook a short survey of the UK's 16 providers of dentistry degrees. We asked education providers for the number of students who had graduated over the last three years (2016–2018) and for the number of students expected

to graduate over the following three years (2019–2021). We also asked educators to provide information about the number of students and full fee-paying overseas students (fig 10).

Figure 10 – Total number of dentistry students in the UK – 2016 to 2021

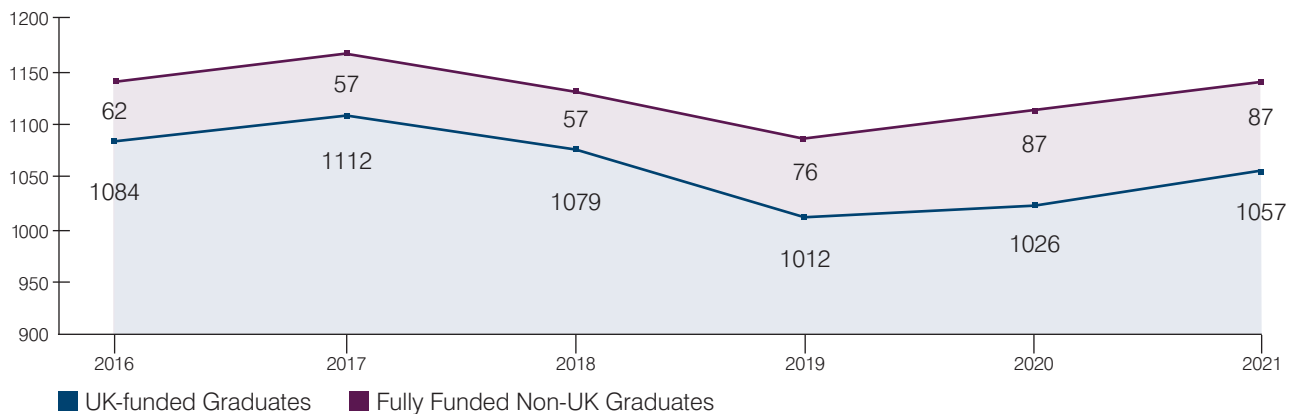
	2016	2017	2018	2019*	2020*	2021*
UK funded graduates	1,084	1,106	1,077	1,012	1,026	1,057
Fully self-funded non-UK graduates	62	57	57	76	87	87

(*2019 to 2021 are predicted numbers)

Overall, the number of UK-funded graduates has remained relatively stable over the period, although current predictions are for a slight decrease in the number of UK-funded graduates from 2019 to 2021.

This compares favourably with a small, but steady, increase in the number of fully funded non-UK graduates, over the same timeframe (fig 11).

Figure 11 – Trends in dental graduate places and funding 2016 to 2021



(*2019 to 2021 are predicted numbers)

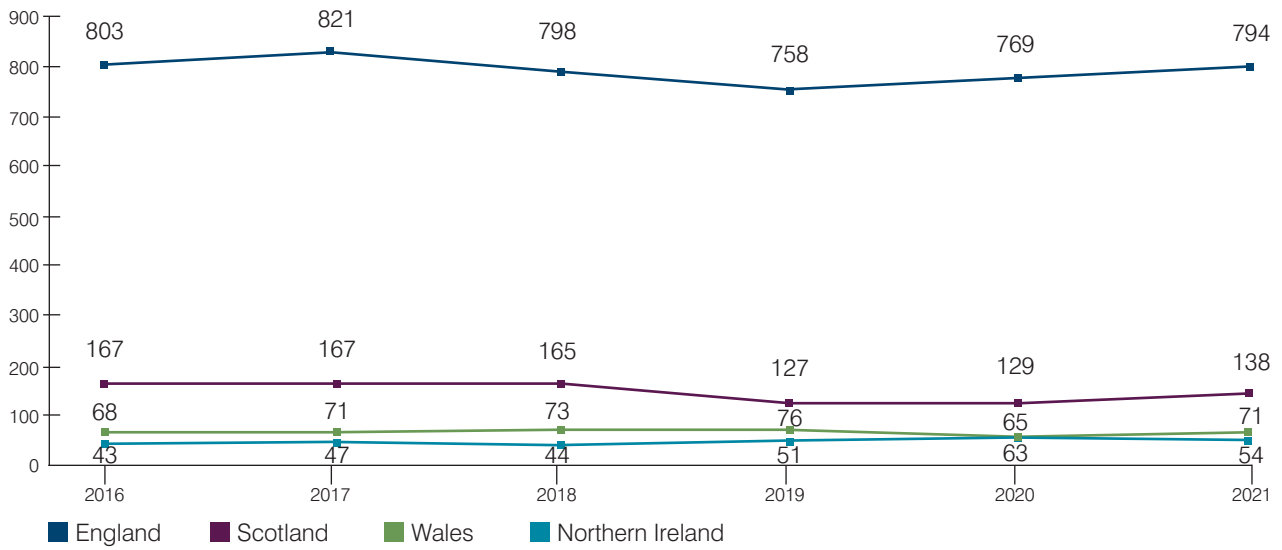
There is little variation in graduate numbers across individual institutions over either timeframe, but the variation between the four UK nations is notable (fig 12).

