



RCSI



RCSI SURGICAL AFFAIRS

GUIDANCE ON SUPPORTING

**FLEXIBLE
TRAINING**



Supporting a healthy work life balance for trainees

Surgical Affairs**Document Title** **Guidance on Supporting Flexible Training**

Revision level	Revision date	Document number	Description of revision	Document owner	Approved by
00	00	00	Draft document	CMCG	
0.1	April 2024	TRN	Updated documentation	CMCG/ P Malone	ISPTC May 24

Background

The RCSI have a strong commitment to ensuring all doctors in training have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Flexible or also known as Less Than Full Time (LTFT) training guidelines are designed to support those trainees who wish to trainee flexibility for either professional or personnel reasons and thereby ensures a pathway by which a trainee has the opportunity to continue their training on a flexible bases while continuing to attain the required competencies and range of experience necessary.

RCSI would consider that all training posts have the potential for flexible training arrangements and will envisage to work and support a trainee on this principle.

All Postgraduate trainees can apply for flexible training at any stage of their training pathway but, it is acknowledged that those in the first year of training CST or CSTEM 1 should if possible complete a full year in training before requesting Flexible options.

Aims of Flexible training

1. Retention of trainees who are unable to continue their training on a full time basis
2. Promote career development and work/life balance for trainees
3. Ensure continued training in both surgery and emergency medicine on a time equivalent basis
4. Maintain a balance between flexible training arrangements, the educational requirements of both full-time and flexible trainees and the service need

Principles of Flexible Training

1. All trainees can apply for flexible training and all applications will be treated positively
2. No existing trainee will be disadvantaged by the application for Flexible Training options
3. All accredited posts are deemed suitable for flexible training must be appropriate for the trainee's training requirements at the time
4. There will be a transparent, independent and fair process in place for trainees who choose to train flexibly

Flexible Training examples

1. 4 day week
2. Reduction in working week to between 0.6 and 0.8
3. Job sharing where two trainees agree to share a post at a 0.6 each
4. Week on week off

Flexible Training considerations - Trainees

Trainees should consider the following prior to applying for Flexible training;

- Salary implications and the duration of training before undertaking this route of training.
- Duration of flexible training will lengthen either Certificate of Core Training and/or CSCST date will be extended.

Application Process for Flexible Training

1. Trainees who wish to avail of Flexible training should where reasonably possible make their intention known to the TPD, no later than 6 months before the rotation is due to commence via email or discussion directly, to allow for rotation planning purposes.
2. All applications need to clearly indicate the type of Flexible training requested
The trainee should apply in writing to the TPD via the specialty admin indicating their intention to seek a flexible training arrangement. Submissions by email will be accepted.
3. The request will be considered by the Specialty Training Committee and the decision communicated to the trainee.
4. Every effort will be made to accommodate requests and decisions will be based on availability of training posts and the training requirements of the individual trainee.
5. Applications will generally be considered at the time of or prior to the post allocation process taking place.
6. In the event of a trainee's application not being successful they will be notified by the training committee and the reasons for the decision will be outlined.

Consideration of request to train flexibly

1. All applications will be considered by the Specialty Programme Director, governed by the Specialty and the Irish Surgical Postgraduate Training Committee (ISPTC) of RCSI.
2. When considering applications a number of factors will be taken into account, these include the availability of an appropriate post at the required training level.
3. No existing trainee can be disadvantaged i.e. have their rotation changed without agreement to accommodate a request unless they are in agreement.
The flexible training post must meet the training requirements appropriate to a trainee at that level.
4. Flexible training will be granted for a period of one year and then reviewed by the Specialty Training Committee if a further request is made by the trainee.
5. The TPD /AES should set out in writing the competencies and requirements of training to be met in that flexible training year such as courses and logbook etc to ensure ARCP and CAPA outcomes are in line with expected competencies at the end of a flexible training year.
6. The specialty should inform JCST to any changes in CSCST dates based on flexible training arrangements.
7. A trainee can appeal a decision if they believe their application has not been managed in accordance with the guidelines. Appeals with supporting documentation can be made to the ISPTC within one month of the Training Committee decision being communicated to the trainee.

Decision Process

If a trainee decides to decline the offer no further offers will be made at that time and the trainee would need to apply again if they wish to pursue this pathway of training at a later stage in their training.

In the unlikely event that an application is not successful the trainee will be informed of this decision by TPD /Dean. A reason for the decision must be provided.

The Specialty will do its best to accommodate such requests but applicants must be aware that requests will be dealt with on an individual basis.

“Flexible” Training requirements

Depending on the trainees year of training and agreed flexible working hours a review of the trainee’s competencies and logbook requirements should be made in advance of commencement of the post to ensure there is clear understanding the trainee’s requirements for assessment at end of year ARCP, CAPA or RITA process.

Trainees may seek time back from end of training in lieu of flexible time period worked. This is will be subject to review and approval by the committee on request and will be based on demonstrated evidence of achievement of required competencies, FRCS or RCEM exams and logbook activity at time of review.

Complaints Process

Trainees who feel that their application has not been managed in accordance to this guideline can submit appeal and grievance procedures will then be triggered. This will follow Surgical Affairs appeals process; all complaints/appeals must be submitted within 14 days following the outcome of the application.

