



AUSTRALIAN
DENTAL COUNCIL

Interim practical examination handbook for dentists

For practical examinations from July 2018

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Version: 1 (March 2018)

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1. Introduction

The Australian Dental Council (ADC) has been assigned the accreditation functions by the Dental Board of Australia (DBA) in accordance with the provisions of the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009*.

One of the ADC's key functions is the assessment of the knowledge, judgement, clinical skills, and professional competency of overseas qualified dentists seeking registration with the DBA whose qualifications are not otherwise approved for registration.

The ADC is also the national assessment authority appointed by the Department of Home Affairs to assess the professional skills of overseas trained dentists and dental specialists for migration purposes.

The assessment and examination procedure consists of:

1. an initial assessment of professional qualifications in dentistry
2. a written examination
3. a practical examination.

The format of the ADC assessment and examination process has been approved for the purposes of registration in Australia. Exemptions from the requirements of the examination process cannot be granted under any circumstances.

From July 2018, the ADC will commence the delivery of the practical examination from its dedicated examination centre in Melbourne, Australia. The revised practical examination ensures the assessment is aligned to current local and international best practice.

2. Handbook objectives

This interim handbook is a guide for candidates completing the practical examination process. The final handbook, available from mid-2018, will be the definitive guide to the ADC practical examination.

3. Applying for the practical examination

3.1. Eligibility

Candidates holding a written examination valid in 2018, or later, are eligible to sit a practical examination in 2018.

A pass in a written examination is generally valid for three years from the date of notification of the examination result.

3.2. Application process

Eligible candidates can apply to sit a practical examination by completing the *Practical Examination Application - Dentist* form and submitting a hard copy to the ADC during the designated application period. The ADC provides detailed information on the correct way to complete the application on the form.

Examination dates, application periods and the *Practical Examination Application - Dentist* form are located on the [ADC website](#). Applications must be submitted in hard copy.

We cannot accept:

- electronic applications
- incomplete or incorrect applications
- applications with no payment
- applications received outside the designated application period
- applications from candidates ineligible to sit a practical examination.

You will be notified when your application is received. Confirmation of your allocated practical examination date will be provided on the Candidate Portal within six weeks of the close of the application period.

Once your booking is confirmed the ADC will forward further instructions and information regarding the examination via email, closer to the practical examination date.

3.3. Your contact details

It is your responsibility to notify the ADC of any changes to your contact information.

Timetables and urgent information will be communicated to you via the details provided by you on your application form. It is your responsibility to ensure the contact details you have provided are current and correct.

As email is a primary form of correspondence, we recommend you regularly check any mail (including email) services you use, to ensure you receive the most up-to-date information regarding your examination. If you use free webmail services, such as Gmail, Yahoo, or Hotmail, you should ensure you properly maintain your mailboxes and check your junk mail to ensure that you do not miss important information from the ADC.

If you change your contact details, notify us as soon as possible using the [Notification of Change of Contact Details](#) form.

The ADC does not accept responsibility for the non-receipt of correctly addressed emails, correspondence or other communications.

3.4. Examination accommodations

Accommodations in examinations refer to changes in how an examination is administered, without compromising the integrity of the examination.

Accommodations aim to remove the impact of a disability, or other medical condition, so that all candidates can fully demonstrate their skills, whilst not being given any advantage.

If you wish to request any accommodations, such as taking medications into the examination room, you should contact the ADC with your request in writing prior to your practical examination. The ADC may deny requests for special consideration.

The ADC cannot grant exemptions from the requirements of the examinations under any circumstances. As such, an accommodation cannot involve the modification of the required standards, the tasks assessed, or an awarded grade.

4. Withdrawing from a practical examination

4.1 Withdrawal process

If you wish to withdraw from a practical examination you must submit a *Notification of withdrawal from an ADC examination form* directly to the ADC. If the date of the examination is imminent, you may submit your intention to withdraw via email and subsequently post your withdrawal form and supporting documentation. A withdrawal is considered confirmed upon receipt of all required documentation. The ADC will respond to you in writing.

