



GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS FOR THE SPECIALIST TRAINING PROGRAMME IN PAIN MEDICINE
JULY 2026

GENERAL POINTS

- Applications are accepted only if received in electronic format via email to painmedicine@coa.ie.
- An application will be considered incomplete if any of the required documents are missing:

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

Evidence of CSCST in Anaesthesiology or proof of entry onto the Anaesthesiology Specialist Register with Irish Medical Council
Proof of registration with Medical Council
*Certified Colour Copy of your Passport
Proof of English Language Competence (if applicable)
Two Completed References
*Certified Copy of Certificate of Naturalisation (if applicable)

NOTE:

Original documents should not be submitted, only copies. ***All** copies of documents submitted should be properly certified in the manner described in Addendum 1.

Canvassing in order to obtain an unfair advantage at interview is unacceptable.
Incomplete and/or late applications will be returned to the email address it was received from.



APPLYING FOR THE SPECIALIST TRAINING PROGRAMME IN PAIN MEDICINE

Medical Council of Ireland Registration

- You are asked to provide your medical council registration number.
- The NCHD Contract requires all junior doctors participating in a structured training programme to hold trainee specialist division registration. Given the Training Bodies' role in the selection of trainees to training programmes and the subsequent proposal of such trainees to employment positions within the health service, it is required that all applicants to training programmes would either hold or be eligible to hold registration on the trainee specialist division.

In that context all applicants must indicate at time of application their eligibility to hold registration on the trainee specialist division. *Please note candidates who do not currently hold Medical Council registration must make an application to the Medical Council immediately.*

The Medical Council have advised that the following candidates can be automatically considered eligible for the trainee specialist division:

- Doctors who have graduated from an Irish Medical School and successfully completed their internship in Ireland or will have completed their internship by July 2021.
- Doctors who have successfully completed their medical qualification in one the following EU countries:
 - Austria
 - Belgium
 - Bulgaria
 - Croatia
 - Cyprus
 - Czech Republic
 - Estonia
 - Finland
 - France
 - Germany
 - Greece
 - Hungary
 - Latvia
 - Netherlands
 - Romania
 - Spain
 - Switzerland
 - Slovak Republic



- Doctors who are currently registered in or have established eligibility for registration in, the General Division with the Irish Medical Council
- Doctors who are currently or previously on the Trainee Specialist Division

All other candidates must provide proof of their eligibility to the trainee specialist division at time of application.

Candidates who qualified in an EU member state other than one of the above will be required to provide, in addition to their medical degree, any additional documentation stated in the EU Directive 2005/36/EC, in order to establish eligibility for registration in the Trainee Specialist Division. Example, a doctor who qualifies in the UK will be asked to provide a Certificate of Experience in addition to his/her medical degree when applying for registration.

Please note the Medical Council cannot confirm a doctor's eligibility for trainee specialist registration until an application for registration has been submitted to the Council and assessed. Note that it will take between 4 to 6 weeks before an application is fully examined and confirmation of a doctor's eligibility for trainee specialist registration cannot be provided before that time. Candidates are advised to apply to the Medical Council for registration and following submission of an application contact the Medical Council to seek an email confirming eligibility to the trainee division. This email confirming eligibility must be submitted with your application.

Applicants who have qualified outside the EU must pass or be exempt from the PRES to establish eligibility for registration in the Trainee Specialist Division. They must also have completed an internship which is recognised by the Medical Council as equivalent to an Irish internship.

The Medical Council recognises internships undertaken in the following countries as equivalent:

- Australia
- Malaysia
- New Zealand
- Pakistan where the internship was commenced after 31st December 2008 (note: the rotations must meet the standards of an Irish internship)
- Sudan
- South Africa where the internship was commenced after 1st July 2006
- UK
- Malta



HSE English Language Requirements

The following is per HR Circular 063/2020 effective from **6th November 2020** re English language requirements for NCHDs - in place of those in HSE HR Circular 022/2018.

