

RCPI International Training Handbook



International Residency Training Programme
International Clinical Fellowship Programme

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Foreword International Clinical Fellowship



On behalf of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, I would like to welcome you to the International Clinical Fellowship Training Programme.

The aim of the International Clinical Fellowship Training Programme is to provide doctors from overseas with the opportunity to undertake structured curriculum based medical training in Ireland, and to produce graduates who will be leaders in their fields and capable of handling the everyday challenges of their health service. During your training you will develop the advanced skills and knowledge required for practising independently as a specialist. Much of this training will happen in the workplace. Additionally, we have put together a comprehensive programme to ensure that essential non-clinical skills, such as management, communication, audit and research are covered along with clinical skills and procedures.

When you start in your first post it is important to meet with your trainer early on. Your trainer plays a vital

role in your training and mentoring, and is required to regularly assess your progress.

As you progress through your training I sincerely hope that you come to recognise and appreciate the value of being part of RCPI and our community both in Ireland and overseas. As a member of this community we value your participation and contribution to our mission in raising standards of health care.

While it is important to focus on your clinical training I also sincerely hope, and indeed encourage you, to take the opportunity to experience Irish culture and living during your stay in Ireland.

Ireland is a safe and friendly country. It has a diverse and fascinating history and culture and I ask you to make the effort to visit our cities and countryside during your stay. I promise you that you will not be disappointed and that this

will add immensely to your overall experience in Ireland, and with RCPI.

Thank you again for choosing RCPI and Ireland as your preferred location to pursue your postgraduate specialist training.

**Dr Diarmuid O'Shea
President, RCPI**

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 referenced to (e.g. Medical Council, Health Service Executive, National Doctors Training Planning, Department of Foreign Affairs) we have given our interpretation of their regulations but 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.

This handbook will provide you with the guidelines to assist in your journey throughout your programme, but please never hesitate to reach out to the team for support.

About RCPI

The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland is a postgraduate medical training college dedicated to ensuring that doctors have the skills to provide patients with the best possible care. Founded in 1654, our college supports doctors to enhance their skills, competencies and professionalism throughout their working lives; delivered through structured postgraduate training in hospitals across Ireland, examinations, educational programmes, and continuous professional development opportunities to a network of over

14,000 doctors from 90 countries, with MRCPI Examinations undertaken in 5 centres worldwide.

We are internationally recognised as a leading provider of postgraduate specialist training. The selection process for our international programmes is very competitive, and you have been carefully selected to develop your training and career. We are delighted you have chosen to broaden your training and medical expertise with Ireland, we are known as the land of one hundred thousand welcomes, and let us be the first of many to welcome you as you begin



Benefits of Training with RCPI

In training with RCPI you will receive access to a unique curriculum for the entirety of your training, as well as a unique opportunity to develop professionally as a doctor. You will learn advanced skills that will be especially beneficial for the health service in your home country. You will be given access to the Eportfolio system which allows you to track your training progress.

You can be confident that you will receive training from experienced consultants in accredited hospitals, offering hands-on training. There will also be an opportunity to enhance your audit and research skills, as well as complementary access to RCPI's Taught Programme and

study days. The International team, along with Castel Education, are always on hand to help, and we will meet you frequently as you progress through your programme to check in on your progress.

You will receive a full induction upon arriving into Ireland before you commence your programme (if commencing in July), please ensure you attend this mandatory session to receive all necessary information, you will receive an itinerary closer to the date. We recommend that all trainees arrive in Ireland at least 21 days prior to your start date in order to settle in, find accommodation etc.

There is a lot to adapt to in your first few weeks in Ireland, not only learning about the Irish Healthcare

System but culture, transport, accommodation etc. The team in RCPI will be sure to check in with you regularly in your first few weeks and months of the programme, but we would encourage you to meet with others on the programme for peer support and advice.

Important: Please ensure you always refer to your curriculum to ensure you are meeting all requirements of the programme. You should also always ensure you are setting goals with your trainer and engaging in quarterly assessments with them. It is highly important to also ensure you are attending your mandatory educational activities and study days throughout the programme.



