



The ADEX Dental Examination Series

# DENTAL CANDIDATE MANUAL

Clinical Examinations: Fixed Prosthodontic,  
Endodontic, Periodontal & Restorative



ALL RIGHTS RESERVED  
American Board of Dental Examiners

EXAM SEASON  
**2026**  
JANUARY 1 - JULY 31

Version 20260115

# CONTENTS

---

|                              |    |
|------------------------------|----|
| Addendum                     | 3  |
| Examination Overview         | 4  |
| Performance Expectations     | 5  |
| Exam Preparation             | 7  |
| Instruments & Materials      | 8  |
| Exam Forms & Criteria Sheets | 26 |

## **PROSTHODONTIC, ENDODONTIC & PERIODONTAL**

|                           |    |
|---------------------------|----|
| Exam Administration       | 10 |
| Exam Check-In             | 11 |
| Exam Day                  | 12 |
| Prosthodontic Examination | 13 |
| Endodontic Examination    | 14 |
| Periodontal Examination   | 15 |
| Exam Day Completion       | 16 |

## **RESTORATIVE**

|                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| Exam Administration     | 17 |
| Exam Check-In           | 18 |
| Exam Day Set-up         | 19 |
| Restorative Examination | 20 |
| Exam Day Completion     | 24 |
| Examination Penalties   | 25 |

# ADDENDUM



Candidates are responsible for understanding content included in the Candidate Guide, Candidate Manuals, criteria sheets and forms regarding simulated-patient examination procedures, protocols and processes applicable to the **January 1 through July 31, 2026 exam season**. Candidates are encouraged to periodically review these publications for changes or updates.

**Any additions or modifications after initial publication will be noted below.**

- **Endodontic Examination.** Per manufacturer recommendation, **use only water for irrigation of the Anterior tooth canal**. Chemical or non-water irrigation may result in an ungradable performance and require retake of the exam. pp. 14. (01/15/2026)

# EXAMINATION OVERVIEW



*The American Board of Dental Examiners administers the ADEX Dental Examination, which consists of computer-based and clinical exam components. All examinations are based on specific performance criteria developed by ADEX and other content experts used to measure the clinical competency of candidates.*

All components of the **ADEX Dental Examination series** must be successfully completed (passing scores) within 18 months of the initial attempt of any component in the series. In conjunction with this manual, refer to the [Candidate Guide](#) (policies) available on the [ADEXtesting.org](http://ADEXtesting.org) website for more information regarding exam eligibility requirements, registration, the **ADEX 18-Month Rule, 3-Time Fail Policy**, and other administrative policies.

- The computer-based **Diagnostic Skills Examination (DSE OSCE)** assesses various aspects of diagnosis and treatment planning knowledge, skills, and abilities. Patient simulation is achieved through computer-enhanced photographs, radiographs, optical images of study and working models, laboratory data, and other clinical digitized reproductions. Refer to the separate [Computer-based Candidate Manual](#) for more information.
- The **Clinical Examinations** procedures are performed on simulated patient manikins and proprietary typodont models in a clinic or simulation laboratory within the designated timeframe. (Refer to the **Examination Timeline** section of the respective procedure for guidelines and restrictions.) Candidates are evaluated based on the respective performance criteria (see [Criteria Sheets](#)).

Clinical examinations consist of multiple procedures, which are evaluated and reported as singular exam parts or components. Successful completion of all procedures of the respective clinical examination are required to achieve an overall passing score. Meaning that failure of one or more procedures requires a re-attempt of all procedures of the respective examination.

- A. **Fixed Prosthodontic Examination.** Candidates have up to four (4) hours to complete the following procedures:
  1. Ceramic Crown preparation
  2. Porcelain-Fused-to-Metal Crown preparation
  3. Cast Metal Crown preparation
- B. **Endodontic Examination.** Candidates have up to three (3) hours to complete the following procedures:
  1. Anterior procedure
  2. Posterior procedure
- C. **Periodontal Examination.** Candidates have up to 60 minutes to complete the following procedures:
  1. Calculus removal on 12 assigned surfaces in a mandibular quadrant
- D. **Anterior Restorative Examination.** Candidates have up to three (3) hours to complete the following:
  1. Class III preparation and restoration of carious lesion on a maxillary incisor
- E. **Posterior Restorative Examination.** Candidates have up to three and a half (3.5) hours to complete the following:
  1. Class II preparation and restoration of carious lesion on a mandibular molar or premolar

# PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS



Examination results are based on independent evaluations completed by three (3) calibrated examiners according to the criteria defined in the [Criteria Sheet](#) for the respective procedure. Each confidential evaluation of candidate performance is individually recorded and submitted electronically. Examiners are prohibited from discussing their evaluations.

| Skills Assessment                          | ADEX Prosthodontic Exam Content  | Criteria |
|--|--|----------|
| All-Ceramic Crown<br>Tooth #9              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparation on a central incisor</li> </ul>   | 12       |
| Porcelain-fused-to-Metal Crown<br>Tooth #5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparation as an anterior abutment for a 3-unit fixed dental prosthesis (bridge)</li> </ul>      | 12       |
| Cast Metal Crown<br>Tooth #3               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparation as the posterior abutment for same 3-unit fixed dental prosthesis (bridge)</li> </ul> | 12       |

| Skills Assessment                | ADEX Endodontic Exam Content  | Criteria |
|----------------------------------|---|----------|
| Anterior Procedure<br>Tooth #8   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access preparation, canal preparation, and obturation</li> </ul> | 10       |
| Posterior Procedure<br>Tooth #14 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access preparation and canal identification</li> </ul>           | 6        |

| Skills Assessment     | ADEX Periodontal Exam Content   | Criteria |
|-----------------------|---|----------|
| Periodontal Procedure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Calculus removal on 12 assigned surfaces in a mandibular quadrant</li> <li>Tissue management (hard and/or soft)</li> </ul> | 3        |

| Skills Assessment                  | ADEX Restorative Exams Content   | Criteria                 |
|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Anterior Restorative Procedures    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Class III Composite Preparation</li> <li>Class III Composite Restoration</li> </ul>   | 9<br>6                   |
| Posterior Restorative Procedures** | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Class II Amalgam Preparation</li> <li>Class II Amalgam Restoration</li> <li>Class II Composite Preparation</li> <li>Class II Composite Restoration</li> </ul> | 13<br>6<br><hr/> 13<br>7 |

\*\* Candidate may choose to complete either an Amalgam or Composite Posterior Restorative procedure.

