

## Background

The transition from an undergraduate student to a professional Dentist has long been considered a significant rite of passage. It is known to be stressful and filled with uncertainty<sup>1</sup>. Predictably, there is an expectation that students should be better prepared for practice with a smooth transition from undergraduate education to clinical practice and further training. To make the transition to professional practice smoother and in response to the fast pace of scientific developments; reforms in dental education and training have taken place<sup>2</sup>. Since 1993, all newly graduated Dentists have followed a curriculum-based Foundation Training designed to serve as a bridge between undergraduate studies and general practice<sup>3</sup>.

Despite this, there are ongoing and growing concerns regarding newly qualified graduates' clinical skills and their compliance with national guidelines<sup>4,5</sup>. This might

suggest a gap between *actual* (practice) and *ideal* (what was taught) treatment planning. Although it is central to standards of patient care, surprisingly little information is available.

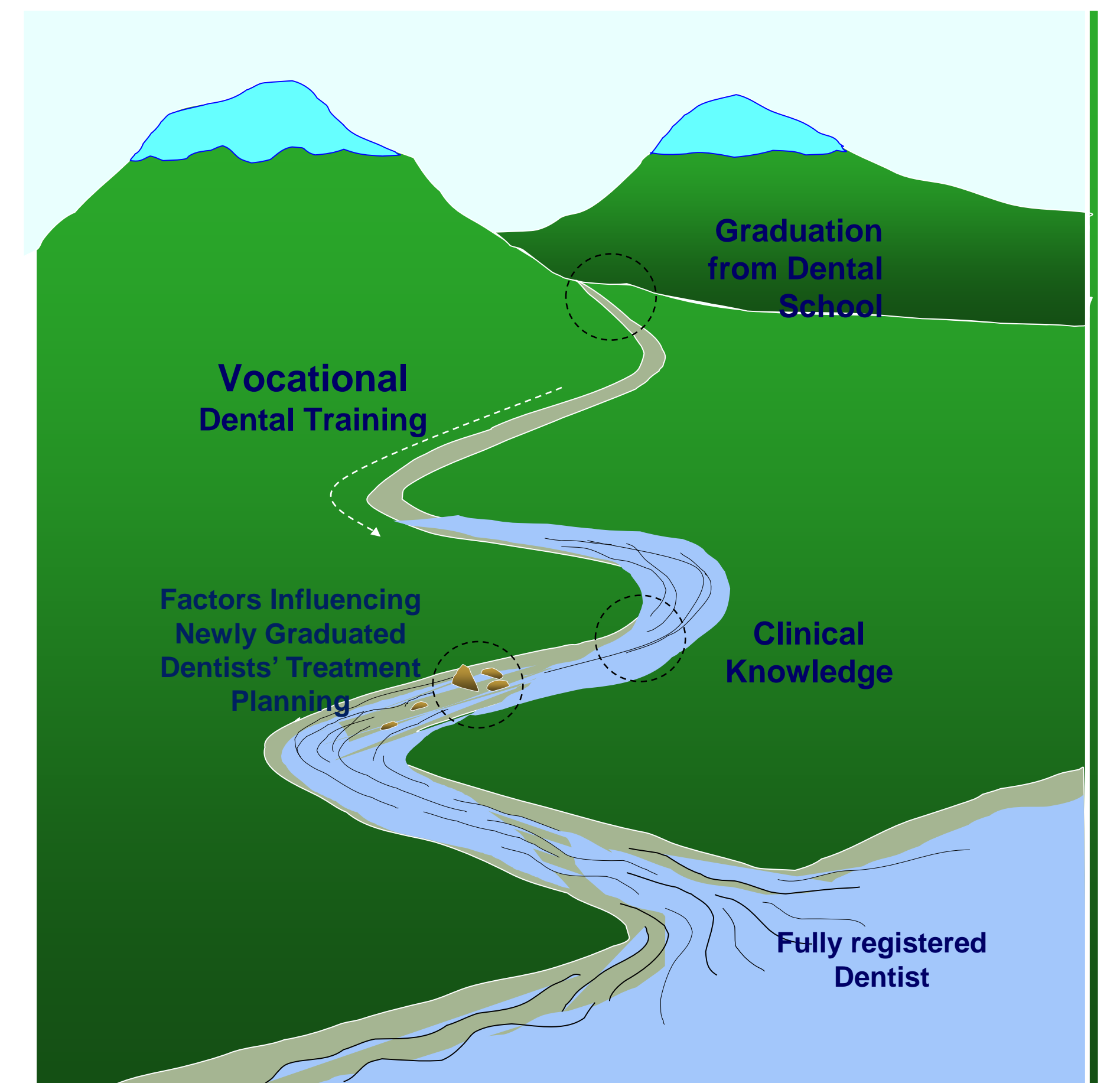


Figure (1) adapted and modified from Kawa model<sup>6</sup>

## Aim

To assess whether new graduates are applying undergraduate teaching to practice and explore some of the complexity related to the transition from undergraduate education to clinical practice (figure 1).

