



MRCs Examination | Part A

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Session objectives

- My experience
- Overview of MRCS
- Syllabus
- Exam technique
- Timelines for revision
- Questions

My Experience

- Current:
 - ST3 Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgeon in Mersey
 - ASiT Associate Honorary Secretary & Interim Northwest Regional Representative
- Previous:
 - MBChB and MRes – University of Manchester
 - Foundation Training – East Midlands
 - Core Surgical Training – Manchester & Lancashire
 - Higher Specialty Training – Mersey

My Experience

- MRCS Part A:
 - First attempt – September 2020 (CT1)
FAIL
 - Second attempt – April 2021 (CT1)
PASS

Overview of MRCS

What is the MRCS?

- Membership of the Royal College of Surgeons
 - Mandatory exam for progression
 - Split into parts A and B
 - Part A = written (MCQ)
 - Part B = practical (OSCE)
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- Part A = intercollegiate
 - Part B = specific college (e.g. RCS England or RCS Edinburgh, etc.)

Overview of MRCS | Part A

- 5 hour examination
- 2 papers:

Paper 1 – applied basic sciences

Paper 2 – principles of surgery in general

- Combination of SBAs and EMQs
- Currently online – Pearson Vue test centres (like driving test)
- Can sit 6 times

Overview of MRCS | Part A

Candidate guidance and further information

The screenshot shows a web browser at the URL intercollegiatemrcsexams.org.uk/mrcs/candidate-guidance/. The page title is "MRCS and MRCS (ENT) Examinations" with the subtitle "Surgical Royal Colleges of the United Kingdom and in Ireland". A search bar is present with the placeholder "Enter a search term..." and a "Search" button. The navigation menu includes: MRCS, MRCS (ENT), ARCHIVED REGULATIONS, POLICIES & REPORTS, THE ROYAL COLLEGES, COLLEGE ACCESS, and ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY. The left sidebar contains a list of links: MRCS Exam Overview, MRCS Candidate Guidance (highlighted in orange), MRCS Regulations & Formal Documents, MRCS Examination Dates, Applying for the MRCS, and MRCS Part A Pearson Vue Information. The main content area shows the breadcrumb "IMRCS & MRCS (ENT) > MRCS > MRCS Candidate Guidance". The text describes the intercollegiate Membership examination of the Royal Colleges of Surgeons (MRCS) and states that the examination has two parts: Part A (written paper) and Part B Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE). It advises candidates to read the guidance notes before sitting the exam. A list of topics to be examined is provided:

- topics and skills that may be examined
- entry requirements
- Part A format, duration and sample questions
- Part B format and duration
- candidate registration and conduct
- marking and results

Syllabus | Applied Basic Sciences

- Applied anatomy (embryology, organs, surface anatomy, imaging)
- Physiology (thermoregulation, homeostasis, acid/base, cardioresp, haemostasis)
- Pharmacology (anaesthetic, common surgical meds)
- Pathology (genetics, immunity, repair and healing, thrombosis, shock)
- Microbiology (bacterial pathology, infections, transmissible viruses)
- Medical physics (scans, radiotherapy)
- Medical statistics (null hypothesis, screening programmes)

Syllabus | Principles of Surgery in General

- Epidemiology
- Common presentations
- Expected findings on history and examination
- Natural history
- Important investigations and likely findings
- Management options and published guidelines
- Prognosis
- Basic surgical skills
- Periop, intraop, postop care
- Critical care, paediatric surgery
- Management of dying patient, health promotion

Syllabus | Important Links to Bookmark

- MRCS guide – syllabus, format, question allocations

[Candidate%20Guide%20to%20MRCS%20examination%20August%202021%20FINAL](#)

- MRCS candidate guidance – overview of exam and key links

<https://www.intercollegiatemrcsexams.org.uk/mrcs/candidate-guidance/>

Exam Technique

Disclaimer:

The information contained in the following slides is based on my own anecdotal experience and do not constitute official intercollegiate recommendation.

