



Irish College of
Ophthalmologists
Eye Doctors of Ireland
Protecting your Vision

ST4-ST7
SPECIALIST TRAINING INFORMATION
2019 OPHTHALMIC SURGERY

Table of Contents

1.	Welcome	2
2.	Overview	3
3.	Training Programme Framework.....	3
4.	Accredited Training Post Hospitals.....	4
5.	Curriculum.....	4
6.	Mandatory Components	5
7.	HST Assessment	8
8.	Courses.....	12
9.	Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST).....	13
10.	Surgical Fellowships & Awards.....	14
11.	Recognition of Prior Posts (Retrospection)	14
12.	Out of Programme.....	15
13.	Out of Programme Training	16
14.	Out of Programme Checklist	17
15.	Leave	17
16.	Flexible Training	18
17.	HSE National Coaching Service	19
18.	HSE National Doctors Training & Planning	19
19.	Funding	20
20.	Data Protection	21
21.	Important Contact Numbers / Emails / Portals	23

1. Welcome

Dear SpR Trainee,

Congratulations on your appointment to Specialty Training in Ophthalmic Surgery (ST4-ST7).

Specialist Training in Ophthalmic Surgery is delivered through a collaborative relationship between the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) and the Irish College of Ophthalmologists (ICO).

As a specialty, we continually review the training programme and identify areas we can improve upon. Equally, we aim to introduce new incentives that will contribute to the quality of training experience.

There are processes in place and these must be followed in order to ensure the smooth running of the training programme. Take time to read this document as it will aid you in your development through each year of training.

If you require assistance, please speak with your Consultant Trainer in the first instance and with the College or myself as necessary.

I hope that your experience of Specialty Training in Ophthalmic Surgery will be a positive one and may I wish you the best in your surgical training career.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Kathryn McCreery
Programme Director, Ophthalmic Surgery
Chairman Manpower, Education & Research Committee, ICO

2. Overview

The surgical ophthalmology curriculum is a seven-year competence-based curriculum, which consists of three core years followed by four years of subspecialty training.

The purpose of the Higher Ophthalmic Surgical Training is to provide in-depth surgical training so as to equip trainees with skills both in cataract surgery as well as in the surgical subspecialties of anterior segment surgery (corneal transplant), glaucoma (trabeculectomy), paediatric ophthalmology and strabismus (strabismus surgery), vitreo-retinal (retinal detachment repair), nasolacrimal, oculoplastic and orbital (enucleations) surgery and neuro-ophthalmology. Higher Surgical trainees, irrespective of preference and future career choice, need to complete training in all subspecialties to successfully complete their training.

3. Training Programme Framework

Trainees commence the four-year Higher Ophthalmic Surgical Training Programme in ST4.

At the end of training, a Trainee is awarded a Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST) if they have achieved the surgical, clinical, personal and professional competences defined in the surgical curriculum, fulfilled the mandatory assessment requirements and passed the FRCSI Exit Examination. Full requirements are outlined in the CCST section of this document.

Retrospective recognition will not be considered for trainees on the streamlined pathway.

Trainees may apply for Out of Programme Training (OOPT). This experience may be recognized for training. There is an application process in place, which must be followed for this to be considered, and a maximum of one year applies. Further information is outlined in the OOPT section of this document. Trainees who are awarded recognition of OOPT must complete a minimum of three years on the Higher Ophthalmic Surgical Training Programme in approved accredited posts in Ireland, which is a mandatory requirement for completion of training. OOPT should be taken in the final year of training.

4. Accredited Training Post Hospitals

Hospital	Important Contacts
Cork University Hospital	Educational Supervisor: Mr Zubair Idrees
University College Hospital Galway	Educational Supervisor: Ms Deirdre Townley
Mater Misericordiae University Hospital Temple St Children's University Hospital	Educational Supervisor: Mr Ian Flitcroft
Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital Our Lady's Children Hospital, Crumlin St. Vincent's University Hospital	Educational Supervisor: Mr Edward Loane
Sligo University Hospital	Educational Supervisor: Ms Shauna Quinn
University Hospital Limerick	Educational Supervisor: Ms Marie Hickey Dwyer
University Hospital Waterford	Educational Supervisor: Mr John Stokes

5. Curriculum

There are 7 sub-specialties in ophthalmic surgery and the training programme covers all 7:

