

# **Understanding the New Dental Admission Test (DAT) Score Reporting Scale**

Guidelines for Candidates,  
Admissions Officers, and  
Pre-health Advisors

# TESTING SERVICES

ADA American Dental Association®

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*You are required to read this Guide before you apply to take the examination.*

*At the time of application, you will be required to confirm that you have read this Guide, understood its contents, and agree to the policies and procedures contained herein.*

*Changes to the Dental Admission Test (DAT®) Program may occur after publication of this Guide. Updated PDFs will be posted to [ADA.org/DAT](https://ada.org/DAT). You will be subject to the policies and procedures currently in effect at the time of your test administration.*

# Understanding the New Dental Admission Test (DAT) Score Reporting Scale

## Guidelines for Candidates, Admissions Officers, and Pre-health Advisors

Beginning March 1, 2025, the American Dental Association (ADA)'s Department of Testing Services (DTS) will implement a new scoring system for the Dental Admission Test (DAT). The new scoring system will yield more precise and accurate estimates of candidates' skills, thereby providing stronger insight into each candidate's level of preparedness for the rigors of dental school. To continue interpreting DAT results effectively, candidates, admissions officers, and pre-health advisors will need to familiarize themselves with the new reporting scale, and also understand how it relates to the old scale. This guide provides resources to assist these groups in doing so, to help ease this important transition. To learn more about the new DAT scoring system and how it will benefit communities of interest, please visit [ADA.org/DATScoringUpdate](https://ada.org/DATScoringUpdate).

### Changes in Results Reporting

When the new DAT scoring system is introduced on March 1, 2025, the DAT's existing score reporting scale (1 to 30) will be replaced by a new 3-digit reporting scale. Under the new 3-digit reporting scale, DAT scores can range from 200 to 600 in 10-point increments (e.g., 200, 210, 220, etc.). DAT results appear in both the DTS Score Reporting System (i.e., the DTS Hub), and the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) Associated American Dental Schools Application Service (AADSAS). Dental education programs typically use ADEA AADSAS to review candidate results for admissions purposes. Candidates rely on the DTS Hub so they can view a historical record of their test results.

**To assist dental program admissions officers and reduce the possibility of interpretational errors, beginning March 1, 2025 all DAT scores will be reported to ADEA AADSAS on the new 3-digit scale (200 to 600).** This includes administrations taking place from March 1, 2025 forward, as well as results from prior administrations (the latter of which will be psychometrically converted). Results from administrations prior to March 1, 2025 will still be available in their original 2-digit format in the DTS Hub, to assist those who wish to see their prior test results in the original 2-digit format.

### Comparing Scores: The DAT Concordance Table

DTS has developed a concordance table to facilitate comparisons between the old and new reporting scales. Table 1 (see below) can be used to convert a DAT score that is reported on the old reporting scale (1 to 30) to its approximate equivalent score on the new reporting scale (200 to 600).<sup>1</sup> For

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<sup>1</sup> This concordance table was established using more than 30,000 DAT attempts from a recent two-year period. Each attempt was scored using both the old and new DAT scoring systems, and scores from the old and new reporting scales were determined for each candidate. In accordance with psychometric principles, a score on the old reporting scale (1 to 30) was considered approximately equivalent to a score on the new reporting scale (200 to 600) if the two scores occupied similar relative positions in their respective score distributions.

example, Table 1 indicates that a Quantitative Reasoning score of 15 on the old reporting scale is approximately equivalent to a Quantitative Reasoning score of 340 on the new scale. DAT users can reference Table 1 when they have old DAT scores (1 to 30) and wish to understand how these scores correspond to the new reporting scale (200 to 600).

### Using the DAT Concordance Table

Use **Table 1** to convert an old DAT score (1 to 30) to its approximate equivalent score on the new DAT reporting scale (200 to 600).

Concordance tables are designed to help facilitate the meaningful comparison of candidates. The *Frequently Asked Questions* section at the end of this guide provides examples of how these types of comparisons can be made.

