

Upcoming Changes to DAT[®] Scoring and Reporting

Starting March 1, 2025, the American Dental Association (ADA) will implement a new scoring system for the Dental Admission Test (DAT). At that time, the current 2-digit score reporting scale (1 to 30) will be replaced by a 3-digit reporting scale (200 to 600).

What does this change mean for you?

- The new scoring system improves the DAT's accuracy in representing your skills, giving you and prospective dental schools stronger insight into your true level of preparedness for the rigors of dental school.
- Beginning March 1, 2025, unofficial score reports will not be available at the testing site. This is because the new scoring system requires additional analyses to provide a more precise score.
- There is no change to DAT content. The DAT will continue to assess the same topic areas it does now.

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

What is the timeline for this change?

DAT administrations occurring on or after March 1, 2025, will be scored using the new scoring system, with results reported using the new 3-digit reporting scale. Under the new reporting scale, DAT scores can range from 200 to 600 in 10-point increments (e.g., 200, 210, 220, ... 600).

Why is the scoring system changing?

The DAT is a valid, reliable, and fair examination. The ADA is committed to continually improving this state-of-the-art examination program, through the involvement of numerous subject matter experts with expertise in relevant areas (content expertise, fairness expertise, and psychometric expertise). This change represents a psychometric improvement to the performance of the examination, resulting in greater precision and accuracy in estimating candidates' skills. This improvement is anticipated to benefit both dental admission programs and candidates.

Will 2-digit scores still be valid?

Yes. 2-digit and 3-digit scores will both be valid scores. The scale you are scored and reported on will depend on when you take the DAT. If you take the exam before March 1, 2025, you will receive 2-digit scores. If you take the exam on or after March 1, 2025, you will receive 3-digit scores. The ADA will continue to report historical 2-digit scores for administrations that occurred prior to March 1, 2025.

Will my 2-digit scores be changed to the new scoring scale?

No. Scores from DAT administrations occurring prior to March 1, 2025, will always be reported on the 2-digit scale. Scores from DAT administrations occurring on March 1, 2025, or later will always be reported on the 3-digit scale.

How can I compare 2-digit and 3-digit scores?

A Concordance Table will be made available as a tool for understanding comparable scores. This table will provide a rough sense of the general correspondence between 2-digit and 3-digit scores. The official DAT Concordance Table will be released by the ADA prior to March 1, 2025.

Will I still be able to get my score at the testing site?

No, unofficial scores will no longer be available at the testing site as of March 1, 2025. The new scoring system requires additional analyses to provide a more precise score. For score reporting timelines, see the DAT Guide.

How will this affect my ADEA AADSAS application?

There will be no change to your application. Candidates will be able to self-report their scores, regardless of whether they are 2-digit or 3-digit scores. All official scores will be sent from the ADA to ADEA AADSAS.

The ADA grants a six-month window to take the DAT. How does this change affect that eligibility window?

Candidates' choice of when to apply will impact which scoring system will be available for use in scoring their examination. Once a candidate's application is approved, they will have six months to complete an administration of the DAT.

For example, a candidate whose application is approved on September 1, 2024, would only have a single day of testing eligibility covered by the new scoring and reporting system (i.e., March 1, 2025). The later your application is approved after September 1, 2024, the more days of testing eligibility would be available under the new scoring system, up to a maximum of 6 months (i.e., if the application were received March 1, 2025, or later).

Should I take the DAT before or after the scoring and reporting change?

You should take the DAT when you feel most prepared. The examination content remains the same. Only the scoring and reporting system will change.

How will dental schools interpret and compare the 2-digit and 3-digit scores?

A Concordance Table will be made available to dental schools to assist them in comparing 2-digit and 3-digit scores. The official DAT Concordance Table will be released by the ADA prior to March 1, 2025.