



National Dental Specialty Examination

Protocol

2027 NDSE Cycle

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Section 1 - General Examination Information

1.1 About the National Dental Specialty Examination (NDSE)

The purpose of the NDSE is to test entry-level competencies required of specialists. The NDSE covers general specialty knowledge including basic sciences, clinical diagnosis, and treatment planning. The level of knowledge required is consistent with Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada requirements in each of the specialties.

The NDSE are six-hour examinations, delivered electronically, with one or more breaks. The number of questions and question values will vary depending on the specialty. Available information for each dental specialty can be found in the corresponding sections of the protocol.

1.2 Examination Locations

The NDSE will be offered at examination test centres throughout Canada and the United States. There is no guarantee you will be able to take the examination in the city in which you are located. Space at examination centres may be limited and examination centre selection is on a first come first served basis.

1.3 Examination Preparation

1.3.1 Important Definitions

Differential Diagnosis: two or more likely diagnoses based on the information provided.

Emergency treatment: the urgent treatment required at this appointment for that specific clinical case.

Immediate management: the management required at that appointment for that specific clinical case.

Initial treatment: the first step in a more complex or comprehensive treatment or the first step in that specific clinical case.

Investigations: all investigations for that specific clinical case, and may include laboratory and clinical tests, radiographs, biopsies, etc.

Management: all patient centered therapies for that specific clinical case and may include restorative, surgical, pharmacological, non-pharmacological treatments, nutritional therapies, education, counseling, monitoring, and follow-up.

Most appropriate: the most suitable correct answer for that specific clinical case.

Example: the most appropriate management.

Most likely: the most probable correct answer for that specific clinical case.

Example: the most likely diagnosis.

Next step: the next step you would take in the management of that specific clinical case.

1.3.2 Examples of Formulations

1.3.2.1 Example of ONE treatment in the management of a specific clinical case

[Case history and periapical radiograph provided of tooth 2.6.]

Select ONE correct answer.

Which of the following is the most appropriate management of tooth 2.6?

- ☐ Occlusal equilibration.
- ☐ Non-surgical endodontic retreatment.
- ☐ Surgical endodontic treatment (apicoectomy).
- ☐ Extraction.
- ☐ Observation and re-evaluation.
- ☐ No treatment.

1.3.2.2 Example of ONE OR MORE treatments for the management of a specific clinical case

[case history, photograph and periapical radiograph of tooth 8.5.]

Select ONE OR MORE correct answers.

Which of the following is an appropriate management of tooth 8.5?

- ☐ Indirect pulp capping.
- ☐ Direct pulp capping.
- ☐ Direct restoration.
- ☐ Pulpotomy.
- ☐ Pulpectomy.
- ☐ Extraction.

1.3.2.3 Example of ONE OR MORE treatment options for the management of a specific clinical case

[case history, photograph and periapical radiograph of tooth 8.5.]

Select **ONE OR MORE** correct answers.

Which of the following is an appropriate management option of tooth 8.5?

- ☐ Indirect pulp capping.
- ☐ Direct pulp capping.
- ☐ Direct restoration.
- ☐ Pulpotomy.
- ☐ Pulpectomy.
- ☐ Extraction.

1.3.2.4 Example of ONE OR MORE diagnoses for a specific clinical case

[case history, photographs and radiographs]

Select **ONE OR MORE** correct answers.

Which of the following is the periodontal diagnoses?

- ☐ Clinical gingival health.
- ☐ Gingivitis.
- ☐ Periodontitis.
- ☐ Intact periodontium.
- ☐ Reduced periodontium.
- ☐ Non-periodontitis patient.
- ☐ Stable periodontitis patient.

1.3.3 Tooth Numbering System

The FDI two-digit tooth numbering system is used in all examinations.

FDI / UNIVERSAL NUMBERING SYSTEM

PERMANENT DENTITION

FDI	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.1	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	FDI
Universal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Universal
Universal	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	Universal
FDI	4.8	4.7	4.6	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.2	4.1	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	FDI
	RIGHT								LEFT								

PRIMARY DENTITION

FDI	5.5	5.4	5.3	5.2	5.1	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	FDI
Universal	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	Universal
Universal	T	S	R	Q	P	O	N	M	L	K	Universal
FDI	8.5	8.4	8.3	8.2	8.1	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	FDI
	RIGHT					LEFT					

1.4 NDSE Training Courses Statement

RCDC is aware of third-party providers of test preparation courses. Be advised that RCDC is not affiliated with, nor does it endorse any third-party providers of test preparation courses.

