The Advanced Dental Admission Test (ADAT) Program

Department of Testing Services
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Purpose

• The Advanced Dental Admission Test (ADAT) is a computer based examination designed to provide advanced dental education programs with insight into applicants’ potential for success in their program.

• The ADAT is a professionally developed, content valid examination containing questions written by dental subject matter experts.

• The ADAT enables programs to quantitatively compare applicants using a nationally standardized and objective test.

• The ADAT can be used in conjunction with other assessment tools to help inform program admission decisions.
ADAT Program Oversight

• The ADA’s Council on Dental Education and Licensure (CDEL) oversees ADAT policies.
• CDEL’s Committee on Dental Admission Testing (CDAT) monitors the program and makes recommendations to CDEL concerning policies.
• The ADA’s Department of Testing Services (DTS) implements the ADAT program under the direction of CDEL and its CDAT.
Candidates

The ADAT is designed for administration to individuals seeking admission to advanced dental education programs:

- 3\(^{rd}\) and 4\(^{th}\) year dental students
- U.S. dentists interested in post-graduate training or degrees
- International dental students/graduates applying to advanced dental education programs or advanced standing in pre-doctoral programs.
Administration

• Administration dates
  • April 3 through August 31 of 2017
  • Testing windows lessen the possibility and implications of test content security breaches, thereby protecting the validity of the examination.

• Retesting policy
  • Candidates may test two times per calendar year, and are limited to two testing attempts separated by a minimum of 45 days.
  • After two testing attempts, candidates must provide DTS with proof they are actively applying to advanced dental education programs.

• Program Participation
  • A list of participating advanced dental education programs in 2016 was posted on the ADAT website. A similar list will be posted in the 1st week of February 2017.
Fees (2017)

- 2017 ADAT fees:
  - Examination fee: $350
  - Additional ADAT score reports: $36
  - Non-accredited candidate processing fee: $135

** This Score Report fee covers score report requests made after the time of application. Score reports requested at the time of application are processed at no additional charge.
2017 Results Reporting

- ADAT scores are made available through ADEA PASS, and an online score reporting portal (DTS Hub) developed by the ADA. The following reporting schedule will be in effect for 2017.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADAT 2017 RESULTS REPORTING SCHEDULE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary Results (Percentiles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official Results (Scale Scores)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Preliminary score results are reported as percentiles (not scale scores). Candidates should be aware that percentiles will change with each test administration period, as the total norm group increased. Candidate percentiles will thus change at each reporting interval. Final scale scores will be reported on September 14, 2017.
### Program Participation and Results Distribution (2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Concentration</th>
<th>Requires</th>
<th>Accepts</th>
<th>Does Not Accept</th>
<th>% of Results Sent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Education in General Dentistry</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental Anesthesiology</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental Public Education</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endodontics</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Practice Residency</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc. (oral path, oral radiology, oral med, orofac. Pain)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthodontics/Periodontics</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pediatric Dentistry</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodontics</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosthodontics</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>48</strong></td>
<td><strong>73</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results Interpretation

- A User’s Guide was created to assist programs with results interpretation. It includes information such as the following:
  - Utilization of ADAT Results in Admission Decisions
  - Evidence Supporting Use of the ADAT
  - ADAT Content and Scales
  - Interpretation of ADAT Results
  - Guidelines for Interpreting and Applying ADAT Results
  - Scale reliabilities
  - Normative information
Additional comments (2016)

- DTS removed non-performing items from scoring as soon as they were reasonably detected.
- DTS updated the ADAT User’s Guide shortly after the close of the testing window with the following information:
  - Scale reliabilities
  - Normative information
    - Overall norms
      - Descriptive statistics
      - Histograms
      - Frequency distributions
    - Norms within specialty (where possible)
- DTS shared ADAT results with dental schools, for students and graduates who indicated they wanted their ADAT scores sent to their dental school. Individual and average performance was provided.
As was articulated in interpretational reports issued throughout the 2016 preliminary ADAT Results Reporting cycles, DTS has strongly recommended that candidates and programs focus their attention on the ADAT Overall and Critical Thinking scales. These scales contain larger numbers of items and are therefore more reliable than scales containing fewer items. Scale reliabilities are anticipated to increase in future years, as additional performance data become available.
A total of 462 ADAT administrations occurred in 2016
Norms – ADAT Scale Scores (2016)

Frequency distribution for the ADAT Overall scale: 2016 (N= 462)
Norms – ADAT Scale Scores (2016)

Frequency distribution for the ADAT Critical Thinking scale: 2016 (N= 462)
Frequency distribution for the ADAT Biomedical Sciences scale: 2016 (N= 462)
Norms – ADAT Scale Scores (2016)

