



AMERICAN BOARD OF
PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

A Guide To The
**Qualifying
Examination (QE)**

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Introduction to ABPD

The American Board of Pediatric Dentistry (ABPD) was founded in 1940 by the American Society of Dentistry for Children (ASDC) to address the need for specialization in pediatric dentistry. At that time, there were dentists who focused on children's dentistry, but there was no formal training or certification process.

ABPD's founders envisioned a board that would ensure dentists seeking to specialize in treating children had the necessary qualifications and skills.

Who We Are

The American Board of Pediatric Dentistry is the credentialing body for the specialty of pediatric dentistry. Our organization is responsible for creating and administering the certification exams required for the credential.

What We Do

We create the policies and procedures for certification. Together with a dedicated group of volunteer pediatric dentists, we create the content for the Qualifying Examination, Oral Clinical Examination and the Renewal of Certification Examination and Continuous Quality Improvement Modules.

Pathway to Certification



Steps to Board Certification

Board Candidacy Application

Must provide evidence of an active license with expiration date, a faculty permit, a faculty limited license, or an international dental license to engage in the practice and/or teaching of pediatric dentistry, and a copy of the certification of completion of the training program.

- Deadline: December 30 of the year participating in the QE



Board Certified

Congratulations on completing your initial certification journey!

Qualifying Examination

The examination is designed to generate evidence toward validation of the individual's advanced training in pediatric dentistry.

- Written/Computerized
- Offered at Testing Centers
- Offered Annually in May

Oral Clinical Examination

The exam enables the candidate to demonstrate proficiency in diagnosis, treatment planning, and clinical care.

- Oral Format
- Offered at one Testing Center
- May not be taken in the same year as the QE
- Must successfully complete the QE to be eligible
- If board certification is not achieved in the 7-year period after residency, a pediatric dentist can apply for the QE as a Registrant.

Examinations



Spring
Testing Center Registration Open
for Qualifying Examination (QE)

January
Oral Clinical Examination (OCE)
Application Opens

August
Qualifying Examination
Application Opens

May
Qualifying Examination
Administration

November
Maintenance of
Candidacy Deadline

Fall
Oral Clinical Examination
Administration

December
QE Application Deadline
Board Candidacy Application Deadline

Pathway to Certification



Eligibility Requirements

1

Completion of, or in the final year of an advanced education in pediatric dentistry which is accredited by Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) or the Commission of Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC).

2

Completion of, or in the final year of an advanced placement program in pediatric dentistry which is accredited by Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) or the Commission of Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC).

Note: A pediatric dentist MUST provide evidence of an active license with expiration date, a faculty permit, a faculty limited license, or an international dental license to engage in the practice and/or teaching of pediatric dentistry and a copy of the certification of completion of the training program.

Supporting documentation (copy of program certificate and current active dental license) must be included with the board candidacy application.

The deadline to apply for board candidacy is December 30. If an applicant fails to apply for board candidacy by the deadline, the applicant's QE result will be invalidated.

Please refer here to review ABPD Examination Policies.

Qualifying Examination

QE

The Qualifying Examination is the first of a two-part American Board of Pediatric Dentistry certification process, and is administered via computer at secured testing sites annually in May.

The Qualifying Examination is designed to assess the use of specialized knowledge and skills, clinical reasoning, communication, and professionalism required of entry-level pediatric dentists for safe and effective care.

The examinee is expected to have an in-depth knowledge of all topics. The QE must be successfully completed before the Candidate can register for the Oral Clinical Examination.

The QE is composed of 240 objective, single-best answer, multiple choice items. 200 of the items are scored items and 40 items are pretest items and will not be scored. The examinee will have a single 4-hour session to complete the examination. The QE is administered only in the English language.

Before the Test:

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible, a pediatric dentist must provide evidence of one of the following two:

- i. Completion of, or in the final year of an advanced education in pediatric dentistry residency program which is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) or the Commission of Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC).
- ii. Completion of or in the final year of an advanced placement program in pediatric dentistry which is approved by Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) or the Commission of Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC).