1. Cataract and Refractive Surgery
2. Paediatric Ophthalmology & Strabismus
3. Corneal and External Diseases
4. Glaucoma
5. Vitreoretinal surgery, medical retina and ocular oncology
6. Neuro-ophthalmology
7. Oculoplastics & Orbital / lacrimal disorders

For further information, please view the Curriculum document on the ICO website:

<http://www.eyedoctors.ie/trainees/Specialist-Training-in-Surgical-Ophthalmology.asp>

6. Mandatory Components

6.1 Human Factors

A programme of training in Human Factors in Patient Safety principles is a mandatory component of ophthalmology training for Trainees at junior and senior levels of training.

Training sessions use a combination of didactic and action-based learning teaching methods. Classes are kept to a maximum of 25 attendees to allow for simulation and practice. Emergency Medicine, Ophthalmology and Surgical Trainees attend sessions together which stimulates multidisciplinary communication. Sessions are facilitated by a Clinical Psychologist/Senior Lecturer and either a Consultant in Surgery, Ophthalmology or Emergency Medicine. Each Trainee attends three full day sessions per year of training.

Attendance is an important component of the annual assessment and is necessary to permit progression through the training programmes.

The Human Factors Training Calendar is set by the Human Factors department in RCSI Surgical Training and is circulated by email at the start of each training year. Each module is repeated.

Trainees on the HST in Ophthalmic Surgery Programme must attend each of the following modules once, during their programme;

- Leadership
- Safety Management Systems
- 21st Century Professionalism
- Advanced Communication: Advocacy & Negotiation
- Bias and Diversity Training

Additionally the ICO Anterior Vitrectomy Simulation Course (for Yr 3 BSTs) has an integrated HF course on Managing Adverse Events. HSTs who have not attended the course during BST will be invited to attend during HST.

6.2 Research Methodology Course for Surgical Trainees

The Irish Surgical Postgraduate Training Committee (ISPTC) is committed to ensuring that surgical trainees have good exposure to Academic Surgery as an integral part of surgical training.

As a first step, a taught course in research methodology was introduced in 2015. This is a modular programme, which runs over 4 days in ST4 and ST5 (i.e. 2 days in each training year). The programme gives a comprehensive introduction to research methodology relevant to surgeons and is delivered in RCSI by Professor Tom Fahy and his team. After ST5, some trainees may opt to take time out of surgical training to pursue an MD or PHD through full time research for 2 years. However, the taught programme is intended for all surgical trainees, even if they do not plan to pursue an MD or PhD later.

The ISPTC has deemed this programme mandatory for all ST4 trainees in all specialties and you will be required to complete the 4 modules in order to be “signed off” in your CAPA at the end of ST5. However, those trainees who have already completed a taught MCh, or MD or PHD are exempted from the research methodology course as they have already completed a similar course as part of their higher degree. Trainees commencing in ST4 will be contacted with details of the course including exemption details.

Research Methodology Course Modules

Module 1

- Introduction to Evidence Based Medicine
- Developing a research question and mapping to most appropriate study design
- Study design – strengths and weaknesses
- Fundamentals of bias, confounding and causality
- Protocol development
- Introduction to standardised reporting guidelines

Module 2

- Accessing clinical evidence
- Fundamentals of randomised controlled trials
- Fundamentals of systematic reviews and meta-analysis
- Other synopses of evidence, including clinical practice guidelines

Module 3

- Fundamentals of biostatistics
- Nature of data; descriptive statistics
- Hypothesis testing; sample size calculation
- Univariable analysis
- Multivariable analysis

Module 4

- Student presentations- protocol and/or completed research
- Funding of research and grant applications
- Peer review publishing
 - Author
 - Reviewer
 - Editor

6.3 School for Surgeons & Interactive Classroom

SCHOOL for Specialists in Ophthalmology and the Interactive Classroom – SFSO is the online component of the training programme and during BST was an obligatory part of the program. From 2018 it is now also a mandatory component of HST training. HSTs will be expected to contribute to teaching on the interactive classrooms:-

Through the eJournal portal on the SFS site each HST will also be able to access all the peer reviewed journals relevant to ophthalmology as well as other disciplines. Trainees are expected to attend a minimum of 60% of ICs in order to pass each 6 month rotation of their 4 year training cycle.

The College will email you directly with your SFS login details. If your login details are not working you can contact the ICO directly.