Please visit the ADC website for more details of the withdrawal process. Examinations cannot be rescheduled. For example, your application forms and examination fees cannot be transferred to alternate examination times if you are unable to attend your allocated practical examination date. If a candidate wishes to sit the examination at a later date they must withdraw from the current examination session and submit a new application form and payment.

4.2 Refunds

You will forfeit some or all of your practical examination fees if you withdraw from a practical examination.

- If you withdraw from a practical examination **up to six weeks before** your allocated examination date you will be eligible to receive a 50% refund of the examination fee.
- If you withdraw **within six weeks** of your allocated examination date you forfeit your examination fees and are not entitled to a refund.

If you are eligible for a refund, you must provide details of the credit card used in your practical examination application. **The ADC can only credit funds back to the credit card used to pay the examination fee.**

Failure to undertake the examination due to the inability to obtain necessary visas, failure to arrange travel, and so on, will be considered a withdrawal and the refunds, as above, will apply.

Any refunds granted outside of these circumstances will be at the sole discretion of the Chief executive officer.

5. What to expect during your practical examination

5.1 Examination venue

All practical examinations are held at the ADC Examination Centre at:
Level 6, 469 La Trobe Street, Melbourne, VIC, 3000

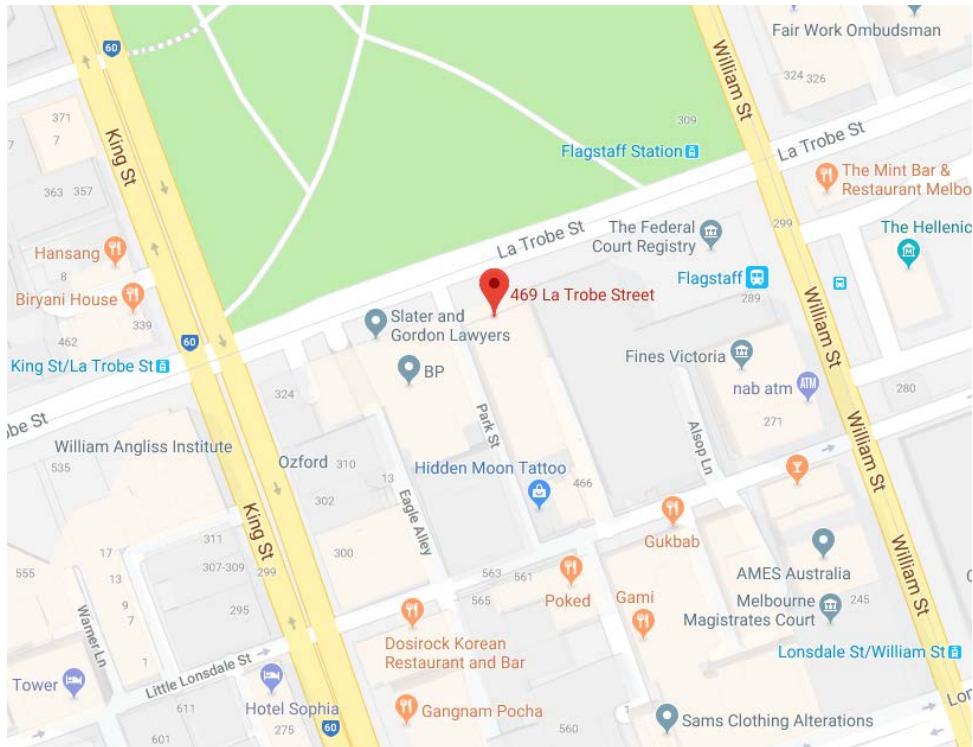


Figure one. 469 La Trobe Street location

The ADC will email further information about the venue location, local travel and local accommodation to candidates with a confirmed booking. However, it is your responsibility to arrange your own travel and accommodation arrangements.

Practical examinations are held over two consecutive days and consist of:

- a technical skills day
- a clinical skills day.

You will need to sit both days and need to be prepared to complete either day first.

