



## Verification of training policy

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Author	Muiris O'Sullivan	
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## Contents

Contents.....	2
1.0 Purpose.....	3
2.0 Scope.....	3
2.1 Within scope .....	3
2.1.1 GP Trainees and graduates .....	3
2.1.2 College employees .....	3
2.2 Out of scope .....	3
3.0 Policy statement .....	4
3.1 General principles .....	4
3.2 Statements of verification of training.....	5
3.3 Personal references provided by College staff.....	5
3.4 Academic references.....	5
3.5 Data management and retention .....	6
4.0 Roles and responsibilities .....	6
5.0 Contact .....	6
Appendix 1: Statement of verification of training template.....	7



## **1.0 Purpose**

This policy sets out the Irish College of GPs' ("College" or "the College") position on providing statements of verification of training to trainees and graduates of the national programme of GP training.

## **2.0 Scope**

### **2.1 Within scope**

#### *2.1.1 GP Trainees and graduates*

This policy applies to trainees and graduates of the national programme of GP training who are seeking a verification of their training.

#### *2.1.2 College employees*

This policy applies to current employees of the College, including scheme directing staff.

### **2.2 Out of scope**

This policy does not apply to current or former employees of the College who are seeking personal or professional references.

This policy does not apply to general practice or hospital trainers, who are contract holders with, or employees of, the Health Service and subject to internal HSE guidance.

## 3.0 Policy statement

### 3.1 General principles

- There is no statutory obligation in Ireland to give a reference where one is requested;
- Where a reference is given, there is no obligation that it be full and comprehensive;
- What is provided must be fair, accurate, and not mislead;
- The provider of a reference has a duty of care to the trainee and the prospective employer who will rely on it; if the provider fails in their duty of care, the trainee or prospective employer may have a case in negligence;
- The provider also has a duty of care to protect the reputation and standing of the College;
- Under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, trainees or graduates have a right to see any provided reference. “Expressions of opinion” may be given in confidence, but the Data Protection Commissioner has set a high bar for this;
- The nine grounds for discrimination under the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2005 (gender, marital, family, age, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability and membership of the Traveller community) should be avoided when compiling a reference unless there is a compelling reason for their inclusion;
- If a reference is felt to be defamatory, the provider may be sued under the Defamation Act 2009;
- There is a distinction between professional references and personal references. The latter is typically provided by someone with whom the applicant has not worked but can describe their values, integrity, character, and goals, while the former seeks to vouch for capabilities, skills and experience in training and employment.
- Professional references are increasingly being replaced by “statements of verification of training” setting out the basic facts of the trainee or graduate’s training.



### **3.2 Statements of verification of training**

The College does not, as a routine, provide professional references to trainees or graduates. Where a current trainee, or a graduate of the GP training programme requests a professional reference from College or an employee of College, they will be provided with a statement of verification of training by the GP Training Unit.

The statement will include:

- The training scheme upon which the trainee or graduate was enrolled
- The date of commencement of GP training
- The date of exit from GP training
- Date of certification of completion of specialist training (if applicable)
- A summary of training including clinical rotations
- Dates of MICGP exam module attempts
- Date of award of MICGP exam certificate (if applicable)
- Awards and commendations (if applicable)

### **3.3 Personal references provided by College staff**

Scheme directing staff and other College staff can provide personal references to trainees or graduates, though they are not under a legal obligation to do so. If a personal reference is provided, it constitutes a private arrangement between the staff member and the trainee or graduate. As such, the duty of care in such circumstances lies with the individual providing the reference rather than with College. College letterhead or any other reference to the College, including trainee and College staff titles, cannot be included.

### **3.4 Academic references**

Where a scheme director has supervised the trainee in research, quality improvement or other similar scholarship activity, a reference to this can be provided by the scheme director as an adjunct to the central verification of training as outlined above.



### **3.5 Data management and retention**

Copies of statements of verification of training are retained by College for 5 years following issuance.

### **4.0 Roles and responsibilities**

Trainees and graduates will request statements of verification of training.

The GP training unit of College will provide statements of verification of training.

Scheme directing staff and other College employees will redirect trainees or graduates to the GP training unit upon receipt of a request for a reference in accordance with this policy.

### **5.0 Contact**

GP Training Quality Assurance and Enhancement

[qae.training@icgp.ie](mailto:qae.training@icgp.ie)



## Appendix 1: Statement of verification of training template

### Statement of verification of training

FROM:

The Irish College of General Practitioners

4-5 Lincoln Place, Dublin 2, D02 XR68

01-6763705

TO:

<Dr Potential Employer

123 Street Name

Bailebréige>

**SUBJECT:** Statement of verification of training for: <Dr Recent Graduate / DOB / address>

Training scheme	
Date of commencement of training	
Date of exit from training	
Date of certification of specialist training in general practice (if applicable)	
Summary of training received including clinical rotations completed	

MICGP CKT module*	
Date(s) attempted:	
Passing mark (if applicable):	
MICGP MEQ module*	
Date(s) attempted:	
Passing mark (if applicable):	
MICGP CCT module*	
Date(s) attempted:	
Passing mark (if applicable):	
Date of award of MICGP examination certificate	
Scholarship, research and quality improvement**	

\*MICGP: Membership of the Irish College of GPs; CKT: Core Knowledge Test; MEQ: Modified Essay Question; CCT: Clinical Competency Test.

\*\*Optional; at discretion of scheme director

The above information is confirmed to be true. If there are questions or concerns, please contact:





**Statement of validation of training requests**

**GP Training Unit**

**Irish College of General Practitioners**

**4/5 Lincoln Place, Dublin 2, DO2 XR68**

**01-6763705**

**[gptraining@icgp.ie](mailto:gptraining@icgp.ie)**