

Examination Guidelines for the Certification Process

The American Board of Prosthodontics

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This document represents the Guidelines as of the above listed dates, but is subject to change at the discretion of the American Board of Prosthodontics. The most current Guidelines are available on the American Board of Prosthodontics website (www.abpros.org). Interested parties are strongly encouraged to visit this online resource.

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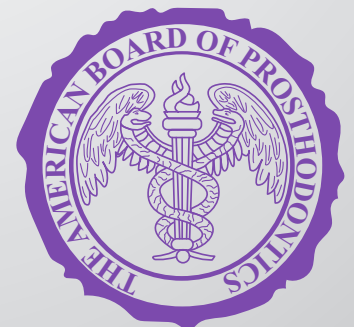


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1. The American Board of Prosthodontics

1.1 MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the American Board of Prosthodontics (ABP) is to certify and recertify educationally qualified individuals who demonstrate in-depth knowledge and expertise in prosthodontics.

The vision of the ABP is for all educationally qualified prosthodontists to be board certified.

The ABP recognizes its responsibility to the profession and to the public, and accepts this responsibility through the administration of examinations designed to identify individuals with the knowledge, skills, and attributes deemed important to those who will be called Diplomates of the ABP.

1.2 GENERAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The ABP was organized by the Academy of Denture Prosthetics, at the request of the American Dental Association, to:

- Advance the science and art of prosthodontics by encouraging its study and improving its practice.
- Determine the eligibility of candidates within the regulations for qualification for examination.

- Conduct examinations to determine the proficiency of applicants for certification as Diplomates.
- Grant and issue Diplomate certificates to successful candidates.
- Maintain a roster of Diplomates for the general information of the public, the dental and medical professions, dental schools, and health agencies.

1.3 SPECIFIC GOALS OF THE ABP

1. Ensure that candidates are assessed based on their clinically relevant knowledge and judgment in the field of prosthodontics, and award certificates to those individuals who successfully meet the established criteria.
2. Assure that Diplomates maintain continued proficiency in prosthodontics.
3. Provide the public and profession with information regarding individuals who are board certified.
4. Encourage the specialty of prosthodontics to advance itself through board certification.

1.4 IMPORTANCE OF BOARD CERTIFICATION

Board certification distinguishes practitioners who have proven their specialty-level competence by successfully completing a rigorous evaluation process. This certification allows the public to recognize clinicians who have not only completed the certification

process but have also demonstrated the clinically applicable knowledge and judgment to warrant such recognition. This acknowledgment highlights the unique capabilities of practicing prosthodontists, ensuring the public can trust in their expertise.

By recognizing clinicians who meet the standards for board certification, the ABP plays a vital role in defining the specialty of prosthodontics. This specialty is characterized by its scope of practice, educational requirements, and the board-certified clinicians who uphold these standards. The framework for prosthodontics is established by several authoritative bodies, including the National Commission on Recognition of Dental Specialties and Certifying Boards, the American College of Prosthodontists' Parameters of Care, and the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) Standards for Advanced Dental Education Programs in Prosthodontics. Additionally, the ABP Examination Guidelines for the Certification Process outline the sequence leading to board certification, culminating in the designation of Diplomates. The efforts of the ABP are critical to the advancement of prosthodontics and its recognition as a dental specialty.

1.5 DEFINITIONS

Prosthodontics

Prosthodontics is the dental specialty pertaining to the diagnosis, treatment planning, rehabilitation and maintenance of the oral function, comfort, appearance and health of patients with clinical conditions associated with missing or deficient teeth and/or maxillofacial tissues using biocompatible substitutes.

Maxillofacial Prosthetics

Maxillofacial Prosthetics is the branch of prosthodontics concerned with the restoration and/or replacement of the stomatognathic and craniofacial structures with prostheses that may or may not be removed on a regular or elective basis.

ABP Qualifying Examination

The ABP Qualifying Examination (QE) is a criterion-referenced written assessment developed through the collaborative efforts of ABP directors and psychometric experts. This computer-based exam is administered at regional testing centers and is designed to evaluate the knowledge of qualified candidates in the core principles of prosthodontics.

The test score reflects a candidate's performance based on their understanding of the exam content, rather than comparing their results to those of other candidates. Furthermore, the examination content adheres to the standards set by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) for Advanced Dental Education Programs in Prosthodontics, ensuring that it is both relevant and rigorous.