6.4 American Academy of Ophthalmology ONE Network

As a Trainee of the ICO, you have free access to the American Academy's Ophthalmic News & Education (ONE®) Network. The ONE Network is a comprehensive, online educational resource that brings together the most clinically relevant content, news and tools from a variety of trusted sources. The recent updates mean that when you log on to use the ONE Network, you will be able to access a greater extent of new content, such as a library of 3,500 free clinical images, basic skills courses, master class videos and self-assessments. The upgraded facility will also find content easily and quickly using a powerful new search engine and customise a visitors learning experience with the "My ONE Network" tool. The new version also allows you to view clinical content on any mobile device.

Important: Content from the ONE Network will be used in your School for Surgeons assignments and Interactive classroom feedback sessions. For this reason, the College advises you to check that your username and password is functioning and active.

The College has provided the setup details required to the ONE Network and you will be emailed directly with your login details. If your login details are not working or you need instructions on logging in to the ONE Network you can contact the ICO directly or email oneintl@ao.org.

7. HST Assessment

7.1 Examinations

- FRCSI Examination

The Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (FRCSI) is the exit appraisal for the Higher Ophthalmic Surgical Training Programme. The FRCSI examination is a test of competence to practice as an independent specialist (consultant) in ophthalmic surgery and is aimed at trainees who are coming to the end of their Specialist Training in Ophthalmology.

The MRCSI is an entry requirement for the FRCSI and candidates for the FRCSI must be in their **final year** of Specialist Training in Surgical Ophthalmology in Ireland.

You can apply via the RCSI Postgraduate Exams portal and search for the FRCSI exam listing <https://postgradexams.rcsi.ie/public/openexams>

If you have any queries before your exam, you will see listed on the portal a contact person from the RCSI Exams office for the FRCSI exam or you can contact the general exams email address pgexams@rcsi.ie.

For the Regulations and Eligibility Guidelines of the FRCSI Exam, please visit <http://www.rcsi.ie/ophmembersexams>.

It is essential that you pay close attention to the **closing dates** for the exam, as these can be as early as 2-3 months before the examination date.

Trainees must have satisfactorily completed all assessments deemed appropriate by the Training Committee to be eligible to fit the final FRCSI exam and must be in their final year of training.

- EBO Examination

The European Board of Ophthalmology Diploma (EBOD) Examination is a test of excellence in ophthalmology. It is designed to assess the knowledge and clinical skills requisite to the delivery of a high standard of ophthalmology care both in hospitals and in independent clinical practices.

The examination takes place every year in Paris, France over two days (usually in early May) and welcomes eligible candidates from all over Europe.

The MRCSI is an entry requirement for the EBO Exam and candidates must be in ST4 or ST5 of Training to apply..

Please visit <http://www.ebo-online.org/ebo-exam/exam-information/> to apply for the exam. Here, you can also read the Exam Regulations and Eligibility Criteria, along with Exam Structure and Fees.

Candidates are required to upload an approval letter from the Programme Director. Applications are not complete without this letter, please contact the ICO to arrange it before applying for the exam online.

If you have any queries regarding the exam, you can contact lisa.flanagan@ebo-online.org or the general exams email address ebo@ebo-online.org.

It is essential that you pay close attention to the **closing dates** for the exam, as these can be as early as 2-3 months before the examination date.

7.2 Competence and Assessment of Performance Appraisal (CAPA)

Trainees are assessed via Competence and Assessment of Performance Appraisal (CAPA). This is a review session with the HST Programme Director where your progress in relation to fulfilling the mandatory components of assessment is discussed. CAPA assessment documentation for your first six-month rotation is required in December for review by the Programme Director. CAPA assessment documentation for your second six-month rotation is required in May ahead of the formal CAPA assessment session with the Programme Director in June.

