

Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Achievement Test

Test Administration Guide

National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners | 2020-2021

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I. Overview

The purpose of this guide is to provide a reference to the colleges of osteopathic medicine (COMs) for the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Achievement Test (COMAT) administration.

II. Description of the COMAT Series

The NBOME COMAT series includes eight core clinical discipline exams, a comprehensive foundational biomedical sciences exam, and fourteen targeted foundational biomedical sciences (FBS) exams.

The COMAT Clinical subject exams are designed for standardized assessment in core osteopathic medical disciplines, such as end-of-course or clinical rotation student assessment, and assess an osteopathic student's achievement level on those disciplines. Each Clinical examination in the series has osteopathic principles and practice integrated throughout, making it the obvious choice for COMs for student assessment needs. The Clinical exams are also the only osteopathically distinctive discipline-specific examinations available.

The FBS Comprehensive exam is designed for standardized assessment in overall basic sciences, as studied in the first and second years of medical school, and assesses an osteopathic student's achievement level across both basic science disciplines and body systems.

The FBS Targeted exams are designed for standardized assessment in specific basic science disciplines and body systems, as studied in the first and second year of medical school, and assess an osteopathic student's achievement in individual basic science disciplines and body systems.

All exams in the COMAT series are:

- Presented in a style and format comparable to the COMLEX-USA licensure series
- Created to reflect osteopathic physician practice
- Written by osteopathic and FBS discipline subject matter experts

III. COMAT Use Policy

The NBOME develops and provides the COMAT series to be administered by the COMs to assess the osteopathic medical knowledge of their medical students in the following areas:

CLINICAL SUBJECTS

- Emergency Medicine
- Family Medicine
- Internal Medicine
- Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Osteopathic Principles and Practice
- Pediatrics
- Psychiatry
- Surgery

FOUNDATIONAL BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

- FBS – Comprehensive

- Foundational Anatomical Sciences
- Foundational Neurosciences
- Microbiology and Immunology
- Molecular, Biochemical, Tissue, and Cellular Basis of Health and Disease, including Medical Genetics
- Pharmacologic Principles and Concepts
- Physiologic Basis of Health and Disease
- Cardiovascular and Hematologic Systems
- Endocrine System and Metabolism
- Gastrointestinal (GI) System and Nutritional Health
- Genitourinary/Renal System
- Human Development, Reproduction and Sexuality
- Integumentary System
- Musculoskeletal System
- Respiratory System

COMs must maintain the security and integrity of the COMAT series.

V. Exam Information

Information about the exam specifications follows.

- **COMAT Clinical Subjects**
 125 Questions
 2.5 Hours
 8 Subject Exams
- **COMAT Foundational Biomedical Sciences - Targeted**
 62 Questions
 1.5 Hours
 14 Content Areas
- **COMAT Foundational Biomedical Sciences - Comprehensive**
 200 Questions
 4 Hours*
 16 Content Areas

*Optional break after section 1 is completed.

IV. Roles and Responsibilities

A. COM Dean and Administrator

Determine the utilization of COMAT exams and work with the NBOME to execute a COMAT Master Agreement for exam administration.

B. COMAT Coordinator

A COMAT Coordinator is designated by the dean to manage COMAT administrations for their COM students. The primary responsibilities of the COMAT coordinator are to:

- Oversee administrative tasks for the COMAT administrations
- Ensure that all COMAT examinations are administered in a secure, proctored setting
- Report and follow up with NBOME on adverse testing conditions that might impact the administration. Please refer to the [COMAT Proctor Guide](#).
- Manage COMAT invoices and payment

C. COMAT Proctor

All COMAT examinations must be proctored by a COM-approved proctor. The primary responsibilities of the COMAT proctor include:

- Secure a quiet location to administer the COMAT examination
- Follow the proctor guidelines and conduct the examination according to the specified procedures in the [COMAT Proctor Guide](#)
- Run system checks and resolve any issues prior to COMAT administrations and ensure that the secure browser has been downloaded to all work stations and devices used for testing
- Ensure test security and minimal disturbance
- Monitor examinees throughout the examination
- Report to COMAT administrator of adverse testing conditions that might impact the administration

D. COMAT Students

COMAT students are expected to:

- Prepare any personal equipment (conduct system check and download browser) prior to examination date
- Follow instructions provided by proctor during the administration

V. Delivery Options

A. COM Approved Location

The COMAT series must be administered in a secure, proctored setting.

PC/MAC/Apple iPad

Delivered via a secure browser on a desktop or laptop computer provided by either the COM or student

Delivered through NBOME's custom application (eCOMAT) on any standard Apple iPad device.