ABP Oral Certifying Examination

The ABP Oral Certifying Examination (OCE) is an oral-based assessment designed to evaluate a candidate's clinically relevant knowledge and judgment in prosthodontics. This examination comprises open-ended questions that thoroughly assess the candidate's expertise and clinical reasoning. To be eligible for the OCE, candidates must first successfully complete the Qualifying Examination (QE), which establishes a foundational level of competence. Additionally, candidates must have completed formal training in prosthodontics before they can attempt the OCE, ensuring they are well-prepared for this rigorous assessment.

Candidacy Designations

For the purposes of the ABP and these Guidelines, the following designations are used, in part, to determine candidate status in the certification process:

1. Postgraduate Student/Resident

An individual in an advanced dental education program in prosthodontics accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation in the United States or Canada. Beginning in the third year of formal prosthodontic training, this individual may challenge the Qualifying Examination.

2. Prosthodontist

A graduate of an advanced dental education program in prosthodontics accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) or the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC). A prosthodontist is *educationally qualified* and may challenge the Qualifying Examination after establishing candidacy. Prosthodontists may challenge the Oral Certifying Examination after successful completion of the Qualifying Examination.

3. Candidate

A postgraduate student/resident or prosthodontist who is actively pursuing certification by the ABP. Prior to examination, all candidates must submit an online completed application at www.abpros.org and be approved by the ABP. Candidates have ten (10) years from the date of initial application approval to complete the certification process. This period of examination candidacy may be extended upon submission of a new application at www.abpros.org, paying the associated fees, and approval by the ABP.

4. Diplomate of the ABP

A prosthodontist who has successfully completed the certification process and who maintains good standing with ABP policies and procedures.

1.6 CERTIFICATION FOR THE SPECIALTY OF PROSTHODONTICS

By the authority of the American Dental Association and the Council on Dental Education, the ABP is empowered to issue certification in the specialty of prosthodontics. Successful certification attests to a dentist's knowledge, ability, and proficiency in the specialty of prosthodontics.

Individuals who meet qualifications set forth in this document may become a candidate for certification by making a formal application to the ABP. The ABP does not and shall not discriminate based on race, color, religion (creed), sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability, marital status, family/parental status, income status, military/veteran status, political beliefs, or any other characteristic prohibited by law in any of its activities or operations.

2. Certification & Recertification Processes

2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND INQUIRIES

Comprehensive information about the examination process is available below, covering certification pathways, candidate qualifications, application procedures, fees, contact updates, reexamination, the appeals process, certificate revocation, annual fees, and requirements for continued proficiency or recertification. For any additional inquiries regarding the examination process and logistics not addressed in these guidelines, contact the ABP Chief Professional Officer at exams@abpros.org.

2.2 PATHWAYS TO CERTIFICATION AND STIPULATIONS

To achieve board certification, candidates must successfully complete the following examinations:

- Qualifying Examination (QE)
- Oral Certifying Examination (OCE)

The successful completion of the ABP certification examination process is governed by the following requirements and stipulations:

- **Official Language:** English is the designated language for all aspects of the ABP certification process.
- **Candidacy Establishment:** Candidates establish their eligibility for examination at the time of their application through the official website: www.abpros.org.
- **Qualifying Examination Eligibility:** Postgraduate students or residents may challenge the Qualifying Examination starting in their third year of formal prosthodontic training.
- **Oral Certifying Examination Eligibility:** Candidates must successfully pass the Qualifying Examination and complete their formal training in prosthodontics before they may challenge the Oral Certifying Examination.
- **Reexamination Policy:** If a candidate does not pass either the Qualifying Examination or the Oral Certifying Examination, they may apply for reexamination within ten (10) years of their initial candidacy approval.
- **Prohibition on Recording Devices:** The use of any recording devices, including cellular phones and other instruments capable of recording or transmitting information, is strictly prohibited during examinations. Additionally, candidates must surrender any handwritten notes made during the examination to the examiners at the conclusion of each session. Failure to comply with these regulations, including the use of unauthorized recording devices or retaining handwritten notes, will result in disqualification from the examination and loss of all future opportunities to sit for the ABP examinations.
- **Examination Security:** Security measures that align with industry standards are in place and actively monitored before,

during, and after all examinations to ensure compliance and integrity throughout the examination process.

