

الهيئة السعودية للتخصصات الصحية
Saudi Commission for Health Specialties



Professional Dental Licensure Examination (PDLE) EXAMINATION CONTENT GUIDELINE



EXAMINATION MODEL

General Rules

Note: Read this guide before submitting an application to test. At the time of application, you will be required to acknowledge that you have read and understood this guide and the policies and procedures contained within.

Saudi Dental Licensure Examination

Congratulations to those who are a year away from BDS graduation and the ones who have already graduated! We share the excitement and pride you feel at this moment of your life. Your future career is bright and holds many opportunities from being a great dentist to pursuing your postgraduate studies. We wish you all the success in your future endeavors and dreams.

At this stage, you must take the Saudi Dental Licensure Examination (SDLE) if you want to practice in Saudi Arabia and/or get admitted to a postgraduate training program at the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties (SCFHS).

What is the SDLE?

The SDLE is an exam that assesses your readiness to practice and/or proceed to postgraduate training. It consists of 300 MCQs which may include up to 30 pilot questions. It is a six-hour MCQ examination with scheduled breaks. It is divided into three sections of 100 (+10) questions each with time allocation of 120 minutes for each part. There are two scheduled breaks between section one-two and section two-three with a pool total time of 45 minutes to be divided between these two breaks based on candidate preference. These MCQs have four options from which the candidate will choose one best answer.

The examination shall contain questions that test knowledge and questions with scenarios that test other skills (interpretation, analysis, decision making, reasoning and problem solving). (See Appendix A: for Important exam Instructions).



Note : **As of March 2023, the test will consist of 200 MCQs divided into two sections of 100 (+10) questions each with time allocation of 120 minutes for each part. One scheduled break between the two sections is allowed.**

What is a test blueprint, and what is its purpose?

A test blueprint is a document that reflects the content of the SDLE. The blueprint is the plan used for “building” the SDLE. The blueprint was established by the SDLE steering committee. The purpose of the blueprint is to ensure including questions related to what you are expected to know before entry into clinical practice.

This outline provides a common organization of SDLE content. SDLE exam council continually reviews the outline to ensure content is relevant to the practice of dentistry. As practice guidelines evolve or are introduced, the content on SDLE is reviewed and modified as needed.

The examination will emphasize certain parts of the outline, and no single examination will include questions on all aspects. Questions may include content that is not included in this outline.



Note : (See Appendix A: for Important exam Instructions).

Application and Eligibility

How to apply for the SDLE?

To apply for the SDLE, you must have a recognized primary degree (BDS or equivalent) from an accredited health science program or commenced training in the internship year or student who is one year away from graduation.

Applying for the SDLE

When applying for the examination, you must apply through the e-application and include the required attachments. Once your application is processed, a scheduling permit with your eligibility period will be issued. You will receive an email with instructions for accessing your permit.

After obtaining the scheduling permit, you may visit the specified website to schedule a test date. Scheduling may not be available more than three months in advance.



Important Notes:

- Scheduling the allowed test attempts during the year is the sole responsibility of the candidate.
- SCFHS is not responsible for delaying the test attempts till the end of the year and not finding a test spot.
- Candidates can test in any SCFHS approved Prometric testing center locally and internationally as locations appear upon scheduling.
- A candidate is not allowed to sit for the test twice in the same testing window. In this instance, the result of the first dated test will be announced and the second will be considered an attempt and result invalid.
- All candidates must review the applicant guide before taking the test.

Exam Preparation Resources:

SDLE Mock Practice Examination:

To experience a test that resembles the actual test blueprint and sampled from the SDLE item bank, you can apply for SDLE mock test. Please visit the SCFHS website for more information.

