



**Policy on General Health,
Infectious Diseases Screening
and Vaccination of
RCSI Bahrain Students
AY 2025-26**

RCSI DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE

Policy / Regulation History

General Health, Infectious Diseases Screening and Vaccination RCSI Bahrain Students

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1 PURPOSE

This policy outlines the university's process and guidelines regarding students' general health, infectious diseases screening and vaccinations. RCSI Bahrain is aware of its overriding duty of care to the public with whom students are in close contact, and takes reasonable and appropriate measures not only to safeguard students but also patients and members of the public.

2 POLICY STATEMENT

This policy must be read carefully by students to ensure that they are fully aware of the contents. Students are responsible for complying with this policy and for ensuring that their medical records, screening and vaccinations are compliant with RCSI Bahrain and Ministry of Health regulations.

3 APPLICATION

This policy is applicable to new undergraduate student applicants, as well as registered and continuing undergraduate students at RCSI Bahrain.

4 POLICY CONTENT

a. General Health

Students can discuss in confidence their health and wellbeing requirements and concerns with the Student Health and Wellbeing team. Contact student-health@rcsi-mub.com

Students have a responsibility under the Student Code of Conduct to inform RCSI Bahrain if any form of ill-health or disability, whether physical or mental, temporary or permanent, could negatively impact their academic progress or their competence in providing safe patient care.

- i. Student applicants **must** disclose a known disability or medical condition **upon application (Student Health Questionnaire)** so that consideration can be given to any supports and arrangements that may be provided through RCSI Bahrain's Reasonable Accommodation policy.

All student applicants must confirm fitness to study at RCSI Bahrain prior to registration by completing the **Infectious Disease Screening and Immunization Report** which will be provided to them.

All applicants must be declared medically fit according to the Kingdom of Bahrain Higher Educational Council requirements, Ministry of Health regulations, and in order to achieve the marks and standards required of their programme of study at RCSI Bahrain. It should be noted that RCSI Bahrain cannot guarantee an allergen free learning environment.

RCSI Bahrain reserves the right to discontinue students who have failed to disclose significant health information which may, even with the provision of Reasonable Accommodation, prevent a student from progressing through the academic programme.

- ii. International students must subscribe to the University's medical insurance programme (unless they have similar medical insurance in place) in order to be provided with optimal medical care during their period of study in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Queries regarding the medical insurance programme can be addressed to privatemedinsurancebh@rcsi-mub.com
- iii. **Students are responsible for their own self-care**, in order to be fit to study as well as for the benefit of those with whom they come in to contact. Developing an effective self-care plan has a number of important health benefits. Self-care is essential in order to achieve academic, personal and professional success.

Examples of how students may take responsibility for their self-care include:

- Seeking early support for any health and wellbeing concerns.
- Asking for guidance and confidential advice from the Student Health and Wellbeing team, accessing self-help resources and other support such as from a Personal Tutor.
- Finding out about University policies that provide student support, for example Reasonable Accommodation, Counselling, and Exceptional Circumstances.
- Being aware of own self-care needs and creating a self-care plan that includes:
 - nutrition, diet, exercise, and sleep routines necessary for optimal health;
 - maintaining positive relationships within a supportive social network;
 - knowing where to go for help;
 - developing coping strategies and building resilience.
 - effective stress management techniques.
- Managing existing health issues and following medical advice.

b. Needle stick injuries

Students **must** report any needle stick injury to the appropriate clinical authority at their clinical placement site. The clinical authority at the site where the injury occurred is responsible for assessing the risk and providing first aid treatment and follow up, which may include booster vaccinations and blood borne virus testing.

The student must also inform the Student Health and Wellbeing team, who will provide counselling and advice to the student. The Student Health & Wellbeing Unit maintains a database of reported needle stick injuries in order to monitor practice and identify any retraining needs to be communicated to the relevant School.

c. Vaccination programme

Healthcare workers, which includes healthcare students, face the possibility of exposure to infectious diseases. While the risks are small, increasing efficiency of preventive measures such as vaccination has highlighted the importance of these diseases.

It is mandatory that RCSI Bahrain students demonstrate evidence of having received the required vaccinations in accordance with the **Ministry of Health Recommended Vaccination to Health Care Workers** (HCWs).

Students are responsible for ensuring that all required vaccinations remain up to date.

Required Vaccinations:

- 3 x Hepatitis B Vaccines
- Tetanus & Diphtheria Vaccine (within last 10 years)
- 2 x MMR Vaccines
- Meningococcal ACWY (within the last 5 years)
- 2 x Varicella Vaccines
- POLIO (Complete childhood series)

-Measles, Mumps and Rubella

- Students must provide evidence of having received two doses of MMR.
- If not immunized, students should receive both doses of MMR, given at least one month apart (unless otherwise contra-indicated), or provide documented immunity to Measles, Mumps and Rubella.

-Chicken pox (Varicella)

- Students without a proof of vaccination will be considered non-immune.
- Non-immune students will need vaccination. This requires a series of two doses with a minimal interval of 4 weeks apart.

-Polio

- Students are required to provide evidence of a complete primary series of polio vaccine. Students who cannot demonstrate proof of vaccination will be required to complete the vaccination.

-Influenza Vaccine

- Students are encouraged to receive the annual influenza vaccine. The University will advise students how to receive the vaccination.