By adhering to these guidelines, candidates can ensure a smooth and successful examination experience.

2.3 CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS FOR EXAMINATION

To be eligible for the certification examination by the ABP, a candidate must meet the following criteria:

- **Qualifications:** The candidate must be either a licensed prosthodontist or a third-year prosthodontic student or resident engaged in formal training. Candidates are required to provide proof of completing or anticipating the completion of an advanced dental education program in prosthodontics. This program must be accredited by either the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) or the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC).
 - **Postgraduate Students:** Those enrolled in an accredited postgraduate prosthodontics program will follow a structured curriculum that includes advanced courses and clinical training. This program culminates in the attainment of a master's or doctoral degree alongside a specialty certificate in prosthodontics.
 - **Residents:** Participants in an accredited graduate prosthodontics program will also engage in a planned sequence of advanced courses and clinical training, leading to the award of a specialty certificate in prosthodontics.
- **Application Requirements:** Candidates must submit a fully completed application form along with all necessary supplemental documentation as specified by the ABP.

Guidelines for Postgraduate Students/Residents Seeking Certification

- **Application Timeline:** Candidates may apply for candidacy during their third year of training.
 - Postgraduate students/residents may challenge the Qualifying Examination beginning in their third year of formal prosthodontic training.
 - Postgraduate students/residents must successfully pass the Qualifying Examination and complete their formal training in prosthodontics before they can challenge the Oral Certifying Examination.
- **Documentation Requirements:** As part of the online application, candidates must upload a letter from their Program Director confirming the following:
 - The candidate is currently in their third year of training.
 - The candidate is in good academic standing.
 - The expected graduation date for the candidate.
- **Application Fees:** Candidates must submit the appropriate fees with their online applications as outlined below:
 - Application for Board Candidacy — \$250
 - Qualifying Examination — \$600

Guidelines for Prosthodontists Seeking Certification

- **Establishing Candidacy:** Candidates may establish their candidacy by submitting a formal application after completing an accredited advanced dental education program in prosthodontics.
- **Examination Eligibility:** Once candidacy is established, candidates are eligible to take the Qualifying Examination. Candidates may challenge the Oral Certifying Examination only after successful completion of the Qualifying Examination.

- **Documentation Requirements:** As part of the online application, candidates must upload a notarized copy of their prosthodontics certificate or a Certified Electronic Diploma or CeDiploma from their institution. All electronic diplomas must be able to be verified directly from the issuing institution and not from a third party.
- **Application Fees:** Candidates must submit the appropriate fees with their online applications as outlined below:
 - Application for Board Candidacy — \$250
 - Qualifying Examination — \$600
 - Oral Certifying Examination — \$1,800

2.4 APPLICATION PROCEDURES

All applications and required documentation must be submitted online at www.abpros.org. For any questions about the application process that are not addressed in these guidelines, contact our Chief Professional Officer at exams@abpros.org. Incomplete online forms or improperly notarized documents will not be accepted by the ABP. If a candidate needs to leave any item on the application form blank or answered incompletely, a detailed explanation for this omission must accompany the application.

Registration Deadlines:

- The registration deadline for the Qualifying Examination is January 31 each year.
- The registration deadline for the Oral Certifying Examination is 60 days prior to the scheduled examination date.
- To register for an examination, candidates must first complete the candidacy application process, including the upload of all required documents, and have their candidacy confirmed.

2.5 APPLICATION, REAPPLICATION AND EXAMINATION FEES

There are application fees for candidacy and separate fees for examination/reexamination. The appropriate total fee must accompany all applications. The fee schedule is as follows:

- Application for Board Candidacy — \$250
- Application for Extension of Board Candidacy — \$250
- Qualifying Examination or Reexamination — \$600
- Oral Certifying Examination or Reexamination — \$1,800

All applicable fees must accompany applications for examinations or reexaminations at the time of submission. Applications should be submitted online at www.abpros.org. Payment must be made in United States dollars using a credit card, and all requested credit card information should be provided on the application form.

Important Considerations:

- Candidates who withdraw from scheduled examinations less than 60 days before the examination date will forfeit all fees paid.
- If a candidate's board candidacy expires, they must submit an online Application for Extension of Board Candidacy at www.abpros.org and pay the required fee of \$250.
- Candidates who are unsuccessful on the Qualifying Examination or the Oral Certifying Examination may reapply for the examination within ten (10) consecutive years of their initial board candidacy approval. This reapplication must include the appropriate fee.