### Interpreting the New 3-Digit DAT Scores: DAT Percentile Ranks

Table 2 provides the percentile ranks associated with the new 3-digit DAT scores. **The percentile rank for a given score indicates the percentage of candidates in the national normative sample who achieved that score or lower.** If a Quantitative Reasoning score of 460 corresponds to a percentile rank of 85, for example, it means that 85% of the candidates in the sample achieved a Quantitative Reasoning score of 460 or below. Higher percentile ranks indicate stronger relative performance. The percentile ranks in Table 2 are based on a national normative sample consisting of more than 30,000 DAT attempts occurring over a recent two-year period.

### Finding DAT Percentile Ranks

Use **Table 2** to determine the percentage of DAT candidates who score at or below a given 3-digit DAT score (200 to 600).

The DAT percentile ranks in Table 2 are provided to help candidates understand how they performed relative to the candidates in the nationwide normative sample. The percentile ranks are also helpful to admissions officers and pre-health advisors who seek to interpret candidates' 3-digit DAT scores.

## Frequently Asked Questions

The section below provides answers to several frequently asked questions concerning the interpretation and use of DAT scores reported on the new 3-digit reporting scale (200 to 600).

**I'm a candidate who has taken the DAT twice. The scores from my first test were previously reported on the old reporting scale (1 to 30), but the scores from my second test were reported on the new scale (200 to 600). How do I know if I improved on my second attempt?**

You can use Table 1 in this guide to convert the scores from your first DAT attempt to their approximate equivalent scores on the new 3-digit reporting scale (200 to 600). Once you have done this, the scores from your first and second DAT attempts can be compared.

As an example, suppose you earned a Biology score of 18 on your first DAT attempt and a Biology score of 420 on your second attempt. Table 1 indicates that the Biology score of 18 from your first DAT attempt is approximately equivalent to a score of 390 on the new reporting scale. Because you earned the approximate equivalent of a 390 on your first attempt, and a 420 on your second attempt, you can conclude that your performance in Biology improved from your first attempt to your second.

**I'm a candidate who has taken the DAT under the new 3-digit reporting scale (200 to 600). I'm not familiar with this scale, and I don't really understand how I performed on the test. How can I better understand my 3-digit DAT scores?**

You can use Table 2 in this guide to determine the percentile rank associated with your 3-digit DAT score. The percentile rank tells you how you performed relative to other DAT candidates in a large, nationwide normative sample.

As an example, suppose you earned a Quantitative Reasoning score of 460. Table 2 indicates that a Quantitative Reasoning score of 460 corresponds to a percentile rank of 85, meaning that 85% of the candidates in the nationwide normative sample achieved a Quantitative Reasoning score of 460 or below.

**I'm an admissions officer. My dental education program has historically required candidates to earn an Academic Average score of 18 or higher on the DAT in order to be admitted. How can my program continue to implement this minimum requirement once only 3-digit DAT scores are reported?**

You can use Table 1 in this guide to determine that an Academic Average score of 18 on the old DAT reporting scale is approximately equivalent to an Academic Average score of 390 on the new reporting scale. If your program wishes to maintain essentially the same performance standard, then going forward your program could simply require applicants to have an Academic Average score of 390 or higher on the new reporting scale.

**Table 1: DAT Concordance Table (Old to New)**

Linking old DAT scores (1 to 30) to the new DAT score reporting scale (200 to 600).

