



## NEUROSURGERY ANATOMY EXAMINATION 2024 INFORMATION AND RULES

### 1.0 CHANGES TO THE EXAMINATION AS PART OF SELECTION

- 1.1 The Neurosurgery Anatomy Examination (**Examination**) is part of the selection process for the Surgical Education and Training Program in Neurosurgery.
- 1.2 Commencing in 2024 (for the 2025 intake) applicants must have achieved the pass mark of 70% in the Examination at the time of application. As such, it will now become an eligibility requirement to apply rather than being sat during the selection process.
- 1.3 The Minimum Standard (70%), weighting in selection (30%) and use as a short-listing tool during the selection process will continue and will be as outlined in the Selection Regulations.
- 1.4 Examination results will now be valid for 2 selection years commencing from the 2024 Examination.
- 1.5 All applicants applying for selection in 2024 (for the 2025 intake) must sit the 2024 Examination and only that score will be used during the 2024 selection process.
- 1.6 For all subsequent years, applicants will have the choice whether they sit the current year Examination or rely on the previous year Examination score for selection purposes. If they choose to sit both years, their best score will be used.
- 1.7 For clarity, the Examination results that can be used as part of the selection process will be as follows:
  - 2024 selection process (2025 intake): 2024 Examination results only
  - 2025 selection process (2026 intake): 2024 or 2025 Examination results
  - 2026 selection process (2027 intake): 2025 or 2026 Examination results
- 1.8 Potential selection applicants can apply for and present for the Examination **but are not required to then proceed with an application for selection that year and may not be eligible to apply for selection that year.**
- 1.9 This change is to benefit applicants as they can consider their score in the Examination when deciding whether to proceed with a selection application. This is important given that applicants have a maximum number of selection applications. This also avoids unnecessary applications and expenditure to applicants who do not achieve the pass mark in the Examination.

### 2.0 KEY EXAMINATION DATES, TIMES, AND VENUES

- 2.1 The key dates for the 2024 Examination are as follows:
  - Registration Opens: 12 noon AEDT Monday, 20 November 2023
  - Registration Closes: 12 noon AEDT Monday, 11 December 2023
  - Examination Date: Wednesday, 21 February 2024
  - Examination Results Released: Prior to 5pm AEDT Friday, 1 March 2024

2.2 The list of venues and times can be found on the NSA website at [www.nsa.org.au](http://www.nsa.org.au).

2.3 Modifications and adjustments may be necessary in response to exceptional circumstances or events beyond the Neurosurgical Society of Australasia's control. In such instances, applicants registered for the Examination will be advised as soon as is reasonably practical.

### 3.0 ELIGIBILITY TO PRESENT FOR THE EXAMINATION

3.1 The eligibility to register and present for the Examination is not the same as the eligibility to apply for the selection process. The Selection Regulations apply for the selection process, and it is the applicant's responsibility to review the selection process eligibility requirements before deciding whether to register and present for the Examination.

3.2 The eligibility requirements for the 2024 Examination are as follows:

- Applicants in Australia must have general (unconditional) registration with the Medical Board of Australia.
- Applicants in Aotearoa New Zealand must have general scope registration or restricted general scope registration in Neurosurgery in Aotearoa New Zealand with the Medical Council of New Zealand.
- Applicants must have completed a minimum 10 weeks' full-time equivalent dedicated neurosurgical experience in Australia or Aotearoa New Zealand in the three years immediately prior to the closing date for registration for the Examination.
- Applicants must pay the Examination fee of \$AUD550 at the time of registration. This fee is non-refundable.

3.3 It is the applicant's responsibility to make the appropriate travel arrangements and to meet any costs incurred in attending the Examination.

### 4.0 EXAMINATION GENERAL INFORMATION

4.1 The Examination will be a single paper with 60 multiple choice neurosurgery anatomy questions and scored out of a total of 240 marks.

4.2 The Examination will run for 100 minutes.

4.3 Where a manifest error is identified in a question after the Examination and prior to the release of the Examination results, that question will be removed from the Examination scoring and the total marks for the Examination, and any reference in the Selection Regulations to the total marks, will be adjusted accordingly. A manifest error is an error that is obvious and indisputable.

4.4 The recommended reading is Last's Anatomy, Regional and Applied, 9th Edition, 1998 (reprinted 2003) – McMinn R.M.H., Churchill Livingstone and/or Last's Anatomy - Revised Edition 9th Edition (2019) – McMinn R.M.H., Churchill Livingstone.

4.5 Applicants must score the Minimum Standard of 70.00% (168 out of 240 marks) for the 2024 Examination to be eligible to apply for selection (this is not the only eligibility requirement to apply for selection).

4.6 For applicants satisfying the Minimum Standard, the Examination score will be recorded as a percentage. The selection tool weighting will then be applied which is 30%. As such, the applicant will receive a selection score for the Examination out of a maximum 30 points.

4.7 Applicants will be provided with their score for the Examination prior to the Opening Date for selection applications. Applicants will not be provided with additional feedback or a copy of the Examination paper.

- 4.8 The Examination will use two different types of multiple-choice questions being:
- Type 1, which has a statement and four possible true-false answer stems. Applicants respond to each of the four answer stems as either true or false.
  - Type 2, which has a statement and four possible answer stems. There is an answer key which has five options. Applicants select a single letter from the key.
- 4.9 Each Type 1 question will be worth 4 marks (one for each of the four answer stems in the question). The Examination will have 20 Type 1 questions.
- 4.10 Each Type 2 question will be worth 4 marks. The Examination will have 40 Type 2 questions.

