



# The American Board of Surgery Continuous Certification Program



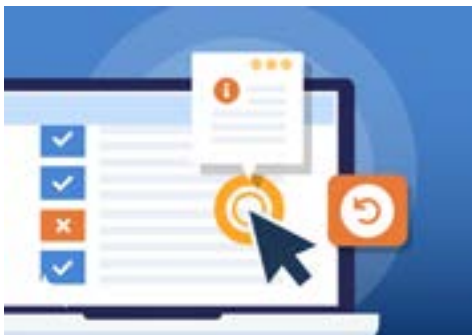
*The ABS Continuous Certification Program is designed to provide flexible, high-quality, practice-relevant learning and assessment to support surgeons in their practice as they maintain their ABS board certification.*



## Continuous Certification Assessment

As part of this program, the **Continuous Certification Assessment** has replaced the traditional recertification exam for all ABS specialties and sub-specialties.

The assessment focuses on the latest and most important developments in practice to assist ABS-certified surgeons (diplomates) in staying up to date.



## Assessment Structure

- 40-question, open book assessment to be taken and passed every other year
- General surgery assessment is modular:
  - 20 questions on core surgical principles
  - 20 questions on a practice-related area of the diplomate's choosing
- Complex general surgery oncology, hand surgery, pediatric surgery, surgical critical care, and vascular surgery assessments are not modular at this time

## Assessment Details

- Take assessment using your own computer
- Once assessment is started:
  - Two weeks to complete
  - Ability to save and continue later
  - Individual questions are not timed
- If taking more than one assessment, you can begin each assessment on a different date within assessment window
- Immediate feedback provided
  - Two attempts to answer correctly
  - Final score of 80% correct needed to pass
  - Must achieve 40% or higher on first attempt in order to receive a second attempt

A fail does not necessarily affect certification status — see information about the grace year on the following page.

*Topics and references for all assessments will be published in advance of the assessment window on the ABS website.*

## Enrollment

Diplomates whose certificate expires at the end of 2021 will use the new assessment to continue their certification. *Diplomates are not required to take the new assessment until the year in which their certificate is due to expire.*

All diplomates must continue to meet the other ongoing requirements of the ABS Continuous Certification Program — **see box at right.**

## Grace Year

A grace year will be offered the following year for diplomates who are enrolled in the program and need to retake the assessment. These diplomates will not lose certification until the end of the grace year.

## Advantages

- Evaluates knowledge and judgment more relevant to a surgeon's daily practice
- Assures patients that ABS-certified surgeons are staying current in their area of practice
- Less need to prepare, less anxiety to take
- No travel or time away from practice

Registration for all 2021 Continuous Certification Assessments will open by **August 4, 2021.**

All assessments will be available from **August 30 - November 8, 2021.**

*The last day to begin the assessment to ensure that you have the full two weeks for completion is Monday, October 25, 2021.*

## Continuous Certification Program Requirements

Diplomates should keep their information regarding these requirements up to date in their ABS portal:

- A valid, full and unrestricted medical license
- Hospital/surgical center privileges if clinically active
- Two professional reference forms submitted every five years
- A 12-month operative experience report submitted every 10 years
- Practice improvement: Ongoing participation in a local, regional or national outcomes registry or quality assessment program
- 150 Category 1 CME credits from the past five years, 50 of which must include self-assessment
  - Requirement will change to 125 Category 1 CME credits with no self-assessment required after passing first assessment, beginning January 1 of the year following the first successful assessment attempt
- Annual fee once participating in new assessment process

***Check your status and update your information anytime at [www.absurgery.org](http://www.absurgery.org).***

### See [www.absurgery.org](http://www.absurgery.org) for more info:

- [Continuous Certification Program Overview](#)
- [Continuous Certification Assessment Enrollment](#)
- [Continuous Certification Program Requirements](#)
- [Complex General Surgical Oncology Assessment](#)
- [General Surgery Assessment](#)
- [Hand Surgery Assessment](#)
- [Pediatric Surgery Assessment](#)
- [Surgical Critical Care Assessment](#)
- [Vascular Surgery Assessment](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Please make sure to keep your contact information **up to date** for updates regarding Continuous Certification.

For specific questions, send an email to [cc@absurgery.org](mailto:cc@absurgery.org).