

National Board Dental Examination (NBDE) Part I Frequently Asked Questions

Obtain a DENTPIN® and Apply to Test

What is a DENTPIN®?

The DENTPIN® is a unique personal identifier for applicants and students involved with the U.S. dental education system and standardized testing programs. The DAT, ADEA AADSAS and TMSAS, plus ADEA PASS, ADEA CAAPID, the Dental Match and the National Board Dental and Dental Hygiene Examination (NBDE and NBDHE) programs all use the DENTPIN® for identification of students and test-takers. You must obtain or retrieve a DENTPIN® from www.ada.org/dentpin.aspx before continuing with your NBDE I application.

I am not in Prometric's system, but my credit card has been charged.

The Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations (JCNDE) processes applications daily Monday-Friday. It can take up to 48 hours from the time your application is processed by the JCNDE for Prometric to upload your application into their system, thereby allowing you to schedule your testing appointment. If you are unable to schedule after two business days, call the JCNDE office to verify that your application has processed.

I was billed twice for my electronic application. How do I get a refund?

Fax a brief explanation and copy of your credit card statement to 312.587.4105. Please include your name (as it appears on your application), daytime contact information and DENTPIN. Address the fax to the attention of NBDE I Refund Request.

Corrections/Changes to My Application

I have not yet taken my examination, can I update my address?

Using the [DENTPIN Request Form](#), submit the request for an address change (must be received prior to your testing appointment) by email to nbexams@ada.org or fax to 312.587.4105; address it to the attention of NBDE Part I Address Update Request. Or, update your address in the DENTPIN system at www.ada.org/dentpin.aspx. Once the update is complete, send an email to nbexams@ada.org, containing your name, DENTPIN and a request for your NBDE Part I application to reflect your updated address as indicated in the DENTPIN system.

My name is reversed or my name has changed. Can you correct it?

Using the [DENTPIN Request Form](#), submit the request for a name correction (must be received at least two weeks prior to your testing appointment) by fax to 312.587.4105. Please also fax any appropriate documentation such as a marriage certificate or court documents along with a copy of your government issued ID and address it to the attention of NBDE I Name Change Request.

Examination Rules and Regulations

What is the purpose and intent of the National Board Examination Regulations?

Examination Regulations are established to ensure that examination results are valid. This means that candidates' scores are an accurate reflection of their knowledge and understanding. Candidates are expected to recall and interpret information and respond to examination questions without assistance or the advantage of having prior knowledge of questions or answers. The Examination Regulations are intended to prevent candidates from retaining or remembering questions and sharing them with other candidates and to prevent candidates from obtaining unreleased questions or answers from any source.

Examination Regulations are also intended to provide all candidates with an equivalent opportunity to gain National Board certification; no candidate should have an unfair advantage over others.

All examination materials including released materials that are made available by the JCNDE through various authorized channels, are copyrighted to protect the security and confidentiality of the examination content, as well as the investment of resources, primarily from candidate fees, that support the examination program.

How are candidates informed of the Examination Regulations?

The Examination Regulations are provided in writing in the *NBDE Part I Guide* for each examination. The *NBDE Part I Guide* is available under Step One on the [NBDE Part I Examination](#) page. Information in the *NBDE Part I Guide* is updated annually, but the general nature and intent of the regulations remains the same as described above. Information about Prometric Test Center rules is available on the Prometric Website, www.prometric.com. Each examination session begins with a confidentiality statement to which candidates must agree as a condition of testing.

What happens if a candidate violates Examination Regulations?

When the JCNDE receives information that indicates possible inappropriate behavior or violation of Examination Regulations, the candidate's results may be withheld or invalidated. Established JCNDE regulations identify prohibited activities and behavior and related penalties. In most cases, scores are voided and the candidate may have to wait up to two years to retest.

When scores are withheld or invalidated, the candidate is notified of the regulation that has been breached and the related penalty. JCNDE policies provide an appeal process, and candidates who are notified that their scores have been withheld or invalidated receive information about the appeal process. Submission of an appeal will stay the decision to withhold or void scores until such time as the appeal is decided.

Is it acceptable for candidates to remember and share unreleased questions or to solicit or use unreleased questions that have been recalled or obtained by others?

No. This violates the *Confidentiality Agreement* that all candidates acknowledge before they begin the examination. In addition, federal copyright law protects all examinations and sharing or soliciting recalled questions violates the law. These practices are also unethical in that they violate principles of veracity (truthfulness) and justice (fairness).