1.5 Examination Confidentiality, Security, and Integrity

All NDSE content, including examination content, is the property of RCDC. Unauthorized use, disclosure, reproduction, and publication of NDSE content is against the law and is strictly prohibited.

RCDC has implemented security policies and measures to preserve the confidentiality and integrity of its examination content. These measures are in place to eliminate any unfair advantage among candidates and avoid the high costs associated with replacing compromised examination content.

1.6 Candidate Misconduct

All NDSE content, including examination content, is for personal use only. The disclosure, distribution, solicitation and reconstruction of NDSE content is strictly prohibited, as is the use for commercial purposes of NDSE content, including the released examination material on the NDSE website. Any other use of NDSE content is strictly prohibited. Examples of prohibited use of RCDC content include but are not limited to receiving from or disclosing NDSE content, reproducing (through memorization or by any other means), and publishing any NDSE content in whole or in part. Conduct that compromises the confidentiality and integrity of RCDC's processes and examinations will be investigated and is subject to RCDC's policies and procedures regarding candidate misconduct.

More information can be found on the NDSE website in the Policies and Procedures (<https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/policies-and-procedures/>).

1.7 Examination Day Regulations

- Candidates must provide an electronic or physical copy of their confirmation letter of examination registration to the on-site registration staff.
- Bring ONE current, government-issued photo identification (ID) with signature (driver's license, immigration card, passport, U.S. passport card, state ID card, provincial driver's license, provincial ID card, or military ID card). You will NOT be admitted without proper identification or if your ID has expired. Candidates who fail to provide proper identification will be considered a no-show and could lead to a forfeiture of the examination fees.
- Original documents are required.
- Your first and last name on the confirmation letter must match the first and last name on your identification exactly. Middle names will not be presented on the confirmation letter and will not be checked on the identification.
- Nicknames are not acceptable.
- If you have more than one last name or a suffix listed on your government-issued photo ID, the same last name(s) must be reflected on the confirmation letter
- Presenting name change documentation (marriage license, etc.) at the testing center is not acceptable. Name change documentation must be submitted at least two (2) weeks prior to your testing appointment to the NDSE Administration staff, if required.

1.7.1 General Instructions

- Cell phones are NOT permitted at the examination site. Any examination candidate with a cell phone in the examination room could be dismissed from the examination room immediately and denied re-entry.
- Smoking is NOT permitted at the examination site.
- Food and beverages are NOT allowed in the examination area.
- Personal items will NOT be allowed in the examination room and must be left outside of the examination room AT YOUR OWN RISK.
- Friends and relatives, including children, will NOT be allowed in the examination building.
- Please refrain from wearing colognes or perfumes as scents may disturb others in the testing center.

- Bring earplugs if you are sensitive to ambient noise. If you choose to bring earplugs, they will be subject to examination by the testing center staff.
- Computer-based testing facilities offer examination services to multiple agencies. There may be other individuals in the examination room with you who are sitting for examinations from different organizations. The rules for their examinations may be slightly different than the rules for your examination in terms of examination time and what is and is not allowed at their station.
- Computer-based tests are delivered via secure internet connections. Internet connections are subject to local internet providers. While it is not the norm, internet connections can, on occasion, be lost momentarily, requiring the proctor to log you back into your examination. If you lose your internet connection, inform the proctor, who will assist you in logging back into your examination. Upon logging back into your examination, you will resume at the first unanswered question. Your examination time remaining will be exactly the same as it was when the internet connection was lost.
- Candidates will not be provided with additional or a dry erase board for the examination. There is note-taking functionality accessible within the examination platform.
- Candidates are strictly prohibited from attempting to access any outside information, programs, or websites while testing.

1.7.2 Prohibited Items

Candidates are expressly prohibited from bringing the following items to the test site:

- Cameras, cell phones, optical readers, or other electronic devices that include the ability to photograph, photocopy, or otherwise copy test materials;
- Water bottles;
- Notes, books, dictionaries, or language dictionaries
- Bookbags or luggage;
- Purses or handbags;
- iPods, mp3 players, tablets, headphones, or pagers;
- Calculators, computers, PDAs, or other electronic devices with one or more memories;
- Personal writing utensils such as pencils, pens, and highlighters;
- Google and smart glasses (any glasses with electronics);
- Watches, smart devices, and other jewelry except wedding or engagement rings;
- Weapons;
- Medicine, including cough drops unless the candidate has an approved requirement as part of an accommodation
- Food and beverages;
- Coats and jackets.
- Hats, hoods, or other headwear are not permitted in the examination room unless required for religious purposes.
- Please note that sweaters and sweatshirts without pockets or hoods are permitted to be worn.