B. Prometric Testing Center (available only for COMAT Clinical Subject examinations)

COMAT administration for the clinical subject examinations is available at Prometric testing centers. The Foundational Biomedical Sciences examinations will not be available at Prometric. Prometric testing may be preferred for students who are unable to take the examination at the COM approved location. This option requires a five-day minimum advance scheduling and an additional administrative fee for the seat at Prometric. See Registration and Scheduling section.

VI. Registration and Scheduling

A. Registration

a) COM Approved Location

The NBOME has provided a means for the COM to designate students for individual COMAT disciplines. It is available through the COMAT tab on the dean's page in the Client Registration System (CRS). The registration includes selecting the student from the class list, choosing the specific examination, assigning location and proctor.

b) Prometric Testing Center (available only for COMAT Clinical Subject examinations)

The NBOME has provided a means for the COM to designate students for an individual COMAT discipline. It is available through the COMAT tab on the dean's page. The registration includes adding "Prometric Eligibility," selecting Eligibility Start Date and End Date.

B. Scheduling

a) COM Approved Location

The COMAT Coordinator registers and schedules a date for an upcoming administration as part of the registration process via CRS.

b) Prometric Testing Center (available only for COMAT Clinical Subject examinations)

The COMAT Coordinator sets a date range for students via CRS. Students will then receive an email notification to schedule with Prometric. Students must schedule with Prometric at least five days before the examination date.

C. Rescheduled, Canceled, or Missed Scheduled Examination

a) COM Approved Location

COMs can make changes to a scheduled examination date at any time unless the examination is in progress. A missed examination can be rescheduled for a new date at no cost to the COM.

b) Prometric Testing Center (available only for COMAT Clinical Subject examinations)

COMs can make changes to a scheduled examination date up to 30 days prior to their examination date at no cost to the COM. A change made within 30 days will incur the full seat fee.

VII. Retaking an Examination

Students are allowed to retake COMAT exams under the direction of their COM. COMs should allow students to retake the same COMAT examination subject only after receiving the prior examination result.

VIII. Test Accommodation Requests

The COM is responsible for review and approval of all test accommodations requests for the COMAT administrations. The COM is responsible for all additional costs required to provide the approved accommodation. NBOME will make a good faith effort to provide such reasonable test accommodations as the COM determines are warranted for the students.

Special Assistance

a) COM Approved Location

A student may not have any family member, assistant, or other person for any reason except approved by the COM as a special accommodation in the testing area.

b) Prometric Testing Center (available only for COMAT Clinical Subject examinations)

Prometric may provide limited special assistance if sufficient notification is provided to NBOME. Under no circumstance may the Prometric testing center professional staff permit any additional time to take the examination or modify the examination or testing conditions in any way that would alter the standards for measurement of the knowledge or skill being tested by the examination. Examples of special assistance that may be permitted include, but are not limited to, the use of ear plugs, dietary needs, or taking medication.

IX. Examination Administration

A. Arrival and Identification

a) COM Approved Location

The COM establishes the arrival time for an examination. Proctors will be responsible for verifying the identity of all students.

b) Prometric Testing Center (available only for COMAT Clinical Subject examinations)

Students must arrive 30 minutes prior to the start time of the scheduled administration, and must bring with them one piece of identification, which must be a valid government-issued picture ID with signature, such as a current driver's license or passport.

B. Late Arrival

a) COM Approved Location

The COM will determine whether a student is allowed to sit for the examination upon late arrival.

b) Prometric Testing Center (available only for COMAT Clinical Subject examinations)

Any student who arrives after the scheduled start time may be permitted to take the examination only if the testing center is able to deliver the examination in its entirety.

C. No Outside Information or Access

a) COM Approved Location

During the full test session, students are not permitted to access any information or data, including but not limited to any access to a cellular phone or PDA, text, notes or other materials, and may not communicate in any manner with anyone outside the testing area.

b) Prometric Testing Center (available only for COMAT Clinical Subject examinations)

During the full test session, students are not permitted to access any information or data not provided to the student by Prometric at the testing center, including but not limited to any access to a cellular phone or PDA, text, notes or other materials, and may not communicate in any manner with anyone outside the testing center. Students are required to place all personal property, including watches, in the secure lockers provided at the testing centers.

D. Interruption of Examination or Computer Malfunction for All Approved Locations

In the event of an examination interruption, the proctor will determine whether the examination will resume from the point the examination was stopped and if the examination interruption will still permit the examination to be administered in its entirety.

