

Optometry Admission Test (OAT) Program Newsletter

Greetings from the Optometry Admission Test (OAT) Program! This newsletter provides an update on current activity within the program. We invite you to share this newsletter with others. Your comments and suggestions are welcome and appreciated; please direct any feedback or questions to oatexam@ada.org.

Sincerely,

Dr. David Damari
Chair, OAT Committee

NEW! OAT Practice Test

A set of electronic [OAT Practice Tests](#) are now available. Applicants can purchase the entire practice test and/or individual modules that focus on individual sections of the test. The practice test allows applicants to familiarize themselves with the types of questions and question formats used in the OAT. The practice test resembles the current test specifications, which can be found in the OAT Guide posted on the [OAT web site](#).

OAT Results Reporting Now Electronic!

In 2017, the OAT Program introduced major technological improvements to how OAT results are reported to applicants and optometry programs. Paper score reports are now a thing of the past! The following updates improve results reporting in a number of ways:

- Applicants are now able to view their official scores through their "[My Account](#)" page. In addition, applicants can track the progress of their OAT applications and the status of their score requests – all in one centralized location. Once an applicant has obtained their PIN, they can access a specialized "[My Account](#)" page to access important application information. The update to include official scores in "[My Account](#)" was implemented in January 2017.
- OAT official scores are now transmitted directly to OptomCAS (Optometry Centralized Application Service). Through this service, applicants may file a single application that is distributed to multiple optometry programs; additionally, schools and colleges of optometry are able to process applications more efficiently. Within the next two years, all scores that appear in the Department of Testing Services (DTS) Hub should also be visible on each candidate's OptomCAS application.
- Schools and colleges of optometry can now utilize improved sorting and reporting features through the DTS Hub, an electronic portal through which schools are able to view score reports, obtain official results, and approve applications for exams administered by the Department of Testing Services. These changes were instituted to help facilitate program decision making and the consideration of candidate skills.

Seeking Volunteers for Test Construction Teams (TCTs)

The OAT Program seeks volunteers to serve as test constructors in support of the Optometry Admission Test. Test constructors are responsible for developing clear, accurate test questions that meet the test specifications for the OAT. Through their volunteer work, test constructors make a significant contribution to the optometry profession.

OAT test constructors meet annually in Chicago to develop examination content. These meetings are generally a commitment of two to three days.

Applications for test constructors are accepted throughout the year, but acceptance decisions are made once per year. [Applications for the current cycle must be submitted by January 31, 2018.](#)

OAT Validity Studies

OAT validity studies are professionally conducted psychometric investigations that report the relationships among OAT scores, pre-optometry grade point averages, and the academic achievements of a sample of students during their first and second years in U.S. optometry institutions. These studies provide validity evidence that supports the use of OAT results in applicant admission decisions.

Currently, data from 2014-2016 is being collected for the next OAT validity study. The continued participation of optometry programs in providing data for OAT validity studies is vital to the success of the OAT Program, and is greatly appreciated.

Results have been highly consistent across studies. Previous validity reports consistently show that the OAT is a very good predictor of student GPA in the first two years of optometry school.

The 2015 OAT Validity Study, based on data from 2011–2013, is [now available](#).

Test Security and Fraud Prevention

Lastly, the program shares an important reminder that applicants must not disclose any test content (in whole or in part) before, during, or after the test to anyone, including but not limited to family, friends, classmates, colleagues, and test preparation organizations. This applies to any content disclosed through discussions, emails, in writing, online (e.g., blogs, social media, websites), or otherwise. Additionally, applicants must not falsify score reports, or severe penalties will be imposed. The OAT program may void test results or impose a testing ban on applicants who violate these policies. Additional information about test regulations can be found in the [OAT Guide](#).

The OAT is a secure test protected by U.S. copyright laws. Any unauthorized disclosure of test content could result in civil liability, criminal penalties, voiding of test scores, or other appropriate penalty. Students and faculty are encouraged to report any activities that disclose information about test content so the OAT Program can investigate and take necessary action. Report such activity to the OAT Program at testsecurity@ada.org.