Clinical Audits

An audit is a quality improvement process. The reviewer selects and assesses a random set of records against a set standard. The reviewer may look at the whole record or at a specific area of practice like radiographs. The reviewer can look at whether the treatment was clinically necessary or if the radiographs were of sufficient diagnostic value. The individual specified in the condition or undertaking must verify the audit.

Case-based discussion

Case-based discussions help to assess the registrant’s performance by discussing patient cases or looking at patient records. The reviewer will check if the registrant followed standards and if activity they carried out was clinically necessary. They will also identify any areas for improvement.

Reporters or supervisors can use case-based discussions to document supervision as part of conditions or undertakings. The workplace supervisor could include them with reports they submit to the GDC.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest is when another interest influences or could influence or impair ability to make judgement or to act. Examples could include a personal relationship (such as a relation or partner) or a commercial interest. There is no exhaustive list of what constitutes a conflict of interest. Conflicts of interest can be actual or potential.

Contracting body

A contracting body is an organisation or individual who contracts the registrant to provide dental services. A dentist may have a contract with NHS England. A private dentist may have a contract with an individual patient. A private dentist may have a contract with companies such as Denplan to deliver services on their behalf.

Chaperone

A chaperone is an impartial adult observer present whenever the registrant interacts with certain groups of patients. This could be patients under eighteen, female patients, patients with a learning disability.

The chaperone must be either a dentist or a DCP, another health professional or an independent observer. Conditions or undertakings may specify that chaperone should be of a certain sex.

Development Adviser (England)

A development adviser supports a registrant with conditions or undertakings to develop and update a Personal Professional Development Profile (PPDP). They also support, guide, and monitor the registrant to meet the areas of concern identified in conditions or undertakings. They will help the registrant to draw up their PPDP, monitor progress against the PPDP, and review any written evidence specified in the PPDP. The development adviser will provide the GDC, or other relevant bodies, with reports on this process at times specified under the conditions/undertakings or upon request. Development advisers do not supervise the registrant’s clinical practice.

Registrants must nominate a development adviser for approval by the GDC. Persons agreeing to undertake this role will charge the registrant a fee.
Educational Supervisor (Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland)

An educational supervisor is appointed by a Postgraduate Dental Dean. If the condition/undertaking allows it, the registrant may be able to nominate their own educational supervisor. They are responsible for the overall supervision of the registrant’s learning and educational progress during a specified period. The educational supervisor will help the registrant to draw up their PPDP to address the issues identified by the decision maker. They will support and guide the registrant, monitor the progress against the PPDP, and review the evidence specified in the PPDP. The educational supervisor will provide the GDC, or other relevant bodies, with reports on this process at times specified under the conditions/undertakings or upon request. Educational Supervisors do not supervise the registrant’s clinical practice.

Locum/staff bank

A locum is a registrant standing in for an absent professional or temporarily covering a vacancy. A locum is usually employed by an agency to do a locum ‘placement’ at a dental practice or a hospital.

Logs

A log is a record made during or directly after the treatment or activity, as specified in a set of conditions or undertakings. Conditions or undertakings will specify if someone should verify the log. The log must always include:

- Registrant’s name
- Date of the activity/treatment
- Patient’s anonymous identifier or patient number
- Patient’s clinical issues or presenting problem
- The activity/treatment undertaken
- Outcome
- Any relevant medical history
- Any other information needed to meet the requirements of the relevant condition or undertaking.

Medical supervision

A registrant will have a medical supervisor if their fitness to practice is impaired by reason of physical or mental health. The medical supervisor will meet with the registrant regularly to discuss their progress. They will contact treating doctors, for example a GP, or another medical professional treating the registrant. The medical supervisor may, with the consent of the registrant, consult with others involved in the registrant’s conditions/undertakings.

Medical Supervisor Agreement Form

The medical supervisor will report to the GDC on a regular basis about the registrant’s progress under treatment, their compliance with conditions/undertakings and their fitness to practise in general.

