

# Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry University of London



## CLINICAL SCIENCE AND GOOD MEDICAL PRACTICE

### SSC3a Handbook Year 3 2011 / 12

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The information in this handbook was correct as of August 2011. In the unlikely event of substantial amendments to the material, the SMD will attempt to inform students of the changes.

The College cannot accept responsibility for the accuracy or reliability of information given in third party publications or websites referred to in this Handbook.

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## CONTACTS

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## KEY DATES

- Students to have met and with their tutor and agreed the objective and the output required for the SSC, completed learning contracts to be submitted to Karen Picken in the Student Office by **21<sup>st</sup> October 2011**
- Students must have submitted their work for assessment by **9<sup>th</sup> December 2011**, Please submit an electronic copy of your work to: [smd-ssc-year3@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:smd-ssc-year3@qmul.ac.uk). You also need to ensure that you submit a copy of your work to the anti-plagiarism website, Turnitin. Further details of how to do this will be published on Blackboard nearer the time.

## AIMS

The aim of student selected components (SSCs) in the third year is to allow students a degree of choice in their medical education within the context of their initial experience of their first medical or surgical rotations. The objective of these SSCs is to enhance the student's experience of their clinical attachment and at the same time build on and enhance skills that have been developed in SSCs in phase 1. SSCs in year 3 permit in-depth study in areas of particular interest to the student during their clinical rotation and can either be supervised by tutors from within the firm or by an external tutor approved by the lead-clinician in the firm.

In some cases it may be possible for students to develop their interests from previous years. In addition it may also be possible to continue aspects of SSC3a into SSC4 and in some cases to SSCs in year 5 as well. This can allow a more extended SSC to be carried out and may be of particular interest to students who wish to carry out a research project which extends beyond the time frame of any single SSC. We strongly encourage this approach. Students who feel that they wish to take advantage of this option must discuss this with the head of the SSC programme Dr M. Carrier ([m.j.carrier@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:m.j.carrier@qmul.ac.uk))

One of the strengths of SSC3a is the opportunity for students to identify areas of interest, in a wide range of clinical and related disciplines, which can be developed in a variety of different ways. We deliberately do not provide precise guidelines to encourage this. They can take advice from their clinical tutor as well as the SSC academic lead. This activity maps directly to outcome 3 – “*the doctor as a scholar and scientist*” (“Tomorrow’s Doctor’s”, GMC; 2009).

SSC 3b and SSC 3c are linked in as much as they develop different aspects of the doctor patient relationship, professional relationships and aspects of the science underpinning the treatment and management of their patient in rotations 2 and 3. Key to these SSCs is the integration of a range of skills in to a single coherent piece of work – communication, examination, history taking clinical science and evidence based medicine, personal reflection – all of which the student would have had training and bringing them together with respect to individual patients. These activities map directly to outcome 2 – “*the doctor as a practitioner*” and outcome 3 – “*the doctor as a professional*” (“tomorrow’s Doctor’s”, GMC; 2009).

## REGULATIONS

- (1) Each student will be expected to complete 3 SSCs during the year, one as part of their first clinical rotation (SSC3a) one as part of their second rotation (SSC3b) and one as part of their third rotation (SSC 3c). These SSCs will form section E of part 3 of the MBBS course.
- (2) The subject of SSC 3a, aims and assessment profile are to be agreed by the clinical tutor and student within 2 weeks of the start of the rotation. A copy of the attached SSC Learning Contract is to be completed for each SSC and signed by both parties before being forwarded to Karen Picken at The Student Office.
- (3) It is expected that the rotation timetable will include the equivalent of a minimum of a ½ days study each week (approximately equivalent to two weeks work); this may be in blocks or spread out during the firm. How this is arranged must be made clear to the students at the start of the rotation. Within the context of the firm the student can pursue wide range of activities. The aims and objectives may overlap with other components of the rotation (e.g. time spent clerking patients) in which case this can be incorporated into the SSC time.
- (4) The final assessment of the SSC may include a variety of written work, case presentations, tutor’s assessment of clinical progress or other oral assessment, **but must include at least one piece of written work** which will be graded by the tutor. A random selection of work will be reviewed by the SSC Academic lead and by our External Examiners to ensure consistency of assessment.
- (5) At the end of the SSC, the tutor will complete the attached student assessment form and return it to Karen Picken at the Student Office.
- (6) Successful completion of all 3 SSCs in year 3 is a prerequisite for entry into year 4 of the course. Fail grades (D and E) will require remediation in order to pass. An E grade may require a further SSC to be successfully completed before entry into the fourth year. The award of merit in part 3 will in part be determined by your overall performance in SSCs (section E).

