



# Information Pack 3

## Pre Arrival Information for newly arriving students

August 2021

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## A message from the Dean

Dear Student,

I hope that you are enjoying your summer break and have been able to spend time with friends and family. As the start of term draws closer, we are looking forward to welcoming you to RCSI and we are confident that you'll experience an engaging and exciting year ahead.

Last year, RCSI was able to maximise in-person learning for our students because of the many adaptations we had made to our campus and the significant investment in extra public health measures to keep our students, our staff and clinical colleagues safe.

With the vaccination roll-out in Ireland progressing extremely well and the high take-up of vaccinations by our students in their home countries, we are planning for students to have even greater access to the campus in the coming academic year.

At the beginning of August, RCSI and the other Irish universities released a **'Joint statement: Higher education reopening plans confirmed'** to announce plans for a safe return to campus this September which is supported by the Irish Government and public health authorities. Commenting on this statement, RCSI CEO, Professor Cathal Kelly said "Health professional

degree programmes such as those delivered by RCSI – Medicine, Pharmacy and Physiotherapy – cannot be delivered online and we have put robust measures in place since the outset of the pandemic to ensure that our students gained the clinical skills they need in a safe and engaging environment. I welcome the coordinated approach by Higher Education Institutions for the upcoming academic year and I look forward to welcoming our students back for an enhanced on-campus experience in the coming weeks".

The vaccine roll-out in Ireland has gained significant momentum with approximately 80% of adults now fully vaccinated and it is expected that the majority of the adult population will be fully vaccinated by the end of August. In addition to this, vaccine registration has been extended to those age 12 and older. Vaccination rates amongst many of our own RCSI classes are now at 90% and are increasing daily which is very encouraging and positive and I wish to applaud and thank those of you who have so far informed us of your vaccination status.

As a result of the success of the vaccination rollout, many activities are now resuming in Ireland such as international travel for non-essential purposes, outdoor dining is now available to all (max. 6 per group) and indoor dining has resumed for those who have evidence of vaccination or 6 months recovery from COVID-19. Many services have now reopened including hairdressers, cinemas, retail and public transport is now operating at 75% capacity. We are proud that Ireland is being called out as delivering one of the best COVID-19 vaccine programmes in the world.

If you are a new Irish student joining RCSI this year and haven't already been vaccinated, please register now on the [HSE portal](#). For students joining us from overseas, we strongly recommend you to get vaccinated before you travel to make your arrival into Ireland as smooth as possible. If the vaccine is not available to you in your home country, it will be made available to you shortly after you arrive in Ireland. Many students who are arriving from overseas, who are fully vaccinated, are no longer required to quarantine on arrival. Others who are also fully vaccinated, but coming from Countries that are categorised as higher risk (designated counties), will be required to self-quarantine. A small

group of students will require Mandatory Hotel Quarantine which is a longer quarantine period. It is important to establish your quarantine status and this information is outlined in detail within this booklet. Please read the quarantine information carefully to establish whether you are required to quarantine or not and if you are to quarantine, to understand the type of quarantine that you will complete.

As was the case last year, we will be providing free private travel from the airport to your accommodation, so please register for the Meet & Greet service and an RCSI representative will meet you on your arrival and take you to your accommodation.

In terms of your academic programme, we have reviewed all our access and safety protocols on campus and I am pleased to tell you there will be increased onsite activity and increased in-person access to campus with schedules increasingly returning to normal.

As introduced in April, access to library study spaces will continue on a book and attend basis and access to the RCSI gym will also be available through an online booking system. The first two weeks of academic programmes will be online but you are welcome on campus during this time to use the library and or gym provided you have met the government travel advice and any self-quarantine requirements relevant to you. We will continue to record and stream all lectures. Please also remember to regularly check your Moodle page for updates on your detailed schedules for the coming academic year.

To provide the maximum safeguards in relation to health and safety within our student community, we will provide regular systematic PCR testing for all clinical students, supplemented by an opt-in PCR saliva testing which will be available for all students for your peace of mind. Testing will continue to be free and will meet global PCR testing standards. All students will be tested at the beginning of the semester so please check your email regularly for your appointment that will soon be sent to you by our COVID Control team. As part of our plans to increase on campus activity with increased numbers of students on campus, we may be required to increase the ventilation in some settings so we recommend you bring a hoody or warm sweater with you when on campus!

Our Students Services team in partnership with the Student Unions, Sports Union, Clubs and Societies are working tirelessly behind the scenes to plan and deliver a vibrant student life experience for the forthcoming academic year. We are confident that working within government Covid guidelines we can still deliver a wide range of events and activities. Be it virtual, outdoors, socially distanced, we are keen to get the year off to a flying start – having learned so much from the past year.

With 35 Sports Clubs and over 50 student societies, we strive to offer something for everyone. Whether you want to try something new, wish to improve a skillset or continue practising a lifelong passion, all these opportunities are available to you. Remember to sign in to the Student Life HQ, (which you can register for once you begin your course) and engage with student life activities. Stay up to date with all things student life at [studentlife.rcsi.com](https://studentlife.rcsi.com) so you don't miss out.

While we expect the next year to look and feel a lot more like a typical academic year at RCSI with greater access for students, there are some things you still need to do to stay safe. While vaccines are proving to be very effective in reducing the transmission of COVID-19, safety measures such as hand washing, mandatory mask wearing and physical distancing will remain in place, along with a much more simplified daily symptom checker that will reflect each student's vaccination status. Additional information in relation to Covid-19 safety will be provided as part of your Orientation when you begin your programme.

I look forward to welcoming our new GEM students to RCSI on Monday 6th of September and all other new undergraduates the following Monday, 13th September. For those of you who are travelling from overseas, I wish you a safe journey to Dublin. I look forward to welcoming all of you to the RCSI family where you can begin your journey towards your future healthcare career.

Best wishes,



Professor Hannah McGee  
**Dean, Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences**



## Pre Arrival Checklist

August 2021

The most important items to check off your list in August 2021 are as follows:

**1. Accommodation:** Did you book your accommodation in Dublin yet? If not, please check out [this link](#) and book as soon as possible.

