

Dental School Application Process

Choosing Dental Schools:

ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools (PDF book) and **Dental School Explorer** (online database) – includes both for \$35: www.adea.org/home/publications/Books-and-Guides/officialguide.

Admissions Test: DAT (Dental Admission Test)

DAT Program Guide: <http://www.ada.org/dat> → DAT Guide

Registration Timeline: Tests are administered year-round. You must first apply for and obtain a DENTPIN www.ada.org/dat. After your DENTPIN application is processed, you may contact a Prometric Test Center (www.prometric.com) to schedule your test date within the six-month testing window.

Release Scores: Prior to signing up for the test, you have the option of releasing your scores to an undergraduate pre-health advisor. If you miss this step, please print an official score report and send to your GVSU preprofessional advisor.

Fee: \$580 per test

* Payments are non-refundable and non-transferable

* Fee includes official score transcripts to all schools requested at the time of test registration; additional fee per school for those added after test date (please list preprofessional advisor as score recipient)

Fee Assistance: Partial fee waivers are available for first-time test takers which cover 50% of the DAT fee; see DAT Program Guide for more information—must apply BEFORE scheduling test date

Limit: 60 days between tests; 3 testing attempts are allowed, additional attempts require special permission

Subtests	
Tutorial (optional)	15 minutes
Survey of Natural Sciences: Biology (40 items), General Chemistry (30 items), Organic Chemistry* (30 items) = 100 total items <i>*Changes coming in 2026 – see DAT Guide for information</i>	90 minutes
Perceptual Ability Test: 90 items	60 minutes
Scheduled Break (optional)	30 minutes
Reading Comprehension Test: 50 items across 3 reading passages	60 minutes
Quantitative Reasoning Test: 40 items	45 minutes
Post Test Survey (optional)	15 minutes
Total time	5 hours 15 minutes

Scoring: New scoring system went into effect March 1, 2025, with a 200-600 range. Official scores will take 3-4 weeks to be reported and will be reported electronically. The old scoring system ranged from 1-30, standardized with a national average of 19. Visit www.ada.org/DATScoringUpdate for updates on the new scoring model and comparison to the 2-digit scores.

Practice Tests: www.ada.org/dat → Test Preparation. There are Individual Modules, Full Practice Tests and Sample Test Items available



616.331.8585 | www.gvsu.edu/clasadvising | C-1-120 MAK

Application Service: American Association of Dental Schools Application Service (AADSAS)

Contact AADSAS customer service with questions: 617-612-2045 or aadsasinfo@aadsasweb.org

AADSAS Applicant Help Center: https://help.liaisonedu.com/ADEA_AADSAS_Applicant_Help_Center (includes a Quick Start Guide, FAQs, and other instructions on completing your AADSAS)

Fee: \$264 for one school; \$115 for each additional school

*Fee is non-refundable, must be paid online by credit/debit card

*Fee assistance is available through ADEA and provides a \$494 fee waiver that covers up to 3 total schools; it must be applied for and approved BEFORE submitting the application (allow 10 business days for approval)

Re-applicants: You can roll over certain parts of your previous application. There is space in AADSAS to explain what changed since you last applied to dental school.

Transcripts: Transcripts must be sent from EACH school you have attended. GVSU transcripts can be sent electronically (see [Registrar's Office](#) for info). If sending through mail, a Transcript Request Form (download from AADSAS) MUST accompany official transcripts by application deadline—can be submitted in May.

Repeat Grades: Enter ALL attempts at courses, regardless of repeats or grades of W; ALL coursework is used in GPA calculations (including initial and repeated coursework).

Personal Statement: 4500 characters, including spaces; express your motivation to pursue a career in oral health.

Professional Experience: Space to enter relevant dental experiences/shadowing, extracurricular activities, employment, research, volunteer, and any academic enrichment programs; **700 characters (with spaces)** are allotted for each activity description. You can select up to 6 experiences to highlight as “most important.” There is a separate section for entering achievements (i.e. awards/honors/scholarships) and certifications (i.e. RDH, CDA, CDT—can upload a copy of the certificate). You can select up to 4 “most important” achievements. You also get 600 characters to describe manual dexterity activities.

Letters of Evaluation (LOEs): See the next page.

Verification: Process of verification of grades through AADSAS takes 10 business days once ALL required materials are received (this excludes LOEs, DAT, and supplemental applications).

Supplemental Applications: Supplemental applications vary and may include additional fees and essays; more info can be found in the AADSAS application under Program Materials. Some supplemental apps require you to submit a photo of yourself; therefore, it's a good idea to have a nice/professional photo taken of yourself wearing professional attire.

Acceptances: Make sure you are meeting any school deadlines and withdraw applications from all schools following a final decision on attendance.

Schools also conduct a criminal background check and undergraduate disciplinary checks prior to final matriculation.

Apply EARLY (in June!), check your SPAM folder in your email so you don't miss anything, clean up your SOCIAL MEDIA, and stay ORGANIZED.

Letters of Evaluation (LOEs) and the GVSU Letter Packet:

GVSU offers a letter packet for medical and dental applicants. The letter packet will include a cover sheet with the applicant's name and some helpful information about GVSU (i.e. institutional information, SWS, honors, etc.). Individual letters are then ranked in order of strength, attached to the cover sheet in one PDF, then submitted to AADSAS for schools to download (Elizabeth Clark submits). Students must request a letter packet through the GVSU Letter Packet Application (see link below).

In AADSAS, check "Yes" for Committee Letter and list ***Elizabeth as the Letter Writer.***

**Complete the Letter Packet Application between
February March 1st - July 31st at:
www.gvsu.edu/clasadvising/apply**

A complete Letter Packet Application involves:

1. Waiving your rights to view your letters of evaluation
2. Completing the Self-Assessment and meeting with a pre dental advisor to determine your readiness to apply
3. Requesting a minimum of three letters of evaluation (all letters must be received prior to submission of the letter packet)
4. Complete a short questionnaire
5. Upload a photo/headshot of yourself (optional)
6. Upload a copy of your submitted AADSAS application (optional) → your application can be submitted without your letter packet

Benefits of getting a GVSU Letter Packet

1. Ability to request individual letters before faculty leave for the summer.
 - a. The letter packet allows you to request (and faculty to submit) letters starting March 1st; the earliest this can take place in AADSAS is May 12, 2026.
2. Expedite the completion of your dental school application
 - a. When applications open in May, you can have all your letters in and the letter packet can be ready to submit, rather than waiting until after May 12th for your individual letters to be submitted.
3. Letter Packets will include helpful information about GVSU
 - a. GVSU-specific policies and classes like SWS and Honors are explained along with a synopsis of GVSU as an institution, which is helpful for out-of-state schools
4. Strongest letters will be highlighted by being placed at the top of the letter packet
 - a. Your letters will be ranked in order of strength and placed in that order in the letter packet
5. Connects you to advisors for a high level of support through the process

Application Process Timeline

This process begins 2 years before you plan to start dental school