Mandatory Components of HST Assessment

1. CAPA Assessment Session	Trainees must submit assessment documentation for first six-months in <i>December</i> and second six-months in <i>May</i> . Trainees must attend the formal CAPA assessment session once per year with the Programme Director.
2. Audit	Trainees must have one publicly presented audit <i>per training year</i> .
3. Peer Reviewed Paper	Trainees must have one published peer reviewed paper <i>by the end of training</i> .
4. International Presentation	Trainees must give one international presentations <i>by the end of training</i> .
5. Clinical Case Based Discussion	Two clinical case based discussions based on content referenced to the learning outcomes of the subspecialty curricula should be presented locally <i>every six months</i> .
6. Presentation Major Clinical Topic	One major clinical topic, referenced to the learning outcomes of the subspecialty curricula should be presented locally or nationally <i>every six months</i>
7. Teaching and School for Surgeons	Trainees are expected to engage with any in-unit training as well as the School for Surgeons (SFS) online training programme. Participation on SFS assignments, the Interactive Classroom (IC) feedback sessions and the end of term MCQ are mandatory components of the HST programme. A minimum of 60% of assignments are required to be completed and a minimum of 60% of ICs to be attended.
8. Logbook	A logbook showing all procedures should be prepared for <i>each six-month rotation</i> .
	A HST Summary Logbook of all procedures to date (cumulative HST record) should be prepared for <i>each six-month rotation</i> .

9. Exams	(1) The EBOD exam should be sat in <i>ST4 or ST5</i> . (2) The FRCSI exam should be sat in <i>ST7</i> .									
10. Mandatory Courses	(1) Human Factors - One to two modules must be attended <i>per training year</i> . (2) RCSI Research Skills Course must be completed in <i>ST4 or ST5</i> . Trainees may be considered for exemption of this course if they have a research degree.									
11. Recommended Courses / Meetings	Certificates of completion of recommended courses and meetings should be submitted at <i>the formal CAPA assessment session</i> .									
12. Trainer Report	This report is contained within the HST Assessment Form and should be completed by the Consultant Trainer at <i>each six-monthly assessment</i> .									
13. Core Competency Forms <i>Measured across seven sub-specialty sections. Each has a corresponding Core Competency Form.</i>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="548 898 963 1014">1. Oculoplastic, Adnexal & Lacrimal Surgery</td> <td data-bbox="963 898 1472 1665" rowspan="7"> <p>Each section is sub-divided into objective, essential clinical experience and recommended reading.</p> <p>Depending on the sub-specialty opportunity of each rotation, the relevant form(s) are chosen for completion.</p> <p>These forms may be repeated again later in training depending on the rotation and are a useful marker for progress. It is not recommended that these forms are completed and 'signed off' in the first year of training but rather completed incrementally as the Trainee progresses through his/her years of HST training.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="548 1014 963 1129">2. Cornea and External Diseases</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="548 1129 963 1245">3. Cataract & Refractive Surgery</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="548 1245 963 1360">4. Glaucoma</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="548 1360 963 1476">5. Retina, Vitreous, Uvea incl. Ocular Oncology</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="548 1476 963 1591">6. Neuro-Ophthalmology</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="548 1591 963 1665">7. Paediatric Ophthalmology & Strabismus</td> </tr> </table>	1. Oculoplastic, Adnexal & Lacrimal Surgery	<p>Each section is sub-divided into objective, essential clinical experience and recommended reading.</p> <p>Depending on the sub-specialty opportunity of each rotation, the relevant form(s) are chosen for completion.</p> <p>These forms may be repeated again later in training depending on the rotation and are a useful marker for progress. It is not recommended that these forms are completed and 'signed off' in the first year of training but rather completed incrementally as the Trainee progresses through his/her years of HST training.</p>	2. Cornea and External Diseases	3. Cataract & Refractive Surgery	4. Glaucoma	5. Retina, Vitreous, Uvea incl. Ocular Oncology	6. Neuro-Ophthalmology	7. Paediatric Ophthalmology & Strabismus	
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14. HST Competencies Assessment	Yearly assessments will take place which assess the ability of trainees to evaluate, diagnose and formulate treatment plans for ophthalmic conditions. These assessments serve to encourage ongoing learning and preparation for the final FRCSI in Ophthalmology									

HST Assessment Documentation

The following documents should be submitted to the ICO office at the completion of each 6 month rotation for review by the Programme Director

1. HST Training Assessment Form
- This form is a record of Trainees' progress in Audit, Peer Reviewed Paper, International Presentation, Clinical Case Based Discussion, Presentation of Major Clinical Topic, Teaching Activities, Trainer Report
2. Core Competency Form(s) (Any of 1 – 7)
3. Logbook per 6 month rotation
4. HST Summary Logbook

Your Programme Director will also chart your progress in Exams and Mandatory Courses on a CAPA summary sheet, which is stored in your training file in the ICO.

