

Test Specifications

The ABO Written Examination is based on criterion-referenced testing, which is the concept that examinees should be measured against the skill and knowledge represented by each test item. The difficulty of each item for the minimally-competent examinee is the basis for setting the Criterion Standard, one that is represented as an absolute standard on a Benchmark Scale. The Benchmark Scale and Criterion Standard for The American Board of Orthodontics Written Examination were first established in 2003 and updated every five years.

The ABO Written Examination consists of 240 multiple-choice questions. The following is a breakdown of the percentage of questions to total exam for each topic:

MODULE 1 - Basic and Applied Biomedical Sciences. Topics include:

Anatomical Sciences / Anatomical Landmarks of the Skull	10%
Biochemistry / Physiology / Bone Biology and Histology	5%
Developmental Anatomy / Developmental Disturbances / Genetic Disorders	7%
Growth and Development	7%
Microbiology / Immunology / Infection Control / Pathology	4%

MODULE 2 - Clinical Sciences "A". Topics include:

Occlusion	5%
Temporomandibular Disorders	4%
Radiography / Photography	4%
Cephalometrics / Computer Techniques / Anatomical Landmarks of the Lateral and Frontal Cephalogram	8%
Topics below are combined in this percentage	5%
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation / Risk Management / Practice Management / Ethics	
Statistics / Research Design / Pharmacology / Pain and Anxiety Control	
Preventive Dentistry / Oral Hygiene / Behavioral Science / Patient Management	
Speech Pathology / Orthodontic History	

MODULE 3 - Clinical Sciences "B". Topics include:

Orthodontic Materials / Physical Principles / Orthodontic Techniques and Appliances	6%
Orthopedics / Biomechanics	6%
Orthodontic Diagnosis / Case Analysis / Treatment Planning	4%
Orthodontics / Oral Surgery / Periodontics / Endodontics	4%
Orthodontics / Restorative Dentistry / Implantology	4%

MODULE 4

Patient Analysis	17%
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