

Frequently Asked Questions - Core Surgical Training

Q: Is there a fee for the training programme?

A: No, but there is an application fee of 50 Euro (non-refundable), payable via credit card at point of submission of application.

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A: Yes, it is 50 Euro (non-refundable), payable via credit card at point of submission of application.

Q: Can I get a scholarship/fellowship for CST?

A: There are no scholarships or fellowships available for this programme. 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 the allocated Hospital.

Q: Am I eligible for CST?

A: Please see eligibility criteria documentation on the webpage [here](#).

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

A: Please visit the Irish Medical Council website www.medicalcouncil.ie enquire re Trainee Specialist 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 Specialist Division of the Register, not that you have already registered. An email from the IMC is sufficient proof of your eligibility status.

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

A: No, you must hold a full Medical Degree to apply for CST.

Q: Do I need to complete an intern year?

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

Q: Do I need referees?

A: Yes, it is mandatory to have two referees, you will be required to submit their details once you start your application, your referees will then receive a template to complete and submit online.

Q: Where do I find the reference forms?

A: The reference forms are hosted on our online application site. You will be instructed to provide contact details for your references and they receive a link via email to complete a reference form for you.

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

A: Your referees should be from clinical posts with one being from your current or most recent post.

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

A: Yes, please see documentation in relation to this [here](#).

Q: What proof is required when submitting presentations?

A: An invitation or email from the meeting or conference team confirming your presentation slot.

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

A: A letter or email of confirmation from your supervisor (Consultant, not another trainee)

Q: How do I provide proof of audit?

A: A letter from you consultant stating the nature/name of the audit and confirming your participation or published abstract from a national meeting programme including your name as a listed author or a published paper from a journal listing you as an author.

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

A: The HSE Flexible Training scheme is open to trainees from CST year 2 onwards. Family friendly rotation requests will be reviewed on an individual basis. You can read more on such policies as Job sharing and Post reassignment [here](#) under General Policies and Procedures & Employee/HR Guidelines and Procedures.

Q: How many places are available on the CST Programme?

A: 60 Training places are available each year (subject to review year on year by RCSI, NDTP/HSE)

Q: Is there limit on how many times I can apply to CST?

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

Q: Can I defer my place?

A: No deferrals are allowed.

Q: Should I have my MRCS completed before I apply for the programme

A: You must have passed both parts of MRCS to be eligible for an ST3 interview. You can review data on MRCS amongst successful CST applicants in the Trainee Progression Data document on our 'How to apply' page [here](#).

Q: How can I study a particular specialty?

A: You must first successfully complete Core Surgical Training for competitive entry to your chosen specialty at ST3.

Q: Can I apply to ST3 in more than one specialty?

A: No, you can only apply in your ST2 specialty. If you want to change specialty in year 2 there is an option to do so.

Q: When will I choose my specialty?

A: We will contact you with information on this midway through CST year 1.

Q: Can I defer my application for ST3

A: No, if you do not apply to ST3 directly from ST2 you will be required to apply via the Equivalent Standards Route (ESR) where available, in any subsequent years.

Q: What is the Equivalent Standard Route (ESR)?

A: Please see information [here](#) under General Policies and Procedures

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

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

Q: Where can I get information about progression rates from Core to Specialty training?

A: Please see information [here](#) under General Policies and Procedures

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

A: No applications can be submitted after the deadline you will need to apply the following year. We advise all applicants to ensure you have all your documentation prepared well in advance.

Some 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 issues.

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

A: For optimum performance on the CST application site we recommend using Google Chrome

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 clear your cache on your computer; switch to incognito mode on your browser.

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: corest@rcsi.ie