**Training Assessment Documentation is subject to review and updating by the ICO. Any changes will be communicated to you by the ICO.*

HST COMPETENCIES ASSESSMENT

Yearly assessments are currently being implemented in the higher surgical training programme. Review and planning of the format of the assessments is currently ongoing.

Further and detailed information will be circulated to all trainees.

The date for the 2020 assessment has been set as Friday May 29th, 2020

8. Courses

- Mandatory Courses

Human Factors, RCSI
Research Methodology, RCSI
School for Surgeons & Interactive Classroom
Anterior Vitrectomy Course, ICO

- High Priority Conferences & Meetings

ICO Annual Conference:
ARVO; Association for Research & Vision in Ophthalmology
AAO; American Academy of Ophthalmology
ESCRS; European Society for Cataract & Refractive Surgeons
BEAVRS; British & Eire Association of Vitreo Retinal Surgeons
EU Retina:

- **Management Courses** (*One of the following*)

RCPI Leadership Skills Course

Diploma in Healthcare Management, Institute of Public Administrators

UCD Professional Certificate in Healthcare Management

- **High Priority Subspecialty Course**

Strabismus Course, Waterford

RCOphth Oculoplastics Course

Vitreous Retinal Course Moorfields Eye Hospital

Neuro-Ophthalmology Course, Beaumont Hospital

Lasik Course, Moorfields

Glaucoma Course, Moorfields Hospital

Medical Retina Course – Adare, Limerick

Moorfields Medical Retina Course, London

- **Wet Labs**

Artisan IOL wetlab ESCRS

DSAEK wetlab ESCRS

9. Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST)

Trainees must achieve the surgical, clinical, personal and professional competences defined in the surgical curriculum, fulfil the mandatory assessment requirements, pass the FRCSI Exit Examination and in approved accredited posts in Ireland to be awarded CCST.

At the final CAPA assessment session, it is confirmed if the following mandatory components of the training programme have been successfully attained:

- Satisfactory outcome at all CAPA assessment sessions ST4 – ST7
- Audit
- Peer Reviewed Paper
- International Presentation
- Clinical Case Based Discussions and Presentations of linked Major Clinical Topic
- Participation in Teaching Activities and School for Surgeons
- Logbook: Final Six-Monthly Logbook and HST Summary Logbook
- Exams: EBOD Exam and FRCSI Exam
- Mandatory Courses:
- Cumulative Record of Core Competency Forms
- Minimum three years in approved accredited posts in Ireland

Award of the CCST will allow the Higher Surgical Trainee to be registered on the ophthalmic surgery registrar of the Irish Medical Council and will indicate that the Trainee has reached the curricular standards of competence to practice independently as an Ophthalmic Surgeon in Ireland.

10. Surgical Fellowships & Awards

The ICO seeks industry support to help make funding available to ophthalmology trainees to access training opportunities outside of the formal programme. Details on a range of scholarships and travel grants/bursaries as they are confirmed will be circulated. The RCSI also provides a number of grants and bursaries for education and further information is available on the College website. The HSE, through the Dr Richard Steeven's Scholarship annually funds a number of senior trainees to take up overseas fellowship posts. For information on the Richard Steeven's Scholarship, please visit: <http://www.rcsi.ie/steevensscholarship>

Applicants must be Fellows or Members of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland who are in good standing.

11. Recognition of Prior Posts (Retrospection)

The recognition for training of prior posts only applies to those on the traditional pathway – those who commenced BST prior to 2015.

It may be possible for a Trainee to have prior experience recognized towards the completion of their specialist training if they entered HST via the traditional pathway (pre-July 2015). A maximum of one year can be awarded for recognition of post(s) carried out after Basic Surgical Training and prior to commencing the Higher Ophthalmic Surgical Training Programme. The ICO would encourage applications for recognition of prior experience to be made in ST4 but applications can be submitted in subsequent training years. There is a formal application process in place if a Trainee wishes to apply for recognition of prior experience, and this is outlined below.

1. Consider the Prior Post

Consider the prior experience you wish to be assessed for recognition towards training. The post should be one of the following:

- Post is approved for HST training but was not filled by a HST Trainee at the time
- Post was subsequently recognized for HST training

2. *Discuss your Intention to Apply*

Discuss your intention to apply for recognition of prior experience with your local Consultant Trainer(s) and your Programme Director. If there are no concerns raised, you may submit an application.

