



Policy Title	Training Handbook: Basic Specialty Training, Histopathology
Approvers	Faculty of Pathology
Author(s)	Training and Faculties Office
Applies to	RCPI Postgraduate Trainees and Trainers
Policy Number	



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Foreward

This document has been prepared by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) and provides important information in relation to the Faculty of Pathology, Histopathology Training Programme. The purpose of the document is to outline the Rules and Regulations pertaining to Basic Specialist Training in Histopathology.

This document replaces previously published documents and reflects the continuously evolving nature of training in the specialty. The document also refers to the published RCPI policies which should be read in conjunction with the Training Handbook.



Important

Information in this document is accurate at the date of publication. However, regulations are continually evolving, and up-to-date information should be obtained from RCPI if in doubt. The most up-to-date version on this document will always be available on www.rcpi.ie.

While other institutions are referred to (e.g. Medical Council, Health Service Executive, National Doctors Training Planning) we have given our interpretation of their regulations. The institutes themselves should be contacted for definitive information.

There is inevitably some repetition in this document as it is intended to be used as a reference. If regulations are unclear or seem contradictory, RCPI or the Specialty Training Body will determine the correct interpretation.



Governance of the RCPI Training Programmes

Governance Structure

There are six accredited postgraduate training bodies under the umbrella of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland:

- Faculty of Occupational Medicine
- Faculty of Pathology
- Faculty of Paediatrics
- Faculty of Public Health Medicine
- Institute of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists
- Institute of Medicine

The accredited Training Body oversees the development and delivery of the postgraduate training programmes.

In Pathology, the Faculty of Pathology oversees the Basic Specialist Training and the Higher Specialist Training Programmes.

Basic Specialist Training (BST) is two years in duration and Higher Specialist Training (HST) is five years in duration.

The Director of Training and Education for the Faculty of Pathology oversees the delivery and development of the BST and HST training programmes. Supporting the Director of Training are the National Specialty Directors for BST and HST.

At Basic and Higher Specialist Training the day to day running of the programmes is conducted by the National Specialty Director(s) (NSD(s)). The NSD(s) run the Specialty Training Committees (STCs) for the pathology training programmes. A key responsibility of the National Specialty Director(s) is to provide advice, career guidance and support to Trainees on issues relating to training, examination and general queries relating to the specialty. The NSD(s) and STCs report to the Board of the Training Body and meet at a minimum quarterly.



RCPI Trainers

Trainers play a crucial role in the delivery of our Basic and Higher Specialist Training programmes.

They guide Trainees along the path to becoming a specialist and help the next generation of medical leaders reach their full potential.

RCPI recognises that the quality of training depends to a large extent on trainers' clinical experience and expertise, along with competence, aptitude, attitudes and abilities as good role models. The aim of the College is to continue to strive for education and training excellence for all of our Trainees, at all levels and in all locations across Ireland.

The primary focus of the RCPI Trainer is to oversee RCPI trainees' development and education at all training levels, through their involvement in teaching, training, evaluation and supervision. At HST level no Trainer can have more than one HST Clinical Trainee. This rule can be reviewed by the training body under exceptional circumstances. At BST level it is recommended that no Trainer should have more than two RCPI Trainees.

The core responsibilities of the Trainer are

- Meet the trainee and understand requirements of training.
- Meeting with the trainee in their first week in a post and agreeing the Trainee's Personal Goal Plan.
- Facilitate attendance at educational activities
- Act as a supervisor to the trainee
- Provide feedback and motivation to trainee
- Attend Trainee annual evaluations
- Monitor progress and performance
- Completing the End of Post assessment and signing relevant activities in ePortfolio.
- Appraising the trainee's progress at regular intervals during the post

Where possible, one clinical year maximum can be spent with the same trainer.

