



UCC

Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh, Éire
University College Cork, Ireland

Frequently asked questions for potential applicants to the MSc Radiation Therapy

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Do I need to study a specific Degree?

No, broadly speaking a science background is best this includes any science, (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Health Science, Computer science, Exercise and sports science, Agricultural science), as well as any technology, engineering and maths. Sometimes referred to as STEM. However, the better qualified the better. Having double degrees, or master's degrees makes you more competitive.

What classification of degree do I need?

A 2:2 with honours is a minimum. However, the higher the classification the more competitive your application will be.

Do I need Physics?

No, we will teach you the physics needed in the course.

What can I do to improve my chances?

1. Get the best degree classification you can
2. Organise a visit to a radiation oncology department. Reflect on what you see.
3. Visit our website, understand the course structure and fees
<https://www.ucc.ie/en/ckx29/>
4. Watch our video here <https://youtu.be/3TKwTkdrPgs>
5. Understand how your honours project could relate to radiation therapy.
6. Take the free online course on life health and radiation
<https://www.coursera.org/learn/life-health-radiation>
7. Take a free online course on “An Introduction to Radiation Oncology: From Diagnosis to Survivorship”
<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/radiation-therapy>
8. Consider what personal qualities do you think you need to be a radiation therapist
9. Consider why you want to be part of the radiation therapy programme
10. Consider how will you apply what you have previously learned in your first degree to radiation therapy.
11. Consider how the research you carried out in your degree might apply to radiation therapy. Consider the transferrable skills you developed.
12. Visit the post grad expo <https://www.ucc.ie/en/pg-expo/>

Where do I apply?

You can apply for postgrad course through the online UCC application system. Search for course code MSCRT.

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/apply/#>

What is the selection process?

1. Apply from January onwards
2. Shortlisting based on degree classification, and written application.
3. Interview usually around May
4. 12 places offered based on the combination of application and interview.
5. Accept June – August
6. Begin late August / early September

What is the course structure?

See website <https://www.ucc.ie/en/ckx29/>

For placement, are you assigned hospitals or do you have to find the placements yourself?

All placements will be arranged for you.

The courses alternates between blocks of academic lectures followed by blocks of clinical placement where students have the opportunity to put their learning into practice in the clinical setting.

In the clinical departments there would be clinical tutors who would meet you and guide you through each placement in conjunction with the clinical radiographers/radiation therapists. Placements will be spread across both public and private department within the region.

What are the fees?

See website <https://www.ucc.ie/en/ckx29/>

Money Matters discussed here for UCC students.

<https://youtu.be/jjPDK7CUBzk>

It is also useful to look at the STUDENT FINANCE 101 Manual. Explore how you can fund your studies at one of Ireland's leading research universities.

www.ucc.ie/pgfundingguide

What are the English language requirements?

English language requirements can be found here

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/study/comparison/english/postgraduate/>

Can I work Part-time

It is advised that you do not. This a full-time course with three semesters per year. Working part-time will result in burnout.

Consider a student loan instead, this can ease the pressure during study and can be paid back when you are earning a graduate wage.

Bol

<https://personalbanking.bankofireland.com/borrow/loans/student-loans/five-percent-student-loan/features-benefits/>

AIB

<https://aib.ie/our-products/loans/education-loans>

Subject to approval, you can choose an interest only repayment option and make minimum monthly interest repayments for the duration of your course (maximum 4 years). Interest-only repayment options may appear cheaper in the short term but will be more expensive over the term of the loan

When you complete your course, you will begin making full repayments on the total amount you owe over a maximum of five years

How much does it pay?

Pay scales change all the time. The HSE pay scales are available here

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/benefitservices/pay/>

As of 2019 a graduate radiation therapist can earn 35 –50k pa. Increasing to 70k pa with promotion, extra qualifications and experience. Wages can be supplemented by some on-call work.

Private salaries vary and have different terms and conditions.

What job opportunities will be available upon graduation?

There is currently a demand for radiation therapists in Ireland. Radiation Therapy is an expanding area. Currently in Ireland radiation therapy departments are located in the major cities: Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford. At the moment there are a number of them actively recruiting.

There are many options in terms of career pathways- clinical, academic, industry, clinical trials etc.

Could you please describe a typical day for a radiation therapist?

It very much depends on the area that you are working in e.g: treatment or pre-treatment (where you plan patients treatment) but it would involve working within a small team of radiation therapists. You would be dealing with other healthcare professionals such as doctors, nurses, physicists, allied health professionals such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists etc.

If you were working on a treatment unit you would be working to a schedule where you would be dealing with patients over their course of treatment so you would be involved in positioning them for their radiation therapy treatment, and managing their side effects. You see people over a number of weeks so you do build up relationships with patients and their families.

The role involves both patient care aspects and also dealing with technological aspects due to equipment, imaging etc.