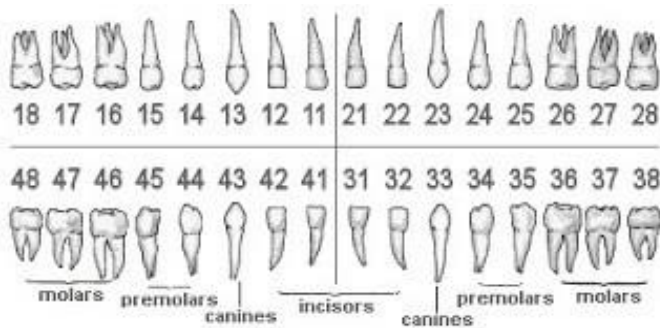


Note: See Appendix B: for suggested reference)

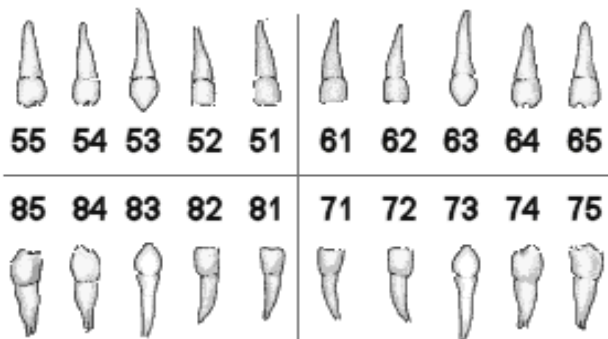
FDI Numbering System:

The FDI (Fédération dentaire internationale) two-digit tooth numbering system is used in SDLE.

The FDI Dental Numbering System for Permanent Teeth:



The FDI Dental Numbering System for Primary Teeth:



Exam Day

Instructions for examination day:

- You will be continuously monitored by video, physical walk-throughs and the observation window during your test. All testing sessions are video and audio recorded (if applicable).
- You must bring valid (unexpired) and acceptable ID(s) (Saudi ID, Resident ID, or Passport) and exam schedule printed out to the examination hall, and present it at the registration desk.
- Any clothing or jewelry items allowed to be worn in the test room must remain on your person at all times. Removed clothing or jewelry items must be stored in your locker.

- You may not leave the examination hall before thirty minutes have elapsed and always accompanied by an invigilator if you wish to return.
- You must conduct yourself in a civil manner at all times when on the premises of the testing center. Exhibiting abusive behavior towards the Test Center Administrator (TCA), or any other staff member of the testcenter, may result in legal prosecution.
- To protect the privacy of all testers, the TCA can neither confirm nor deny if any particular individual is present or scheduled at the test center.
- Repeated or lengthy departures from the test room for unscheduled breaks will be reported by the TCA.
- You must return all materials issued to you by the TCA at the end of your test.
- You are required to sign out on the test center roster each time you leave the test room. You must also sign back in and show your ID to the TCA in order to be re-admitted to the test room.
- Persons not scheduled to take a test are not permitted to wait in the test center.
- If you arrive 30 minutes after the scheduled time, you will not be allowed to enter the test hallway, and the session will be considered “No Show”.



Prohibitions

Before the examination:

- Seeking, providing, and/or obtaining unauthorized access to examination materials, providing false information or making false statements on or in connection with application forms, scheduling permits, or other exam-related documents.
- Applying for an examination for which you are not eligible.
- Communicating or attempting to communicate about specific test items, cases, answers, and/or exam results with an examiner, potential examiner, or formal or informal test developers at any time before, during, or after an examination.

During the examination:

- Taking an examination for which you are not eligible.
- Taking an examination for someone or engaging someone to take an examination for you giving, receiving, or obtaining unauthorized assistance during the examination or attempting to do so.
- Making notes of any kind while in the secure areas of the test center, except on the writing materials provided at the test center for this purpose.
- Failing to adhere to any exam policy, procedure, or rule, including instructions of TCA.
- Verbal or physical harassment of test center staff or other examination staff, or other disruptive or unprofessional behavior during the registration, scheduling, or examination process.
- Possessing any unauthorized materials, including photographic equipment, communication or recording devices, and cell phones, in the secure testing areas.
- Any other electronic communication device, not herein mentioned, are prohibited in the examination hall irrespective if they are turned off, and no provision will be made to store them.
- Communicating or attempting to communicate about specific test items, cases, and/or answers with another examinee, or formal or informal test preparation group at any time before, during, or after an examination.

