

TOR-2030

Surgical Science Examinations Committee

1. Purpose and scope

- 1.1. The Surgical Science Examinations Committee (SSEC) is responsible for the development, conduct and administration of early examinations in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand including:
 - a. Generic Surgical Sciences Examination (GSSE) and,
 - b. Specialty Specific Examinations (SSE)
- 1.2. Specialty Specific Examinations (SSE) include:
 - a. Cardiothoracic Surgical Sciences and Principles (CSSP) Examination
 - b. SSE in Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery
 - c. Plastic and Reconstructive Surgical Sciences and Principles (PRSSP) Examination
 - d. SSE in Urology
 - e. SSE in Vascular Surgery

2. Definitions

- 2.1. Words and phrases used in this document have the following meaning unless the context requires otherwise.
 - a. **Generic Surgical Sciences Examination (GSSE)** is a written examination assessing a prevocational doctor's knowledge of anatomy, pathology and physiology.
 - b. **Specialty Specific Examinations (SSE)** are designed to assess a Trainee's knowledge of the basic sciences relevant to their specialty training program in line with their respective curricula and may include one or more components, either written or practical.
 - c. **Subcommittees** shall comprise of faculty members convened for the development of an examination or a particular aspect of an examination to ensure validity, reliability and alignment to international best practice.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1. To develop policy and protocols for the conduct and administration of each examination.
- 3.2. To coordinate subcommittees for the purposes of:
 - a. Drafting questions, marking guides and determining the pass standard.
 - b. Development and maintenance of a bank of active questions for use in examinations and/or practice examinations, ensuring they are current, accurate and relevant to clinical practice
 - c. Ensuring Specialty Specific Examination questions align to the curriculum as defined by the respective Specialty Training Committees/Boards (STC/Bs).

- 3.3. To review and discuss examination results of individual candidates in defined circumstances which may include but are not limited to special circumstances, application of minimum standard rules and awarding of prizes.
- 3.4. To ratify the results of each examination for noting by:
 - a. Committee of Surgical Education and Training (CSET) for examinations relating to Trainees; and
 - b. Prevocational and Skills Education Committee (PSEC) for examinations relating to prevocational doctors.
- 3.5. To monitor and ensure the validity and quality of examinations by receiving and reviewing feedback, statistical data and issues identified.
- 3.6. To undertake other examination activities as appropriate.

4. Membership and appointment

- 4.1. The Surgical Science Examinations Committee will comprise of:
 - a. Chair
 - b. Deputy Chair
 - c. The Chair of each of the Surgical Science Examination subcommittees (Anatomy, Pathology, Physiology)
 - d. The Chair of the Specialty Specific Examinations (Cardiothoracic Surgery, Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery, Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery, Urology and Vascular Surgery) as appointed by the respective STC/B in accordance with their Terms of Reference.
 - e. Co-opted members will be appointed by nomination from the respective STC/B or to ensure all specialties are represented for the prerequisite prevocational examinations.
- 4.2. RACS recognises the positive benefits from diverse membership. The SSE Committee will prioritise appointments to create diversity in gender, ethnicity and geography.
- 4.3. The Chair is appointed by RACS via an expression of interest process. The Education Committee (EC) confirms appointment.
- 4.4. The Deputy Chair is elected from and by the membership of the SSE Committee. The Deputy Chair will exercise all powers and duties of the Chair when requested by the Chair, or when the Chair is incapacitated.

5. Eligibility for appointment

- 5.1. One or more of the following criteria is required to be eligible for appointment to the SSE Committee.
 - a. A Fellow of RACS in good standing
 - b. In active clinical training and/or teaching in an accredited University
 - c. An expert who is a Fellow of another Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand or Australasian Specialist College.
 - d. An expert in the employment of a recognised Tertiary Institution in Australia or Aotearoa New Zealand.

6. Tenure of SSE Committee

- 6.1. The term of service is three (3) years, with an option to reappoint for a further two terms to a maximum of nine (9) years total.
- 6.2. Representatives appointed by the STC/B will remain a member of the SSE Committee while holding the position on the STC/B.
- 6.3. Members must maintain eligibility for the duration of their tenure.

7. Meetings, quorum and decisions

- 7.1. The SSE Committee will hold a minimum of 3 meetings per year.
- 7.2. College staff will be in attendance.
- 7.3. The quorum shall be the majority of membership.
- 7.4. Decisions shall be made by majority vote, i.e. a minimum of 50% plus one vote of members present at the meeting.
- 7.5. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair shall have the casting vote.
- 7.6. The SSE Committee may make a decision by circular resolution (by email).
- 7.7. Circular resolutions:
 - a. must be sent to all SSE Committee members and all SSE Committee members must be given the opportunity to participate in the decision;
 - b. must include a voting deadline;
 - c. must be withdrawn if any SSE Committee member requests by email before the voting deadline that the matter be dealt with in a meeting rather than by circular resolution;
 - d. must be responded to by email before the voting deadline for the vote to be valid, with all responses retained;
 - e. must have 75% of eligible SSE Committee members cast a vote in favour of the resolution for the resolution to pass;
 - f. are dated as passed on the voting deadline date if the requisite majority of valid votes in favour is received; and
 - g. must be noted and recorded in the minutes of the next scheduled SSE Committee meeting.

8. Accountability

- 8.1. The SSE Committee is accountable to Council through the Education Committee for the fulfillment of duties and responsibilities outlined in these terms of reference and for any other matters as delegated by Council.
- 8.2. The Chair of the SSE Committee is a member of RACS Committee of CSET and PSEC with full voting rights.

9. Governance

- 9.1. This document does not override or otherwise affect the authorities retained by Council.
- 9.2. The existing Terms of Reference and other documents governing the SSE Committee at the time these new documents are approved are replaced and have no further operation.

10. Associated documents

- 10.1. Regulations
 - a. Conduct of the Generic Surgical Sciences Examination for Prevocational Doctors
 - b. Conduct of the Cardiothoracic Surgical Sciences and Principles (CSSP) Examination
 - c. Conduct of the Surgical Sciences Examination in Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery
 - d. Conduct of the Plastic and Reconstructive Surgical Sciences and Principles (PRSSP) Examination
 - e. Conduct of the Surgical Sciences Examination in Urology
 - f. Conduct of the Surgical Sciences Examination in Vascular Surgery
- 10.2. Policies
 - a. Examiners Charter
- 10.3. Terms of Reference
 - a. Surgical Sciences Examinations Subcommittees
 - b. Committee of Surgical Education and Training
 - c. Prevocational and Skills Education Committee

11. Information

Title	Surgical Science Examinations Committee
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