Heretofore, the extent to which NCHDs were required to provide evidence of English language competency was set out in HSE HR Circular 022/2018. This Circular outlines the current position and supersedes all previous communication in this regard.

Required English Language Competency:

The ability to communicate clearly with patients and colleagues is a key requirement for all healthcare professionals. Proficiency in the English language is therefore a core competency for NCHDs working in the Irish public health service. Under Section 6 'Standard duties and responsibilities' of NCHD Contract 2010, NCHDs are required to be able to communicate effectively with patients and clients; and comply with statutory and regulatory requirements, corporate policies and procedures and human resource policies and procedures.

Requirement for all NCHDs:

The English language requirements for NCHDs are universally applicable. There is no distinction between training, non-training, intern or any other category or grouping.

As per this new circular all NCHDs taking up employment with the HSE and section 38 organisations who were not registered with the Irish Medical Council in any of the divisions of the Register of Medical Practitioners prior to 1st January 2015, or who did not complete the entirety of their under-graduate medical training in the Republic of Ireland, are required to provide evidence under one of the following categories:

Category 1. Doctors who completed their Medical degree in English from any of the following countries: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, The United States of America or The United Kingdom must provide:

- A copy of their Medical Degree Certificate

Category 2. Doctors who completed:

- The Irish State Leaving Certificate examination or A Levels in the United Kingdom and a Medical Degree in English must provide all three of the following:
- A copy of Irish Leaving Certificate/UK A-Level transcript results
- A copy of their Medical Degree
- Certificate/confirmation from their University confirming their Medical degree was taught and examined solely in English

Category 3. Doctors who meet the English Language requirements by attaining certification via the recognized English Language Tests must submit a certificate of test results from either the International English Language Test System (IELTS) (Academic EXAM) or Occupational English Test (OET).



Please refer to the table below for the **minimum levels** in each of the tests that are accepted by the HSE:

IELTS	Minimum scores
Listening	6.5
Reading	6.5
Writing	6.5
Speaking	6.5
Overall	7.0
OET	Minimum Grade
Listening	B
Reading	B
Writing	B
Speaking	B
Overall	B

Please note that:

Advice to candidates who have worked in the HSE previously or are currently working for the HSE is as follows:

- Candidates only have to have completed the required English language exam (IELTS/OET) once for employment within the HSE.
- Candidates who are currently in employment with the HSE must provide evidence that the IELTS/OET was completed when they entered service to the HSE. The IELTS/OET does NOT have to be within two years of training programme application date.
- Candidates who were previously in employment with the HSE and not currently in employment with the HSE (i.e. have had a break in service) and the IELTS is not within two years at point of application the candidate will need to re-sit the IELTS/OET.
- Test results cannot be combined. The HSE will only accept one test result.
- The NCHDs communication skills must be independently assessed, by employer or training body, as part of the application and interview process, before the NCHD is recommended for appointment or contract of employment issued (excludes Interns).
- Potential applicants must be informed of these requirements as part of the recruitment process.

Advice to candidates who have not previously completed an IELTS/OET or who have not submitted the certificate to their HSE employer is as follow:

- Candidates must now complete their IELTS/OET. The IELTS/OET must be dated within two years of the training programme application date.

There are no exemptions to the above requirements.

All applicants are required at the time of application to demonstrate to the College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland their English language competency either by means of submitting the required IELTS Certificate or OET test results or by completion of a medical degree in the above countries.



