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Purpose

The Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations (JCND E) launched the Dental Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DLOSCE) in 2020 and plans to launch the Dental Hygiene Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DHLOSCE) in 2025.

Both examinations provide licensing jurisdictions with valid, reliable, and fair assessments to determine whether candidates possess the clinical judgment and skills necessary to safely practice at an entry-level.

The DLOSCE and DHLOSCE are professionally developed examinations that evaluate candidates' abilities to apply their clinical judgment and skills in a problem-solving context, helping to ensure that individuals who are licensed possess the level of proficiency required for safe practice.

Both examinations also support licensure portability by measuring clinical judgments on core tasks that are applicable across all states and regions of the US. The DLOSCE and DHLOSCE assess quality, depth, and breadth of clinical judgment and higher order processes, focusing on the clinical tasks clinicians perform while providing direct chair-side treatment.

Method

The content specifications for the DLOSCE and DHLOSCE were established by subject matter experts and informed by the results of separate comprehensive practice analyses.



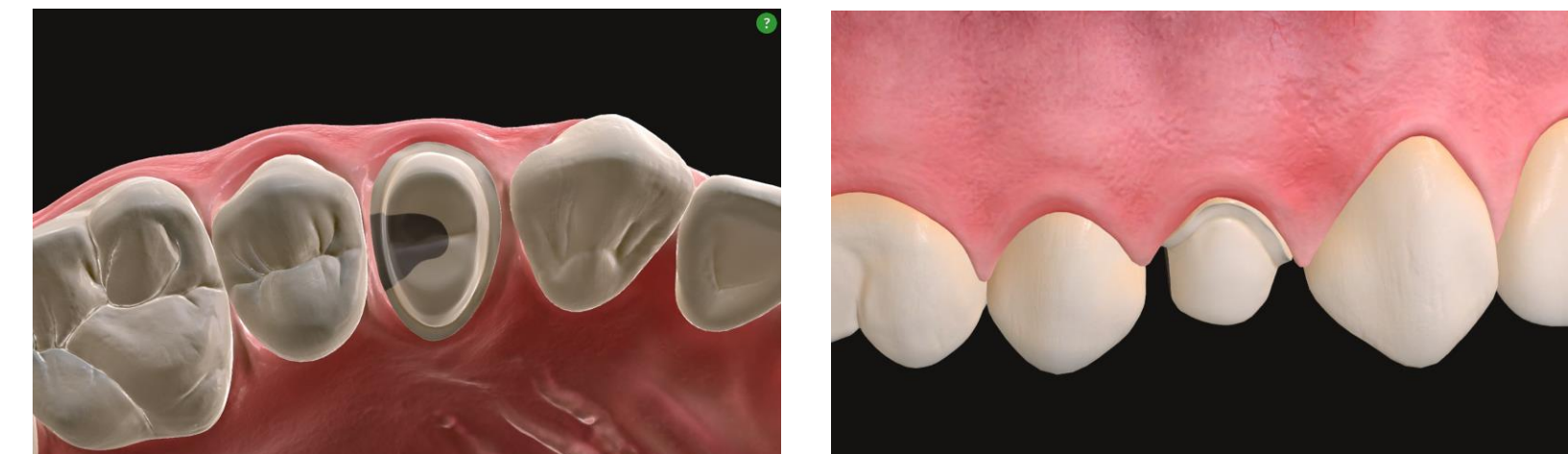
These examinations provide dental and dental hygiene boards with a professionally developed, psychometrically valid tool in support of boards' missions to protect the public. OSCE content is built by highly qualified and dedicated subject-matter experts—including clinicians, academic dental hygienists, and dentists—in accordance with rigorous professional standards.

These examinations are implemented by a team of testing professionals, many of whom possess advanced degrees in psychological measurement and related fields. This team—the Department of Testing Services (DTS)—has substantial experience in developing valid, reliable and fair high-stakes admission and licensure examinations.