Meet the Team

Pre-Arrival/Recruitment

- Sinéad Lucey Director of Business Development & Exams
- Clíodhna Martin Global Training and Partnerships Manager
- Anton Bambuliak Programme Coordinator, Global Training & Partnerships - antonbambuliak@rcpi.ie
- Katerina Prazakova Development Executive, Business Development – katerinaprazakova@rcpi.ie
- Tanya Chapple Admissions Manager
- Adam LaCumber Admissions Coordinator, International – adamlacumber@rcpi.ie

In-Programme

- Muríosa Prendergast Head of Operations
- Zoë Cashman Education and Training Delivery Manager
- MaPi Defenio Coordinator, Intenational Clinical Fellowship Programme – mapidefenio@rcpi.ie
- Rositsa Dupleva Nedelcheva – Coordinator, International Residency Training Programme – rositsaduplevanedelcheva@rcpi.ie
- Hannah Flynn, Administrator, Castel Education – hannah@casteleducation.com

Clinical Leads

- Dr. Anna Clarke Associate Director, International Clinical Fellowship Programme
- Prof. Danny Cheriyan Programme Director, Internal Medicine, International Residency Training Programme
- Prof. Michael O’Neil Programme Director, Paediatrics, International Residency Training Programme
- Prof Cecily Quinn Programme Director, Pathology, International Residency Training Programme





Member of RCPI Examinations (MRCPI)

Now that you have decided to advance your training with the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, we strongly encourage you to become a Member of the college, by taking the MRCPI examination.

The MRCPI is an internationally recognized benchmark of accreditation. Please be advised that MRCPI examinations are

available overseas. You can contact the Exams team for further information on these examinations at exams@rcpi.ie

Please note that holders of the full Arab/ Omani/ Saudi Board are exempt from MRCPI Part I in your chosen specialty and will therefore be only required to complete Part II Written and Clinical.

The MRCPI is a pathway to Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (FRCPI). To be nominated as a Fellow is the highest award given to a doctor, and offers doctors the possibility to represent the college, in terms of training and overseas examinations, and further acts as a voice and exhibits leadership.

Sponsorship

All doctors must secure sponsorship from a recognised funding body to be eligible for the International Residency Training Programme or the International Clinical Fellowship Programme at the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI). This body must have a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with RCPI.

Your sponsoring body plays a vital role in supporting your training journey. They will receive regular updates on your progress, including performance evaluations and attendance records. Your sponsor will be informed if any concerns arise—such as performance, professionalism, or attendance.

Maintaining open and transparent communication with your sponsor is essential, as they are key stakeholders in your professional development and success throughout the programme.

The ICFP offers a unique opportunity to develop professionally as a doctor and learn advanced skills that will be especially beneficial for the health service in your home country.

The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland's International Clinical Fellowship Programme (ICFP) The programme is offered over two to three years of clinical training, after which you are required to return to your country of origin.



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:



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

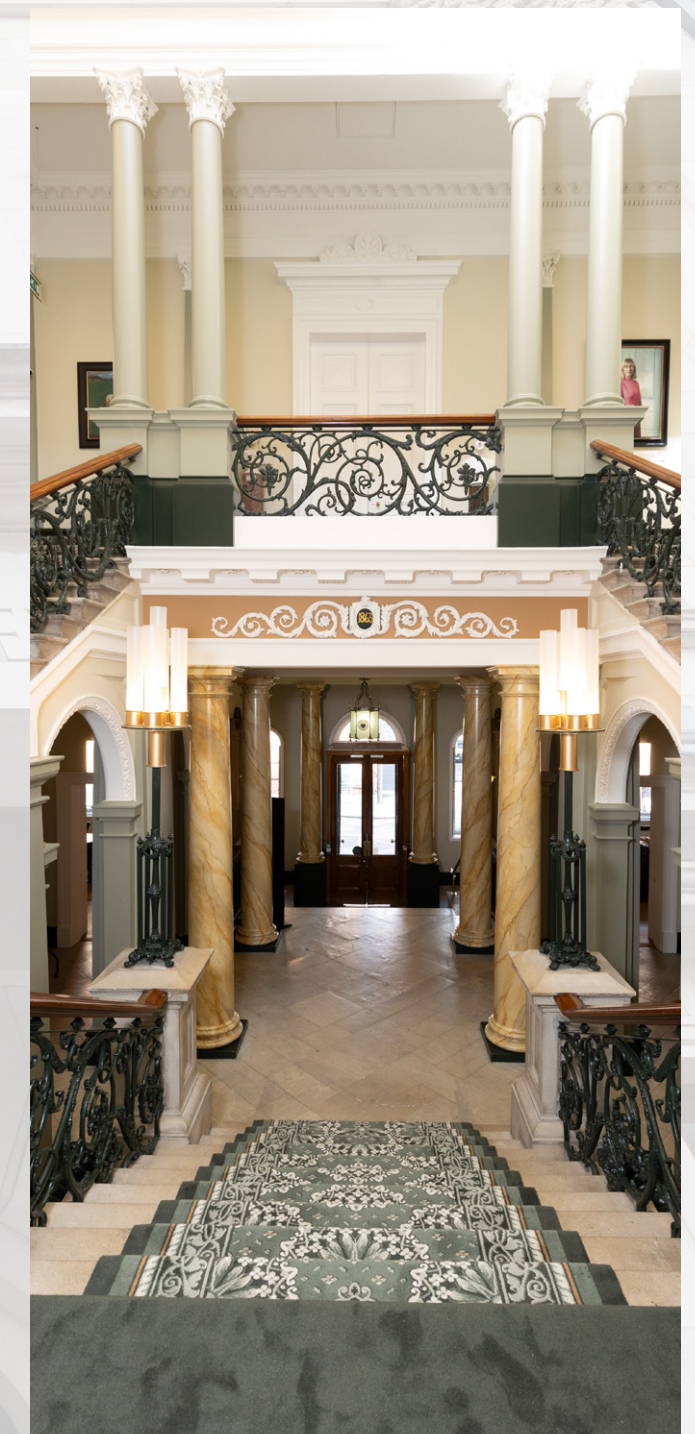
International Clinical Fellowship Programme

The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland's International Clinical Fellowship Programme (ICFP) offers clinical training to international doctors who are sponsored by their government, hospital or national training body.

The International Clinical Fellowship Programme is completed under the guidance of leading consultant Trainers in accredited hospitals across Ireland.

We offer Fellowship training in the following specialties:

- General Internal Medicine
- Obstetrics and Gynaecology
- Occupational Medicine
- Paediatrics
- Pathology
- Public Health Medicine



International Residency Training Programme

The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland's International Residency Training Programme (IRTP) is conducted at designated hospital sites in Ireland and led by RCPI-certified trainers, with additional support through a structured national teaching program. The RCPI International Residency Programme follows a structured curriculum and encourages trainees to actively participate in multidisciplinary clinical team meetings, engage in research and audit projects, and attend both national and international pathology conferences.

The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland offers valuable opportunities for overseas medical graduates whose home country has a sponsorship agreement with RCPI through the International Residency Training Programme (IRTP).

These comprehensive three three-year programmes and one two-year programmes delivered entirely in Ireland, provides specialised training in Internal Medicine, Paediatric, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and Histopathology that may be unavailable in their home countries. A key benefit is the exposure to Ireland's

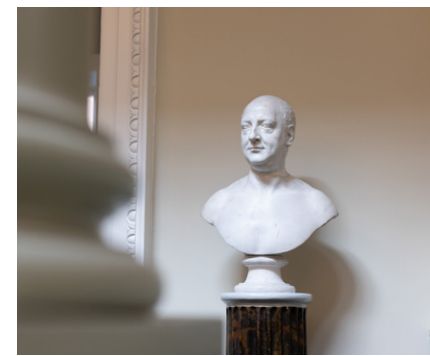
advanced healthcare system and its long-established tradition of postgraduate medical education. The programme enables Trainees to work in primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary hospitals, offering varied clinical experiences across different healthcare settings.