1.7.3 Smart Glasses

Candidates wearing glasses may be asked to give them to the proctor for inspection. No glasses with electronics, even if they have prescription lenses, will be permitted in the examination room.

1.7.4 Examination Security

Examination security is a serious matter. In addition to leaving all personal items outside of the

examination room, candidates may be asked to turn pockets inside out as well as show that nothing is hidden under shirt sleeves or in the hems of pant legs. Also note that most sites record testing sessions. Candidates caught with prohibited items in the examination room risk examination invalidation, disciplinary action, and/or legal liability. If the proctor determines that you have brought any prohibited items to the examination site, the items may be demanded and held by Meazure Learning testing staff. Meazure Learning reserves the right to review the memory of any electronic device to determine whether any test materials have been photographed or otherwise copied. If the review determines that any test materials are in the memory of any such device, Meazure Learning reserves the right to delete such materials and/or retain them for subsequent disciplinary action. Upon completion of the review and any applicable deletions, Meazure Learning will return your device to you but will not be responsible for the deletion of any materials that may result from the review, whether or not such materials are test materials. By bringing any such device into the test site in violation of Meazure Learning policies, you expressly waive any confidentiality or other similar rights with respect to your device, Meazure Learning's review of the memory of your device, and/or the deletion of any materials. Meazure Learning, the examination site, and the test administration staff are not liable for lost or damaged items brought to the examination site.

1.7.5 Intellectual Property

The content, including each question, of this examination is the property of the examination provider. You are strictly prohibited from retaining, copying, distributing, disclosing, discussing, possessing, or receiving any examination content, including even partial questions, by written, electronic, oral, or other form of communication. This includes, but is not limited to, emailing, copying, or printing of electronic files and reconstructing content through memorization and/or dictation before, during, or after the examination. Doing so may result in disciplinary action, assessment of monetary damages, and legal liability. By proceeding further with the examination process, you are acknowledging and agreeing that you understand these restrictions and the consequences if you break these restrictions.

1.7.6 Environmental Distractions

Examination room temperature can be unpredictable; therefore, we suggest that you wear appropriate clothing (e.g., sweatshirt without pockets or a hood or other layered clothing) to help you adapt to a cooler or warmer climate in the examination room. Bring ear plugs if you are sensitive to noise. If you choose to bring earplugs, they will be subject to examination by the testing center staff.

1.8 Test Accommodations

Test accommodations are granted on an individual basis and are dependent on the nature and extent of the request, documentation provided, and requirements of the examination.

More information can be found on the NDSE website in the Policies and Procedures (<https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/policies-and-procedures/>).

1.9 Exceptional Circumstances: Withdrawals, Compassionate Appeals, and Conduct of the Examination

1.9.1 Withdrawals

If, before the examination, you experience a serious medical circumstance or unanticipated exceptional circumstance beyond your control, you must withdraw from the examination. Notice of such a withdrawal should be provided in writing to the NDSE before the examination, if possible, but no later than seven days following the examination. If applicable, supporting documentation must accompany the submission.

Date of withdrawal request	Refundable fees*
Prior to the closing of the application window	100%
More than 90 days from the date of the examination and after the closing of the application window	75%
More than 60 days but less than 90 days from the date of the examination	50%
More than 30 days but less than 60 days from the date of the examination	25%
Less than 30 days from the date of the examination	0

*The candidate management fees are nonrefundable.

More information can be found on the NDSE website in the Policies and Procedures (<https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/policies-and-procedures/>).

1.9.2 Compassionate Appeals

If you believe you have been prevented from demonstrating your ability because of a serious medical circumstance or unanticipated medical circumstance during the examination, you can submit a compassionate appeal to have the results of the examination voided. Compassionate appeals request must be submitted to NDSE@rcdc.ca within five days of the NDSE administration date.

More information can be found on the NDSE website in the Policies and Procedures (<https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/policies-and-procedures/>).