5.2 Examination day procedures

Examination registration

At the start of each examination day, you must present at the ADC Examination Centre reception area for registration.

You must arrive within the scheduled registration time. When directed, you must present current, government-issued photographic identification, such as a driver's licence or passport, which includes your signature. Your photograph will be taken at registration and your identity confirmed.

If you fail to provide the correct identification, comply with registration standards, or arrive after during the scheduled registration time, you may not be permitted into the examination.

Once registered, the registering officer will issue you with an identification badge. Once admitted into the examination centre you must wear your identification badge at all times. The identification badge must be returned before leaving the examination centre. You must re-register at the beginning of the second day of the examination.

Once registered you will be required to leave all your personal belongings in a secure locker for the duration of the day's examination. You will be asked to demonstrate that you have placed all of your belongings, including mobile phones, into the locker.

You will then be directed into the dedicated candidate lounge with seating areas, refreshments and bathrooms.

Orientation

Prior to starting each examination day you will receive a short presentation outlining what to expect for that day's examinations. You will have an opportunity to ask questions at the end of the presentation.

Equipment, instruments and supplies

The ADC will supply all the materials and equipment required for the practical examination. To assist you with your preparations, the ADC will provide details of the materials and equipment available to you at the examination centre before to your examination.

Gloves, masks and gowns will be available for your use, however, due to varying individual requirements, you must provide your own protective eyewear. You may also use clinically suitable magnification aids.

You are not permitted to bring any other equipment, materials, personal effects, or electronic devices, including but not limited to, smart watches or smart glasses, into

the examination. Any exemptions to this must be approved in writing by the ADC prior to the examination.

You may bring your own lunch or refreshments, in ADC approved packaging, which can be kept in the candidate lounge. The candidate lounge is equipped with microwaves, refrigeration, tea, coffee, and light snacks. You will be provided with additional instructions regarding food and drink closer to your examination. You are not permitted to take food or drinks into the examination rooms.

Candidate conduct

You should attend the examinations appropriately and professionally attired. Shoes should be closed-toed and suitable for a dental clinic. Long hair and beards should be appropriately controlled.

You are responsible for your own belongings, and a secure locker will be provided. The ADC will not be held responsible for any personal items.

You should review the *Examination conduct policy* and *Misconduct policy* prior to your examination.

6. Practical examination content

The ADC's assessment process for overseas trained dental practitioners aims to protect the public by ensuring only dental practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise in a competent and ethical manner are deemed eligible to apply for the DBA process for registration.

A candidate demonstrates they have the professional ability to perform safely in the role of a dental practitioner in Australia only after the successful completion of both the initial assessment of qualifications and professional standing, and the written and practical examinations.

The content of the written and practical examinations is based on the expected competencies of a recently qualified Australian dental practitioner at the point of graduation from an ADC accredited dental program. These competencies are described in detail in the [Professional Competencies of the Newly Qualified Dentist](#) (the competencies).

7. Practical examination format

The practical examination has two main components:

- a technical skills day
- a clinical skills day.

Both components are designed, using simulated clinical settings, to allow candidates to demonstrate skills relevant to everyday clinical practice. The technical skills day focusses on the demonstration of procedural restorative skills on typodont models in a manikin. The clinical skills day assesses a broader range of clinical skills using a station-based objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) format.

Each two-day examination will assess a maximum of twenty-four candidates.

