NDSE ENSD
National Dental Specialty Examination
Examen national des specialités dentaires

A Guide to the National Dental Specialty Examination - What to Expect on the Examination Day

May 14th, 2024 - Webinar – Questions & Answers

1. **How can we access the recording later for people who cannot attend the webinar?**

The recording of the webinar will be distributed to the attendees, along with this Question-and-Answer document, during the week of May 20th. If you are an attendee receiving this document, please feel free to forward it to others you may feel are interested or would benefit from this information.

A recording of the webinar held on May 14th 2024, can be located on the NDSE website: https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/webinars-and-newsletters/

2. **The confirmation of registration email that the candidates received on May 13 does not have their specialty mentioned in it. The field next to specialty is left blank. Do they need to do anything regarding this?**

As a follow-up to the webinar the NDSE administration team re-issued the confirmation of registration email to all candidates that have completed examination registration to include the candidate's registered specialty. Should the candidate still be encountering issues in this regards please send an email to NDSE@rcdc.ca.

3. **Will we be provided lockers with locks to leave our personal items at the examination site?**

You will be provided with lockers or storage cubby, but there isn't a guarantee that there will be locks on site. The storage area is also monitored by a Proctor. The sites indicate that leaving personal items is at the candidate's own risk.

4. **What are the steps that a candidate should take if they need medication on site, such as for a medical condition such as migraine?**

For new accommodation requests please send a request through to the NDSE inbox (NDSE@rcdc.ca) and we will be happy to support the candidate through the accommodation process and the supporting requirements.

5. **If the candidate needs a bathroom break during the test, does the time pause or does the time keep running?**

The examination time keeps running once the exam has started, unless there is an internet or site issue that interrupts the delivery of the examination.

6. **Can you confirm there will be no written short or long answer questions?**

The format and structure of questions related to each specialty examination can be found in the NDSE Protocol (https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/specialties/).

7. **If I understand correctly, once a candidate completes the first section they will not be able to go back and review the questions later. Can you please confirm.**

Each examination is broken into two three-hour sections. Once you complete the first section, you will not be allowed to go back and review or revise response(s) during the break or once you have started the second section of the examination. But as you progress through each section you will be able to toggle back and forth through that sections set of questions.

8. **When will we find out our results?**

As per the NDSE policies and procedures (https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/policies-and-procedures/), we are required to publish the results within ten weeks of the exam date. We are targeting to publish the exam results on August 24th, 2024.

9. **Can you get coffee during the 30 minutes break? Can you leave the facility? If not, can someone bring you coffee to the exam facility?**

You are not permitted to leave the examination center during the break. Candidates will have access to their onsite locker during the break but not their personal devices. In addition, during the examination period candidates will not be permitted to interact or receive items, including food and beverages, from individuals outside of the examination centre.

10. **There's a concern about releasing the references a month before is being a bit late. Can you please comment.**

From our discussions with the previous provider the timeframe for the publication of the references is in line with when they were published in previous cycles. If indicated through the candidate feedback surveys that the candidates would benefit from an earlier

publication of the references we would bring that back for discussion and evaluation for feasibility with the Specialty Examination Team Lead group.

11. **For oral and maxillofacial radiology will the laptop come with a mouse? What should we do if we have technical issues with the laptop?**

To answer the second question first, if you have any technical issues, you should inform your Proctor onsite. We have provided clear direction and guidance to them. The NDSE team is also part of the escalation process to address issues that arise.

In addition, candidates with speciality examinations that require an additional laptop will be provided with a mouse to support interacting with the additional software.

12. **The oral maxillofacial radiology exam, the reference says that a sample file will be sent to us via the NDEB platform. We don't have an NDEB login. Where will this be sent?**

This reference was included in error and the reference has been removed from the list for Oral Maxillofacial Radiology.

13. **Someone received information regarding the references but nothing about the test location. Who do they contact to find out their location?**

Information regarding the confirmation of preferred test sites and language was sent yesterday. Within seven business days of the webinar, the address for the exam sites will be sent to the candidates.

14. **Is there a blueprint stating number of MRI questions?**

No. The blueprints will outline the approximate percentage of questions that will be included in the specialty examination for each domain within the blueprint.

15. **Can you repeat the email that we should contact if no specialties listed on the confirmation email?**

NDSE@rcdc.ca.

16. **Are the examinations being held at prometric centers?**

No. Meazure Learning is the test center partner for the NDSE.

17. **Are there negative marks for questions?**

No. There are no negative marks for questions.

18. **Could you provide the distribution of each topic areas for only Oral Medicine?**

NDSE blueprints are included in the NDSE Protocol as well as on the website. In the specialty blueprint the candidate can find the distribution of the percentage of questions that will be allocated per domain.

19. **So when they mark questions as for review, will they be easy to find or will they have to go through each question one by one?**

The examination platform functionality allows for a candidate to flag a question or series of questions for further review and easily transition back to that question.

20. **The protocol does not indicate which percentage of questions will be regarding knowledge of the literature and previous candidates of various years have stated varying amounts. Can you clarify?**

The information that will be provided with the candidates is included in the NDSE Protocol and the blueprints outline the percentage of questions that are allocated per domain.

21. **Can you please repeat the name of the exam centers?**

Meazure Learning is the test center partner for the NDSE.

22. **Are the displays of the laptop computers calibrated for contrast and grayscale values, or can we get an idea of the resolution and quality of the displays of these laptop computers?**

The resolution and quality of the laptops has been vetted by the exam team that developed the questions for the examinations, including the slides.

