



**RCSI**

# Student Agreement

**2026-2027**

RCSI DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE

**SCOPE:**

This Student Agreement applies to students enrolled to the following programmes:

Dentistry: BDS – all entry routes

Medicine: MB BCh BAO – all entry routes

Pharmacy: BScPharm and MPharm – all entry routes

Pharmacy: BSc Advanced Therapeutics (BSc ATT)

Physiotherapy: BSc Physiotherapy

Physicians Associates: MSc Physician Associate

All RCSI registered students not registered to the above listed programmes should consult their relevant Student Agreement.



**RCSI**

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## Contents

1. General Regulations.....	2
2. RCSI Policies and Regulations.....	4
3. Updates to Regulations .....	8



# RCSI

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## 1. General Regulations

1.1 I declare that I have read, understood, and accept this student agreement and the appended policies set out in clause 2.1 of this Agreement (Policies) and the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations (RCSI Disciplinary Regulations) set out in section 2.2 of this Agreement, with which I will comply at all times. I declare that I am fit to undertake my chosen programme of training or study and that I am not aware of, and have not been diagnosed with, any condition that might adversely affect my ability to safely and properly undertake or meet the academic, clinical and professional requirements of my programme and/or to participate fully in university life, including, without limitation, engaging appropriately with other students, staff, and other persons with whom students at RCSI will come into contact, such as patients, vulnerable persons, and personnel on student-placement sites.

1.2 I understand and accept that in order to receive support from RCSI services or to seek reasonable accommodation or access supports or to ensure that I am compliant with the Policies, I must notify RCSI of any change in my personal circumstances in a timely manner in accordance with the relevant Policies and procedures, and supply relevant information as requested.

1.3 I understand and accept that my registration to RCSI is conditional on my continuous and continuing good behaviour, both inside and outside of RCSI, and that any conduct on my part which is detrimental to my reputation, or the reputation of RCSI, or in breach of the applicable RCSI Code of Conduct and/or the Policies and/or subversive of discipline generally, could render me subject to disciplinary action under the RCSI's Disciplinary Regulations, and, where appropriate, liable to such sanctions and/or penalties as are outlined in the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations.

1.4 I understand and accept that it is my responsibility to familiarise myself with the Academic Integrity Policy (appended at annex 2.1.10) of RCSI and any future updates and I agree to comply with it throughout my learning journey.

1.5 I accept that if I fail to pass my examinations or review milestones at the prescribed times, I may be discontinued in accordance with the programme regulations applicable for the Academic Year in which I fail.

1.6 I certify that I have never been expelled or discontinued from any academic institution.

1.7 I accept that if my tuition fees are not paid by the required date, I will not be allowed to sit my examinations or participate in other progress milestones including term, continuous assessment, and



# RCSI

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end-of-year examinations (as applicable), and that I may not be able to progress to the next stage of my programme and/or graduate.

1.8 I accept that I shall not be permitted to change my fee status (NON-EU to EU) following admission to RCSI.

1.9 I accept that a transfer between programmes, or campuses, is not permitted.

1.10 I understand and accept that RCSI may correspond with my nominated next-of-kin, in cases of emergency, in relation to my health and general welfare.

1.11 As an undergraduate student, I understand and accept that RCSI may correspond with my government sponsors, if applicable to me, in connection with any continuance and/or progress in RCSI; in connection with my academic examination results; or, in cases of emergency, in relation to my health and general welfare.

1.12 I understand and accept that RCSI has provided me with a laptop to assist me in the successful completion of my studies; use of the laptop is required for online study, producing and submitting assignments, and in some cases examinations. I understand and accept that this device is not to be sold or given to anyone for use outside of RCSI and that I will not accept a laptop if it is not required.

1.13 I accept that it is my responsibility to provide full and accurate information in my application to RCSI and to notify RCSI of any changes or corrections to the original application.

1.14 I confirm that I have been truthful in my application to RCSI and that I did not omit any material information relevant to my application. I understand and accept that this offer of admission is made in good faith, taking into account and relying on the information I and/or my referee supplied at the time of the application.

1.15 I understand and accept that RCSI reserves the right to withdraw this offer or terminate enrolment or registration if it discovers subsequently that I have given false, inaccurate, incomplete, or misleading information in the application, or if I have provided false, fraudulent, or modified documentation in support of the application, or if I do not provide original documentation for verification on request.



**RCSI**

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## **2. RCSI Policies and Regulations**

### **2.1 Policies**

#### **2.1.1 Fitness to Study (Fitness to Study Policy)**

I have read and understood the Fitness to Study Policy, which is in **Annex 2.1.1** of this Agreement.

I have read and understand the Fitness to Study Policy and understand and accept my responsibility in complying with and adhering to the Fitness to Study Policy at all times and that any breach of the provisions of the Fitness to Study Policy could render me subject to disciplinary action under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations and where appropriate liable to such sanctions being imposed as are outlined in the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations up to and including expulsion.

By signing this Agreement, I confirm that I accept and will comply with the terms of the Fitness to Study Policy at all times.

#### **2.1.2 Code of Conduct**

I have read and understood the Code of Conduct, which is in **Annex 2.1.2** of this Agreement, and which outlines the conduct expected of undergraduate students in RCSI. I understand the Code and my responsibility to comply with and adhere to, the Code at all times, and that any breach of the provisions of the Code could render me subject to disciplinary action, and, where appropriate, liable to such sanctions as are outlined in the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations, up to and including expulsion.

By signing this Agreement, I confirm that I accept, and will comply with the terms of the Code of Conduct at all times.

#### **2.1.2 (a) Code of Conduct (BSc Advanced Therapeutic Technologies)**

I have read and understood the Code of Conduct (BSc Advance Therapeutic Technologies) (BSc ATT Code), which is in Annex 2.1.2 (a) of this Agreement, and which outlines the conduct expected of BSc Advanced Therapeutic Technologies students in RCSI. I understand the BSc ATT Code and my responsibility to comply with and adhere to, the BSc ATT Code at all times, and that any breach of the provisions of the BSc ATT Code could render me subject to disciplinary action, and, where appropriate, liable to such sanctions as are outlined in the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations, up to and including expulsion.

By signing this Agreement, I confirm that I accept, and will comply with the terms of the BSc ATT Code and the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations at all times.



# RCSI

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### **2.1.3 Blood Borne Virus Policy (BBV Policy)**

I have read and understood the RCSI BBV Policy, which is in **Annex 2.1.3** of this Agreement.

I have read and understand the BBV Policy and understand and accept my responsibility in complying with and adhering to the BBV Policy at all times and that any breach of the provisions of the BBV Policy could render me subject to disciplinary action under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations and where appropriate liable to such sanctions being imposed as are outlined in the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations up to and including expulsion.

By signing this Agreement, I confirm that I accept, and will comply with the terms of the BBV Policy at all times.

