

2026

Assessment of Fundamental Knowledge (AFK®) Protocol

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Purpose of the Assessment of Fundamental Knowledge (AFK)

The purpose of the AFK is to test your knowledge of biomedical science and applied clinical science. A passing grade is required before you can continue to the other examinations in the Equivalency Process.

Check-in

During check-in, you must present current government-issued photo identification. Acceptable forms of government-issued photo identification are:

- driver's licence,
- passport, or
- provincial photo identification card.

The ID must be in English or French. Photocopies and digital images will not be accepted.

Photo identification must show your name exactly as it appears in your online profile and must not be expired. If the photo identification does not have an expiry date, it must have been issued within the last 10 years.

If you do not provide government-issued photo identification, you will not be permitted to take the examination.

During check-in, staff may inspect eyeglasses, jewellery, and other accessories. This may require a physical inspection and it may occur each time you enter the examination room.

You are advised to refrain from wearing jewellery, except for wedding rings. Any other jewellery, including ornate hair accessories, will need to be removed and placed in a designated area.

Please refer to the Examination Day Regulations for information on what you can and cannot bring into the examination room.

Additional check-in information for Prometric test centres

During check-in at Prometric sites, you may be scanned with a metal detector wand, fingerprinted, required to raise your pant legs above your ankles, empty and turn all pockets inside-out, and raise shirt sleeves above your wrists prior to entry into the test room.

Prior to the examination, you must read [Prometric's test centre policies](#) including arrival and check-in procedures. These procedures may change at any time. It is your responsibility to know the test centre policies prior to your examination. If you do not comply with Prometric's policies, you may be refused access to the test centre.

Content

Examination items are developed based on the Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs) for beginning dental practitioners in Canada available in the [Exam Resources](#) section of the NDEB website.

Blueprint

The blueprint below gives the content areas and approximate percentage of questions in each area.

AFK Blueprint	Percentage of Questions
Applied Biomedical Sciences (Anatomy, Biochemistry, Biomaterials, Cariology, Growth and Development, Histology, Immunology, Microbiology, Oral Embryology, Physiology)	20 ± 5
Restorative, Prosthodontics, Implants	16 ± 5
Oral Medicine/Oral Pathology, Oral Radiology	15 ± 5
Pharmacology & Therapeutics, Local Anesthesia, Medical Emergencies	14 ± 5
Orthodontics, Pediatric Dentistry, Geriatric Dentistry, Special Needs Patient	8 ± 5
Periodontics	8 ± 5
Oral Surgery, Trauma, Orofacial Pain, Dental Emergencies	8 ± 5
Endodontics	6 ± 5
Evidence-Based Dentistry, Prevention, Infection Control, Ethics & Jurisprudence	5 ± 5
Total	100

Format

The AFK may be offered in two formats: computer-based at Prometric test centres or booklet format offered at select exam sites. The AFK consists of 200 single answer multiple-choice questions delivered in two parts in a single day. You will have two hours to complete each part. The examination is four hours in duration with one scheduled break.

Each AFK question has a value of one. For these questions, you should select the most likely or most appropriate answer. There is no penalty for incorrect answers. You should always answer a question, even when you are unsure. The lowest score for any question is zero.

Sample Question

The following is an example of an AFK question:

What is the most appropriate antibiotic for infections of pulpal origin?

- ☒ Penicillin V.
- ☐ Doxycycline.
- ☐ Erythromycin.
- ☐ Tetracycline.

Preparation Materials

You are encouraged to use the NDEB resources available, including the released examination materials, on the NDEB website. These resources are for personal use only.

Exam Orientation

The AFK will be administered as:

- a computer-based examination at Prometric test centres; OR
- a paper and pencil examination at event sites

If registered for the examination at a Prometric test centre, the [NDEB's AFK and ACJ Electronic Exam Orientation](#) must be viewed prior to taking the AFK.

During a computer-based examination, you may experience short technical delays. The NDEB has accounted for such delays in the time allotted for the examination.

Reference Texts

A list of reference materials used in Faculties of Dentistry in Canada can be found in the [Exam Resources](#) section of the NDEB website. The NDEB also references journal articles, clinical guidelines, and practice standards issued by specialty organizations.

Released Questions

The NDEB publishes many released questions which are available in the [Exam Resources](#) section of the NDEB website.