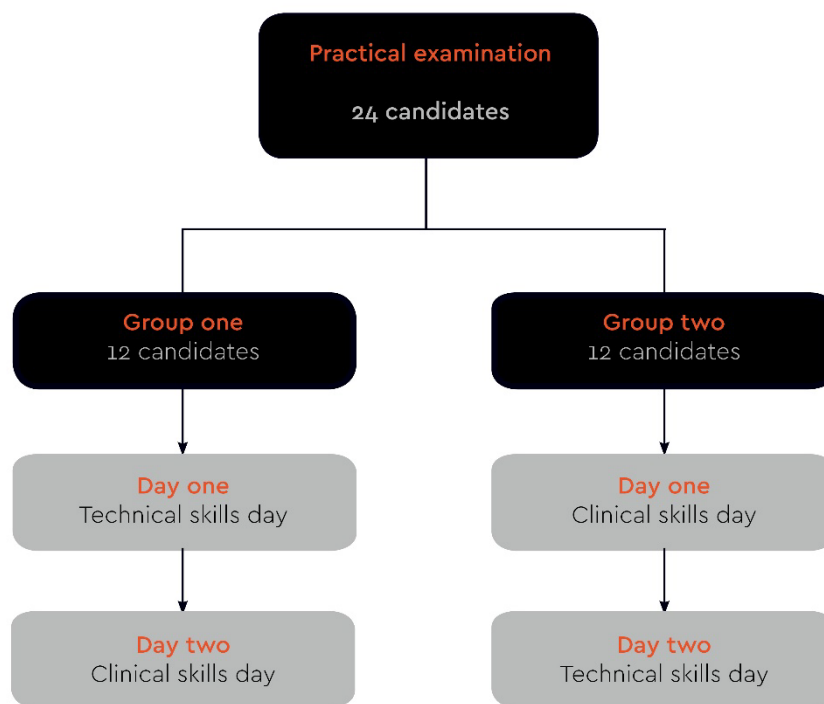


Figure 2 - Day allocations to candidates sitting each Practical Examination

The practical examination is designed to assess clinical competence and uses simulation to achieve this. Tasks reflect potential clinical scenarios and you should approach each assessment in a professional manner, as you would an equivalent real-life scenario. This includes following standard infection control procedures and undertaking any manikin-based tasks in positions appropriate for both the operator and the patient.

Examiners will record, and ask you to correct, any inappropriate use of manikins, such as having the manikin's head or neck in a position that would be uncomfortable for a patient or contact with the manikin that would be considered

inappropriate in a clinical situation. If you continue to work on the manikin in an inappropriate position you may be dismissed from the examination.

7.1 Technical skills day

Content

The technical skills day focuses on the demonstration of technical skills described under domain 6.3, *Patient Care – Clinical Treatment and Evaluation* of the competencies. This covers the provision of evidence-based patient-centred care and may include tooth preparation and /or restoration related to:

- conservation
- endodontics
- fixed prosthodontics.

Process

During the technical skills day, you are required to complete six tasks on pre-prepared, standardised typodont models in manikin heads (see Appendix A). The manikin heads are mounted on clinically realistic simulation units.

You will be provided with a task list at the beginning of the technical skills day. This list will outline all the procedures required to be undertaken for that day, including tooth numbers, tooth surfaces and a designated practice tooth.

All technical tasks must be completed on the technical skills day. Adequate time is available during the session to allow for all tasks to be completed.

You may take breaks in the candidate lounge at any time during the technical skills day. There will be a mandatory lunch break when the clinic will be closed to candidates.

Example tasks

As a guide, a technical day examination may consist of tasks requiring:

- the preparation of a carious tooth/teeth
- the restoration of a prepared tooth/teeth with resin composite
- the restoration of a prepared tooth/teeth with amalgam
- the preparation and/or temporisation of a tooth/teeth to receive an indirect restoration(s)
- an endodontic procedure.

These tasks are examples only and candidates should expect variations to this list. All tasks will be relevant to contemporary practise in Australia and are designed to reflect the skills needed to manage common or important clinical situations.

7.2 Clinical skills day

Content

The clinical skills day focuses on the demonstration and assessment of the professional competencies described under domains 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 of the competencies:

- clinical information gathering
- diagnosis and management planning

- clinical treatment and evaluation.

Demonstration of certain global skills outlined in the competencies, namely:

- communication
- critical thinking
- professionalism (including cultural competence)
- scientific and clinical knowledge
- infection control

may be assessed across multiple tasks.

Process

During the clinical skills day you are required to complete a ten-station OSCE. This is a station-based examination, where you are allocated a defined amount of time at each station (approximately fifteen minutes). Each station is set up in a designated room with a different task relating to a clinical scenario or clinical skill demonstration. Tasks may include the use of standardised simulated patients, video-based scenarios, procedures on manikins and/or other related resources.

