

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Please review the FAQ's for information on range of topics including:

- General information
- Eligibility for the training programme
- Irish Medical Council registration
- The training programme
- The online application
- Technical troubleshooting & queries

GENERAL INFORMATION

Q: Is there a fee for the training programme?

A: No.

Q: Is there an application fee?

A: No.

Q: Can I get a scholarship/fellowship for Basic Specialist Training?

A: There are no scholarships or fellowships available for the basic programmes. Each trainee is employed by the HSE and receives a contract in advance of commencement on the programme and their employment date (Second Monday of July annually) from their allocated Hospital.

Q: Is there limit on how many times I can apply to Basic Specialist Training?

A: No, there is currently no limit to number of times you can apply to the Programme.

Q: I have missed the application deadline, what can I do?

A: No applications can be submitted after the deadline. If you have missed the deadline you must wait to apply the following year. We advise all applicants to ensure you have all your documentation prepared well in advance of the published deadline.

ELIGIBILITY FOR THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

Q: Am I eligible for Basic Specialist Training?

A: Please see eligibility criteria documentation on the ICO website.

Q: Can I join the programme without a Medical Degree?

A: No, you must hold a full Medical Degree to be eligible to apply.

Q: Do I need to complete an intern year?

A: Yes, please see more details with regard to Registration on the Irish Medical Council website at www.medicalcouncil.ie

Q: I completed my Medical Degree in English in non- English speaking country. Do I still need to provide IELTS or OET results?

A: Please see documentation in relation to this [here](#).

Q: I am a non-EU national, am I eligible for Basic Specialist Training?

A: Please refer to the applicant guide on the ICO website which details the eligibility criteria.

MEDICAL COUNCIL QUERIES

Q: How can I apply for Medical Council Registration (IMC)?

A: Please visit the Irish Medical Council website www.medicalcouncil.ie for information re eligibility for Registration.

Q: Do I need to pay my registration fee for the IMC before applying?

A: No, you must prove you are eligible for the Trainee or General Division of the Register, not that you have already registered. An email from the IMC is sufficient proof of your eligibility status.

Q. Why do you ask for an IMC number?

A. While we do not require registration with the IMC to have been completed by the time of application, it can be a lengthy process. To ensure that there will be no delays in completing registration before commencement on the programme, your application to the IMC must be started by the time of application. It also serves as a unique identifier for applicants.

Q. My application with the IMC is still pending, how do I input an IMC number?

A. You will have received an application number with your application to the IMC. This number will become your IMC number for life once your registration is complete. This is a 6 digit number and should be input where the application requests an IMC number.

REFERENCES

Q: Do I need referees?

A: Yes, it is mandatory to have two referees, you will be required to submit their details using the nomination form with your application, your referees will then receive a template from the ICO to complete and submit.

Q: Where do I find the reference nomination forms?

A: The reference forms are available on our website. You will be instructed to provide contact details for your referees. The ICO will contact your nominated referees directly to request that they complete a reference form for you. Please ensure that each referee is happy to complete a reference for you prior to including them on your application.

Q: Are there stipulations as to who the referees can be?

A: Where possible your referees should be from clinical posts with one being from your current or most recent post. Referees must not be related to you or have a relationship to you that would be of conflicting interest.

THE APPLICATION

Q. Do I need to complete the online application in one sitting?

A. No. You can save your progress and return to the application. However we do recommend that you start the application early to allow enough time to gather your documents and complete the application.

Q. Is there a certain Document Format for Online Applications?

A. Allowed file extensions: “jpg”, “jpeg”, “jpe”, “png”, “gif”, “txt”, “doc”, “docx”, “pdf”, “xls”, “xlsx”, “rtf” If you upload a PDF this will increase the size of the document.

Q. Is there a limit to the file size?

A. Yes, the maximum size a file can be is 22MB.

Q. Is there a preferred format for naming supporting documents?

A. Yes, all documents must be clearly labelled. Please include your full name and the section of application to which the document relates to.