### **2.1.4 Infectious Disease & General Health Procedures Policy (IDGHP Policy)**

I have read and understood the IDGHP Policy, which is in **Annex 2.1.4** of this Agreement.

I have read and understand the IDGHP Policy and understand and accept my responsibility in complying with and adhering to the IDGHP Policy at all times and that any breach of the provisions of the IDGHP Policy could render me subject to disciplinary action under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations and where appropriate liable to such sanctions being imposed as are outlined in the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations up to and including expulsion.

By signing this Agreement, I confirm that I accept, and will comply with the terms of the IDGHP Policy at all times.

### **2.1.5 Alcohol, Drug and Substance Misuse Policy (ADSM Policy)**

I confirm that I have read and understood the RCSI ADSM Policy, which is in **Annex 2.1.5** of this Agreement.

I have read and understand the ADSM Policy and understand and accept my responsibility in complying with and adhering to the ADSM Policy at all times and that any breach of the provisions of the ADSM Policy could render me subject to disciplinary action under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations and where appropriate liable to such sanctions being imposed as are outlined in the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations up to and including expulsion.

By signing this Agreement, I confirm that I accept, and will comply with the terms of the ADSM Policy at all times.

### **2.1.6 Data Protection - Privacy Policy (Privacy Policy)**

I confirm that I have read and understood the RCSI Privacy Policy, which is in **Annex 2.1.6** of this Agreement.

I have read and understand the Privacy Policy and understand and accept my responsibility in complying with and adhering to the Privacy Policy at all times and that any breach of the provisions of the Privacy



# RCSI

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Policy could render me subject to disciplinary action under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations and where appropriate liable to such sanctions being imposed as are outlined in the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations up to and including expulsion.

By signing this Agreement, I confirm that I accept, and will comply with the terms of the Privacy Policy at all times.

For all queries on how your personal data is managed by RCSI, please contact the RCSI Data Protection Officer: [dataprotection@rcsi.ie](mailto:dataprotection@rcsi.ie)

## **2.1.7 CCTV Policy**

I confirm that I have read and understood the CCTV Policy, which is in **Annex 2.1.7** of this Agreement.

I have read and understand the CCTV Policy and understand and accept my responsibility in complying with and adhering to the CCTV Policy at all times and that any breach of the provisions of the CCTV Policy could render me subject to disciplinary action under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations and where appropriate liable to such sanctions being imposed as are outlined in the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations up to and including expulsion.

By signing this Agreement, I confirm that I accept, and will comply with the terms of the CCTV Policy at all times.

## **2.1.8 IT Acceptable Usage Policy**

I confirm that I have read and understood the IT Acceptable Usage Policy, which is in **Annex 2.1.8** of this Agreement.

I have read and understand the IT Acceptable Usage Policy and understand and accept my responsibility in complying with and adhering to the IT Acceptable Usage Policy at all times and that any breach of the provisions of the IT Acceptable Usage Policy could render me subject to disciplinary action under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations and where appropriate liable to such sanctions being imposed as are outlined in the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations up to and including expulsion.

By signing this Agreement, I confirm that I accept, and will comply with the terms of the IT Acceptable Usage Policy at all times.

## **2.1.9 Vetting (Police Clearance) Disclosures Policy (Vetting (Police Clearance) Disclosures Policy)**

I confirm that I have read and understood the Vetting (Police Clearance) Disclosures Policy, which is in **Annex 2.1.9** of this Agreement.

I have read and understand the Vetting (Police Clearance) Disclosures Policy and understand and accept my responsibility in complying with and adhering to the Vetting (Police Clearance) Disclosures Policy at all times and that any breach of the provisions of the Vetting (Police Clearance) Disclosures Policy could render me subject to disciplinary action under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations and where appropriate



liable to such sanctions being imposed as are outlined in the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations up to and including expulsion.

By signing this Agreement, I confirm that I accept, and will comply with the terms of the Vetting (Police Clearance) Disclosures Policy at all times.

### **2.1.10 Academic Integrity Policy**

I confirm that I have read and understood the Academic Integrity Policy, which is in **Annex 2.1.10** of this Agreement.

I have read and understand the Academic Integrity Policy and understand and accept my responsibility in complying with and adhering to the Academic Integrity Policy at all times and that any breach of the provisions of the Academic Integrity Policy could render me subject to disciplinary action under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations and where appropriate liable to such sanctions being imposed as are outlined in the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations up to and including expulsion.

By signing this Agreement, I confirm that I accept, and will comply with the terms of the Academic Integrity Policy at all times.

### **2.1.11 Student Dignity and Respect Policy**

I confirm that I have read and understood the Student Dignity and Respect Policy, which is in **Annex 2.1.11** of this Agreement.

I have read and understand the Student Dignity and Respect Policy and understand and accept my responsibility in complying with and adhering to the Student Dignity and Respect Policy at all times and that any breach of the provisions of the Student Dignity and Respect Policy could render me subject to disciplinary action under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations and where appropriate liable to such sanctions being imposed as are outlined in the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations up to and including expulsion.

By signing this Agreement, I confirm that I accept, and will comply with the terms of the Student Dignity and Respect Policy at all times.

## **2.2 Regulations**

### **2.2.1 Disciplinary Regulations**

I confirm that I have read and understand the Disciplinary Regulations contained at Annex 2.2.1 of this Agreement.

By signing the Agreement, I confirm that I accept and will comply with the terms of Disciplinary Regulations at all times.



# RCSI

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### **3. Updates to Regulations**

I accept that, during my time as a student, RCSI may amend, extend, consolidate, or replace any university regulations or policies with further or other university regulations or policies, and I agree to be bound by any RCSI regulations or policies as so amended, extended, consolidated or replaced.

I understand that RCSI regulations and policies are available to all registered students for reference on RCSI's Virtual Learning Environment and that this agreement must be accepted each year to indicate my having read, understood, and accepted the regulations and policies concerned, and my commitment to complying with them at all times.



RCSI

I have read, understand and agree to be bound at all times by all applicable RCSI regulations, the Policies and the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations

RCSI or CAO Application Number:

.....

Student Name (PLEASE PRINT):

.....

Signature of Student: .....

Date: .....

***The below is to be signed only if student is under 18 years of age:***

As the above-named student is under the age of eighteen years, I, being the parent / guardian of the above-named student, hereby agree to be party to this RCSI Student Agreement for the purpose of binding the student.

SIGNED by the above-named student, before me:

.....

Name of Parent / Guardian (Please print):

.....