If the examination is interrupted for a period of time that will not permit the examination to be administered in its entirety, or the examination is canceled for emergency or safety purposes, the COM must inform NBOME immediately and NBOME will not score the examination. Otherwise, if the issue is not reported to the NBOME, the score will be released to the COM.

E. Cancellation Due to Inclement Weather, Other Force Majeure

a) COM Approved Location

If a student is unable to test due to inclement weather, force majeure, or other event beyond the control of the COM, the examination can be rescheduled.

b) Prometric Testing Center (available only for COMAT Clinical Subject examinations)

In the event of severe inclement weather, force majeure, or other event beyond the control of Prometric, Prometric may in its sole discretion cancel a scheduled examination. If this occurs, students should contact his/her COM to arrange a new period of eligibility.

F. Emergency Evacuation for All Approved Locations

Students will follow the emergency evacuation instructions of the testing site.

G. Test Day Issues

Students who encounter test day issues must report to their proctor or Prometric testing center staff immediately. After reporting the incident to the staff on premises, the student must inform their COM of the incident. NBOME will work with the COM to review the issue to determine the appropriate resolution. If a student does not complete the exam for any reason, the school will be responsible for payment of the exam.

X. Conduct

The COM should follow its policy to prevent any possible irregularities in test administration, student behavior, breach of test security, or confidentiality. Any proctor, who suspects irregular conduct by a student during a COMAT administration should report the conduct to the COM and NBOME.

XI. Voided Examination Administration

The NBOME can remove a score for an examination requested by the COM or under circumstances where NBOME determines the test administration was materially adversely impacted and/or the test administration or results is otherwise deemed by NBOME to be not be valid. Students may not void their COMAT examination score for any reason.

XII. Fees and Invoice

A. Examination Fee

The fees for all COMAT examinations will follow the pricing structure set forth on the COMAT Master Agreement.

B. Rescheduling and Cancellation Fee

The rescheduling and cancellation fees for all COMAT examinations will follow the pricing structure set forth on the NBOME Master Agreement.

C. Invoice

All fees are invoiced after the examination administrations and are issued to the COM monthly. NBOME will not collect any fee directly from the students.

XIII. Scoring and Reporting

NBOME provides summary reports for single COMAT administrations, as well as cumulative reports for individual subjects within a COMAT testing cycle. Reports for single administrations may include summary statistics, performance profile, cumulative frequency distribution, score roster, and item key phrase report.

For the COMAT Clinical subject exams, score reports are scheduled to be released 5 to 10 business days after administration regardless of the number of administrations, typically on Thursday afternoons. For COMAT FBS exams, score reports are typically scheduled to be released on Wednesdays within 15 business days after administration. The reports are posted on the dean's page. COMs can release individual score reports to student's CRS account. The NBOME does not send the COMAT student score reports to students directly.

Reported scores for most COMAT exams are nationally normed standard scores, which reflect equating between different forms. Standard scores for COMAT Clinical subjects are set to have a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 10, based on a representative norming sample. For COMAT FBS Comprehensive exams, scores have a mean of 200 and an approximate standard deviation of 10, based on a national sample of examinees in their 2nd year in osteopathic medical school. Currently, normed standard scores are not available for COMAT FBS Targeted exams but percent correct score reports are used.

Standard score scales are reviewed annually, and may be reestablished at the discretion of the NBOME. Reported scores initially provided for new exam subject are percent correct scores. After approximately one year of availability, percent correct scores are converted to standard scores, and all subsequent reported scores for the subject are standard scores.

XIV. Score Confirmation

The NBOME will confirm a COMAT examination score if a COMAT coordinator submits a written request to NBOME for score confirmation within 30 days after the scores are released. Individual students may not request score confirmations. The fee per examination score confirmation is \$25, and the request must be accompanied by a check, credit card payment information or the option to invoice the school. A score confirmation entails retrieving the original test responses, rescoring and comparing the rescored results with the originally reported scores. Results of a score confirmation will be sent to the COMAT coordinator by NBOME Client Services within two weeks of the request.

XV. NBOME and ITS Administration Support

NBOME will provide telephone support for all COMAT administrations between the hours of 7 AM-7 PM (Eastern Time) Monday through Friday with the exception of NBOME holidays.

NBOME Client Services can be reached at (866) 479-6828, and ITS Technical Support can be reached at (800) 514-8494 between the hours of 8 AM and 8 PM (Eastern Time).

XVI. Blackout Testing Days

No COMAT exams will be administered on Saturdays and Sundays, NBOME holidays and during exam blackout periods. Please check our website www.nbome.org for those dates.