Exam content is based on the “**Universal Numbering System**” of dental notation.

## Scoring Overview



The criteria gradations of competence are described across a 3-level rating scale. Those criteria appear on the respective [Criteria Sheet](#) and are the basis for the evaluation. The three rating levels are as follows:

- **ACC (Clinically Acceptable):** The treatment is of acceptable quality, demonstrating competence in clinical judgment, knowledge, and skill.
- **SUB (Marginally Substandard):** The treatment is of marginal quality, demonstrating less than expected clinical judgment and/or skill.\*
- **DEF (Critically Deficient):** The treatment is of unacceptable quality, demonstrating critical areas of incompetence in clinical judgment, knowledge, and/or skill.

If a criterion is assigned a rating of **critically deficient** by two or more examiners, no points are awarded for that procedure, and the candidate will fail that procedure.

**\*3-SUB RULE:** If examiners independently confirm three marginally substandard over-preparation criteria on the same procedure, then the procedure will be determined to be critically deficient, and the candidate will fail that procedure. Applicable criteria are highlighted in yellow on the criteria sheet.

**NOTE:** Candidates are not informed of the outcome of any procedure during the examination. For the Restorative examination, candidates will restore the prepared tooth even in the case of a failure of the preparation.

**Result Details.** A score of 75 or greater is required to pass each part of the examination; however, results are reported as Pass/Fail to Candidates and licensing jurisdictions for each part. Applicable criteria are provided to candidates of failed clinical attempts. Post-exam images, details or explanation beyond the stated criteria are not reported to the Candidate.

**10-Day Retake Waiting Period.** A 10-day waiting period is required between the date of failure and the re-attempt of any clinical part of the ADEX examination.

## Standards of Conduct

Integrity of the examination depends on fairness, accuracy and consistency. Established standards of conduct ensure that these principles are adhered to by examiners, candidates, and all individuals and entities involved in examination administration.

Dismissal, failure of the examination or a reduction in an examination score may result from unethical and/or unprofessional conduct (misconduct).

Candidates are required to adhere to these standards of conduct while participating in any examination administered by the American Board of Dental Examiners. Refer to the [Candidate Guide](#) for conduct and examination guidelines resulting in penalties or automatic failure of the examination and/or examination series (e.g. use of prohibited electronic devices, etc.).

### IMPORTANT REMINDER: Photography

**Photography or recording of any aspect of the clinical or computer-based examination is strictly prohibited and grounds for immediate dismissal.**

# EXAM PREPARATION



## OFFICIAL RESOURCES

***Candidates are responsible for reading and understanding manuals and materials published by the American Board of Dental Examiners. Candidates bear all risk of any misunderstanding resulting from the use of or reliance on unofficial, non-authorized or third-party information or materials.***

Refer to the [Dental Examination Overview](#) and [Test Prep](#) pages of the [ADEXtesting.org](#) website for official resources.

### Candidate Guide, Exam Manuals, Criteria Sheets & Forms

Official resources available for candidate use during the examination.

- Refer to the [Candidate Guide](#) for American Board of Dental Examiners policies and procedures regarding eligibility requirements, candidate conduct, infection control protocols, results release, and exam administration.
- Refer to this **Candidate Manual** for exam protocols, procedures, materials, and performance expectations.
- [Downloadable Criteria Sheets](#) provide the criteria used to evaluate a candidate's performance.
- [Downloadable sample examination forms](#) are for candidate reference only, not for exam use.

### Typodonts & Manikins

All candidate assignments are performed on the **magnetically retained typodonts and proprietary teeth** provided by the American Board of Dental Examiners during the examination. Manikin, shroud and mounting post are also provided for candidate use during the examination.

Similar products for candidate practice in advance of the exam are available at [Acadental.com](#).

Questions?  
[Contact Us](#)

### Site Info Sheets

Visit the [Calendar](#) section of the [ADEXtesting.org](#) website for **Site Info Sheets** regarding host-provided supplies and equipment, infection control protocols, PPE, equipment rental, and other valuable information for each clinical exam location. Contact site host directly with questions regarding information listed in their **Site Info Sheet**.

Submit questions regarding exam availability, registration and fees to American Board of Dental Examiners via [Contact Us](#).

### Q&A Session

The **Q&A Session** affords Candidates the opportunity to ask questions about exam processes or other exam-related concerns, including host site-specific protocols, in advance of their clinical examination.

Registered Candidates are notified of their scheduled Q&A Session date and time via email; participation is strongly encouraged. Sessions may be virtual or onsite, depending on host site preference/availability. Q&A Sessions are not recorded by American Board of Dental Examiners.

### Video Tools

Visit the [Test Prep](#) page to access **videos** highlighting the examination day experience. Only videos branded and published by [ADEX Testing Media](#) are valid sources of information. However, these videos are for demonstration purposes only, not a replacement for information contained within this **Candidate Manual**.



# INSTRUMENTS & MATERIALS



## Instrument Guidelines

- Candidates are **responsible for furnishing their own instruments and materials** as needed to complete the required dental examination procedures.
- Only instruments, materials and techniques within the standard of patient care for the dental procedure specific to each examination part may be used. (Use of inappropriate instruments, materials, solvents or techniques is prohibited and grounds for termination of the examination.)
- Candidates must use their best clinical judgment and diagnostic skills when determining which dental instruments and armamentarium are required to perform each procedure as an instrument list is not provided.
- Instruments must be clean and disinfected, but sterilization is not required for simulated patient (i.e. manikin) examinations. Once the examination begins, all CDC infection control guidelines must be followed.

### CONTAMINATED INSTRUMENT PROTOCOL

Once treatment begins, inform the CFE if an instrument becomes contaminated (e.g. dropped). In lieu of replacing the instrument, the candidate must explain the protocol followed for patient treatment, and **wipe down/disinfect** the instrument prior to use.

## Exam Site Information

Some locations may have instruments available for candidate use for an additional fee. Refer to the [Site Info Sheet](#) of the clinical exam location listed in the [Calendar](#) section of the [ADEXtesting.org](#) website for information regarding instrument availability, hand-piece compatibility, and materials provided.

Any arrangements for instrument or equipment rental should be completed well in advance of the examination to ensure availability, if applicable. Contact the site host directly with questions regarding school-related information listed within their [Site Info Sheet](#).

