

## Orthoptic Careers Case Study

# Meet Holly

I graduated from the University of Sheffield in the summer of 2020. My first Orthoptic job was a fixed term band 5 contract at the Sheffield Royal Hallamshire Hospital starting September 2020. Since then, I have become a permanent band 6 Orthoptist at the Sheffield Royal Hallamshire and I am working as the BIOS new graduate Representative.

I was assigned a preceptor to support my development as a newly graduated Orthoptist prior to starting my band 5 role. A departmental preceptorship document was used to provide structure and guidance during our regular two weekly meetings. My preceptor had previously

been a new graduate who has gone through the same preceptorship in the department. This was extremely beneficial as she had excellent knowledge of the preceptorship and how it could be adapted and tailored to suit me.

As recommended by my preceptor I compiled a list of Orthoptic conditions I was less familiar with and tests that I needed to practice. This was shared with the department so that appropriate patients and/or clinics were selected for me to consolidate the gaps in my knowledge and clinical skills.

My manager timetabled me to be supernumerary in clinic during the first two weeks of my contract which meant that I always had a more experienced member of staff to go to for support. This included asking for other Orthoptists to check my PCT results or my ocular movements, as well as discussing the case and relevant literature to come to the correct diagnoses and exploration of the most appropriate management option(s). My team were extremely supportive and lead by example conducting a thorough Orthoptic assessment and always going the extra mile to achieve the best outcome for every patient.



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During each preceptorship meeting, I would present two patients that I had seen in the previous two weeks. The cases were either ones I had found challenging or that I had learnt from. Having a dedicated colleague to help me reflect on my practice and talk through challenging cases with was invaluable and allowed me to build my confidence as an autonomous practitioner. Over time our scheduled meetings became less frequent, yet I was always able to talk openly to my preceptor if I felt I needed and guidance or extra support.

It has been two and a half years since I began working as an Orthoptist and I can proudly say that I feel confident in my Orthoptic ability. This is largely attributed to the support and supervision of my team, as well as effective use of a preceptorship.

My experience as a new graduate would have been improved with the use of the BIOS preceptorship. The self-assessment forms would have allowed me to have considered each and every area of knowledge, clinical skills and decision making that I needed to work on. As well as this, the public health MECC section would have prepared me for healthy conversations with patient prior to starting in my first role.



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