Tooth Numbering System

The World Dental Federation (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	

Training Courses

Be advised that the NDEB is not affiliated with, nor does it endorse any third-party providers of test preparation courses. The use of the NDEB's name by third parties, unless expressly authorised, is prohibited. The disclosure, distribution, solicitation, and reconstruction of NDEB examination content is strictly prohibited, as is the use of NDEB examination content for commercial purposes, including the released examination material on the NDEB website.

Copyright and Exam Security

All NDEB content, including examination content, is for personal use only. Any other use of NDEB content is strictly prohibited. Examples of prohibited use of NDEB content include, but are not limited to, receiving or disclosing NDEB content, reproducing (through memorization or by any other means), and publishing any NDEB content in whole or in part. Conduct that compromises the confidentiality and integrity of the NDEB's processes and examinations will be investigated.

Information on exam security and NDEB's Intellectual Property Statement can be found on the NDEB website.

Examination Day Regulations

You are required to follow all regulations. Any failure to comply will be formally documented and reported to the NDEB.

General

- You must be punctual for all sessions. If you arrive late, you may be denied entry to the examination.
- All devices with recording or transmitting and/or receiving abilities are prohibited. This includes all portable electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, tablets, laptops) and wearable smart technologies. These devices must be turned off and placed in the designated area. These devices cannot be accessed during the break.
- All watches are prohibited and must be placed in the designated area. These cannot be accessed during the break.
- You must not wear a hat, scarf, coat, outdoor clothing, hoodie with the hood up, or bulky clothing (except where the listed items constitute religious attire).
- You must empty all pockets before entering or leaving the examination room.
- Food is not allowed to be consumed in the examination room.
- Water is allowed in the examination room in a transparent bottle with the label removed. No other beverages are permitted.
- If you require food, medicine, or medical equipment during the examination, you must submit a request pursuant to the NDEB's [test accommodation](#) policy.
- Ear plugs will be provided. You will not be allowed to use your own ear plugs.
- You will be required to read and agree to a Confidentiality and Non-disclosure Agreement before you can begin the examination.

- You are prohibited from communicating, publishing, reproducing, or transmitting any part of your examination, in any form or by any means, verbal, written, or electronic, for any purpose.
- You will be provided with scratch paper, a pencil, and an eraser. You cannot write on anything other than the scratch paper provided. The scratch paper, pencils and eraser must be submitted to staff at the end of the examination.
- You cannot leave and re-enter the examination room unattended once the examination has started.

Booklet Examinations

- You will not be allowed to leave the examination room when there are 10 minutes remaining.
- You must stop writing when the invigilator indicates time is up.
- The transfer of answers from books to answer sheets must be completed within the session time.

If may be necessary for the NDEB to introduce new regulations or modify existing regulations for specific examination administrations. Any new or modified regulations will supersede regulations published in the protocol.

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. Read the NDEB's policies and procedures for [test accommodations](#) on the NDEB website.

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

Withdrawals

If you experience a health-related issue or personal circumstance prior to the start of an examination that will prevent you from demonstrating your ability, you must withdraw. If you do not attend the examination, you will not lose an attempt.

Login to your [NDEBConnect](#) account to withdraw from an examination. All withdrawals are subject to a fee.

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 must be submitted through your [NDEBConnect](#) account within seven days of the examination.

More information can be found in the [Compassionate Appeal](#) section of the website and in the [NDEB By-laws and policies](#).

Appeal of the 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, it must be submitted through your [NDEBConnect](#) account within seven days of the examination.

More information is available in the [Appeal of the Conduct of an Examination](#) section of the website and in the [NDEB By-laws and policies](#).

Results

Results are normally released within eight weeks of the examination. You will receive an email notification when your results are available in your online profile.

Results will be reported as a Pass/Fail. Those who receive less than 75 will also receive their test equated re-scaled score.

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

Passing Standard

To assure a consistent level of difficulty, the NDEB uses test equating and re-scaling procedures to correlate raw scores to scores on a reference examination and to a standardized passing score of 75.

You must obtain a minimum test equated, re-scaled score of 75 to be successful on an NDEB examination.

Information on [test equating and re-scaling](#) is available on the NDEB website.

Appeals and Rescoring

If you receive a failing grade, you have 30 days from the date results are released to request a verification of your score.

Information can be found in the [Appeals and Rescoring](#) section of the NDEB website.

In no case will you have access to your answer score sheets or examination questions.

Repeats

The AFK can be taken a maximum of three times.