DENTAL ADMISSION TEST
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT SCORING

How are DAT results reported?

DAT results are reported as scale scores. Scale scores are neither raw scores (i.e., the number of questions answered correctly) nor percentiles. DAT scale scores range from 1 to 30. A scale score of 19 typically signifies average performance on a national basis.

How many questions do I need to answer correctly to earn a particular DAT score?

The ADA does not release the total number of questions that must be correctly answered to earn a specific DAT scale score. This number will vary based on the specific examination form that is administered. For retest and test security purposes, multiple forms of the DAT are available for administration.

If there are different examination forms, wouldn't that mean that some forms might be easier than others? How does this impact scoring?

Each examination form contains a separate set of questions which can differ in difficulty. Differences in examination form difficulty are addressed via sophisticated psychometric procedures that take question difficulty into account when determining candidate scale scores.

How is the DAT Academic Average score determined?

The Academic Average is the rounded average of a candidate's scale scores in Biology, General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, Quantitative Reasoning, and Reading Comprehension.

How is the DAT Total Science score determined?

The Total Science scale score is based on a candidate's performance on the Survey of Natural Sciences section. The Total Science score is NOT the rounded average of a candidate's scale scores in Biology, General Chemistry, and Organic Chemistry.

Does the DAT contain unscored questions?

Yes. A small number of questions on the test are experimental and are not scored. The data collected on unscored questions may be used in later test construction procedures, to ensure that these questions are appropriate before they become scored items. Unscored questions are presented in the same manner as scored questions.

Where can I find additional information about candidate performance on the DAT?

The DAT User's Manual provides information about candidate performance on the DAT. The User's Manual is available under DAT Newsletters and Resources on ADA.org/DAT.