**2. Visa:** Are you a visa-required student and if so, have you applied for your visa? For a list of visa-required countries, [click here](#). To apply for an Irish study visa, [visit this website](#).

**3. Flights:** Have you booked your flights to Dublin yet? If not, it is especially important that you avoid inadvertently transmitting through a designated state en-route to Dublin (which may require mandatory hotel quarantine if you do not have valid proof of approved vaccination against Covid 19). If you need to speak to someone in advance of booking flights, we recommend you contact our colleagues in RCSI Travel who can provide expert travel advice on designated states, how to avoid mandatory hotel quarantine etc. Email: [travel@rcsi.ie](mailto:travel@rcsi.ie).

**4. Covid 19 vaccine:** Students who can get vaccinated against Covid 19 in their home country before travelling to Ireland are strongly encouraged to do so. For an up to date list of approved Covid 19 vaccines (to avoid quarantine in Ireland), scroll down to the bottom of the webpage on [this link](#).

If you are not fully vaccinated on arrival, you may have to undertake Mandatory Hotel Quarantine if travelling from a designated state or self quarantine for up to 14 days on arrival from a non-designated state. Students who cannot provide valid proof of approved vaccination or recovery from Covid 19 must provide evidence of a negative PCR test result taken 72 hours prior to their arrival in Ireland.

**5. Designated states:** Are you travelling from a designated or non-designated state? All international students should clearly understand the testing, vaccination and quarantine requirements for entering the country. It is each student's personal responsibility to comply with international travel requirements. A key component to understanding your responsibilities is knowing whether you are travelling from or through a designated state in the 14 days prior to your arrival in Ireland. For a list of designated states, [click here](#). You should check this list regularly to ensure you continue to meet travel requirements in advance of your arrival, i.e. Mandatory Hotel Quarantine, pre-travel PCR testing etc.

**6. Passport:** Ensure your passport is valid for the intended length of your study period in Ireland.

**7. Medical Care:** Have medical, dental and optical check-ups before you depart and organise any prescribed medication you may require including a letter from your doctor (in English) detailing any prescribed medicines.

## The Week before Travel

Once you have checked off all of the above from your pre-arrival list, other items you should focus on in the week leading up to your travel date are:

**1. RCSI IT tutorial videos:** Your RCSI IT network login details which will include your RCSI username and password, will be sent to you by email one week in advance of your starting date. In addition to your login details, this email will include instructions on how to login to your RCSI account and training videos for Blackboard Collaborate, Microsoft teams and Moodle, three IT platforms that you will use for your online learning and orientation activities. Make sure you familiarise yourself with these video tutorials in advance of your arrival in Dublin.

**2. RCSI Meet and Greet Arrival Service:** RCSI is pleased to offer all new students arriving into Dublin airport this Fall a high quality, free of charge airport 'Meet and Greet' transport service. Please ensure that you have registered in advance (minimum 4 days before your travel date) for the Meet and Greet service. If you fail to complete the registration, we will not know your arrival date and your transport service from

the airport to your accommodation will not be in place. To find out about our free, on-arrival airport pickup service, please consult the RCSI Eye website [here](#) and complete the online booking form.

**Please note:** If you are staying in Mandatory Hotel Quarantine, your transport will be managed by the Irish Government and further instructions will be provided at Border Control. In these circumstances, you will not need to book the RCSI Meet and Greet service. For more information on Mandatory Hotel Quarantine, go to the MHQ section of this booklet.





## 72 hours before Travel

**1. Consult with latest updates re travelling to Ireland:** Please ensure you consult the latest updates from the Irish Government on travel to Ireland, as arrival regulations may have changed.

Click [here](#) for a visual step by step guide for international arrivals to Ireland.

Click on the links below for the latest updates on the following:

- The [main information website](#) for international arrivals to Ireland
- [What does 'fully vaccinated' mean?](#)
- Is your country on the list of ['designated states'](#)?
- What does [Self \(home\) quarantine](#) mean?
- The main information website for [Mandatory Hotel Quarantine](#)

**2. Passenger Locator Form:** You are required by law to download and fill out the Irish Government and Covid 19 Passenger Locator Form within 72 hours before you arrive in Ireland from overseas. Click [here](#) to go directly to the online form. The information provided on the form may be used to contact you within the 14 days after your arrival to verify the details given on the form and to provide public health advice.

The form may also be used for the purposes of contact tracing in relation to continued or suspected cases of Covid 19. After you complete the form (online), you will receive an email which contains a receipt. You will be asked to show this receipt when boarding your plane. When arriving in Ireland, you may also have to show this receipt to border officials.

**3. PCR test:** If you are required to present evidence of a negative PCR test result on arrival in Dublin airport, you must arrange for this test to take place within 72 hours before you are due to arrive in Ireland from overseas. Click [here](#) to find out if you require a negative PCR test result on arrival based on where you are travelling from and your vaccination status.

## Suggested Packing List

Please find below a suggested packing list. This list includes some essential items that you will need to bring with you for your arrival through the airport and for the self-quarantine period, if applicable.