In order to become a candidate for certification the following documentation is required:

- i. Active dental license with an expiration date, or a faculty permit, or a faculty limited license, or an international license.
- ii. Certificate or diploma from an advanced education in pediatric dentistry program.

Application Process

The application for the QE is available on the ABPD website annually in August. The deadline for the application is December 15th.

Examination Blueprint



Qualifying Examination

The examination blueprint for the QE reflects the subject matter within the specialty of pediatric dentistry and provides the framework for the assessment of knowledge. The blueprint below is a resource in preparation for the examination. ABPD performs a job/task practice analysis to ensure that the QE reflects the practice of pediatric dentistry. The data from the job/task analysis is used to support any future test plan modifications and also strengthen examination validity. ABPD will notify applicants of any changes to the blueprint prior to the examination application open date.

Domain	Skill			Task
	Remember	Understand /Apply	Analyze/Evaluate	
Behavior Guidance			X	Assess a patient's physical, psychological, and social development
			X	Evaluate pharmacologic options based on indications
		X		Administer nitrous oxide analgesia, monitor, and manage adverse events
		X		Provide care for patients under moderate or deep sedation (general anesthesia), monitor, and manage/follow protocol for adverse events
			X	Prevent, assess, and manage patient plan
Growth & Development	X			Recognize the influence of genetics, anatomy, and embryology on the growth and development of the head, neck and dentition
		X		Identify dentofacial growth patterns
		X		Determine the presence of a dental, skeletal, or functional abnormality
			X	Determine the need for and interpret the findings from a panoramic radiograph to assess growth and development

Examination Blueprint



Domain	Skill			Task
	Remember	Understand /Apply	Analyze/ Evaluate	
Growth & Development		X		Determine the need for and provide appliance for space maintenance
		X		Identify the indications and mechanisms of interceptive appliances
		X		Determine the need for and interpret the findings from a cephalometric analysis
	X			Recognize the indication for cone-beam computed tomography (CBCT)
Oral Facial Injury, Emergency Care & Oral Surgery			X	Assess and evaluate oral facial injuries, dental pain, and infections.
			X	Evaluate, diagnose, and manage/treat dentoalveolar trauma including maxillary and mandible jaw fractures
			X	Evaluate, diagnose and manage/treat the pulpal, periodontal and associated soft tissues following traumatic injury
		X		Recognize and manage a soft tissue lesion
		X		Manage a supernumerary tooth
		X		Recognize indications for and manage decoronation of tooth
		X		Management of third molars
			X	Manage adverse events and medical emergencies

Examination Blueprint



Domain	Skill			Task
	Remember	Understand /Apply	Analyze/ Evaluate	
Diagnosis, Oral Pathology, Oral Radiology, and Oral Medicine		X		Identify systemic conditions contributing to oral conditions
			X	Diagnose, manage, and explain the common pediatric oral/facial anomalies
			X	Diagnose, manage, and explain the common pediatric oral/facial pathological conditions
		X		Select radiographic techniques and materials, and capture images following radiation hygiene practices
		X		Identify the need for antibiotic therapy and prescribe antibiotics
		X		Identify risk factors for, diagnose, and classify gingival and periodontal disease
		X		Evaluate patient medical history
Prevention & Health Promotion			X	Evaluate risk for caries, periodontal disease, and trauma
		X		Provide diet counseling
			X	Recommend fluoride type and treatment modality
		X		Establish recall/recare visits based on patient needs
		X		Identify and classify enamel erosion and determine the etiology

Examination Blueprint



Dental Caries Diagnosis, Non- Restorative Caries Management & Restorative Treatment