Why is it unethical to ask someone for unreleased, recalled questions or to otherwise obtain and use recalled questions?

Candidates are expected to pass the examination on their own merit without assistance. Members of the public who entrust dentists with their well-being expect that they are trustworthy and competent individuals. The purpose of the examination is to ensure that you, as a candidate for licensure, have achieved entry-level competence. By asking previous test-takers to share unreleased questions, or by obtaining them, you undermine the very purpose of the examination.

What information can I share about the examination?

You can tell others whether you thought it was difficult or easy. You can tell them how prepared you felt. You can share any broad topic areas that are also listed in the National Board specifications that are published in the *NBDE Part I Guide* or on the JCNDE Website (e.g., osteogenesis, premolar tooth morphology). You cannot describe specific questions and answers or context of questions related to these topics. If another student or member of the faculty suggests that you should remember and/or share confidential examination information with other students or faculty, you should decline and explain that this is not permitted.

What if someone offers unreleased or remembered questions to me?

You should not agree to accept unreleased examination items or confidential examination information or participate in the exchange of this information. If you receive unsolicited confidential or unreleased examination materials, you should inform the dean or associate dean at your school or contact the JCNDE. They may request that you forward the materials for evaluation to determine whether the materials are indeed unreleased or confidential. Failure to do so could inadvertently implicate you in activity that violates Examination Regulations and may jeopardize your ability to achieve National Board certification and licensure.

General Information

What is on the examination?

The NBDE Part I is a comprehensive examination which is comprised of 400 multiple-choice items evenly distributed across four discipline areas: Anatomic Sciences, Biochemistry-Physiology, Microbiology-Pathology, and Dental Anatomy and Occlusion. Approximately 20% of the items are grouped in testlets with interdisciplinary focus and clinical application. The Test Specifications with sample questions, located in the *NBDE Part I Guide*, list the topic areas in each discipline and the corresponding number of items.

National Board Dental Examination Part I	
Optional Tutorial	15 minutes
Discipline-based, multiple-choice test items with 6-8 testlets (approximately 200 items)	3.5 hours
Optional scheduled break	One hour (maximum)
Discipline-based, multiple choice test items with 6-8 testlets (approximately 200 items)	3.5 hours
Optional Post-examination Survey	15 minutes
Total	8 hours 30 minutes

Where can I find study materials?

The *NBDE Part I Guide* includes sample test items and test specifications. Tutorials, located on the [NBDE Part I Examination](#) page designed to familiarize candidates with the format of the questions on the examination. Reference texts are cited on the [Resources](#) page.

Candidates are cautioned that obtaining or sharing confidential, unreleased examination content violates Examination Regulations and carries significant penalties. Further, material obtained from sources such as Internet chat rooms, blogs or information-sharing sites may be inaccurate and/or out-dated and could mislead or disadvantage test-takers.

Released item sets may be purchased for the NBDE Part I through the American Student Dental Association (ASDA) at www.asdanet.org or 800.621.8099, ext. 2795.

International Dentist Applying for Examination

I am an international dentist. What is required to practice dentistry in the United States?

Please contact the dental board of the specific state in which you wish to obtain licensure to determine individual state requirements regarding the practice of dentistry. State board contact information is located at www.aadexam.org. Additional information about licensure can be found at www.ada.org.

Am I eligible to take the National Board Dental Examination Part I? I graduated from an international dental school.

All graduates of non-accredited programs (dental schools not accredited by the ADA, Commission on Dental Accreditation, (CODA) or the Canadian Commission on Dental Accreditation, (CDAC) must have their credentials evaluated by the Educational Credential Evaluators (www.ece.org), and must meet all other eligibility requirements to take the NBDE I. Please refer to the *NBDE Part I Guide* for specific details.

Have you received my ECE report?

Call the JCNDE office to determine the status of your application. If the JCNDE office has approved your application, your ECE report has been received. If your application has not been approved, a representative will be able to verify whether or not it has been received. If it has been received, your application will be approved during the next application processing day.

I previously applied for the examination; do I need to submit a new ECE report?

If you have previously taken the examination, you do not need to submit another ECE report; however, you must indicate on your application that you have previously taken the examination. It is advisable to call the JCNDE office to confirm that your application has been processed.

Re-test

How long do I have to wait to retest?

