



# 2026 Qualifying Examination

*For Foreign Trained  
Applicants*

## Handbook

ABOMS

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***The recognized leader in Board certification of  
oral and maxillofacial surgery and related discipline***

## **Mission**

The American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (ABOMS) ensures that Diplomates meet our standards of training, education, and professionalism through our certification process. As the certifying body in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, ABOMS provides contemporary and innovative programs that promote optimal care and service to the public.

## **Vision**

To be the recognized leader in Board Certification of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and related disciplines.

## **Organization**

ABOMS is the certifying Board for the specialty of oral and maxillofacial surgery in the United States and is recognized and approved by the Council on Dental Education of the American Dental Association (CODA).

A committee was authorized at the 1945 annual meeting of the American Society of Oral Surgeons to establish an American Board of Oral Surgery, which would conduct examinations for the certification of specialists in oral surgery. In 1946, the American Board of Oral Surgery was incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois. During the following year, the American Board of Oral Surgery was approved by the Council on Dental Education of the American Dental Association and was authorized to proceed with the certification of specialists in oral surgery. The American Board of Oral Surgery was renamed the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery in 1978 to reflect the scope of the specialty. The name modification was incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois.

The operation of ABOMS is entrusted to an eight-member Board of Directors. These Directors are Diplomates of ABOMS and Fellows of the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (AAOMS). One Director is elected each year to an eight-year term by the House of Delegates of the AAOMS. An Examination Committee composed of Diplomates of ABOMS is



appointed by the Board of Directors to prepare and conduct the annual certification examination. The Board of Directors and its Examination Committee serve without salary.

## **Examinations**

The certification process is comprehensive, covering the biological sciences and clinical practice of oral and maxillofacial surgery. The certification process in oral and maxillofacial surgery consists of two examinations:

- Qualifying Examination (QE)
  - The first examination in our board certification.
- Oral Certifying Examination (OCE)
  - This is the second examination in our board certification process.
  - Hospital privileges are required upon applying. Please visit [www.aboms.org](http://www.aboms.org) for the OCE handbook for deadlines and more details.

Acceptable ethical and moral standing in the specialty and by review of any data pertaining to such standing may be requested by the Board.

## **About the Qualifying Examination**

The American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (ABOMS) Qualifying Examination (QE) is a secure, valid computer-based examination administered to Board applicants that test their knowledge in central principles of the specialty. The QE is the first step in becoming Board certified and takes place at Prometric Testing Centers.

The QE is made up of 300 multiple-choice questions covering 11 subject areas. There are two sections. The first section is allowed three hours, followed by an optional one-hour break, and the second section is allowed another three hours. After completing the first section, you may



not go back to review. Of the 300 questions, 30 of them are pretest questions and are therefore not counted towards one’s score. A full examination blueprint can be found on [www.aboms.org](http://www.aboms.org).

After passing the QE, the doctor is eligible to take the Oral Certifying Examination (OCE) as an ABOMS Candidate. This will grant three opportunities to complete the OCE successfully. An OCE Candidate who does not pass the OCE within a three-year period will result in a void status with the Board.

## Timeline

Below is the examination timeline. It is the test taker’s responsibility to be aware and meet all deadlines. ABOMS goes to great lengths to assist applicants when participating in the certification process. In return, it is requested that individuals seeking board certification comply with set requirements and deadlines.

2026 QE Timeline	
<b>Applications Open</b>	June 10, 2025
<b>Applications Due</b>	September 17, 2025
<b>Schedule Examination</b>	October 14 – November 20, 2025
<b>Examination Administered</b>	January 10 – 17, 2026
<b>Examination Results</b>	Letters to mail in mid-March 2026

## Getting Started

Accounts can be created on [www.aboms.org](http://www.aboms.org). An applicant can update their contact information at any time by logging into their ABOMS account. Please email the Examination Services Coordinator, Linh Le ([LLe@aboms.org](mailto:LLe@aboms.org)) if you have trouble accessing your account.

All materials must be uploaded to your application file through your ABOMS account. Supporting documents can be found under the “Resources” tab in your ABOMS profile. All application



materials will be reviewed by the ABOMS Board and staff for approval. ABOMS goes to great lengths to assist applicants when participating in the certification process. In return, it is requested that individuals seeking Board Certification comply with set requirements and deadlines. All application materials must be submitted using your ABOMS account by the application due date, September 17, 2025.

***All foreign trained applicants must follow the Foreign Trained Policy eligibility requirements.***

## **Eligibility Requirements**

All applicants for ABOMS certification must be graduate dentists (DMD, DDS, or international equivalent). Surgeons who have not graduated from a CODA-accredited U.S. or Canadian OMS training program but have completed formal OMS training outside the U.S. or Canada may consider applying for the examination using its foreign trained pathway.

### The pathway:

Foreign trained applicants must provide proof of completing a minimum of 156 weeks of progressive training as a full-time resident in a single CODA-accredited US or Canadian oral and maxillofacial surgery program. A minimum of 52 weeks of the 156 weeks must be at the senior resident level. Rotations on anesthesia, surgical and medical services consistent with current CODA standards are required at the time of submitting the application.