2.6 CHANGE OF LOCATION OR CONTACT INFORMATION

The ABP understands that postgraduate students and residents may change their contact information upon graduation due to relocation. Similarly, private practitioners, military personnel, and academicians may also move from one location to another. Once a candidate's application for candidacy has been completed and accepted by the ABP, it is the candidate's responsibility to update their personal contact information through the ABP website at www.abpros.org. It is important to note that candidates should never submit a new, separate application to continue the examination process. All updates to contact information should be made directly on the ABP website to ensure accurate and timely communication.

2.7 REEXAMINATION

If a candidate is unsuccessful on either the Qualifying Examination or the Oral Certifying Examination, reexamination is possible. All examination retakes require online registration for the specific examination of interest and online payment of appropriate fees.

2.8 APPEALS PROCESS

The ABP has a formal appeals process for concerns related to administration or examination scoring only. There are no appeals process for concerns related to examination execution or candidate performance. Details related to appeals are available from the ABP Chief Professional Officer (exams@abpros.org) upon request.

2.9 REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATE

The ABP maintains the power, jurisdiction, and right to determine whether available evidence is sufficient to constitute grounds for suspension or revocation of certification issued by the ABP.

2.10 ANNUAL FEE

Diplomates are required to maintain their membership with the ABP by paying an annual fee. Membership fees should be paid online at www.abpros.org by December 31 for the following year. Failure to pay dues on time will result in penalties. If both dues and penalties remain unpaid, members will lose access to their membership login, be removed from the directory, and forfeit their eligibility for recertification or verification, as well as their Diplomate status. To ensure continued membership and benefits, Diplomates are encouraged to make timely payments and stay informed about their membership status.

2.11 CONTINUED PROFICIENCY OR RECERTIFICATION

To maintain Diplomate status, periodic recertification is required. Certificates of Diplomate status are valid for a period of eight (8) years. All active Diplomates must participate in a continued proficiency process, which includes completing continuing education requirements and passing a recertification examination. The following outlines the continued proficiency process that all Diplomates are required to complete to sustain their status.

Continuing Education

All Diplomates, except for those holding Life Diplomate status, are required to complete a minimum of 240 continuing education hours over an eight (8) year period. Diplomates may accumulate a maximum of 60 hours per year to meet this requirement. Continuing education hours can be earned through the following activities:

- **Attendance at Scientific Sessions:** Diplomates can earn 6 hours per day for attending scientific sessions sponsored by major prosthodontic organizations.
- **Other Courses and Conferences:** Attendance at relevant courses, conferences, or meetings related to prosthodontics, preferably those

with CERP approval, also counts toward continuing education hours.

- **Professional Presentations:** Diplomates may earn hours by presenting invited lectures or participating in study club activities that focus on prosthodontics.
- **Publication of Articles:** Publication of articles in peer-reviewed professional journals grants 12 hours per article; however, abstract publications will not be accepted for continuing education credit.
- **Book Chapter Publication:** Diplomates can earn 6 hours for each prosthodontic book chapter published.*

** A maximum of ninety-six (96) hours in an eight (8) year period may be accrued from article and chapter publications, professional presentations, and study club activities.*

Continuing education activities must be reported on the ABP online portal at www.abpros.org. Diplomates are responsible for keeping updated documentation of their continuing education activities. To ensure accuracy in reporting, the ABP will randomly select Diplomates for audits, requiring them to provide documentation supporting their reported continuing education activities.

Recertification Examination

To maintain active status, Diplomates must successfully complete a recertification examination focused on contemporary prosthodontics. This examination must be taken and passed within each eight (8) year recertification period, requiring a minimum score of 70% to pass. The recertification examination is administered online at <https://abp.roc-p.com> and incurs a fee of \$350 each time it is attempted.

Examination Details:

- Each exam comprises 25 multiple-choice questions, each accompanied by relevant literature citations. Candidates must review these citations to accurately answer the questions.