23. **Is there any negative marking in the multiple-choice questions? And what happens should I choose the wrong answer? And I'm also going to pair that with the next question because they were told that they would be given a negative mark of -0.5 for every incorrect selection on the multiple choice question, and they want confirmation that this is not accurate?**

Some examination questions will have more than one correct answer. These questions are identified by the direction “Select ONE or MORE correct answers.” The grade you receive

on each question depends on if you select all the correct answers, some of the correct answers, or an incorrect answer. All questions have a maximum score of 1 and a minimum score of 0. Every answer in a multi-answer multiple-choice question has a value. You must select all the correct answers to receive the full mark for the question. If you select an incorrect answer, it does not matter if all your other answers are correct, you receive a score of zero. This information can be found as part of the NDSE protocol (linked above) for those specialties that have this question type as part of their respective specialty examination.

24. **Will the demo exam properly reveal the nature of the multi answer, multiple choice type questions?**

The demo examination will show examples of the following question structure:

1. Multiple choice single answer
2. Multiple choice multiple answer
3. Constructed response

The example questions included in the demo examination may not be specific to your specialty as the intent to provide an overview of the potential question structure.

25. **There is a question about how the exam is scored, on absolute numbers of right versus wrong? Answers are scored based on a percentile score? If it is based on absolute score such as percent, what is the criteria score for passing the examination?**

The examination undertakes a very thorough development and standard setting process. And as part of that standard setting process, the cut score is set in advance of the candidates engaging in the examinations.

26. **Are we going to have the same session every year?**

At this time the NDSE is scheduled to be delivered once a year, during the June period.

27. **There's a question about the quality of the translation and a request to ensure that the translation is adequate and that it is done by professionals that are familiar with dentistry so that to avoid errors which would change the feel of the question. Sean, do you want to answer that question in English slowly so that I can translate?**

We are working with a professional translation organization who has been involved with other high stakes licensure examinations. In addition, as part of the process following that translation, this is reviewed by one or multiple specialists of that specialty.

28. **There is a question about removing short answer questions which actually allows candidate to justify their answers. There's a request to know why these have been removed.**

We have maintained the same question type and format as the 2023 NDSE.

29. **What I mean by negative marking is getting zero for choosing a wrong answer. Please clarify.**

Some examination questions will have more than one correct answer. These questions are identified by the direction "Select ONE or MORE correct answers." The grade you receive on each question depends on if you select all the correct answers, some of the correct answers, or an incorrect answer. All questions have a maximum score of 1 and a minimum score of 0. Every answer in a multi-answer multiple-choice question has a value. You must select all the correct answers to receive the full mark for the question. If you select an incorrect answer, it does not matter if all your other answers are correct, you receive a score of zero. This information can be found as part of the NDSE protocol (linked above) for those specialties that have this question type as part of their respective specialty examination.

30. **What is the cut score for passing?**

The cut score may vary between the different specialties and is set prior to the examination through the standard setting process. However, we will not be communicating the cut score in advance.

31. **What is the direction in regards to the examination format of the NDSE? Given that the exam format has changed from when the NDEB used to deliver the examination.**

The format in terms of the platform and the structure of the examination has remained consistent between the NDEB's delivery of the NDSE in 2023 and our development and delivery plan for 2024. Information on the structure of the examination for each Specialty information can be found in NDSE Protocol.

32. **If you don't pass the examination, will we have to pay the $6,000 again to retake the exam?**

Yes. In order to retake the examination, the candidate who were unsuccessful would need to repay the fee to set the examination.

33. **In case of a sickness or for an unknown reason that is outside the control of the candidates. If they have to stop the examination or they can't actually attend, is there a retake date close to the date.**

There is no retake date or second session of the NDSE for the 2024 cycle. If a candidate is unable to engage in the examination for unforeseen circumstances or medical reasons, there is a compassionate appeal, which can be found in the NDSE Policies and Procedures (https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/policies-and-procedures/). The candidate may not have to absorb the expense of an exam they weren't able to engage in.

34. **Sorry, I was unclear on what determines the past what is an absolute mark, or rather is it a top percentile that passes?**

It's a pass mark that is determined as part of the standard setting process. Purpose of the NDSE is not to target passing a certain percentage of candidates.

35. **For open answer questions, what is the penalty for spelling mistakes?**

This depends on the nature of the spelling mistake and the material impact on the marker's understanding of your response based on the answer key.

36. **Will candidates sitting the examination in French have access to the English examination?**

No. Candidates will only receive the specialty examination in the language they have selected as part of examination registration.

37. **Are we able to know how many individuals are writing the endodontic specialty examination? How many questions are in each three hour section specifically for orthodontics?**

That's not information that we're publishing in advance of the examination. And I would refer you to the protocol where it breaks down sort of the percentage of questions that will be allocated per the domain.

38. **What is the direction of the examination format? Short answer versus OSCE style? Given that the examination format has changed recently, 2022 versus 2023.**

No the examinations will not be graded on a curve.

39. **Are you considering potentially having another examination date in the middle of the year for the unsuccessful candidate? It is a bit unfair to have to wait an entire year to retake the exam, especially for those whose license relies fully on them passing the examination.**

It's something that has been discussed for future exam development cycles. Unfortunately, that it will not be in play for the 2024 cycle of the examination. Candidates that are unsuccessful in the 2024 sitting of the NDSE will have to wait until the 2025 sitting of the NDSE.

40. **Is there an example of a radiologic report for oral radiology?**

All information that will be provided to the candidates is included in the protocol, which is posted on the NDSE website.