Signature of Parent / Guardian:

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**RCSI**

## [Annex 2.1.1]

# Fitness to Study Policy

RCSI DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE

## Contents

1.	Introduction.....	1
2.	Fitness to Study.....	1
3.	Core Competencies.....	2
4.	Purpose.....	2
5.	Scope of Policy.....	3
6.	Notification of Fitness to Study Concerns.....	3
7.	Fitness to Study Concern Responses.....	4
8.	Exclusions.....	4
9.	Key Associated Policies and Regulations.....	5
10.	Review of this Policy.....	5



# RCSI

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## 1. Introduction

RCSI is committed to supporting our students and assisting them to participate fully and safely in their chosen professional healthcare training programme. The University accepts its duty of care towards all students to facilitate them in achieving their academic, clinical and professional goals. This includes providing the necessary supports, resources and opportunities to demonstrate competence and to enable students to effectively manage their personal well-being and maintain the required professional standards linked to their status as healthcare professionals in training.

RCSI acknowledges its equal duty of care to RCSI staff, students, the public and, in particular, the patients and clients RCSI students will come in contact with as part of their training.

For the vast majority of students, progression to graduation is relatively uneventful. Sometimes, this is not the case and some students require additional support and assistance. In certain circumstances, students may experience significant difficulties and/or distress in the course of their studies requiring a formalised co-ordinated response to their needs.

Occasionally, despite additional support, the progression of an individual student is so adversely affected as to make continuation impossible. This may be because it is detrimental to the individual; presents a risk to their own or others' safety; or because it is likely to interfere unreasonably with the learning, working or living experiences of others.

These Fitness to Study (FTS) regulations are expressly intended to be supportive of individual students who may be incapable of meeting the core academic, clinical and/or professional practice requirements of their programme, including clinical placements, due to personal circumstances, and having been provided with reasonable opportunity to do so.

## 2. Fitness to Study

A student is deemed 'fit to study' if they are progressively developing the necessary skills, knowledge, behaviour and character, and maintaining the necessary personal health and well-being to allow them to complete their chosen programme safely and effectively. Fitness to study is more than the ability of a student to pass examinations and progress academically, clinically and professionally in terms of their chosen programme of training. It includes also a student's fitness to participate and to function effectively in University life. This means being able to function independently, competently and safely within the academic,



# RCSI

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residential, community, clinical and professional contexts of their programme of training, including placements, and not causing undue disruption to the learning, working or living experience of others.

This Fitness to Study policy sits under the umbrella of the RCSI Codes of Conduct and should be viewed in conjunction with all other student policies and procedures.

Fitness to Study regulations are needed to ensure that, in addition to having achieved the required academic and clinical standards to undertake a programme that permits graduates to practice in a profession, students also:

- i. Have the capacity to develop and demonstrate the core competencies of their programme of study;
- ii. Conduct and behave themselves so as not to harm their patients/clients or put their patients/clients at risk;
- iii. Conduct and behave themselves so as not to harm their fellow students or RCSI staff or put fellow students or RCSI staff at risk;
- iv. Conduct and behave themselves in a manner likely not to harm the reputation of their profession;
- v. Be free from any health problems that would prevent them from being able to pursue their studies safely and practice their profession competently.

### **3. Core Competencies**

Core competencies are developed progressively and are specific to each RCSI educational programme. Core competencies include academic, clinical and professional competencies and behaviours associated with the specific programme of professional healthcare training being pursued. At all times, students are expected to demonstrate the competencies and behaviours appropriate to their stage of study and meet associated programme requirements. A failure to demonstrate these core competencies and meet requirements safely and effectively or where there are reasonable grounds to assume a student may be unable to do so may give rise to a fitness to study concern.

### **4. Purpose**

These regulations are in place to:

- 4.1.** identify and support students whose progression, behaviour, well-being or welfare are of concern to themselves or others to such an extent as to give rise to concerns as to their fitness to continue in study or on clinical placement;

**AND**



# RCSI

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4.2. to ensure appropriate supports and procedures are put in place to enable and assist students to remain on the programme or, where advisable, to take a voluntary leave of absence;

**OR**

4.3. to determine if and how a student is to be required to take an involuntary leave of absence;

**OR**

4.4. in exceptional cases to determine if a student is to be permanently withdrawn from their programme.

## 5. Scope of Policy

These regulations apply to all circumstances where a Fitness to Study concern arises in relation to a student who is formally notified of this concern in accordance with the procedures identified.

## 6. Notification of Fitness to Study Concerns

A note of concern in relation to a student's fitness to study would **not** be raised for isolated or minor incidents. In such circumstances, a student can be supported locally and/or should be referred to the CoMPPAS unit for personal and academic support or to Registry Services for the appropriate regulatory/disciplinary process.

A note of concern in relation to a student's fitness to study might be notified by the student themselves or an appropriate third party e.g. member of faculty or other staff. Examples can include:

- Students already in receipt of University support services where a fitness to study concern persists or is serious or is the result of a recent deterioration.
- Students exhibiting concerning behaviour that has been attributed to, or could possibly be attributed to an underlying known physical and/or mental health difficulty.
- Students whose attendance, academic/clinical or professional competence or general progression are falling short for an unknown reason that needs to be determined.

Indicators giving rise to concerns could include the following:

- Deterioration in well-being, physical appearance, social withdrawal, mood, physical health or welfare.
- Unexplained deterioration in academic and/or clinical performance.
- Unusual or concerning behaviour which is out of character.
- Behaviour putting themselves or anyone else at risk or which is distressing to others; or behaviour that is at risk of negatively affecting the experience of fellow students or staff.
- While having the personal right to do so, a student has against medical advice unilaterally withdrawn from, or fails or refuses to engage with, prescribed or recommended treatment, including medication,



counselling and/or psychiatric treatment, and where withdrawal or non-engagement gives rise to a concern for their safety or well-being or that of others.

- A student failing to adhere to or engage with other assessments or services intended to assure the success, well-being and/or the safety of the student and others.
- Where the student fails to engage with or respond to University services and staff and their communications or to meet the requirements of a previously agreed personal progression plan, including conditions specified in any return to University agreement.

## 7. Fitness to Study Concern Responses

The RCSI Fitness to Study regulation operates on three response levels:

RESPONSE LEVELS	FORUM
Level 1	School Assessment and Local Remediation
Level 2	FTS Health & Well-Being Panel (HWP)
Level 3	FTS Health & Well-Being Panel(HWP)

Please note that in certain cases where it is determined that a significant and immediate risk may potentially exist to the well-being of a student or to the well-being of others, including patients or clients, the University reserves the right to escalate immediately to a Level 3 response. This may involve acute intervention actions prior to a review by a FTS Health & Well-Being Panel when dealing with urgent priority cases.

## 8. Exclusions

- 8.1.** With the exception of Principle 4 (§4.1) of the Undergraduate Student Code of Conduct, Principle 5 of the BSc Advanced Therapeutic Technologies Code of Conduct and Principle 4 of the Postgraduate Student Code of Conduct, this Policy generally shall not be invoked for circumstances where it is considered that a breach of the Student Code of Conduct and/or associated academic or disciplinary regulations has occurred;
- 8.2.** Isolated cases of non-attendance and/or academic or clinical or professional incompetence or insufficiency or failure to progress;
- 8.3.** Student circumstances deemed normally to fall within the scope of the RCSI Disability Policy and associated procedures.

