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Mr David McColl
Chair, BDA Scottish Dental Practice Committee

15 February 2021

Dear Mr McColl

Thank-you for your letter dated 2nd February regarding dental undergraduate training and addressed to both the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport and to me. I am replying on behalf of the Scottish Government.

The dental schools have now confirmed that the vast majority of BDS students will need to repeat a full academic year in order to reach the required standard of clinical excellence necessary for General Dental Council registration and safe practice. Similarly, NHS Education Scotland have confirmed that an extension of training is required to ensure vocational trainees meet the standards for award of Satisfactory Completion.

The impact of the pandemic has been significant on the clinical training of senior undergraduates in years 4 and 5, and on vocational trainees. Students in earlier years have also missed clinical training and laboratory work. The majority of dentistry requires the use of aerosol generated procedures and analogous to the wider situation in the sector, these procedures in a teaching environment can only be performed under strictly controlled conditions with the use of enhanced PPE.

In recognition of the unique set of circumstances we have put in place a bespoke support package for all BDS students facing a year's extra study. This significant funding was announced alongside the Dean's news, and full details can be found [here](#). Furthermore, NHS Education Scotland have agreed that vocational trainees will be offered an extension of their contract, supported by continuation of their salary.

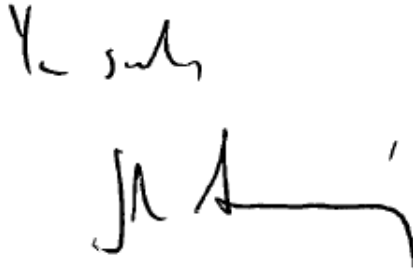
We are sure you will join us in recognising the necessity of this decision, taken in order to safeguard both the education of our future dentists and safety of patients.

Tha Ministearan na h-Alba, an luchd-comhairleachaidh sònraichte agus an Rùnaire
Maireannach fo chumhachan Achd Coiteachaidh (Alba) 2016. Faicibh www.lobbying.scot

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We trust this reassures you and your members.



JOHN SWINNEY

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