1.9.3 Conduct of an Examination

If, during the examination, you believe there may have been an irregularity or inconsistency in the conduct of the examination that prevented you from demonstrating your ability, it must be immediately reported to staff at the examination centre.

Should you want to submit an appeal based on the reported irregularity or inconsistency, A NDSE Candidate Incident Reporting Form must be completed and submitted within 5 days of the NDSE administration date.

More information can be found on the NDSE website in the Policies and Procedures (<https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/policies-and-procedures/>).

1.10 Results

Results are released within 10 weeks of the examination. You will receive an email notification when your results will be available electronically.

Results will not be released by telephone, mail, or fax.

1.10.1 Result Verification

If you are unsuccessful, you have 30 days to request a verification of your result.

Regrade: Candidates who have taken and failed may request re-evaluation of their score for the constructed responses only.

More information can be found on the NDSE website in the Policies and Procedures (<https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/policies-and-procedures/>).

NDSE Dental Anesthesia

Content

The NDSE in dental anesthesia evaluates your knowledge and clinical competence at the specialty level.

Blueprint

Canadian specialists in dental anesthesia are required to have a broad knowledge and skills in seven domains. The blueprint below indicates the content domains and approximate percentage of questions in each domain.

Dental Anesthesia Blueprint	Approximate % of questions
Biomedical Sciences: - Anatomy - Physiology - Human growth and development - Neuroscience - Physics - Biostatistics	5-15%
Pathophysiology and Clinical Medicine: - Pathophysiology - Clinical medicine - Psychological/behavioural management of dental anxiety	5-15%
Pharmacology: - Drugs used for the administration of the states of minimal and moderate conscious sedation, deep sedation, and general anesthesia - Drugs used in critical care and resuscitation - Local anesthetics used for dental and maxillofacial procedures - Drugs used for management of acute orofacial pain	15-25%
Anesthesia Equipment, Delivery Systems, and Monitoring: - Patient monitoring - Anesthetic machines and equipment - Adjunctive anesthetic devices and technologies - Vascular access	5-15%
Preoperative Assessment: - Physical exam, including airway assessment - Patient history, including stability and severity of disease - Identification and determination of anesthetic risk	10-20%
Anesthetic Plan: - Perioperative treatment modifications, including anesthetic risk mitigation - Selection of anesthetic agents and airway management strategies - Postoperative patient management, including recovery and discharge - Preoperative and postoperative patient instructions and informed consent/assent	10-20%
Management of Complications/Emergencies: - Differential diagnosis of anesthetic and medical emergencies - Management of anesthetic and medical emergencies - Crisis management	15-25%

• Emergency airway management • ACLS and PALS protocols	
Total	100%

Format

The examination will be administered in two, three-hour parts. The examination consists of single answer multiple-choice questions that assess knowledge, application of knowledge, diagnosis, and clinical decision-making.

Question and Answer Formats

Question and answer format sample questions will be published on the NDSE website, in the resource section (<https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/resources/>), by December 1st, 2026.

The number and detail of the question and answer formats will remain consistent with the information that was provided in the 2026 NDSE Protocol.

NDSE Dental Public Health

Content

The NDSE in dental public health evaluates your knowledge of dental public health principles and public health issues.

Blueprint

Canadian specialists in dental public health are required to have broad knowledge and skills in the seven domains. The following blueprint shows the content areas and approximate percentage of questions (cases, topics, computer-based data analysis, and policy analysis) in each domain.

Dental Public Health Blueprint	Approximate % of questions
Assess community oral health status, needs, and resources	5-15%
Diagnose community oral health problems and identify the cause or strength of contributing factors	10-20%
Assess policies, strategies, programs, services, and devices that affect oral health and the provision of oral health services	15-25%
Plan activities or programs that would be worthwhile in improving oral health within the given ethical, legal, political, social, demographic, economic, and environmental context	10-20%
Manage oral health programs and human resources providing oral health care services, including conduct quality assurance programs and program evaluation.	5-15%
Assemble, synthesize, and communicate relevant, accurate and clear information that will enable individuals, families, communities, public and private health organizations, and government decision-makers to improve oral health	15-25%
Conduct education on and research into community oral health problems and services to assure a diverse and competent public oral health workforce and advancement of the specialty.	5-15%
Total	100%

Format

The examination will consist of three, two-hour parts of equal weight:

Part 1 will be a data analysis of dental epidemiologic data provided in a format similar to what would be collected using World Health Organization. (2013). *Oral health surveys: Basic methods* (5th ed.). An IBM SPSS® Statistics software data set will be provided on a PC laptop computer with a standard mouse. Data analysis skills will be assessed through a series of short- and long- answer questions.