Notwithstanding 8.3, however, where such students are in receipt of reasonable accommodations and fail to demonstrate the core required academic, clinical and professional competencies of their



# RCSI

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programme or elect not to engage with supports provided by the University, they may be referred for a fitness to study review under this policy.

## **9. Key Associated Policies and Regulations**

### **9.1. Leave of Absence**

The actions taken under these regulations shall be consistent with the requirements and procedures of the RCSI Student Leave of Absence Policy, including Return to University Procedures.

### **9.2. Child Protection**

The actions taken under these regulations shall be consistent with the requirements of the RCSI Child Protection Policy and relevant legislation in this area.

### **9.3. Garda Vetting**

The actions taken under these regulations shall be consistent with the requirements of Garda Vetting associated with RCSI professional programmes.

### **9.4. Academic Appeals**

Where a Fitness to Study issue arises in the context of an academic appeal, the Academic Appeals Committee shall have the authority to address it through these regulations.

## **10. Review of this Policy**

This RCSI Fitness to Study Policy shall be reviewed within the first year of operation and at least once every two years and any recommendations of this review to be considered for approval by the Academic Council.



**RCSI**

**[Annex 2.1.2]**

**Code of Conduct**

**2026-2027**

RCSI DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE

**SCOPE:**

This Code of Conduct applies to students enrolled to the following programmes:

Dentistry: BDS – all entry routes

Medicine: MB BCh BAO – all entry routes

Pharmacy: BSc and Mpharm – all entry routes

Physiotherapy: BSc Physiotherapy

Physicians Associates: MSc Physician Associate

All RCSI registered students not registered to the above listed programmes should consult their relevant Code of Conduct.



**RCSI**

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## Contents

1. Principle 1 .....	2
2. Principle 2 .....	4
3. Principle 3 .....	4
4. Principle 4 .....	5
5. Principle 5 .....	7
6. Principle 6 .....	7



# RCSI

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## RCSI Code of Conduct

Membership of a healthcare profession requires the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct. During your education and training, while you prepare to enter your profession, you are also obliged to abide by a set of standards. The Code of Conduct (Code) outlines the defined standards and the principles by which you must abide as a student of RCSI.

You must formally agree to abide by the Code. Every student is personally responsible under the Code for their own acts or omissions. Compliance with these standards is considered as evidence of fitness to study and practise.

The Code applies throughout the students' time in RCSI, whether engaged in university activities or otherwise.

Repetitive breaches of the Code will be cumulative.

Sanctions are the responsibility of RCSI and will be applied through the RCSI Disciplinary regulations. A breach of the Code could render you liable to action under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations with sanctions imposed on you up to and including expulsion.

The Code is based on six core principles:

1. Your primary concern must be to maintain and improve the health, wellbeing, care and safety of patients.
2. Develop your professional competence, skills and standing so as to bring health gain and value to the community and society.
3. Be honest and trustworthy and show respect for others.
4. Conduct yourself in a manner which enhances the service provided to society and which will maintain the good name of your profession.
5. Maintain your professional knowledge and competence.
6. Be aware of your obligations under the Code and do not do anything which constitutes a breach of the Code.

RCSI takes seriously any breach of the Code. If your behaviour fails to meet the standards outlined in the Code, for any reason, the matter may be reviewed in accordance with RCSI's Disciplinary Regulations.

**The following information is to direct you on the proper use of the Code in terms of your relationships and interactions with staff, fellow students, placement tutors, patients, carers, and all other individuals with whom you come into contact.**

### Principle 1

- **Your primary concern must be to maintain and improve the health, wellbeing, care and safety of patients**  
Throughout your education and training you are required to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values intrinsic to your practise as a competent healthcare professional. As part of your programme, you will engage with the public and gain knowledge and experience in the clinical and professional setting.



# RCSI

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Even when you are not in direct contact with patients, you must make the health, well-being and safety of patients your main concern. All other principles must be read in light of this first principle.

***As a student you must:***

- 1.1 Always bear in mind your future role as a healthcare professional when studying. This applies equally to all aspects of your education and training.
  - 1.1.1 Take responsibility for your work, studies and behaviour.
  - 1.2.1 Apply your learning for the maximum benefit of patients.
  - 1.2.2 Behave in a trustworthy and professional manner.
- 1.2 Ensure that your beliefs and actions do not compromise patients, staff or students.
  - 1.2.1 Recognise and respect the rights of others.
  - 1.2.2 Never discriminate on the basis of gender, religion, age, civil status and family status, disability, sexual orientation, race ethnicity, or membership of the Travelling community.
  - 1.2.3 Be prepared to undertake physical examination of patients if appropriate.
  - 1.2.4 Adhere to the dress codes of RCSI in clinical and professional environments and placements.
- 1.3 Never knowingly allow your judgment to be influenced by personal interests, including but not limited to:
  - 1.3.1 Do not abuse the trust of a patient and maintain proper professional boundaries, especially with children and vulnerable adults.
  - 1.3.2 Do not make decisions for personal interest or gain that in any way may adversely affect the health and welfare of patients and a member or members of the public.
- 1.4 Never knowingly mislead others including staff, students and those with whom you come in contact either verbally or in any form of written communications.
  - 1.4.1 You should introduce yourself by name to patients and make it clear to patients and the public that you are a student and not a qualified healthcare professional.
  - 1.4.2 You must never recommend a treatment or course of action to anyone unsupervised.
  - 1.4.3 You should never misrepresent data or information that could adversely affect the health and welfare of patients and a member or members of the public.
- 1.5 Never compromise patient care.
  - 1.5.1 Raise concerns as soon as possible with an appropriate member of staff if you believe that patient safety or care could be compromised.
  - 1.5.2 Be prepared to challenge the judgement of others if you have reason to believe that their decisions could compromise safety or patient care.



# RCSI

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## Principle 2

- **Develop your professional competence, skills and standing so as to bring health gain and value to the community and society**

It is your responsibility to acquire all necessary knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and behaviours to become a competent practitioner. You must not impede other students in acquiring the same knowledge and skills. This should guide you in your academic education, training and during clinical and professional placements

### *As a student you must:*

- 2.1 Take responsibility for your learning.
  - 2.1.1 Use every opportunity to learn. Attend classes. Be punctual. Be contactable. Plan and use your time effectively.
  - 2.1.2 Reflect on feedback about your performance and respond constructively.
  - 2.1.3 Make informed decisions.
- 2.2 Engage constructively in assessment.
  - 2.2.1 Complete and submit your course work on time.
  - 2.2.2 Appropriately reference the academic work of others.
  - 2.2.3 Never misrepresent data, coursework or information that could result in the awarding of a grade not reflective of your competence.
  - 2.2.4 Never cheat.
  - 2.2.5 Always behave with the highest standards of academic integrity.
- 2.3 Recognise and stay within the limits of your competence.
  - 2.3.1 Recognise your limitations and ask for help from a member of staff, where and when appropriate.