You must wait 90 days between examination attempts. You will not receive your eligibility information nor will you be able to contact Prometric to schedule an appointment until the 90 day waiting period is over. National Board candidates who have failed the NBDE Part I three times must wait 12 months before retesting. Please refer to the *NBDE Part I Guide* for specific details. Candidates who have received a passing score may not retest unless they provide evidence that they must retest for purposes of licensure.

Effective January 2012, you shall be limited to successful completion of an examination within five years of testing or five examination attempts, whichever comes first; this does **not** include testing attempts prior to January 1, 2012.

Refunds

Are refunds available?

Examination fees are **non-refundable and non-transferable**.

Scheduling a Testing Appointment with Prometric

How do I schedule a testing appointment with Prometric?

An e-mail that contains instructions for scheduling your testing appointment will be sent to the e-mail address on your application after your application has been processed. If you do not receive an e-mail, you should contact the JCNDE office to verify that your application has been processed. Approved candidates can schedule testing appointments by contacting the Prometric Call Center at 800.688.5804 or visiting www.prometric.com.

I called Prometric, but I cannot get through. What can I do?

You can schedule electronically at www.prometric.com. Otherwise, please call Prometric when call volume is low. Call volume is higher on Monday and Tuesday of

each week and hold times are considerably less after Tuesday of each week. The Call Center is open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday.

Prometric says I am not in their system, what can I do?

If your application has been approved and it has been more than 48 hours since your application has been processed, please contact Prometric's Candidate Care hotline at 800.853.6769.

Scoring/Score Reports

How is the NBDE Part I examination scored? Are the scores based on a curve?

The National Board examinations are criterion-referenced; candidates are not graded on a curve or comparison to others but against a pre-determined standard.

Effective January 2012, scores for the NBDE Part I will be reported as pass/fail only. Scores for examinations taken prior to January 1, 2012, will be reported as numerical scores.

A candidate whose score is reported as a "pass" is deemed to understand important information from basic biomedical, dental, and dental sciences and have the ability to apply such information in a problem-solving context.

Additionally, all examination results are audited thoroughly before scores are reported.

Please refer to the *NBDE Part I Guide* and Technical Report at www.ada.org for specific details on scoring.

I read the *NBDE Part I Guide* and the Technical Reports; however, I still have questions regarding my score report. Would you answer my questions?

Please submit your questions or concerns in writing and forward them to the JCNDE office by U.S. mail or fax.

Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations/Score Report Question
211 E. Chicago Avenue, Suite 600, Chicago, Illinois 60611-2637; 312.587.4105 (fax)

When will I receive my score report?

Official score reports are mailed approximately three to four weeks after your testing appointment.

Have you received my request for scores? Has it been processed?

Score reports are mailed approximately three weeks from the date the request was received. For further questions, contact the JCNDE office at 800.232.1694.

Did I pass the examination? Can I get my results over the phone?

JCNDE regulations prohibit reporting scores to candidates by telephone, fax or e-mail.

I tested more than once; can I choose which scores are sent out?

You cannot choose to send any one particular set of scores. The scoring system reports the most recent set of scores. Effective January 2012, all score reports will display your complete score history.

How do I request a National Board score report?

Visit the [NBDE Part I](#) page and follow the directions under Step 5.

How is my score reported to the State Board?

Official score reports are mailed approximately three to four weeks after the examination and the most recent score is always reported.

Effective January 2012, each score report will display your complete score history. The score report includes examinations taken since 1982; earlier scores are available by special request and subject to availability.

Test Center Procedures

What constitutes proper identification for the examination?

When you arrive at the Prometric Test Center to take the examination, two original, current forms of identification (ID), one primary and one secondary, will be requested and must be produced. The primary ID must be a government issued ID, bearing a photograph and a signature. Examples of acceptable primary IDs (bearing a photograph and signature) are a driver's license or a passport. *There must be at least one ID that has both picture and a signature.* Examples of secondary IDs (requiring only a signature) are a debit card, a library card, a credit card, etc. Both forms of ID must be current (not expired).

The name on your primary and secondary ID must match exactly with the name on your NBDE Part I application. If the names on your IDs and your NBDE Part I application do not match exactly, you will be denied admission to testing and you will forfeit your scheduled testing appointment and application fee. You will be required to submit a new application and fee to test.

If you have an address or name change you must submit the changes in writing, with appropriate documentation to nbexams@ada.org or facsimile to the JCNDE at 312.587.4105 at least two weeks prior to your testing appointment. If you have any questions concerning types of acceptable identification, please call the JCNDE at 800.232.1694 or view the FAQs at www.ADA.org.