Some stations may be directly observed by an assessor present throughout the task or you may be required to undertake a task without an observer present.

Upon entry, you will be provided with the detailed instructions and information for that station. You will have a designated period of reading time upon entering a station. You will be notified when the examination period starts and finishes.

An examinations team member will coordinate the movement of candidates between stations and you will be directed when to move stations and which station to move to next.

Example tasks

As a guide, a clinical skills day examination may consist of tasks such as:

- taking a history from a simulated patient
- explaining a diagnosis and management plan to a simulated patient
- establishing a risk profile for a simulated patient
- communicating a health promotion strategy to a simulated patient
- managing a medical emergency in a simulated environment
- taking intra-oral radiographs for a given clinical situation
- designing a partial denture for a given clinical situation
- placing rubber dam for a given clinical situation.

These tasks are examples only and candidates should expect variations to this list. All tasks will be relevant to contemporary practise in Australia and are designed to reflect the skills needed to manage common or important clinical situations.

8. Examination conduct

8.1 Safety and quality assurance

The examination centre is an ADC-run facility and ADC staff are present at all examinations. Each practical examination will be supervised by an examination convenor assisted by a team of examiners.

The examination centre is fitted with closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras collecting both video and audio recordings. CCTV equipment is present in all common areas and all assessment areas of the centre, including rooms where candidates are not observed by examiners. CCTV footage is monitored live and recorded. It may be used to ensure the safety and well-being of people within the examination centre, and to preserve the integrity and validity of ADC processes. The use and storage of any data collected is detailed in the ADC's *Privacy Policy*.

All of the consulting rooms within the OSCE area are equipped with a call button in the event of an emergency.

8.2 Breaks

You may take breaks as desired throughout the technical skills day. The examination has been designed to provide sufficient time for you to take breaks throughout the day and you are encouraged to take regular breaks. The technical skills day includes a mandated 45 minute lunch break.

During the clinical skills day there will be scheduled breaks for all candidates.

All candidate breaks are taken in the candidate lounge area which includes a kitchen, lounge area, male and female bathrooms, and a quiet room.

8.3 Adverse incidents

The ADC Examination Centre has been designed to provide a low-stress environment, however, all examinations can be stressful. The ADC recommends you investigate strategies to help you manage your stress during the examination, as minor changes, delays or interruptions over a two-day examination are inevitable.

Adverse incidents include situations beyond a candidate's control that are likely to affect their performance in the examination. For example a chair malfunction or extended power outage. Inability to understand a task, personal illness or minor incidents are readily rectified, such as a loose tooth which is tightened, would not be considered an adverse incident.

Candidates cannot be permitted special consideration for tasks as a result of personal illness during an examination, including illness on day two of the examination after completing day one.

If an event(s) occurs during an examination you believe is likely to affect your performance, it is your responsibility to notify an examiner immediately. The examiner, in consultation with the examination convenor, will assess the situation and will attempt to remedy any adverse incident at the time of its occurrence. You

may be moved to another room or chair to allow your examination to continue with minimal delay. If warranted, the examiner or examination convenor may request that you complete an *Adverse incident* form.

The ADC will not be able to take into consideration any adverse incidents reported after the examination, as there is no opportunity to rectify or verify such incidents. Incidents reported by telephone or email following a practical examination will not be considered.

8.4 Time extensions

Candidates experiencing delays relating to an adverse incident extending beyond thirty minutes of assessment time, can apply to the examination convenor for a time extension. The examination has thirty minutes of additional time built in and delays which do not extend beyond thirty minutes will not qualify for a time extension.

9. Assessment

9.1 Assessment process

All tasks are marked against a defined set of assessment criteria.

All observed clinical skills day tasks will be marked by an examiner at the time of the task.

Unobserved clinical skills day tasks and technical skills day tasks will be marked by two independent examiners after the examination.