- Upon submission of the examination, results will be immediately provided to the Diplomate.
- Diplomates may retake the examination as many times as necessary, provided they pay the applicable fee each time, until they achieve a passing score. It is crucial for Diplomates to complete the examination before their current certification expires to maintain their Diplomate status. Each Diplomate is responsible for ensuring that they meet the recertification requirements within the designated timeframe.

Important Note: The ABP expects all Diplomates to uphold the confidentiality of the recertification process. While the examination is open book, it is imperative that each Diplomate completes the exam independently, using only the provided literature citations for assistance. As representatives of the prosthodontics specialty, Diplomates are expected to adhere to the highest ethical standards and avoid any actions that may compromise the integrity of the recertification examination.

Summary

To maintain Active Diplomate status, all Diplomates must fulfill the following requirements within each eight (8) year certification period:

- **Continuing Education:** Accumulate and maintain documentation of at least 240 hours of continuing education. These records should be readily available for review by the Board upon request. Diplomates are responsible for entering their continuing education hours into the ABP online portal.
- **Recertification Examination:** Successfully complete one (1) recertification examination, achieving a score of 70% or higher.
- **Good Standing:** Maintain good standing with the Board throughout the certification period.

3. Qualifying Examination

3.1 QUALIFYING EXAMINATION GENERAL INFORMATION

The ABP Qualifying Examination (QE) is a criterion-referenced written assessment developed through the collaborative efforts of ABP directors and psychometric experts. This computer-based exam is administered at regional testing centers and is designed to evaluate the knowledge of qualified candidates in the core principles of prosthodontics.

The test score reflects a candidate's performance based on their understanding of the exam content, rather than comparing their results to those of other candidates. Furthermore, the examination content adheres to the standards set by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) for Advanced Dental Education Programs in Prosthodontics, ensuring that it is both relevant and rigorous.

This computer-based examination is available annually for one week at various regional testing centers across the United States and internationally. Information on the computer-based testing process can be found at www.datarecognitioncorp.com.

- Frequently asked questions about computer-based testing are available at <https://drccertificate.wpengine.com/faqs/>

- A sample examination demonstrating computer examination processes and test item formatting is available at <https://wsr.pearsonvue.com/athena/athena.asp>.

The content of the examination reflects the broad scope and scientific basis for prosthodontics. Examination to the broad scope and scientific basis of prosthodontics is the responsibility of the ABP Board of Directors. The certification examination reflects, but is not limited to, the Commission of Dental Accreditation (CODA) Standards for Advanced Dental Education Programs in Prosthodontics. Current standards may be found at <https://coda.ada.org/standards>. In addition to these areas, questions from current professional literature in prosthodontics and related clinical, laboratory and basic sciences contribute to the ABP test item database.

Candidates are provided four (4) hours to complete the Qualifying Examination, which consists of two hundred (200) multiple-choice questions that may include images, diagrams, or short videos appearing with the questions.

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4. Oral Certifying Examination

4.1 ORAL CERTIFYING EXAMINATION GENERAL INFORMATION

The ABP Oral Certifying Examination (OCE) is an oral-based assessment designed to evaluate a candidate's clinically relevant knowledge and judgment in prosthodontics. This examination comprises open-ended questions that thoroughly assess the candidate's expertise and clinical reasoning. To be eligible for the OCE, candidates must first successfully complete the Qualifying Examination (QE), which establishes a foundational level of competence. Those who pass the QE are better prepared for the OCE, as it requires a deeper understanding of prosthodontics. Additionally, candidates must have completed formal training in prosthodontics before they can attempt the OCE, ensuring they are well-prepared for this rigorous assessment.

The OCE is conducted over three days, with each day dedicated to a major area of prosthodontics. On Day 1, candidates will be assessed on Fixed Prosthodontics; Day 2 focuses on Removable Prosthodontics; and Day 3 is centered on Implant Prosthodontics. Candidates are required to challenge all three examinations consecutively, demonstrating their comprehensive knowledge at a single point in time. The evaluation yields a binary pass/fail decision, eliminating the possibility of a partial pass. Each exam is conducted by a pair of examiners, resulting in assessments by a total of six different evaluators. Throughout

the examination process, candidates engage with clinical vignettes that inspire questions and discussions, allowing for an in-depth evaluation of their clinical decision-making abilities.

