

Cardiff MRCS Part B OSCE Programme: Five-Day Attendance Course

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Where does the course take place?

The course is delivered across two venues in Cardiff.

- Days 1, 2, 3, and 5 take place at the Doctors Academy International Education and Training Centre, located at Frazer Building, 126 Bute Street, Cardiff, CF10 5LE. This venue is less than a minute's walk from Cardiff Bay Train Station.
- Day 4, which includes the cadaveric anatomy teaching and mock OSCE, is held at the School of Biosciences, Cardiff University, Museum Avenue, Cardiff, CF10 3AX. The nearest train station for this venue is Cathays Train Station, which is also less than a minute's walk. Attendees will be provided with detailed information prior to the course to help them navigate to both venues.

2. What is the schedule for each day?

The first four days of the course run from 0830 to 1945 hours, with registration from 0820 hours. The final day of the course concludes slightly earlier, finishing at 1800 hours. The course is tightly scheduled to replicate the pressure and intensity of the day of the exam. Regular refreshment breaks, a lunch interval, and an evening interval are incorporated into the programme, although they are brief to ensure the structure of the programme is maintained.

3. What does each day of the course cover?

- Day 1 of the course focuses on surgical sciences, including anatomy of the head, neck, thorax, abdomen, and pelvis, as well as relevant pathology. Day 2 continues with anatomical studies of the upper limb, lower limb, and spine, as well as system-specific pathology and cancers.
- The morning of Day 3 is dedicated to clinical and practical skills. Attendees practise a wide range of procedures such as knot tying, infiltration of local anaesthetic, excision of a lesion, suturing, catheterisation, cannulation, arterial blood gas sampling, fine-needle aspiration cytology, abscess drainage, and chest drain insertion using synthetic and animal models. The afternoon covers applied surgical sciences and critical care scenarios delivered by consultant anaesthetists.
- Day 4 includes cadaveric anatomy teaching using prosections, pathology pots, radiological imaging, and osteology in the morning, followed by a comprehensive mock OSCE in the afternoon with structured feedback.
- Day 5 is divided into system-based clinical examinations in the morning (cardiovascular, respiratory, abdominal, vascular, joint, and cranial nerves). The afternoon session covers communication-based OSCEs, which include taking consent, taking history, explaining procedures, and breaking bad news.

4. When is the most appropriate time to attend this course?

The Cardiff MRCS Part B OSCE programme is intended for those who have started their revision but are not fully prepared for the exam. The intensity of the five-day attendance component makes it most appropriate for those who are sitting the exam four-to-six weeks after attendance. It may also be suitable for those who intend to appear for the subsequent sitting of the exam (three-to-four months later) and who wish to understand the core topics to revise and the technique required.

5. What teaching methods are used during the course?

The course employs a wide variety of teaching methods. These include lecture-based instruction by surgical educationalists, small-group discussions aimed at enhancing active recall, anatomy sessions using cadaveric dissections, practical skills training with immediate feedback, and timed OSCE stations. Attendees are also provided with a detailed workbook to help consolidate their learning during and after the course.

6. Who are the faculty?

The course is delivered by a diverse and experienced team of professionals, including surgeons, surgical educationalists, anaesthetists, intensivists, anatomy demonstrators, and surgical trainees from across the UK. All faculty members are thoroughly vetted and bring extensive experience in MRCS OSCE preparation and delivery.

7. What attire should I wear?

All attendees are expected to wear smart-casual or professional clothing. Appropriate attire includes shirts, trousers, blouses, skirts, and modest dresses. Inappropriate clothing such as shorts, hoodies, vests, scrub tops, ripped jeans, and flip-flops is not allowed. Attendees who fail to adhere to the dress code may be denied entry or asked to leave the session.

8. What conduct is expected during teaching sessions?

Professionalism is paramount during all teaching sessions. Attendees are expected to remain silent unless contributing to discussions, and mobile phones must be switched off or kept on silent. Laptops and tablets are not permitted in lectures or in the Dissection Room, and all notes should be made in the workbook provided. Any form of disruptive behaviour may lead to exclusion from the sessions.

9. What are the rules for the Dissection Room (Day 4)?

The Dissection Room is a place of respect and academic rigour. Food, drinks and chewing gum are strictly prohibited. The use of mobile phones and other electronic devices is not allowed. Attendees must wear gloves and other personal protective equipment, as instructed by the staff in the centre. Inappropriate attire, which includes shorts, hoodies, ripped jeans, and flip-flops, is not permitted. Silence must be maintained throughout, and instructions from staff and demonstrators must be followed without exception.

10. Is parking available at the venues?

Parking is only available on Day 5 of the course. For Days 1 to 4, there is no designated parking, and attendees are advised to use public transport or nearby paid parking. Cardiff Bay and Cathays Train Stations are both conveniently located close to the respective venues.

11. Are refreshments and meals provided during the course?

Attendees are provided with refreshments and meals throughout the day. Each morning includes a 20-minute break with pastries, biscuits or cakes. Lunch consists of a selection of sandwiches, crisps, fruit, fruit juice, tea, coffee and dessert, with a hot lunch offered on one of the days. There is a mid-afternoon break with more cakes and biscuits, and an evening break with either hot food or sandwiches. Drinking water is available throughout the day, and additional sweets, savouries, and light snacks are also provided. Attendees are welcome to bring their own food, and a fridge is available for their use.

12. I have specific dietary requirements. Can I be catered for?

We endeavour to provide refreshments and lunch for all attendees, regardless of any specific dietary requirements they may have. We politely request that attendees inform us well in advance of the course of any dietary requirements to ensure that we are able to cater for them. In the event that the caterers are unable to provide appropriate options, we will inform the attendee in advance.