The following criteria are required to be a registered Trainer

- Registered on the relevant Specialist Division of the Medical Council Register
- Registered on a Professional Competence Scheme



- Practising at consultant level in Ireland
- Fellow of the relevant training body (RCPI or one of our Faculties/Institutes) - This is desirable but not mandatory

Further detail on the role of an RCPI trainer can be found in [Role and Responsibilities of the Trainer 2016](#).

Training Site Environment

All training posts are monitored by RCPI through the Training Site inspection process. The purpose of a training site inspection is to determine the ability of an institution to deliver Higher Specialist Training and Basic Specialist Training in a specialty, according to the requirements as defined by the relevant curriculum of training.

The inspection panel advises on the suitability after a detailed interview with consultant trainers, trainees and management representatives, with an inspection of the facilities. All posts will be expected to conform to statutory guidelines on hours and condition of work for doctors in training.

Facilities

Your training location/hospital must provide an appropriate training environment and facilities that will allow you to develop the knowledge, skills and clinical judgement essential for your specialty. Physical facilities should include enough space for research and study. You should also have access to professional literature and information technology.

We regularly inspect all training locations approved for training to ensure that they meet these requirements.

Trainees' Committee

The RCPI Trainees' Committee is the 'voice' of Trainees in RCPI. They represent Trainees on College Council, the Advisory Committee, the Institute of Medicine, each STC and the Examinations Committee.



The RCPI Trainees' Committee has always had an active interest in postgraduate specialist training and acts as an important interface between Trainees and RCPI. The goal of the Committee is to represent Trainees' interests and work towards improving training.

They are also responsible for the organisation of a number of Trainee Awards including:

- the Corrigan Medal
- the David Mitchell Award
- the William Stokes Award
- the Kate McGarry Award
- The Dorothy Stopford Price Medal

Trainees are encouraged to get involved with the Trainees' Committee. For information on the Trainee Committee please email trainees@rcpi.ie. For a list of current Trainee Committee members and details on the role please [see here](#).

Training Post Evaluation

Each year you will be asked to complete a short online Training Post Evaluation. In it, you are asked to evaluate the training post that you just completed. This includes the working conditions, and the training-related supports available to you in that post. Data will be aggregated and only used after 3 years.

The evaluation is completely anonymous. You are not asked for any identifying information such as your name, date of birth or RCPI ID number.

Your honest feedback is enormously important to us, as it helps RCPI identify any issues affecting the quality of training in specific posts or sites, so that we can take action and continue to drive improvements in training.



Regulations relating to Basic Specialist Training

Point of Entry to the Programme (Recognition of Prior Learning)

Entry to the BST Programme is once a year, in July. Trainees in the majority of circumstances enter year one of the programme.

BST consists of two years of training in approved Senior House Officer posts. Senior House Officer (SHO) grade is the initial training grade after Internship, and for most doctors the minimum period spent in this grade will be two years.

BST in Histopathology is regulated and certified by the Faculty of Pathology. BST must be done in posts that have been approved for training by the Faculty of Pathology, RCPI.

Equivalence of Basic Specialist Training – programme undertaken outside Ireland

Consideration will be taken, on a case by case basis, for equivalence of Basic Specialist Training for programmes undertaken outside of Ireland.

Applicants seeking to gain equivalence of training/experience for entry to BST will only be recognised if the training which is being considered has been successfully completed and provided through a structured programme formally recognised by a national training body in one of the following jurisdictions:

- UK – Programmes Approved by The Royal College of Physicians
- Australia and New Zealand –Programmes Approved by The Royal Australasian College of Physicians
- US – ACGME Approved Residency Programmes
- Canada –Programmes Approved by The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada
- OMAN - Fellowship programme of the OMAN Medical Specialist Board OMSB

In determining the amount of credit to be awarded regard will be given to the clinical attachments, courses, etc. completed.



A minimum of 12 months and a maximum of 24 months overseas equivalence may only be considered.

Retrospective Recognition

Histopathology does not recognise any retrospective recognition for standalone posts held in Ireland, i.e. posts undertaken at SHO and/or Registrar level while not registered on an accredited Basic Specialist Training programme.

