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	20	9.5%
II.	Dental Sciences	70	33.3%
III.	Clinical Procedures	68	32.4%
IV.	Dental Imaging	52	24.8%
Total		210	100%

Question Weightings, Work Areas, Task Areas, and Competencies

Number of items

[20] **I. Office Assisting Skills (9.5% of exam)**

A. *Office Procedures*

1. Telephone protocol and courtesy
   **Use proper telephone technique and etiquette
2. Health Information Management
   **Properly file documents, notes, reports, and patient communication in charts or electronic health record (EHR)
3. Inventory procedures (clinical)
   **Maintain inventory control
4. Practice management software
   **Employ computerized practice management software

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
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 patient confidentiality
5. Malpractice
   **Identify professional liabilities
   **Know regulation regarding dispensing medications
6. Federal regulations
   ** Comply with *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act* (HIPAA) regulations

[70] **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 and Health History

1. Patient health history

**Obtain, report, and document patient medical 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

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. Emergency protocol
   **Recognize signs and symptoms of medical/dental emergencies, including side effects of N_2O, syncope, chest pain, insulin shock, and allergic reactions
   **Know location and availability of emergency equipment
   **Maintain emergency equipment

H. Infection Control, Sterilization, and Disinfection

1. Sterilization procedures and aseptic techniques
   **Perform sterilization procedures
2. Contaminated waste and OSHA guidelines
   **Understand disposal of contaminated waste according to OSHA guidelines
3. Infection control
   **Know barrier techniques
   **Practice infection control

I. Dental Materials

1. Dental materials
   **Identify and use dental materials
      a. Restorative
         cements composites: light- and cold-cured
         amalgam resins
         cast crowns ceramic restorations
      b. Impression
         rubber hydrocolloid, reversible, irreversible
         silicone polyethers
         alginate impressions
         night guard fabrication

c. Gypsum
d. Resin
custom trays temporary restorations
denture repair
e. Abrasives
f. Waxes
g. Whitening tray fabrication

2. Physical properties and application
**Prepare, pour, and trim models
**Know care of various impression materials
**Know physical properties of restorative dental materials
**Obtain bite registration

[68] **III. Clinical Procedures (32.4% of exam)**

J. Instruments and Equipment

1. Handpieces, rotary, and power instruments
**Identify and use handpieces, rotary, and power instruments
2. 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
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 (bloodborne pathogens standard and material safety hazard)
3. Manipulation of laboratory materials
**Understand manipulation of laboratory materials
4. Equipment
**Identify and use laboratory equipment
5. Maintenance
**Maintain laboratory equipment

[52] **IV. Dental Imaging (24.8% of exam)**

M. Principles and Theory

1. Terminology
**Know basic terms, nomenclature, and anatomy
2. Fundamental concepts of analogue (film) radiography
**Know fundamental concepts of analogue (film) radiography handling
3. Fundamental concepts of digital radiography
**Know fundamental concepts of digital radiography handling

N. Techniques and Applications
1. Radiographic procedures
**Perform analogue (film) and digital radiographic procedures, and operate equipment using paralleling and bisected-angle techniques
2. Radiographic images
**Produce acceptable radiographic images (analogue and digital) including periapical, bitewing, occlusal, panoramic, and cephalograms
3. Evaluation
**Evaluate errors in film/plate placement, exposure, and processing

O. Safety

1. Safety requirements and equipment

**Follow recommended radiation safety requirements
**Follow recommended operator safety for digital and analog imaging
**Dispose of developing/fixing agents
2. State and federal radiation safety laws
**Comply with state and federal law concerning dental radiation

P. Infection Control for Digital and Analog Imaging
1. Infection control
**Practice infection control for digital and analog imaging

Task Inventory Note

**The tasks included in this inventory are considered by American Medical Technologists to be representative of the dental assisting job role. This document should be considered dynamic, to reflect the dental assistant's current role with respect to contemporary health care. Therefore, tasks may be added, removed, or modified on an ongoing basis.