### Essentials - Hand luggage

- Face coverings
- Hand sanitiser (travel size, important for your flight)
- Any required medications
- \*Passport (with your valid entry visa, if you require one)
- \*Copy of your RCSI offer letter
- \*Copy of your accommodation details (confirmation of booking or address you will be staying at when you arrive)
- \*Registration for RCSI Meet and Greet service
- \*Irish Government Covid 19 Passenger Locator Form Receipt
- \*Written confirmation of your Covid 19 PCR test results (if required)
- \*Written or digital confirmation of your Covid 19 vaccination/recovery from Covid 19 (please check if your Covid 19 vaccination is [recognised in Ireland](#))
- \*In case of emergency, make a note of the RCSI contact numbers for international students: +353 1 402 2219. Please also have a telephone number for your Dublin accommodation in case you need it on arrival.
- Some basic food for light snack on arrival

\*It can be useful to have photographs of these important documents on your phone



## Essentials – Check in luggage

### Quarantine essentials:

- Duvets, pillows, bed linen, towels etc. (already supplied if living in Mercer, Scape, New Mill or Wexford Street Accommodation)
- Personal thermometer
- Toiletry products (toothpaste, shampoo, handwash etc)

### Non quarantine essentials:

- Clothing: everyday wear, sportswear and nightwear
- Footwear: boots, trainers, casual footwear etc
- Winter wear: warm coat, rain jacket, scarf, hat and gloves

### Electrical Items:

- The standard domestic electricity supply in Ireland is 230 volt AC (frequency 50Hz)
- Plug and socket are Type G on the World Standard. Type G is mainly used in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Cyprus, Malta, Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong
- Adaptors will be required if you are using other socket/voltage types
- Device chargers (phones/laptops etc)
- Head phones
- Mobile phone
- Personal entertainment, games console, portable speaker, kindle, iPad etc

### Miscellaneous items for Check in luggage

- Backpack/Gym bag
- Personal exercise/yoga mat
- Stationary for study

## Day of Travel

### Final Departure Checklist

- ✓ Accommodation booked
- ✓ Visa secured, if visa-required
- ✓ Flights to Dublin booked
- ✓ Fully Covid 19 vaccinated, if vaccines available
- ✓ Double check designated states list prior to travelling to ensure compliance with travel regulations
- ✓ RCSI Meet and Greet service booked
- ✓ Irish Government Covid 19 Passenger Locator Form Receipt
- ✓ Proof of negative PCR test result in last 72 hours, if required
- ✓ Double check packing list in previous section to ensure all essentials included in hand luggage etc.

Note: We advise that you continue to monitor your health in the lead-up to your departure. Should you display any Covid 19 symptoms prior to your departure, we ask that you seek medical advice as a matter of urgency and defer your travel plans.

## Staying safe on your journey

All airlines are providing safety guidelines on their websites so please consult with your airline for specific advice.

The following guidelines apply in most circumstances so please follow these guidelines when you are travelling to Ireland:

- Travellers may wear face coverings during screening. However, you may be required to adjust or remove the covering for ID purposes.
- Instead of handing boarding passes to the boarding staff, travellers may be required to place passes (paper or electronic) directly on the scanner and then hold them up for inspection
- Each traveller may have one container of hand sanitiser up to 12 oz (350 ml) in a carry-on bag. The container must be taken out for screening.
- Food items taken on board the plane should be in clear plastic bags and placed in the bin for screening
- Personal items such as keys, wallets and phones should be placed in clear plastic bags and placed in the bin for screening as this reduces the handling of these items during screening
- Be sure to wash your hands with soap and water for at least 60 seconds directly before and after going through screening
- Face coverings should be worn for the duration of the flight.

For more information on what to expect at Dublin airport including safety measures and FAQs, please [visit this website](#).

## Arrival at Dublin Airport

Your next steps after arriving in Dublin airport will depend on your quarantine status, e.g. quarantine-exempt, required to self-quarantine or to undertake mandatory hotel quarantine.

Your quarantine status will depend on a number of variables including what country you are travelling from, your Covid 19 vaccination status and PCR test status (if applicable) on arrival.

All international students travelling to Ireland should clearly understand the testing, vaccination and quarantine requirements for entering the country. It is each student's personal responsibility to comply with international travel requirements. The Educate Ireland website, accessible [here](#), contains lots of useful information and links for incoming students – one particularly useful resource is the Guidelines for International Arrivals (available [here](#)).

This infographic clearly outlines what your quarantine situation will be on arrival in Ireland.

We would encourage you to carefully consider this resource as you prepare for your upcoming journey as it's very important that you understand your own travel and quarantine situation in advance of your arrival in Ireland.





## Mandatory Hotel Quarantine (MHQ)

MHQ is a key safeguard for public health in the context of the Covid 19 pandemic. It aims to protect public health and mitigate the spread of Covid-19 and new variants of concern in Ireland. Unless exempt, all international arrivals will have to undertake a period of quarantine – either in a hotel or home, once you arrive in Ireland. The rules which apply and where quarantine must be completed depends on your travel history – in particular;

- whether you have been in a 'designated state' or not,
- your pre-travel PCR test results and
- Covid-19 vaccination/recent recovery from Covid 19 status.

MHQ is a legal obligation for any person, except an exempt traveller (i.e. exempt from quarantine), who has been in a designated state within 14 days of their arrival in Ireland and does not have valid proof of approved Covid 19 vaccination status or recovery from Covid 19 in the past 180 days. This applies to all passengers who have been in a designated state including a person travelling or transiting through a designated state irrespective of nationality/residence.

MHQ is also required for a person travelling from a non-designated state without valid proof of approved Covid 19 vaccination or recovery from Covid 19 **and** without evidence of a negative RT-PCR test taken within 72 hours before arriving in Ireland from overseas.

Please do **NOT** travel to Ireland without proof of a negative PCR test in the last 72 hours, if required to do so.

Passengers are advised to check the list of designated states regularly and to check again within 72 hours of travelling to Ireland, to be sure of their obligations, as the list is subject to change at short notice. The list of designated states is available [here](#).

Note: Please do NOT travel to Ireland if you are required to undertake MHQ on arrival and you have not managed to secure MHQ accommodation. If you find yourself in this situation, please contact [admissions@rcsi.ie](mailto:admissions@rcsi.ie) or [travel@rcsi.ie](mailto:travel@rcsi.ie) immediately.

## Arrivals required to undertake MHQ

The Irish Defence Forces have been designated as the State Liaison Official (SLO) to support Ireland's MHQ policy.

After immigration and customs processing, you will be met by members of the Defence Forces who will ensure you are safely and securely transported to the location in which you complete your pre-booked MHQ.

When you arrive at the hotel, staff will greet and take you through the check-in process. They will also provide you with the information relating to your stay including food choices, exercise and wellbeing.