For example: *John Smith_Publication 1A Copy of Publication.*

Q. How do I provide my medical school centile score?

A. You are required to submit an official document from your medical school outlining your centile mark. If your medical school does not provide such letters please request a letter confirmation that they do not provide this. Failure to submit either an official centile score or a letter confirming that your medical school do not issue such confirmation may be detrimental to your score. A copy of your medical degree does not suffice.

Q. How are marks allocated based on medical school centile score?

A. As part of your application to Basic Specialist Training you will be asked to submit evidence of your centile score as provided by your university.

Centile Scores have a maximum of 15 marks available. Marks will be awarded as outlined here:

Range	Centile	Marks
Top 10%	90-100	15
Next 20%	70-89	12
Next 40%	30-69	9
Next 20%	10-29	6
Lowest 10%	0-9	2

Q. Will I be awarded marks if my medical school does not provide a centile score?

A. If you do not supply a centile ranking, you will be awarded the lowest score of 1 marks. If your university does not provide centile ranking, you can submit a letter from your university confirming this. If you submit a letter from your university confirming it does not provide centile rankings, 6 marks will be awarded.

Q: What proof is required when submitting publications?

A: A copy of the publication and written confirmation from the publisher which clearly states acceptance of the paper for publication.

Q: What proof is required when submitting presentations?

A: A copy of the poster/oral presentation, written confirmation from the event organiser which clearly states acceptance of presentation at the meeting and a certificate of attendance from the event organiser.

Q: What supporting documents are required for Research in Progress?

A: A copy of the Research in Progress and a letter from your research Supervisor (must be Consultant level, not another trainee).

Q: How do I provide proof of audit?

A: A copy of the audit or a letter from your supervising consultant stating the nature, name of the audit and confirming your participation. Audits that have been published and/or presented should include the evidence as outlined above.

Q. Can I list an audit with an expected finish date?

A. Audits in progress cannot be added to the audit section, however can be included in the research in progress section of the application.

THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

Q: Can a basic trainee avail of the HSE Flexible training scheme or family friendly rotations?

A: The HSE Flexible Training scheme is open to trainees from year 2 onwards. Family friendly rotation requests will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Q: How many places are available on the Basic Specialist Training Programme?

A: 5-6 training places are available for Basic Surgical Training (BST) and 4-5 training places for Basic Medical Training (BMT) each year. Please note however that this is subject to review year on year by the ICO and NDTP/HSE.

Q: Can I defer my place?

A: No deferrals are allowed.

Q: Will my Basic Specialist Training cert be accepted to apply directly to higher training in other countries?

A: You would need to check this with the training body in the country where you are applying for Specialty training.

Q. Can I get credit for completing a different training programme and do less than three years basic training?

A. No, currently we do not recognise prior learning and you must complete the full three year programme to be awarded your certificate of completion.

TECHNICAL QUESTIONS

Q: Can I do my application on a smart phone?

A: No, we strongly advise that you use a laptop/desktop for optimum performance.

Q: Can I do my application in my hospital?

A: We recommend you don't try to do your application in the hospital as there can be firewall /internet speed issues.

Q: Is there a recommended browser for the online application site PAC?

A: For optimum performance on PAC we recommend using Google Chrome.

Q: I need help using the application site PAC, where can I find help?

A: For help using PAC, please visit their help page here: <https://v2.pac.ie/help>

Q: I am having an issue accessing the site or uploading my documents, what should I do?

A: If you are experiencing technical issues we recommend you try a couple of things such as check the file size, clear your cache on your computer; switch to incognito mode on your browser. (You can readily find information online on how to do this)

Q: I'm having a technical issue with my application and the suggestions listed have not helped, what should I do?

A: Please take some screen shots of the error messages or relevant pages & email them to PAC at pachelp@pac.ie or phone them on +353 91 549260.

If your query is not answered above please contact the ICO via email at: andrea.farrell@eyedoctors.ie