RCPI Trainers

Trainers play a crucial role in the delivery of our International 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.



The core responsibilities of the Trainer are

- Meet the Trainee during induction and understand the individual requirements of their international training programme.
- Agree the trainee's training goals and plan for the programme
- Facilitate attendance at educational activities and study days
- 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 the 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 International 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). Please note, this is desirable but not mandatory
- Completion of the 'Physicians as Trainers' education programme

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 accredit 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 Training Committee, the six Faculties and Institutes, 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. International Trainees are encouraged to get involved with the Trainees' Committee. For information on the Trainees' Committee please email trainees@rcpi.ie.





Regulations Relating to International Training

Point of Entry

Entry to the International Programmes occurs twice a year, July and January.

Recognition of prior learning is not possible. Trainees must complete all years and requirements of the programme in order to receive a completion certificate.

Training Posts and Organisation of Training

The duration of your training programme is laid out in your individual curriculum, please review this carefully before arrival and throughout your programme. The International Residency Training Programme is three years in duration, while the International Clinical Fellowship programme can range from 2-3 years, depending on the specialty.

You will complete rotations within your training programme, this may be within one hospital site or you may be asked to rotate to other hospital sites to gain better training exposure. You will be notified well in advance if you are asked to rotate to an alternative site.

The National Specialty Directors (NSDs) or Clinical Lead of each programme/specialty are responsible for approval/allocation



of placements for each fellow/resident. Allocations are based on training requirements, capacity and programme structure.

Taught Programme and Study Days

International Trainees must complete the RCPI taught component of their training programme, which consists of modular elements released in phases. The learning material covers essential topics like communication and ethics, delivered through self-paced online content, live virtual tutorials, and in-person workshops tailored to the Trainee's specialty. Once registered on the training programme, Trainees will be enrolled on RCPI's virtual learning environment, Brightspace, to access their learning material. Some courses and study days require attendance at RCPI, while others are completed online or held at the local hospital. For further details, refer to your International Programme curriculum.

Attendance at study days, courses, exams and conferences is mandatory on the International programmes.

Audit

Trainees must take part in audit activities during their training programme and

provide evidence of having completed the process. Audit activities must relate directly to a Trainee's practice. Your curriculum will outline the minimum requirements. Quality Improvement projects can be counted towards this requirement.

Annual Leave

Annual leave must be notified to your hospital site HR and also your trainer, as per HSE guidelines you are asked to provide at least 6 weeks notice ahead of taking annual leave but please refer to your local site policies. Please also ensure once approved that you notify your programme coordinator of any leave so that it is properly documented, and to ensure there are no scheduling conflicts when organizing the End of Year Evaluations or other activities. There is useful information related to your Annual Leave entitlements and using HR Payroll on the HSE Website.

Annual Evaluations

The Annual Evaluation of Progress (AEP) is the formal method by which a Trainee's progression through their 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 e-Portfolio.

Trainees are required to undergo an annual evaluation process. This evaluation will generally take place virtually. It is mandatory for trainees to attend the evaluation.

At the evaluation, recommendations will be highlighted and approved by the Evaluation Panel. The recommendations will be recorded and saved in the Trainee ePortfolio.

Evaluations take place between May-June each year. The evaluation panel includes the National Specialty Director(s) for the specialty and the programme coordinator in RCPI.

During the evaluation, the panel will review the ePortfolio Evaluation Report. At the end of your evaluation, the panel will agree on a list of recommendations for the following year, or if you are in the final year of your programme the panel will recommend for you to be issued with graduation certificate.