## Exemptions from MHQ

For a full list of exemptions from MHQ, [visit this page](#).

## Arriving from a Designated State

International students arriving from designated states are exempt from MHQ if they have valid proof of Covid 19 vaccination or recovery from Covid 19 (no less than 11 days and no more than 180 days ago) **plus** evidence of a negative RT-PCR test taken within 72 hours before arriving in Ireland from overseas.

Further details can be found by clicking this [link](#) and scrolling down to 'Exemptions for fully vaccinated persons'.

Please note: if you are coming from a designated state and have valid proof of approved vaccination or recovery from Covid 19, you must still provide evidence of a negative RT-PCR test in the 72 hours prior to your arrival in Ireland and you are still required to complete self quarantine at your Dublin home address for the next 5-14 days.

## How long does MHQ last?

The duration of MHQ depends on why a person is required to enter MHQ and the results of RT-PCR tests conducted in quarantine.

If you have not been in a designated State but have to enter MHQ because you did not have a negative (not detected) RT-PCR test result on arrival in Ireland, the period of quarantine is 10 days beginning on the day of admission to MHQ accommodation. However, the law provides that this period of quarantine will end early, on receipt of a negative (not detected) result following an RT-PCT test conducted in MHQ. If you test positive during MHQ, you will be assessed by a medical practitioner to determine if a further period of quarantine in the MHQ accommodation may be required.

If, however, you entered MHQ because you have been in a designated state, the period of quarantine is 14 days, beginning on the day of admission to the designated facility (the hotel).

However, the law provides that this period of quarantine will end early, on receipt of a negative RT-PCR test result taken on day 10 of quarantine. If a person in these circumstances tests positive during MHQ, a further period of quarantine is required.

## Hotels used for MHQ

Tifco Hotel Group, on behalf of the Minister for Health, is responsible for the provision of MHQ accommodation in Ireland.

The hotels that are being used for MHQ are;

- Crowne Plaza Dublin Airport, Northwood Park, Santry, Dublin 9, D09 X9X2
- Holiday Inn Express Dublin Airport, Northwood Park, Santry, Dublin 9, D09 TY17
- Red Cow Moran Hotel, Naas Road, Dublin, D22 YX80
- Crowne Plaza Hotel Blanchardstown, Blanchardstown Centre, Dublin 15, D15 T1FD
- Radisson Blu Royal Hotel, Golden Lane, Dublin 8, D08 VRR7
- Croke Park Hotel, Jone's Road, Drumcondra, Dublin 3, D03 E5Y8

The hotel facilities are for the exclusive use of travellers using MHQ and will not be hosting other guests.

The cost of MHQ per traveller is established by law and outlined below:

	Rate (based on standard package of 12 nights inclusive of all services)	Day rate (for those entering from non-designated states with no pre departure RT-PCR test)
Rate for 1 Adult in 1 Room	€1875	€150
Additional Rate for 1 Adult sharing (or child over 12)	€625	€55
Additional Rate for child sharing Aged 4-12	€360	€30
Rate for Infant (0-3)	€0	€0



## Supports for guests at MHQ facilities

A Liaison Officer (who is a member of the Defence Forces) is present in each designated facility on a 24 hour basis, 7 days a week, to assist persons in MHQ.

Medical assistance is also available on site at each designated facility on a 24 hour basis, 7 days a week.

Dietary needs are catered for. Menus for use in the hotels are operated as designated facilities have been designed with dietary requirements in mind.

The full range of the hotel's in-room services are available to guests including free WIFI, in room entertainment system and room service menus.

While meals are provided as part of the package for guests quarantining at the hotel, guests may purchase additional food and beverages from the room service menu and deliveries to the hotel from outside suppliers are also permitted.

## Unaccompanied Minors

On the basis that unaccompanied minors (under the age of 18) who arrive in the State, having been in a designated state in the 14 days prior to arrival in Ireland, are not permitted to enter a MHQ facility alone, we would urge any students who fall into this category to immediately discuss possible alternative options with us.

Email: [admissions@rcsi.ie](mailto:admissions@rcsi.ie)

## Medical and other supports available to persons in MHQ

Medical services are available onsite at every designated facility, with nursing staff onsite and GP services available at all times.

Delivery of prescription medicine can also be arranged as required.

Every person entering MHQ is offered a health check, in the form of a questionnaire, to allow them to notify of any underlying conditions or medical needs they may have and which may require additional clinical support during MHQ.

Every person in MHQ is also contacted regularly by the onsite healthcare provider to monitor their physical and mental wellbeing.

In addition to the onsite supports, the RCSI welfare team will remain in contact with you to provide support to assist you during your quarantine period.

Your RCSI laptop will also be delivered to your MHQ accommodation to allow you to connect with your academic programme and social events taking place online during the first two weeks of the programme.

## Arrangements for exercise/fresh air

A designated safe and secure space for fresh air breaks will be available at each hotel. The hotel will endeavour to accommodate guests at their preferred time.

In addition to this, the RCSI Gym team will host a number of online exercise classes every day during the first two weeks of the programme, to help get you through the quarantine period.

## Testing for Covid 19 during MHQ

A person in MHQ is required to take a PCR test for Covid 19 within 36 hours of arrival at the facility and again on the 10th day of MHQ calculated on the basis of 24 hour periods from the time of arrival at the facility.

Covid-19 testing is free of charge to all persons in MHQ.

For further information on MHQ, [visit this page](#).

## Exempt from Quarantine on Arrival to Ireland

### Arriving from a Non Designated State

If you fall into either of the below categories on arrival into the country, you will be exempt from Quarantine **and** pre travel PCR testing requirements.

1. Passengers arriving into Ireland from inside the EEA who have valid proof of vaccination or valid proof of recovery from Covid 19 no less than 11 days and no more than 180 days before arrival in Ireland; or
2. Passengers arriving into Ireland from outside the EEA whose journey originated in a non-designated state **and** have valid proof of vaccination or valid proof of recovery from Covid 19 no less than 11 days and no more than 180 days before arrival in Ireland.