Reciprocity of Basic Specialist Training programmes in Ireland

Consideration will be taken on a case by case basis for those trainees who wish to transfer from other postgraduate training programmes recognised by Irish postgraduate training bodies in the Irish Health Care System – general practice, surgery, anaesthesia and emergency medicine.

Allocation Process

A trainee entering the Basic Specialty Training scheme will, normally, be informed of their assigned rotations for the first two years of the scheme.

There are four training hubs in BST in Histopathology, which a candidate will rank in order of preference during the application process.

- Munster (Waterford Regional Hospital and Cork University Hospital)
- Galway (Galway University Hospital)
- North Dublin (Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, The National Maternity Hospital, Connolly Hospital, Children's University Hospital Temple Street and Beaumont Hospital)
- South Dublin (St. Vincent's University Hospital, Rotunda Hospital, Tallaght Hospital, Our Lady's Children's Hospital Crumlin, Coombe Women's Hospital and St. James' Hospital)

Post Reassignment

The Faculty endeavours to provide Trainees their allocation assignment for the two-year programme. However if a Trainee's circumstances have changed, applications for a post reassignment will be considered. Applications received will be considered by the National Speciality Director(s).

Applications will generally be considered as part of the allocation process. Priority will be given to Trainees with significant change in circumstances. Applications from Trainees with change in



circumstances related to caring or parental responsibilities will then be considered. Applications from Trainees with a change involving a committed relationship will be considered afterwards.

Please see policy [on Post Reassignment](#) for information and application process.

Trainers

Every BST post has at least one assigned Supervising Trainer, whose duties include:

- Meeting with the trainee in their first week in a post and agreeing the Trainee's Personal Goal Plan
- Appraising the trainee's progress at regular intervals during the post
- Completing the End of Post assessment in ePortfolio
- Supporting the trainee, both personally and in respect of obtaining career advice

Research and Audit

Research and audit are not mandatory requirements for BST, however it is recommended that Trainees attempt one or the other to prepare for Higher Specialist Training.

Trainees are encouraged to:

- Ask Trainer for audit ideas at the start of a rotation
- Choose a project that is achievable considering other commitments
- Consider sharing the audit with a colleague to reduce the burden
- Try to pick something that has presentation/publication potential
- Learn the necessary steps for completing clinical audit from someone who knows the subject, rather than learning a skill badly from an uninformed teacher
- Learn the difference between audit and research
- Start with trying to do case reports. They are less challenging and can be completed in a shorter period of time than large-scale studies
- See if any senior colleagues are working on an ongoing project that the Trainee could become involved in



- Consider a literature review as an intermediary step after case reports, which can be shared among several authors.

Mandatory Courses

All BST Trainees are required to attend courses and study days throughout their training programme. These days are mandatory. Some courses/study days Trainees are required to attend once a year, and some are required once during the programme.

Trainees are automatically given access to their mandatory courses once they are registered on the programme via the online Digital Hub. Some courses/study days require attendance in RCPI, some are completed online, and some can be organised in the local hospital. Please see the curriculum for further details.

Attendance at study days, courses, exams & conferences including study leave; entitlement is as per the NCHD Contract for educational leave (up to 18 working days per 6 months).

Should a Trainee complete their mandatory courses outside of their BST scheme, they will be required to pay the course registration fee. Please note that all courses must be undertaken inside of the *Four-Year Rule* timeframe.

Should mandatory courses not be completed within four years of a Trainee's start date, they will be required to undertake the full two-year programme again from the beginning in order to qualify for their Certificate of Completion.

The Faculty of Pathology requires BST Trainees to attend at least 8 study days over the course of the two years. There is a minimum of 10 study days per year.

Annual Evaluation Process

The Annual Evaluation of Progress is the formal method by which a Trainee's progression through her/his training programme is monitored and recorded each year. The evidence to be reviewed by the panel is recorded by the Trainee and Trainer in the Trainee's ePortfolio.