Withdrawal from Training Programme

Should you wish to withdraw from the training programme, it is highly recommended that you first discuss with your trainer to see if there is anything that can be actioned within your current training programme to assist. We would also recommend that you meet with your programme coordinator and international management team to discuss if there is any assistance that can be provided by the college in order to help you complete your training programme

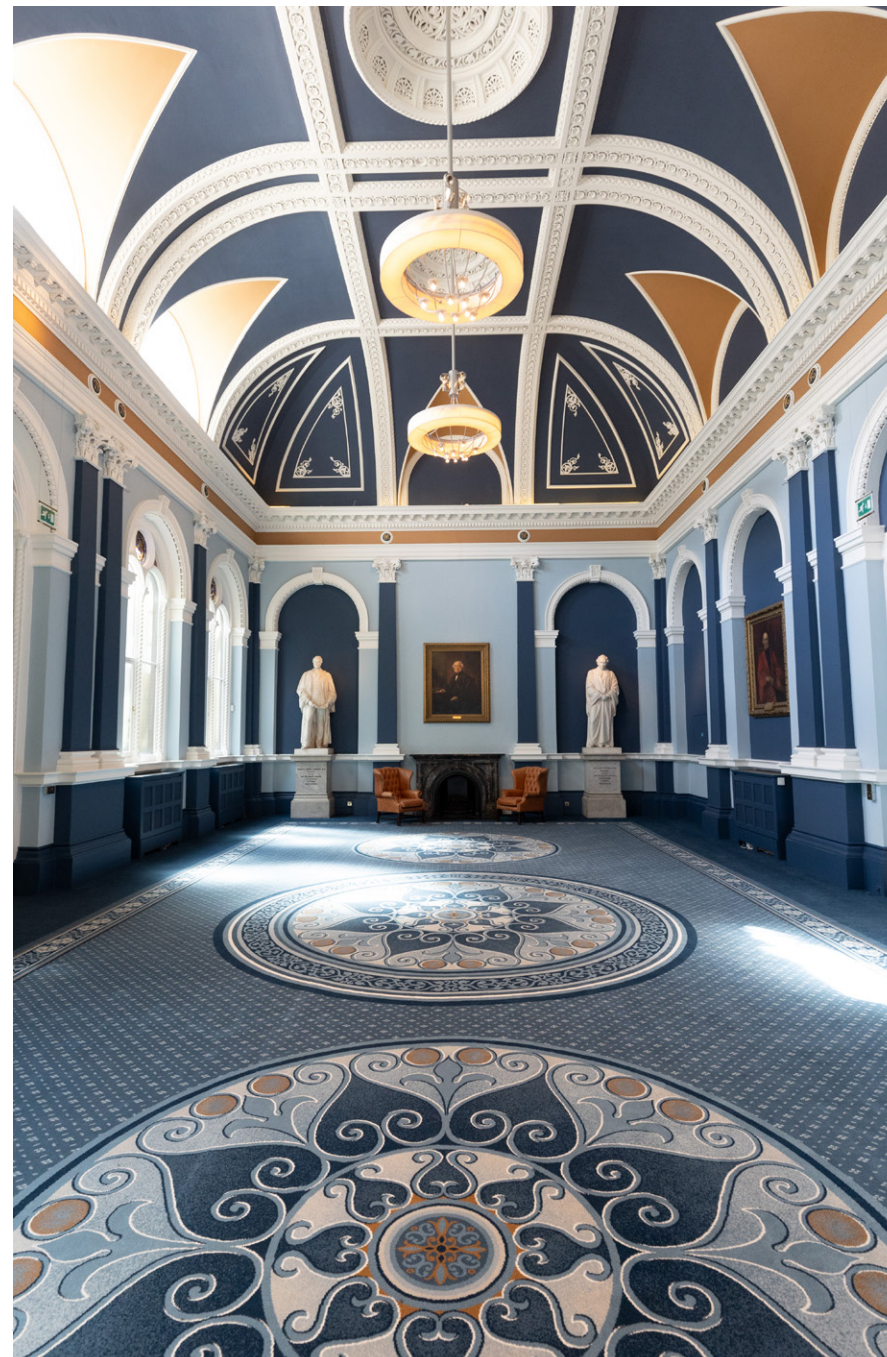
Certification Upon Completing the Training Programme

In order to complete your programme and receive your certificate of completion, you are required to complete all mandatory elements of your curriculum, inclusive of mandatory courses and mandatory training elements. In your Final Year assessment, this will be reviewed with your clinical lead in order to establish if you are ready to be signed off on your training programme.