### IMPORTANT REMINDER: School Equipment

**Notify Clinic Floor Examiner (CFE) immediately of any school equipment malfunction.**

## EXAMINATION TEAM MEMBERS

- **Chief Examiner** - oversees exam administration in Candidate clinics/areas
- **Clinic Floor Examiner (CFE)** - oversees Candidate functions
- **Grading Team Captain/Grading Examiners** - evaluate Candidate performance according to published criteria; no candidate interactions
- **Exam Technical Administrator (ETA)** - provides administrative and technical support in both Candidate and Grading Examiner clinics/areas





## Infection Control Guidelines

Candidates are required to adhere to current **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** infection control guidelines and recommendations for all simulated patient (manikin) examinations. However, the exam site host may impose additional requirements or restrictions. Refer to the [Site Info Sheet](#) for a list of school-provided materials and equipment, PPE requirements, and plan accordingly.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).** Candidates are responsible for following basic Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements for all clinical examinations as outlined by American Board of Dental Examiners.

- Mask
- Appropriate clinical attire/scrubs
- Protective eyewear, loupes or prescription eyewear with side shields
- Gloves
- Close-toed shoes

Refer to the [Candidate Guide](#) for additional information regarding minimum infection control requirements.

### Instruments & Materials Used for Evaluation

Examiners utilize the following instruments and materials during the evaluation processes:

- Perio probe with millimeter markings (e.g. UNC-15)
- 11/12 explorer (Periodontal exam)
- Endodontic explorer (Endodontic exam)
- Sharp explorer (e.g. shepherd's hook) (Restorative exam)
- Dental floss, articulating paper (Restorative exam)
- Putty matrices/reduction guides (Prosthodontic exam)

### Prohibited Items

Presence of the following prohibited items will result in confiscation of materials, as well as dismissal from and failure of the examination.

- Non-dental instruments
- Digital scanner
- Electronic devices (e.g. phone, smart watch, camera, etc.)
- Pre-made reduction guides/putty matrices and/or impressions
- Pre-made overlays, clear plastic shells, models
- Extra and/or pre-prepared typodont teeth
- Screwdrivers
- Solvents
- Non-official reference materials

Dental assistants are not permitted during any aspect of the examinations.

Refer to the [Candidate Guide](#) for additional information and violations applicable to all exam types.

### Use of Solvents for Treatment Procedures

Solvents or any technique or material deemed unacceptable for patient care are prohibited.

Alcohol **can only** be used after the anterior endodontic procedure has been completed to remove excess sealer from the chamber (as performed clinically when treating patients).

## Dental Technologies

The American Board of Dental Examiners recognizes the ongoing development of technologies that enhance the quality and efficiency of patient care. However, as a testing agency, the American Board of Dental Examiners reserves the right to restrict the use of such technologies during the examination until these innovations are established as the standard of care and available to all candidates at all testing locations.

# EXAM ADMINISTRATION



## Prosthodontic, Endodontic & Periodontal

### EXAMINATION TIMELINE

Preliminary schedules are subject to change. Candidates are notified via email once their official individual **examination schedule and Q&A Session** information are posted in their [Candidates.ADEXtesting.org](https://Candidates.ADEXtesting.org) profile, approximately 2-3 weeks prior to the clinical exam. Candidates assume all risk and responsibility for making travel or lodging arrangements in advance of receiving their official individual examination schedule.

| Session  | Start Time      | Stop/Finish Time |
|--|-----------------|------------------|
| Candidate Check-In, Clinic Entrance, Workstation Setup | 6:30 AM         | 8:00 AM          |
| Prosthodontic Examination (4 hours)                    | 8:00 AM         | 12:00 PM         |
| <i>Break (Optional)<sup>1</sup></i>                    | <i>12:00 PM</i> | <i>12:30 PM</i>  |
| Endodontic Examination (3 hours)                       | 12:30 PM**      | 3:30 PM          |
| Periodontal Examination (1.0 hour)                     | 3:30 PM**       | 4:30 PM          |

**START TIME:** Treatment may begin only after the Chief Examiner or Clinic Floor Examiner (CFE) announces the start of examination. All procedures must be completed within the allotted timeframe.

**<sup>1</sup>BREAKS.** Breaks are permitted between exam parts and taken at the discretion of the Candidate. All procedures must be started by the scheduled start time to receive the full time allotment. Time adjustments or extensions are not permitted for discretionary breaks taken during treatment timelines. Plan accordingly.

**\*\*Start Time dictates Stop/Finish Time.** Candidate may begin Endodontic or Periodontal procedures in advance of scheduled start time. Clinic Floor Examiner (CFE) will record assigned Finish Times on **Progress Forms**. All procedures must be completed within the allotted or assigned timeframe.

### IMPORTANT REMINDER: Time Management

Candidates are responsible for managing and monitoring their time appropriately to ensure timely arrival and procedure completion according to their assigned examination schedule or finish time to avoid penalty.

# EXAM CHECK-IN



## Prosthodontic, Endodontic & Periodontal

### IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

The following items are required for admission to the clinical examination. Refer to the [Candidate Guide](#) for **identification requirements** and **“No Show” Policy**.

- **PHOTO IDENTIFICATION.** A U.S. government- or school issued photo ID. Acceptable forms of non-expired photo identification include such documents as current, valid driver license, passport, military ID, or official school ID.
- **Recent Name Change.** If your legal name has recently changed, bring a copy of the supporting name change document (e.g. marriage certificate, dissolution decree or court document) to the clinical examination.

### Candidate ID Number, Badges & Labels

**CANDIDATE ID NUMBER.** Note that your Candidate ID Number will be used on all badges, labels and forms to maintain your anonymity during the examination; and in conjunction with your name on all post-exam results reports.

**ID BADGES.** Upon identity verification, candidates receive a sheet of candidate labels, including two (2) Candidate Photo Badge labels. Photo badge label must be visible on your outermost garment throughout the examination.

**LABELS.** Place your Candidate ID Label/QR Code on all examination forms and cubicle card.

### Progress Forms & Tablet Entry

Official records are submitted electronically via the exam tablet and all communication with examiners is digital. **Progress Forms** are used to track your progress throughout the exam and for drafting notes to examiners prior to entering the information into the **tablet**. Any handwritten information that you record on the form is solely for your reference prior to manually entering the data into the exam tablet. **The onus is on the candidate to verify the accuracy of the data entry.** All forms are surrendered at Check-out along with other exam materials.