## 5.0 EXAMPLE OF TYPE 1 QUESTIONS

For each Type 1 question; the applicant must provide a true or false response for each of the four answer stems. Two example questions are provided below.

Example question 1: The foramen rotundum

- opens into the pterygopalatine fossa
- transmits the accessory meningeal artery
- transmits the maxillary division of the trigeminal nerve
- lies medial to the anterior clinoid process

Example question 2: The zygomatic bone articulates with the

- frontal bone
- temporal bone
- maxilla
- greater wing of the sphenoid

## 6.0 EXAMPLE OF TYPE 2 QUESTIONS

For Type 2 questions; each question has a statement and four possible answer stems. There is an answer key which has five options. Applicants select a single letter from the key. Two example questions are provided below.

The answer key is:

- 1 is the only correct response
- 2 and 4 are the only correct responses
- 1, 2 and 3 are the only correct responses
- 4 is the only correct response
- All responses are correct

Example: The trigeminal ganglion

- receives blood supply from the accessory meningeal artery
- lies partly in the dural wall of the cavernous sinus
- is bathed partly by cerebrospinal fluid
- lies completely in Meckel's cave

Example: Structures which pass between the external and the internal carotid arteries include

- the stylohyoid ligament
- the glossopharyngeal nerve
- a portion of the parotid gland
- the stylopharyngeus muscle

## 7.0 EXAMINATION CONDUCT RULES

- 7.1 Please arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of your Examination.
- 7.2 When you are seated, do not open the Examination Booklet until instructed to do so.
- 7.3 Ensure any electronic devices in your bag are turned off completely. You will not be permitted to have any materials on your Examination desk except for a drink bottle, the official Examination documents (which will be provided) and your pen.
- 7.4 The time allocated for reading and writing answers is 100 minutes. There is no additional reading time.
- 7.5 Please write in pen only.
- 7.6 Please write your name on all pages of the Answer Sheet prior to the commencement of the Examination.
- 7.7 If you need assistance at any time, please raise your hand. Please note invigilators cannot provide any clarification on any question within the Examination.
- 7.8 If you believe there is a fault with the question, make a note of the question number and advise the invigilator after the Examination has concluded. The invigilator will submit a Question Review Notice for consideration by the Examinations Committee. Alternatively, email your concern to [set.neurosurgery@nsa.org.au](mailto:set.neurosurgery@nsa.org.au) within 24 hours of the conclusion of the Examination.
- 7.9 You will not be permitted to leave the Examination room within the first 30 minutes or the final 15 minutes. If you finish early, raise your hand.
- 7.10 At the conclusion of the Examination, place your pen down and remain in your seat until the invigilator gives you permission to leave.
- 7.11 You must not remove any materials from the Examination room, including any notes you take.
- 7.12 Applicants may bring into the Examination room a clear bottle of water and pens. Food may only be brought into the Examination room if it is needed for medical reasons.
- 7.13 Applicants must bring photo identification to the Examination.
- 7.14 The following are deemed to be unauthorised materials:
  - a) Textbooks
  - b) Study notes and other study materials
  - c) Any electronic devices including calculators
  - d) Mobile phones
  - e) Pencil cases
  - c) Notes of any kind including those written on any material, on the applicant's body or anywhere else
  - d) Blank paper
  - e) Any other item or material that may cause disruption or provide applicants with an unfair advantage
- 7.15 Any unauthorised materials brought to the Examination venue must be kept in a closed bag. Any electronic devices in the closed bag must be switched off completely (not on silent or vibrate). The closed bag must be placed under the applicant's chair or at a location instructed by the invigilator and must not be opened at any time after entering the Examination room.
- 7.16 The invigilator will check Examination desks for unauthorised materials and, if found, will ask the applicant to place them in their closed bag or on the floor.

- 7.17 The invigilator will confiscate unauthorised materials if it appears that they are being used improperly. Any items which have been confiscated will, in most instances, be returned to the applicant at the conclusion of the Examination. However, the invigilator may retain any confiscated items for a further period of time if they consider that such item(s) may be relevant in proceedings relating to misconduct.
- 7.18 Recording or making changes to an answer on the Answer Sheet after the conclusion of the Examination, regardless of whether permission is granted by an invigilator, will be a breach of the Examination rules (see 7.22).
- 7.19 The invigilator will report cases of alleged breaches relating to unauthorised materials to the Board.
- 7.20 Personal possessions at the Examination venue are at the applicant's own risk and the Board is unable to provide reimbursement for any items lost or damaged during the Examination.
- 7.21 The Board will investigate all reports of alleged breaches, regardless of the source. All investigations will be carried out with due process and procedural fairness.
- 7.22 If a breach is established the Examination result may be voided and not used for the purposes of applying for the Surgical Education and Training Program in Neurosurgery. The applicant will not be entitled to a refund and will not receive a result for the Examination.
- 7.23 Depending on the seriousness of the breach, the applicant may be prohibited from making future applications for the Examination and selection applications to the Surgical Education and Training Program in Neurosurgery.
- 7.24 Where a manifest error is identified in a question after the Examination and prior to the release of the Examination results, that question will be removed from the Examination scoring and the total marks for the Examination, and any reference in the Selection Regulations or this information to the total marks, will be adjusted accordingly. A manifest error is an error that is obvious and indisputable.