After the examination:

- Altering or misrepresenting examination scores.
- Any reproduction by any means, including, but not limited to, reconstruction through memorization, and/or dissemination of copyrighted examination materials by any means, including the internet.
- Communicating or attempting to communicate about specific test items, cases, and/or answers with another examinee, potential examinee, or formal or informal test preparation group at any time before, during, or after an examination.
- Failure to cooperate fully in any investigation of a violation of the SCFHS rules.

Frequently Asked Questions

How many times can I retake the SDLE?

- All eligible candidates may take SDLE up to four times a year starting from the first attempt to obtain a pass score.
- SCFHS classification and registration rules and regulations apply to candidates who fail the SDLE for two years after graduation date.
- After obtaining a pass score in the SDLE each candidate is eligible for two further attempts to improve their mark for the purpose of attaining a better opportunity for residency selection.
- After one calendar year of the second attempt mentioned above each candidate is eligible for one further attempt annually to improve their mark for the purpose of attaining a better score for residency selection.

How is the examination conducted?

SDLE is conducted using computer based testing with three sets. The testing period is 6 hours. After finishing the first set of 100 items and second set of 100 items scheduled breaks are allowed with a total of 45 minutes can be taken. Upon leaving the testing area candidates are required to sign-out and when entering again sign-in and go through security check.

How are SDLE results announced?

SDLE contains 300 multiple-choice questions with the possibility of including up to 20 unscored items. Results are not provided instantly. During the window closing period, psychometric analysis is conducted and results are announced within 2-6 weeks of the end of a test window. Two reports will be provided to every candidate (if possible), statement of results and a feedback report on performance in comparison to other test-takers.

How is the SDLE pass score established?

The SCFHS brings together a panel of Saudi dentists to define an acceptable level of performance and establish the pass score for the SDLE through a standard setting exercise. The panel then recommends its pass score to the Central Assessment Committee (CAC) for approval.

SCFHS conducted a rigorous standard setting exercise with a diverse panel. Following the standard setting exercise, the panel recommended a pass score of 542 on the reporting scale of 200-800. This pass score was reviewed and approved by the CAC.

What to Expect on Test Day?

- All test centers follow the same procedures and rules, which you should get familiar with before test day.
- Testing sessions for the Saudi Licensing Examinations are monitored by test center administrators (TCA), in person and through audio and visual recording. Staff are required to report any violations of assessment bylaws or test center rules.
- You must follow instructions from TCA throughout the examinations; failure to do so may result in a finding of irregular behavior.
- TCA are not authorized to answer questions regarding registration, examination content or format, testing software, scoring, or retesting.

Registration on Test Day

- If you're late more than 30 minutes from the time noted on your admission ticket or absent on test day, you will not be allowed to sit for the test and this will be considered an attempt unless an acceptable reason with required documentation is presented and accepted by the committee supervising the test as per the assessment rules and regulations.
- When you arrive at the test center, you must present your scheduling permit and the required identification.
- Acceptable forms of unexpired identification include:
 - Passport
 - National/Residence Identity Card (KSA Only)
- Your name, as it appears on your scheduling permit, must match the name on your form(s) of identification exactly.
- If you do not bring your scheduling permit on paper or electronically (e.g., via smartphone) and acceptable identification, you will not be admitted to the test and will be required to pay a fee to reschedule your test. Your rescheduled test date(s) must fall within your eligibility period.
- During check-in, test center staff will conduct the appropriate security check before entering the testing room to confirm that you have no prohibited items.
- You will be asked to repeat this process each time you return to the testing room after a break. Additionally, your photo ID and fingerprint may be scanned electronically and you must sign the test center log.
- TCA will escort you to your assigned testing station and provide brief instructions on use of the computer equipment. A brief tutorial is available before each examination.

- Your test session is scheduled for a fixed amount of time and the computer keeps track of the time allocated for each block and for breaks.
- Once you begin a testing block, the block time continues to run even if you leave the testing room (e.g., for a personal emergency).
- If you leave during the block without permission from test proctor, the test center will file a report of the incident. Additionally, the unauthorized break screen, described in the examination tutorial, will appear on the monitor after a defined period of inactivity.
- Each time you leave the testing room, you are required to sign out and sign in when you return. You must present your identification each time you sign in.