For more details on proof of vaccination and recovery from Covid 19, please [visit this page](#).

**Please note:** If you are exempt from quarantine, we still recommend you book the RCSI Meet and Greet transport service which will bring you directly to your accommodation from Dublin airport. Once you arrive at your accommodation, you are not required to quarantine and therefore can start exploring the city, in line with public health guidelines, as soon as you have settled into your accommodation and are ready to do so.

## Self (Home) Quarantine on Arrival

Passengers arriving in Ireland are required to self-quarantine in their own accommodation\* for up to 14 days, if they fall into one of the following categories:

- If your journey originates in a designated state **and** you have valid proof of vaccination against Covid 19 or proof of recovery from Covid 19 in the past 180 days **and** evidence of a negative PCR test taken no more than 72 hours before arrival in Ireland; or
- If your journey originates in a non-designated state but you do not have valid proof of vaccination against Covid-19 or proof of recovery from Covid-19 in the past 180 days.

\* for most students this will be their student accommodation and the address that they have indicated on their passenger locator form

In both cases, if you receive a negative result from a PCR test taken from day 5 onwards after arrival into Ireland, you will be able to leave self-quarantine early. RCSI has its own onsite PCR testing facility, which will organise your PCR test after day 5. If you receive a negative PCR result after day 5, your self-quarantine period ends early and you are free to visit the RCSI campus and explore the city.

**Please note:** If you fall into the self-quarantine category, you should avail of the RCSI Meet and Greet Service at Dublin Airport - a free of charge service which will safely bring you to your new accommodation to commence your self-quarantine period. Click [here](#) to book the RCSI Meet and Greet Service today.



## Self Quarantine: On-Campus Accommodation

Students completing self-quarantine in on campus accommodation (Mercer, Scape, New Mill - including the Tannery - and Wexford Street Accommodation), will be greeted on arrival by staff who will assist with the check-in process.

A full inventory of what is included in your accommodation is issued with your lease agreement.

In addition, an RCSI starter pack will be in your room.

### The RCSI starter pack contains:

#### Bedding and Towel Pack

- 2 x Bath Towels
- 2 x Hand Towels
- 1 x Face cloth
- 1 x Duvet
- 1 x Duvet cover
- 2 x Pillows
- 2 x Fitted Sheets
- 2 x Pillow Cases

#### Cleaning Pack

- 1 x Hand Soap
- 1 body wash sachet
- 1 shampoo sachet
- 1 x Bathroom cleaner
- 1 x Washing up liquid
- 1 x Multi surface cleaner
- 4 x Toilet rolls
- 1 x toilet brush & holder

#### Dishes/cutlery

- 1 mug
- 1 side plate
- 1 dinner plate
- 1 cereal bowl
- Knife, fork, desert spoon, teaspoon
- 1 drinking glass

Kettles, toasters, microwaves etc. are provided in your kitchens (please see the specifics of your accommodation in your lease agreement)

Students who self-quarantine in on-campus accommodation are expected to stay in their room and avoid contact with other people while they wait to receive their first post-arrival PCR test result.

Make sure to keep the air circulating in your room by opening your bedroom window every day and use the first day or two of self-quarantine to 'make your room your own' to help you settle in and make the self-quarantine period as comfortable as possible.

Everything you need to get through the self-quarantine period will be available in your room except for cooked food. Information on how to organise food deliveries during self-quarantine is available in the Shopping and Food Delivery section below.

Staff will also be available to support students to remove the need to leave on-campus facilities during self-quarantine, e.g. to deliver takeout food to your room and remove rubbish bags from outside your room daily.

During self-quarantine, you should only leave your apartment/house if you need urgent medical support. For more information on medical supports, visit the 'Medical and other supports' section below.



## Self-quarantine: Off Campus Accommodation

Students living off campus should check with the property owner to understand the inventory contained within the unit.

Your RCSI laptop will be delivered to your off-campus accommodation address before classes begin provided you have completed the address confirmation form well in advance of your arrival date.

Students who undertake self-quarantine in off-campus accommodation have access to the same medical supports as RCSI students living on campus.

## Shopping and Food Delivery during Self-Quarantine

During your self-quarantine period, you will be required to remain in your room and will not be able to go shopping or access shared cooking facilities in your accommodation. These measures are in place to minimise Covid-19 infection risks and remain in place until after you have received your negative PCR test after day 5.

During your quarantine period, we recommend that you order your meals via the many food delivery apps (e.g. Uber Eats) that are operational in Dublin and downloadable from both the Apple App and Google Play stores. Each of these apps feature restaurants, cafes etc around Dublin which offer a variety of local and international cuisines.

Staff in on-campus accommodation facilities will deliver your order to your room and remove waste, which you can leave outside your door.

The primary food delivery apps currently operational in Dublin are listed below:

- Just Eat
- Deliveroo
- Uber Eats
- Buymie (grocery delivery app offering delivery from Dunnes Stores, Lidl and Tesco)

There are also numerous shopping options for food and household items, as outlined below.

Grocery shopping: there are a number of large grocery/food retailers in Ireland.

1. [Dunnes Stores](#)
2. [Tesco](#)
3. [Supervalu](#)
4. [Lidl](#)
5. [Aldi](#)

All of the above shops are located nationwide and branch locators are available on their websites. Many also offer home delivery (useful when you are in self-quarantine) or 'click and collect' services (useful, post-quarantine).

The closest of these retailers to RCSI is Dunnes Stores who have a large store in the [St Stephens Green](#) Shopping Centre located beside the RCSI main campus. Lidl, which is a competitively priced grocery store, has a branch located below the Scape accommodation building on Aungier Street.

Mace, Spar and Centra are smaller convenience stores which are also popular/throughout the country and located close to the college campus.

