

Faculty of Radiologists Careers Day, 8/10/2020

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is eligible to apply for radiology training in Ireland?

Any doctor with at least 2 years of clinical experience (including intern year) is eligible to apply for the diagnostic radiology training programme in Ireland. In practice, most trainees have completed 2 years of basic training in either medicine or surgery and passed the relevant membership exams before starting radiology.

How long is the training programme?

The training programme is 5 years long. Trainees spend at least 4 years in Ireland, with the option to train overseas in fifth year. In practice, trainees often complete another 2 years of fellowship training overseas in the USA, Canada, Australia and/or the UK.

What hospitals accept trainees?

Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, Dublin
St. James's Hospital, Dublin
St. Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin
Beaumont Hospital, Dublin
Tallaght University Hospital, Dublin
Cork & Mercy University Hospitals, Cork
Galway University Hospital
Waterford University Hospital
University Hospital Limerick.

Do you rotate through different hospitals as part of your training?

Unlike other training schemes in Ireland, radiology trainees spend the majority of their 4/5 years of training in one hospital (as above). Trainees do rotate through other hospitals for subspecialist training, i.e. 9 week paediatric radiology rotation in Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin/Temple Street, 3 week neuroradiology rotation in Beaumont etc.

How many trainees are accepted per year?

This varies from year-to-year. 20-25 first-year trainees are accepted per year on average.

How is the training scheme structured?

All radiology trainees from 1st to 4th year receive formal teaching one or two half-day(s) per week. This prepares you well for the exams (see below). Otherwise, learning is primarily on-the-job. During your training, you are exposed to all the major imaging modalities – x-ray, fluoroscopy, ultrasound, CT, MRI, nuclear medicine, interventional radiology etc. Most of your reports (all initially) are co-signed by a consultant. Trainees participate in a busy on-call roster. There are several mandatory courses for example, evidence-based practice and audit modules that must be completed during training. Trainee progress is assessed formally during an annual end-of-year assessment. Consultants are also asked to periodically evaluate trainee performance, i.e. reading x-rays, on-call CT, performing procedures, chairing multidisciplinary team meetings etc.

How frequent are on-call shifts?

This varies from hospital-to-hospital and from year-to-year depending on how many trainees there are. First years do not participate in the on-call roster so on-call shifts are shared equally amongst 2nd to 5th years. Currently, on-call shifts vary nationally from 1/7 to 1/13, averaging 1/9.

Do you sit exams as part of the training programme?

There are two sets of exams you must pass to become a Fellow of the Faculty of Radiologists at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. The first exam, towards the end of first year, examines radiological anatomy, physics and techniques. It consists of MCQs, digital image viewing and two viva (spoken) examinations. The second exam, toward the start of fourth year comprises 2 parts – the first part consists of single best answer/extended matching

questions and the second part encompasses a written short-case exam, rapid x-ray reporting and two viva exams. Both exams are challenging.

Are there opportunities for research?

There is ample opportunity for research. Trainees are encouraged and supported to undertake research with a view to presenting at national and international meetings, including the Faculty of Radiologists Annual Scientific and Spring Meetings, the Irish MRI meeting, the European Congress of Radiology and the Radiological Society of North America Annual Meeting. The Faculty of Radiologists offers travel bursaries and publication awards to promote research amongst trainees.

Is flexible (part-time) training possible?

Flexible (part-time) training is possible and results in the training scheme being longer than the standard 5 years. Flexible trainees are required to complete all the same training/modules/assessments as full-time trainees.

How do you become an interventional radiologist?

As it stands currently, all interventional radiologists have completed specialist training in diagnostic radiology, before subspecializing in interventional radiology (IR). In practice, this usually means at least 2 years of further training as an IR fellow.