

The Advanced Dental Admission Test (ADAT)

Overview

- Purpose
- Rationale for the ADAT
- Oversight
- Test Content, Design, and Construction
- Test Administration
- Scoring and Reporting
- Resources
- ADAT and NBDE: A Key Comparison

Purpose

- The Advanced Dental Admission Test (ADAT) is a computer based exam designed to provide advanced dental education programs with insight into applicants' potential for success in their program.
 - The ADAT will be professionally developed, valid, and reliable, containing questions written by dental subject matter experts.
 - The ADAT will provide quantitative data regarding applicants using a nationally standardized and objective test.

An Important Note

The ADAT is a new examination program for the American Dental Association. As such, the specific details associated with this program can be expected to evolve and change over time. Information shared in this presentation should be regarded as tentative and based on preliminary program requirements and the best available information as of the date of this presentation.

Why Develop an Advanced Dental Admission Test?

- As of January 1, 2012, the Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations no longer reports candidate scores for those who pass NBDE Part I and Part II.
- A number of dental schools have moved away from GPA and are reporting grades as pass/fail.
- Advanced dental education programs are seeking other ways to compare program applicants.
- Both program directors and students have expressed concern regarding how qualifications will be assessed when making admissions decisions.

Why Develop an Advanced Dental Admission Test?

- Fagin, Howell, Da Silva, and Park (2014) conducted a survey of US dental students.
- Students were “members of either the last class to take the NBDE Part I for a numerical score, or the first class to take the NBDE Part I without a numerical score.”
- 1,843 students responded (18.5% of the target population)

Why Develop an Advanced Dental Admission Test?

“Eighty percent of our respondents wanted some form of a scored exam regardless of their school’s grading practices, whether that is a scored NBDE Part I, an additional entrance exam common to all specialties, or additional specialty-specific entrance exams. The students clearly perceived that entering their application into an extremely competitive and growing applicant pool without a standardized measure could potentially hurt their chances of getting an interview.”

Fagin, Howell, Da Silva, and Park (2014, p.820)

Process

- ADA's Council on Dental Education and Licensure (CDEL) endorsed creation of a business plan for development of an Advanced Dental Admission Test. (May, 2014)
- To assess demand for the ADAT, CDEL distributed a survey to 739 directors of advanced dental education programs. (October, 2014)

Survey Results

- Survey response rate: 63% (464 out of 739 programs)
- 294 program directors (63% of respondents) indicated they are likely or extremely likely to require program applicants to take the ADAT.
- 150 program directors (32% of respondents) voiced interest in participating in the ADAT pilot administration in 2016, requiring all of their applicants to take the exam.

Decision to Pursue ADAT Development

- CDEL reviewed the ADAT business plan and survey data and recommended that the ADA pursue development of the ADAT. (November, 2014)
- The ADA Board of Trustees approved development of the examination. (December, 2014)

Oversight

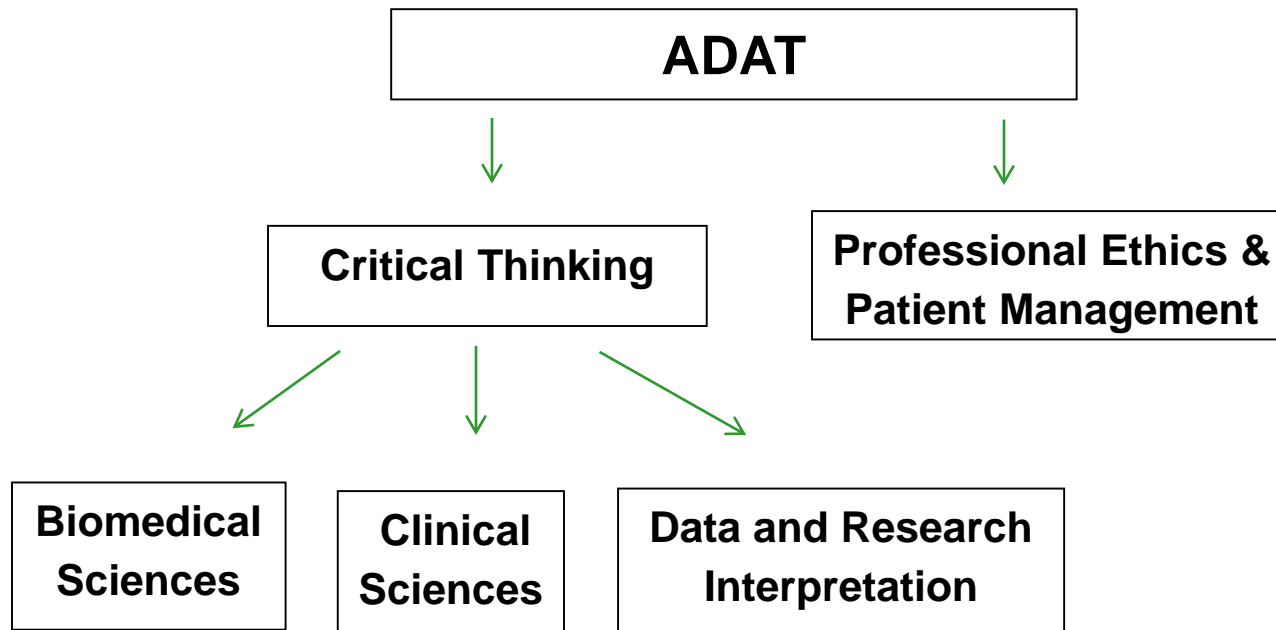
- The ADA's Council on Dental Education and Licensure (CDEL) will oversee ADAT policies.
- CDEL's Committee on Dental Admission Testing will monitor the program and make recommendations to CDEL concerning policies.
- The ADA's Department of Testing Services (DTS) will implement the ADAT program under the direction of CDEL and its Committee on Dental Admission Testing.

