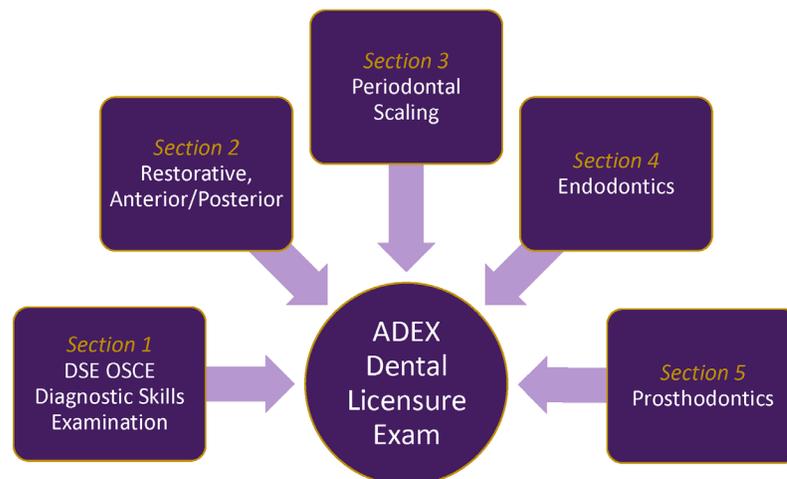# ADEX Computer-based Examination: The Diagnostic Skills Examination OSCE

A. DSE OSCE Overview

The computer-based Diagnostic Skills Examination Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DSE OSCE) is one of five parts that when combined, comprise the ADEX Dental Licensure Exam.

The DSE OSCE is administered at a Computer Testing Center upon authorization by the CDCA. Candidates register for the DSE OSCE through their online candidate profiles, and they may attempt the DSE OSCE either before or after the manikin or patient-based examination sections. The test is administered on one day and is approximately four (4) hours in length. As with all sections of the ADEX Dental Examination Series, the 18-month rule and the 3-time failure rule apply to the DSE OSCE.

The DSE OSCE is divided into two sections with a 15-minute break in between each section. The two exam sections will cover a total of three areas of study, and the exam is designed to progressively assess more complex levels of diagnosis and treatment planning knowledge, skills, and abilities. Pilot questions that are being tested for use in future versions of the examination may be added but are not included in, nor do they affect the candidate's final score. Additional time is provided for pilot questions, but they are not identified. In general, the three areas of study the DSE OSCE focuses on are as follows:

1. Patient Evaluation (PE): designed to assess the candidate's abilities to recognize critical clinical conditions or situations encountered regularly in the general practice of dentistry (30 items).

2. Comprehensive Treatment Planning (CTP): designed to assess the candidate's abilities to recognize critical clinical conditions or situations encountered regularly in the general practice of dentistry, and also to identify the appropriate treatment options required for the clinical condition or situation depicted in simulations (90 items).

3. Cross-Cutting Clinical Judgments: designed to assess the candidate's abilities to recognize critical clinical conditions or situations encountered regularly in the general practice of dentistry and to formulate appropriate treatment options as well as evaluation of treatment outcomes (60 items).

B. DSE OSCE Content

The DSE OSCE content is developed by the Dental Examination Committee. The committee has considerable content expertise and also relies on practice surveys, current curricula, standards of competency and guidance for clinical licensure examinations in dentistry from the American Association of Dental Boards (AADB) to ensure that the content and protocol of the examination are current and relevant. The examination content and evaluation methodologies are reviewed annually and periodically change to reflect current best practices. Because of the broad-based approach to test development, no single textbook or publication can be used as a reference. The examination is based on concepts taught and accepted by educational institutions accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) or Canadian Commission on Dental Accreditation (CCODA). Any current textbook relevant to the subject matter of the examination utilized in such institutions is suitable as a study reference.

DSE OSCE CONTENT	
Patient Evaluation	**20%**
Pathology	10%
Physical Evaluation	10%
Anatomy Identification of Systemic Conditions Radiology Lab Diagnostics Therapeutics	
Comprehensive Treatment Planning	**60%**
Systemic Diseases/Medical Emergencies/ Special Care and Oral Medicine	20%
Periodontal Diagnosis and Treatment Planning	10%
Restorative Dentistry	18%
Specialties	12%
Endodontics Orthodontics Oral Surgery Pediatric Dentistry	
Cross-Cutting Clinical Judgments	**20%**
Medical Emergencies	
Infection Control	
Prosthodontics	

Simulations of patients are made through photographs, radiographs, images of study and working models, laboratory data and other clinical digitized reproductions. The items in the DSE OSCE will include multiple choice (traditional/single response), multiple choice (multiple response), extended match, drop down, fill in the blank, hot spot, and drag & drop questions.

In each subsection, candidates may skip or mark items to be considered later. Once a subsection is completed, the candidate must lock out of the subsection and will not be able to return to that subsection again. The time indicated on the computer screen is the amount of time for that subsection. There is no specific time limitation for each item. The chart below details the content of the DSE OSCE and the weight of each area of study. The CDCA does NOT offer any study material for the DSE OSCE examination.

C. DSE OSCE Scoring

There are 165 scored points on the DSE OSCE. There are 15 of the 165 scored points that come from pilot questions. The final score for the DSE OSCE is based on the percentage of items answered correctly and scaled to equate scores from year to year. Out of 100 possible points, a scaled score of 75 or higher is required to pass.