- Complete the full duration of the International programme
- Achieve all outcomes as set out in the specialty curriculum.
- Attend relevant study days

- Attend mandatory courses listed in the specialty curriculum
- 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 not being able to be signed off and awarded their certificate of completion

completed your programme, you will receive a digital and printed copy of your certificate. Please note this can only be issued when the programme is completed in its entirety.



Supports for International 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 their training programme, 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. This is a log of all the activity of a Trainee and is provided so a Trainee can record the mandatory components of the training programme. This is the Trainees record and RCPI has no authority to share with third parties unless authorised to do so.

Following completion of the training programme a Trainee will have access to the ePortfolio for three years, at which point Trainees can download all their records. Access to ePortfolio after three years will not be possible.

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 two 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



Professional Support (Health & Wellbeing)

Please note there is a Health and Wellbeing department within RCPI. There are many helpful resources available on the Health and Wellbeing website. Should you wish to make an appointment, you can reach out to the Health and Wellbeing Manager, Maria Golden, to arrange (mariagolden@rcpi.ie).

Health and Wellbeing offers support in 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

Castel Education

RCPI have engaged with Castel Education to provide concierge services to our new trainees commencing the Programme. If you are having difficulty achieving the IELTS/OET English Language requirements, please contact the Admissions team via helpdesk@rcpi.ie, who would be happy to refer you on to Castel Education, who will happily provide you with courses and options to suit your needs, and advice on these programmes. Further information on services offered by Castel can be found on their website.

Castel's programmes are developed specifically for each individual doctor on the basis of your current and required English language levels. All interactive video-based sessions are scheduled around your current busy work schedule.

Whilst the Irish people are known for their friendliness and hospitality, living in a new country and adjusting to an unfamiliar culture can be challenging. Adapting to a new environment presents many challenges, for which we have contracted Castel Education to support you through this process. Castel Education provides a range of services to you, all of which are delivered to the highest international standards.



Castel Services Pre-Arrival

- Advice on EPIC and Medical Council requirements and documentation for registration
- Advice on securing your Atypical Working Scheme Letter of Approval (doctor's work permit)
- Advice on your Visa Application, including family visas where appropriate
- Castel will notify the relevant Irish Embassy in advance of your visa application
- Advice on your medical insurance requirements
- Advice on temporary accommodation options
- Establish your permanent accommodation preferences
- Advice on accommodation options that reflect your preferences
- Establish school/childcare requirements, if any



Castel Services Post-Arrival

- Pick up from the Airport and transfer to temporary accommodation
- Personalised welcome pack;
- Facilitate viewing of permanent accommodation options
- Advice on lease agreements with landlords and letting agents
- Review of school/childcare options available (where appropriate)
- Advice on setting up; Bank accounts, Mobile phone accounts, Telephone landline, Broadband, Tv Channels, Electricity accounts
- Advice on Immigration requirements; Garda National Immigration Bureau cards (GNIB), Re-entry visa applications, Third country visas (if required)
- Local orientation; Local transport facilities, local prayer facilities, ethnic food shops, local health centres
- Out of hours telephone support service

Important Notes For Entry

To come to Ireland to work on a temporary basis there are particular requirements must be met, specifically, your visa for the period of your time. Your initial ATWS letter of approval is provided by RCPI Admissions who apply on your behalf. We have engaged with Castel Education to support you in using this letter of approval to obtain your IRP card and renew it while on the programme, which must be done on a yearly basis. If an extension is required for your letter of approval you must liaise with Castel Education no later than 6-months prior to the date of expiry.

Please be advised that neither RCPI nor Castel determine the rules and regulations regarding these applications. In this regard, to find up to date information in relation to immigration regulations and requirements, please refer to the Immigration Service and Department of Foreign Affairs