Frequency distribution for the ADAT Clinical Sciences scale: 2016 (N= 462)
Norms – ADAT Scale Scores (2016)

Frequency distribution for the ADAT Data, Research Interpretation, & Evidence Based Dentistry scale: 2016 (N= 462)
Frequency distribution for the ADAT Principles of Ethics & Patient Management scale: 2016 (N= 462)
Reflections on 2016 ADAT performance

• Generally speaking the ADAT appears to be performing well.
• Results indicate that the ADAT can be used to discriminate among candidates with lower and higher cognitive skills
• The ADAT Overall score in particular performed very well.
• DTS noted the following issues with regard to ADAT performance:
  – The Principles of Ethics & Patient Management scale underperformed and likely does not measure what advanced education programs would like to know (i.e., whether a candidate would behave ethically)
  – Certain scales had lower than desired reliabilities.
Reflections on 2016 ADAT performance

• Identified issues were addressed as follows for 2017:
  – The Principles of Ethics & Patient Management scale has been eliminated as a separate, reported scale. Items within these areas still appear on the exam, but a separate scale score is not reported.
  – The number of items has been increased in the following scales:
    • Clinical Sciences
    • Data, Research Interpretation, and Evidence Based Dentistry
• The ADAT administration schedule and reported scores have been adjusted to reflect these changes. The same total administration time applies (4 ½ hours).
ADAT Content Structure and Reported Scales (2017)

ADAT
Critical thinking in dentistry.

Biomedical Sciences
Clinical Sciences
Data, Research Interpretation, & Evidence Based Dentistry
## Number of Items per Subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Thinking</th>
<th>Biomedical Sciences</th>
<th>80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clinical Sciences</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Data, Research Interpretation, and Evidence Based Dentistry</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principles of Ethics and Patient Management</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>200</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Test Specifications Overview (2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADAT Overall Scale (Critical Thinking in Dentistry)</th>
<th>Number of Items per Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biomedical Sciences</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Sciences</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data, Research Interpretation, and Evidence Based Dentistry</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>200</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scoring (2017)

- ADAT official scores are reported as scale scores ranging from 200 to 800, with a mean of 500 and a target standard deviation of approximately 100 for most scales. Scores are reported in increments of 10.
- In 2017, scores are reported for the following four scales:
  1. ADAT Score: an overall score that is computed based on performance on all ADAT items. This score represents “critical thinking in dentistry.”
  2. Biomedical Sciences
  3. Clinical Sciences
  4. Data and Research Interpretation.
- The number of correct responses is NOT reported for the ADAT. Examinees do NOT receive immediate feedback concerning their test results.
- Scores are reported to the programs selected by the candidate at the time of application. Additionally, if a candidate requests their results be sent to any advanced dental education program, their results will also be made available to ADEA PASS and distributed to all programs that participate in ADEA PASS.
## Test Administration Schedule (2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADAT TESTING SCHEDULE</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Biomedical Sciences (80 items)</strong></td>
<td>95 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break (optional)</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clinical Sciences (80 items)</strong></td>
<td>90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break (optional)</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data, Research Interpretation, and Evidence-Based Dentistry (40 items)</strong></td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Test Survey (optional)</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Time</strong></td>
<td>4 hours 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use of ADAT Results in Admission Decisions

• With respect to ADAT participation, programs require, accept, or do not accept ADAT results at their own discretion.

• Programs make their own decisions as to the use of ADAT results in admission decisions.
  – For example, those who “require” ADAT results could simply “collect and evaluate” those results.

• DTS is currently surveying advanced dental education programs to understand their intended involvement in the ADAT program in 2017.

• A program participation list will be posted in the 1st week of February 2017. Candidates should continue to monitor this list for changes, and can contact programs directly to understand their participation status.

• Admission decisions should consider available validity evidence that supports current admission tools, as well as evidence supporting use of the ADAT.

• Programs should base their decisions on the tools that have the greatest validity in supporting admission decisions.
ADAT Communications

• **Website**  [www.ada.org/adat](http://www.ada.org/adat)

Examination Guide, User’s Guide, Practice Test, FAQs, past presentations, program tracker spreadsheet, test specifications, reference texts, link to ADA/ADEA PASS video, Test Construction Committee (TCC) application, etc.

• **Presentations**

American Dental Education Association (ADEA)(3/15); ADEA Council of Hospitals and Advanced Education Programs (COHAEP)(3/15); American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD); (10/15); American Student Dental Association (ASDA) (1/16); ADEA Council of Students Residents and Fellows (3/16); ADEA (3/16); American College of Prosthodontics (4/16); American Association of Orthodontists (4/16); AAPD (5/16), ADA/ASDA Board Meeting (7/16), etc.

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Questions?
Thank You