

Title: So You Want To Be A Surgeon? (Applying into Core Surgical Training)

- Applications for Core Surgical Training 2027 open at 10am on Thursday 22 October 2026 and close at 4pm on Thursday 19 November 2026, on Oriel.
- Initial offers are made at 5pm on Tuesday 6 April 2027. The national interview window is Monday 11 January to Friday 2 April 2027.
- CST's own sub-dates are not yet published. In 2026 the MSRA ran 6 to 19 January, evidence upload 16 to 26 February, interviews 2 to 11 March and offers 24 March.
- In 2025 there were 5,399 applications for 630 posts, 8.6 to 1, so about 12% of applicants were appointed.
- Only the top 1,200 at the MSRA are invited to interview. Prioritisation now applies at shortlisting; the 2027 criteria are unpublished.
- There is no Oriel self-assessment. Evidence is uploaded with a mandatory index sheet and discussed at the portfolio station.

Subject focus: Applying into Core Surgical Training

Date: 17th November 2026

Time: 9am to 4pm

Delegate number: aim 20

Supervising consultant:

Time	Session	Content
08:30 - 09:00	Registration & Pre-course Evaluation	
09:00 - 09:30	Introduction: So You Want to Be a Surgeon?	Surgical career pathways: FY1 → FY2 → CST → ST3 → CCT • Different surgical specialties and routes into training • What is life actually like as a surgical trainee? • What does a successful applicant need to demonstrate? • Overview of the day and learning objectives
09:30 - 10:00	Understanding the Application Process	• Current recruitment pathway and timeline • Eligibility and person specification • Application form and evidence requirements • Shortlisting/self-assessment where applicable • Interview stage • Common mistakes and things to prepare early • “If I want to apply this year, what should I be doing now?”
10:00 - 11:00	MSRA: Tips & Resources	• What is the MSRA and how does it fit into recruitment? • Exam structure and domains

11:00 - 11:30	Audit & QI: Getting Started	• Process • Turning a project into presentation/publication evidence • How to document your contribution
11:30 - 12:00	Teaching: Building Your Teaching Portfolio	• Finding teaching opportunities • Collecting meaningful feedback
12:00 - 13:00	Presentations & Publications	• How to find opportunities to present • Local → regional → national conferences • Posters vs oral presentations • How to turn audit/QI work into an abstract • Choosing a journal • Getting involved in research as a junior doctor • Finding supervisors/research groups • Authorship and collaboration • Avoiding common pitfalls • Examples of realistic projects for FY1/FY2
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch	
14:00 - 15:00	Interview Preparation & Resources	• What to expect from a surgical interview • Motivation for surgery/specialty • Portfolio-based questions • Clinical/professional scenarios • Communication and ethical scenarios • Structuring answers • How to prepare without memorising scripted answers • Useful resources
15:15 - 15:45	Role-Play Station: Communication & Professionalism	Small-group scenarios/mock interviews.
15:45 - 16:00	Q&A + Post course evaluation	Repeat selected baseline questions + participant satisfaction + achievement of learning objectives + free-text feedback.