### IMPORTANT REMINDER: Official Resources & References

Only the Candidate Manual, Candidate Guide, and Exam Criteria Sheets are permitted in the clinic area. A Candidate's personal, handwritten notations or hand-rendered illustrations recorded within the pages of the manual are also permitted.

# EXAM DAY



## Prosthodontic, Endodontic & Periodontal

### Clinic Entrance

1. Candidates may enter the clinic or simulation lab used for the examination at 6:30 am
2. Check-in to receive exam packet (Candidate ID Labels, exam forms) and typodont

### Cubicle or Workstation

1. Identify cubicle/workstation
2. Evaluate typodont, and indicate approval on **Progress Forms**
3. Setup instruments and materials

### Set-up Period

Gloves are not required prior to typodont mounting or exam start. Clinic Floor Examiners (CFE) monitor candidate progress and confirm that typodonts are properly mounted, and shrouds appropriately placed.

1. CFEs will circulate to loosen Endo tooth #8 retention screw (Candidates may NOT loosen screw.)
2. Candidates measure length of the Anterior Endo tooth with CFE present and attests that a measurement was taken on the **Endodontic Progress Form**. Candidates determine the working length and proceed with treatment based on their measurement of the Anterior tooth, making careful measurement an important step in the set-up process.
3. CFE re-tightens the tooth in typodont.
4. Candidates make putty matrices/reduction guides.

## Time Management

Examiners are not responsible for stopping candidates at their assigned finish times. Failure to meet the examination timeline requirements for a procedure results in a violation of exam standards penalty and failure of the exam.

## Typodonts & Assigned Teeth

Typodonts and proprietary teeth are provided at Check-in. Evaluate typodont for acceptance. Indicate acceptance and approval on respective **Progress Form**.

**TOOTH MARKING.** Teeth may be marked--*only after the official exam start*--in a way that could be done on a patient following proper infection control techniques.

**WRONG TOOTH.** If a procedure is started on the wrong tooth, stop working and immediately notify a CFE.

Refer to respective [Criteria Sheet](#) for evaluation criteria for each exam procedure.

# PROSTHODONTIC EXAMINATION



The candidate may perform the Prosthodontic Examination procedures (ceramic, PFM, cast metal crown preparations) in any order they choose.

- Candidate must check-in with Clinic Floor Examiner (CFE) for authorization of typodont mounting. Treatment may begin only after the start of the exam. Both maxillary and mandibular typodont arches must be in place for all treatment procedures.
- All candidates must stop working by their assigned Finish Time, which is four (4) hours after the start of the exam.
- After all Prosthodontic procedures have been completed, request a CFE to begin the check-out process for the Prosthodontic exam. Once checked out of the Prosthodontic exam, you cannot return to any prosthodontic procedure.

## Putty Matrices

Putty matrices or reduction guides must be fabricated during the setup time or using full infection control procedures once the Prosthodontic Exam has begun.

Two putty matrices are to be fabricated for the ceramic crown and two for the combination of the cast metal crown and PFM preps. One of each set of putty matrices is to be sectioned mesiodistally and one facio-lingually over each tooth to be prepared. This may be done without the use of gloves before typodont mounting. Other impressions may be taken during the exam using CDC infection control procedures.

Reduction guides or putty matrices must be placed into the typodont box with the typodont at the end of the examination. All other impressions, casts, or models must also be turned in.

Refer to [Guide to Fabrication](#) PDF for additional information regarding candidate-fabricated putty matrices.

## Additional Information

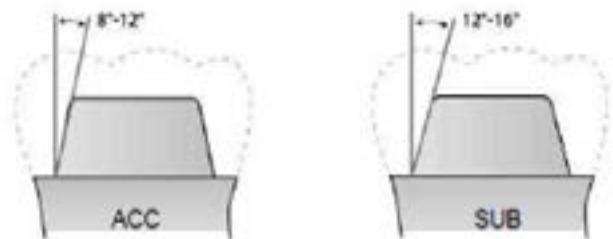
- Occlusal equilibration of typodont teeth is prohibited.
- Isolation dam not required for this procedure.

## Impressions

If exam site allows, Candidates may make analog impressions and pour models to evaluate preparations (e.g. parallelism for the bridge preps or an undercut on any prep). (Digital scanning of preparations is prohibited.) All model pouring must be performed in the designated location. Candidates may not remove any examination materials from the Clinic Floor.

Models and impressions MUST be submitted to a CFE at the completion of the exam.

**Taper** is defined as gradually becoming narrower in one direction. For examination purposes, the requirements for tapering are illustrated below:



**Taper greater than 16 degrees is considered Critically Deficient.**

### Preparation Line of Draw

The two bridge abutment preparations must allow a common line of draw.

# ENDODONTIC EXAMINATION



You may choose to start the Endodontic Exam earlier than the scheduled start time. If you opt to start early, the CFE will record your assigned finish time for the endodontic procedures on your **Progress Form**, which will be three (3) hours from the time you start the Endodontic Exam.

The candidate may perform the endodontic procedures (anterior, posterior) in any order they choose (separate isolation dam required for each procedure). Holes may be punched in the isolation dam, but not placed in the manikin prior to exam start time.

- Candidate must check-in with Clinic Floor Examiner (CFE) for authorization of typodont mounting. Treatment may begin only after check-in is complete. Both maxillary and mandibular typodont arches must be in place for all treatment procedures.
- All candidates must stop working by their assigned Finish Time, which is three (3) hours after their start time.
- After all endodontic procedures have been completed, request a CFE to begin the check-out process for the Endodontic exam. Once checked out of the Endodontic exam, you cannot return to any endodontic procedure.

## Tooth #8

### **Additional treatment considerations:**

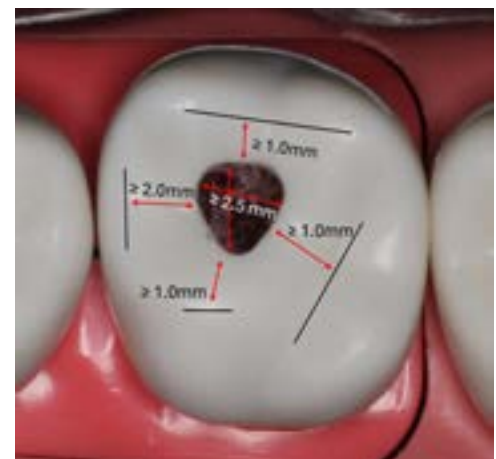
The exam tooth is designed to be consistent with the pulpal anatomy of a 21-year-old patient. When **shaping the canal**, the canal should be prepared to an appropriate file size. The size and shape of the anterior access opening should be consistent with the size and anatomy of the pulp chamber of a 21-year-old patient and allow for complete debridement of the pulp chamber.