Allocation of Places on Specialist Training Programmes

In order to comply with national policy relating to the recruitment, training, retention and development of specialist medical practitioners, it has been determined that the following process will apply to the recruitment and selection of new specialist trainees:

Available specialist training places will be allocated by the Faculty of Pain Medicine of Ireland (Faculty) in the first instance to those candidates who at the time of application are citizens of Ireland or nationals of another Member State of the European Union. This includes non-EEA nationals who are deemed to be qualifying or permitted family members of nationals of a Member State under the EU Directive 2004/38/EC (Free Movement Directive) as transposed into Irish domestic law, European Communities (Free Movement of Persons) Regulations 2015. S.I No 548 of 2015 and have been granted the right of residence or permanent residence (i.e. holders of GNIB Stamp 4 EUFAM or holders of IRP Stamp 4 by virtue of marriage or dependency*).

All such appointments will be made in order of merit, and are subject to the applicant meeting the conditions and standards prescribed by The Faculty of Pain Medicine of Ireland.

Should training places on the specialist training programme remain unfilled following the initial round where qualified candidates (as outlined above) are offered training places, the Faculty may allocate any remaining training places to candidates who at the time of application were otherwise qualified save for meeting the condition specified in paragraph 1 above.

All offers made under paragraph 3 above will be made in order of merit, and are subject to an applicant meeting the conditions and standards prescribed by the Faculty.

To manage this allocation process, all applicants at the time of application are required to submit to the Faculty a colour copy of their passport. The colour copy submitted must be legible and include the passport identity page. Where appropriate, applicants should submit a copy of their Certificate of Naturalisation as issued by the Department of Justice and Equality or a copy of their Stamp4 EUFam card or Stamp4 card, if such is required for an applicant to be considered as a candidate specified in paragraph 1 above.

An applicant's citizenship status is a matter entirely between the applicant and the relevant national authorities. The Faculty will not entertain or take account of applications for naturalisation that are pending with the relevant authorities. All required evidence must be provided at the time of application.

*Please note that IRPStamp4 is awarded in a number of different circumstances - for the purposes of this guidance, only holders of a long term (circa 3 years) IRPStamp4 that are based on marriage to an Irish person, holders of a Stamp4EUFam card through marriage to an EU national, or dependent children/step children (under 21 years old) of such a couple are eligible to be considered in the initial allocation of training places as outlined in points 1 & 2 above. Holders of IRP Stamp 4 on any other basis are eligible to apply; however, these will not be included in the allocation of training places in the first instance as per points 1 and 2 above.

It is the responsibility of the Stamp 4 applicant to supply the training body with documentation requested by the training body to satisfy that the applicant meets the criteria within the timeframes set by the training body. Such documentation may include (but is not limited to) some of the following: evidence of IRPstamp4EUFAM / IRPstamp 4, passport of spouse indicating nationality, valid marriage certificate, and valid birth certificate.



Please include two references with your application, one of which must be from your most recent supervisor.

Application Checklist

Confirm here the documents that you are including with your application, (and check that they have been attached). Please be advised that applications which are incomplete will be returned and, unless re-submitted correctly and in time, **will not** be put forward for consideration by the short listing and appointment panels.

Documents to Submit	✓
Evidence of CSCST in Anaesthesiology or proof of entry onto the Anaesthesiology Specialist Register	
Copy of Medical Council Certificate of Registration or email confirming registration for MCI	
Certified colour copy of your passport	
Certified copy of Certificate of Naturalisation (if applicable)	
Proof of English Language Competence (if applicable)	
Two completed references	

Addendum 1

“CERTIFIED” COPIES

The FPM CAI only requires copies of documents; however, all copies must be certified copies.

To have a copy certified, you must present the original document and the photocopy to one of the following:

- A Fellow of the College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland or the Royal College of Anaesthesiologists.
- A member of the Garda Síochána at a police station
- A Commissioner for Oaths
- A Notary Public

The copy must be certified with the following words or an appropriate equivalent (BLOCK CAPITALS, please)

I (NAME) certify that this is a true and faithful copy of an original document which I have seen.

It must then be signed, officially stamped and dated. In the case of a document being certified by a Fellow of the College, the stamp of the hospital must accompany the signature.

Do not send the original documents. College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland will not take responsibility for their loss or damage.