Household items: In addition to being a large grocery store, the Dunnes Stores in St Stephens Green Shopping Centre also has a large household and clothing department where you will find most of your immediate needs. Dunnes Stores has a reputation for providing good quality goods at affordable prices. The Stephens Green Shopping Centre also features a large TK Maxx store (known as TJ Maxx in the US) as well as Argos, which is a catalogue based store where you can pick up a number of reasonably-priced household items. You can browse their catalogue and reserve items for collection on their [website](#).

## WiFi during Self-Quarantine

Students who are living on-campus will connect to the IT network that is available in the accommodation. If you are living off-campus, please ensure that you have internet access, as this is a prerequisite to connectivity to your academic programme and non-academic activities during quarantine.

As mentioned in the MHQ section of this booklet, free WIFI is available for the duration of your Mandatory Hotel stay.



## Medical supports during Self-Quarantine

In our commitment to our students wellbeing, RCSI will:

- Have a free of charge, 24/7 GP/family physician service
- Use a specifically trained team to guide you to the relevant health professionals should you have any symptoms or concerns in relation to Covid-19
- Have a mandatory online training course for all students on how best to minimise Covid-19 infection spread and protect us all
- Arrange for all Undergraduate students to have access to Covid-19 testing as clinically indicated, through RCSI's Mercer Medical Centre
- Students are required to keep a personal log of all persons that could be classified as a close contact.
- You are also required to download Ireland's national COVID Tracker App which has been set up by the health service to allow for quick and

effective contact tracing. The app is available for download once you are in Ireland and you are encouraged to use the tracker on a daily basis.

## Medical Supports if you become unwell

All new RCSI students are automatically eligible to become patients of the Mercers Medical Centre when they begin their academic programme. This entitles you to free GP healthcare for the duration of your time as an RCSI student.

Additional resources have been put in place since the start of the pandemic to ensure that all students have rapid access to medical care as and when required at Mercers Medical Centre.

### Students will be asked to:

- Agree to comply with the Irish Government and RCSI Covid-19 policies
- Agree to provide RCSI with your contact details and contact details of a family member, parent and/or guardian so that we can keep them informed in the event you become sick and wish to keep them informed of your progress
- Agree to take self-responsibility to check your symptoms as required and follow RCSI guidelines which best protect you, your fellow students, clinical colleagues, staff and patients
- Agree to contact the RCSI student welfare team should you become unwell or are worried in any way and they can advise accordingly

Detailed information on the medical services (including Covid 19 related services) available to RCSI students, is available on the [Mercers Medical Centre Website](#).

We strongly encourage all students to familiarise themselves with the services that are available to avoid the inevitable unnecessary stress or anxiety of looking for this information when you are feeling unwell or in the middle of an unexpected medical emergency.

The Covid-19 information on the Mercer Medical Centre website has been continually updated and adapted since the start of the pandemic, as our understanding of the virus improved and medical interventions were adapted. We will continue to update the site in the year ahead as health guidelines evolve and the vaccine roll-out continues. It is worth checking the site from time to time to stay up to date on the latest information re Covid 19 and related health services at Mercer.

Students who are not vaccinated on arrival in Ireland will begin their vaccination process under the direction of the Medical Centre shortly after their arrival in Ireland.

Any student becoming Covid-19 symptomatic should self-isolate immediately and follow the advice outlined on the [Mercer Medical Centre website](#).

#### **For Mild Symptoms**

(e.g. slight fever, cough, sore throat, loss of taste or smell)

- Complete the Mercer Medical Centre's Covid 19 form (available on the link above)
- Mercer Medical Centre will contact you within 24 hours for a telephone conversation
- A test will be arranged if required at a community testing hub convenient to your accommodation

#### **For Severe Symptoms**

(e.g. a very high fever and feeling unwell or shortness of breath)

- Contact Mercer Medical Centre on 01 402 2300 or for out of hours, contact Dubdoc on 01 454 5607
- A telephone consultation will be completed
- A test will be arranged if required at a community testing hub convenient to your accommodation

If a student tests positive for Covid 19 at any stage during the year, RCSI will provide the following support:

Every effort is being made by RCSI to minimise the likelihood of Covid-19 infection among our students, but there can obviously be no guarantee that an individual student will not become infected.

In the event that a student tests positive for Covid-19, RCSI will remain in close contact with the student and will provide assistance during every stage:

1. RCSI's Student Welfare team will contact the student on a daily basis to provide support.
2. Food and laundry will be provided free of charge for confirmed positive students during the self-isolation period
3. Students will receive one phone call per day from a qualified health professional to check on their medical status
4. If a student tests positive for Covid-19 and lives in a twin room (in on-campus accommodation), the symptomatic student will remain in the room and the non-symptomatic student will be moved to alternative accommodation, this is to help reduce the spread of the virus.
5. Pending student consent, RCSI can provide a daily update to the students parents/sponsor by a phone call. We always encourage students to keep in touch with their parent/sponsor when living away from home.





**In the rare case that a student is hospitalised due to Covid-19:**

1. The Irish Government has confirmed that all acute healthcare needs of international students will be provided free of charge to the student.
2. A qualified professional from the Student Welfare team will act as liaison between medical staff and the students parents/sponsor, to advise them their son/daughter has been hospitalised. They will be able to offer reassurance of the care being provided and the current stage of the illness.
3. The Student Welfare team will continue to keep in touch with both the student and parent/sponsor each day for the duration of the hospital stay.

**PCR Testing**

COVID vaccination within the RCSI community will be the bedrock to ensure safety on and off campus. However, we will also maintain a range of other protective measures to maximise student safety. We will continue to require all

persons on campus to wear masks and observe regular hand washing and social distancing guidance across the campus.

All students will be asked to check and confirm their covid symptoms status each day. In addition, we will continue with asymptomatic screening using PCR testing. We will conduct the PCR test on salivary based samples, which has been validated by our own scientists and much more comfortable and convenient for students.

Prior to the start of the new academic year we will ask that all new and returning students take a COVID PCR screening test. We will then continue with cyclical asymptomatic PCR testing for students on clinical placements as an additional layer of safety for students, patients and their tutors. For students who wish to have an asymptomatic PCR test for peace of mind, this will also be accommodated.