## Principle 3

- **Be honest and trustworthy and show respect for others.**

Demonstrating respect for the dignity, views and rights of others is fundamental in forming and maintaining appropriate relationships with academic staff, fellow students, placement tutors, patients, carers, and other individuals with whom you come into contact. All health professionals must be guided by their primary responsibility to act in the best interests of their patient without influence of any personal consideration. The public-health professional relationship is a privileged one and is based on trust and professionalism which are enshrined in the ethical principles of beneficence, non-maleficence, autonomy and justice.

### *As a student you must:*

- 3.1 Act in the best interest of the patient and contribute to the safety of patients.
- 3.2 Accept and agree to be bound by the ethical principle of autonomy.



# RCSI

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- 3.2.1 Obtain consent from the patient before you interview or examine them. The patient should be offered a chaperone as appropriate. In the case of a minor patient or a patient without capacity, obtain the consent of the parent or legal guardian before you interview or examine the minor patient.
- 3.2.2 Respect the patient's right to refuse health care or to take part in teaching.
- 3.3 Preserve the confidentiality of the patient at all times. This includes personal data that is in their clinical records as well as information they disclose to you during a consultation.
  - 3.3.1 Do not share medical information with anyone except those health care professionals involved in the care of the patient.
  - 3.3.2 Make sure that patients, or anyone close to them, cannot be identified. This includes conversations and discussions in person and virtual / social networking sites, texts or e-mails, recordings of interviews or assignments on e.g. smart-phones and/or YouTube, and pictorial records, e.g., photographs and/or video clips.
  - 3.3.3 Do not share or discuss any aspect of patient cases / care with others through any means which could be perceived to bring you, the RCSI or the profession into disrepute.
  - 3.3.4 Recognise the circumstances when confidential information may be disclosed without consent.
- 3.4 Accept and agree to be bound by the ethical principle of justice.
  - 3.4.1 Recognise and respect the rights of the patient to fair treatment and care.
- 3.5 Be honest and trustworthy.
  - 3.5.1 Identify yourself truthfully in all forms of communication and media.
  - 3.5.2 Represent your qualifications, position and abilities honestly at all times.
  - 3.5.3 Do not knowingly mislead others.
  - 3.5.4 Be truthful in verbal and written communications.
  - 3.5.5 Use research and laboratory data honestly and ethically, seeking permission to use data as required.
  - 3.5.6 Ensure any funds you are responsible for are used for the purpose they are intended.
  - 3.5.7 Decline gifts from the pharmaceutical, medical device or biotechnology industries.

## Principle 4

- **Conduct yourself in a manner which enhances the service provided to society and which will maintain the good name of RCSI and your profession**

The public trusts healthcare professionals. As a student, and throughout your career, you must justify that trust by acting with integrity and professionalism. You should be aware of the importance of looking after your own health and how it impacts on you and your professional responsibilities. You need to develop skills to work on a multidisciplinary team to deliver a high standard of care and ensure patient safety. You need to be able to work effectively with patients, staff, colleagues and healthcare professionals.



# RCSI

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## ***As a student you must:***

- 4.1 Recognise the importance of self-care and take responsibility for your own health, especially if it may impact negatively on other people.
  - 4.1.1 Seek prompt and appropriate professional advice about your general wellbeing, i.e. your physical or mental health, or substance use or other issues which may impact on your ability to complete your studies or interact with patients, staff or colleagues.
  - 4.1.2 Inform appropriate staff if there is anything that could impair your ability to study or to practise as a professional.
  - 4.1.3 Inform the appropriate member of staff if you are being affected by a major life event e.g. divorce or bereavement that may impair your ability to study or practise as a professional.
  - 4.1.4 Inform the appropriate member of staff if you have, to your knowledge, any disability or medical condition that might affect your ability to study or your role as a future healthcare professional, or that might put patients at risk.
  - 4.1.5 Inform the appropriate member of staff if you take medicines that may impair your judgment and impact on the safety of others.
  - 4.1.5 Comply with the requirements of the RCSI IDGHP and BBV policies. Promptly inform the relevant member of staff if you contract or are exposed to any of the diseases set out in these policies.
  - 4.1.6 Respect the confidentiality of your colleagues but appropriately disclose information of concern to include information regarding 4.1. above as relevant to your colleagues.
  
- 4.2 Learn how to work in partnership with others in RCSI, on professional placement, and with patients and their carers in the management of their treatment and care.
  - 4.2.1 Recognise the expertise of other healthcare professionals.
  - 4.2.2 Respect the knowledge and skills of those involved in your education.
  - 4.2.3 Be aware of the limitations of your knowledge and skills.
  
- 4.3 Treat others politely with consideration and respect.
  - 4.3.1 Recognise diversity and respect the cultural differences, values and beliefs of others.
  - 4.3.2 Refrain from behaviour that includes intimidation, foul language, threats of violence or retaliation.
  - 4.3.3 Listen to, and respect, the opinions of others and be non-judgemental in your attitudes toward them.
  
- 4.4 Learn how to communicate effectively.
  - 4.4.1 Ensure you have proficient English Language skills.
  - 4.4.2 Learn how to listen to patients and their carers and communicate effectively with them in a way they understand.
  - 4.4.3 Learn how to communicate effectively with others including academic staff, placement tutors and other healthcare professionals.



# RCSI

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## Principle 5

- **Maintain your professional knowledge and competence**

At all stages of your professional journey you must take responsibility for ensuring your knowledge and skills are up-to-date and that you maintain your competence. You have engaged in a career of lifelong learning and teaching.

***As a student you must:***

- 5.1 Commit to developing, and continuously improving, your professional knowledge and competence.
- 5.2 Learn from experience and grow from the knowledge gained from errors to avoid repeating them.
- 5.3 Ensure that you are aware of continuing professional development requirements.

## Principle 6

- **Be aware of your obligations under the Code and do not do anything which constitutes a breach of the Code.**

It is the responsibility of all students to make every reasonable effort to ensure that everything they do conforms with the principles laid down in the Code.

***As a student you must:***

- 6.1 Ensure you are aware, apply and adhere to the principles of the Code.
  - 6.1.1 Promote and support the principles of the Code by example.
  - 6.1.2 Refrain from any activity that would negatively affect the reputation of RCSI, or your intended profession.
  - 6.1.3 Report breaches of the Code to the appropriate person (e.g. Head of School, member of staff in RCSI or on placements).
- 6.2 Obey the law.
  - 6.2.1 Personally and promptly disclose to the Associate Director for Academic Affairs of RCSI the details of any criminal investigations<sup>1</sup>; charges for a criminal offence; pending prosecution for a criminal offence; conviction for a criminal offence (save for “spent convictions”) which may arise during your studies whether within or outside the Republic of Ireland.
- 6.3 Comply with RCSI’s Policies, Rules and Regulations, and those of other organisations linked to your studies.
  - 6.3.1 Respect all RCSI, and clinical and professional placement policies, procedures and property. Never willingly cause damage to such property, remove property from the premises in which it is located, or make use of property for personal reasons.