Exam Technique | Principles

1. Spaced repetition
2. Active recall
3. Curiosity
4. Etymology

Exam Technique | Spaced Repetition

1. Spaced repetition

What is it?

- Technique that tests information
- Spaces questions out
- Provides repetition of information following small pauses
- Increases familiarity with concepts

How to implement it?

- Question banks (eMRCS, PastTest, etc.)

Exam Technique | Active Recall

2. Active recall

What is it?

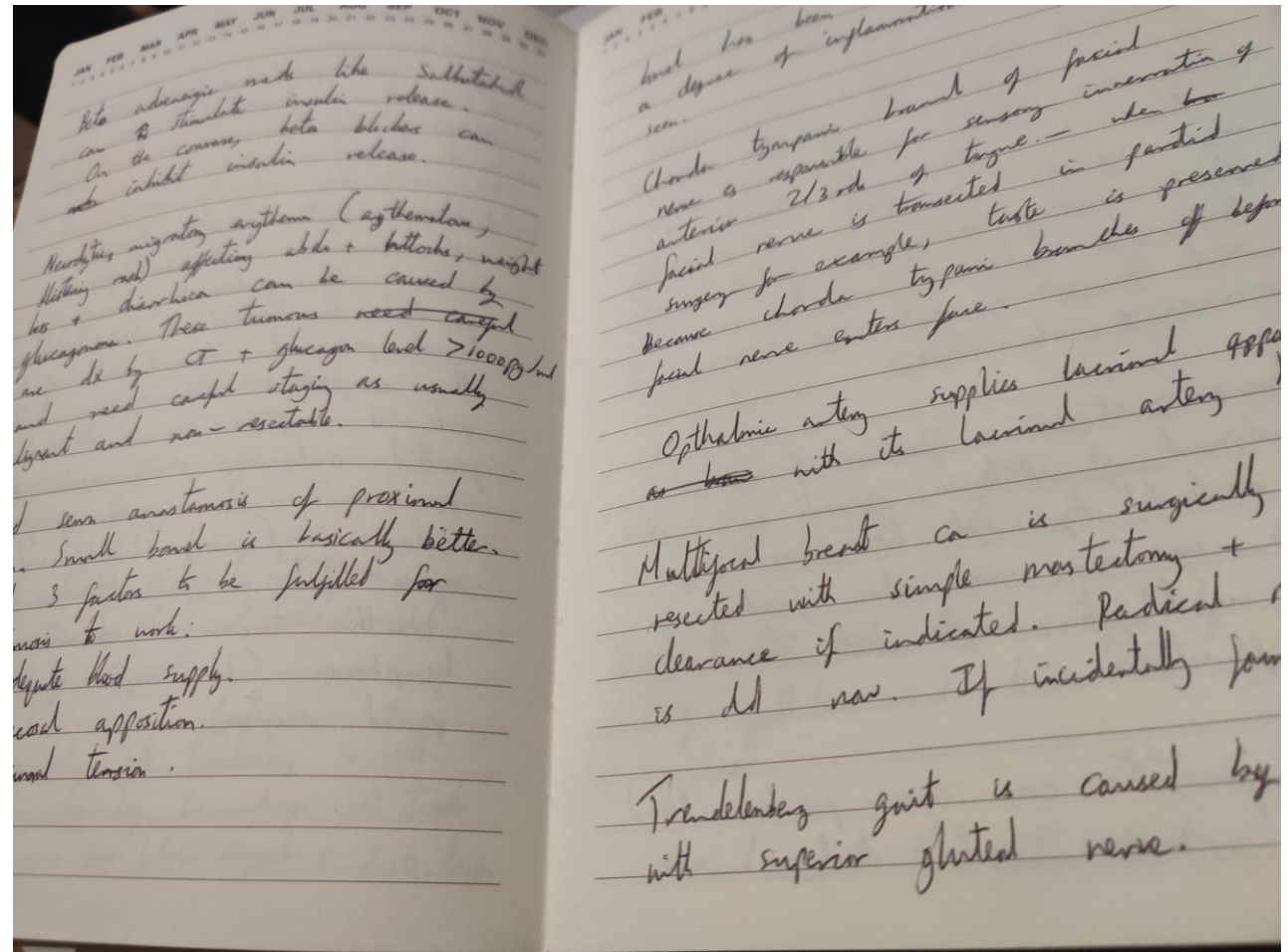
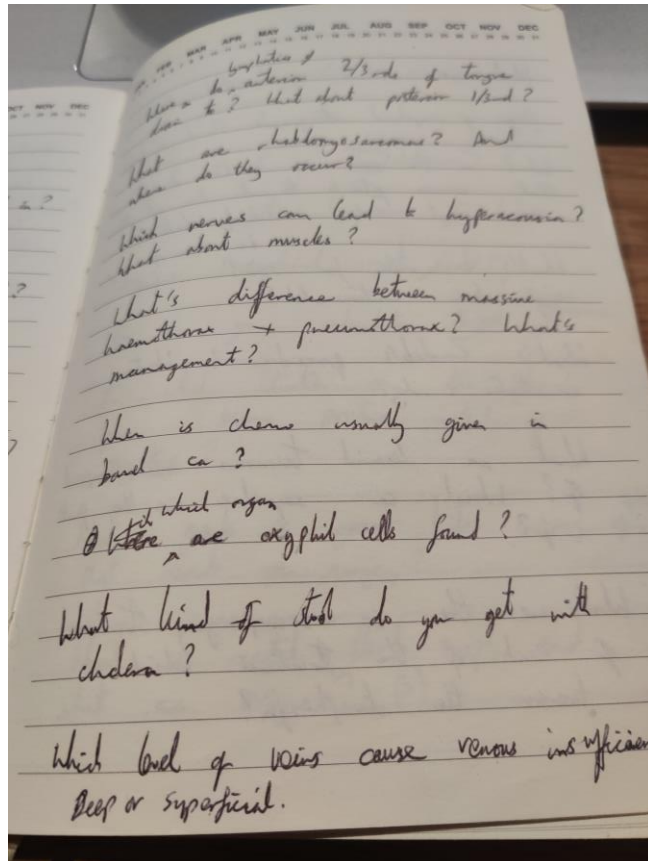
- Technique that encourages active recollection of information
- Creates pathways in brain for easier recall
- Works well with spaced repetition