Candidates

- Candidates for the ADAT will be individuals who are seeking admission to advanced dental education programs. This includes:
 - Current dental students (e.g. 3rd or 4th year)
 - Current US dentists interested in post-graduate training/degrees
 - International dental students/graduates applying to advanced dental education programs or applying for advanced standing in pre-doctoral programs

Test Content

ADAT Content is structured as follows:



Test Specifications Overview

Number of Items per Subject		
Critical Thinking	Biomedical Sciences	80
	Clinical Sciences	60
	Data and Research Interpretation	30
Professional Ethics and Patient Management		30
TOTAL		200

Test Construction Committees

- There will be Test Construction Committees (TCC) for each section of the ADAT.
- The call for TCC members will be made on an annual basis by the ADA's Department of Testing Services.
- TCCs will rely on existing DTS Item Writing Guidelines.
- Test specification changes will occur over time, and will be made based on recommendations from the TCCs, with final approval by CDEL.

Testing Schedule (Pilot)

ADAT Testing Schedule (Pilot)	
<i>Tutorial</i>	15 minutes
Session One- 110 items Biomedical Sciences Data and Research Interpretation	1 hour, 50 minutes
<i>Scheduled Break</i>	30 minutes
Session Two – 90 items Clinical Sciences Professional Ethics and Patient Management	1 hour, 30 minutes
<i>Post-exam survey</i>	15 minutes
Total	4 hours, 20 minutes

The preceding time estimates are based upon NBDE Part I and Part II administration times, candidate response times for these examinations, and the desire for the ADAT to be a relatively speeded examination. The final established testing time will be contingent upon psychometric analyses and candidate considerations.

Scoring

- ADAT scores will be reported as scaled scores and will range from 200 and 800 with a target mean of 500 and a target standard deviation of 100. Scores will be reported in increments of 10.
- Scores will be reported for the following six scales:
 1. ADAT Score: an overall score that is computed based on performance on all ADAT items
 2. Critical Thinking
 3. Professional Ethics and Patient Management
 4. Biomedical Sciences
 5. Clinical Sciences
 6. Data and Research Interpretation
- The number of correct responses will NOT be reported. Examinees will NOT receive immediate feedback on their test.
- Quantitative scores will be reported to the programs selected by the candidate at the time of application.

Administration

- Administration is anticipated to occur twice per year, in testing windows.
- Testing windows lessen the possibility and implications of test content security breaches, thereby protecting the validity of the examination.
- Initial target administration dates:
 - May 2016 and August 2016
 - April 2017 and July 2017
- The ADAT would be available for two, one-week periods, (e.g., first and third week of each month indicated).

Resources

- Prior to pilot administration, the ADAT Program Guide will be available.
- As soon as feasible, advanced dental education programs will be provided with the following additional resource materials:
 - Technical Report
 - Normative Reports
 - Examination Information Report
 - Periodic Program Performance Reporting

ADAT and the NBDEs: A Key Comparison

- The ADAT is designed for admission purposes, to help advanced dental education programs identify the most qualified, strongest candidates for selection into advanced dental education programs.
- The NBDE Part I and Part II is designed for use by state dental boards, to help boards understand whether a candidate for licensure has the required cognitive skills to safely practice dentistry (minimum competency).

Contact

- For further information, please visit www.ada.org/adat or email datexam@ada.org.