



# General Information for Assessment of Procedural and Surgical Skills (APSS)

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The *Assessment of Procedural and Surgical Skills* is designed to provide a structured feedback format for the assessment of knowledge and technical proficiency regarding a procedural or surgical skill. It is most effective when used to assess formatively before a final summative assessment.

**Formative Assessment** is assessment *for* learning and is intended to assist the learner modify his or her thinking, behaviour or performance for the purpose of improving learning. Formative assessment:

- **Addresses** clinical skills and professional qualities which need to be demonstrated.
- **Informs** trainees about their progress as an incremental developmental learning process.
- **Assesses** measurable criteria.
- **Prepares** Trainees for the Summative Assessment which assesses their progress and performance towards achieving competencies required to obtain Fellowship.

**Summative Assessment** is an assessment *of* learning and contributes to the overall assessment of a trainee as per their competency to perform specific procedural and surgical skills independently as appropriate to their current stage of training.

## Note to Trainees:

Trainees are encouraged to initiate a formative APSS when they would like to receive feedback on their performance throughout their training. When a trainee feels confident in being assessed as 'performed this procedure with minimal input', they may initiate a summative APSS. Trainees are encouraged to complete numerous formative assessment APSS in preparation, and it is recommended that trainees complete a minimum of 3 for each individual procedure before asking a consultant to undertake a final summative assessment.

Each procedure must be assessed on a separate form. The assessor **MUST** discuss this assessment with the trainee following the procedure and before signing the form.

## Note to Assessors:

For **formative** and **summative** assessments of procedures that need to be signed off by the end of Year 1 and 2, Advanced Trainees may act as assessors.

For all other procedures, the assessor must be a RANZCOG Fellow - either the Training Supervisor or an appropriate consultant who works with the trainee. A nominated senior midwife can assess competence in performing a spontaneous vaginal birth.

When agreeing to act as an assessor, you should note that the College has an expectation that the process involves discussion of the assessment with the trainee following completion of this form. You are asked to rate the trainee on the criteria that comprise this assessment and assess the trainee according to the descriptors. Each assessment should be based on observing the trainee performing the relevant procedure **ONCE**, not several times.

When completing a **summative** assessment, you are asked to indicate whether the trainee has:

- Performed the procedure with minimal input from assessor.  
**NOTE** A trainee must achieve a minimum ranking of 7 in all listed skill areas.



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If the trainee does not meet this criterion, the APSS form should not be submitted. Other comments relating to the performance of trainees during the assessment may also be included but these should be relevant to their year level; you are not assessing him/her as if they were a consultant. Each procedure must be assessed on a separate form.

It is useful to ask the trainee to outline how they will do the procedure and what precautions they will take, before they start the procedure. To assess clinical knowledge, understanding and reasoning related to performing the procedure on a patient (or in a skill lab), Assessors could prompt the trainee on:

- What are the contraindications, benefits, risks, complications, and alternatives (together with the pros and cons) of the procedure?
- What should be discussed with patient and family? Has valid and adequate informed consent been obtained?
- Trouble-shooting - What problems can occur during the performance of a procedure like this and what would be your approach to dealing with them?
- Regarding potential post procedure problems, how do you minimize risk to the patient?
- Outline the relevant anatomy and relate it to the issues outlined above if relevant.

**Please remember that the most important aspect of this assessment is the constructive feedback provide to the trainee after completing the APSS.**

## Once the Form is completed:

- Assessor discusses assessment with trainee.
- Form is signed by Assessor, Trainee and Training Supervisor (if not the Assessor).
- Submitting completed forms:
  - (1) Trainee logs into My.RANZCOG.
  - (2) Create a new APSS record via the "Add New" tab on the Additional Requirements page prior to the due date. (Formative assessments can also be submitted; however, these do not require College review.)
  - (3) Upload your signed APSS form (ie the hard copy version) and record the date of the assessment.
  - (4) Click "Submit" to send the APSS to the College for review.
  - (5) Once your APSS form has been reviewed by the College and assessed as satisfactory, the status of the APSS record will change to Completed.