ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Assessment Tools

Objective structured assessment of technical skill (OSATS)

Please note: copies of each of the assessment tools are available to download and photocopy on the Education and Training section of the RCOG website. Further guidance on developing competence is also available on the RCOG website.

There are a small number of procedures which are so fundamental to the practice of obstetrics and gynae-cology that an objective assessment tool has been developed to aid the assessment process. The OSATS is a validated assessment tool to assess your technical competency in a particular technique. The curriculum indicates those skills which need to be assessed with OSATS. The forms are included within the relevant module in the logbook. The OSATS should be used to help you and your trainer assess when you are ready to move on to independent practice for a procedure and when you are ready to be signed off for independent practice. The same OSATS may be used to assess increasing levels of complexity for any particular procedure.

Ten OSATS have been developed to assess those procedures that are fundamental to the practice in obstetrics and gynaecology. These are:

- fetal blood sampling
- diagnostic hysteroscopy
- diagnostic laparoscopy
- opening and closing the abdomen
- uterine evacuation
- perineal repair
- caesarean section
- operative vaginal delivery
- operative laparoscopy
- manual removal of the placenta.

Before the competences can be signed off in the logbook, each OSATS must have been successfully completed (that is, every box ticked for independent practice). When you feel ready to undertake the relevant OSATS, you will meet with your clinical trainer who will assess the procedure and complete the OSATS form.

A record of the date that each OSATS is signed off should be entered in the relevant section of the log-book module. You will need to involve at least two different assessors for this process. You must not use the same assessor for all OSATS and a consultant must do at least one OSATS. Once you have been signed up for independent practice it is recommended that, to demonstrate continued competency in an area, you undergo an annual OSATS assessment.

Before undertaking an OSATS assessment you must be able to perform the procedure competently under direct supervision. You will be required to demonstrate this on several occasions before the first OSATS assessment. It is not envisaged that you will successfully complete the assessment at the first attempt and this should not be seen as failure. The department will nominate an assessor for you and in some situations will give you discretion to choose your own assessor. Taking consent for the procedure is not part of the assessment; however, the taking of consent must be assessed separately using a mini-CEX. You must retain all OSATS assessment forms, whether satisfactorily completed or otherwise. Review of these forms allows your assessor to see the progress you are making.

There are two parts to the OSATS form. The first is a checklist, which breaks down the procedure into steps, all of which must be successfully completed. The second is a generic technical skills assessment. The generic technical skills, not all of which will be relevant to every OSATS, will form an important part of the assessment process. It is anticipated that, to pass the OSATS, you will have the majority of competences ringed in the middle or to the right of the generic skills assessment list. However, to be signed off for independent practice, you must have the generic skill 'fully understands areas of weakness' within the generic skill of insight/attitude consistently ringed.

Trainees will proceed at different rates and the competency levels are the minimum that must be achieved prior to moving to the next stage of training.

The OSATS form may be used to assess technical skills at differing levels of complexity; for example, the caesarean section OSATS may be used for assessing competency for a simple caesarean section or a complex caesarean section. The level of complexity should be indicated on the assessment form.