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<sup>1</sup> Criminal investigations include being arrested or interviewed under caution by a police officer whether in the Republic of Ireland or elsewhere



# RCSI

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- 6.3.2 Supply accurate information in response to lawful requests and update that information as necessary.
- 6.3.3 Cooperate with honesty and openness in formal investigations about you or others.
- 6.4 Comply with health and safety requirements.
  - 6.4.1 Comply with RCSI's health requirements and health policies in relation to the BBV Policy and the IDGHP Policy.
  - 6.4.2 Comply with RCSI's, clinical and professional placements' safety requirements, including dress code and other safety requirements.



**RCSI**

**[Annex 2.1.2(a)]**

## **BSc Advanced Therapeutic Technologies Code of Conduct**

RCSI DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE

### **Contents**

1. Principle 1 .....	1
2. Principle 2 .....	2
3. Principle 3 .....	3
4. Principle 4 .....	4
5. Principle 5 .....	5
6. Principle 6 .....	6



# RCSI

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## RCSI Code of Conduct

As an undergraduate BSc (Advanced Therapeutic Technologies) student of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI), you are preparing for a career in the Biopharmaceutical and related Industries and/or in scientific research. During your education and training you are obliged to abide by a set of standards. The Code of Conduct (Code) outlines the defined standards and the principles by which you must abide in the academic, research, industry or other training environment. You must formally agree to abide by the Code. Every BSc (ATT) student is personally responsible under the Code for their own acts or omissions. This Code applies from the first day of registration, both on and off campus.

The Code applies throughout the students' time in RCSI, whether engaged in university activities or otherwise.

Repetitive breaches of the Code will be cumulative.

Sanctions are the responsibility of RCSI and will be applied through the RCSI Disciplinary regulations. A breach of the Code could render you liable to action under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations with sanctions imposed on you up to and including expulsion.

The Code is based on six core principles:

1. Develop your professional competence, skills and standing to bring scientific related health gain and value to the community and society.
2. Act according to the highest ethical principles at all times.
3. Demonstrate professional responsibility and behaviour.
4. Develop and maintain a high level of competence.
5. Be accountable for own actions and self-care.
6. Be aware of your obligations under the Code of Conduct and do not do anything which constitutes a breach of the Code.

RCSI takes seriously any breach of the Code. If your behaviour fails to meet the standards outlined in the Code, for any reason, the matter may be reviewed in accordance with RCSI's Disciplinary Regulations.

**The following information is to direct you on the proper use of the Code in terms of your relationships and interactions with staff, fellow students, work placement tutors/colleagues, patients, carers, and other individuals with whom you come into contact.**

### Principle 1

- **Develop your professional competence, skills and standing to bring scientific related health gain and value to the community and society**

As a BSc (ATT) undergraduate student it is your responsibility to acquire all necessary knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and behaviours to become a competent science practitioner and not impede other students in acquiring the same knowledge and skills. This should guide you in your academic education, training and during professional placements.



# RCSI

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## ***As a BSc (ATT) student you must:***

- 1.1. Take responsibility for your learning.
  - 1.1.1. Use every opportunity to learn. Attend classes. Be punctual. Be contactable. Plan and use your time effectively.
  - 1.1.2. Reflect on feedback about your performance and respond constructively.
  - 1.1.3. Make informed decisions.
- 1.2. Engage constructively in assessment.
  - 1.2.1. Read and be familiar with the Marks and Standards (M&S) for your programme.
  - 1.2.2. Follow guidelines, complete and submit your course work on time.
  - 1.2.3. Appropriately reference the academic work of others.
  - 1.2.4. Never misrepresent data, coursework or information that could result in the awarding of a grade not reflective of your competence.
- 1.3. Recognise and stay within the limits of your competence.
  - 1.3.1. Recognise your limitations and ask for help, where and when appropriate.

## **Principle 2**

- **Act According to the Highest Ethical Principles at all times**

As a BSc (ATT) undergraduate student you are required to adhere to internationally recognised ethical principles and practices in the conduct of your undergraduate study, situated learning work placement and research. These include but are not limited to adherence to regulations; good stewardship of research on behalf of others; avoidance of plagiarism or misrepresentation; avoidance of research misconduct; appropriateness of authorship; duty of care to self and others; compliance with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and/or patient confidentiality where applicable; compliance with ethical approval practices and accountability.

## ***As a BSc (ATT) student you must:***

- 2.1. Be honest and trustworthy in all your activities.
- 2.2. Take responsibility for your work, studies and behaviour.
- 2.3. Commit to being honest in the collection, analysis and reporting of findings from your research or programme of study.
- 2.4. Not participate in, condone or allow yourself to be associated with dishonesty, misrepresentation or fraud.
- 2.5. Ensure any funds you are responsible for are used for the purpose they are intended.



# RCSI

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- 2.6. Only take credit for work that you have done or generated and, where appropriate, give due acknowledgment when referring to the work of others, including the use of generative AI.
- 2.7. Ensure research data is stored appropriately in line with RCSI/work placement employer policies and relevant legislation.
- 2.8. Demonstrate Academic Integrity while refraining from any activity which constitutes academic misconduct including plagiarism and contract cheating.

## Principle 3

- **Demonstrate Professional Responsibility and Behaviour**

As a BSc (ATT) undergraduate student, you are part of the broader RCSI community and as such are expected to conduct yourself with honesty, integrity and professionalism. Demonstrating respect for the dignity, views and rights of others is fundamental in forming and maintaining appropriate relationships with academic and administrative staff, fellow students and other individuals with whom you come into contact. When engaged in any interaction with patients or members of the public, use of patient data, care of animals or humans involved in research, you must be guided by your responsibility to act in the best interests of all concerned without influence of any personal consideration.

