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DDS Admissions FAQ

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Your top questions about applying to the DDS program, answered here.

Q: Are my Dental Admission Test (DAT) scores competitive?

A: Our incoming class averages are:

- Academic average: 22
- Percentual ability: 21

- Perceptual ability: 21
- Quantitative Reasoning: 22
- Reading comprehension: 22
- Biology: 22
- General chemistry: 21
- Organic chemistry: 22
- Total science: 21

Competitive scores this year were 22 and higher. If your scores are significantly lower than our class averages (below 20), we recommend retaking the Dental Admissions Test (DAT). There is not a deadline to take the DAT, but preference for admission is given to students who provide final DAT scores no later than November for any given admissions cycle. The committee reviews only the most recent DAT scores provided.

For instructions on how to schedule a date for the DAT, please visit the [American Dental Association \(ADA\)](#) website.

Q: Are there particular courses that would best prepare me for dental school?

A: The Admissions Committee encourages every student to develop his or her course of study in conjunction with the college or university pre dental advisor. If a school does not have a pre dental advisor, the student should consult faculty members in the chemistry and biology departments to select courses that meet the intent of the pre dental requirements. We recommend you select courses that extend the content of biomedical sciences, such as anatomy, histology, biochemistry, physiology, and microbiology.

Q: What level of performance is the Admissions Committee looking for in my academic history?

A: Many of our successful applicants completed three or more terms of full-time study at a college within the last three years. Full-time study is defined as four or more courses per term. In each term, three of the four courses should be pre dental science courses approved for biology majors. Applicants should achieve a B or better in each course; no D, W, F or I grades. Our incoming class grade point averages (GPA) are 3.6 overall and 3.5 science.

Q: Are there elective courses that would help prepare me to be a good dentist?

A: To develop your doctor/patient relationship skills, we recommend a course in journalism, public speaking, debate, interpersonal relationships, or drama.

To prepare you for managing your own business, we recommend accounting for small business, marketing for the small business, consumer behavior or economics courses.

To enhance your hand skills, we recommend course work in mechanical drafting/drawing, jewelry making, sculpting or ceramics.

Q: Does Pacific require a secondary application?

A: No. You need only to file an [Associated American Dental School Application Service \(AADSAS\)](#) application. We recommend that you apply as early as June but no later than November. The official deadline is early February.

Q: How will your Admissions Office notify me regarding the status of my application?

A: To find out the most up-to-date status of your application,

Applicants selected by our Executive Admissions Committee are invited to the dental school for an interview. Invitations for interview are extended by phone and confirmed by email. Most of our interviews are conducted from September through March. By May, all applicants will be notified by mail as to the final decision on their application.

Q: What are the selection factors for an interview at Pacific?

A: The Admissions Committee carefully considers each applicant's scholastic record, scores on the DAT, AADSAS essay, letters of evaluation, evidence of manual dexterity (including the perceptual ability portion of the DAT) and other personal attributes and qualities as well as demonstration of his or her understanding about a career in the dental profession.

Applicants who appear to meet the requirements will be invited to the dental school in San Francisco for an interview with one or more members of the Admissions Committee. During the interview the applicant's interest in dentistry, future plans, maturity and other personal qualities needed for successful work with patients are assessed. In addition, applicants will participate in an orientation seminar, meet informally with current dental students and tour the school. Applicants who

are offered the opportunity to enroll must complete planned coursework at a specified performance level.

The Executive Admissions Committee reserves the right to override admissions recommendations made by faculty interviewers.

Q: If I have applied to your dental school in previous years, am I guaranteed admission next year?

A: No. Our dental school has one of the largest applicant pools in the country. This year more than 2,700 individuals applied for 140 positions.

Unfortunately, the Admissions Committee had to deny admission to many qualified applicants due to limited class size. Competitive applicants may need to apply several times before being invited for an interview.

Indicating your re-applicant status on your next application will **not** negatively impact your admissions status for the new cycle.

Q: My AADSAS status says that my application is "Received/Waiting Additional Information." What does this mean and what are the next steps?

A: In order to have a complete application, we must receive the following items, in addition to the successful submission of your **AADSAS Application**:

- FINAL Dental Admissions Test (DAT) Scores
- Three Letters of Recommendation (two from science professors, one of your choice) OR a committee letter
- **\$75 Supplemental Application Fee**
 - We do not accept fee waivers for the supplemental fee.
 - The Fee portal will close on the specified **ADEA AADSAS Deadline** each year, so if you do not submit your payment to us before that deadline, we will not be able to review your application for that cycle.

