

Training in Diagnostic Radiology

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Diagnostic Radiology offers the medical graduate a most rewarding and challenging career in a clinical specialty which is playing an increasing role in all fields of medicine.

The advances in the past 80 years have been dramatic and almost every organ in the body can now be demonstrated in great detail. A progressive reduction in the doses of radiation necessary for diagnostic purposes has proved possible with elimination of radiation risks to the patient and of course to the operator.

The main attraction of the Department of Radiology is the vital multi-disciplinary role it occupies with the opportunity to study medicine in its many forms. The contribution of radiology to internal medicine has now reached the stage that specialisation within radiology itself is now common, particularly in Teaching Hospitals.

The development of new imaging techniques in recent years has caught the imagination of everyone. Modern computer technology has been responsible for the development of computed tomography and more recently magnetic resonance imaging. Computers are also being used in association with diagnostic ultrasound and scintiscanning. With each technological advance diagnostic radiology has reaped the benefit.

Radiologists are increasingly engaged in the treatment of patients. A development in recent years has been the involvement of radiologists in interventional techniques such as aspiration cytology, angioplasty and removal of gallstones either percutaneously or by endoscopic technique.

In the United Kingdom there is now enormous interest shown by young graduates in diagnostic radiology and competition for training places is intense. Many applicants already possess higher qualifications in Medicine or Surgery.

Before radiological training can be undertaken it is a requirement of the Royal College of Radiologists that candidates should have at least one year's experience in a clinical specialty after registration. It would of course be a considerable help in subsequent career prospects if a higher clinical qualification had been obtained.

There are many training centres in the United Kingdom recognised by the Royal College of Radiologists. Each centre organises its own course following the College syllabus.

The Fellowship examination is in two parts. The First Examination is taken after one academic year and includes subjects such as physics related to diagnostic radiology and radiological techniques with anatomy. The final Examination can only be taken after three years training in recognised departments. After five years training in radiology and possession of the Fellowship sufficient experience has been obtained to apply for consultant appointments.

The future of the specialty is extremely bright and few other disciplines are able to offer the young medical graduate such an exciting career in an expanding specialty.