Part 2 will be a policy analysis of a dental public health topic. A series of long-answer questions will be provided to assess your ability to analyze information provided in a written document, and to write and defend appropriate options for oral health policies to address the problems identified in the document.

Part 3 will consist of a mix of single and multiple-answer multiple-choice questions, and constructed response questions covering basic dental epidemiological principles and dental public health issues in Canada.

Question and Answer Formats

Question and answer format sample questions will be published on the NDSE website, in the resource section (<https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/resources/>), by December 1st, 2026.

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NDSE Endodontics

Content

The NDSE in endodontics evaluates your knowledge and clinical competence in endodontics at the specialty level.

Blueprint

Canadian specialists in endodontics are required to have broad knowledge and skills in eleven domains. The blueprint below shows the domains and the approximate percentage of questions covered by each domain.

Endodontics Blueprint	Approximate % of questions
Biomedical sciences: a comprehensive understanding and strong foundation in the following: anatomy, physiology, oral histology, oral pathology, oral histopathology, oral microbiology, immunology, biomaterials.	10-15%
Non-surgical root canal therapy: proficiency in the procedures and materials used in non-surgical endodontic treatment, such as instrumentation, cleaning, shaping, and obturation of root canals, as well as complications and their management.	20-25%
Surgical root canal therapy: principles and techniques of micro-endodontic apical surgery and other surgical interventions related to endodontic treatment. Demonstrating expertise in the procedures and materials/grafting used in surgical endodontic treatment, including the management of complications.	5-10%
Diagnosis, treatment planning, and patient management: accurate diagnoses and developing comprehensive treatment plans while considering the individual needs of patients. Emphasizing the holistic approach to patient care and effective management.	15-25%
Pharmacology: pain management, infection control and knowledge of pharmaceutical agents and their application in endodontic practice.	6-10%
Trauma: management of dento-alveolar injuries, including splinting, post-operative care, and follow-up protocols for patients who have experienced traumatic dental injuries.	5-9%
Anesthesia: knowledge of various anesthesia techniques, local anesthetics (including composition and pharmacological properties), and pain management in endodontics; patient comfort and safety through effective anesthesia is a key focus.	4-8%
Management of medically compromised patient: endodontic care to patients with various medical complexities. It involves understanding and addressing the unique needs and potential challenges posed by medically compromised patients.	2-6%

Radiology: basic radiographic physics, various radiographic techniques, advanced imaging modalities like CBCT, error recognition/artifacts, and radiographic interpretation. The focus will be on the ability to interpret radiographic images accurately and utilize them effectively in diagnosis and treatment planning.	10-15%
Research methods: basics of research methodology, fundamental aspects of evidence-based endodontics, statistics, and their application in the field of endodontics.	2-5%
Multidisciplinary topics (includes prosthodontics, periodontics, orthodontics, ethics, asepsis & sterilization, implantology): foundational understanding of these related areas, recognizing their potential relevance to endodontics and patient care.	2-5%
Total	100%

Format

The examination will be administered in two, three-hour parts. The examination consists of a mix of single and multiple-answer multiple-choice questions that assess knowledge, application of knowledge, diagnosis, and clinical decision-making.

Question and Answer Formats

Question and answer format sample questions will be published on the NDSE website, in the resource section (<https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/resources/>), by December 1st, 2026.

The number and detail of the question and answer formats will remain consistent with the information that was provided in the 2026 NDSE Protocol.

NDSE Prosthodontics

Content

The NDSE in prosthodontics evaluates your knowledge and clinical competence in prosthodontics at the specialty level.

Blueprint

Canadian specialists in prosthodontics are required to have broad knowledge and skills in six domains. The blueprint below presents the six domains and the approximate percentage of questions covered by each domain.

Prosthodontics Blueprint	Approximate % of questions
Removable complete dental prosthesis	5-15%
Removable partial dental prosthesis	5-15%
Fixed dental prosthesis supported by natural teeth	15-25%
Dental implant supported prosthesis	25-35%
Maxillofacial prosthetics	2-8%
General prosthetic topics (including basic sciences, medical management of dental patients, dental management of medically compromised patients, tooth wear, theories of occlusion, materials)	25-35%
Total	100%

Format

The examination will be administered in two, three-hour parts. The examination will include a mix of single and multiple-answer multiple-choice questions, and a constructed response question that assesses knowledge, application of knowledge, diagnosis, and clinical decision-making.