When **obturing the canal** on tooth #8, this must be done with pink or colored gutta-percha since white or light-colored obturation material is difficult to distinguish from the sealer. Warm gutta-percha or carrier-based, thermo-plasticized gutta-percha techniques are acceptable but discouraged as they may cause damage to the plastic endodontic tooth.

Avoid placing **isolation dam clamps** on teeth treated during the exam. Clamp only adjacent teeth, or use alternate methods (ligation), to secure isolation dam.

Per manufacturer recommendation, **use only water for irrigation of the Anterior tooth canal**. Chemical or non-water irrigation may result in an ungradable performance and require retake of the exam.

## Landmarks used in Evaluating Endodontic Criteria



Buttons not functional on all platforms.

# PERIODONTAL EXAMINATION



You may choose to start the Periodontal Exam earlier than the scheduled start time. If you opt to start early, the CFE will record your assigned finish time for the periodontal scaling procedure on your **Progress Form**, which will be one (1) hour from the time you start the Periodontal Exam.

- Candidate must check-in with Clinic Floor Examiner (CFE) for authorization of typodont mounting. Periodontal treatment may begin only after check-in is complete. Both maxillary and mandibular typodont arches must be in place for all treatment procedures.
- All candidates must stop working by their assigned Finish Time, which is one (1) hour after their assigned start time.
- After all periodontal treatment has been completed, request a CFE to begin the check-out process for the Periodontal exam.
- Once checked out of the Periodontal exam, the CFE will permit you to dismount the typodont.

Candidate performance is evaluated for calculus removal on 12 assigned surfaces and whether there is evidence of hard, and/or soft tissue trauma. Calculus remaining on four (4) or more of the assigned surfaces and/or a critical deficiency in tissue management will result in a 100-point penalty.

Refer to [Periodontal Procedures Criteria Sheet](#) for evaluation criteria.

# EXAM DAY COMPLETION



## Prosthodontic, Endodontic & Periodontal

1. Once dismantled, typodonts should be thoroughly cleaned and dried.
2. Candidate must be in line to turn in all required materials (listed below) no later than 15 minutes after scheduled exam end time.
3. CFE will check and collect all required materials at a central location in the clinic.
4. Candidate is required to present the following items at the check-out station:
  - Progress Forms
  - Any fabricated putty matrices, models, impressions, or reduction guides made during examination
  - Sheet of Candidate ID Labels
  - Typodont and typodont box containing:
    - Typodont articulator, and/or metal carry trays;
    - Maxillary arch segments, each labeled with Candidate ID QR Code;
    - Mandibular arch, labeled with Candidate ID Label;
    - Molded plastic carrier trays (2).
5. At check-out station, the CFE will complete the following:
  - a. Separate arches, segments from articulator carrier trays.
  - b. Secure mandibular arch, maxillary segments typodont in molded plastic trays to prevent damage during transport.
  - c. Place mandibular perio arch, maxillary segments, **Progress Forms**, putty matrices (if applicable) in typodont box; seal box with Candidate ID Label.
6. Candidate cleans their assigned operatory/cubicle/workstation and exits clinic

### CANDIDATE QR CODE LABEL

Place on each **maxillary** Prosthodontic and Endodontic arch segments



### CANDIDATE ID LABEL

Place on **mandibular** Periodontal arch with ID Number displayed intra-orally



### IMPORTANT REMINDER: Typodont Removal

**Do not remove typodont arches from the simulated patient until instructed to do so by Clinic Floor Examiner (CFE).**

**Arch removal without Examiner approval after exam begins is grounds for exam termination.**



# EXAM ADMINISTRATION



## Restorative

### EXAMINATION TIMELINE

Clinic session dates vary by location and are subject to change. Candidates are notified via email once their individual **examination schedule and Q&A Session** information are posted in their [Candidates.ADEXtesting.org](https://Candidates.ADEXtesting.org) profile, approximately 2-3 weeks prior to the clinical exam. Schedules are subject to change until the official examination schedule is posted. Candidates assume all risk and responsibility for making travel or lodging arrangements in advance of receiving their individual examination schedule.

| Session   | Start Time | Stop/Finish Time |
|---|------------|------------------|
| <b>Candidate Check-In, Clinic Entrance, Workstation Setup</b> | 6:30 AM    | 8:00 AM          |
| <b>Anterior Restorative Examination (3.0 hours)</b>           | 8:00 AM    | 11:00 AM         |
| <b>Grading Time as needed (30 minutes)</b>                    | 11:00 AM   | 11:30 AM         |
| <b>Posterior Restorative Examination (3.5 hours)</b>          | 11:30 AM** | 3:00 PM**        |

**START TIME:** Treatment may begin only after the Chief Examiner or Clinic Floor Examiner announces the start of examination. All procedures must be completed within the allotted timeframe.

**BREAKS.** Breaks are permitted at the discretion of the Candidate. All procedures must be completed within allotted timeframe; time adjustments or extensions are not permitted for breaks. Plan accordingly.

**\*\*Start Time dictates Stop/Finish Time.** After the Anterior exam procedures have been graded (i.e. completed restoration has been evaluated and typodont has been returned to candidate), the Candidate may begin the Posterior exam procedures in advance of the scheduled start time. Clinic Floor Examiner (CFE) will indicate assigned Finish Time (3.5 hours after Posterior exam begins). Candidate may note assigned Finish Time on the worksheet for their reference.

**FINISH TIME:** All procedures must be completed within the allotted or assigned timeframe. Examiners are not responsible for stopping candidates at their assigned finish times. Failure to meet the examination timeline requirements for a procedure results in a violation of exam standards penalty and failure of the exam.

### IMPORTANT REMINDER: Time Management

Candidates are responsible for managing and monitoring their time appropriately to ensure timely arrival and procedure completion according to their assigned examination schedule or finish time to avoid penalty.

# EXAM CHECK-IN



## Restorative

### IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

The following items are required for admission to the clinical examination. Refer to the [Candidate Guide](#) for **identification requirements** and **“No Show” Policy**.