Appeals policy is available upon request.

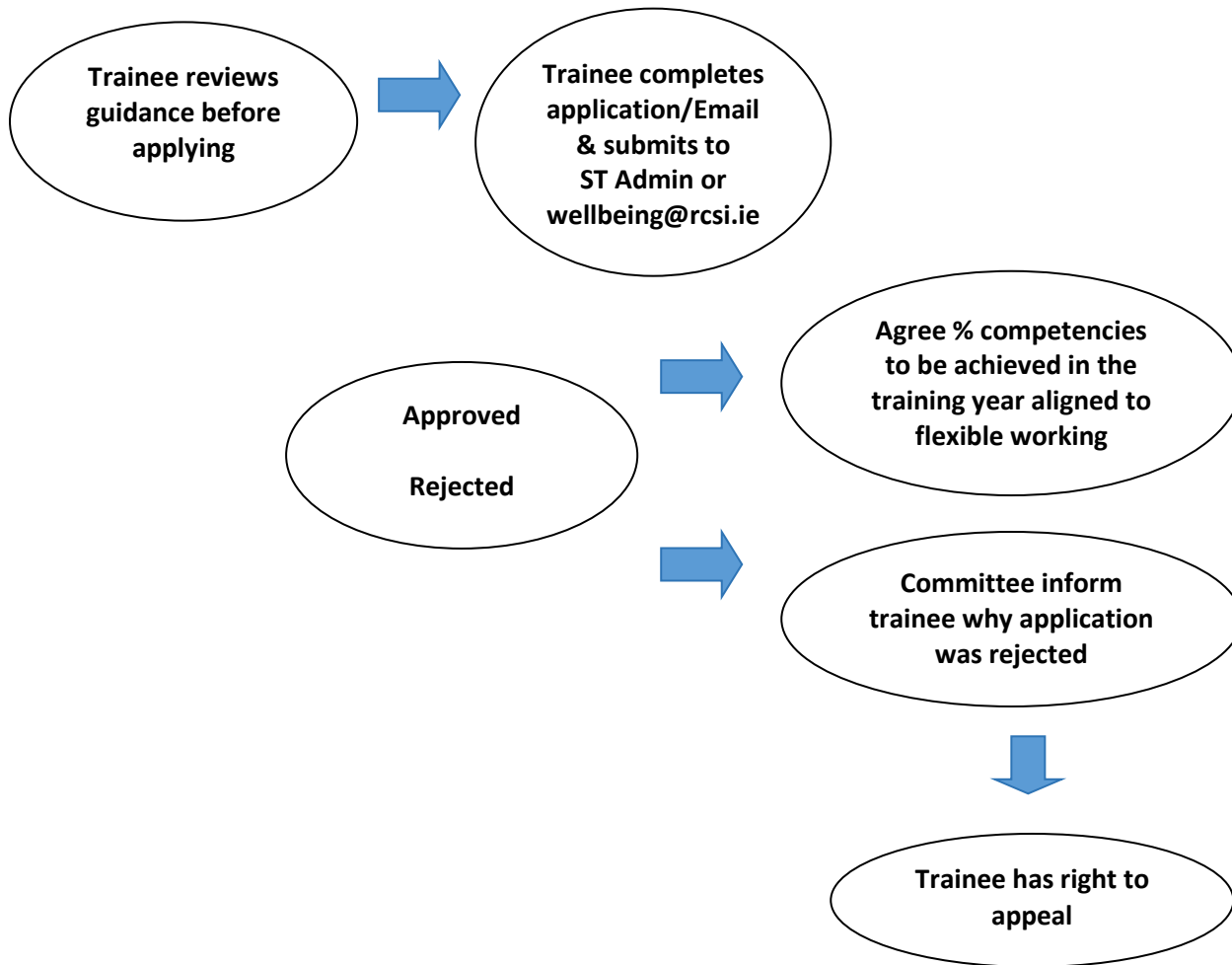
Additional Employer Flexible training routes

Another available route to flexible training can be via the [HSE National Flexible Training scheme](#) . A Trainee can apply directly to this scheme and this is managed directly by NDTP /HSE.

Trainees should also be aware of the various Parent & Parental leave options along with shorter working year available to them via their employer (HSE) information on these options and how to apply can be found at <https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/leave/> .

Trainees are obliged to inform their Programme TPD of their intention of taking these option(s) to ensure their progression through training is managed in line with leave entitlements.

Flexible Training Process Map



If you require any further information or guidance, please contact your specialty administrator directly in Surgery Training or wellbeing@rcsi.ie

Flexible Training Application Form or details required for email application below

Name	
Primary email address	
Contact Details	
Title	
First Name	
Middle Name	
Last Name	
Mobile Number	
Training Programme Details	
Specialty	
Training year in Programme	
Location of current post	
Future Planned Placement (if known, please advised the detail of the hospital from and to date)	Hospital From to
Expected CSCST date	
Flexible Training	
Please outline the details of your request including the proposed number of hours per week and the duration of the flexible training	
Intended Start Date	
Additional information (optional)	

Applicant Signature