Trainees are required to undergo an annual evaluation process. This evaluation will take place in the RCPI.



Trainees must attend the evaluation. Trainees who do not complete an annual evaluation during each year of training will not be eligible for certification as they do not meet the minimum requirements of training.

Year 2 BST Evaluations occur at 18 months of training and are a bit different from the Year 1 end of year evaluations as they are essentially an interview to assess whether trainees are ready to progress into HST. They are conducted by a panel made up of the NSD and RSAs in person.

Trainers will be asked to complete an aptitude form for their trainees which the panel will review along with the trainee's ePortfolio on the day. Trainers will not be asked to attend.

If trainees are deemed ready to progress, they will then submit application to HST.

Leave of Absence

Study leave and annual leave do not affect BST completion dates and are as per the NCHD contract.

Taking time out of the BST programme

Once you commence BST, you must complete your training in a consecutive two-year block except in exceptional circumstances. Details on special leave and how it may affect your completion date are outlined below.

Special Leave (Other than study and annual leave):

Examples of special leave: Sick leave, maternity leave, compassionate leave, Force Majeure Leave. As the BST programme consists of two years of intensive, supervised clinical training, any significant period of leave (i.e. greater than 6 weeks) taken over the course of the programme has the potential to affect the Trainee's opportunities to acquire the core skills and knowledge required for satisfactory completion of the programme.

In cases where additional leave (including maternity leave) is agreed by the Trainee's employer, the following conditions apply to all Trainees:

- ≤ 6 weeks over two years: If a Trainee takes special leave totalling 6 weeks or less over two years, his/her BST completion date is not affected



- >6 weeks: Any leave of greater than 6 weeks must be made up in a block of 3 months' extra training. This applies to all Trainees who take special leave totalling more than 6 weeks and less than or equal to 3 months over two years
- >3 months: 6 months of training in (an) approved post(s) must be completed in order to meet the requirements for BST certification. This applies to all Trainees who take special leave totalling more than 3 months and less than or equal to 6 months over two years.
- >6 months: 9 months of training in (an) approved post(s) must be completed in order to meet the requirements for BST certification. This applies to all Trainees who take special leave totalling more than 6 months and less than or equal to 9 months over two years.
- >9 months: 12 months of training in approved posts must be completed in order to meet the requirements for BST certification. This applies to all Trainees who take special leave totalling more than 9 months and less than or equal to 12 months over two years.

If a Trainee wishes to take leave of absence, retain credit and return to the BST programme, this must be agreed with the NSD(s), and confirmed by the Faculty office. The Trainee should seek prospective approval of their leave of absence at least four weeks in advance. Approval will be agreed on a case by case basis and credit may not be retained in all cases.

Parental Leave

If a Trainee takes parental leave, he/she will have to make up this time on the programme, similarly to that of a flexible Trainee. Any time that is taken as parental leave must be made up before a Trainee will be awarded their Certificate of Completion of BST.

Flexible Training

It is the policy of RCPI training bodies to facilitate flexible training. Whilst the training programme is full-time it is recognised that some trainees may have individual circumstances that mean that training on a full-time, continuous basis would, for them, not be practical for well-founded reasons.

The training body recognises and supports part-time, interrupted, and other forms of flexible training and all trainees are eligible to apply for flexible training for a set period.

Trainees can apply for flexible training through three routes:

- HSE National Flexible Training Scheme



- Job Sharing
- Less than full time working

HSE National Flexible Training Scheme

The HSE National Doctors Training and Planning (NDTP) operates a National Flexible Training Scheme, which allows a small number of trainees to train part-time for a set period of time.

Applications may be made for flexible training by all trainees excluding 1st year BST. This scheme is not recommended for final year trainees. You must have a well-founded reason to apply, e.g. responsibility for young children or elderly relatives, or personal family circumstances. You cannot apply for flexible training in order to pursue other paid work or research.