## Proposed method

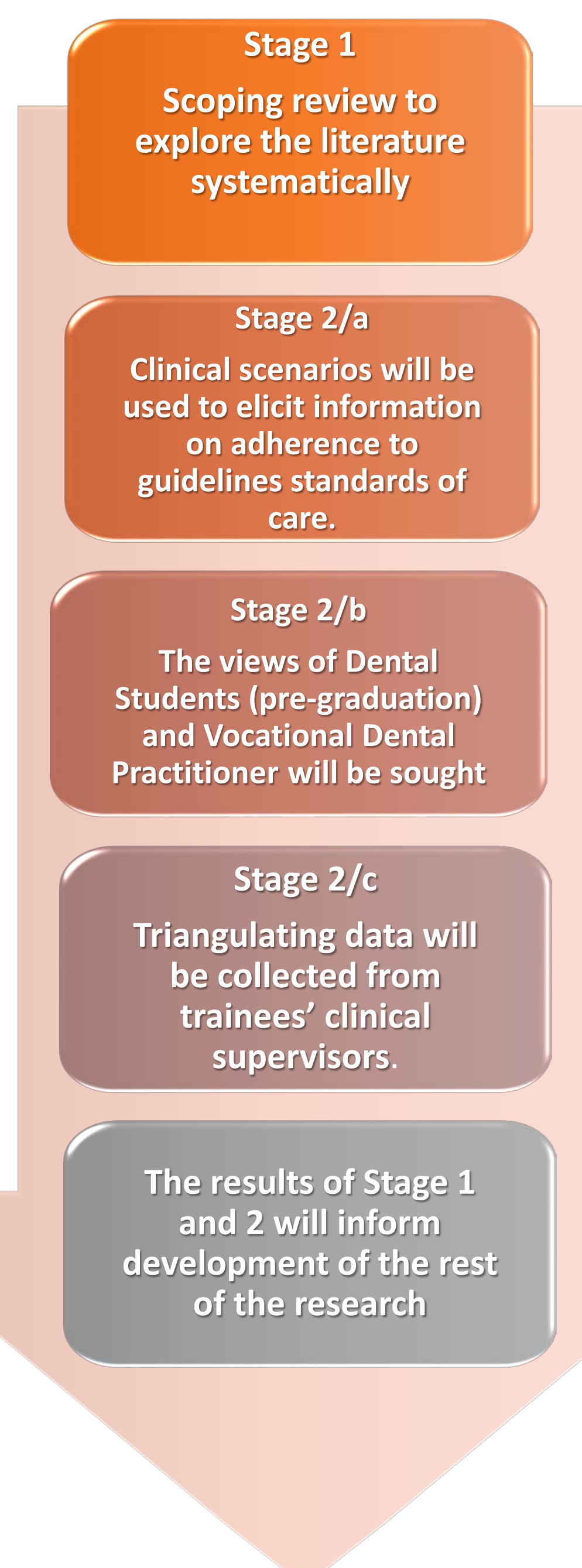


Figure 2

The study will use a mixture of both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Stage 1. A scoping review will be conducted<sup>7</sup>, aiming to elicit a deep understanding of the issues around the transition from undergraduate studies to dental practice.

Stage 2: The scoping review findings will inform Individual, semi-structured, in-depth interviews. These will be used to collect data relating to the transition from undergraduate to qualified dentist. The primary research sample will be drawn randomly from fifth-year dental students before graduation. The participants will be interviewed twice: once before starting work as a Vocational Dental Practitioners and again during their Vocational Dental Training year. Triangulating data will be collected in interviews with Vocational Dental Practitioners' clinical supervisors. The collected findings will be analysed and mapped against existing guidelines.

Stage 3: The results of Stage 1 and 2 will inform development of the rest of the research

## References and Acknowledgments

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