

FAQs

OSCE changes

Why is the RACGP changing the assessment and delivery of the OSCE?

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented the RACGP with an opportunity to fast-track plans to modernise the assessment of GPs in training and the delivery of the OSCE.

As our response to the pandemic continues, it's clear we are no longer able to reliably hold an OSCE examination in 2020. These exams require several hundred examiners, candidates and support staff to gather in confined clinical spaces all across Australia. This could pose a risk to the health and safety of all involved.

Just as the pandemic is forcing many other organisations to change and adapt, so too is it pushing the RACGP to fast-track a modernisation of our OSCE.

While the decision to cease running the OSCEs will be a surprise to many, modernising this Fellowship exam is something the RACGP has been planning for some years, with input from our advisory committees and external stakeholders.

The RACGP has been undertaking the OSCE for 24 years and in that time, the format and delivery of 14 highly structured clinical cases conducted with examiners and role players has not fundamentally changed.

We want to deliver a modernised assessment that focuses on competency and is more educationally aligned to what GPs in training are learning.

The modernisation of the OSCE will bring it in line with modern assessment principles, the RACGP Curriculum and the RACGP Vocational Training Standards, by being more competency based.

What will the new format look like?

The OSCE in its traditional format will no longer be held and we will move to quickly develop a transitional assessment before starting afresh in 2021.

We will share an update on the transitional assessment for 2020 as soon as possible.

We are moving as quickly as we can confirm our plans for the upcoming November assessment.

The decision about the assessment to come in November will be made in the coming weeks and our priority will be to communicate this to all those enrolled or looking to enrol in the forthcoming OSCEs.

Who is involved in designing the transitional format?

After years working as an RACGP examiner and censor, our recently appointed General Manager of Education Services Dr Genevieve Yates is overseeing the project to deliver a modernised assessment.

A full time project manager and a part time clinical lead, both with considerable expertise and experience in assessment development and delivery (including remote clinical assessment delivery), have been engaged to lead the 2020 Clinical Assessment Project.

They are being supported by Acting Censor-in-Chief, Dr Tess Van Duuren and National Clinical Lead of Assessment, Dr Gary Butler.

The RACGP is committed to ensuring that the voice of GPs in training is heard when it comes to decisions that affect them. The new Faculty for GPs in Training through Inaugural chair, Dr Krystyna de Lange plus key stakeholders will be consulted on developments relating to both the transitional format and new format.

When will GPs in training and other impacted groups find out more about the new-look OSCE?

The decision about the November 2020 assessment will be made in the coming weeks and our priority will be to communicate this to all those enrolled or looking to enrol in the forthcoming OSCEs.

How will current GPs in training be impacted by the change?

We recognise this decision will have a significant impact on our GPs in training and will work with Training Organisations and those impacted directly.

GPs in training preparing to sit the November OSCE will sit a transitional assessment. Passing this assessment will count towards your requirements for Fellowship just like passing the OSCE would.

GPs in training who were preparing to sit an OSCE in 2021 will participate in a completely new Fellowship clinical exam to meet their requirements for Fellowship. This assessment will better test their competency to work unsupervised in general practice than the current OSCE format

Will impacted GPs in training and other doctors receive special consideration when they sit the assessment in November?

Once we know what the transitional assessment will look like, we'll be able to consider a range of options to best support those doctors and GPs in training enrolled to sit the clinical exam.

How will other doctors preparing to sit an OSCE be impacted?

Approximately one third of RACGP OSCE exam candidates are not GPs in training. We recognise these doctors will also be affected by our decision to modernise the OSCE. We will work with those impacted directly.

Doctors preparing to sit the November OSCE will sit a transitional assessment.

Doctors preparing to sit an OSCE in 2021 will participate in a completely new Fellowship clinical exam. This assessment will better test their competency to work unsupervised in general practice than the current OSCE format.

How is the RACGP supporting GPs in training and other impacted doctors?

We are moving as quickly as we can confirm our plans for the upcoming November assessment.

The decision about the assessment to come in November will be made in the coming weeks and our priority will be to communicate this to all those enrolled or looking to enrol in the forthcoming OSCEs.

We are also engaging with key stakeholders including Training Organisations, our examiners and those RACGP staff whose roles currently support the delivery of the OSCEs.

All GPs in training and other affected doctors can contact the RACGP to discuss the OSCE.

When will the new-look OSCE be held?

A transitional assessment will be held in November 2020.

The completely new clinical exam will be held in March 2021.

Will the new clinical assessment cost the same as the OSCE?

We are reviewing the cost of the new clinical assessment. We will communicate decisions around assessment cost to all enrolled or looking to enrol in the forthcoming OSCEs as soon as possible.

How can I contact the RACGP to speak to someone about my upcoming OSCE?

In the first instance you can call the RACGP on 1800 474 247 and our team will be able to help or direct you to the right person to get your specific questions answered.