Applications for flexible training can be made to the HSE NDTP up to 12 months in advance of the proposed date of commencement of flexible training. The trainee must inform the RPD of his/her intention to apply for flexible training. NDTP recommend applying as soon as possible, as applications are considered in the order in which they are received, and places are limited.

Participation on the flexible training scheme will be restricted to a maximum of two years and will only be extended by NDTP in exceptional circumstances. This is to provide as many trainees as possible with the option to train flexibly.

Applications for flexible training should be made to NDTP, however trainees are required to let their relevant training body know that they are going to apply in plenty of time, so rotations can be planned and structured.

Further information on the application process can be found [here](#) on the HSE website.

Job Sharing

Postgraduate trainees on the Basic Specialist Training Programmes can avail of job-sharing opportunities for a set period of time.

Job sharing works on the basis that two trainees will share one full-time post with each trainee working 50% of the hours.

A training post can be shared by two trainees who:

- are training in the same specialty and;



- are within two years on the training pathway

Applications may be made up to 12 months in advance of the proposed date of commencement of the job share post and received no later than the month of October of the previous year of commencement.

Please refer to the [Job-Sharing](#) policy document for more information on how to apply and further information on the regulations of job sharing.

Acting Up to Registrar posts

In some incidences BST Trainees in year 2 of their training programme may be able to act up as a registrar. These requests will be considered on a case by case basis. The hospital Medical Manpower, the Trainer and the NSD(s) need to approve. All applications to act up as a registrar should be sent to your NSD(s) for approval.

Withdrawal from the BST Programme

Informing RCPI:

If a Trainee wishes to leave the programme before their expected BST completion date, they must notify the Faculty office in writing at least four weeks before they wish to leave their current post. Emailed notifications will be accepted.

Informing the National Speciality Director(s):

The Trainee must inform his/her NSD(s) of their intention to leave the programme as a matter of priority. This may be done in person, in writing or by telephone.

Leaving the programme without giving reasonable notice or explanation to the NSD(s) is not acceptable behaviour.

Informing the employer:

Notice of resignation by the Trainee as an employee of his/her hospital must be given in accordance with the provisions of his/her contract of employment.



Withdrawal to take up another position:

The Irish training colleges regularly share information regarding Trainees transferring between schemes. If a BST Trainee is mid-scheme and is offered a position on another training scheme, early withdrawal from BST prior to the commencement of entry to the new training scheme without the express permission of the NSD(s) will be reported to the new training scheme. This may result in a withdrawal of the training offer for the new scheme, as such a withdrawal is considered unprofessional behaviour.

Out of Clinical Programme Experience

Out of Clinical Programme Experience is not permitted in Basic Specialist Training.

Exit Criteria

For a Trainee to be awarded a Certificate of Completion of Basic Specialist Training Trainees are required to:

- Register on the BST programme. Entry to the programme is in July on an annual basis.
- Complete 24 months of training in SHO posts that have been approved for BST.
- Achieve all outcomes as set out in this curriculum.
- BST Study Days are held each year, and Trainees are required to attend 8 study days over the course of their BST
- Maintain an up-to-date and correctly completed ePortfolio as evidence of satisfactory completion of training.
- Attend and satisfactorily pass annual evaluations

Failure to complete any of the above may result in a Trainee have their training time extended.

Trainees must complete their BST Training Programme within four years of their start date.

Completion dates may change under the following circumstances:

- If a Trainee takes special leave in excess of 6 weeks over two years, and is required to complete a further period of training
- If a Trainee has not reached the required standard and is required to undertake additional training.
- If a Trainee has not fulfilled the curriculum requirements for BST certification and is required to undertake additional training or attend outstanding mandatory courses
- If a Trainee's completion date is changed for any reason, the Trainee and the NSD(s) will be informed in writing by the BST coordinator in the Training Team, RCPI

The Four-Year Rule

Trainees must complete BST within a four-year period. If a Trainee's expected completion date is changed to a date greater than four years after their start date, they will be required to undertake the full two-year programme again from the beginning.