13. How should I prepare before I attend the course?

To make the most of this intensive programme, it is important to be well-rested. Attendees should aim to get adequate sleep, have a substantial breakfast, and review anatomy and surgical skills beforehand. Reading the MRCS Part B blueprint will help tailor preparation and ensure alignment with the content of the course.

14. How will the mock OSCE be conducted?

The mock OSCE held on Day 4 closely simulates the anatomy component of the MRCS Part B. It is conducted in the Dissection Room using prosected cadaveric material, and it includes stations on anatomy, pathology, and radiology. Timed circuits are used, and attendees will receive structured feedback and scores shortly after.

15. Are all OSCE domains covered during the course?

Yes, the course comprehensively covers all of the domains tested in the MRCS OSCE, including applied basic sciences, clinical and procedural skills, communication skills, and history taking, as well as critical care and interpretation. The sessions use real-life clinical scenarios, models, cadavers, and simulated patients to ensure a holistic and exam-focused approach.

16. Can I receive feedback on my performance?

Absolutely. Attendees will receive verbal feedback from tutors during the hands-on and OSCE sessions, and written feedback is provided for the mock OSCE. This feedback is designed to be constructive and informative, enabling candidates to identify areas for improvement.

17. Will I receive course materials?

Yes, all participants will be sent pre-course reading material in advance. Upon arrival on Day 1, each delegate will be given a comprehensive workbook which contains key learning points, OSCE scenarios, and space for written answers. The workbook is an essential tool for revision and reflection.

18. I do not work in the UK and I do not have a GMC registration. Can I complete this programme?

Yes, candidates who do not work in the UK or who have limited exposure to the NHS are very welcome to complete this programme. Due to its hands-on practical nature, the five-day attendance component will prove particularly helpful for those with limited or no experience in interactions with patients and other healthcare professionals within the NHS.

19. Can I attend only certain days of the five-day course?

This is a comprehensive five-day course that has been structured in such a way that all topics pertinent to the exam are covered over the five days. The teaching will flow from Day 1 to Day 5 in a logical order, and delegates will gain the maximum benefit by attending all five days. If a delegate is unable to attend one particular day due to professional or personal commitments, he/she will be able to advise us of his/her non-attendance on that day. He/She will need to register for the full programme regardless of his/her intention to attend only certain days.

20. Will this course help me pass the MRCS OSCE?

While success cannot be guaranteed, the structure and content of this course are carefully designed to significantly improve attendees' chances of passing the MRCS OSCE. It mirrors the examination setting, offers detailed teaching, and enhances both practical and communication skills. Feedback from past attendees indicates a high pass rate among those who fully engage with the course.

If you have a question or query that is not covered in these FAQs, please do not hesitate to contact us at courses@doctorsacademy.org.uk. A member of our team will be able to provide you with the information you require.

Please find below some feedback and testimonials from delegates who have previously attended the five-day MRCS Part B Course.

I am delighted to share that I have successfully passed my MRCS Part B examination. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the entire team at Doctors Academy for their excellent and comprehensive preparation sessions. I really felt that dissection models in anatomy helped me a lot in retaining key structures and built up my confidence on anatomy illustrations.

A special word of thanks to Professor Enoch for his unwavering dedication, insightful teaching, and consistent support throughout the course. His commitment to my success made a significant difference in my preparation and confidence.

Thank you once again for playing such a pivotal role in this achievement. I am truly grateful.

A.A.

District Headquarter Hospital, Jhelum Valley, AJK, Pakistan

I want to let you know that I have passed the exam. I would definitely recommend your course to other colleagues as it is very close to how the exam is laid out. Definitely worth the money.

C.M.

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

I found the Doctors Academy MRCS Part B course extremely useful, especially for building confidence as a Foundation Year 1 sitting the exam. The course was well-structured and despite having a fast pace, I found the 5 days of the course the most useful period of my entire revision as it enabled me to revise all aspects of the exam with emphasis on the most pertinent points. I would definitely recommend it to anyone sitting the MRCS Part B exam!

A.F.

Bedford Hospital NHS Trust

I have passed the MRCS part b in May this year. I have been recommending the Doctors Academy course to everyone who is revising for part B. I found it intense but extremely helpful especially for anatomy and I don't think I would have passed first time without the course!

S.I-W.

Wrexham Maelor Hospital, Wrexham

I think the course was very useful and certainly helped me pass, especially the anatomy prosections day at the university. I think the course was very useful for identifying what topics could come up and where to focus revision. It was well timed being 5-6 weeks before the exam.

A.A.

Southmead Hospital, Bristol

I am pleased to inform you that I passed my exam. Much of this is testament to the course that I attended. I would say the main benefits for me were the mock in the dissection room but most importantly the opportunity to be taught and practice the key skills including communication, suturing and chest drains.

O.V.

Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge

I have attended the MRCS Part B preparatory course and have successfully passed the exam.

The course was very helpful in guiding me towards what is relevant to know and what is less relevant. It was exceptionally helpful in terms of anatomy with the dissection hall sessions and lectures. Prof Enoch is evidently an expert at teaching and his delivery was exceptional - to the point and easy to understand. I would highly recommend this course to anyone who wants to increase their odds of passing the MRCS Part B.

G.B.
Mater Dei Hospital, Malta

I'm pleased to share that I've passed the exam! The course was incredibly helpful. Before attending, I felt only about 20% prepared due to work commitments. However, after completing the course, I felt fully ready and confident going into the exam. It truly made a significant difference in my preparation, and I've already recommended it to several colleagues.

Thank you once again for organising such a valuable and well-structured course.

J.S.C.
Worthing Hospital, Worthing