

Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in the Dental Admission Test (DAT). The American Dental Association's Council on Dental Education and Licensure (CDEL) and its DAT Committee oversee the administration, policies, and procedures of the DAT. The DAT Committee met in February, 2014 and CDEL met in April, 2014. This newsletter provides an update on planned changes, recent information, tips, and reminders involving the DAT.

The topics in this newsletter are as follows:

- 2016 Changes to Quantitative Reasoning Test (QRT) Specifications *New*
- 2015 Changes to Biology Specifications
- Updated Website and Examinee Application System
- 2015 DAT Fee
- Frequency of DAT Validity Studies
- Recruiting Data for Canadian Examinees
- Testing Program: 2013
- DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU: Violations of Testing Rules and Regulations
- Reminders

2016 Changes to Quantitative Reasoning Test (QRT) Specifications

In order to enhance testing of critical thinking skills, the detailed specifications of the Quantitative Reasoning Test (QRT) are being changed as follows:

New: Data Analysis, Interpretation, and Sufficiency; and Quantitative Comparison (includes, but is not limited to, conversions; probability and statistics; geometry; and trigonometry)

The QRT will still contain 40 questions in total.

These changes will be implemented during Calendar Year 2016.

2015 Changes to Biology Test Specifications

The Biology specifications will change slightly in 2015 as follows:

New: Biomolecules - within Cell and Molecular Biology
Relationships - within Diversity of Life

Experimental embryology will be removed from Developmental Biology.
Cladistics will be removed from Evolution, Ecology, and Behavior.

Biology will still contain 40 questions in total.

These changes will be implemented during Calendar Year 2015.

Updated Website and Examinee Application System

The screenshot shows the ADA American Dental Association website. The header includes the ADA logo and the tagline "America's leading advocate for oral health". A navigation menu is visible with "MEMBER CENTER" and "EDUCATION/CAREERS" highlighted. The main content area is titled "Dental Admission Test" and includes a breadcrumb trail: "Home > Education and Careers > Dental Admission Test". A sidebar on the left lists links: "My Account", "DENTPIN", "DAT Guide", "DAT Application", "DAT Score Report Request", and "DAT Privacy Policy". The main content area lists several options: "Apply to Take the DAT", "Test Preparation Material and Helpful Information", "DAT Score Information and Audit Request", "DAT Newsletters and Resources", and "DAT Test Construction and Contact Information".

The DAT website has been redesigned. We hope you like the new look!

An improved online DAT examinee application system has also been introduced. The new system allows examinees web-based, 24x7 self-service access to the status of applications and score requests. Previously, examinees had to call the ADA during business hours to obtain this information. This change is another step to support examinees.

2015 DAT Fee

Effective January 1, 2015, the DAT administration fee will be changed from \$385 to \$415. The increase to examination fees is due to factors such as increased operating expenses and infrastructure improvements to improve the candidate experience and processing efficiency.

Frequency of DAT Validity Studies

DAT Validity Studies report the relationship between pre-dental grade point averages, DAT scores, and the academic achievements of a sample of students during their first and second years in US dental schools. These studies provide validity evidence that supports the use of examination results to make admission decisions concerning examinees. The most recent DAT Validity Study is available under the [DAT Newsletters and Resources](#) tab and looking further under “Additional DAT Resources”. Historically, the validity reports have been done annually, and require significant effort to produce. With few exceptions, results have been highly consistent year-to-year.

Going forward, DAT validity studies will be conducted every two years with the caveat that, when substantive changes are introduced that could affect the relationship between test performance and student performance, a validity study will be conducted the first year for which data is available. Shifting to a less-frequent cycle will allow resources to be shifted to investigate and implement additional analyses that may provide further insights.

The continued participation of schools in providing data for DAT validity studies is vital to the success of the DAT program, and is greatly appreciated.

Recruiting Data for Canadian Examinees

Effective July 1, 2014, a new Canadian law imposes strict requirements for emails, texts, e-newsletters and all forms of commercial electronic messages that promote goods and services, including training and conferences. Individuals must provide their “expressed consent” to receive these messages. Penalties of up to \$10 million can be imposed per violation.

As a result, the email addresses of examinees with Canadian addresses have been removed from the DAT demographic reports that are provided to dental schools. These demographic reports provide contact information for examinees who have a) identified themselves as minorities and b) agreed to receive recruiting information from dental schools. These examinees have also been removed from the DAT list that provides contact information for any examinee who has agreed to receive recruiting information.

Testing Program: 2013

The DAT is offered year-round at Prometric Test Centers in the United States and its territories, including Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. During 2013, in North America there were 284 professional level testing centers with 5,243 seats available for testing. Examinee satisfaction with the test center experience remains generally positive according to the responses to a post-test survey.

In 2013, there were 12,947 administrations of the DAT.

From highest to lowest percentages, examinees' self-reported ethnicities in 2013 were as follows:

White	52%
Asian	25%
Hispanic	8%
Black	6%
American Indian	1%
Pacific Islander	1%
Did not provide	6%

DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU: Violations of Testing Rules and Regulations

The Test Rules and Regulations in the DAT Guide provide rules of conduct for all examinees. Anyone who violates these rules faces serious consequences. Consider the following example from a real-life case.

Action: The sister of a DAT applicant took the DAT in the applicant's stead. The applicant was in a time of great personal stress. The sister was also a student with similar coursework.

DAT Regulation(s) Violated: "You certify that you are the person who has registered for the test for the purpose of gaining admission to dental school or another health profession education program. You may not take the test for someone else."

Consequence: The applicant's scores were voided, and she was required to wait two years to retest.

Appropriate Action: Do not take the test for anyone else! Do not ask anyone else to take the test for you! Proxy testing represents a clear violation of DAT program regulations, with corresponding severe penalties.

Reminders

- Faculty interested in being item writers for the DAT can find information on selection criteria, the application process, and an orientation manual that describes the role of test constructors by viewing the DAT Test Construction and Contact Information tab [here](#).
- Findings from the [2014 DAT Validity Study](#) (click to download the PDF) are consistent with the results of previous DAT validity studies, and provide evidence of the value of

including DAT scores as part of dental school selection criteria. This report is based on data from 2011-2012.

- The DAT Practice Test is available for purchase through the Prometric web site.
- A limited number of partial fee waivers are available each calendar year for cases of severe financial hardship. The waiver covers 50% of the DAT fee. See the [DAT Guide](#) for eligibility requirements and necessary documentation.
- Previous editions of the DAT newsletter are available under [DAT Newsletters and Resources](#).

Please share this newsletter with your colleagues. Your comments and suggestions are welcome and appreciated. Please send them to datexam@ada.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diane Hoelscher, DDS, MS." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Diane Hoelscher
Chair, DAT Committee