

Five tips for your upcoming practical examination



The practical examination is a platform for you to show your competency to practise safely as a dental professional in Australia.

As the final stage in the dental practitioner assessment process, we understand the importance of the practical examination. To help, here are our top five tips for your upcoming practical examination.

1. Be prepared

Review all exam documentation prior to your practical examination. This includes:

- the [Practical examination handbook](#)
- the [Practical examination information package](#)
- the [ADC candidate rules agreement for the practical examination](#)
- the [ADC assessment processes document](#), and
- your registration email.



These resources are your definitive guide to the practical examination. Ensure you read and understand all instructions before your examination. This will help avoid any additional stress during the examination or, potentially, any examination misconduct.

We do not recommend or endorse any proprietary or informal courses which advertise as preparation for the ADC written or practical examinations. Such courses are developed and run without our input. We cannot be held responsible for the quality of training or advice provided at such courses.

Common mistakes:

- Attempting to bring **unauthorised materials** into the examination centre (e.g. unapproved medications, mobile phones, eyewear in incorrect packaging).
- Being **late to registration**, or forgetting your **registration documentation** (such as your signed candidate rules agreement or correct identification).

2. Manage stress



All examinations can be stressful. We recommend you investigate strategies to help manage your stress and do not lose track of your health and well-being whilst you are preparing for and completing your examination.

Don't forget as an ADC candidate you have access to the Dental Board of Australia's free [Dental Practitioner Support Service](#).

Common mistakes:

- **Not taking breaks** during the technical skills day of the practical examination.
- **Losing track of the task** by focusing on unplanned or unexpected occurrence.



3. Read the task carefully

Examination tasks change each day. The tasks displayed during your examination will provide clear instructions on what you are expected to do.

At your examination briefing, your convenor, examiners and ADC staff will also provide instructions on how to adjust manikins and use the equipment. Read all tasks and follow all instructions carefully.

Common mistakes:

- Providing a **rehearsed response** to a standard OSCE.
- **Seeking prompts** from the simulated patient in a standard OSCE.
- Attempting a task on an **incorrect tooth** or incorrect quadrant.
- Not asking for help from an ADC staff member if **you do not know how to use the equipment available** (e.g. there may be slight operational differences between equipment brands. If used incorrectly, equipment may become damaged and be unavailable for your task. If you are unsure, please ask a staff member).
- **Inappropriate patient handling** (e.g. resting your hand on the patient's face).

4. Manage your time

Adequate time is available to complete all tasks during the examination.



During the technical skills day, we recommend starting with tasks you are most comfortable with and planning your time across the day. Reassess the tasks and time you have remaining at the lunch break to ensure you complete all tasks during the day.

During the clinical skills day, use the reading time to review all materials and take note of what the task is asking you to do. Be mindful of how long you have remaining during the ten minutes' examination time at each clinical skills day station.

Common mistakes:

- **Reviewing OSCE resources during examination time** rather than during reading time.
- **Rushing** at the end of the tasks in the clinical skills day, or **running out of time to complete the task**.
- **Rushing** at the end of the technical skills day, or **leaving some tasks incomplete**.

5. Report any concerns to your examination convenor, at the time of occurrence



If an event(s) occurs during your examination that 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 event(s) as quickly as possible. The examiner or examination convenor may complete an Adverse Incident form to record the event.

Inability to understand a task, personal limitations (including illness) or minor events that are readily rectified (such as a loose tooth, which is tightened), are not considered adverse incidents and the convenor may not complete an adverse incident form if these events occur.

Common mistakes:

- **Reporting concerns** by email, telephone or complaints form **after the practical examination**.

We will not be able to take into consideration any events reported after the examination, as we will not then have the opportunity to rectify or verify them. Events reported by telephone, email or complaints form following a practical examination will not be considered.