Fellowship training or concurrent time served as faculty during fellowship **cannot** be counted towards fulfilling the minimum 156 weeks requirement.

***Foreign trained applicants are not eligible for the ABOMS QE Fast Track pathway.***

All foreign trained applications are sent to the ABOMS Credentialing Committee to be reviewed for approval or denial. All other application requirements and fees must be met by the applicant.



Please reach out to Examination Services Coordinator, Linh Le (Lle@aboms.org), if you have questions regarding the pathway.

## **First Time Foreign Trained Requirements**

First time foreign trained applicants are applicants applying for their first Qualifying Examination (QE) any time after completing the requirements from a US/Canadian OMS program. Upon approval of a foreign trained application by the Credentials Committee, the applicant is recognized as a “Candidate” of ABOMS.

This status grants two opportunities to complete the QE successfully. If the Candidate is not successful in their first two consecutive years/opportunities, the status is void.

### Requirements to submit through ABOMS account:

- Photocopy of government issued ID
- Photocopy of dental license
- Copy of original and translated verification of your foreign dental degree and OMS training certificate/degree by an approved credentials evaluation agency.
- ABOMS Foreign Trained Pathway Verification Form signed by most recent program director (from an accredited program)
  - The form is available in your ABOMS account.
- Record of Operative Experience (ROE)
  - This is available in the application where you will enter the quantities. All relevant cases from the last 12 months should be accounted for.
  - Please know that this data collected is informational use only. Entering “0” is acceptable and will not affect your application.
- Application fee of \$1,350.00 USD (waived for second opportunity within two-year window)
- Examination fee of \$1,600.00 USD



Application fees are non-refundable and non-transferable. The examination fee is only refundable should the application not be approved.

## **Repeat Foreign Trained Requirements**

Repeat foreign trained applicants are applicants who have unsuccessfully attempted the certification process. If a foreign trained applicant wishes to reapply due to an unsuccessful previous attempt, the requirements are listed below.

### Requirements to submit through ABOMS account:

- ABOMS Foreign Trained Pathway Verification Form signed by most recent program director (from an accredited program)
  - The form is available in your ABOMS account
- Photocopy of government issued ID
- Record of Operative Experience (ROE)
- Proof of 30 hours of Category I Continuing Education Credits within 12 months prior to the application date
- Photocopy of dental license
- Application fee of \$675.00 USD
- Examination fee of \$1,600.00 USD

Application fees are non-refundable and non-transferable. The examination fee is refundable should the application not be approved.

## **Category I Continuing Education**

Category 1 activities are designated by an accredited provider before the applicant participates in them. Examples include attendance and presentations at a conference where the American Dental Association (ADA) Continuing Education Recognized Provider (CERP) Category 1 credit will be given. Applicants may also earn Category 1 credit for publishing an article in a peer-reviewed journal and meritorious learning experiences that have been pre-approved for credit.





ABOMS has identified providers of continuing education that meet the requirements set forth for the certification process. ABOMS does not have an approval process for CE providers but is familiar with the groups identified below and acknowledges their expertise of offerings that support continued learning for oral and maxillofacial surgeons.

- ACLS/PALS/BLS/ATLS/NCLS regardless of the provider
- Courses approved by Academy of General Dentistry (AGD)
- Courses offered by American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (AAOMS) component societies (state or regional)
- Courses approved by the ADA (American Dental Association) Continuing Education Recognition Program (CERP)
- Courses sponsored by ADA CODA (Commission on Dental Accreditation) accredited dental schools
- Courses sponsored by ADA CODA accredited OMFS programs
- Courses approved by the AMA (American Medical Association) Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) {both single and dually degreed Diplomates may earn this credit}

## Planning for the Oral Certifying Examination

To plan for the 2027 Oral Certifying Examination (OCE), it is recommended to review the current OCE requirements and general timeline. The OCE handbook can be found at [www.aboms.org](http://www.aboms.org). Hospital privileges are required to apply for the OCE. **No exceptions will be made.**

## Qualifying Examination Audit Process

The submission of an application indicates your agreement to comply with the terms of the audit process. All applications are subject to an audit, although only a percentage of applications are selected. The selection of an application for audit is random. If your application is selected for an audit, you will be notified by email. If you fail to meet the audit requirements, your fees will be forfeited, and your applications will be moved to void.



During an audit, American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (ABOMS) Credentialing Chair/Committee will verify the following documents:

- OMS Training Verification Form
- Record of Operative Experience
- Dental/Medical License
- Continuing Education Credits from the last 12 months (Repeat applicants only)

### **Accommodation Policy**

The American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (ABOMS) will make every effort to provide all appropriate and reasonable efforts to accommodate any requests in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Issues such as a second language, test anxiety, slow reading without an identified underlying physical or mental deficit, and failure to achieve a desired outcome are not learning disabilities and generally are not covered by the Americans with Disability Act. ABOMS offers all examinations in the English language only.

Applicants that require special accommodations must contact the Examination Services Coordinator, Linh Le (lle@aboms.org) with specific accommodation requests and required documentation by the application due date, September 17, 2025.

