



**American Medical Technologists
Registered Dental Assistant (RDA) Certification Competencies
and Examination Specifications**

Summary Table

	Work Area	Number of Questions	Percentage of Exam
I.	Office Assisting Skills	28	13.3%
II.	Dental Sciences	70	33.3%
III.	Clinical Procedures	61	29.0%
IV.	Dental Imaging	51	24.3%
Total		210	100%

Question Weightings, Work Areas, Task Areas, and Competencies

Number of items

[28]

I. Office Assisting Skills (13.3% of exam)

A. Office Procedures

1. Telephone protocol and courtesy
**Use proper telephone technique and etiquette
2. Appointment control and recall
**Utilize appointment system and know function (e.g., call, email, text, message)
**Utilize recall/reminder system and know function (e.g., call, email, text, message)
3. Insurance
**Recognize third-party payments
4. Filing
**File records according to office system
5. Inventory procedures (clinical and front office)
**Maintain inventory control
6. Financial record keeping
**Maintain daily log system of ledger entries
**Manage financial collections

B. Patient Management and Communication

1. Psychology
 - **Recognize patient fears and observe verbal and nonverbal cues
 - **Recognize indicators of personal stress
2. Team concept
 - **Establish and maintain rapport
 - **Use listening skills
 - **Promote team concept
3. Patient motivation
 - **Establish and promote patient recognition of treatment and prevention

C. Ethics and Professional Conduct

1. Regulations
 - **Identify state and federal regulatory agencies
2. Professional behavior and appearance
 - **Develop and maintain professional attitudes
 - **Maintain professional appearance
3. Professional responsibilities
 - **Recognize professional responsibilities
 - **Maintain neat, accurate, and complete records
4. Patient confidentiality
 - **Maintain confidentiality
5. Malpractice
 - **Identify professional liabilities
 - **Know regulation regarding dispensing medications
6. Federal regulations
 - ** Comply with *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act* (HIPAA) regulations

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II. Dental Sciences (33.3% of exam)

D. Dental Anatomy and Terminology

1. Dental terminology
 - **Know basic dental terminology including suffixes and prefixes
2. Tooth anatomy and supporting structures
 - **Recognize permanent and deciduous dentition
 - **Recognize supporting structures of the teeth and know their functions
 - **Identify correct tooth name, location, and function
3. Head, neck, and oral anatomy
 - **Name and locate muscles of mastication
 - **Name and locate nerves that supply important dental structures
 - **Know life cycle of dentition
4. Pathology
 - **Know and recognize major pathological conditions

E. Patient Education

1. Patient instruction
 - **Demonstrate brushing technique to patient
 - **Demonstrate flossing technique to patient
2. Prevention
 - **Recognize plaque formation and its implications
3. Patient health history
 - **Obtain, report, and document medical/dental history

F. Local Anesthesia

1. Preparation, delivery, and disposal of anesthetic
 - **Know and abide by OSHA guidelines regarding the disposal of anesthetic, ampules, and needles
 - **Assist in preparation for, and delivery of, local anesthetic
2. Contraindications
 - **Know contraindications for local anesthesia

G. Medical Emergencies

1. First aid
 - **Recognize situations requiring first aid and assist in administering first aid
2. Vital signs
 - **Take and record vital signs
3. Health history
 - **Recognize medically compromised and high-risk patients
4. Emergency protocol
 - **Recognize signs and symptoms of medical/dental emergencies, including side effects of N₂O, syncope, chest pain, insulin shock, and allergic reactions
 - **Know location and availability of emergency equipment
 - **Maintain emergency equipment

H. Infection Control

1. Sterilization procedures and aseptic techniques
 - **Maintain sterile and disinfected conditions in office
 - **Perform sterilization procedures
2. Contaminated waste and OSHA guidelines
 - **Dispose of contaminated waste according to OSHA guidelines
3. Microbiology
 - **Recognize types of microorganisms
4. Infection control
 - **Know barrier techniques

I. Dental Materials

1. Dental materials

****Identify and use dental materials**

a. Restorative

cements composites: light- and cold-cured

amalgam resins

cast crowns

b. Impression

rubber hydrocolloid, reversible, irreversible

silicone polyether

c. Gypsum

d. Resin

custom trays temporary restorations

denture repair

e. Abrasives

f. Waxes

2. Physical properties and application

****Prepare and pour study models**

****Know care of various impression materials**

****Know physical properties of restorative dental materials**

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III. Clinical Procedures (29.0% of exam)

J. Instruments and Equipment

1. Identification and usage

****Identify and use hand instruments**

2. Handpieces, rotary, and power instruments

****Identify and use handpieces, rotary, and power instruments**

****Maintain handpieces, rotary, and power instruments**

3. Compressor and suction units

****Use and maintain compressor and suction units**

4. Procedural trays

****Recognize and prepare procedural trays**

5. Sterilization

****Maintain proper sterilization techniques**

K. Chairside Procedures

1. Position of dentist, patient, and assistant

****Know operating zones**

****Know seating for four-handed dentistry**

2. Aspiration and retraction

****Practice proper aspiration and retraction techniques**

3. Instrument transfer

****Maintain operating field**

****Perform four-handed instrument transfer**

K. Chairside Procedures (continued)

4. Manipulation of chairside materials
 - ** Mix, prepare, and deliver materials
5. Intra- and extraoral charting
 - **Record intra- and extraoral data
6. Hazards
 - **Recognize operatory hazards
 - **Recognize material hazards/OSHA safety data sheets
 - **Practice safety precautions related to chairside materials
7. Preventative procedures
 - **Perform and assist in performing preventative procedures
8. Restorative procedures
 - **Assist in performing restorative procedures

L. Laboratory

1. Safety
 - **Practice laboratory safety precautions
2. OSHA guidelines
 - **Know and abide by laboratory-related OSHA guidelines (blood borne pathogens standard and material safety hazard)
3. Manipulation of laboratory materials
 - **Mix and prepare laboratory materials
4. Equipment
 - **Identify and use laboratory equipment
5. Maintenance
 - **Maintain laboratory equipment

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IV. Dental Imaging (24.3% of exam)

M. Principles and Theory

1. Terminology
 - **Know basic terms, nomenclature, and anatomy
2. Fundamental concepts
 - **Know fundamental concepts of radiography handling

N. Techniques and Application: Exposure of Radiographs (Paralleling and Bisected angle)

1. Exposure
 - **Perform radiographic procedures, and operate equipment using paralleling and bisected angle techniques
 - **Expose and produce acceptable intraoral radiographic surveys including periapical, bitewing, occlusal, and panoramic radiographs, and cephalogram
 - **Know film characteristics
 - **Understand concepts of digital imaging
2. Evaluation
 - **Evaluate errors in placement, exposure, and processing

O. Radiograph Processing and Mounting

1. Manual processing
 - **Understand manual radiographic processing
2. Mounting
 - **Perform mounting of radiographs
3. Automatic processing
 - **Process and duplicate radiographs using automatic methods
4. Digital imaging
 - **Understand concepts of digital image production

P. Safety

1. Safety requirements and equipment
 - **Follow recommended radiation safety requirements
2. State and federal radiation safety laws
 - **Comply with state and federal law concerning dental radiation