3. *Application Form*

Complete the Application for Recognition of Prior Experience, which requires the following details on the prior post:

- Date of Post
- Location of Post
- Weekly Timetable
- Subspecialty Experience
- Surgical Logbook
- Comments and Signatures of the post's Consultant Trainer(s)

Submit the completed application form to the Training Coordinator in the ICO. Please note that applications with any fields omitted or missing Consultant Trainer(s) signatures will not be accepted.

4. *Assessment*

After the Training Coordinator has quality checked the application form, it is circulated to the Programme Director and the Retrospection Panel of the ICO Manpower, Education & Research Committee for review and a decision on recognition of prior experience is made. If your application is not approved, you will be notified in writing of the reasons for the decision. If your application is approved, you will be notified in writing and your re-calculated CCST date will be stated.

12. Out of Programme

HST is a structured four-year programme designed to meet the requirements of the curriculum of training. Trainees must complete four years on the HST programme together with meeting the requirements of the curriculum to be awarded CCST.

OOP (Out of Programme) is a general term for any time spent outside of a training rotation. OOP can range from specialised training to maternity/paternity leave, but does not include annual leave and short-term sick leave, as that is included in your training time. There are a number of circumstances when a Trainee may seek to spend some time out of the specialty training programme. All such requests need to be agreed by the Training Programme Director in advance, so Trainees are advised to discuss their proposals as early as possible.

Time out of programme must be in prospectively approved training posts or for other purposes.

13. Out of Programme Training

Trainees may apply for Out of Programme Training (OOPT), which can only be taken in the final year of training.

Approval for OOPT is subject to the appropriate application process. The post must be deemed suitable for a surgical training programme. Trainees must continue to meet the requirements of the programme while they are on OOPT. A maximum of one year OOPT can be recognised for training.

There is a formal application process in place should a trainee intend to apply for recognition of this experience, and this is outlined below.

1. *Discuss your Intention for OOPT*

Discuss your plan for Out of Programme Training with the Programme Director and the Dean of Postgraduate Education. You may wish to seek advice also from Research Supervisors and Educational Supervisors. If your OOPT plans are supported by the Programme Director and Dean, you can notify the ICO.

2. *Notify the Training Body/ICO*

Notifications to the training body must be made no later than 6 months prior to your intention to leave on OOPT. You will need to confirm the details below in writing to the Training Coordinator in the ICO:

- Reason for OOPT
- The exact dates of the OOPT
- Content of the planned OOPT

The Programme Director, in conjunction with the Dean and Training Committee will review the submission and will determine a provisional agreement with respect to the OOPT including the requirements that the trainee must meet during the time away to satisfy the subsequent review of experience, with a view to deciding the appropriate training recognition. All trainees on OOPT, looking for recognition of training, must complete the mandatory HST requirements for the CAPA appraisal as outlined in section 7.2 above.

To satisfy the time component of HST, an extended period of OOPT will have an impact on the CCST date.

If you are employed outside the Irish hospital service and you cease to pursue, for any reason, the research or other activity, which has been agreed, you must inform the Programme Director and Dean promptly with the ICO Training Coordinator in copy. It will then be decided, in consultation with the ICO Manpower, Education & Research Committee, whether it is appropriate for you to remain within the training programme.

If you are employed outside the Irish hospital service and wish to begin or return to the Training Programme, you must accept a reasonable offer of a suitable training post. Offers of training posts will, as far as possible, take into account your training need.

14. Out of Programme Checklist

Up-to-date CV	
Signed offer letter	
Letter of support from Training Programme Director showing exact dates of OOPT period and whether the time is counting towards training	
Application for OOPT must be completed & approved not less than 6 months prior to commencement.	
Educational contract signed by Trainee and OOPT site Supervisor, which includes details of Learning Agreements and Objectives and timetable	
Job description	
Name and contact details of the OOPT Supervisor	
Logbooks from two previous incumbents of the post or a report from the Supervisor	

15. Leave

15.1 Maternity Leave

As Maternity Leave affects the CCST date, Trainees are required to inform the Programme Director and the College of their Maternity leave start and finish dates when they have them. Trainees must also inform their employer as per their HSE contracts.