Domain	Skill			Task
	Remember	Understand /Apply	Analyze/Evaluate	
Dental Caries Diagnosis, Non- Restorative Caries Management & Restorative Treatment		X		Recognize indications for and apply sealants for primary and permanent teeth
		X		Manage minimally invasive restorative treatment for primary and permanent teeth and prescribe follow-up reassessment plan
		X		Manage enamel erosion with preventive and restorative techniques for primary and permanent teeth
		X		Manage hypoplastic and hypomineralized teeth in primary and permanent dentition
		X		Restore primary and permanent teeth with amalgam
		X		Restore primary and permanent teeth with composite
		X		Restore primary and permanent teeth with glass ionomer
		X		Restore primary and permanent teeth with stainless steel crown
		X		Restore primary and permanent incisors with composite crown
		X		Restore primary incisors, canines, and molars with zirconia crown
		X		Identify the indications for prosthetic therapy in the primary and permanent dentition

Examination Blueprint



Domain	Skill			Task
	Remember	Understand /Apply	Analyze/ Evaluate	
Special Health Care Needs			X	Recognize special health care needs (congenital or acquired) in patients and the challenges of providing dental care for individuals with these needs)
		X		Identify and manage common oral manifestations often associated with special healthcare needs
		X		Maintain social and cultural awareness during patient care
Advocacy & Education		X		Advocate for patients to receive needed care, and refer patients and guardians to social support resources, including community-based oral health programs and care opportunities
		X		Participate at the local, state, and/or national levels in organized dentistry in its advocacy for public health policy, legislation, and regulations to protect and promote the oral health needs of children
		X		Employ principles and mechanisms of infection control and safety practices to ensure a safe patient care environment (by following professional organization guidelines and complying with local, state, and national standards/regulations)
Elements of Pediatric Dental Practice		X		Develop and follow protocols for clinical practice including safety, technology, privacy, licensing, malpractice, billing and security
		X		Maintain privacy of protected health information according to HIPAA
			X	Continually evaluate the practice for adherence to professional standards (e.g. evidence-based dentistry, practice, policies)

Examination Blueprint



Domain	Skill			Task
	Remember	Understand /Apply	Analyze/ Evaluate	
Elements of Pediatric Dental Practice			X	Evaluate research articles for application to clinical practice
		X		Manage adverse events and medical emergencies

Who is involved in content development?



ABPD utilizes subject matter experts (SME) to develop examination items.



How is the content initially developed?

All items are supported by scientific resources or accepted protocols and go through multiple reviews by SMEs and psychometricians to ensure correctness.

How is ABPD improving exam content?



ABPD reviews item performance to identify items that require refinement and editing by an SME.

Items target mid-range difficulty levels to distribute examinee scores as a means to recognize examinee variability in performance. In effect, items separate examinees of varying ability levels and yield meaningful discrimination. In addition, ABPD reviews item performance for item effectiveness. Such analyses help identify items that do not discriminate well, and which may require refinement and editing by an SME.



Textbooks

Textbooks on pediatric dentistry, pediatric medicine, craniofacial growth and development, dental trauma, and pulp therapy are recommended to prepare you for the exam.

Journals

Pediatric dentistry journals and periodicals, such as the *Journal of the American Dental Association*, and *Journal of Dental Research*, *Dental Traumatology*, and *Pediatrics* can be expected to serve as sources of test items on contemporary topics.



Continuing Education

The American Board of Pediatric Dentistry does not sponsor or endorse any specific courses or programs for board examination preparation.

Study Clubs

Literature reviews can be accomplished through many venues, including formal continuing education courses, study clubs, or self-study.



Examinations



QE

Need to Know Info

Format

The examination will be of the objective type, containing only multiple choice questions. Examinees are responsible for recording their answers by using the mouse to select the button next to the letter of the chosen response.

Timing

The test will be administered in a four hour session. Examinees will be permitted to progress through the examination at their own pace. Examinees may elect to take breaks as needed, but the time will count against the total time allocated for the examination.

Integrity

No support materials or electronic devices will be allowed at the examination. No communication between examinees will be allowed during the examination. Failure to comply may invalidate the results and prompt referral to ABPD's Ethics Committee.

