

fdi  **Project**
FDI World Dental Federation

**Mental Health and
Well-being in Dentistry**

PEER SUPPORT TEMPLATES



Templates for setting up peer support pathways

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Introduction to Peer Support

Peer support plays a vital role in fostering well-being, resilience, and a sense of belonging throughout dental school. Sharing experiences with peers who understand the unique pressures and challenges of dentistry can be both reassuring and empowering. It provides a safe space to talk openly, exchange practical advice, and remind one another that no one is navigating the journey alone.

In this resource, we'll explore two simple yet effective ways to incorporate peer support in your dental school.



Dental School Peer Support System



Regular Check-in Template

Dental School Peer Support System

A simple structure for pairing students with senior peers for mutual support.

Purpose: To pair students across year groups to support transition, well-being, and peer connection.

Roles and responsibilities

Senior student



Offer informal guidance on settling in, managing workload, and clinical life



Be a listening ear and signpost to support when needed



Commit to at least 3 check-ins per term

New student



Reach out with any questions or worries



Respect your peer's time and boundaries



Share feedback about how the process is going

How it works

1

Students complete a short sign-up form including their interests and availability



2

Pairings are made by the peer support lead or student rep



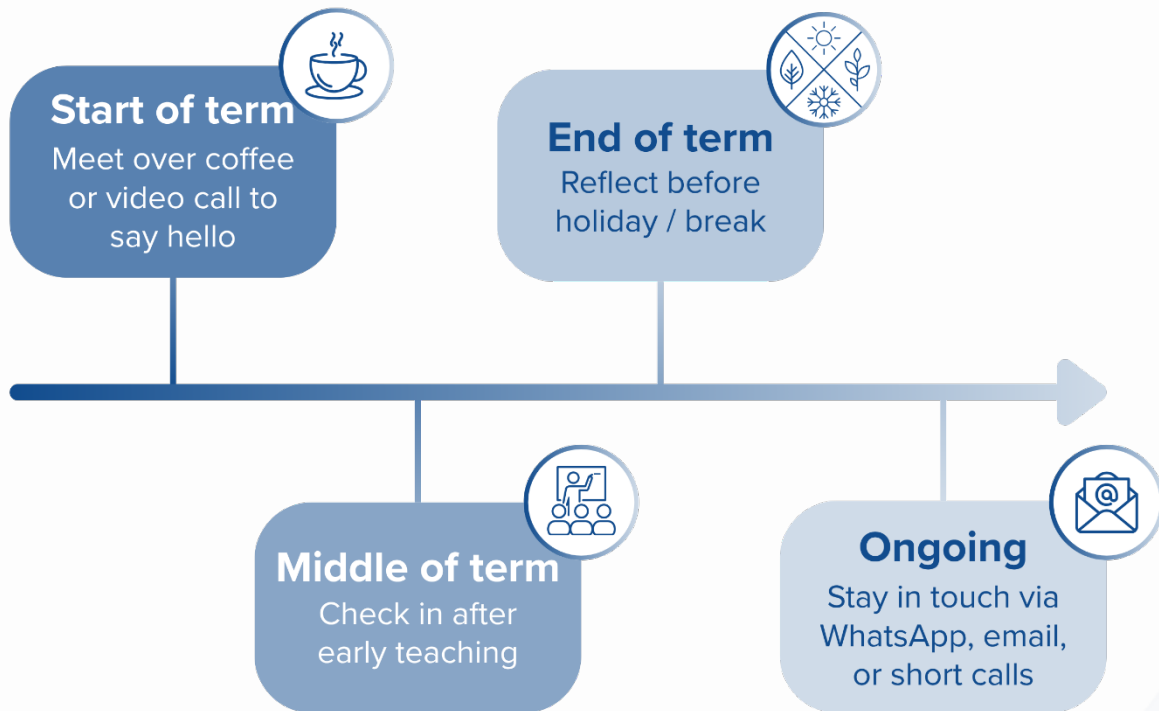
3

Peers are introduced via email with suggested first meeting prompts



Suggested check-in timeline

At least 3 check-ins should be carried out per term. Students should find times that work with each other's schedules, but the timeline below can be used as a starting point:



First meeting prompts

First meetings are a great opportunity to get to know your peer, begin to understand each other, and pick up some useful tips. For example, questions may include...



