



ADA American Dental Association®

Recent and Forthcoming Updates to Examinations

Recent and Forthcoming Updates to Examinations

Department of Testing Services

This document describes recent and forthcoming updates to examinations implemented by the Department of Testing Services (DTS). Please check back for additional updates as they become available. If you have any questions, please contact dtsonline@ada.org.

CONTENTS

Dental Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DLOSCE)	2
Integrated National Board Dental Examination (INBDE)	4
National Board Dental Hygiene Examination (NBDHE)	6
Admission Test for Dental Hygiene (ATDH)	8
Advanced Dental Admission Test (ADAT)	9
Dental Admission Test (DAT)	10
Optometry Admission Test (OAT)	11

Dental Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DLOSCE)

Last Updated 1/13/2026

Date	Topic	Notes
Implemented in 2021	Antibiotic Prophylaxis	<p>In 2021, the American Heart Association (AHA) released a new <u>scientific statement regarding the use of antibiotic prophylaxis</u>. Examination questions reflect the updates provided in the 2021 scientific statement from AHA.</p> <p>Relevant information concerning the AHA guidelines is available <u>here</u>.</p>
Implemented in 2021	Anesthesia (Physical Status Classifications)	<p>In December 2020, the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) released an amendment to the Physical Status Classification System used to assess and communicate a patient's pre-anesthesia medical co-morbidities. Information about the amended classification system is available <u>here</u>. Examination questions reflect the 2020 amended classification system.</p>
Implemented in 2021	Dental Traumatology	<p>In 2020, the International Association of Dental Traumatology (IADT) released updated guidelines for the evaluation and management of traumatic dental injuries. Information about the updated guidelines is available <u>here</u>. Examination questions reflect the 2020 IADT guidelines.</p>
Implemented in 2020	Periodontal Classifications	<p>In 2017, the American Academy of Periodontology (AAP) introduced new periodontal classifications. Examination questions reflect the new classification system introduced by AAP in 2017. Periodontal educators recommend that individuals refer to the 2017 World Workshop on the Classification of Periodontal and Peri-implant Diseases and Conditions — available on the <u>American Academy of Periodontology</u> website — for additional information.</p>
Implemented in 2025	Smoking Terminology	<p>Items referring to smoking cigarettes may appear in multiple formats. Moving forward, the preferred approach is to indicate the number of cigarettes per day, which aligns with current educational practices and the American Academy of Periodontology staging and grading guidelines. However, some existing items may continue to reference packs of cigarettes or pack-year history. When this occurs, one pack is defined as 20 cigarettes, and pack-year history reflects the number of packs smoked per day multiplied by the number of years the individual has smoked.</p>

Implemented in 2020	Blood Pressure	<p>In 2017, the American Heart Association (AHA) released new information regarding hypertension guidelines. Examination questions reflect the information provided in the 2017 update.</p> <p>Relevant information concerning the AHA guidelines is available here.</p>
Implemented in 2025	Pricing Bundle for Dental Examinations	<p>Starting January 1, 2025, candidates applying to take either the Integrated National Board Dental Examination (INBDE) or the Dental Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DLOSCE) can bundle these two examinations together and save \$475.</p> <p>For more information, download the Pricing Bundle for Test Administrations (PDF) here.</p>

Integrated National Board Dental Examination (INBDE)

Last updated 1/13/2026

Date	Topic	Notes
Implemented in 2023	Antibiotic Prophylaxis	In 2021, the American Heart Association (AHA) released a new <u>scientific statement regarding the use of antibiotic prophylaxis</u> . Relevant information concerning the AHA guidelines is available here . Examination questions reflect the updates provided in the 2021 scientific statement from AHA.
Implemented in 2023	Anesthesia (Physical Status Classifications)	In December 2020, the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) released an amendment to the Physical Status Classification System used to assess and communicate a patient's pre-anesthesia medical co-morbidities. Information about the amended classification system is available here . Examination questions reflect the 2020 amended classification system.
Implemented in 2023	Dental Traumatology	In 2020, the International Association of Dental Traumatology (IADT) released updated guidelines for the evaluation and management of traumatic dental injuries. Information about the updated guidelines is available here . Examination questions reflect the 2020 IADT guidelines.
Implemented in 2023	Radiography	The term “film” is no longer used on the examination to refer to radiographs. Therefore, no questions related to dark room and chemical processing will be asked.
Implemented in 2020	Periodontal Classifications	In 2017, the American Academy of Periodontology (AAP) introduced new periodontal classifications. Examination questions reflect the new classification system introduced by AAP in 2017. Periodontal educators recommend that individuals refer to the 2017 World Workshop on the Classification of Periodontal and Peri-implant Diseases and Conditions — available on the American Academy of Periodontology website — for additional information.

