

Division:	Education Development & Assessment	Ref. No.	EDA-EXA-028
Department:	Examinations		
Title:	Conduct of the Surgical Science Examination in Vascular Surgery		

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The policy provides the criteria for the conduct of the Surgical Science Examination (SSE) in Vascular Surgery.

The SSE in Vascular Surgery is a summative assessment of a candidate's knowledge, understanding and application of anatomy, physiology and pathology relevant to Vascular Surgery.

2. KEYWORDS

SSE, Vascular Surgery, Examinations, Anatomy, Pathology, Physiology

3. BODY OF POLICY

3.1. Format of the Examination

- 3.1.1. The examination consists of one paper containing 120 Multiple Choice Questions.
- 3.1.2. The examination is conducted over one day and runs for 2½ hours.

3.2. Eligibility to Present for the Examination

- 3.2.1. All trainees in the SET program in Vascular Surgery, or on interruption from training are eligible to apply.
- 3.2.2. Trainees must have satisfactorily completed SET 1 in Vascular Surgery before applying and presenting for this examination.
- 3.2.3. Trainees who have deferred commencement of training are not eligible to apply and present for the SSE in Vascular Surgery.

3.3. Application

- 3.3.1. The examination dates and application closing dates are published on the RACS website.
- 3.3.2. A candidate must apply to present for the SSE in Vascular Surgery through the online registration system, via the RACS website and pay the full examination fee at the time of registration.
- 3.3.3. An application outside the published timeframes will not be accepted.

3.4. Timeframe and Venue

- 3.4.1. The examination is offered twice annually, in February and June in venues across Australia and New Zealand.
- 3.4.2. A minimum of five registered candidates is required in order for each venue site to be used in Australia and New Zealand. A candidate from New Zealand will not be required to travel to Australia and vice versa as there will always be at least one examination conducted in each country.

3.5. Time Limitations and Number of Attempts

- 3.5.1. Trainees must pass this Examination by the completion of SET 3.
- 3.5.2. Trainees who fail to successfully complete the examination by the end of SET 3 will be dismissed from the training program.

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- 3.5.3. The examination is limited to four attempts. Failure to pass on the fourth attempt will result in dismissal.
- 3.5.4. Each sitting of the examination undertaken will count towards the maximum four (4) attempts, irrespective of whether the trainee is in active clinical training, deferred or on interruption.

3.6. Conduct of the Examination

- 3.6.1. The conduct of the examination is the responsibility of the Surgical Science Examination and Clinical Examination (SSE&CE) Committee.
- 3.6.2. The Board of Vascular Surgery is responsible for formulating the syllabus and setting the questions of the SSE in Vascular Surgery.
- 3.6.3. Invigilators play a central role to ensure that the security of the written components of the examination is maintained at all times.
- 3.6.4. Disruptive behaviour by a candidate in any segment of the examination will be investigated as misconduct. If a candidate is reported to be causing a disturbance during the examination, he/she will be removed from the examination room.
- a. The candidate involved will not be given extra time at the end of the examination for any reason including time taken to address the incident.
 - b. An examiner or other person supervising an examination segment will complete an incident report for consideration by the SSE&CE Committee.

3.7. Prohibited Equipment or Materials

- 3.7.1. Equipment or materials which are not permitted to be taken into an examination room by a candidate ("prohibited equipment or materials") includes but is not limited to:
- a. all watches, mobile phones, calculators, portable computers, tablets or other electronic audio-recording devices (e.g. audio-recording wrist bands, pens, spectacles, mp3 players, iPods, iPads, etc.).
 - b. notes, books, textbooks or other materials.
- 3.7.2. A candidate who takes prohibited equipment or materials into an examination room will be informed that he or she must leave the examination room immediately and will not be permitted to take further part in the examination.
- 3.7.3. The candidate's result for the examination will not be approved and any examination fees paid will be forfeited as per terms stipulated in clause 3.13
- 3.7.4. An examiner or other person supervising an examination segment will complete an incident report for consideration by the SSE&CE Committee.