- **PHOTO IDENTIFICATION.** A U.S. government- or school-issued photo ID. Acceptable forms of non-expired photo identification include such documents as current, valid driver license, passport, military ID, or official school ID.
- **Recent Name Change.** If your legal name has recently changed, bring a copy of the supporting name change document (e.g. marriage certificate, dissolution decree or court document) to the clinical examination.

### Candidate ID Number, Badges & Labels

**CANDIDATE ID NUMBER.** Note that your Candidate ID Number will be used on all badges, labels and forms to maintain your anonymity during the examination; and in conjunction with your name on all post-exam results reports.

**BADGES.** Upon identity verification, candidates receive a sheet of candidate labels, including two (2) Candidate ID Badge labels. Photo badge label must be visible on your outmost garment throughout the examination.

**LABELS.** Place your Candidate ID Label on all examination items and cubicle cards.

### Typodonts & Teeth

Typodonts and proprietary CompeDont™ teeth are provided at Check-in. At set-up, the candidate evaluates the typodont for acceptance.

**WRONG TOOTH.** If a procedure is started on the wrong tooth or surface, **stop working and notify a CFE** immediately.

### IMPORTANT REMINDER: Official Resources & References

Only the Candidate Manual, Candidate Guide, and Exam Criteria Sheets are permitted in the clinic area. A Candidate's personal, handwritten notations or hand-rendered illustrations recorded within the pages of the manual are also permitted.

# EXAM DAY SET-UP



## Restorative

### Clinic Entrance

1. At 6:30 AM, candidates may enter the clinic or simulation lab used for the examination
2. When instructed, check-in to receive exam items: Candidate ID Labels, Cubicle Cards, worksheet and typodont.

### Cubicle or Workstation

1. Identify cubicle/workstation
2. Setup instruments and materials
3. Place Candidate ID Label on the following items:
  - Cubicle Cards (1 identifies workstation; 1 accompanies typodont to Evaluation Area)
  - Candidate Worksheet
  - Typodont Box
4. Evaluate typodont and indicate acceptance

### Procedure Check-In

Clinic Floor Examiners (CFE) monitor candidate progress and confirm that typodonts are properly mounted, and shrouds appropriately placed.

1. CFE distributes radiographic image.
2. Candidate diagnoses lesion in image (one carious lesion present).
3. Candidate electronically records proposed restoration to treat the lesion in tablet.
4. Candidate is informed of the outcome of the diagnosis/proposed treatment plan.
  - **First Misdiagnosis.** An initial misdiagnosis will result in a point penalty deduction (-15 pts) for that procedure. You will be permitted a second attempt to diagnose the lesion. If the second diagnosis is correct, you will be allowed to proceed.
  - **Second Misdiagnosis.** A subsequent misdiagnosis for same procedure will result in loss of all points (-100 pts) and failure of that procedure/exam component. [Candidate will be permitted to move forward to diagnosis of next restorative procedure; only applicable if both procedures are attempted.]
5. CFE approves typodont mounting and affixes Candidate ID Labels on both CompeDont™ arches.
6. Intraoral procedures may not begin until CFE announces start time (8:00 AM or as scheduled). Holes may be punched in the isolation dam but not placed in the manikin prior to exam start time.

## Candidate Worksheet & Tablet Entry

Official records are submitted electronically via the exam tablet and all communication with examiners is digital. The **Candidate Worksheet** is for tracking your progress throughout the exam and for drafting modification requests or notes to examiners prior to entering the information into the **tablet**. Any handwritten information that you record on the form is solely for your reference prior to manually entering the data into the exam tablet. **The onus is on the candidate to verify the accuracy of the data entry.** The worksheet is surrendered at Check-out along with other exam materials.

# RESTORATIVE EXAMINATION



Candidates must check-in with Clinic Floor Examiner (CFE) for approval of typodont/CompeDont™ mounting, lesion diagnosis, and paperwork. If approved, intraoral procedures may begin only after the scheduled examination start time (8:00 AM).

If attempting both Anterior and Posterior procedures, the Posterior restorative preparation may not be started until the Anterior restorative procedure has been graded (i.e. after the completed restoration has been evaluated and the typodont has been returned to the candidate). Both maxillary and mandibular arches must be in place for all treatment procedures.

**Cavity Preparation.** Candidates are required to remove all simulated caries. Contact CFE immediately as needed to submit a modification request or if a pulpal exposure occurs during the cavity preparation process (see “**Modification Requests**” on page 21 and “**Identifying/Diagnosing Pulp Exposure**” on page 23).

## **Cavity Preparation Completed:**

1. Check-in with a CFE when you have completed the cavity preparation.
2. CompeDont™ will be transported to the Evaluation Area for evaluation of the prepared cavity.
3. Cubicle Card must accompany the CompeDont™ arches for each trip to the Evaluation Area.
  - Note that the CompeDont™ may be in the Evaluation Area for up to 30 minutes or more for each visit. Plan accordingly.

When your typodont returns from the Evaluation Area, the CFE will review the findings and provide instruction as appropriate.

**Communications from Grading Examiners.** When applicable, the CompeDont™ arch returns from the Evaluation Area along with instructions to the Candidate. Before proceeding to the next step of treatment, the candidate must review the “Instructions to Candidate” with the CFE.

## **Restorative Exam Guidelines**

- **BITE BLOCKS, WEDGES, SECTIONAL MATRICES,** etc, may be used during treatment, but must be removed before sending the CompeDont™ to the Evaluation Area.
- **ISOLATION DAM:** An isolation dam (e.g. rubber dam) is required for all procedures.
  - Isolation dam must be placed before starting the preparation and used until the restoration is completed.
  - Isolation dam must be in place whenever the preparation is sent to the Evaluation Area.
  - At least one tooth on either side of the prepared tooth must be included under the isolation dam.
  - Isolation dam must be intact and provide an unobstructed view of the entire cavity preparation.
  - Candidate must replace isolation dam before rendering any further treatment if dislodged in transit to/from the Evaluation Area.
  - Isolation dam may be removed when the candidate is ready to check and adjust the occlusion of the restoration.
  - Isolation dam must be removed for evaluation of the finished restoration.



## Modification Requests

Candidates demonstrate their clinical judgment and diagnostic skill by determining whether any aspect of the preparation needs to be extended beyond the acceptable criteria. Refer to the respective [Criteria Sheet](#) for acceptable and deficient performance parameters for each category.