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- (7) The deadline for submission is the **9<sup>th</sup> December 2011**. Please submit an electronic copy of your work to: [smd-ssc-year3@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:smd-ssc-year3@qmul.ac.uk). You also need to ensure that you submit a copy of your work to the anti-plagiarism website, Turnitin. Failure to submit your work to Turnitin will result in you failing your SSC irrespective of whether you have submitted your work to the student office or not. Further details of how to do this will be published on Blackboard nearer the time.
- (8) Late submission will result in a grade reduction of one grade per week.

## GUIDANCE FOR TUTORS

The nature of selected study components in year 3 is slightly different from other years. The requirement for students to be closely linked to a particular rotation can in some cases mean that the degree of choice open to any one student will be restricted to areas of specialty of the firm. This is not necessarily problematic as it will allow student and tutor to devise a program of study of mutual benefit allowing both the student and tutor to follow-up areas of interest, with potential added value in terms of research output or clinical practice. The final decision on the topic of study is yours, although you should take into account the interests of the student, the feasibility of the study, resources and time available for its completion.

The SSC must have a clear practical clinical focus. This could ideally take the form of an audit, but could also include other practical clinical activities/projects/case-reports/service development etc. Literature reviews should be avoided if possible. Where patient contact is required for a research project or audit, questionnaires are used or patient records accessed, the tutor should make the student aware of ethical considerations and should take responsibility for the process of obtaining the necessary ethical committee approvals (in practice it is likely only to be possible to do work which has had prior ethics approval). If you require any further guidance in generating SSC topics please contact Dr Martin Carrier, Head of SSC Programme in the first instance ([m.j.carrier@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:m.j.carrier@qmul.ac.uk)).

Audit is a key clinical skill and it is important the student understands its role within a clinical setting (as indicated in "Tomorrows Doctor's", 2009). Although we are not specifically prescribing this approach, we strongly encourage tutors to help provide the students with the opportunity to carry and be involved in a clinical audit. This may be part of an ongoing study, or a newly devised audit designed specifically for the students.

Tutor and student should meet at the beginning of the rotation to devise a project/programme of work and complete the learning contract documentation (see the end of this handbook). The learning contract should contain full details of the aims, objectives and learning outcomes of the SSC, it is important that it is carefully completed by the student as this will form part of the overall SSC assessment. The tutor should then plan to meet the student at regular agreed intervals during the rotation. Appropriate deadlines should be set by the tutor for written work, and subsequent to this, the tutor should complete the assessment form for each student. These must be returned to the Student Office by the deadline for each rotation to allow compilation and publication of results.

It is important that the project assigned to the student is set at an academic level appropriate for a 3<sup>rd</sup> year undergraduate student, and can be successfully completed within the designated time.

The following are examples of methods of assessing the performance of your students. The list is not intended to be exhaustive; there is often scope for developing innovative means of assessing clinical skills and academic attainment.

**At least one piece of written work should be produced by each student for this SSC. This work MUST be submitted to the SSC supervisor as well as the following address: [smd-ssc-year3@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:smd-ssc-year3@qmul.ac.uk)**

**In course Examples:**

- Workbook
- Assessed tutorials
- Assessed Clinical Presentation
- Essays
- Patient/clinical information sheet/literature/leaflet

**End-of Course Examples:**

- Audit report
- Practical project report
- Essay (Title previously given)
- Patient Case report(s) – written
- Practical Exam
- OSCE
- Oral presentation/exam
- Poster presentation
- Patient/clinical information sheet/literature/leaflet

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## GRADING OF THE SSC

Each SSC will be formally assessed by the firm consultant/tutor at the end of the rotation. S/he will complete a standardised assessment form which will be distributed by the relevant Trust teaching co-ordinator.