3.8. Cheating

- 3.8.1. Cheating is defined as, but is not limited to:

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- a. gaining or attempting to gain access to any materials such as specimens or images, or patients involved in the examination, prior to an examination;
- b. copying, or allowing another candidate to copy, answers during the course of an examination;
- c. disseminating or making available questions or answers to another candidate or prospective candidate relating to the current examination;
- d. procuring knowledge of the questions, and their answers, from anyone before the examination.

3.8.2. An examiner or other person supervising an examination segment will, upon identifying suspected cheating during the examination, complete an incident report for consideration by the SSE&CE Committee.

3.9. Report of prohibited equipment or materials or cheating

3.9.1. Upon receipt of an incident report of the taking of prohibited equipment or materials into an examination room or cheating, the Chair of the SSE&CE Committee will transmit the report to the Board of Vascular Specialty for consideration pursuant to the RACS Misconduct policy and the Board's regulations;

3.9.2. If a report on the taking of prohibited equipment or materials into an examination room or cheating is received by the SSE&CE Committee, or the Board receives the report directly:

- a. prior to the examination taking place; the candidate's application for presenting to an examination will be withheld until such time an investigation has concluded; if an allegation is upheld in addition to any penalty imposed by the Board, the candidate's application will not be valid and the entire examination fee paid will be forfeited as per terms stipulated in clause 3.13 of this Policy.
- b. during the examinations and prior to the examination results being made available to candidates - the examination result will be withheld until such time as an investigation has concluded; if the allegation is upheld, in addition to any penalty imposed by the Board, the examination result will not be approved and the candidate will be regarded as having an unsatisfactory performance.
- c. after the examination results have been made available to candidates; if the allegation is upheld, in addition to any penalty imposed by the Board, the examination result will be withdrawn and the candidate will be regarded as having an unsatisfactory performance.

3.10. Privacy and Confidentiality

Any person involved with the SSE in Vascular Surgery and candidates presenting for the examination shall treat as strictly confidential any materials, images, content or discussions of any examination component viewed or discussed for the purposes of conducting the SSE in Vascular Surgery. Any breach of confidentiality by any candidate may be treated as cheating and dealt with according to RACS process.

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3.11. Special Circumstances Relating to Examinations

Refer to policies EDA-EXA-034 Special Consideration and EDA-EXA-035 Reasonable Adjustments for Disability.

3.12. Results

- 3.12.1. A panel of Fellows of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons specialists in Vascular Surgery will define and set the standards.
- 3.12.2. The results of the SSE in Vascular Surgery are approved by the SSE&CE Committee.
- 3.12.3. The candidate will be awarded a result of pass/fail only.
The candidate will be informed of his/her result via email.
- 3.12.4. Results of this examination will be communicated directly to the Board of Vascular Surgery

3.13. Withdrawals and Refunds

- 3.13.1. A candidate who wishes to withdraw from the examination must do so via the RACS website and online withdrawal form.
- 3.13.2. A candidate who wishes to withdraw from the examination must do via the RACS website and online withdrawal form.
- 3.13.3. A percentage of the examination fee will be refunded in accordance with the following timeline.
 - a. A candidate will be refunded 95% of the examination fee if notification of withdrawal from the examination is received prior to the application closing date.
 - b. A candidate will be refunded 50% of the examination fee if notification of withdrawal from the examination is received after the application closing date and more than 10 business days prior to the commencement of the first scheduled day of the examination.
- 3.13.4. A candidate will not receive a refund if notification of withdrawal from the examination is received with fewer than 10 business days prior to the commencement of the first scheduled day of the examination.
- 3.13.5. A candidate will not receive a refund for non-attendance of the examination.
- 3.13.6. A candidate will not receive a refund if he/she is prevented from participating in the examination as a result of taking prohibited equipment or materials into an examination room or cheating or misconduct.

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Policies

EDA-EXA-010	Conduct of the Fellowship Examinations
EDA-EXA-034	Special Consideration
EDA-EXA-035	Reasonable Adjustments for Disability
ETA-SET-007	Dismissal from Surgical Training
ETA-SET-010	Training Registration and Variation
ETA-SET-026	SET Misconduct

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Forms

Application for Special Consideration
Application for Reasonable Adjustment for Disability
Examination Rules for Candidates
Examinations Incident Report

Approver Education Board
Authoriser Council

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