England has seen stable graduate numbers over the six-year timeframe, albeit with a predicted drop in 2019. It should be noted that these figures are predictions, and so subject to revision, for students who are unsuccessful or drop out.

In Wales and Northern Ireland, each with one dental school, graduate numbers have remained broadly steady.

However, Scotland has witnessed a steady decline since 2016, with a predicted drop of 38 places between 2018 and 2019, to be slightly offset by a rise of 11 places by 2021. In 2021, on current predictions, it will be graduating 32 fewer UK-funded dentists than in 2016, a 19% decrease over the period.

Figure 12 – UK-funded graduates by UK nation (actual/predicted)



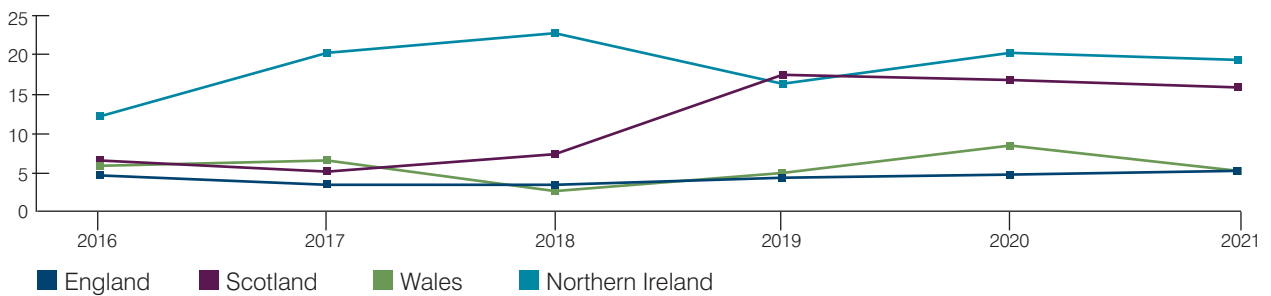
(*2019 to 2021 are predicted numbers)

Non-UK funded places

Another development is the growth of non-UK funded student places in Scotland (fig 13). This contrasts starkly with the number of places in England and Wales, which have remained relatively stable. Northern

Ireland, while echoing Scotland’s position, has specific and long-standing reasons for having a high percentage of such students/places.

Figure 13 – Percentage of graduates who are non-UK funded/overseas full-fee paying



	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
England	4.7%	3.6%	3.5%	4.4%	4.8%	5.3%
Scotland	6.6%	5.1%	7.4%	17.5%	16.8%	15.9%
Wales	5.9%	6.6%	2.7%	5.0%	8.5%	5.3%
Northern Ireland	12.2%	20.3%	22.8%	16.4%	20.3%	19.4%

This is the first time that we have undertaken this level of analysis into graduate numbers and student places, so it is difficult to discern historical trends.

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