Tutors are asked to give a final grade for each student which is a composite of grades awarded for the following criteria:-

1. Attendance
2. Achievement of learning objectives set out on the schedule agreed with the student
3. Motivation, engagement, attitude and conduct in the SSC
4. Standard of in-course assessment (where made)
5. Performance in tutorials or seminars (where appropriate)
6. Ability to work as part of a team (where appropriate)
7. Standard of summative assessment (where made)

The type and nature of assessments designated by tutors for each SSC module are given with the individual module proposals. Tutors will be asked to give an overall assessment of the student's performance as follows:

**A (excellent performance)**

**B (good performance)**

**C (satisfactory performance)**

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**D = Fail (students may be required to do additional work in order to pass)**

**E = Fail (In order to successfully remediate Students will be expected to complete an additional piece of work, in order to comply with requirements for entry into year 4; this will be set by the SSC 3a lead (Dr M. Carrier))**

When assessment forms have been completed by tutors, they should be returned as soon as possible after the end of the rotation to the relevant Trust teaching coordinator, who will pass them on to the Student Office.

## STANDARDISATION OF STUDENT GRADES

In order to ensure maximum consistency of grades across SSCs, the following stereotypes are intended to provide a guide to the level of achievement expected from students within each grade band.

Grade	Attendance	Learning Objectives	Motivation / Engagement	Assessments	Group activities*
<b>A</b>	Full attendance at all sessions	All learning objectives achieved with outstanding performance	Highly motivated – showing great self-initiative, commitment and professionalism	Submitted on time. Excellent presentation in the appropriate format – full understanding of concepts and achieves outstanding results	Makes a major and insightful contribution to group activities
<b>B</b>	Good attendance at sessions – no avoidable absence	All learning objectives achieved with good performance	Well motivated in all the tasks involved. Shows some initiative, commitment and professionalism	Submitted on time. Presentation in the appropriate format demonstrates understanding of all major concepts and achieves above average results	Makes a significant contribution to group activities
<b>C</b>	Good attendance at sessions – perhaps one absence or missed appointment	All the major learning objectives achieved with adequate performance	Is generally well engaged in the SSC activities, does not necessarily show great initiative and commitment	Submitted on time. Presentation may not be in an entirely appropriate format but demonstrates understanding of most of the major concepts and achieves average results	Makes an effort to make some contribution to group activities
<b>D</b> Retrievable Fail	Incomplete attendance or more than one missed appointment. Some avoidable or unexplained absence	Has failed to achieve some of the learning objectives and performance has been generally poor.	Is poorly motivated and lacks initiative. Engagement with the module is marginal. Student may be flagged for unprofessional behaviour	Perhaps submitted late. Presentation may be disorderly but demonstrates understanding of some of the major concepts but is lacking in important areas and achieves below-average results	Makes little effort to make a contribution to group activities
<b>E</b> Outright Fail	Unacceptable absence from module activities with no good reason	Has failed to achieve most of the learning objectives and performance has been unsatisfactory.	Is unmotivated and lacks initiative. Engagement with the module is unacceptable. Student will be flagged for unprofessional behaviour.	Perhaps submitted late. Presentation may be incomplete demonstrating a lack of understanding of basic concepts and achieves poor results	Makes no effort to make a positive contribution to group activities and may have a negative impact on the group

\* This section may not be relevant to SSCs with small numbers of students

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## GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS

Student Selected Components in year 3 will probably have a different character to the SSCs you completed in phase 1. Within the context of your clinical rotations this year, you will have the opportunity to study one aspect of your clinical specialty in more depth. A tutor designated by the firm will supervise your study during the period of the rotation.

It is important that you meet with your tutor by the end of the second week of the rotation to decide upon a topic for study. This should then allow plenty of time for completion of the project. When you have agreed a project you should complete the learning contract form which is appended to this handbook. The learning contract should contain full details of the aims, objectives and learning outcomes of the SSC, it is important that it is carefully completed by the student as this will form part of the overall SSC assessment.

Your tutor should be able to provide you with some background information on the project and the necessary means to perform the project. The project may take many forms. In certain circumstances, especially during the rotation, there may be an opportunity to organise an SSC outside the immediate firm, although this must always be done with the approval of the lead clinician.

We strongly encourage tutors to help provide students with the opportunity to carry and be involved in a clinical audit (Although we are not specifically prescribing this approach). Audit is a key clinical skill and it is important the student understands its role within a clinical setting (as indicated in “Tomorrows Doctor’s”, 2009). This may be part of an ongoing study, or a newly devised audit designed specifically for the students.