Sample Examination Questions

DLOSCE

Select ONE OR MORE correct answers. Any INCORRECT selections will result in your earning NO CREDIT for this question.*



*This question is presented to candidates via an interactive, 3D model.

Which describes the crown preparation on tooth 5?

- A) Acceptable (Incorrect)
- B) Undercut (Incorrect)
- C) Over-tapered (Neutral)
- D) Unacceptably sharp (Incorrect)
- E) Inadequate proximal clearance (Incorrect)
- F) Finish line located on restorative material (1 point)

DHLOSCE

Select ONE OR MORE correct answers. Any INCORRECT selections will result in your earning NO CREDIT for this question.



Where is radiographic evidence of calculus present?

- A) 2D (Incorrect)
- B) 2M (0.25 points)
- C) 3D (0.25 points)
- D) 3M (Incorrect)
- E) 4D (Incorrect)
- F) 4M (Incorrect)
- G) 5D (Incorrect)
- H) 29M (Incorrect)
- I) 29D (0.25 points)
- J) 30M (Incorrect)
- K) 30D (Incorrect)
- L) 31M (0.25 points)
- M) 31D (Incorrect)

Results

OSCEs used for dental licensure have consistently yielded strong validity evidence. The JCND E's Dental Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DLOSCE) was found to be strongly predictive of performance in clinical courses during the third year of dental school ($r = 0.57$) (JCND E, 2023).

Similarly, the dental OSCE developed by the National Dental Examining Board of Canada was found to be highly predictive of candidates' performance in the final year of their dental program ($r = 0.46$) (Gerrow, 2003). The JCND E anticipates that the DHLOSCE will similarly demonstrate strong validity evidence.

Q & A

What is an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)? Where and how are these examinations used?

OSCEs were developed to help accurately assess the complex notion of clinical competence in the medical field. The OSCE format often includes stimulus materials such as radiographs, photographs, models and prescription writing. Standardized patients (actors) have been used in medical OSCEs. Harden, Stevenson, Downie, and Wilson (1975) indicated that they introduced the OSCE format to avoid many of the weaknesses and disadvantages of traditional clinical examinations.

OSCEs are widely used in the health sciences, including their use in the U.S. Medical Licensing Examination for all medical graduates. The National Dental Examining Board (NDEB) of Canada uses an OSCE for dental licensure throughout Canada.

How is OSCE content determined?

DLOSCE and DHLOSCE content is determined by subject matter experts in dentistry and dental hygiene, based on practice analysis findings and in accordance with industry best practices and professional standards such as the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (AERA, APA, & NCME, 2014). The JCND E and DTS follow rigorous development procedures rooted in psychometrics, which typically require several years to execute.

Will the DLOSCE and DHLOSCE be regional clinical examinations?

No. The DLOSCE and DHLOSCE are national examinations focusing on the clinical judgment and skills required to perform essential tasks performed throughout the US, based on comprehensive US practice analyses.

Q & A (Continued)

How do candidates apply to take the examinations?

Candidates may register for the examinations online via the JCND E website. The examinations will be offered during specific testing windows.

Conclusions

The use of OSCEs for licensure purposes represents a historic milestone in the oral health licensure process. The JCND E's OSCEs are designed to rigorously measure the quality of micro-judgments practicing clinicians make during treatment. These examinations significantly enhance public protection, providing candidates with a valid, reliable, and fair opportunity to demonstrate their clinical knowledge and skills.

Many have voiced interest in helping to modernize the licensure process and increase licensure portability nationwide. Individuals can contribute to this effort by helping build consensus within academic programs, state dental/dental hygiene associations, and state dental or dental hygiene boards. Help champion this effort by advocating for the JCND E's OSCEs and requesting that your licensure board accept successful completion of the DLOSCE and DHLOSCE as complete fulfillment of clinical licensure examination requirements.

Consider joining the Coalition for Modernizing Dental Licensure:

www.dentallicensure.org



For additional details, visit:

jcnde.ada.org/dlosce or jcnde.ada.org/dhlosce



References

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