

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	31%
Biochemistry / Physiology / Bone Biology and Histology	15%
Developmental Anatomy / Developmental Disturbances / Genetic Disorders	21%
Growth and Development	21%
Microbiology / Immunology / Infection Control / Pathology	12%

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

Occlusion	19%
Temporomandibular Disorders	15%
Radiography / Photography	15%
Cephalometrics / Computer Techniques / Anatomical Landmarks of the Lateral and Frontal Cephalogram	31%
Applied topics:	
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation / Risk Management / Practice Management / Ethics	5%
Statistics / Research Design / Pharmacology / Pain and Anxiety Control	5%
Preventive Dentistry / Oral Hygiene / Behavioral Science / Patient Management	5%
Speech Pathology / Orthodontic History	5%

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

Orthodontic Materials / Physical Principles / Orthodontic Techniques and Appliances	25%
Orthopedics / Biomechanics	25%
Orthodontic Diagnosis / Case Analysis / Treatment Planning	16%
Orthodontics / Oral Surgery / Periodontics / Endodontics	17%
Orthodontics / Restorative Dentistry / Implantology	17%

MODULE 4

Clinical Case Analysis	100%
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