## Campus Infection and Control

We each have a personal responsibility to protect the health of ourselves, our fellow students and staff. RCSI has increased the level of cleaning across the campus and you will see an increased presence of our cleaning staff. Extra measures that we have put in place are as follows:

- We have arranged for frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles, light switches, handrails etc. to be cleaned at increased frequency
- Welfare facilities and communal areas will also be cleaned more frequently
- Lecture theatres, tutorial rooms, laboratories and communal areas will be provided with cleaning materials to keep the environment hygienically clean and you are advised to regularly clean any personal items brought in from home
- In addition, all students and staff will be expected to clean their own study/ work areas on a daily basis. "Clean as you go" when moving around on campus to maintain the hygiene standards needed to kill any virus particles.

### What this means in practice:

- At the start of the day, staff and students are required to clean down their study/ work areas
- Disinfectant spray will be widely available as will hand sanitizer: all surfaces should be sprayed regularly
- Take care when cleaning any electrical devices and use a cloth instead of spraying directly onto them
- This process should be repeated periodically throughout the day and it is a requirement to 'clean out' by repeating the process at the end of each day.

### Hand and hygiene facilities

Hygiene practices are important to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Regular hand washing with soap and water is effective for the removal of COVID-19. All of us should wash our hands properly, regularly and most especially before and after preparing food and before and after using the bathroom.

### Other times when hand washing is essential:

- Before and after wearing gloves
- Before leaving/after entering the home
- Before and after you remove your face covering/mask
- Before and after the use of public transport
- When arriving/leaving the Campus/other sites
- Before and after meeting people
- Before smoking or vaping (RCSI is a smoke free campus)
- RCSI applicable - if in contact with a patient/ surface model, before and after exposure.

It is important to follow good practice for hand washing - washing the front and back of your hands, between fingers and washing for least 20 seconds.

Between washing, regular use of hand sanitisers that has at least 70% alcohol is recommended. RCSI has installed over 90 hand sanitiser units and we recommend you always carry a small hand sanitiser on your person.

See HSE recommendations for hand washing [here](#).

### Respiratory Hygiene and cough etiquette

All of us should follow good respiratory measures to limit the spread of the virus.

These include:

- Avoid touching the face, eyes, nose and mouth
- Cover your mouth when coughing and sneezing into your elbow or a tissue (not your hand)
- Put used tissues into a sealed bin and then wash your hands immediately
- See below in the "face coverings" section for information on face masks/coverings.

### Physical distancing

Distancing measures have been implemented across all RCSI campuses in high foot flow areas. Across different areas of the campus you will see a variety of measures including: one-way systems, entrance and exit only locations, signage, screens, floor markings, new entrance and exit measures, plus additional measures to assist with maintaining physical distancing.

We all have a duty to maintain physical distancing so please make yourself familiar with the following important and useful information to help achieve physical distancing:

- Keep a distance of 2 metres between you and others
- Avoid making close contact with people (i.e. do not shake hands – use non-contact greeting methods)
- Make yourself familiar with signage and instructions in place throughout the RCSI campus
- Many engagements with RCSI staff will be online meetings
- Visitors to the University are discouraged during the COVID-19 period and access to campus is limited to students, staff and essential personnel only
- Use contactless payments for all transactions where possible
- Perspex screens have been installed at all front of house locations
- Keep up to date with changes on campus through Moodle and onsite signage.

#### **Passenger lifts/ elevators**

Passenger elevators are restricted to one person only. Please give up the lift for persons who have reduced mobility. Staff and students are encouraged to use the stairs.

- Hand sanitiser will be available at all entry and exit points of lifts
- Staff and students are required to apply sanitiser to their hands before entering a lift AND again on exit
- Lifts will be regularly cleaned throughout the day, focusing on button touchpoints in the lift.

#### **Minimising contact**

RCSI has implemented the following safety measures to minimise contact between students and staff:

- Microsoft Teams has been rolled out to all staff and students across the University for teams to communicate and to continue to meet virtually
- Onsite meetings are reduced to essential onsite meetings only
- Campus signage is advising staff and students

to avoid congregating around lobby and communal areas

- Online induction training is provided to all staff and students and includes guidance on how to minimise contact

#### **Face coverings/ Masks**

We now know that people who are showing no signs of feeling unwell (asymptomatic) can still spread the virus. This is why, as we begin the 2021/22 academic year, all staff and students will be required to wear facial coverings or masks while on campus. This is in line with government and public health advice. We ask everyone to provide their own mask or face covering for normal, day-to-day activity. In line with RCSI Green Campus initiatives we ask that you wear reusable masks to reduce the environmental impact of disposable masks.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth when removing your mask, and wash your hands immediately before and after removal. Even when wearing face coverings, you should observe the important things necessary to prevent the spread of the virus. These include:

- Physical distancing
- Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow when you cough and sneeze
- Washing your hands properly and often
- Not touching your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.

RCSI will continue to review and adhere to Health Services Executive (HSE) and government guidance on the use of face coverings.

Disposable face masks can be worn by everyone in RCSI to contain the wearer's respiratory droplets. These masks should be discarded daily.

Surgical face masks worn in clinical/simulation settings reduce the wearer's spread of respiratory droplets and shield the wearer from large droplets emitted by others. Discard daily.

Respirators to be worn by laboratory and clinical/ simulation personnel only. These contain the wearer's respiratory droplets and protect the wearer from the finer respiratory droplet emissions of others.



Cloth face coverings can be worn by all in RCSI to reduce the spread of infection via respiratory droplets. These face coverings can be made at home/purchased. Change and wash face coverings daily. Store in a clean paper bag when not in use.

Click [here](#) for further information on wearing and making face coverings correctly.

