



CMSA

The Colleges of Medicine of South Africa NPC

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EXAMINATIONS & CREDENTIALS

INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR CANDIDATES FOR THE FCOG(SA) FINAL EXAMINATION



Compiled by COG(SA) Final Examination Committee:

Approved by the Council of the College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

- 1 Introduction**
- 2 Portfolio of learning**
- 3 Dissertation**
- 4 Electronic typed examinations**
- 5 Online clinical examination**
- 6 Criteria for invitation to the clinical examinations**
- 7 Criteria for Final examination success**

1. INTRODUCTION

The primary function of the College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists is to establish an objective and fair examination to ensure that high standards of training are maintained. This document outlines the College of Medicine of South Africa (CMSA) requirements for the candidate portfolio and provides an overview of the FCOG Final examination structure and expectations.

2. PORTFOLIO OF LEARNING

- 2.1 The portfolio must give a written summary of the training and clinical experience of the candidate. This must include all clinical activities, procedures and interventions, clinical rotations and projects undertaken by the candidate, as well as presentations given and attended. The Head of Department must certify the training time. Portfolio templates are available electronically and may be downloaded from the CMSA website.
- 2.2 The portfolio must give the examiner an indication of the continuous development and assessment of the candidate. The date of all entries into the portfolio must be completed in chronological order and candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with the required procedures, and the prerequisite minimum number of procedures, that must be performed before the portfolio can be submitted for consideration. All this information is available in the regulations on the CMSA website.
- 2.3 It is the responsibility of the Head of the Department to confirm the training time, training activities, academic activities, and all other procedures entered in the portfolio by the candidate. To assist in this function, the portfolio contains space for certification by Heads of Units as well as Head of Department. All these components must be countersigned by the respective unit heads, and finally by the Head of the Department. This must also include ultrasound training and experience in family planning.
- 2.4 The portfolio must be submitted to the CMSA before the examination in an electronic form. The HPCSA registrar training number of the candidate must be included on these pages. It will then be sent to examiners whose primary function is to confirm that the contents of the portfolio meet the expected minimum requirements which will allow the candidate to sit the FCOG(SA) Final examinations. A minimum of 36 months training time (a minimum of 48 months if the candidate started registrar teaching after 31 March 2025) is required before applying to attempt the Final examination. If any of the stipulated procedures have not been performed or the candidate has not been able to achieve the minimum number required, the Head of the Department should provide an explanation. The expectation is that the candidate completes all the procedures before applying to attempt the Final examination.
- 2.5 The CMSA will inform the candidate whether the portfolio is acceptable or whether any additional information is required.
- 2.6 The portfolio will be valid after acceptance provided no additional experience is required. If, however, prior to attempting the Final examination, new requirements for clinical experience are necessary, candidates will have to provide confirmation/proof that they have completed these requirements. The Head of Department must certify the additional requirements have been met.
- 2.7 Reflective Cases: There should be four cases, two in Obstetrics and two in Gynaecology, each with a critical assessment of a real case. The total length of each case should be approximately 800 words. There should only be 3-5 key references.

3. DISSERTATION

An MMed dissertation is required by the HPCSA for registration as a specialist Obstetrician and Gynaecologist. The dissertation will be submitted for examination by the training university and does *not need to be submitted* to the CMSA. However, the Head of Department of the training institution must certify that research was performed by the candidate and fulfils all the necessary criteria.

4. ELECTRONIC TYPED EXAMINATIONS

4.1 The electronic typed exams aim to test knowledge at various levels:

- knowledge
- insight
- application
- analysis and integration
- synthesis
- evaluation

4.2 The online typed examinations will assess factual recall, insight, integration of knowledge, utilization of knowledge and clinical problem-solving. A further objective is that the typed examinations serve as a screening mechanism for invitation to the clinical component of the examination.

4.3 Two online typed exams of 3 hours each will be taken, one on Gynaecology and one on Obstetrics. A comprehensive range of Obstetrics and Gynaecology topics will be included in the exams.

4.4 Each exam will consist of single best answer (SBA's) questions.

4.5 Prerequisites for entry into the FCOG Final Examinations

- FCOG Primary examination success
- FCOG Intermediate examination success
- PORTFOLIO is approved CMSA prior to examinations

4.6 Part I/Primary and/or Intermediate will no longer expire provided the candidate is affiliated with a training platform at the time of applying for Final examinations. If the candidate left a training program for more than 5 years and wants to register, the candidate should provide a letter of motivation to the President of the College from the relevant HOD that demonstrates the ongoing clinical and academic training of the candidate. The council will decide whether that candidate can enter the examination process or may need further clinical training.

5. CRITERIA FOR INVITATION TO THE CLINICAL EXAMINATIONS

5.1 The typed examinations will be assessed using a formal standard-setting process. The specific method of standard setting will be determined by the Education and Assessment Unit of the CMSA.

5.2 The pass mark for each examination will be determined through this standard-setting process and is specific to each examination sitting.

5.3 Candidates must pass each section of the examination (Obstetrics and Gynaecology) independently to be eligible for admission to the clinical examination.

6. CLINICAL EXAMINATION

6.1 Candidates invited to the clinical examination will be notified individually by the CMSA

6.2 An online examination will be scheduled consisting of three distinct components.

- A practically orientated, focussed short answer question section (previously named an OSCE) will consist of 14-16 problems. This section of the examination will have a pass mark of 50%
- No condonation of marks will be considered.
- An Obstetrics focused clinical case discussion consisting of four clinical case scenarios where the candidate will be supplied with a short description of a clinical scenario and be allowed 15 minutes to prepare before a 15-minute online examination by an examiner. This section of the examination will have a pass mark of 50%
- No condonation of marks will be considered.
- A Gynaecology focused clinical case discussion consisting of four clinical case scenarios where the candidate will be supplied with a short description of a clinical scenario and be allowed 15 minutes to prepare before a 15-minute online examination by an examiner. This section of the examination will have a pass mark of 50%
- No condonation of marks will be considered.

7. CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

7.1 To be successful in the overall examination the candidate must pass:

- The online typed Obstetrics examination
- The online typed Gynaecology examination
- The practically orientated focussed short answer question section
- The Gynaecology focused clinical case discussions and
- The Obstetrics focused clinical case discussions

7.2 No condonation of marks will be considered by the examiner panel for borderline cases.

7.3 Unsuccessful candidates may request feedback from the College via their HOD. Candidate must request feedback directly from the CMSA who will provide a report of the candidate's performance to the relevant HOD.