The First MRCS Part B Revision Course Delivered Online

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Background

Core training

2 years
Core surgical training (CST)

Specialty training

6 years
General surgery specialty training

Foundation competencies

Year 1

Year 2

Exam for a membership or fellowship*

Year 3

Year 4

Year 5

Year 6

Year 7

Year 8

Exam for a membership or fellowship†

Certificate of completion of training

Intermediate stage

Final stage 1

Final stage 2

* Membership of the Royal College of Surgeons exam (MRCS)
† Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons exam (FRCS (General surgery))
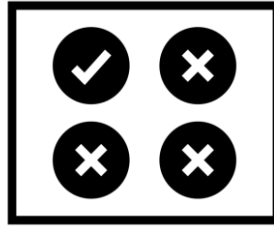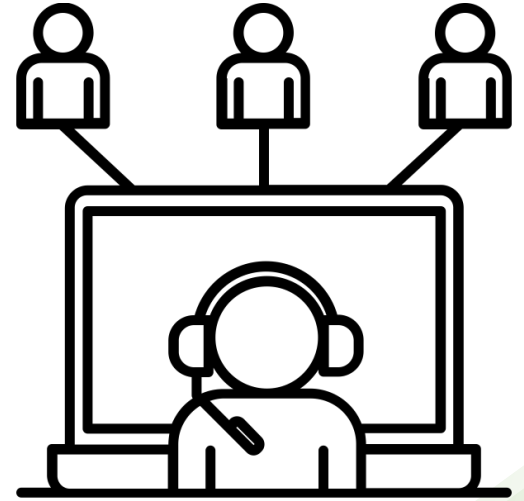
Part A: SBA MCQs

The Membership of the Royal College of Surgeons (MRCS) Examination

Part B: OSCE

Aim

Deliver a high quality, real-time, interactive MRCS Part B revision course **on a virtual platform**

Planning & Organisation

- Pre-existing course content adapted for online delivery

- Advertised via a website/social media

- Candidates provided information about their training status, location, and exam history upon registration

- Candidates were sent pre-course material
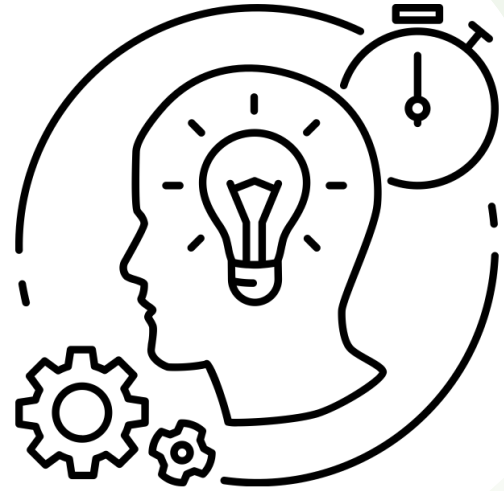
Candidates

- 43 candidates registered for the course. Majority UK-based with attendees also from Ukraine, Nigeria, and India

- Each assigned a specific number, which allowed allocation into smaller groups for sessions and ensured all candidates were questioned throughout the course

Faculty

- MRCS-qualified surgical trainees and consultants
- Medical consultant involved in organising the course and running the 'Communication skills' session
- Critical care consultant, and a consultant pathologist who lead the 'Critical care' and 'Pathology' sessions respectively
- The team engaged with each other either in person or virtually during the course.

Location

- Delivered over two days, both running from 08:30 to 17:00, from Musgrove Park Hospital Academy (Somerset Foundation Trust, UK) as in previous course iterations

- Single wireless hospital network access, with 4G hotspots available as backup

Technology

- Zoom.us

- A single course organiser with previous experience of running large Zoom-based teaching sessions co-ordinated the software and managed the candidates

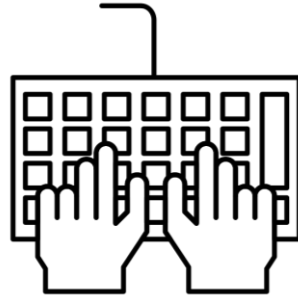- A trial run with faculty was performed the day before the course

Course Structure

- **Webinars**: live lecture style presentations broadcast to the whole group of participants