Breaks between Test Blocks

- Each time you leave the testing room, you are required to sign out and sign in when you return. You must present your identification each time you sign in.
- If you take too much break time and exceed the allocated break time, next test block will start automatically and the excess time will be deducted from your testing time.
- Ensure you arrive 10-15 minutes before the start of your next block to allow time for sign in as the sign process may take more around 15 minutes based on testing capacity.

Test	# of Test Block(s)	Duration of Each Block	Break Time (Pool)
SDLE	3	120 min	45 minutes total

End of Test

- The test session ends when you have started and exited all blocks or the total test time expires. You will receive a notice during checkout that you have appeared for the test on the screen.
- After you start taking an examination, you cannot cancel or reschedule that examination. If you experience a computer issue during the test, notify test center staff immediately. The testing software is designed to restart the test at the point that it was interrupted.
- You will maintain the confidentiality of the materials, including, but not limited to, the multiple-choice items. You will not reproduce or attempt to reproduce examination materials through recording, memorization, or by any other means.
- You will not provide information relating to examination content to anyone who may be

taking or preparing others to take the examination. This includes postings regarding examination content and/or answers on the Internet.

- Test results will be available online 2-6 weeks after the testing window you are currently taking the test on.
- Please visit the SCFHS website for more information.

Appendix B: Saudi Dental Licensure Examination Blueprint

Section	Weight%
Oral Medicine/ Oral Surgery	15%
Periodontics	18%
Orthodontics/Pediatric Dentistry	10%
Restorative Dentistry	40 %
Endodontics	17%
Total	100%

Notes:

- Common to all will be the following: Local Anesthesia; Professionalism and Bioethics; Infection control and patient safety.
- Section Domains are Diagnosis, Clinical Management, Dental Material & Instruments, and Adverse Effect/ Complication.
- Restorative Dentistry: Comprises Prosthodontics; Operative dentistry.
- Blueprint distributions of the examination may differ up to +/-5% in each category
- See the SCFHS website for the most up-to-date information.



SDLE Content Outline

This outline provides a common organization of SDLE content. SDLE supervisory committee continually reviews the outline to ensure content is relevant to the practice of dentistry. As practice guidelines evolve or are introduced, the content on SDLE is reviewed and modified as needed.

The examination will emphasize certain parts of the outline, and no single examination will include questions on all aspects. Questions may include content that is not included in this outline.

Section	Content Outline
Endodontics	Endodontic Emergencies
	Endodontic Instruments
	Endodontic Treatment Planning
	Endodontics Mishaps
	Endo-Perio Lesions
	Pulpal & Periapical Pathosis
	Root Canal Anatomy
	Trauma to Permanent Teeth
	Vertical Root Fracture
Oral Medicine/Oral Surgery	Abnormalities of teeth
	Allergies and immunologic diseases
	Biopsy techniques
	Bone pathology
	Cardiovascular disease
	Developmental defects of the oral
	Endocrine/metabolic disease
	Exodontia/LA/impacted teeth
	Facial pain and neuromuscular diseases
	Gastrointestinal/liver disease
	Genitourinary disease
	Hematologic and oncologic disease
	Immunologic disease
	Microbiological infections
	MRONJ
	Mucosal lesions and tumors
	Neurologic, behavioural and psychiatric disorders
Odontogenic cysts and tumors	

	Odontogenic infections
	Oral manifestations of systemic diseases
	Pathology
	Physical and chemical injuries
	Principles of surgery
	Pulmonary disease
	Salivary gland pathology
	Trauma
	Dentofacial deformities
Orthodontics/Pediatric Dentistry	Adult Orthodontics
	Behaviour Guidance
	Biology of tooth movement
	Canines
	Cephalometric analysis
	Child Abuse and Neglect
	Class I
	Class II
	Class III
	Classification of malocclusion
	Dental Caries & Prevention
	Dentoalveolar Traumatology
	Development & Teeth Morphology
	Etiology of malocclusion
	Examination of the Child
	Fixed orthodontic appliances
	Interceptive treatment
	Occlusion & Space Management
	Orthodontic diagnosis
	Orthodontic treatment planning
	Pain Management
	Pediatric Oral Surgery
	Pulp Therapy
Restorative Dentistry	
Skeletal problems	
Periodontics	Diagnosis & Classification of Periodontal Diseases