Supports for Postgraduate Medical Trainees

ePortfolio

ePortfolio is an electronic logbook for recording essential information about training, educational and evaluation activities. Trainees are required to maintain an up-to-date ePortfolio throughout BST, as it is an official record of satisfactory completion of training.

Trainees must complete an ePortfolio during their training programme. All Trainees will be given access to the RCPI ePortfolio which is set up depending on the specialty of the trainee. Trainees must complete minimum requirements for their specialty. Details on the minimum requirements can be found in each specialty curriculum. The ePortfolio is also used to conduct Trainee Evaluations and end of post feedback.

The ePortfolio is the trainee's record of their training and the information in the ePortfolio is owned by the Trainee. Following completion of the training programme a Trainee will have access to the ePortfolio for three years. RCPI provide a number of training videos on how to use your ePortfolio.

As you rotate through posts, your trainers are required to verify recorded information and sign off evaluations. To do this, they will need to log into the RCPI website and open ePortfolio.

When to update ePortfolio

Trainees must update their ePortfolio at key points, listed below.

At the start of the year

- Check that personal details are correct
- Check that the details of post and trainer are correct
- Review the training curriculum and requirements for the specialty. The curriculum and specialty requirements are reviewed every year, so Trainees need to be aware of any changes

At the start of each post

- Trainees must meet with their trainer within the first six weeks to agree on the personal goals plan. The personal goals plan must be recorded on ePortfolio and the Trainer must sign it off.

During each post

- Trainees must enter training and educational activities on ePortfolio

- Complete workplace-based assessments as they happen

At the end of each quarter and at the end of the post

- Trainees must ensure ePortfolio is up to date and signed off by the Trainer
- Meet the Trainer to complete the End of Post Form

At the end of each training year

- Trainees must make sure that the ePortfolio is up to date and signed off by the Trainer in preparation for the End of Year Evaluation
- Complete the annual evaluation form with the trainer in advance of the Evaluation

At the end of your training programme

- Make sure that the ePortfolio is up to date and signed off by the trainer in preparation for the Final Year Evaluation

RCPI Benefits

RCPI offers a wide range of benefits, services and support to all trainees on our training programmes

Benefits and services that we are pleased to offer Trainees include:

- Free online access to BMJ Journals and the Lancet Online
- A free four-month subscription to a BMJ OnExamination package
- A wide range of discounts on travel, computers, insurance, medical equipment, entertainment, sports and fitness, financial products, and lots more through our group affinity scheme
- A free Student Leap Card, which will get you discounts with Irish Rail, Dublin Bus, Bus Eireann, Dart and Luas services
- Free attendance at many of our courses and events, including Masterclasses and Clinical Updates
- Facilities for research and study at our premises at 6 Kildare Street, available Monday to Friday

Where do I find these journals?

You will see links to Online Journals when you log in to the RCPI website.

You can request your BMJ OnExamination access code, simply email BST@rcpi.ie

If I need help?

If you need help accessing journals call our Helpdesk on Freephone 1800 303 574 or email helpdesk@rcpi.ie.

Top tips for using this service

To redeem your OnExamination voucher and activate your free four-month subscription you must access BMJ OnExamination via the RCPI website - log in to our website www.rcpi.ie and click on the link entitled BMJ OnExamination.

RCPI Training Site Offices

RCPI training site offices are local, knowledgeable sources of information and support for Trainees, Trainers, Members and Fellows based in those hospital groups.