- **Small group teaching sessions**: Groups of 8-10 candidates

- **One to one sessions**: mock OSCE at the end of the course

Encouraged to turn on their camera

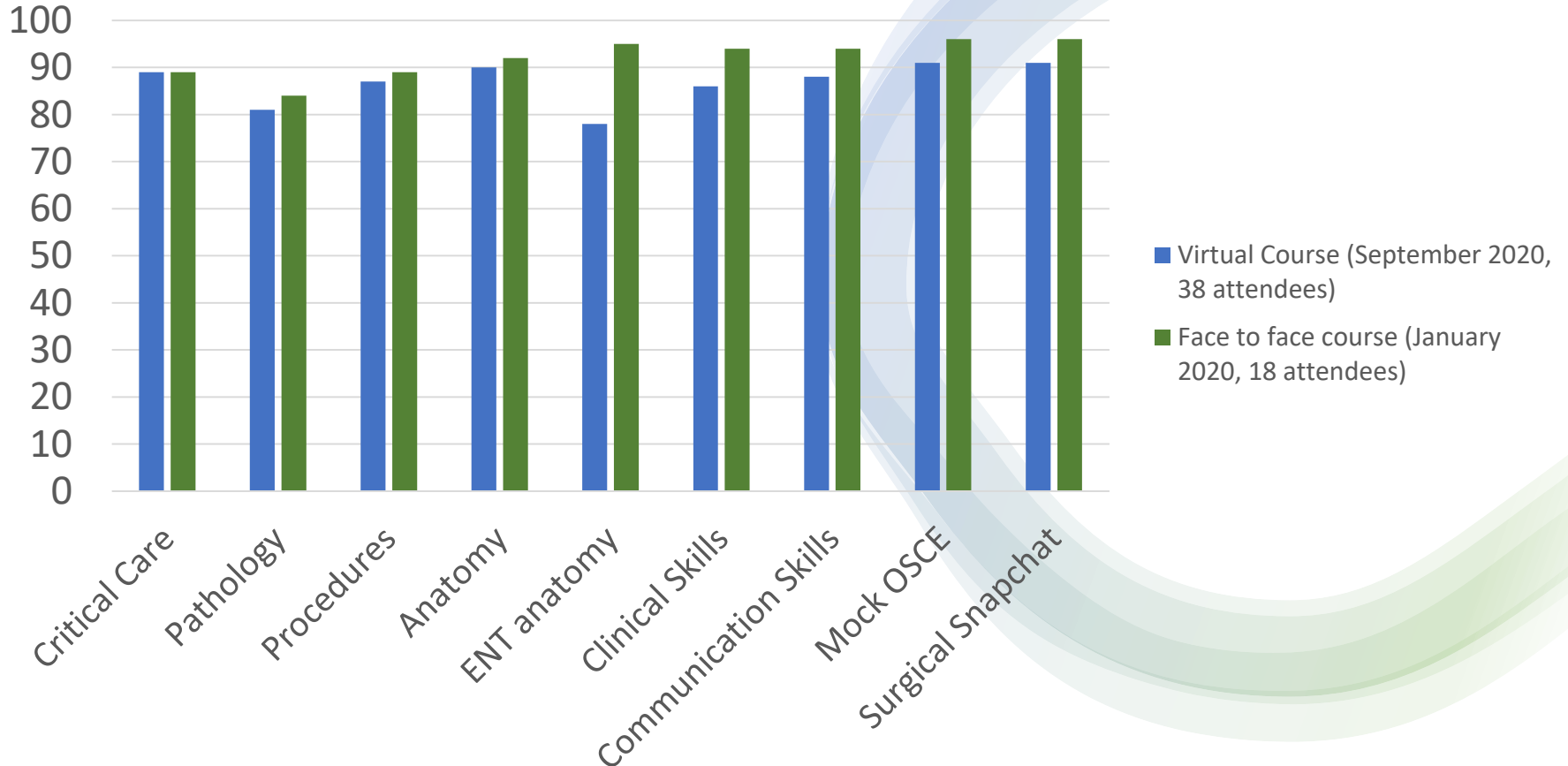All participants could post questions in the group chat
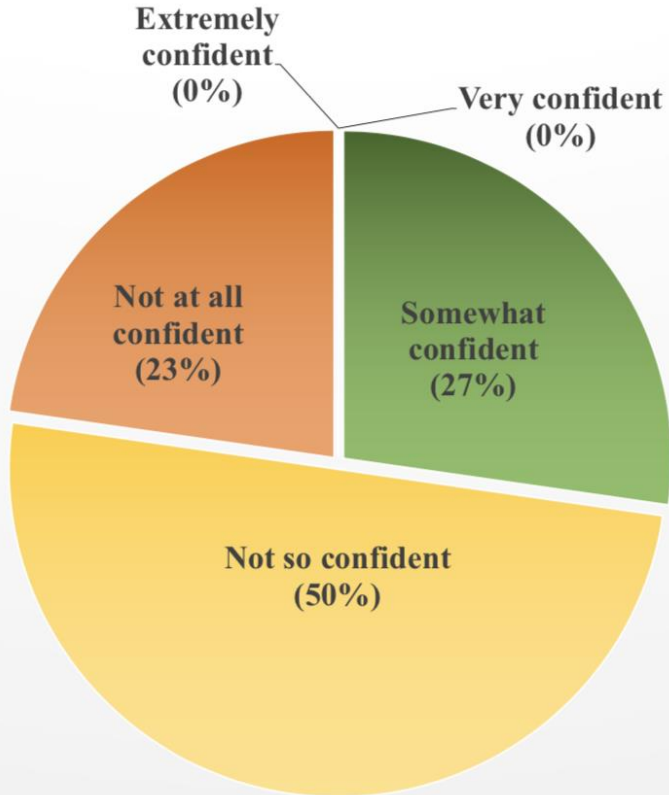
Mobile phone numbers