If a candidate determines that extension of the cavity preparation beyond the acceptable range is necessary for the complete removal of caries, the candidate should submit a modification request. This request must be submitted and approved **BEFORE** extending any aspect of the preparation beyond the acceptable range. (Caries, as defined by ADEX for the Restorative Examinations, is penetrable with a sharp explorer using light pressure, exhibiting “tug-back.”)

By submitting a modification request, the candidate is indicating that they have evaluated their entire preparation as being within the acceptable range based on the published criteria. In addition, the specific wall and/or surface requested to be modified must be extended to the maximum limit of the acceptable range. If the preparation does not meet these specifications, the modification request will be denied, and a penalty applied. Refer to the “**Examination Penalties**” on page 25 for additional information.

Using the **Candidate Worksheet**, the candidate drafts their modification requests indicating the following:

1. “What” modification will be made to the preparation (e.g. extend the preparation).
2. “Where” the modification of the preparation from ideal will occur (i.e. which specific wall/surface).
3. “Why” the modification beyond acceptable limits is required (e.g. caries).
4. “How Much” modification beyond acceptable limits will occur (e.g. 1.0 mm).

Once the worksheet draft is complete, the candidate notifies a Clinic Floor Examiner (CFE) and electronically enters the official Modification Requests. The preparation is then transported to the Evaluation Area. Candidates may submit multiple modification requests as needed in one trip to the Evaluation Area.

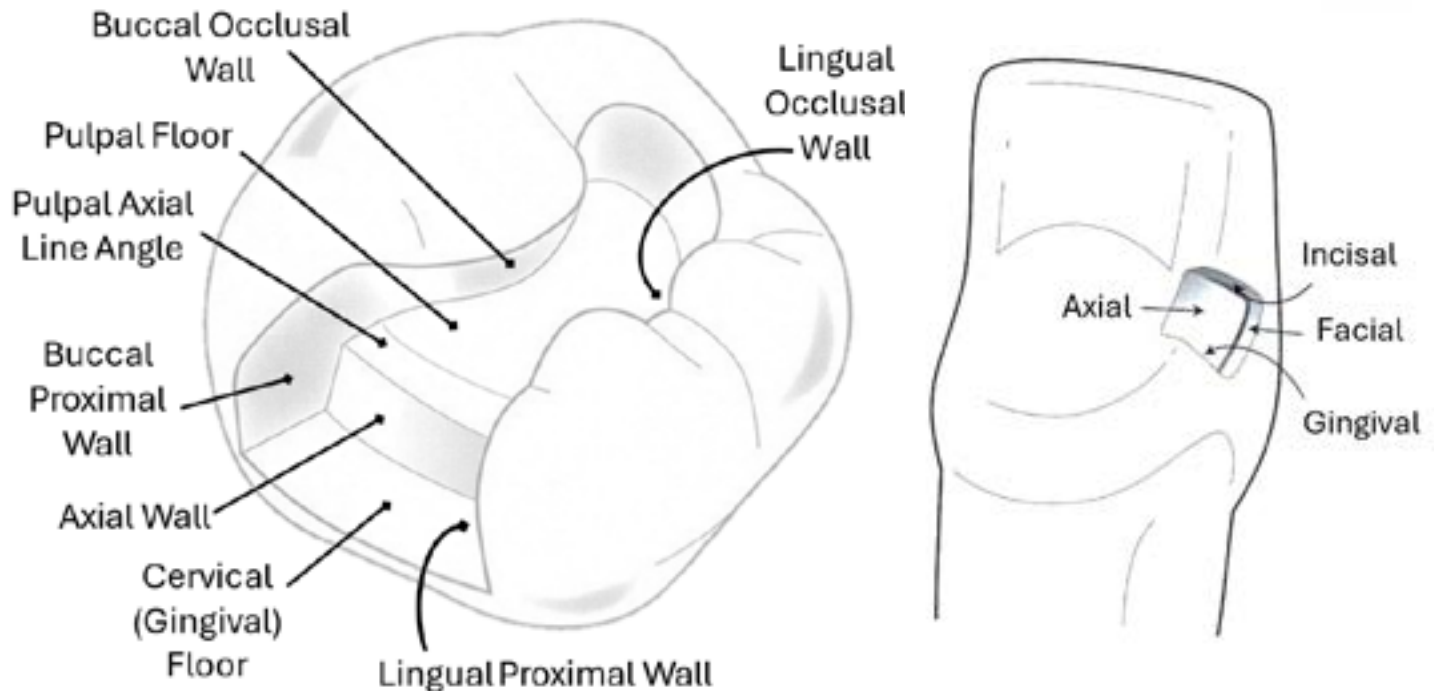
After evaluation, the candidate should record the outcome of each modification request on their worksheet as displayed on the CFE tablet.

## Evaluation of Preparation

The CompeDont™ preparation may be in the Evaluation Area for **up to 30 minutes or more** per visit. Matters within a candidate’s control, such as procedure planning, number of separate modification request submissions, breaks and time management, have the greatest impact on the candidate’s examination schedule. Candidates are advised to plan accordingly.

Refer to respective [Criteria Sheet](#) for evaluation criteria for each exam procedure.

## Terminology to be used when requesting a Modification:



### Denial of Modification Requests

A request for modification may be denied based on any one of the parts of the request. Candidates are not informed of the specific reason for denial. The onus is on the candidate to re-evaluate the preparation and determine their next step.

Denied requests for modification will result in a point deduction for each request. In addition, more significant penalties will be applied for specific errors related to modification requests which are listed elsewhere in this manual.

- **Lack of clinical judgment or skill.** Should a typodont be presented for a modification request and the candidate's performance or the nature of the modification request(s) demonstrates a critical lack of clinical judgment or skill, a penalty will be applied resulting in a loss of all points (-100 pts) and failure of that procedure.

### A Note About Unsupported Enamel

In most cases, the presence of unsupported enamel is either representative of candidate error or the removal of the unsupported enamel does not require a modification request.

When a candidate has approval to extend a certain wall to a specified extent (either within acceptable dimensions or through a modification request), the approved extent includes the cavosurface margin of that specific wall, if applicable.

### **Modification requests to remove unsupported enamel will be denied in the following cases:**

- **Not yet to extent.** If removing the undermined enamel *would not extend* the preparation beyond acceptable (or approved) limits, it may be removed to the same extent as the dentin of the associated wall without submitting a modification request.
- **Over-extended.** The associated wall has already been over-extended due to candidate error if the margin is undermined and removing it *would extend* the outline of the preparation beyond the acceptable limits.