### **Gloves**

Do not wear disposable gloves instead of washing your hands. The virus gets on gloves in the same way it gets on your hands. Also, your hands can get contaminated when you take them off. Gloves are generally not required for infection prevention and control and are not a substitute for hand hygiene. Disposable gloves are worn in medical and research settings. They are not as effective in daily life. Wearing disposable gloves can give you a false sense of security.

## **Connecting to your Academic Programme**

The first two weeks of your programme will be delivered online, this is to allow all students to be out of their quarantine period before face to face on-campus teaching begins.

It is essential that you have your RCSI network access details and your laptop to allow you to engage with the online content from day 1.

The IT Network login details, which will include your RCSI username and password, will be sent to you from the IT department by email one week in advance of your start date.

In addition to your login details, this email will include instructions on how to login to your RCSI account and training videos for Blackboard Collaborate, Microsoft teams and Moodle, which are the three platforms that you will use for your online learning and orientation activities.

Additional IT training videos will also be provided in advance of your start date so please review these as they will ensure that you are familiar with the platforms that you will use to successfully connect to your online learning community.

IT support will be available after the first morning as well so please be assured that you will be supported during this phase.

In recent weeks, we have contacted all students to ask them to provide details of where they are living in Dublin, in case they need to quarantine on arrival and have their laptop and registration pack delivered to their accommodation.

Please ensure that you have responded to these emails so that we can ascertain which students can visit the university to collect their laptop and which students are required to quarantine on arrival and will deliver their laptop directly to them. For the small number of students who will require MHQ, we will obtain your hotel details from Tifco, the entity that manages the allocation of the MHQ hotels, and arrange for delivery of your laptop and registration pack to your hotel room.



## First Two Weeks of Academic Programme

Based on current government guidelines a number of international students will have to complete a period of post-arrival quarantine for up to 14 days. As a consequence, the first two weeks of the programme, including Orientation and Registration, will be delivered online.

Orientation Day takes place on the first day of the academic programme.

The morning will comprise a series of IT workshops and IT supports to ensure that all students are fully set up and connected to begin their studies.

In the afternoon your programme begins with a welcome address from the Dean of the University, Professor Hannah McGee, followed by your head of school who will introduce some of the school staff and support services. An outline of the first two weeks of the course will then be provided.

During the first two weeks of the programme:

- Student orientation will take place and you will be given supports on how to make the transition to RCSI life, how to make best use of

RCSI resources, and where to get assistance when required.

- You will virtually meet and get to know key RCSI staff and the academics who are managing and delivering your course.
- You will start semester one of your programme online, using a digitally engaged learning approach.
- You will have lots of opportunities to get to know your fellow students, through online academic and non-academic activities.
- You will experience learning and teaching within your learning group
- Each student will be assigned a Personal Tutor, a member of RCSI Faculty, who is there to support you throughout the academic year.
- Socially, you will have the option to join lots of online activities during orientation, including Student Club and Society events, daily exercise classes delivered by the RCSI Gym team including yoga, HIIT and exercises that can be done from your room, and more, so you can start engaging in student life.

**Note:** We have reviewed all our access and safety protocols on campus and are pleased to confirm that there will be increased onsite activity and increased in-person access to campus this year with schedules increasingly returning to normal. Although the first two weeks of the programme are online, you are welcome on campus during this time to use the library or gym provided you have met the government travel advice and any self-quarantine requirements relevant to you.

## Post Quarantine

### Academic Programme

On completion of the first two weeks of the academic programme, face to face teaching (lectures, practical demonstrations and simulated clinical teaching) will commence on campus. Students can expect to be on campus at least three to four days per week. Blended learning (a mixture of face to face and online) will remain in place until social distancing is no longer required and full face to face teaching is restored.

### Getting to and from RCSI

Students and staff rely on a variety of modes of transportation to commute to the University, e.g. walking, cycling, car, public transport. As a result of the success of the vaccination rollout, many activities are now resuming in Ireland and public transport is now operating at 75% capacity.

### Bicycle parking

Bicycle parking is available in the following locations

- RCSI House, 121/122 St Stephens Green Car Park
- 123 St Stephens Green at end of railings on York Street
- No. 26 York Street at back of building (via Cuffe Lane)

### Car parking

- Car parking is available through the public car park (Q Park) located beside the main St Stephens Green campus
- Q Park is located on Mercer Street RCSI

### Public Transport

Students and staff using public transport are

asked to adhere to all public health guidance, including the requirement to wear face coverings and maintaining physical distancing when travelling through public spaces. Please review guidance from the [National Transport Authority website](#), which has the most up to date transport information and guidance for safe travel.

No matter the mode of transport used, once students and staff arrive to campus there is a requirement to complete hand washing/hand sanitising before moving through the campus. Ideally hand washing with soap and warm water is preferable to using sanitiser, but sanitiser will be available for use in multiple locations.

### Post Quarantine Checklist

Once you have completed your post-arrival quarantine period, you can organise the following:

- Open an Irish bank account
- Purchase private health insurance (for Irish Residency Permit)
- Confirm and attend Irish Residency Permit Appointment
- Go food shopping (and all other shopping!)
- Purchase a new Irish mobile phone SIM card
- Explore Dublin city
- Visit the RCSI campus and use library and gym facilities etc

## Pre Arrival Webinars

Pre Arrival Webinars are due to take place on the following dates and times:

### Graduate Entry Medicine Pre-Arrival Webinar

**Date and Time:** Friday, 20 August 2021 @ 3.30pm Irish Standard Time (GMT+1)

**Register to Attend:** [Click here](#)

### Undergraduate Medicine, Pharmacy and Physiotherapy Pre-Arrival Webinar

**Date and Time:** Friday, 27 August 2021 @ 11am or 3.30pm Irish Standard Time (GMT+1)

**Register to Attend:** [Click here](#) to attend the morning webinar and [here](#) to attend in the afternoon

If you miss the live version of the Pre Arrival Webinar, it will be available to watch on the [RCSey site](#) after the live event has taken place.

## Contact us

If you have any queries please contact us:

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For more information about us visit [rcsi.com/dublin](https://rcsi.com/dublin)