I am delighted to announce that I am up to date with my course work – all lectures so far have been listened to and the critical reading has been printed out and read – well, skimmed anyway!

We have left Unit 1 behind, except for the end of unit assessment which is due in a week’s time – five short answer questions on topics ranging from the characteristics I would seek in a new caries diagnostic device, to how I would choose between a conformative or reorganised approach to the occlusal scheme in a patient requiring multiple posterior restorations replaced. Sounds like a day in the life of a general practitioner...Still, putting my thoughts down in a succinct yet organised manner will require some effort! I haven’t received the results from the first assessment where I really did struggle to answer the questions within the word allocation which makes me slightly nervous...

Unit 1 covered the Foundations of Clinical Practice, leading us into Unit 2 entitled Aesthetic Foundations. This is much more familiar territory for me, having spent the last eight years of my professional career involved in the British Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry. I would classify my learning style as ‘highly impatient’ or ‘cut to the chase’ – I can’t abide waffle, and I was concerned that as I have spent many years learning about smile design, aesthetic evaluation etc, I may become frustrated with having to revisit these areas. All credit goes to Chris Orr – not only was his presentation a work of art (must be a Mac thing) – but he did keep my attention and pulled the information together in a very logical and scientific method. His excellent use of actual cases served as real-life examples to describe smile evaluation, which can often be a tedious subject to teach as it so often turns into a long list covering lip line, embrasures, contact points, connector lengths, golden proportion etc. Included in the lectures was an e-learning unit on photography which was excellent. Even as a regular user of digital photography, I gained some useful insights into how I could further utilise photography on a daily basis.

As I write this, the next thing is our first residential learning course in London. More on hands-on photography – yippee! I have spent years teaching my team how to take excellent photographs (which they do!) so that I don’t have to and now I have to turn up with my camera! What goes around comes around. My team are looking forward to me showing myself up in a subject I used to teach in the early days of BACD! We’ll see – I am looking forward to meeting my fellow students who have so far just been a list of names and comments beside the webinars.

About the author
Elaine Halley BDS.
DGDP (UK) is the BACD Immediate Past President and the principal of Cherrybank Dental Spa, a private practice in Perth. She is an active member of the AACD and her main interest is cosmetic and advanced restorative dentistry and she has studied extensively in the United States, Europe and the U.K.