How to implement it?

- Use Q&A format
- Flashcards, notebook, etc.

Exam Technique | Active Recall

2. Active recall



Exam Technique | Curiosity

3. Curiosity

What is it?

- Not an exam technique per se
- Fosters openness of the mind to new information
- Helps to reduce stress of learning

How to implement it?

- Stop. Pause. Reframe information.
- Reconsider the information as if seeing it like vibrant colour or a piece of 3D art.
- Wow! It is the coolest piece of information you've ever come across!

Exam Technique | Etymology

4. Etymology

What is it?

- Not an exam technique per se
- The history of a word or phrase shown by tracing its development and relationships
- Medical exams are often just as much a language exam as a science exam

How to implement it?

- Look up the roots of common/new words
- Figure out the breakdown of the words
- See how many other words are derived from this root
- Enjoy cracking the code for medical words/terminology/jargon

Exam Technique | Etymology

4. Etymology

Working example:

Cholecyst (n.)

"**gall bladder**," 1846, from medical Latin cholecystis, incorrectly formed from Greek khole "**gall**" (from PIE root *ghel- (2) "**to shine**," with derivatives denoting "green, yellow," and thus "bile, gall") + **kystis** "**bladder, cyst**" (see cyst).

Related: **Cholecystectomy**. (ectomy = to remove!)


Timelines for Revision

- At least 3 months (+/- 2 months)
- “Complete question bank twice over”
- Advice:
 - Book exam first then start working towards it
 - Be mindful it's an expensive exam


Questions?



Thank You

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