-Meningococcal Conjugate ACWY

- Students must provide evidence of receiving one dose of Meningococcal Conjugate ACWY vaccine. Students who cannot demonstrate proof of vaccination will be required to complete the vaccination

d. Infectious Diseases (Blood Borne Virus) Screening :

Students must read and comply with the RCSI Bahrain Blood Borne Virus policy and provide evidence of infectious diseases screening according to policy requirements.

The RCSI Bahrain **Infectious Disease screening and Immunization Report** must be completed by a licensed healthcare provider and submitted to the University before registration and according to requirements communicated to students by the Student Health and Wellbeing Unit. **Students will not be able to start their clinical placement if their rescreening results are not received on time.**

Infectious diseases screening includes:

- Hepatitis B Surface Antigen
- Hepatitis B Antibodies
- Hepatitis C Antibody
- HIV 1 & 2
- Tuberculosis Screening
- Chest X Ray
- Tuberculosis (PPD/ TST Testing/ QuantiFERON®-TB Gold test)

Note: Regardless of previous BCG vaccination, all new student applicants will need to provide evidence of tuberculosis screening. Students will be assessed again in line with the infectious diseases screening schedule outlined in the RCSI Bahrain Blood Borne Virus policy (Section d). Students with a positive tuberculosis screening result will need to seek medical evaluation and treatment from a healthcare provider. A medical report detailing the investigations must be provided to the Student Health and Wellbeing team.

Blood borne virus testing : Positive results

Offers of places in the university are made to student applicants in good faith and are subject to the results of the repeat medical screenings. If a student tests positive for a blood borne virus at any stage during their programme of study, the Student Health and Wellbeing Unit is required to immediately notify the Disease Control Section at the Ministry of Health. Please see the RCSI Blood Borne Virus policy for details.

e. Summary:

Students must comply with the following :

- Take responsibility for their health and wellbeing; seek help early.
- Contact student-health@rcsi-mub.com with any health and wellbeing concerns.
- Complete and return to the university the **Infectious Disease screening and Immunization Report** as required. The report must be completed in English.

- Complete the required infectious diseases screening tests and clinical follow-up according to the RCSI Bahrain Blood Borne Virus Policy. Blood borne virus screenings takes place prior to registration, after registration and at a specified time during the academic programme of study.
- Completion any required vaccinations and/or follow-up testing, if deemed necessary, in accordance with the Ministry of Health document on Recommended Vaccination to Health Care Workers (HCWs)

Complex work is required in the gathering of individual assessments, documentation of vaccinations, blood tests to confirm current immune status for different diseases, administration of vaccination programmes (unique to each individual), and appropriate screening and follow up. It is very important that students attend for vaccination/screening appointments when requested and provide documentation when required.

Non-compliance with the RCSI Bahrain medical screening and vaccination programme and not responding to requests for updated rescreening and vaccination records are a breach of the Student Code of Conduct and can result in referral through the University's disciplinary process.

f. Costs

- Vaccinations which require updating can be obtained at King Hamad University Hospital staff clinic.
- For students who participate in the RCSI Bahrain Student Medical Insurance programme, please refer to the schedule of benefits provided by the insurance company for details of coverage.
- Students who are not covered under a medical insurance scheme will need to pay for their own screening.

g. Exemptions

Pregnancy

Most of the above vaccines are contra-indicated in pregnancy. It is extremely important that students do not proceed with vaccinations if they are, or may become, pregnant over the course of an immunization programme. Students should discuss their case in confidence with the Student Health and Wellbeing team.

Opting Out of Vaccinations and rescreening during the academic programme

Students can only opt out of the immunization programme with the prior written approval of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, for example in case of previous adverse reactions and immuno-suppressed students. In such cases, the Student Health and Wellbeing team would arrange a risk assessment of the student and discuss the case with the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

h. Confidentiality: Student medical screening and vaccination records

Student medical records, screening results, and vaccination records will be confidentially maintained for each student by the Student Health & Wellbeing Unit in accordance with RCSI Bahrain's policy on data retention, and following data protection regulations of the Kingdom of Bahrain. Students can access their medical records, screening results, and vaccination records through the SAFE application.

i. Outbreak Situations

In the event of an outbreak of any infectious illness on campus, in clinical locations or in the wider local community, students are required to adhere to all infection control measures recommended during that outbreak.

Students who contract an infectious illness should adhere strictly to the Ministry of Health and clinical location guidelines. They must adhere to any isolation requirements and must not return to campus or clinical environment until that period has elapsed and they have recovered from their illness. Advice can be obtained in confidence from the Student Health and Wellbeing team at student-health@rcsi-mub.com.

Students should avail of any other appropriate immunization as and when recommended during an outbreak situation. This may include obtaining boosters to previously completed primary immunization courses.

5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- RCSI Bahrain Blood Borne Virus policy
- RCSI Bahrain Student Code of Conduct
- RCSI Bahrain Fitness to Study policy
- RCSI Bahrain Student Agreement
- Ministry of Health: Recommended Immunization Schedule for the Kingdom of Bahrain
- Ministry of Health: Recommended Vaccination to Health Care Workers
- RCSI Bahrain Infectious Disease Screening and Immunization Report
- Reasonable Accommodation Policy
- Exceptional Circumstances Policy
- Provision of Counselling Services to Students
- Student Maternity Policy

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