For specific information, please review the *NBDE Part I Guide*.

What can I bring with me into the test center?

No personal or miscellaneous items are permitted in the secure testing area. Any

personal belongings brought to the test center must be stored in a designated locker. Storage facilities are limited. Upon reasonable suspicion, your personal belongings may be inspected. Notes or any materials accessed during testing or an unscheduled break that appears to contain examination content may be confiscated. Accessing personal belongings during an unscheduled break violates Examination Regulations.

Items that are prohibited from the secure testing area include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Books, notes, study materials, scratch paper, tissues, or dry erase markers not furnished by the testing center.
- b. Dental instruments, models or materials.
- c. Slide rules, paper, calculating devices, rulers or other measuring devices.
- d. Electronic devices, such as telephones, pagers, recording devices, personal digital assistants (PDAs), iPods, radios or stereos with headsets; personal earplugs or headphones.
- e. Tote bags; purses, wallets, backpacks, briefcases.
- f. Highlighters, pens, erasers, mechanical pencils, dictionaries, and translators.
- g. Food, candy, gum, water or other beverages.
- h. Outerwear, such as coats, jackets, gloves or head coverings (except for religious or cultural purposes).
- i. Good luck charms, statues, religious or superstitious talismans.
- j. Medicinal items (except those items approved in advance under testing accommodations).
- k. Watches (digital or analog) or timing devices (a clock is provided on the computer screen).
- l. Magnifying devices

Violations may result in the voiding of your test scores and waiting up to two years to retest. For specific information, please review the *NBDE Part I Guide*.

The JCNDE reserves the right to cancel or withhold any score when, in our judgment, there is a good-faith basis to question the validity of the scores for any reason. Cause for withholding, voiding or invalidating of scores may include, but is not limited to:

- Unusual answer patterns
- Atypical score increases from one examination to another
- Inconsistent performance on different parts of the examination
- Improper access to secure examination content
- A test administration irregularity
- A discrepancy in, or falsification of, a candidate's identification
- Information indicating that a candidate has engaged in misconduct or violation of the rules and regulations
- Falsification of the candidate's score report
- Any other information indicating the results may not be valid
- Falsification of the application or supportive documents.

If it is determined that a candidate engaged in irregular behavior, information regarding this determination becomes a part of the candidate's JCNDE record. In its sole discretion, the JCNDE may elect to send a summary report documenting the incident,

with a brief statement provided by the candidate immediately following the decision by the JCNDE to report, to legitimately interested parties, including all persons or agencies to which the candidate has instructed that scores be sent, both presently and in the future.

Testing Accommodations

I require accommodations for testing, what do I need to do to receive accommodations?

If you have a documented disability recognized under the Americans with Disabilities Act and require testing accommodations, you must:

1. At the time you submit your NBDE Part I application and **prior to scheduling a testing appointment** check the box that indicates you are requesting testing accommodations. You must submit an application to test, the testing accommodation request form, and the supporting documentation. The process is not complete until you have submitted all three components. You can schedule a testing appointment after your testing accommodation request has been approved. Testing accommodations cannot be added to previously scheduled testing appointment. If you schedule your testing appointment before the approval of testing accommodations you will be required to cancel the appointment and pay a fee.
2. Submit the following (scanned) documents to nbexams@ada.org:
 - a. Testing Accommodation Request Form, signed and dated, describing the disability, and the need for accommodations. Accommodations should align with the identified functional limitation so that the adjustment to the testing procedure is applicable to the identified impairment. A functional limitation is defined as the behavioral manifestation of the disability that impedes the individual's ability to function.
 - b. Current evaluation report (within the past five years) from the appropriate licensed professional. The document (must be on official letterhead) should include the professional's credentials, signature, address, and telephone number. The report must indicate the candidate's name, date of birth, and date of evaluation. The report should include:
 - The specific **diagnostic procedures or tests** administered. Diagnostic methods used should be appropriate to the disability and in alignment with current professional protocol.
 - The **results** of the diagnostic procedures and/or tests and a comprehensive interpretation of the results.
 - The specific **diagnosis of the disability**, with an accompanying description of the candidate's limitations due to the disability.

- A summary of the complete evaluation with **recommendations for the specific accommodations** and how they will reduce the impact of identified functional limitation.
- c. Documentation of any previous accommodations provided by educational institutions or other testing agencies. If no prior accommodations were provided, the licensed professional should include a detailed explanation as to why no accommodations were given in the past and why accommodations are needed now.