Regular Check-In Template

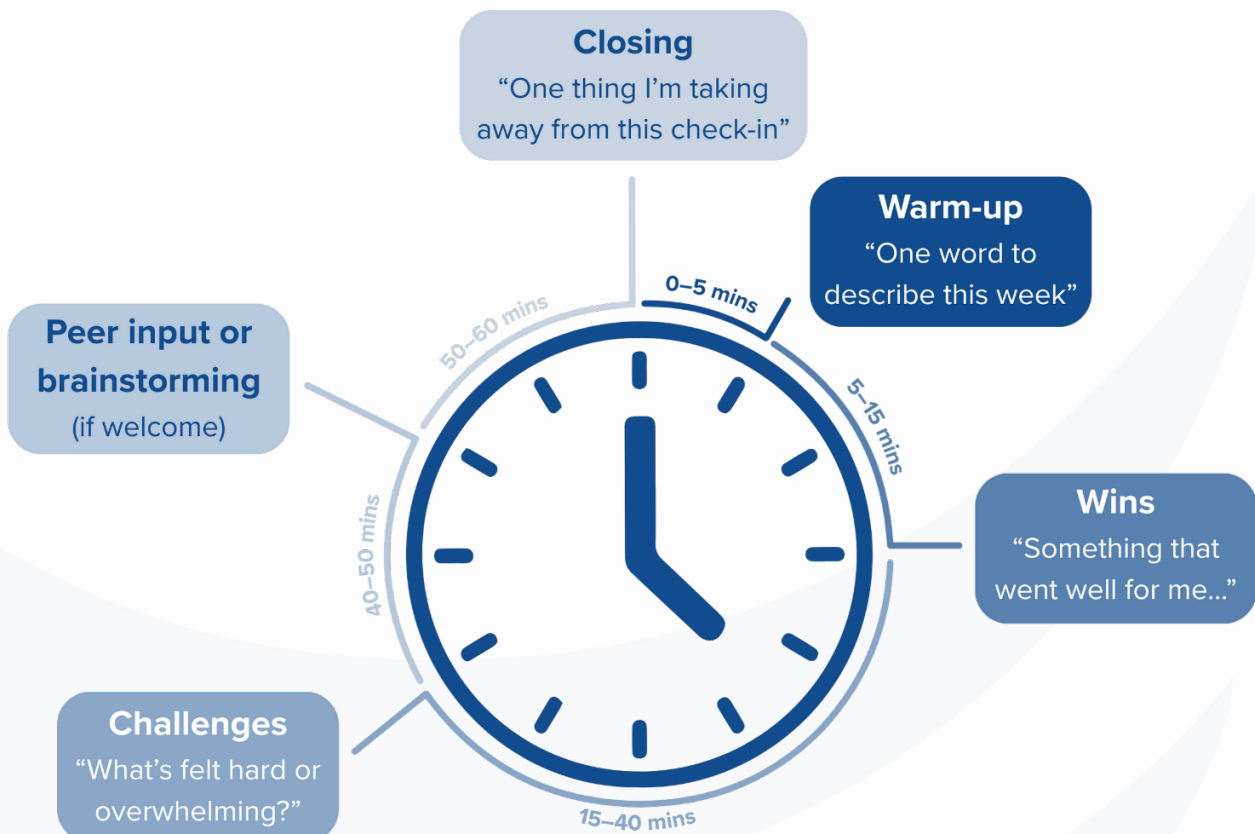
A simple format for a more formal 1:1 or group peer check-ins.

Title: Weekly/Monthly Peer Check-In Format

Purpose: To create a safe, supportive space for sharing how things are going academically and emotionally.

Structure example (60 min)

These timings can be adjusted as appropriate, depending on the length of the session and whether a student would like to focus on a specific topic.



Optional add-ons

- Bring a case or dilemma
- Share wellbeing tips or resources
- Try a reflective question of the week (e.g. "What made you feel proud recently?")

Ground rules: During these sessions, it is important to set some ground rules and boundaries to create a safe and supportive environment.



What's shared here stays here



We speak with, not at each other



Advise only if asked — sometimes listening is enough



No judgment or comparison



Everyone has space to speak



Confidentiality & boundaries

Peers are not counsellors. If a serious issue arises, encourage your peer to speak with a staff member or well-being service. If a situation arises where a peer is at serious risk of harm, you should raise this immediately using the appropriate pathways.

Template Sign-Up Form

Below is an example form with suggested questions for students interested in signing up for a peer support session. Be sure to include a brief description of the session, including whether it is group-based or one-to-one, the aims of the sessions, their frequency, and how students will be paired or grouped.

As the organizer, you may wish to include your contact details to help collate responses. To reach a wider audience, consider asking a member of the faculty to distribute the form via email as an attachment. Alternatively, an online survey tool such as Google Forms can be used to collect responses with similar questions.

Name:

Year of study:

Are there any topics you would like to discuss during the session?

For example, you may wish to explore practical mindfulness strategies, discuss common mental health challenges such as stress, imposter syndrome, cultural isolation, and hierarchical pressure, or simply hear top tips and advice from more senior students.

What are you hoping to take away from this session?

What days and times are most suitable for you?

Once completed please email a copy of this form to
at

Peer support beyond dental school

The peer support tools shared in this document are adaptable to any peer-to-peer relationship in dentistry, not just early dental school. In some countries, such as [New Zealand](#), there are already well-established mentorship programmes for **young dentists** as they begin their careers. The framework outlined here for student-to-student conversations may be a helpful starting point for similar conversations at the post-graduate level and between younger and more experienced dentists.

Acknowledgements

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