If at any time you feel you have not been given adequate resources to complete the SSC, you should contact your firm tutor in the first instance. If problems continue during the SSC you should then contact either Karen Picken ([k.picken@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:k.picken@qmul.ac.uk)) or Emily Mclean-Inglis ([e.mclean-inglis@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:e.mclean-inglis@qmul.ac.uk)) in the Student Office or the Head of SSC Programme, Dr Martin Carrier ([m.j.carrier@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:m.j.carrier@qmul.ac.uk)) who will endeavour to rectify any major problems.

SSC3a has been deliberately designed to allow you a significant degree of freedom and choice within the framework of your clinical rotation. It is therefore particularly important that care should be taken when deciding upon the subject area of your SSC. Ensure that it is not over-ambitious, as you only have limited time to complete the project. **Your SSC must include at least one written component.** This need not be voluminous (no written SSC report should exceed 3000 words – 2000 is average) but should be concise and well thought-out and carefully presented. **Please ensure that the written work is completed on time, returned to your tutor and submitted to [smd-ssc-year3@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:smd-ssc-year3@qmul.ac.uk)** you also need to ensure that you submit a copy of your work to the anti-plagiarism website, Turnitin. Further details of how to do this will be published on blackboard nearer the time. **This is very important as you may fail if you do not submit your work to Turnitin!**

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At the end of your project, your supervising tutor should complete and sign the assessment sheet and forward to the Trust teaching coordinator who will return to the Student Office.

**VERY IMPORTANT: When your written work has been assessed by your tutor, you should retain it and a copy of the assessment sheet in your SSC portfolio for the duration of your degree course in case it is required to be viewed by an external examiner.**

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## CHECKLIST FOR STUDENTS

### Have you?

1. Met early with your firm tutor to plan SSC options?
  
2. Completed the learning Contract form and submitted it to Karen Picken, SSC Administrator, Student Office
  
3. Had appropriate time-tabled time for your SSC during the rotation?
  
4. Completed all assessed work and submitted to tutor, [smd-ssc-year3@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:smd-ssc-year3@qmul.ac.uk) and anti-plagiarism website, Turnitin
  
5. Met with tutor at the end of the SSC for feedback and to discuss your performance and retained a copy of the assessment form.

**LEARNING CONTRACT**

**\*This document should be returned to Karen Picken at the Student Office before the 21<sup>st</sup> of October 2011**

Student Name: .....

Tutor(s) Name: .....

Tutor(s) Teaching Hospital: .....

Tutor(s) Firm/Department: .....

Tutor email: ..... Tutor phone: .....

Title of SSC .....

What are the main aims of this SSC?

What are the main objectives of this SSC?

What are the learning outcomes expected from this SSC?

What activities will be employed to achieve these objectives?

What methods of assessment will be used? (Note: At least one piece of written work should be produced during the SSC). Please define how the assessment will be carried out (i.e. combination of attendance, engagement, presentation, written work etc)

Student Signature: .....

Tutor(s) Signature: .....

## YEAR 3 STUDENT SELECTED COMPONENT ASSESSMENT FORM

**Student Name:** ..... **Student Signature:** .....

**Dates:** ..... **to** ..... **Teaching Hospital:** .....

Please refer to the Year 3 SSC grading criteria for grading and feedback instructions, and circle the appropriate grades below

Attendance:                    **A B C D E**      Assessments:                    **A B C D E**

Learning objectives:                    **A B C D E**      Motivation                    **A B C D E**

Was this student's Professional Attitude or Conduct (please circle): **Satisfactory**    **Unsatisfactory**

**Overall Grade (please tick one box only)**

**A**  

**B**  

**C**  

**D**  

**E**  

***TUTOR FEEDBACK: This is very important and central to student learning. It is really valued by students. Please comment on any particular strengths or any areas to which the student should be asked to pay special attention for development.***

**Name of Assessor:** ..... **Date:** .....

**Signature of Assessor:** .....

**Signature of Student:** ..... **Date:** .....

*The student's performance should be discussed with the student, who should also sign the form. Please return a copy of this form to the student, who should file it in their portfolio, and retain a copy for your files.*