The OCE specifically measures higher-level cognitive abilities such as problem-solving, decision-making, and the ability to analyze and evaluate clinical scenarios. Candidates are tested on their clinical judgment and their capacity to assess and treat cases while understanding potential outcomes. The clinical cases presented are representative of those typically encountered by practicing prosthodontic specialists and reflect contemporary practices within the field. The content is curated by the American Board of Prosthodontics to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of candidates' knowledge relevant to prosthodontics. This comprehensive structure ensures that candidates are thoroughly evaluated across a broad spectrum of knowledge essential for success in the field of prosthodontics.

The content of the examination is consistent with current Commission of Dental Accreditation (CODA) Standards for Advanced Dental Education Programs in Prosthodontics. Vignettes serve to evaluate depth and breadth of candidate knowledge in prosthodontics and related disciplines and sciences. For questions about the examination process or logistics that are not covered in these Guidelines, contact the ABP Chief Professional Officer at exams@abpros.org.

4.2 SCORING

The ABP partners with a professional testing organization to develop a structured examination format that ensures reliability, validity, and objectivity in identifying candidates who possess the necessary knowledge, expertise, and judgment to achieve Diplomate status. Scoring for the OCE is based on independent ratings provided by examiners, which allow for the calibration of all examination components, including candidate scaled scores and overall outcomes. Each clinical vignette is accompanied by specifically crafted questions, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation. As a result, the quality of the ratings by examiners is closely monitored to maintain their effectiveness and relevance within the scoring model, thereby upholding the integrity of the evaluation process and ensuring it accurately measures candidates' competencies in the field of prosthodontics.

4.3 PSYCHOMETRIC MODELING

The OCE will incorporate advanced psychometric modeling through Multi-Facet Rasch Modeling. This approach effectively addresses variations in rater severity and case difficulty across different exams and administrations, thereby enhancing the reliability of candidates' ability estimates. This ensures a more equitable assessment process, allowing for accurate and consistent evaluations of all candidates.

4.4 PATHWAYS TO CERTIFICATION

To strategically navigate the various ABP required examinations, candidates may consider one of the pathways below to successful board certification:

Prosthodontists *see timelines below

- Pathway #1: Section A + Section B (all 3 parts)
- Pathway #2: Section A + Section B (any 2 parts) + Section C
- Pathway #3: Section A + Section B (any 2 parts) + Section D
- Pathway #4: Section A + Oral Certifying Examination
- Pathway #5: Qualifying Examination + Oral Certifying Examination

Postgraduate Students/Residents (Class of 2027 and beyond)

- Qualifying Examination + Oral Certifying Examination

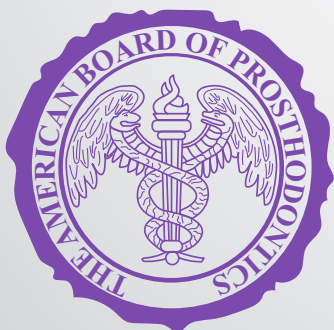
4.5 TIMELINES

- Last Section A offering in 2026 (exam window is March 30 to April 2)
- Last Section C offering in October 2026
- Last Section B and D offering in October 2028
- First Qualifying Examination offering in April 2027
- Limited release of the Oral Certifying Examination in April and October 2026
- Full release of the Oral Certifying Examination in April 2027

4.6 ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Prosthodontists who have not successfully completed the Section A examination by the end of 2026, will be directed to register for the Qualifying Examination in 2027.
- Prosthodontists who have successfully completed the Section A examination within the past 10 years but have not successfully completed at least one (1) Section B/C/D examination by the end of 2026, will not be eligible to continue the Section B/C/D pathway to certification. They will be directed to register for the Oral Certifying Examination pathway to certification.
- Prosthodontists who have successfully completed at least one (1) Section B/C/D examination by the end of 2026, will have until the end of 2028 to successfully complete any remaining Section B/D examinations. Alternatively, these prosthodontists can forego the Section B/C/D pathway to certification and register for the Oral Certifying Examination pathway to certification.
- Prosthodontists who have not initiated or successfully completed the Section A/B/C/D pathway by the end of 2028, will be directed to the QE/OCE pathway to certification.
- These guidelines relate to the Qualifying Examination and the Oral Certifying Examination. If you wish to view complete guidelines related to the Section A, Section B, Section C, or Section D examinations, please visit www.abpros.org/certification.
- For special consideration or extenuating circumstances, please email the ABP exams@abpros.org.

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