

Dental Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DLOSCE) FAQ

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Answers to frequently asked questions about the Dental Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DLOSCE) are provided below.

What is the purpose of the DLOSCE?

The Joint Commission on National Dental Examination's (JCNDE's) Dental Licensure OSCE (DLOSCE) is a high-stakes examination consisting of multiple questions which will require candidates to use their clinical skills to successfully complete one or more dental problem solving tasks. The DLOSCE is designed to provide information to US dental boards, concerning whether a candidate for dental licensure possesses the necessary level of clinical skills to safely practice entry-level dentistry. This will be accomplished through the use of a valid and reliable examination that has been professionally developed.

What is an objective structured clinical examination (OSCE)? Why were OSCEs developed?

The OSCE format often includes stimulus materials, such as radiographs, photographs, models, and prescription writing. Standardized patients (actors) have been used in medical OSCEs. The National Dental Examining Board (NDEB) of Canada's OSCE is presented as a written, multiple-choice examination that presents stimulus materials in multiple stations. Advances in simulated patient and haptic technologies suggest that simulations may be incorporated in a dental OSCE sooner rather than later.

OSCEs were developed to help accurately assess the complex notion of clinical competence in the medical field. More specifically, Harden, Stevenson, Wilson 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: optometry, medicine, physical therapy, radiography, rehabilitation medicine, nursing, pharmacy, podiatry, and veterinary medicine. Since their inception in the 1970s, OSCEs are now part of the US Medical Licensing Examination for all US medical graduates.

The NDEB Canada OSCE is used for dental licensure in Canada.

How do candidates apply to take the DLOSCE?

Candidates may register for this examination on the [DLOSCE website](#).

The examination is offered during scheduled testing windows. To determine current or upcoming windows, visit the [DLOSCE FAQ webpage](#) and click "How do candidates apply to take the DLOSCE?"

Which states currently accept the DLOSCE?

The states below have adopted regulations which permit the acceptance of the DLOSCE. In some states, passage of the DLOSCE only partially fulfills the clinical examination requirement for licensure. Please refer to each state board's website for specific details, clarifications, and updated policies.

- Alaska
- Colorado
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Oregon
- Washington

Why did the JCNDE develop a DLOSCE?

There are many reasons why the JCNDE developed a DLOSCE and why the JCNDE feels it is uniquely positioned to build a high quality clinical licensure examination:

- The JCNDE has a long and successful track record of delivering high quality, high stakes examinations for licensure purposes that help protect the public.
- As the governing body that oversees both the NBDE and DLOSCE Programs, the JCNDE is positioned to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the skills necessary to safely practice dentistry.
- The JCNDE is a Commission with mechanisms in place to reduce conflicts of interest and help ensure that no single community of interest has an undue influence on governance decisions related to the DLOSCE.
- The JCNDE possesses the in-house expertise to develop an OSCE through the Department of Testing Services (DTS), which is staffed by testing professionals with advanced degrees in psychological measurement and related fields.
- Lastly and most importantly, the JCNDE feels that a DLOSCE can protect the public health more effectively than existing clinical licensure solutions.

Will the DLOSCE be a regional clinical examination?

The DLOSCE is available nationally, to all state dental boards. Examination content will remain the same regardless of the region of the country where it is administered, and regardless of the curriculum implemented at different dental schools.

How is the DLOSCE content determined?

Consistent with the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing established by the American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education (2014), the content of the DLOSCE is based on a practice analysis involving entry level general dentists. The DLOSCE practice analysis involves collecting information on the tasks performed by entry-level practicing dentists, with regard to their frequency and criticality for patient care. This information will be used to identify the clinical areas to be tested, and the numbers of items and OSCE stations devoted to these areas.

How was the decision made to pursue DLOSCE development and who supported this decision?

The ADA's Council on Dental Education and Licensure (CDEL) requested that the ADA Department of Testing Services (DTS) create a business plan to develop an OSCE. CDEL believed that developing an OSCE for dental licensure would help achieve goals stated within several long-standing ADA policies on licensure, including the elimination of patients from the clinical examination process, and dental license portability. Subsequent to business plan development, both CDEL and the Joint Licensure Task Force (co-sponsored by the ADA and the American Dental Education Association) reviewed and strongly endorsed the business plan. In February 2017, the ADA Board of Trustees' Finance Committee recommended approval of the requested funds so exam development could begin in 2017. After a thorough review and discussion, the Board of Trustees voted to fund the startup costs for exam development.