On-call duties

Some General Dental Practitioners (GDPs) at a general practice can be on an on-call rota to see
patients outside of regular hours. GDPs may also belong to an on-call service, separate to the practice. On-call GDPs may also provide dental services under the NHS Dental Access Helpline or a private emergency dental service. Hospital-based registrants could be on call to see acute patients. The registrant could be on call while at home or off duty.

Out-of-hours work

Out-of-hours work is done outside of business hours. Normally this is after 18:00 and before 08:00 on weekdays and all day at weekends and bank holidays.

Personal Professional Development Plan (PPDP)

PPDP is a plan for the registrant’s continued professional and/or personal development over a set period. For registrants with conditions or undertakings, it is the starting point for remediation and/or retraining in a particular area or areas of practice. The PPDP can cover any area of the GDC’s Standards for the Dental Team, but it must set out an action plan to address the area or areas of concern, any measures to take, and the completion date. The Development Adviser/Educational Supervisor can advise the registrant about preparing a PPDP, but it is the registrant’s responsibility to prepare and complete it.

Reporter

The reporter reports to the GDC on the registrant’s progress towards remediation in an area or areas of concern. GDC must approve the reporter before a registrant can return to work. The registrant or their defense representative will need to provide the reporter’s full name and contact details, current CV and a signed copy of the Reporter Agreement Form. The reporter and the workplace supervisor can be the same person.

The reporter must agree to provide reports to the GDC at the intervals specified in the registrant’s conditions or undertakings. The reporter can use a GDC template. All reports must include:

- dates of meetings between the reporter and the registrant
- confirmation that the registrant is complying with their conditions or undertakings
- details of any patient complaints received and the outcome of these complaints
- details of any concerns raised in the workplace about the registrant’s fitness to practice
- details of any formal disciplinary action
- details of the registrant’s progress on making remedial activities
- any other information relevant to the registrant’s compliance with their conditions or undertakings.

If the reporter does not work at the same place as the registrant, they must be able to attend the practice and access any documentation relevant to the registrant’s conditions or undertakings. Sometimes, the Committee or case examiner may specify that the reporter must be always on premises with the registrant.

Workplace supervision

Workplace supervisor oversees the registrant’s clinical day-to-day work. They review clinical practice of the registrant throughout the period of supervision and provide feedback. Postgraduate Dental Deans or their nominated deputies do not appoint, identify, or manage workplace supervisors.

GDC must approve the workplace supervisor before the registrant can return to work. The registrant or their defense representative must the provide supervisor’s full name and contact details, current CV and a signed copy of the Workplace Supervisor Agreement Form.
The workplace supervisor must agree to provide reports to the GDC at the intervals specified in the registrant’s conditions or undertakings. The reports should include information about:

- the registrant’s clinical performance
- one-to-one meetings and case-based discussions
- the registrant’s progress towards remediation
- any concerns regarding the registrant, their practice, or their progress towards remediation

There are three levels of workplace supervision:

**Supervised**

Another GDC registrant must supervise the registrant’s day-to-day work in a way prescribed in the relevant condition or undertaking. The supervisor does not need to work at the same practice as the registrant, but they must be available to provide advice or assistance if the registrant needs it. The supervisor must review the registrant’s work at least once a fortnight in one-to-one meetings and case-based discussions. These meetings must focus on all areas of concern identified by the conditions or undertakings. These meetings should usually be in person. If this is not possible, at least one of every two fortnightly meetings must be in person.

**Closely supervised**

Another GDC registrant must supervise the registrant’s day-to-day work in a way prescribed in the relevant condition or undertaking. The supervisor must always be on site and available when the registrant is working. The supervisor will review the registrant’s work at least twice a week in one-to-one meetings using case-based discussions. These meetings must focus on all areas of concern identified by the conditions or undertakings. These meetings can be in person or via video conferencing.

**Direct observation**

Another GDC registrant must observe the registrant’s day-to-day work as prescribed in the relevant condition or undertaking. The supervisor must always be on site and available when the registrant is working. Conditions or undertakings will specify which elements of a registrant’s practice to observe.