

An Evaluation of the  
Western Region Examining Board  
Dental Examination

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## **VII: SUMMATIVE EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Dental Examination consists of five independent tests, each of which is subject to validation. This final section summarizes findings and recommendations of this evaluation.

### **Operative Test**

As noted previously, this test is very complex. Because of that fact, it is very challenging to score reliably. This test has excellent qualities and a very supportive body of validity evidence. This test is very valid for making pass/fail decisions for the content that this test is supposed to measure. No recommendations were offered for its improvement.

### **Periodontal Test**

This test consists of two subtests that measure very different content. As a result, the two subtests are only slightly related. This fact makes the estimating of reliability very difficult. Fortunately, the performance of candidates on each subtest is so high and the standard error of measurement is so low, that very few candidates are in jeopardy regarding their pass/fail status. Validity evidence supports the use of the test for making pass/fail decisions. A recommendation is to improve documentation of validity evidence. Another recommendation is to lengthen one of the subtests to achieve higher reliability.

### **Endodontics Test**

Based on the validity evidence reviewed, this test appears well validated for test score interpretations and pass/fail decisions. The content basis for the exam, item quality, administration procedures, examiner training and validation, standard setting and comparability, and examiner consistency and reliability all are very good. Some improvement in rater consistency can be achieved, but rater consistency is not a problem considering the high reliability achieved in the current test.

### **Prosthodontics Test**

As with the Periodontal diagnosis test, candidate performance is very high. Thus, reliability estimates are low. However, the standard error of measurement is also very low, so only a few candidates who have scores close to cut score have some uncertainty about their pass/fail status. This test could be longer and consist of higher quality test items to improve reliability. Documentation of validity evidence should be improved.

### **PATP Test**

This test has a wealth of validity evidence supporting it. Primary strengths are clear statements about content, sound administration, high examiner consistency, high reliability, and effective training and trainer validation. There are no threats to validity present in this test.