Question and Answer Formats

Question and answer format sample questions will be published on the NDSE website, in the resource section (<https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/resources/>), by December 1st, 2026.

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NDSE Pediatric Dentistry

Content

The NDSE in pediatric dentistry tests your knowledge and clinical competence in pediatric dentistry at the specialty level.

Blueprint

Canadian specialists in pediatric dentistry are required to have broad knowledge and skills in fourteen domains. The blueprint below presents the fourteen domains and the approximate percentage of questions covered by each domain.

Pediatric Blueprint	Approximate % of questions
Growth and development	7-13%
Cariology, preventive dentistry, and anticipatory guidance	5-15%
Restorative dentistry and oral rehabilitation	8-18%
Child development & non-pharmacological behaviour guidance	4-10%
Pharmacological behaviour guidance	4-10%
Pharmacology	2-8%
Oro-facial trauma	5-15%
Medical management	5-15%
Oral diagnosis, oral pathology, oral medicine, oral radiology	5-15%
Periodontology	1-4%
Pulp Therapy	5-15%
Infection Control and occupational hazards	1-4%
Biostatistics and epidemiology	1-4%
Record keeping and informed consent	1-4%
Total	100%

Format

The examination will be administered in two, three-hour parts. The examination consists of a mix of single and multiple-answer multiple-choice questions that assess knowledge, application of knowledge, diagnosis, and clinical decision-making.

Question and Answer Formats

Question and answer format sample questions will be published on the NDSE website, in the resource section (<https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/resources/>), by December 1st, 2026.

The number and detail of the question and answer formats will remain consistent with the information that was provided in the 2026 NDSE Protocol.

NDSE Orthodontics

Content

The NDSE in orthodontics evaluates your knowledge and clinical competence in orthodontics at the specialty level.

Blueprint

Canadian specialists in orthodontics are required to have broad knowledge and skills in seven domains. The blueprint below indicates the content domains and the approximate percentage of questions in each domain.

Orthodontics Blueprint	Approximate % of questions
Growth and Development/Principles of Growth Modification	5-15%
Etiology of Orthodontic Problems, Diagnosis and Treatment Planning	25-35%
Biologic Basis of Tooth Movement	5-15%
Biomechanics and Orthodontic Appliance Design	5-15%
Patient Management/Treatment	25-35%
Oral Pathology	2-8%
Statistics	2-8%
Total	100%

Format

The examination will be administered in two, three-hour parts. The examination consists of a mix of single and multiple-answer multiple-choice questions that assess knowledge, application of knowledge, diagnosis, and clinical decision-making.

Question and Answer Formats

Question and answer format sample questions will be published on the NDSE website, in the resource section (<https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/resources/>), by December 1st, 2026.

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NDSE Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

Content

The NDSE in oral and maxillofacial surgery evaluates your knowledge and clinical competence in oral and maxillofacial surgery at the specialty level.

Blueprint

Canadian specialists in oral and maxillofacial surgery are required to have broad knowledge and skills in ten domains. The blueprint below indicates the content domains and approximate percentage of questions in each domain.

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Blueprint	Approximate % of questions
Temporomandibular disorders	7-13%
Implants	5-15%
Cleft lip and palate, and craniofacial syndromes	5-10%
Dentoalveolar and preprosthetic surgery	6-11%
Medicine	6-11%
Pathology	5-15%
Orthognathic surgery	5-15%
Reconstructive surgery	5-15%
Trauma	10-20%
Anesthesia and sedation	5-15%
Total	100%

Format

The examination will be administered in two, three-hour parts. The examination consists of a mix of single correct answer and multiple-answer multiple-choice questions, ordered response questions and constructed response questions that assess knowledge, application of knowledge, diagnosis, and clinical decision-making.

Question and Answer Formats

Question and answer format sample questions will be published on the NDSE website, in the resource section (<https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/resources/>), by December 1st, 2026.

The number and detail of the question and answer formats will remain consistent with the information that was provided in the 2026 NDSE Protocol.