15.2 Career Break

Please see [here](#) the HSE circular in relation career breaks. NCHDs who travel abroad can now apply for a career break and if approved will remain on the superannuation scheme. NCHDs wishing to avail of a career break under this arrangement must apply to their Employer in sufficient time before the expiry of their current contract. For those NCHDs participating in a Specialist Training Scheme they must also apply to the relevant postgraduate medical training body and obtain the formal written approval of the relevant postgraduate medical training body. This formal written approval must be attached to the career break application to their employer. Please see [here](#) for the list of agencies with public service employees funded by the HSE.

For further information, please visit: <http://www.rcsi.ie/TraineeInformationFAQ>

16. Flexible Training

16.1 HSE National Flexible Training Scheme

The HSE National Flexible Training Scheme for Higher Specialist Trainees is a national scheme managed and funded by the Health Service Executives National Doctors Training and Planning (NDTP) Unit. The scheme provides for a limited number of supernumerary places to facilitate doctors at higher specialist training level to continue their training in a flexible manner for a set period.

The HSE NDTP Guidance Document sets out the current details of the National Flexible Training Scheme and provides information for trainees about the programme and the application process. Applications generally open at the beginning of August and close in December for the training year commencing the following July. Applicants will then be notified of the outcome of their application for the scheme by the end of January each year.

To view the HSE NDTP Guidance Document and access the Application Form, please visit: <http://www.rcsi.ie/TraineeInformationFAQ>

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the necessary approval is obtained from both the training body and the employer in a timely manner, a minimum of three months prior to commencement of the post.

16.2 Post Reassignment Request

A post reassignment request can be submitted to the Programme Director and Dean of Postgraduate Education of the ICO via email if there has been a significant change to personal circumstances or for other personal reasons. It is important to note that rotations are confirmed to trainees ahead of time so flexibility cannot always be guaranteed.

16.3 Job-sharing

Postgraduate trainees can avail of job sharing opportunities for a set period. Job sharing works on the basis that two trainees will share one full-time post with each trainee working 50% of the hours. The aim of the job-sharing policy is to retain doctors within the medical workforce who are unable to continue training on a full-time basis.

***Important**

Please note that flexible training options are currently under review with the HSE NDTP. Any resulting changes to flexible training will be communicated to you but you may also wish to check the HSE NDTP Flexible Training webpage for updates <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/ed/flex/>

17. HSE National Coaching Service

The HSE offers a National Coaching Service to all its employees in recognition that coaching aims to help people when they feel stuck and want to bring about personal change in their lives and work, to shift their perspective, reflect on their choices and realise their individual potential. The National Coaching Service offers 4-6 one to one sessions over the phone with each session lasting 1-hour max.

To find out more about the coaching service please visit <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/coaching.html>.

You can apply for a coach confidentially by contacting National Human Resources Division, Workplace Relations Unit, Staff Development Section by email hr.staffdevelopment@hse.ie.

18. HSE National Doctors Training & Planning



The Irish College of Ophthalmologists wish to acknowledge the support provided by the HSE National Doctors Training & Planning and its contribution to the development of postgraduate medical training in Ireland in an evolving health service.

19. Funding

Funding is available to Trainees via five different funds. Please see table below for a brief overview of all funds.

<p>MANDATORY FUND</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Run by RCSI on behalf of HSE/NDTP. ▪ For approved mandatory courses only. ▪ €1200 maximum per year per trainee. ▪ Funding is not carried over year-on-year. ▪ Trainees must have approval for the course before claiming.
<p>SPECIALIST TRAINING FUND</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Run by RCSI on behalf of HSE/NDTP. ▪ For training courses/activities, equip, books, expenses. ▪ €500 per year per Trainee. ▪ Funding is carried over year-on-year e.g. three years unclaimed will give the Trainee €1500 to claim.
<p>CLINICAL COURSES & EXAM FUND</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Run by HSE/NDTP for courses and exams only on the approved list. ▪ €450 per claim, no restrictions on how many claims can be submitted per year. ▪ Trainees must claim for this fund through the HR Departments in their hospital within 6 months of attending the exam/course.
<p>SURGICAL LOUPES FUND</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Surgical Loupes fund is open to trainees in years ST3-ST8. ▪ Applications open in February each year and close end of March. ▪ Applications will be emailed directly to trainees with a link to the webpage for further information ▪ Amount of funding available depends on number of claims.
<p>Training Support Scheme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Additional Training Support Funding has been made available to by HSE NDTP to NCHDs from July 2019 onwards. ▪ Funding is allocated based on Grade for each registration training year, July – July. ▪ €2,000 is available to each SpR for certain approved clinical courses, conferences and examinations

Please note while it is our intention to meet all mandatory training requirements, funding will be subject to review and approval by the HSE/ NDTP on an annual basis.

