

Division:	Education Development & Assessment	Ref. No.	REG-2075
Department:	Examinations		
Title:	Conduct of the Plastic and Reconstructive Surgical Science and Principles Examination		

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The policy provides the criteria for the conduct of the Plastic and Reconstructive Surgical Science and Principles (PRSSP) Examination.

The examination is a summative assessment of a candidate's knowledge, understanding and application of the basic sciences, anatomy, general patient care and surgical principles relevant to Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery early in a trainee's surgical training.

2. KEYWORDS

Plastic and Reconstructive Surgical Science, Eligibility, Prerequisites, Application, Conduct, Time Limitations, Results.

3. BODY OF POLICY

3.1. Format of the PRSSP Examination

- 3.1.1. The examination consists of two papers (Paper A and Paper B) each containing 100 Type X (True/False) multiple choice questions.
- 3.1.2. The examination is conducted over two consecutive days. Each paper runs for 2½ hours.

3.2. Eligibility to Present for the Examination

- 3.2.1. All trainees in the SET program in Plastic and Reconstructive 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

A trainee must have successfully completed the following prior to presenting for this examination:

- 3.3.1. The Generic Surgical Science Examination (GSSE)
- 3.3.2. The SET Clinical Examination.

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 to present 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. Venue and Dates

The examination is offered twice annually, in June and October in venues across Australia and New Zealand.

3.6. Time Limitations and Number of Attempts

- 3.6.1. The trainee must pass this examination by the completion of SET 4.

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- 3.6.2. The trainee who fails to successfully complete the examination by SET 4 will be dismissed from the training program.
- 3.6.3. The examination is limited to four attempts. Failure to pass on the fourth attempt will result in dismissal.
- 3.6.4. 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.

3.7. Conduct

- 3.7.1. The conduct of the PRSSP examination is the responsibility of the Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Specialty Court of Examiners and the regional surgical supervisors or others as deemed appropriate by both the Australian and New Zealand Boards of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery.
- 3.7.2. Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Specialty Court of Examiners is responsible for setting the questions and defining the standards of the examination.
- 3.7.3. Curriculum areas covered in the examination include basic science, anatomy, general patient care and surgical principles.
- 3.7.4. Invigilators play a central role to ensure that security of the written components of the examination is maintained at all times.
- 3.7.5. 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 Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Specialty Court of Examiners.

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") include but are 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.

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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.

3.8.4. An examiner or other person supervising an examination segment will complete an incident report for consideration by the Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Specialty Court of Examiners.

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 Board of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery.

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 Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Specialty Court of Examiners will transmit the report to the relevant national Board of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery 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 Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Specialty Court of Examiners 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 Training Board, the candidate's application will not be valid and the entire examination fee paid will be forfeited as per terms stipulated in clause 3.14 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, the examination result will not be approved and the candidate will be regarded as having an unsatisfactory performance.

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- 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.

3.11. Privacy and Confidentiality

Any person involved with the PRSSP examination 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 PRSSP examination. 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

Refer to Exceptional Circumstances and Special Consideration Policy.

3.13. Results

- 3.13.1. The results are approved by examiners of the Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Specialty Court of Examiners.
- 3.13.2. The candidate will be awarded a result of pass/fail only.
- 3.13.3. Both papers A and B are considered to determine a candidate's overall result.
- 3.13.4. The candidate will be informed of his/her result via email.
- 3.13.5. Results of this examination are communicated directly to the relevant national Board of Plastic and Reconstructive 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 notification of withdrawal from the examination is received 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

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4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Policies

Exceptional Circumstances and Special Consideration Policy
 Conduct of the Fellowship Examinations
 Dismissal from Surgical Training
 Trainee Registration and Variation
 SET Misconduct

Other

Application for Special Consideration
 Examination Rules for Candidates
 Examinations Incident Report

Approver Education Committee
Authoriser Council

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