9.2 Assessment criteria

Assessment criteria are used by examiners to assess your performance at each assessment task in a standardised and reliable manner. Examiners will assess a range of criteria for each task.

The criteria have been developed to identify the attributes of the task which will be assessed and to define what a competent candidate should be able to achieve. A candidate can receive one of four possible grades for each criterion: very good, satisfactory, borderline or unsatisfactory.

The grade description for each criterion may vary by task however, in broad terms, the grade descriptors are outlined below.

VERY GOOD	identifies a competent performance which is thorough, complete and well executed.
SATISFACTORY	identifies minor deviations from a very good performance which <ul style="list-style-type: none">• could be easily corrected and/or• would not significantly compromise the clinical outcome and/or• might reasonably occur on occasions when a task is undertaken by a competent operator.
BORDERLINE	identifies additional, more major deviations from a very good performance which <ul style="list-style-type: none">• should, where possible, have been corrected during the task• would compromise the clinical outcome to a minor extent and/or• should not often occur when a task is undertaken by a competent operator.

UNSATISFACTORY identifies additional, major deviations from a very good performance which

- cannot be corrected and/or
- would significantly compromise the clinical outcome and/or
- should not occur when a task is undertaken by a competent operator.

9.3 Scoring

Candidates will receive an overall score for each station or technical task. The score is calculated from the grades given to each of the criteria assessed in that task.

The passing score for each station/technical task will be established using a criterion-referenced standard setting method.

9.4 Final result grade derivation

To obtain an overall “pass” in the practical examination you must achieve a pass in both days of the examination.

10. Getting your results

Practical examination results are posted on the ADC Candidate Portal. Posting of results usually occurs within six weeks of the examination, but may take longer. You should check the [ADC website](#) regularly for updates on the posting of results. Results will not be released by telephone, fax or email.

10.1 Repeat Examinations

If you do not pass the practical examination you may apply to sit another practical examination, provided your written examination is still valid.

No credits or exemptions will be given for previous attempts at the practical examination.

10.2 Verification, review and appeal

Candidates can apply for results verification, a review of the administrative procedures of the practical examination, or an appeal against the administrative procedures of the practical examination.

Candidates should read the [Verification of ADC Practical Examination Results Policy](#) and the [Appeals Policy for the Practical Examination](#) for further information regarding the verification, review and appeal processes for the practical examination.

The ADC will only take into consideration concerns relating to the administrative procedures of the practical examination formally submitted according to the *Verification of ADC Practical Examination Results Policy* and the *Appeals Policy for the Practical Examination*. Reports or accounts provided by telephone or email following a practical examination will not be considered and candidates will be re-directed to these policies.

10.3 How to apply for registration to practise as a dentist

If you successfully complete the ADC practical examination, you will be awarded an *ADC Certificate (General Dentist)* which is available for you to download from the [Candidate Portal](#).

You are then eligible to apply to the [DBA](#) for registration. You should review the DBA's requirements for registration carefully.

The ADC provides the DBA with a list of successful candidates following each examination.

Appendix A

The ADC will provide specifically prepared typodont models to be used during the examination. These models may include combinations of teeth and dental tissues of the following types:

- **Plain Ivorine:** teeth of uniform colour and consistency.
- **Simulated enamel: white** in colour and is made of composite resin harder than the simulated dentine and simulated caries. The teeth have been manufactured so they can be prepared with a dental bur using normal pressure and, if desired, preparations can be finished using normal pressure with sharp hand instruments.
- **Simulated dentine: yellow** in colour and is softer than the simulated enamel.
- **Simulated caries:** for those enamel/dentine teeth with simulated caries the manufacturing process ensures the caries depth is standardised for each tooth used.
The simulated caries in dentine is **grey** in colour and is softer than the simulated enamel but of similar hardness to the simulated dentine.
- **Simulated pulp chamber and canals:** the simulated dental pulp chamber and canals are hollow spaces lined with red colouring.

The manufacturing process for teeth with simulated caries ensures preparations and pathology is standardised for each tooth used as part of the assessment.