



# The American Board of Surgery Continuous Certification Program

*The new 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.*



As part of this new program, the ABS is transitioning to a **new assessment process** that will replace the traditional recertification exam.

***The new assessment is being introduced in 2018 for general surgery, with other ABS specialties launching in 2019.***

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## New General Surgery Assessment

The new assessment will focus 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

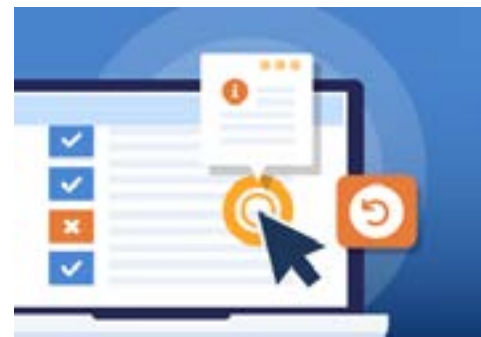
- 20 questions on core surgical principles
- 20 questions on a practice-related area of surgeon's choosing

For 2018, select from four practice-related areas:

- General surgery
- Alimentary tract
- Abdomen
- Breast

More areas are planned for the future based on feedback from surgeons and surgical societies.

Topics and references will be published in advance on ABS website.



### Assessment Details

- Take assessment using your own computer
- Once assessment is started:
  - Diplomates have two weeks to complete
  - Ability to save and continue later
- 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 immediately affect certification status — can retake assessment the following year.

## Enrollment

Diplomates whose general surgery certificates will expire in 2018 can use the new assessment to continue their certification. Diplomates will not be required to take the new assessment until their certificate is due to expire.

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

## Certification Status

Once participating in the new assessment process, a surgeon's certification status will be contingent on passing an assessment every other year, as well as meeting other program requirements.

## Grace Year

A grace year will be offered the following year for those who need to retake the assessment or otherwise catch up. Diplomates will not lose certification until the end of the grace year.

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## 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 the 2018 general surgery assessment will be open from Aug. 1 to Oct. 15.**

**The assessment will be available from Sept. 7 to Nov. 5.**

## Continuous Certification Program Requirements

Diplomates should keep their information regarding these requirements up to date on the ABS website:

- 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 new general surgery assessment
- 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 Overview](#)
- [New Assessment Enrollment](#)
- [Program Requirements](#)
- [Video & PDF Overview](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [General Surgery Assessment Topics](#)

Please make sure to keep your contact information [up to date](#) for news and notifications regarding Continuous Certification.

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