South/South West Hospital Group office

The RCPI South/South West Hospital Group office is located in Office 2.60, School of Medicine, Brookfield Health Sciences Complex, College Rd, UCC, Cork. The office is open Mondays 8:00 am to 5:00 pm and Thursdays 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

Fiona Collins

Tel: 021 490 1589

Email: fionacollins@rcpi.ie

Saolta Hospital Group office

The RCPI Saolta Hospital Group office is located in the Academic Office, Nurses Home in University Hospital Galway. The office is open on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings 8:30 am – 2:00 pm

Sheila Kelly

Tel: 091 893151

Email: SheilaKelly@rcpi.ie

University of Limerick Hospitals Group Office

The RCPI UL Hospitals Group office is located in the Postgraduate Training Department, Room 2938, Ground Floor, Nurses Home, University Hospital Limerick. The office is open in the morning Monday to Thursday 8:30 am – 2:00 pm

Muire Graham

Tel: 061 588264

Email: MuireGraham@rcpi.ie

RCPI Trainee Representative

Trainee Representatives are an important point of contact for Trainees seeking clarification or direction relating to training and education matters and are expected to encourage and support improvements to educational facilities that will improve training delivery, for example MRCPI tutorials, journal access, journal clubs, internet access and trainer engagement.

They are also expected to encourage open and honest feedback from Trainees on their training experiences.

Where possible, Trainee Reps also attend the College's hospital inspections at their hospital sites(s).

Trainee Reps are appointed each year for a period of one year, with applications for new appointments normally opening in June. It's an ideal opportunity to take up a formal role in RCPI and put your management skills into action.

Trainees can apply to become a Trainee Rep for their hospital if they meet the following criteria:

- A SpR in a full-time clinical post in Higher Specialist Training or in the second or later year of Basic Specialist Training
- Clear assessment/training record of at least 12 months prior to your application
- Interest in education and training

Trainees are encouraged to get apply to be a Trainee Representative. For information on the Trainee Committee please email trainees@rcpi.ie. For a list of current Trainee Reps and details on the role please see [here](#).

HSE Financial Support Schemes

Clinical Course & Examination Refund Scheme for NCHDs

This HSE scheme is open to all NCHDs. The HSE Clinical Course and Examination Refund Scheme covers the cost of examination fees and clinical courses such as Advanced Cardiac Life Support.

There is an approved list of clinical courses & examinations qualifying for this refund scheme contained in the HSE [guidance document](#). Commencing 8th July 2019, the full cost of an approved examination/course taken on after this date is eligible to be refunded for the **first sitting of the exam**. Applicants must hold HSE NCHD contract 2010. Subsequent sittings of the same exam are ineligible for any payment under this scheme. However subsequent sittings may be claimed from the HSE Training Support Scheme (TSS) from July 2019 onwards.

Training Support Scheme (TSS)

Additional Training Support Funding has been made available to NCHDs from July 2019 onwards. This scheme is in addition to existing financial supports such as the Clinical Course and Exam Refund Scheme and the Higher Specialist Training Fund. Funding is allocated based on Grade. Funding is available pro-rata for doctors employed on shorter contract durations.

A list of approved clinical courses, conferences and examinations that can be claimed for under the TSS are listed [on the HSE NDTP website](#).

Please see the NCHD Training Supports Scheme (TSS) Guidance Document for Employers & NCHDs [on the HSE NDTP website](#).

Professional Support (Health and Wellbeing)

The health and wellbeing office provides professional services to trainees who require additional support during their training programme. This can include any of the following areas:

- Mental/physical health issues which impact on training progression
- Interpersonal conflict or difficulties
- Professionalism competencies development such as communication, assertiveness, building relationships
- Complaints made by trainees or about trainees
- Difficult working environments/conditions including bullying which was not resolved locally
- Burnout
- Career guidance

- Mentoring
- Advice and referral to other services such as Occupation Medicine, Health Committee, psychology and psychiatry
- Advice and referral to additional resources such as course, books, online resources, mentors

The health and wellbeing service is available to RCPI trainees only and forms part of their training programme where required. As such, it is not a confidential service. Trainees are referred by their Trainers, NSDs or they may self-refer into the service. Further information can be found [here](#).

Trainee Awards and Fellowships

Corrigan Award for BST Case Study

The **Corrigan Award** is awarded by the Trainees' Committee in RCPI. It recognises excellence in communication - The ability to identify complicating and challenging aspects of patient histories and communicate what we can learn from them.