RCSI pays fees for Trainees for the following:

<p>STATISTICAL PACKAGE FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES (SPSS Statistics Package)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Available to all Trainees on the ST Programme and should help with research. ▪ This can be downloaded using your RCSI log on through https://vle.rcsi.ie/, then follow the path: Support → IT Support → 4. RCSI Software Library → SPSS ▪ Normal purchase cost €1100 per Trainee.
<p>ENDNOTE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Available to all Trainees on the ST Programme and should help with research. ▪ This can be downloaded using your RCSI log on through https://vle.rcsi.ie/, then follow the path: Support → IT Support → 4. RCSI Software Library → Endnote ▪ Normal purchase cost €300 per Trainee.

20. Data Protection

Data Protection is an increasingly important issue for all organisations. Like all organisations that hold and use personal data, the ICO must meet certain obligations relating to the manner in which it collects, stores, uses and disseminates personal data of individuals.

The ICO is committed to meeting its obligations under the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2018. ICO needs to collect personal data, as defined by the Acts, for a variety of purposes, in order to conduct its business as a professional and post graduate training body. ICO collects data relating to trainees who come into contact with the college in the course of its activities. Personal data is collected, managed and used for a variety of purposes including, but not limited to, the admission, assessment and examination of trainees and their clinical performance.

ICO is committed to compliance with the eight principles of data protection as set out in the Acts:

1. To obtain and process personal data fairly

ICO will obtain and process personal data fairly in accordance its legal obligations.

2. To keep it only for one or more specified and lawful purposes

ICO will keep data for purposes that are specific, lawful and clearly stated and the data will only be processed in a manner compatible with these purposes.

3. To use and disclose it only in ways compatible with the stated purpose(s)

ICO will only use and disclose personal data in ways that are necessary for the purpose/s or compatible with the purpose/s for which it collects and keeps the data.

4. To keep it safe and secure

ICO will take appropriate technical and organisational security measures against unauthorised access to, or alteration, disclosure or destruction of the data and against their accidental loss or destruction.

5. To keep it accurate, complete and up-to-date

ICO will take appropriate measures to ensure high levels of data accuracy and completeness and to ensure that personal data is kept up to date.

6. To ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive

Personal data held by the College will be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose/s for which they are kept.

7. To retain it for no longer than is necessary for the purpose for which it was collected

ICO will have a defined retention period policy for personal data and appropriate procedures in place to implement such a policy.

8. To give a copy of his/her personal data to an individual, upon request.

ICO has procedures in place to ensure that data subjects can access a copy of his/her data held by ICO, in compliance with sections 3 & 4 of the Data Protection Acts.

The ICO does not share personally identifying data with third parties unless requested to do so for a specific regulatory purpose by the HSE or the Medical Council.

21. Important Contact Numbers / Emails / Portals

RCSI National Surgical Training Centre (NSTC) - Admin Offices

Roisin Scally, Email: roisinscally@rcsi.ie

Tel: 01 402 2166 / Fax: 01 402 2459

Working hours: 09.00 – 17.00

Irish College of Ophthalmologists

Tel: 01 402 2777 / www.eyedoctors.ie

Rob Tracey, Training Programme Administrator

rob.tracey@eyedoctors.ie

RCSI Human Factors

Simone Brennan

Email: simonebrennan@rcsi.ie

RCSI Research Skills Course

Barbara White

Email: barbarawhite@rcsi.ie

RCSI Reception

121 Stephens Green 01 402 2422

123 Stephens Green 01 402 2263

RCSI IT Dept 01 402 2273

RCSI SARA Office

01 402 2222

ssgsara@rcsi.ie

RCSI Library

librarian@rcsi-mub.com

RCSI Website

<http://www.rcsi.ie/TraineeInformationFAQ>

Please check the Trainee Information page for regular training updates.

School for Surgeons

<https://vle.rcsi.ie/login/index.php>