### ***As a BSc (ATT) student you must:***

- 3.1. Learn how to work in partnership with others in RCSI, its associated centres/Industry partners and other locations.
  - 3.1.1. Behave in a trustworthy and professional manner.
  - 3.1.2. Act with civility, dignity and respect towards all with whom you come into contact for your studies/research, both at RCSI, its associated centres/Industry partners and all other locations.
  - 3.1.3. Maintain proper professional boundaries with all whom you come into contact through your studies/research, both at RCSI, its associated centres/Industry partners and all other locations.
  - 3.1.4. Recognise diversity and respect the cultural differences, values and beliefs of others. Behave in a manner that demonstrates respect for equality and diversity. Do not engage publicly in degrading comments about others that include culture, nationality, ethnicity, colour, race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, size, civil status or family status.
  - 3.1.5. Refrain from behaviour that includes intimidation, foul language, threats of violence or retaliation.
  - 3.1.6. Listen to, and respect the opinions of others and be non-judgmental in your attitudes towards them.
  - 3.1.7. Demonstrate appropriate respect for the knowledge, insight, experience and expertise of others and be aware of the limitations of your knowledge and skills.
- 3.2. Demonstrate professional and academic standards.
  - 3.2.1. Where ethical approval is required for the conduct of research, you must ensure that appropriate ethical approval has been obtained in advance of the study.
  - 3.2.2. Exercise appropriate care and confidentiality in the collection, recording and storage of research or other data including complying with GDPR.



# RCSI

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- 3.2.3. Maintain the confidentiality of any patient information obtained by you as part of your studies/research.
  - 3.2.3.1. Make sure that patients, or anyone close to them, cannot be identified. This includes conversations and discussions in person and virtual / social networking sites, texts or e-mails, recordings of interviews or assignments on e.g. smartphones and/or YouTube, and pictorial records, e.g., photographs and/or video clips.
  - 3.2.4. Comply with the HR and IP policies of Situated Learning work placement Industry host.
  - 3.2.5. Keep clear, accurate records of all research in ways that will allow verification and replication of your work by others.
  - 3.2.6. Avoid any conflict of interest and make relevant parties aware of any potential risk of having your judgement influenced by your personal interests.
  - 3.2.7. Share your data and findings openly and promptly, as soon as you establish priority and ownership claims. This applies to dissemination in poster, written report, oral, thesis or other format.
  - 3.2.8. If you become aware of any incident of irresponsible research, you must inform the relevant authorities within RCSI.
- 3.3. Protect the reputation and identity of RCSI.
  - 3.3.1. Behave in a manner that does not bring yourself, others or RCSI into disrepute, including online activity and the use of social networking services.
  - 3.3.2. Avoid using the RCSI identity to promote self-interest that is not in keeping with the values, rules, statutes or interests of RCSI.
  - 3.3.3. Engage with third parties in relation to your programme of study only with the prior approval of the Programme Director(s).
  - 3.3.4. Decline gifts or incentives in any form and do not engage in any commercial exercise that might harm the reputation of the research endeavour of RCSI.

## Principle 4

- **Develop and Maintain a High Level of Competence**

Competence, the overall integration of knowledge, skills and abilities into professional science practice, is dynamic and demands that you keep up to date with change in order to maintain and continually develop your competencies. As a BSc (ATT) undergraduate student you must do this by engaging in all programme content including the professional formation modules.

***As a BSc (ATT) student you must:***

- 4.1. Commit to developing, and continuously improving, your professional knowledge and competence.
- 4.2. Learn from experience and grow from the knowledge gained from errors to avoid repeating them.
- 4.3. Ensure that you are aware of continuing professional development requirements.
- 4.4. Make a judgment as to whether you are competent to carry out a particular role or function.



# RCSI

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- 4.5. Acknowledge any limitations of competence and refuse in such cases to accept delegated or assigned research/work functions, particularly when engaged in activities that involve patients, patient information or animals.
- 4.6. Take measures to develop and maintain the competence necessary for professional and research practice.
- 4.7. Ask for help and support when experiencing difficulties related to your learning and research.

## Principle 5

- **Be Accountable for Own Actions and Self-Care**

As a BSc (ATT) undergraduate student, you must recognise the importance of self-care and take responsibility for your own health, especially if it may impact negatively on other people. You must commit to being accountable for your own actions.

***As a BSc (ATT) student you must:***

- 5.1. Comply with all relevant RCSI health and safety requirements.
- 5.2. Be aware of any conditions of your funders/sponsors/employers (e.g. Government or other funder/employer) and abide by the conditions of your contracts and/or agreements with them. Familiarize yourself with and abide by intellectual property rights; regulations; relevant contractual agreements regarding disclosure of data and confidential information.
- 5.3. Be aware of your own health and how it impacts on you, on others, and your academic, research or professional responsibilities.
- 5.4. Seek prompt and appropriate professional advice about your general wellbeing, i.e. your physical or mental health, substance use or other issues which may impact on your ability to complete your studies or interact with staff or colleagues.
- 5.5. Inform appropriate RCSI staff if you are being affected by a major life event that is affecting your studies e.g. bereavement.
- 5.6. Inform appropriate RCSI staff of any disability or medical condition that might affect your ability or role as an undergraduate student that might put yourself, your colleagues or research subjects at risk or have an impact on animal welfare.
- 5.7. Inform appropriate RCSI staff if you take medicines that may:
  - 5.7.1. Impair your judgement.
  - 5.7.2. Impact on the safety of others.
  - 5.7.3. Impact on your ability to use laboratory, research facilities or research equipment.
  - 5.7.4. Impact your ability to follow procedures.



# RCSI

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5.8. Respect the confidentiality of your colleagues/fellow students but appropriately disclose information of concern, to include information regarding 5.4 above.

5.9. Co-operate with formal investigations about yourself or others.

## Principle 6

- **Be aware of your obligations under the Code of Conduct and do not do anything which constitutes a breach of the Code**

It is the responsibility of all BSc (ATT) undergraduate students to make every reasonable effort to ensure that everything they do conforms with the principles laid down in the Code of Conduct.

### ***As a BSc (ATT) student you must:***

6.1. Ensure you are aware, apply and adhere to the principles of the Code of Conduct.

6.1.1. Promote and support the principles of the Code of Conduct by example.

6.1.2. Refrain from any activity that would negatively affect the reputation of the University.

6.1.3. Report breaches of the Code of Conduct to the appropriate member of staff.

6.2. Obey the law.

6.2.1. Personally and promptly disclose to the Associate Director for Academic Affairs the details of any criminal investigations;<sup>1</sup> charges for a criminal offence; pending prosecution for a criminal offence; conviction for a criminal offence (save for “spent” convictions) which may arise during your studies whether within or outside the Republic of Ireland.

6.3. Comply with University Policies, Rules and Regulations, and those of other organisations linked to your studies.

6.3.1. Respect all university and professional placement policies, procedures and property. Never willingly cause damage to such property, remove property from the premises in which it is located, or make use of property for personal reasons.

6.3.2. Ensure that you are contactable.

6.3.3. Supply accurate information in response to lawful requests and update that information as necessary.

6.3.4. Co-operate with honesty and openness in formal investigations about yourself or others.

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<sup>1</sup> Criminal investigations include being arrested or interviewed under caution by a police officer whether in the Republic of Ireland or elsewhere.



