# What makes a good competition entry?

Welcome to a guide to help you prepare the best possible entry for Dental Protection Research Competition for Foundation Dentists

## Advice on how to prepare a good entry for the competition.

The following is some advice to help you make the best possible application for The MPS Foundation Research Competition for foundation dentists. This advice is based on recommendations from the developers of the competition, the criteria and guidance set out for the Competition.

## Who can enter the competition?

This is research competition for foundation dentists (FDs). You must be a FD who is undertaking your Dental Foundation Training during the 2024/2025 academic year. You may submit an entry based on a project undertaken as an individual or an entry based on collaborative efforts involving a team of up to 3 foundation dentists.

## Understand the challenge, categories, criteria, and guidance given.

Before starting work on your entry, visit our website to familiarise yourself with this year's focus, categories, criteria and guidance provided. Consider carefully if your research project aligns with the focus and which of the categories your entry would best fit into.

## Allow sufficient time to prepare your competition entry.



The open date for registration of interest is 23 November 2026 and the closing date for submission of entries is 30 July 2027. Allow yourself sufficient time to scope out and plan your work. Seek help, support and mentorship at an early stage, to give yourself the best opportunity of submitting a thoughtful and well-considered competition entry. Remember to build in some time contingency because to be fair to everyone, we do not accept late entries submitted after the closing date and time.

## Obtain informed consent.

If aspects of the content of your competition entry will relate to patients, then seeking their consent for this prior to undertaking any examination, special test (including photographs) or treatment is essential. All patient information used must be redacted and anonymised. We cannot accept entries that have not addressed these crucial points.

## Write an engaging narrative.

Write a coherent and compelling narrative. An easy-to-understand writing style is key to engaging the reader, in this case, those who will be judging your competition entry. Wherever possible, use language that can be understood by a non-professional to compose your competition entry. This is not because non-professionals will be judging the competition, but it demonstrates that you have a good grasp of your research and are able to communicate it in a manner that can be understood by all. Being able to communicate to a wide-ranging audience is an important skill to hone as a budding researcher.

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## Ensure all the essential components are present in your entry.

Your competition entry will be judged against criteria defined for the category into which you are submitting. The rubric that the judges will be using for scoring the entries are available on our website. Make sure you understand and are familiar with them.

In general, a good research competition entry will include the following:

**Title:** A title that is clear, concise, specific and descriptive.

**Project Summary:** This should be a brief, clear overview of your project, written in plain and easy to understand language. It should effectively convey the core purpose, approach, and significance of your work to a non-specialist audience.

**Background:** This should explain the rationale for doing the research project submitted for the competition. It would be expected that your rationale is grounded in the literature and relevant to your research question.

**Aims and Objectives:** These should be clearly stated and relevant to your research question.

**Methodology:** This should be appropriate for the research project question(s) and design.

**Results:** Make sure you apply the right statistical tests for your data analyses. The results should be organised and presented clearly. The use of appropriate tables, diagrams and photographs could help you explain your results more effectively.



**Discussion:** Your discussion should show that you have a good understanding of your project and its limitations, the findings, how they relate to the literature and the implications. You should include any suggestions for future research that you may have identified through your research.

**Conclusion(s):** Your conclusion(s) should reflect the original aims and objectives of your research, supported by the findings.

**Overall appearance:** Within the rules of the competition, make your competition entry standout.

Make sure it:

- Is well laid out and structured.
- Is easy to read.
- Has a logical flow of information.
- Is free from spelling mistakes and grammatical errors.

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## The impact of your research

Consider the outcomes of your research project. A good competition entry would include an explanation of how your findings fit within the context of the literature and potential next steps which may include, for example, how you hope to share your findings and how you perceive that the findings could make a difference.

## Peer and Mentor review

Asking others, especially your peers, educational supervisors, and other mentors to read your competition entry can be valuable, especially if you ask them to read through the lens of the competition criteria. Their understanding and genuine feedback of your competition entry could be an indication of what others may think. Their responses could help you to clarify and strengthen your entry.

## The final checks

Before you submit your competition entry, re-review all the criteria for the category you are interested in and make sure the required criteria are addressed within your entry. It is also a good idea to proof-read your entry, prior to submission, to check spelling, punctuation and correct use of language.

Please note, we can only consider entry submissions made through the official competition portal.



## If you need clarification

If you need any clarification or further information, please contact The MPS Foundation at info@thempsfoundation.org with the subject line: Dental Protection Research Competition for Foundation Dentists in the UK.

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