## Identifying/Diagnosing Pulp Exposure

In case of exposure of the dental pulp during cavity preparation, complete the following:

1. Complete section of Candidate Worksheet related to pulp exposure.
2. Request a CFE.
3. Enter/submit finding in tablet identifying location/approximate size of pulp exposure.
4. CompeDont™ is sent to the Evaluation Area with an isolation dam in place.
5. Examiners will evaluate the following to approve or deny the candidate's diagnosis:
  - Pulp exposure was appropriately recognized by the candidate and justified by the clinical findings.
  - Previous Modification Request submission indicates that the candidate had the approval to extend the preparation.
  - Candidate did not exceed the dimensional limits of the approved modification request(s).
  - Damage to the pulp is slight and does not preclude the possibility of successful pulp capping.

Placement of the pulp cap is not a component of this exam. Candidates will not place the pulp cap for evaluation. Preparations will be graded without a pulp cap in place and the candidate may proceed to restoration after the preparation has been graded.

Note that when the CompeDont™ returns after evaluation of the pulp exposure diagnosis, the preparation has not been graded. A separate submission for grading of the preparation is required.

### Misdiagnosis of Pulp Exposure

If examiners in the Evaluation Area find no evidence of a pulp exposure, a penalty will be assessed for demonstration of a critical lack of clinical judgment and diagnostic skill, which will result in a loss of all points (-100 pts) and failure of that procedure.

### Unrecognized Pulp Exposure

If examiners in the Evaluation Area find a pulp exposure that was not identified by the candidate, either when evaluating a modification request or when evaluating a completed preparation, a penalty will be assessed for demonstration of a critical lack of clinical judgment and diagnostic skill, which will result in a loss of all points (-100 pts) and failure of that procedure.

# EXAM DAY COMPLETION



## Restorative

### Restoration Placement

After the preparation has been evaluated and the CompeDont™ is returned to the candidate, the Candidate must be authorized by the CFE to proceed with placement of the Restoration. An isolation dam must be in place during the placement of restorative materials.

### Restoration Evaluation

Once the restoration is completed to candidate satisfaction, contact the CFE. The CompeDont™ will be sent to the Evaluation Area for evaluation of the completed restoration.

Once grading is complete, the CompeDont™ is returned to the candidate. The candidate must check-in with the CFE before starting the next assigned procedure.

#### Note the following:

- Class II amalgam restoration must be sufficiently set to allow a check of the occlusion.
- Composite restorations must be presented without surface glaze or sealer on the restoration.

### Check-out Procedures

After completing the final restorative procedure, consolidate the following **required items** before proceeding to the designated check-out station to complete the check-out process.

- Candidate Worksheet
- Cubicle Cards
- Radiographs
- Unused Candidate ID Labels/QR Codes
- CompeDont™ arches in typodont box (arches and box labeled individually)
- Typodont articulator, and/or metal carry trays

#### CANDIDATE ID LABEL

Place label with  
ID Number displayed  
intra-orally



### IMPORTANT REMINDER: Typodont Removal

**Do not remove typodont arches from the simulated patient until instructed to do so by Clinic Floor Examiner (CFE).**

**Arch removal without Examiner approval after exam begins is grounds for exam termination.**



# EXAMINATION PENALTIES



| Penalty  | POINT DEDUCTION |
|--|-----------------|
| Failure to complete an assigned examination procedure  | 100             |
| Violation of examination standards, rules or guidelines, or time schedule                    | 100             |
| Treatment of teeth other than those approved or assigned by examiners                        | 100             |
| Gross damage to adjacent tooth structure—teeth or tissue                                     | 100             |
| Unrecognized exposure  | 100             |
| Candidate diagnosed pulp exposure—no exposure present  | 100             |
| Large pulp exposure requiring endodontic treatment   | 100             |
| Unjustified mechanical exposure  | 100             |
| Unrestorable iatrogenic fracture   | 100             |
| Critical lack of clinical judgment/diagnostic skills   | 100             |
| Unprofessional attitude, rude, inconsiderate/uncooperative with examiners or other personnel | 100             |
| Request to remove caries or decalcification without clinical justification                   | 21              |
| Poor simulated patient management  | 11              |
| Initial preparation is not to at least acceptable dimensions                                 | 11              |
| Surface to be modified is not at the limit of acceptable (ACC) criteria                      | 11              |
| Unsatisfactory completion of modifications required/granted by examiners                     | 11              |
| Any denied modification request  | 1               |
| Appearance: unprofessional, unkempt, unclean   | 1               |
| Violation of universal precautions   | 1               |
| Inadequate isolation   | 1               |
| Improper operator and/or simulated patient position  | 1               |

Refer to the [Candidate Guide](#) for additional conduct and examination guidelines resulting in penalties or automatic failure of the examination and/or examination series (e.g. use of prohibited electronic devices, etc.).

# EXAM FORMS & CRITERIA SHEETS



Criteria Sheets and sample examination forms are [downloadable](#) for candidate reference. Official printed examination forms are provided at exam site during Check-In.

## PROSTHODONTIC EXAM

### **Criteria Sheets:**

- Ceramic Crown Prep Criteria
- PFM Crown Prep Criteria
- Cast Metal Prep Criteria

### **Examination Forms:**

- Prosthodontic Progress Form

### **Supplemental Information:**

- Guide for Fabrication of Putty Matrices

## RESTORATIVE EXAM

### **Criteria Sheets:**

- Anterior Composite Prep Criteria
- Anterior Composite Restoration Criteria
- Posterior Amalgam Prep Criteria
- Posterior Amalgam Restoration Criteria
- Posterior Composite Prep Criteria
- Posterior Composite Restoration Criteria

### **Examination Forms:**

- Candidate Worksheet

## ENDODONTIC EXAM

### **Criteria Sheets:**

- Anterior Endo Procedure Criteria
- Posterior Endo Procedure Criteria

### **Examination Forms:**

- Endodontic Progress Form

## PERIODONTAL EXAM

### **Criteria Sheets:**

- Periodontal Procedure Criteria

### **Examination Forms:**

- Periodontal Progress Form

Visit [ADEXtesting.org](https://www.adextesting.org) to download full-size sample examination forms



ALL RIGHTS RESERVED  
American Board of Dental Examiners  
ADEX Testing Media  
©2025-2026