Implemented in 2020	Blood Pressure	In 2017, the American Heart Association (AHA) released new information regarding hypertension guidelines. Relevant information concerning the AHA guidelines is available here . Examination questions reflect the information provided in the 2017 update.
Implemented in 2025	Smoking Terminology	Items referring to smoking cigarettes may appear in multiple formats. Moving forward, the preferred approach is to indicate the number of cigarettes per day, which aligns with current educational practices and the American Academy of Periodontology staging and grading guidelines. However, some existing items may continue to reference packs of cigarettes or pack-year history. When this occurs, one pack is defined as 20 cigarettes, and pack-year history reflects the number of packs smoked per day multiplied by the number of years the individual has smoked.
Implemented in 2025	Pricing Bundle for Dental Examinations	Starting January 1, 2025, candidates applying to take either the Integrated National Board Dental Examination (INBDE) or the Dental Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DLOSCE) can bundle these two examinations together and save \$475. For more information, download the Pricing Bundle for Test Administrations (PDF) here .

National Board Dental Hygiene Examination (NBDHE)

Last updated 01/13/2026

Date	Topic	Notes
Implemented in 2022	Antibiotic Prophylaxis	<p>In 2021, the American Heart Association (AHA) released a new <u>scientific statement regarding the use of antibiotic prophylaxis</u>. Examination questions reflect the updates provided in the 2021 scientific statement from AHA.</p> <p>Relevant information concerning the AHA guidelines is available <u>here</u>.</p>
Implemented in 2022	Anesthesia (Physical Status Classifications)	<p>In December 2020, the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) released an amendment to the Physical Status Classification System used to assess and communicate a patient's pre-anesthesia medical co-morbidities. Information about the amended classification system is available <u>here</u>. Examination questions reflect the 2020 amended classification system.</p>
Implemented in 2022	Dental Traumatology	<p>In 2020, the International Association of Dental Traumatology (IADT) released updated guidelines for the evaluation and management of traumatic dental injuries. Information about the updated guidelines is available <u>here</u>. Examination questions reflect the 2020 IADT guidelines.</p>
Implemented in 2022	Radiography	<p>The term "film" is no longer used on the examination to refer to radiographs. Therefore, no questions related to dark room and chemical processing will be asked.</p>
Implemented in 2021	Periodontal Classifications	<p>In 2017, the American Academy of Periodontology (AAP) introduced new periodontal classifications. Examination questions reflect the new classification system introduced by AAP in 2017. Periodontal educators recommend that individuals refer to the 2017 World Workshop on the Classification of Periodontal and Peri-implant Diseases and Conditions — available on the <u>American Academy of Periodontology</u> website — for additional information.</p>
Implemented in 2021	Blood Pressure	<p>In 2017, the American Heart Association (AHA) released new information regarding hypertension guidelines. Examination questions reflect the information provided in the 2017 update.</p> <p>Relevant information concerning the AHA guidelines is available <u>here</u>. Please note that examination questions also reflect the General Patient Considerations listed under Implications of Hypertension in Dental Care on <u>this website</u>, which differ from those posted in the 13th edition of Esther M. Wilkins' Clinical</p>

		Practice of the Dental Hygienist (Table 12-2 in Chapter 12).
Implemented in 2025	Smoking Terminology	Items referring to smoking cigarettes may appear in multiple formats. Moving forward, the preferred approach is to indicate the number of cigarettes per day, which aligns with current educational practices and the American Academy of Periodontology staging and grading guidelines. However, some existing items may continue to reference packs of cigarettes or pack-year history. When this occurs, one pack is defined as 20 cigarettes, and pack-year history reflects the number of packs smoked per day multiplied by the number of years the individual has smoked.