	Etiology and Risk Factors Analysis
	Applied Pathology of Periodontal Diseases
	Applied Periodontal Anatomy and Histology
	Periodontal Examination
	Nonsurgical Therapy (Cause-Related Therapy)
	Basic Implant Dentistry and Peri-Implant Diseases
	Surgical Therapy
	Multidisciplinary Care & Referral
	Iatrogenic Factors
Restorative Dentistry	Basic Implantology
	Complete Removable Prosthodontics
	Dental Anatomy and Occlusion
	Fixed Prosthodontics
	Operative Dentistry
	Removable Partial Prosthodontics



Appendix C: Suggested Saudi Dental Licensure Examination References

Section	Textbooks
Oral Medicine/ Oral Surgery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brad W. Neville, Douglas D. Damm, Carl M. Allen and Angela C. Chi, . Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, 4th ed. • Stuart C. White and Michael J. Pharoah, . Oral Radiology: Principles and Interpretation, 7th ed. • James W. Little, Nelson L. Rhodus and Craig S. Miller/ Elsevier Health Science div., Little and Falace's Dental Management of the Medically Compromised Patient, 9th ed. • James R. Hupp, Myron R. Tucker and Edward Ellis III, . Contemporary Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, 6th ed.
Periodontics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niklaus P. Lang, Jan Lindhe., Clinical Periodontology and Implant Dentistry, 6th ed. • Michael Newman, Henry Takei, Perry Klokkevold, Fermin Carranza, . Carranza's Clinical Periodontology, the latest edition. • Louis F. Rose., Periodontics : Medicine, Surgery and Implants, the latest edition.
Orthodontics/ Pediatric Dentistry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeffrey A. Dean,. McDonald and Avery's Dentistry for the Child and Adolescent, 10th ed. • Paul S. Casamassimo, Henry W. Fields, Dennis J. McTigueArthur and Arthur Nowak , . Pediatric Dentistry: Infancy through Adolescence 5th ed. • Laura Mitchell, . An Introduction to Orthodontics, 4th ed. • William R. Proffit, Henry W. Fields, Jr., David M. Sarver, . Contemporary Orthodontics, 5th ed.
Restorative Dentistry (Prosthodontics, Operative Dentistry and Basic Implantology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theodore Robertson, .Sturdevant's Art and Science of Operative Dentistry, 5th ed. • Alan B Carry and David T Brown,. McCracken's Removable Partial Prosthodontics, 12th ed. • Stephen F. Rosenstiel, Martin F. Land and Junhei Fujimoto ., Contemporary Fixed Prosthodontics, 4th ed. • Arthur O. Rahn, John R. Ivanhoe and Kevin D. Plummer , . Textbook of Complete Dentures, 6th ed.
Endodontics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stephen Cohen and Kenneth Hargreaves / Mosby, . Pathways of the Pulp, 11th ed. • Mahmoud Torabinejad, Ashraf F. Fouad and Richard E. Walton., Endodontics Principles and Practice, 5th ed.
Common to all sections (Local Anesthesia; Professionalism and Bioethics; Infection control and patient safety.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stanley F. Malamed PUBLISHER Elsevier Health Sciences, . Handbook of Local Anesthesia 6th edition. • CDC, Center for Disease Control (CDC) U.S.A., Basic Guide to Infection Prevention and Control in Dentistry. 2009, • Caroline L. Pankhurst and Wilson A. Coulter, Wiley-Blackwell ., Guidelines for infection control in dental healthcare settings-2003. • Al kaabba F. Abdulaziz , Hussein MA Ghaiath, and Kasule H. Omar SCFHS-2015,. Professionalism and Ethics, Handbook for Residents, Practical guide. • Stanley F. Malamed., Handbook of Local Anesthesia, the latest edition.



Note: This list is intended for use as a study aid only. SCFHS does not intend the list to imply endorsement of these specific references, nor are the exam questions necessarily taken from these sources.

Efficiently healthy society