Supporting documentation must not be older than three years.

### **Required Documentation:**

- Documentation of previous accommodations provided by educational institutions
- Evaluation from an appropriate licensed professional (physician and/or psychologist). The report must be on professional letterhead and must include but is not limited to, the following:
  1. The professional's qualifications, address, telephone number and original signature.



2. The applicant's/Candidate's name and date of evaluations.
3. The specific diagnostic tests or procedures administered. Diagnostic methods used should be appropriate to the disability and in alignment with current professional protocol.
4. The results of the tests or procedures and a comprehensive interpretation of the results.
5. The specific diagnosis of the disability, with an accompanying description of the applicant's/Candidate's limitation due to the disability.
6. A summary of the completed evaluation with recommendations for the specific accommodations requested and how they will reduce the impact of identified functional limitations and how they pertain to participation in the ABOMS examination.

The following documentation will not be accepted:

- Handwritten/mailed letters from licensed professionals
- Handwritten patient records or notes from patient chart
- Diagnoses on prescription pads
- Self-evaluations
- Research articles

## **Other Policies**

### **Applicants' Responsibilities**

The timely submission of applications and the accuracy of the information submitted therein are the sole responsibility of the applicant. It is recommended to read and follow all instructions thoroughly.

It is the applicant's responsibility to keep a current address, email and telephone number on file. The American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (ABOMS) does not share contact information with any other organization. Third party request for information on a doctor's



application or results will not be granted. Time-sensitive information regarding applications, test registration and results require direct contact. ABOMS will not be responsible for missed communications when the test taker does not have current information on file.

### **Extensions on Expiring Status**

Requests for extension of application must be made after expiration of the current application for the Qualifying Examination (QE). Requests for extensions must be in writing and additional supporting documents may be required. Each request will be individually reviewed and considered by the ABOMS Credentials Committee.

### **Refunds**

When a test taker registers for an examination, significant costs are incurred by ABOMS; therefore, all fees are non-refundable and non-transferable. Should the application not be approved, the examination fee only will be refunded.

### **Receipts for Fees Paid**

Test takers will receive email confirmations including transactions numbers for any fees paid. Additionally, receipts can be found in the test taker's ABOMS account under "View My Past Payments."

### **Release of Examination Results**

ABOMS will not release any direct examination results by phone or email. ABOMS reserves the right to withhold examination results if any application materials are found to be deficient, expired, or inaccurate. ABOMS does not report result information to other third parties.



## Appeal Mechanism

- A. The applicant/Candidate must contact the ABOMS headquarters within **five (5) days** from taking the examination if they believe the examination has not been conducted in a fair manner. The request with an explanation of why an appeal is needed must be made in writing and received by either email or certified mail within five (5) calendar days.
- B. All appeals will be reviewed by the Computer-Based Testing (CBT) Chair for evaluation and decision. During this time, results of the said exam will not be disclosed to the applicant/Candidate.
- C. If the request is granted:
  - 1. the result of the appealed examinations, regardless of whether pass or fail, will be discarded, and never disclosed.
  - 2. a second examination will be provided one year later at the regularly scheduled time.
  - 3. the applicant/Candidate must resubmit any required application materials and submit an amended examination fee as defined by the CBT Chair.
- D. Candidates on their last year of eligibility may appeal their examination however will lose their “Candidate” status. A Candidate cannot appeal in two consecutive attempts.
- E. ABOMS will not consider appeals based on examination result, content, delivery, scoring or psychometric validation.

## Examination Fairness

ABOMS abides by the Principles of Fairness, developed by The Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation (CLEAR), to ensure fairness through the design, development, administration, and scoring of the examinations. ABOMS makes every attempt to provide the necessary information before, during and after the examination to Candidates to ensure testing fairness. The decision of the ABOMS Board of Directors shall be considered final.



## Frequently Asked Questions

***Q: This is my first time; how do I start?***

A: To begin the application process, an applicant must create an ABOMS account on [www.aboms.org](http://www.aboms.org).

***Q: Can I apply first and pay later?***

Q: Both the Qualifying Examination Application and Examination fees are due upon submission. Confirmation emails are sent to the email address on file. Receipts can also be found in your ABOMS account.

***Q: How do I find available OMS CODA accredited programs with enrollment availability?***

A. For training guidance, please contact the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (AAOMS). [www.aaoms.org](http://www.aaoms.org)

***Q: Where do I take the Qualifying Examination?***

A: The Qualifying Examination is available through Prometric Testing Centers and proctored in-person.

***Q: How long is the Qualifying Examination?***

A: The examination is made up of 300 questions divided into two sections. The first section is allowed three hours, followed by an optional one-hour break, and the second section is allowed another three hours.



## Contact Information

### ABOMS Administrative Mailing Address

American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

8770 W Bryn Mawr Ave, Suite 1370

Chicago, IL 60631

**Website:** [www.aboms.org](http://www.aboms.org)

**Telephone:** 312-642-0070

### Direct Examination Contact:

Ms. Linh Le

Examination Services Coordinator

TEL: 312-642-0070

EMAIL: [LLe@aboms.org](mailto:LLe@aboms.org)

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