Admission Test for Dental Hygiene (ATDH)

Last updated 04/13/2023

Date	Topic	Notes
Anticipated for September 1, 2023	Year-round Testing	<p>Effective September 1, 2023, the ADA's Department of Testing Services (DTS) will implement year-round testing for the ATDH Program. This change is anticipated to provide candidates and dental hygiene programs with additional flexibility. Under year-round testing, a candidate will be permitted to attempt the ATDH on any day of the year for which they can secure a testing appointment, provided they meet established ATDH eligibility criteria.</p> <p>The transition to year-round testing will also be accompanied by an improvement in the speed with which ATDH results will be reported to candidates and dental hygiene programs. Under year-round testing, results will be reported within three to four weeks of the candidate's test date. In comparison, under the window-based system, results reporting can require as much as 12 weeks.</p> <p>Additional information is available at the ATDH website, at ADA.org/ATDH.</p>

Advanced Dental Admission Test (ADAT)

Last updated 01/13/2026

Date	Topic	Notes
Implemented in 2022	Antibiotic Prophylaxis	In 2021, the American Heart Association (AHA) released a new <u>scientific statement regarding the use of antibiotic prophylaxis</u> . Examination questions reflect the updates provided in the 2021 scientific statement from AHA. Relevant information concerning the AHA guidelines is available here .
Implemented in 2022	Anesthesia (Physical Status Classifications)	In December 2020, the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) released an amendment to the Physical Status Classification System used to assess and communicate a patient's pre-anesthesia medical co-morbidities. Information about the amended classification system is available here . Examination questions reflect the 2020 amended classification system.
Implemented in 2022	Dental Traumatology	In 2020, the International Association of Dental Traumatology (IADT) released updated guidelines for the evaluation and management of traumatic dental injuries. Information about the updated guidelines is available here . Examination questions reflect the 2020 IADT guidelines.
Implemented in 2020	Periodontal Classifications	In 2017, the American Academy of Periodontology (AAP) introduced new periodontal classifications. Examination questions reflect the new classification system introduced by AAP in 2017. Periodontal educators recommend that individuals refer to the 2017 World Workshop on the Classification of Periodontal and Peri-implant Diseases and Conditions — available on the American Academy of Periodontology website — for additional information.
Implemented in 2020	Blood Pressure	In 2017, the American Heart Association (AHA) released new information regarding hypertension guidelines. Examination questions reflect the information provided in the 2017 update. Relevant information concerning the AHA guidelines is available here .
Implemented in 2025	Smoking Terminology	Items referring to smoking cigarettes may appear in multiple formats. Moving forward, the preferred approach is to indicate the number of cigarettes per day, which aligns with current educational practices and the American Academy of Periodontology staging and grading guidelines. However, some existing items may continue to reference packs of cigarettes or pack-year history.

		When this occurs, one pack is defined as 20 cigarettes, and pack-year history reflects the number of packs smoked per day multiplied by the number of years the individual has smoked.
--	--	--

Dental Admission Test (DAT)

Last updated 08/13/2025

Date	Topic	Notes
Implemented 1/21/22	Biology	Changes to the DAT Biology Test Specifications were implemented on January 21, 2022. Students who plan to take the DAT are encouraged to review the updated specifications, which include several new topics that were not previously covered on the examination. Additional information about the changes is available in the DAT Candidate Guide , under “Scope of the Examination.”
March 1, 2025	Scoring and Reporting	Starting with administrations occurring on March 1, 2025, the 2-digit score reporting scale (1 to 30) will be replaced by a 3-digit score reporting scale (200 to 600), and unofficial score reports will no longer be available at the testing site. Please click here for more information.
Anticipated to be implemented in April 2026	Organic Chemistry	Updates to the DAT Organic Chemistry Test Specifications are expected to occur in April 2026. Additional information is available on the DAT webpage , and students taking the DAT in 2026 are encouraged to check back regularly for updates.

Optometry Admission Test (OAT)

Last updated 08/13/2025

Date	Topic	Notes
Implemented 4/13/22	Biology	Changes to the OAT Biology Test Specifications were implemented on April 13, 2022. Students who plan to take the OAT are encouraged to review the updated specifications, which include several new topics that were not previously covered on the examination. Additional information about the changes is available in the OAT Candidate Guide , under “Scope of the Examination.”
Anticipated to be implemented in June 2026	Organic Chemistry	Updates to the OAT Organic Chemistry Test Specifications are expected to occur in June 2026. Additional information is available on the OAT webpage , and students taking the OAT in 2026 are encouraged to check back regularly for updates.