



## THE COMMISSION ON **DENTAL COMPETENCY** ASSESSMENTS

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### **Policy for the Use of High-Speed Handpieces and Ultrasonic Scalers**

(effective September 1, 2020)

Dental high-speed handpieces or ultrasonic scalers may be used during the dental or dental hygiene exams, with the following provision:

*When used while treating a patient, high-speed suction must also be provided by an assistant or by other equivalent processes.*

*Requirements for high-speed evacuation do not apply when these devices are used in manikin examinations.*

**Will all sites permit the use of high-speed equipment?** The decision to permit the use of high-speed handpieces and/or ultrasonics in any exam will rest with the school.

**Will use of high-speed equipment impact previously extended treatment times for dental hygiene examinations?** Yes. While a 30-minute time extension was permitted for examinations dependent on handscaling, it will not be extended when high-speed equipment is permitted. The standard time allowance of two hours will be in place at an exam site that allows the use of ultrasonics. Should a candidate at a site where such equipment is approved choose not to utilize these instruments, an individual time waiver will not be applied.

**Could this policy change?** The CDCA, its Board and its advisory committee will continue to monitor literature and recommendations from national agencies and provide further guidance on the administration of examinations with safeguards necessary for everyone involved.