NDSE Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology

Content

The NDSE in oral and maxillofacial radiology evaluates your knowledge and clinical competence in oral and maxillofacial radiology at the specialty level.

Blueprint

Canadian specialists in oral and maxillofacial radiology are required to have broad knowledge and skills in five domains. The blueprint below presents the domains and the approximate percentage of the questions covered by each domain.

Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology		Approximate % of questions
Part 1	Interpretation of diagnostic imaging of the maxillofacial region	50-60%
Part 2	Radiation sciences and imaging techniques: Include but are not limited to radiation physics, projection geometry, the biological effect of radiation, radiation safety, dose and quality assurance, imaging modalities and emerging technologies that are pertinent to Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology: -Techniques and procedures -Uses, application and limitations -Factors affecting image quality and artifact formation -Optimization of imaging techniques	5-25%
	Head and neck anatomy	10-15%
	General head and neck pathology	10-15%
Total		100%

Format

The examination will consist of two, three-hour parts.

Part 1 will consist of a set of patient diagnostic images for you to interpret in order to write a radiographic report.

Part 2 will consist of a mix of single correct answer and multiple-answer multiple-choice questions, ordered response questions and constructed response questions that assess knowledge, application of knowledge, diagnosis, and clinical decision-making.

Question and Answer Formats

Question and answer format sample questions will be published on the NDSE website, in the resource section (<https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/resources/>), by December 1st, 2026.

The number and detail of the question and answer formats will remain consistent with the information that was provided in the 2026 NDSE Protocol.

NDSE Periodontics

Content

The NDSE in periodontics evaluates your knowledge and clinical competence in periodontics at the specialty level.

Blueprint

Canadian specialists in periodontics are required to have broad knowledge and skills in six domains. The blueprint below indicates the content domains and approximate percentage of questions in each domain.

Periodontics Blueprint	Approximate % of questions
Non-surgical therapy: Plaque control/behaviour modification eg. Smoking cessation; SRP; Pharmacotherapeutics eg. LAA, systemic antibiotics, host modulation therapy; Stress reduction/sedation; Occlusal therapy; Periodontal maintenance therapy	15-20%
Regeneration surgical therapy: Bone replacement grafting; Barrier therapy eg. GTR; Combination graft and barrier; Use of biologics/growth factors/dermal matrices; Soft tissue grafting/pedicle flaps/barrier or combination	15-20%
Resective surgical therapy: Gingivectomy and gingivoplasty; Open flap debridement; Osseous resective (ostectomy/osteoplasty); Root resection; Tooth extraction	15-20%
Dental implants: Site preparation; Placement; Loading protocol; Provisionalization/definitive restorations; Maintenance; Peri-implantitis/complications	25-30%
Interdisciplinary therapy: Restorative dentistry/prosthodontics consideration such as crown lengthening; Endodontics consideration; Orthodontics consideration such as canine exposure and forced eruption	10-15%
Oral/systemic interrelationships: Oral medicine/pathology/biopsy; Medicine/medically compromised; Medical emergencies	5-9%
Total	100%

Format

The examination will be administered in two, three-hour parts. The examination consists of a mix of single and multiple-answer multiple-choice questions that assess knowledge, application of knowledge, diagnosis, and clinical decision-making.

Question and Answer Formats

Question and answer format sample questions will be published on the NDSE website, in the resource section (<https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/resources/>), by December 1st, 2026.

The number and detail of the question and answer formats will remain consistent with the information that was provided in the 2026 NDSE Protocol.

NDSE Oral Medicine and/or Oral Pathology

Content

The NDSE in oral medicine and/or oral pathology evaluates your knowledge and clinical competence at the specialty level.

Blueprint: Oral medicine only

Canadian specialists in oral medicine are required to have broad knowledge and skills in three domains. The blueprint below indicates the content domains and approximate percentage of questions in each domain.

Oral Medicine Blueprint	Approximate % examination
Basic medical sciences: General and systemic pathology, orofacial anatomy, physiology; Pharmacology and therapeutics; Immunology; Microbiology; General medicine	10-20%
Diseases and conditions of the maxillofacial region: Developmental and congenital conditions, Tooth and periodontal abnormalities, Infectious, Physical, chemical and iatrogenic injuries, Allergies and immunologic diseases, Epithelial, Salivary gland, Soft tissue, Hematologic, Bones and joint, Odontogenic, Dermatologic, Oral manifestations of systemic diseases, Benign and malignant tumours	45-55%
Temporomandibular disorders, Oral and dental management of patients with complex medical conditions, Orofacial pain and neurosensory disorders, Orofacial disorders arising from aging, systemic disease and medical therapies	30-40%
Total	100%

Format: Oral medicine only

The oral medicine examination will be administered in two, three-hour parts. Part 1 and 2 will consist of a mix of single and multiple-answer multiple-choice questions, and constructed response questions that assess general knowledge, application of knowledge, diagnosis, and clinical decision-making.