Make sure to regularly check your emails after submitting your application for updates to ensure all files are submitted. If you don't see emails from us for a while, make sure to check your spam folder.

Check your status in AADSAS. If we are missing files, it will state that you are on hold or missing additional information.

Q: Which DAT scores will you accept?

A: Your most recent DAT scores will be evaluated as part of our holistic application review process.

If you are planning to retake the DAT after submitting your application, make sure to indicate a *planned* or *future* DAT date on your application. Your file will be placed on hold until we receive your new scores.

If you indicated a *planned* or *future* DAT date on your application and decide later not to retake the DAT, please let us know about this change and we will remove the hold on your application.

Please note that DATs must be taken within one year of when the admission cycle begins every June. Final DATs submitted to us before November 1 will be given priority for review.

Q: How can I maximize my letters of recommendation to create an impactful character assessment in my dental school application?

A: Make sure that you are submitting two letters from biomedical science professors. Examples of science professors include subjects such as: biology, chemistry, physics, biochemistry, etc. Your third letter

Choose people who know you and can speak to your character, personality and/or work ethic.

Start searching for letters of recommendation at least three months in advance of submitting your application. This will allow your writers ample time to craft and submit the letter without feeling rushed.

Give your letter writers clear guidance:

- The letter must be physically signed by the writer before submission (unsigned letters will not be accepted).
- Ideally, the letter should be written on letterhead, or contain the logo of the organization or school that they work for.
- Make sure to communicate the ADEA AADSAS letter submission guidelines to them so they know what to expect.

- Make sure to communicate the ADEA AADSAS letter submission guidelines to them, so they know what to expect.
- Give them a deadline to submit the letter (allowing them at least a month to write it).
- The letters must be submitted directly to AADSAS and should not be viewed or submitted by the applicant to maintain the confidentiality of the writing.

Q: Can I submit additional letters of recommendation?

A: AADSAS will let you submit up to four letters of recommendation with your application. Additional letters will not be accepted.

Q: Does your school accept letters of intent or application updates?

A: You may submit a letter of intent to sf_admissions@pacific.edu, but we cannot confirm receipt of your letter due to the large volume of emails we receive each day. Application updates will not be accepted, unless requested by the Office of Admissions.

Q: Why am I not receiving email updates?

A: Due to the volume of applications that we receive and review and the eventfulness of the admissions cycle, we are not able to accommodate calls or emails regarding application status updates.

Please refer to your AADSAS portal, which will provide your up-to-date status. A "Received/Under Review" status means your application is complete and have everything we need to review your application.

We also recommend checking your email regularly for updates, to ensure all communications are being received. Please check your spam and junk folders to ensure our emails are not getting marked as spam.

Q: Are interviews required for an acceptance or alternate position for the program?

A: Yes, interviews, by invitation, are required for any potential position in the program.

Q: Are interviews virtual or in person?

A: Interviews, by invitation, are in person. Candidates invited for an interview will be informed of any virtual interview days, if offered.

Q: My AADSAS status says that my application is "Received/Under Review." What does this mean, and what are the next steps?

A: This means that we have received all necessary materials to review your application, and we do not require anything further at this time. If you are selected for an interview, we will call you to schedule, but will also follow up over email.

We may email periodic updates throughout the cycle (June-February). Due to a high volume of inquiries, the Office of Admissions cannot offer status updates once you are in review.

Q: Is the campus open for tours?

A: We are open for tours that are pre-scheduled through the Office of Admissions. Tours are typically conducted Monday-Friday, 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm. Other times can be arranged if needed. Please contact Erika Giannini at egiannini@pacific.edu or sf_admissions@pacific.edu to schedule a tour.

Visitors must be fully vaccinated (with booster) and use a mask (surgical mask or N95) when on the clinic floors. Please plan to make your tour reservation at least a week in advance so we can find tour guides and plan the best possible visit for you.

Q: I have questions about applying or prerequisites for admission. Can I schedule time to meet with an Admissions Coordinator?

A: Yes, we offer virtual advising appointments (Phone or Zoom offered) for prospective applicants. [Appointments can be made online](#). If you would like to discuss your transcripts, please make sure to send them to your selected advisor at least 24 hours before your appointment.

Applicants who have submitted an application for the current cycle already should contact us by phone at 415.780.2093 or email us at sf_admissions@pacific.edu for questions.

Stockton Campus

3601 Pacific Ave.
Stockton, CA 95211
Admissions: 209.946.2211

Sacramento Campus

3200 Fifth Ave.
Sacramento, California 95817
Admissions: 916.739.7105

San Francisco Campus

155 Fifth St.
San Francisco, California 94103
Admissions: 415.929.6491

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