The winner receives the Corrigan Medal, named after past RCPI President Sir Dominic Corrigan (1859 – 1863) and an educational grant worth €1,000.

This competition is open to all Trainees currently undertaking BST with RCPI.

Further information can be found at www.rcpi.ie or contact BST@rcpi.ie

David Mitchell Award for Audit

The David Mitchell Award is awarded by the Trainees' Committee in RCPI. It recognises audits that improve patient care and/or specialist education and training.

The winning Trainee or team of Trainees receives an educational grant worth €1,000 for a single Trainee or €1,500 for a team of Trainees.

The competition is open to all Trainees, or a team of Trainees currently registered with RCPI.

Further information can be found at www.rcpi.ie or contact BST@rcpi.ie

William Stokes Award for Research

The William Stokes Award is awarded by the Trainees' Committee in RCPI. It recognises research of the highest standards carried out by Trainees in Higher Specialist Training. The winning Trainee receives the William Stokes Award and an educational grant worth €4,000.

The award is open to all Trainees currently undertaking Higher Specialist Training with RCPI.

Further information can be found at www.rcpi.ie or contact BST@rcpi.ie

Dorothy Stopford Price Medal

The Dorothy Stopford Price Medal recognises excellence in research or audit on vaccination, immunisation or control of infectious diseases and its potential impact on public health.

The medal is awarded by the Faculty of Public Health Medicine to honour this pioneer in infectious disease control in Ireland.

This competition is open to all Trainees.

Further information can be found at www.rcpi.ie or contact BST@rcpi.ie

Fellowships/Scholarships

Wellcome-HRB Irish Clinical Academic Training (ICAT)

The Wellcome – Health Research Board Irish Clinical Academic Training (ICAT) Programme is a unique all Ireland cross-institutional, comprehensive national programme for Clinician Scientists based at six major Irish universities and their affiliated hospital groups. The partner universities include Trinity College Dublin, University College Dublin, National University of Ireland, Galway, Queen’s University Belfast, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and University College Cork. At its core is an integrated programme spanning 6-7 years of seamless, supported and mentored academic and clinical training targeting future academic leaders.

ICAT’s mentorship scheme spans the entire duration of specialist medical and postgraduate academic training. At the time of completion, ICAT fellows will have graduated with a PhD at their chosen university/ institution and achieved CCST (RoI) / CCT (NI) in their chosen specialty. The ICAT Programme adopts a dynamic training focus whereby the emphasis shifts and leads the ICAT Fellow from (i) learning how to start a research career as a PhD candidate, (ii) to successful completion of a PhD, (iii) to establishing independence through novel thought and independent research funding.

For further details on ICAT please see <https://icatprogramme.org/>.

Policies and Procedures

There are a number of other Policies and Procedures that trainees may refer to throughout the duration of their training programmes. Below is a summary of these policies and procedures. For further detail please see the individual policy or procedure which is available on <https://www.rcpi.ie/training/important-documents-for-current-trainees/>.

RCPI Policies

1. Roles and Responsibility of a Trainer
2. Post Reassignment Policy
3. Job Sharing Policy
4. Progression through Training: Higher Specialist Training
5. Anti-Bullying Policy
6. Appeals Policy: Postgraduate Training
7. Disciplinary Process for Postgraduate Specialist Training
8. Equal Opportunities Policy
9. Grievance Policy: Postgraduate Training
10. HST Allocation Policy

Other Relevant HSE Policies

- Specialist Training Fund Policy
- Clinical Course and Exam Refund Scheme
- Training Support Scheme

Please click [here](#) for further information on the above HSE policies.

Review

This Handbook shall be subject to review every three years from the date of approval of this document by the Faculty of Pathology

Approved By:	Date
Senior Management Group	
Faculty of Pathology	
Review	
Review by Faculty of Pathology	June 2020