



# **2026 Qualifying Examination Handbook**

**ABOMS**

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



## **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 the ABOMS is entrusted to an eight-member Board of Directors. These Directors are Diplomates of the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery 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 the 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.

## **Education**

Applicants for certification by the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (ABOMS) must have graduated from a U.S. or Canadian dental school that is recognized by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) of the American Dental Association (ADA). They must have also completed advanced education in an oral and maxillofacial surgery program that is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association.

For current residents in their last year of training interested in the Fast-Track pathway, please see our Fast-Track Qualifying Examination Handbook, found on [www.aboms.org](http://www.aboms.org).



**Applicants who are not enrolled or did not complete a CODA approved program have a separate pathway. Please see our separate handbook for foreign trained applicants on [www.aboms.org](http://www.aboms.org).**

## **Licensure**

Applicants for the Qualifying Examination (QE) must provide evidence of an active dental/medical license from the appropriate authority enabling the individual to practice independently in the specialty of oral and maxillofacial surgery. An individual with limited licensure, which permits practice only under supervision, such as a “resident license” or a “fellowship license,” is not enough to satisfy this requirement.

## **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

Applicants have an existing account if they have taken the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery In-service Training Examination (OMSITE). Applicants can log in with the email address your program used (for the OMSITE registration) and reset your password. Please email the Examination Services Coordinator, Linh Le (LLe@aboms.org) if you have trouble accessing your account. If needed, accounts can also be created on [www.aboms.org](http://www.aboms.org). Do not create a duplicate 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. Applicants have different requirements depending on status.

See pages 7–9 for more details.



## First Time Applicant

First time applicants are applicants applying for their first Qualifying Examination (QE) any time after completing an accredited OMS program. Upon the application review and approval, the first time applicant is recognized as a “Candidate” of American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (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 unrestricted dental/medical license
- Photocopy of OMS certificate
- ABOMS Verification Form (signed by most recent program director)
  - 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.
  - The data collected is informational only. Entering “0” is acceptable and will not affect your application.
- Application fee of \$675.00 USD
- Examination fee of \$1,600.00 USD

If the QE is successful, the Candidate is eligible for the Oral Certifying Examination (OCE). If a first time applicant is not successful, the doctor may attempt the following immediate year/opportunity as a second opportunity applicant with Candidate status.



## Second Opportunity Applicant

Second opportunity applicants are applicants who are recognized as a Candidate after an unsuccessful attempt as a first time applicant from the previous year.

### Requirements to submit through ABOMS account:

- Copy of unrestricted dental/medical license
- Examination Fee of \$1,600.00 USD

If the QE is successful, the Candidate is eligible for the Oral Certifying Examination (OCE). If a second opportunity applicant is not successful, the Candidate status is void.

## Repeat Applicant

Repeat applicants are applicants who are not recognized as a Candidate and had previously attempted the QE.

### Requirements to submit through ABOMS account:

- Photocopy of OMS certificate
- ABOMS General OMS Training Attestation Form (signed by applicant)
  - 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 unrestricted dental/medical license
- Application fee of \$675.00 USD
- Examination fee of \$1,600.00 USD

If the QE is successful, the repeat applicant is recognized as a Candidate and eligible for the Oral Certifying Examination (OCE). If a repeat applicant is not successful, the applicant may apply for the following immediate year as a repeat second opportunity applicant.





## **Repeat Second Opportunity Applicants**

Repeat second opportunity applicants are applicants who applied as a repeat applicant the year before and would like to attempt the QE immediately the following year.

### Requirements to submit through ABOMS account:

- Copy of Unrestricted dental/medical license
- Examination fee of \$1,600.00 USD

If the QE is successful, the repeat second opportunity applicant is recognized as a Candidate and eligible for the Oral Certifying Examination (OCE). If a repeat second opportunity applicant is not successful, the applicant may apply for the QE again as a repeat applicant.

## **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.

The American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (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 applicants 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
- Dental/Medical License
- Record of Operative Experience (first time and repeat applicants only)
- 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 test taker'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 test taker'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.

## **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 test taker 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 test taker.
- C. If the request is granted:
  - a. the result of the appealed examinations, regardless of whether pass or fail, will be discarded, and never disclosed.
  - b. a second examination will be provided one year later at the regularly scheduled time.
  - c. the test taker 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 having the “Candidate” status may appeal their examination however will lose their “Candidate” status with the Board. 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**

The American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (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: How do I start if this is my first time?***

A: To begin the application process, an applicant must create an ABOMS account on [www.aboms.org](http://www.aboms.org). If you have taken the OMSITE before, you have an existing ABOMS account.

***Q: I took the OMSITE before, but I have not accessed my ABOMS account.***

A: You may log in by resetting your password with the email address your program set up for you. If you need more help to get started, email [info@aboms.org](mailto:info@aboms.org).

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

A: Both fees (the Application and Examination fees) are due upon submission. A confirmation email will be sent to the email address on file.



***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.

***Q: What if I did not train at an OMS program accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association?***

A: Please see our separate Qualifying Examination Handbook for Foreign Trained applicants on [www.aboms.org](http://www.aboms.org).



## 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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