Location

The Qualifying Examination is delivered via computer at testing sites worldwide. All North American centers are located in facilities with ample parking and access to major freeways and public transportation.

Examinees may be required to travel and encumber an overnight stay in another city. Specific information and instructions will be sent to examinees upon registering with the testing vendor.

Setting

The centers are designed to be quiet, free of distractions, and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Although many seats are allocated by the testing agency for the QE, the number of seats available during the testing window will vary by site.

Registration

Testing center registration will open annually, approximately three months prior to examination administration. Examinees will receive detailed information regarding scheduling with the testing center.

Language

The examination is conducted using only the English language.

Tutorial

A tutorial and practice exams are available to become familiar with the operations of an examination at www.pearsonvue.com/abpd.

Please refer to PearsonVUE Professional & Regulatory Candidate Rules Agreement for information regarding check-in process and requirements, personnel, security, test material and equipment, and exam administration.

Examination Results

Examination results are available within 8 weeks of the exam administration. Examination performance is reported on a Pass/Fail basis. Unsuccessful candidates will receive additional information. Candidate scores are intended to compare performance against a criterion standard, and using the scores for other intentions would be a misuse of the test score.

All applicants must complete board candidacy and will have until December 30 annually to complete. An applicant will not be able to participate in the Oral Clinical Examination until they have successfully completed the QE and their board candidacy application has been approved. Upon ABPD's verification of the application and supporting materials, the pediatric dentist becomes a candidate.

ABPD provides outcome reports to CODA and CDAC advanced education in pediatric dentistry programs. The report includes an unidentifiable scaled score for those who have completed their training programs. The outcome report should only be used to evaluate the program's performance.

Assessment Score Verification Policy

ABPD offers score verification service to candidates that wish to have the accuracy of their reported scores verified. Verification of a candidate's QE score is limited to verifying that the responses recorded were correctly scored as correct or incorrect and their total score was correctly transformed into a scaled score. Verification of a candidate's OCE score, will verify that the examiners' ratings for the candidate were accurately recorded, recalculate the scaled score and verify that the scaled score and pass/fail decision were accurately reported to the candidate. Examiners will not reevaluate the examinee performance.

The score verification service is not a review of the content, a review of the correct answers, the acceptability of testing site conditions or examiner style, or a reconsideration of the passing standard. ABPD employs extensive and rigorous quality control procedures to ensure the accuracy of the assessment results reported to our candidates, and have no record of a discrepancy being detected. **Candidates that wish to request the exam score verification service should contact ABPD staff.** The fee for the score verification service is \$250. We will communicate the exam score verification outcome within six weeks of receiving the request.

Re-Examination Policy

An applicant or registrant who fails the QE may retake the examination annually during their eligibility period. All examination scores will be forfeited if board certification is not achieved during the eligibility period.

Understanding Scoring

- 1** **A key validation is performed** to make sure items were keyed correctly, and that no major irregularities in examinees' response patterns were observed.
- 2** **Once the key validation is complete, examinations are scored.** Passing and failing outcomes are based on examinee scores for the entire examination.
- 3** **The minimum passing score is derived using a modified Angoff procedure.** In this standard-setting procedure, a panel of experts in the industry and a psychometrician review each item's content and judge its difficulty. The difficulty judgments are compiled to determine the minimum passing score. This method produces a passing standard based on the performance of examinees in relation to a defined criterion standard, and not on how examinees perform in relation to their cohort. Items are weighted equally, and a candidate's score (i.e. proportion correct) is their number of correct responses divided by the total number of items scored.
- 4** **To ensure examinees testing in different years are measured against the criterion standard, the Rasch measurement model is used to calibrate candidate ability and item difficulty onto the same linear scale (Wright & Stone, 1979).** Exams are calibrated to same scale of measurement, thus ensuring item difficulty is accounted for in candidate ability measures before applying the criterion standard to determine pass/fail outcomes.

