

<b>Division:</b>	<b>Education Development &amp; Assessment</b>	<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>EDA-EXA-029</b>
<b>Department:</b>	<b>Examinations</b>		
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Conduct of the Surgical Science Examination in Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery</b>		

## 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The policy provides the criteria for the conduct of the Surgical Science Examination (SSE) in Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery (OHNS).

The SSE (OHNS) is a summative assessment of a candidate's knowledge, understanding and application of anatomy, physiology and pathology relevant to Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery.

## 2. KEYWORDS

SSE, Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery, Examinations

## 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 Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery, having completed all prerequisites in 3.3 are eligible to apply
- 3.2.2. A trainee who has deferred commencement of training or has interrupted his/her training program and has completed the prerequisites in 3.3 is eligible to apply.

### 3.3. Prerequisites

- 3.3.1. It is a requirement that a trainee attempt the GSSE either before or at the same time as the SSE (OHNS).
- 3.3.2. The Generic Surgical Science Examination (GSSE) and the SSE (OHNS) can be attempted at the one sitting or at separate sittings.

### 3.4. Application

- 3.4.1. The examination dates and application closing dates are published on the RACS website.
- 3.4.2. A candidate must apply for the examination through the online registration system, via the RACS website and pay the full examination fee at the time of registration.
- 3.4.3. An application outside the published timeframes will not be accepted.

### 3.5. Timeframe and Venue

- 3.5.1. The examination is offered twice annually, in February and June in venues across Australia and New Zealand.
- 3.5.2. A minimum of 5 registered candidates is required in order for each 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.

<b>Division:</b>	<b>Education Development &amp; Assessment</b>	<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>EDA-EXA-029</b>
<b>Department:</b>	<b>Examinations</b>		
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Conduct of the Surgical Science Examination in Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery</b>		

### 3.6. Time Limitations and Number of Attempts

- 3.6.1. The examination must be passed within the two (2) year period from the commencement of the trainee's first clinical rotation or period of accredited research. The two year time limit will be extended by that period where a trainee has interrupted their training and during which time sittings of the SSE (OHNS) are held, unless one or both of those sittings have been attempted.
- 3.6.2. A maximum of four (4) attempts at the SSE (OHNS) are allowed by any individual trainee. This includes sittings of the examination while in clinical training, accredited research, on interruption or deferred from training.
- 3.6.3. Trainees who have not passed the examination after four (4) attempts or within the period specified in 3.6.1 (whichever is sooner) will be dismissed from the training program.

### 3.7. Conduct of the Examination

- 3.7.1. The conduct of the examination is the responsibility of the Surgical Science Examination and Clinical Examinations (SSE&CE) Committee.
- 3.7.2. The Board of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery is responsible for formulating the syllabus and setting the questions of the SSE (OHNS).
- 3.7.3. Invigilators play a central role to ensure that the security of the written components of the examination is maintained at all times.
- 3.7.4. 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.

### 3.8. Prohibited Equipment or Materials

- 3.8.1. 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.
- 3.8.2. 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.
- 3.8.3. 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 3.14.

Authorised By: **Director, Education Development & Assessment**

**Original Issue:** February 2014

Document Owner: **Manager, Examinations**

**Version:** 5

**Approval Date:** January 2018

<b>Division:</b>	<b>Education Development &amp; Assessment</b>	<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>EDA-EXA-029</b>
<b>Department:</b>	<b>Examinations</b>		
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Conduct of the Surgical Science Examination in Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery</b>		

- 3.8.4. An examiner or other person supervising an examination segment will complete an incident report for consideration by the SSE&CE Committee.

### 3.9. Cheating

- 3.9.1. Cheating is defined as, but is not limited to:
- 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.
- 3.9.2. 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.

### 3.10. Report of prohibited equipment or materials or cheating

- 3.10.1. 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 OHNS for consideration pursuant to the RACS Misconduct policy and the Board's regulations;
- 3.10.2. 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 if the Board of OHNS 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 of OHNS, the candidate's application will not be valid and the entire examination fee paid will be forfeited as per terms stipulated in clause 3.14 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 of OHNS, 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 of OHNS, the examination result will be withdrawn and the candidate will be regarded as having an unsatisfactory performance.

### 3.11. Privacy and Confidentiality

Any person involved with the SSE (OHNS) 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

Authorised By:	<b>Director, Education Development &amp; Assessment</b>	<b>Original Issue:</b>	February 2014
Document Owner:	<b>Manager, Examinations</b>	<b>Version:</b>	5
		<b>Approval Date:</b>	January 2018
		<b>Review Date:</b>	January 2021

<b>Division:</b>	<b>Education Development &amp; Assessment</b>	<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>EDA-EXA-029</b>
<b>Department:</b>	<b>Examinations</b>		
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Conduct of the Surgical Science Examination in Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery</b>		

conducting the SSE in Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery. Any breach of confidentiality by any candidate may be treated as cheating and dealt with according to RACS process.

### 3.12. Special Circumstances Relating to Examinations

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

### 3.13. Results

- 3.13.1. A panel of Fellows of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons specialists in Otolaryngology Head and Neck will define and set the standards.
- 3.13.2. The results of the SSE (OHNS) are approved by the SSE & CE Committee.
- 3.13.3. Candidates will be awarded a result of pass/fail only.
- 3.13.4. The candidate will be informed of his/her result via email.
- 3.13.5. Results of this examination will be communicated to the Board of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery.

### 3.14. Withdrawals and Refunds

- 3.14.1. A candidate who wishes to withdraw from the examination must do so via the RACS website and online withdrawal form.
- 3.14.2. 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.
- 3.14.3. A candidate will not receive a refund if withdrawal from the examination is received with fewer than 10 business days prior to the commencement of the first scheduled day of the examination.
- 3.14.4. A candidate will not receive a refund for non-attendance of the examination.
- 3.14.5. 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	Trainee Registration and Variation

Authorised By:	<b>Director, Education Development &amp; Assessment</b>	<b>Original Issue:</b>	February 2014
Document Owner:	<b>Manager, Examinations</b>	<b>Version:</b>	5
		<b>Approval Date:</b>	January 2018
		<b>Review Date:</b>	January 2021

**POLICY**

ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

<b>Division:</b>	<b>Education Development &amp; Assessment</b>	<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>EDA-EXA-029</b>
<b>Department:</b>	<b>Examinations</b>		
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Conduct of the Surgical Science Examination in Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery</b>		

ETA-SET-026      SET Misconduct Policy

**Forms**

Application for Special Consideration  
Application for Reasonable Adjustment for Disability  
Examination Rules for Candidates (Schedule 1)  
Examinations Incident Report

**Approver**      Education Board**Authoriser**      Council

---

**Authorised By:**      **Director, Education Development & Assessment****Document Owner:**      **Manager, Examinations****Original Issue:**      February 2014**Version:**      5**Approval Date:**      January 2018**Review Date:**      January 2021