Blueprint: Oral pathology only

Canadian specialists in oral pathology are required to have broad knowledge and skills in four domains. The blueprint below indicates the content domains and approximate percentage of questions in each domain.

Oral Pathology Blueprint	Approximate % examination
Microscopic examination	40-50%
Basic medical sciences: General and systemic pathology, orofacial anatomy, physiology; Pharmacology and therapeutics; Immunology; Microbiology; General medicine	10-20%
Diseases and conditions of the maxillofacial region: Developmental and congenital conditions, Tooth and periodontal abnormalities, Infectious, Physical, chemical and iatrogenic injuries, Allergies and immunologic diseases, Epithelial, Salivary gland, Soft tissue, Hematologic, Bones and joint, Odontogenic, Dermatologic, Oral manifestations of systemic diseases, Benign and malignant tumours	27-37%
Laboratory pathology: gross pathology, molecular, immunohistochemistry, tests, electron microscopy, laboratory management	5-10%
Total	100%

Format: Oral pathology only

The oral pathology examination will consist of two, three-hour parts.

Part 1, the microscopic evaluation, will involve the evaluation and diagnosis of tissue sections using *Leica Aperio ImageScope* pathology slide viewing software. You will be provided with a laptop on which you will find the software and case files.

You can download Leica Aperio ImageScope from <http://www2.leicabiosystems.com/l/48532/2019-01-03/7bs4rg>.

Cytology specimens, electron micrographs, immunohistochemical and molecular histology tissue sections may be included.

Part 2 will consist of a mix of single and multiple-answer multiple-choice questions, and constructed response questions that assess general knowledge, application of knowledge, diagnosis, and clinical decision-making.

Blueprint – Oral medicine and oral pathology

Canadian specialists in oral medicine and oral pathology are required to have broad knowledge and skills in five domains. The blueprint below indicates the content domains and approximate percentage of questions in each domain.

Oral Medicine and Oral Pathology Blueprint		Approximate % examination
Microscopic examination		40-50%
Basic medical sciences: General and systemic pathology, orofacial anatomy, physiology; Pharmacology and therapeutics; Immunology; Microbiology; General medicine		4-10%
Diseases and conditions of the maxillofacial region: Developmental and congenital conditions, Tooth and periodontal abnormalities, Infectious, Physical, chemical and iatrogenic injuries, Allergies and immunologic diseases, Epithelial, Salivary gland, Soft tissue, Hematologic, Bones and joint, Odontogenic, Dermatologic, Oral manifestations of systemic diseases, Benign and malignant tumours		24-34%
Temporomandibular disorders, Oral and dental management of patients with complex medical conditions, Orofacial pain and neurosensory disorders, Orofacial disorders arising from aging, systemic disease and medical therapies		6-16%
Laboratory pathology: gross pathology, molecular, immunohistochemistry, tests, electron microscopy, laboratory management		5-10%
Total		100%

Format: Oral medicine and oral pathology

The oral medicine and oral pathology examination will be administered in two, three-hour parts.

Part 1, the microscopic evaluation, will involve the evaluation and diagnosis of tissue sections using *Leica Aperio ImageScope* pathology slide viewing software. You will be provided with a laptop on which you will find the software and case files.

You can download Leica Aperio ImageScope from <http://www2.leicabiosystems.com/l/48532/2019-01-03/7bs4rg>

Cytology specimens, electron micrographs, immunohistochemical and molecular histology tissue sections may be included.

Part 2 consists of a mix of single and multiple-answer multiple-choice questions, and constructed response questions that assess general knowledge, application of knowledge, diagnosis, and clinical decision-making.

Question and Answer Formats

Question and answer format sample questions will be published on the NDSE website, in the resource section (<https://ndse-ensd.ca/en/resources/>), by December 1st, 2026.

The number and detail of the question and answer formats will remain consistent with the information that was provided in the 2026 NDSE Protocol.