Technology

Feedback

- Digital feedback forms

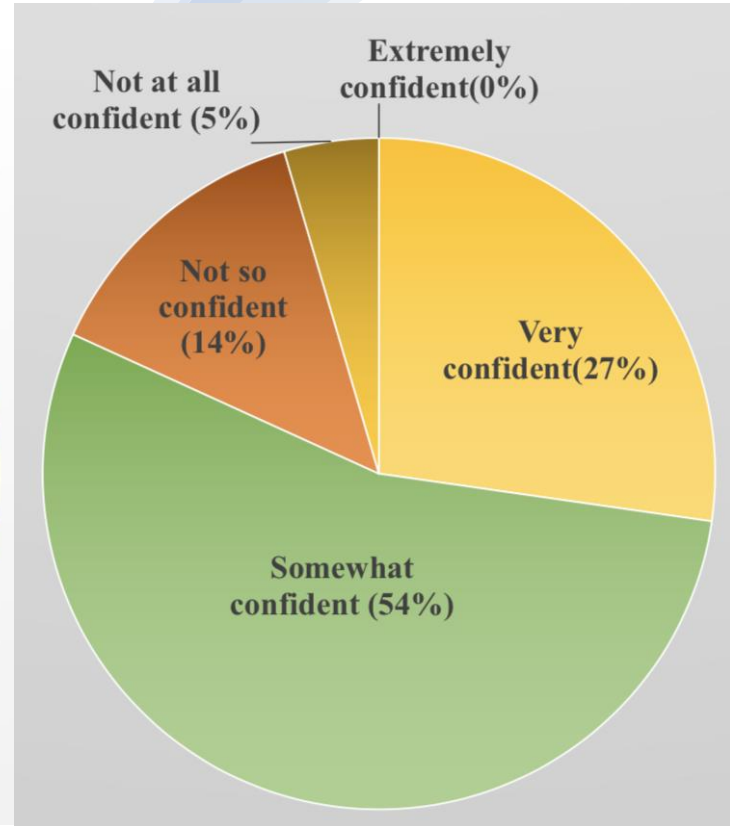- Received from 22/38 candidates

- Overall course quality rated 94/100

Feedback

Pre-Course

Post-Course

Feedback

- **Excellent value for money**. Great level of breadth and depth covered. Would highly recommend.

- Clearly a huge amount of effort and consideration has been put into running this course. Barely any technical difficulties and **amazing co-ordination**. I am really grateful and impressed and will be raving about it for the next few weeks!

- Very well organized and well-conducted. The majority of crucial topics were covered during the course. Also, **the interactive hot seat approach was very useful to overcome apprehension and exam stress**. Thank you very much for the course.

Learning points

- Reduced cost = greater accessibility

- Dedicated moderator(s) essential

- Realtime online interaction can simulate the 'performance' aspects of an OSCE

- Online delivery is here to stay – Blended courses in the future

References

- All images from Noun Project: achmed mulyana, IYIKON, Dairy Free Design, LAFS, Erin Standley, b farias, Asyifa Waskito, Oleksandr Panaskovskyi, ibrandify, Alfredo, Dinosoftlab, pongsakom, Luis Prado, Denicon, Creative Stall

- https://www.gmc-uk.org/education/standards-guidance-and-curricula/curricula/general-surgery-curriculum