DAT Score (OLD scale)	DAT Score (NEW scale)							
	AA	SNS	BIO	GCH	OCH	PAT	QRT	RCT
1	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
2	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
3	210	210	200	200	200	200	200	200
4	220	210	200	200	200	200	200	200
5	220	210	200	200	200	200	200	210
6	230	220	200	200	200	200	200	210
7	240	220	200	200	200	200	200	210
8	240	230	200	200	200	200	200	220
9	250	230	200	200	200	200	200	220
10	250	240	210	200	220	200	210	220
11	260	240	210	240	260	210	240	220
12	270	270	260	280	300	210	270	230
13	290	300	290	310	320	250	300	260
14	310	320	320	330	330	280	320	280
15	330	340	340	350	350	310	340	300
16	350	360	360	360	370	340	360	320
17	370	380	370	380	380	360	380	340
18	390	400	390	400	400	390	400	360
19	410	410	410	410	410	410	420	370
20	420	430	420	430	430	430	430	390
21	440	450	440	440	450	450	450	410
22	460	460	460	460	470	470	460	430
23	470	480	470	470	480	500	480	450
24	490	500	490	490	490	520	500	470
25	510	520	500	510	510	550	510	490
26	520	530	520	530	530	580	520	510
27	540	550	550	550	550	580	540	550
28	560	560	580	570	560	590	580	550
29	580	580	590	580	570	600	590	560
30	600	600	600	600	590	600	600	580

**Interpretation Example:**

A **Quantitative Reasoning** score of 15 on the old DAT reporting scale is approximately equivalent to a **Quantitative Reasoning** score of 340 on the new scale.

**AA** Academic Average  
**SNS** Survey of Natural Sciences

**BIO** Biology  
**GCH** General Chemistry  
**OCH** Organic Chemistry  
**PAT** Perceptual Ability  
**QRT** Quantitative Reasoning  
**RCT** Reading Comprehension

**Table 2: DAT Percentile Rank Table (3-Digit Scores)**  
 Percentile ranks associated with the new 3-digit DAT scores (200 to 600)

3-Digit Score (NEW scale)	Percentile Rank							
	AA	SNS	BIO	GCH	OCH	PAT	QRT	RCT
200	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
210	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
220	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
230	0	0	1	2	2	2	1	1
240	0	1	2	2	2	2	1	1
250	0	1	2	2	2	3	2	1
260	1	2	2	3	3	3	2	1
270	1	2	3	3	3	4	3	2
280	2	3	4	4	4	5	4	3
290	3	5	5	5	5	6	5	4
300	4	6	6	7	6	8	6	5
310	6	8	9	9	8	10	8	7
320	8	10	11	11	11	12	11	10
330	11	13	14	14	14	15	14	14
340	15	17	18	18	18	18	18	18
350	20	22	23	23	23	22	23	23
360	25	27	28	28	28	27	28	29
370	32	33	34	33	34	33	34	36
380	39	39	40	39	41	39	41	43
390	47	47	47	46	47	46	47	49
400	54	53	54	53	54	52	54	56
410	62	61	61	60	61	59	61	63
420	69	67	67	66	67	65	67	69
430	75	73	73	73	73	71	73	74
440	81	79	78	78	78	76	78	79
450	85	83	83	82	82	81	82	83
460	88	87	86	86	85	84	85	86
470	91	89	89	89	88	88	88	89
480	94	92	92	92	91	90	91	91
490	96	94	93	93	92	93	93	93
500	97	95	95	94	94	94	94	94
510	98	96	96	95	95	96	96	95
520	99	97	97	96	96	97	96	95
530	99	98	97	97	97	98	97	96
540	100	99	98	97	97	98	98	96
550	100	99	98	98	98	99	98	98
560	100	100	98	98	98	99	98	99
570	100	100	98	99	99	99	98	99
580	100	100	99	99	99	99	98	99
590	100	100	99	99	99	100	98	99
600	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

**Interpretation Example:**  
 85% of DAT candidates in the national normative sample achieved a **Quantitative Reasoning** score of 460 or lower.

Note: Percentile ranks were calculated using a national normative sample consisting of more than 30,000 DAT attempts occurring over a recent two-year period.

- |            |                            |            |                        |
|------------|----------------------------|------------|------------------------|
| <b>AA</b>  | Academic Average           | <b>BIO</b> | Biology                |
| <b>SNS</b> | Survey of Natural Sciences | <b>GCH</b> | General Chemistry      |
|            |                            | <b>OCH</b> | Organic Chemistry      |
|            |                            | <b>PAT</b> | Perceptual Ability     |
|            |                            | <b>QRT</b> | Quantitative Reasoning |
|            |                            | <b>RCT</b> | Reading Comprehension  |