

COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF EAST, CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

**Introduction**

The College of Surgeons of East, central and Southern Africa (COSECSA) is the brainchild of the Association of Surgeons of East Africa (ASEA). The College was inaugurated in Nairobi in December 1999 during the 50th anniversary of ASEA. COSECSA offers Membership and Fellowship of the College.

MCS(ECSA)

The Membership Examination is designed to assess the basic principles of surgery and a broad knowledge of surgery in general. It is designed to identify surgical trainees who can recognise and deal with the wide variety of problems that may be met by trainees. He or she should be able to take responsibility for emergency surgical admissions, deal independently with life threatening situations due to trauma or critical illness, and be able to accurately diagnose and plan treatment of a wide variety of surgical complaints.

Membership of the College does not confer specialist status but signifies that the member is ready to pursue higher surgical training in a particular specialty. Higher surgical training in the chosen specialty is examined by the College's Fellowship examination, which recognises specialist status.

Registration for Training

Applications to register for training must be made on COSECSA application forms which are available from the College offices or from national examination secretaries. These should be completed and sent to the College accompanied by copies of certificates showing primary qualifications in medicine and surgery. A registration fee of \$50 should be given to the Country Training Coordinator (CTC). On receipt of the registration fee, the CTC will give the candidate:

1. A copy of the examination regulations and syllabus
2. A log book
3. A list of recognised posts
4. assessment forms to be filled in at the end of every training post by the trainee and the supervising consultant.
5. A recommended reading list
6. A study guide on cd
7. A calendar of examinations and sites
8. an application to sit the examination

Training Requirements Before being admitted to membership of the college candidates will be required to have become registered trainees (see [Registration](#)). They will also be required to have satisfactorily completed two years of basic surgical training in recognised posts in approved centres. This training should take place after full registration with the medical council of the country in which the candidate is working. The two years should comprise at least six months of general surgery including emergencies and at least six months of orthopaedics including trauma. The remainder of the time may be spent in any surgical specialty (including general surgery and orthopaedics).

Before being admitted to membership of the college candidates will be expected to have successfully completed a Basic Surgical Skills course, and an acute care or trauma course. Proof of such courses

should be brought to the oral examination outlined below.

During the two year training period candidates should keep a log book prospectively recording all their training experience. This log book should be signed by the consultants supervising the recognised posts. The book should also contain details of any courses attended. The book should be available for inspection at any time by the CTC.

Examination Format

1. The examination will comprise the following:
2 multiple choice (MCQ) papers which can be taken in the candidates own country. The first paper will be predominantly on the principles of surgery in General (sections 1 – 9 of the syllabus) and the second paper will be primarily on systematic surgery (sections 10 – 20 of the syllabus).
2. An oral examination (viva) which will take place approximately 3 months after the multiple choice exam, in a country and at a site designated by the college. The oral exam will cover critical care, principles of surgery including operative surgery and applied anatomy, clinical surgery and pathology, based on the experience demonstrated in the candidate's logbook.
3. A clinical examination which will take place at the same time and at the same site as the oral. It covers the full range of specialties included in the syllabus.

Candidates who are not successful in the MCQ examinations will not be invited to the oral and clinical examinations. Candidates who fail one of the MCQ examinations only need to resit the one they failed. Candidates who pass the MCQ examination but fail the oral or clinical examinations, do not need to retake the MCQ, but need to apply to retake both the oral and the clinical examinations at a later sitting on payment of a further exam fee.

Application to sit Examinations

Candidates who are registered as trainees (see 2 above) may apply to sit the examination at the end of their second year of training provided

that they have completed 20 months of training by the time they sit the multiple choice examination and 24 months of training by the time they sit the oral examination. Candidates should send a completed examination application form to the college with the examination fee of \$200. On receipt of the form and the fee, candidates will be informed of the precise times, dates and places for the exams. Candidates should bring their logbooks and proof of identity to the examination.

If a candidate withdraws from an exam more than 12 weeks before the exam is due, then the fee can be transferred to a later examination date. Fees will not normally be returned if the candidate withdraws permanently.

Candidates who fail one or more parts of the MCQ examination will need to reapply for the exam and pay a further fee of \$100. They only need to resit the part(s) they failed. Candidates who pass the multiple choice examination but fail the oral or clinical examinations will be required to resit both the oral and clinical parts but will need to reapply for this and pay a reduced fee of \$100. Candidates must pass the examination within four years of their first attempt. After this they will not be allowed to resit.

Syllabus. Download the Syllabus as a [Word Document](#) (486KB) or PDF.

MCS Exam Application Form	Word Document (23KB)	PDF (33KB)
MCS Trainee Assessment Form	Word Document (34KB)	PDF (57KB)
MCS Training Post-Assessment Form	Word Document (36KB)	PDF (37KB)
MCS Training Registration Form	Word Document (29KB)	PDF (39KB)
MCS Logbook View Sample Page	Word Document (304KB)	PDF (99KB)
MCS Logbook Extra Page	Word Document (30KB)	PDF (47KB)