**RCSI**

**[Annex 2.1.3]**

## **Blood Borne Virus Policy**

**RCSI** DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE

***The 2026-2027 Blood Borne Virus Policy is not yet finalised. The 2025-2026 policy is enclosed for your reference.***

***The finalised 2026-2027 policy will be provided to you at a future date. We ask that you study this carefully and advise us of any queries that you may have.***



**RCSI**

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## Contents

1. Introduction .....	1
2. General Considerations .....	1
3. Risk of Transmission of Blood Borne Viruses Patients Hepatitis B .....	1
4. Exposure Prone Procedures .....	2
5. Screening of Students .....	2
6. RCSI Requirements .....	3
7. Management of Students Infected with Specific Blood Borne Viruses .....	3
8. Procedures for a student who is positive for a BBV .....	5
9. Students' Responsibilities .....	6
10. Confidentiality .....	7

## **1. Introduction**

The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) is aware of its over-riding duty of care to the public with whom students are in close contact. In the rare circumstances where a student is shown to have a blood borne virus and is infectious, RCSI will consider all appropriate measures and will do all that is reasonable to accommodate the needs of the student in question, in accordance with statutory requirements. RCSI is obliged to ensure that we take reasonable and appropriate measures not only to safeguard the students and their colleagues, but also patients and members of the public. Safeguarding these groups is of paramount importance.

This document is intended to ensure that all students are informed of the policy and procedures being applied by RCSI regarding blood borne viruses. This policy must be read carefully by students who must ensure that they make themselves fully aware of the contents. Failure to adhere to the provisions of this policy could result in an action being taken under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations which could lead to a sanction being imposed on the student up to and including expulsion.

The transmission of blood borne pathogens within a healthcare setting has become a matter of increasing public concern and interest over a number of years. This policy is designed to protect students from acquiring a blood borne virus. In the rare instance where a student has acquired a blood borne virus, this policy will detail how to support and manage that student. This will be undertaken with acknowledgement that the protection of patients and the public is paramount.

RCSI Students registered to health professional programmes are regarded as Category A Health Care Workers.

## **2. General Considerations**

The prerequisite of good practice in any healthcare setting is the careful observation of basic hygiene and proper infection control procedures by all students. For this reason, particular attention is drawn to the avoidance of sharps/needle stick injuries, including the value of double gloving preoperatively where appropriate and the covering of skin lesions with waterproof dressings. Any student with exudative or weeping skin lesions must avoid direct patient contact and must not handle devices or equipment used during invasive procedures.

RCSI students must adhere to all infection control policies that are in place within the hospitals/institutions where they are based.

## **3. Risk of Transmission of Blood Borne Viruses**

### **Patients Hepatitis B**

The transmission of hepatitis B Virus (HBV) from infected healthcare workers to patients has been well documented and the factors which predispose to transmission have been identified. They include the performance of invasive procedures (surgical or dental) and a high level of infectivity in the healthcare worker (HBe antigen positive or pre-core mutant positive).

### **Hepatitis C**

The major source of transmission of hepatitis C is by exposure to infected blood and body fluids. Cases involving transmission of hepatitis C from surgeons to patients have been well documented and have arisen in the context of cardiothoracic surgery, open heart surgery, gynaecological surgery and anaesthesiology and dentistry.

### **HIV Transmission**

Studies have shown that the HIV virus can be transmitted to patients during both dental and surgical procedures.

## **4. Exposure Prone Procedures**

Most contact between healthcare workers, students and patients does not involve the possibility of blood-to- blood contact and therefore carries low risk for transmission of blood borne pathogens. Provided infection control procedures are adhered to, Exposure Prone Procedures (EPP) are the only procedures associated with a risk of transmission of blood borne pathogens to patients.

EPPs are defined as procedures which involve surgical entry into tissues, cavities or organs or repair of major traumatic injuries, caesarean deliveries or other obstetric procedures during which sharp instruments are used such as perineal repair after a vaginal delivery; the manipulation, cutting or removal of any oral or perioral tissues including tooth structure, during which bleeding may occur.

In addition, EPPs relate to situations where the student or surgeon's hands (whether gloved or not) may be in contact with sharp instruments, needle tips or sharp tissues (spicules of bone or teeth), inside a patient's open body cavity, wound or confined anatomical space, and where the hands or fingertips may not be completely visible at all times.

EPPs are not part of the usual activities of physiotherapy or pharmacy students during undergraduate training or subsequent clinical practice. Physiotherapy and pharmacy students must, however, recognise the nature of EPPs.

Should the opportunity to electively participate in an EPP arise, students may not be able to participate unless they have recently been tested and shown not to carry a blood-borne virus. Exposure prone procedures that a physiotherapy student may be involved in include:

- Palpation of exposed tendons during orthopaedic procedures
- Temporomandibular joint mobilisations through the mouth

Students infected with a BBV should immediately exclude themselves from EPPs as a standard precaution.

## **5. Screening of Students**

It is the duty of all healthcare workers, including students, to protect themselves and their patients from disease. This includes being tested and immunised against hepatitis B, and strictly adhering

to standard precautions. There is a moral, ethical and legal obligation on both health service providers and healthcare workers to ensure the protection of workers and patients alike.

There is an ethical duty for healthcare professionals to protect patients from harm. A healthcare professional or student who knowingly puts patients at risk and who infects patients may be subject to a medical negligence case for breach of standard of care or indeed to prosecution for criminal negligence; students could be subject to a disciplinary action under the RCSI's Disciplinary Regulations with sanctions being imposed up to and including expulsion.

## **6. RCSI Requirements**

Within the first eight months of admission to the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, all undergraduate students will be screened for hepatitis B and hepatitis C, as well as other communicable diseases. Full details are given in the document "Infectious Disease and General Health". This document should also be read by all students.

As part of RCSI's overall approach to minimising the risks for students associated with blood borne viruses, all students who are not immune to hepatitis B are required to be vaccinated against hepatitis B within six months of admission to RCSI. All students must complete a blood borne virus risk assessment, consent to immunisation where it is deemed necessary and participate in follow-up serology by the Mercer's Medical Centre for evidence of immunity in order to reduce the potential of transmission of these infections.

It is essential that students bring a copy of their pre-existing personal vaccination records to their first appointment for the vaccination programme. If this documentation is not provided, then there is no evidence of previous vaccinations and it will be assumed that the student is not protected. Booster vaccines will be administered if no evidence is provided. Students are also required to provide photographic identification (Passport / Irish Driver's License) to enable their EPP bloods to have an "Identity Verified Sample" stamped on their lab reports. If no ID is provided, no sample will be taken – resulting in a new appointment to be scheduled at a later date.

Failure to adhere to any of these requirements could result in the student having disciplinary proceedings brought against them under the RCSI's Disciplinary Regulations which could lead to a sanction up to and including expulsion.

Results of tests for hepatitis B immunity are only acceptable from the Mercer's Medical Centre. Students presenting such results from elsewhere must have the test repeated. Satisfactory completion of the immunization programme will be necessary prior to the student commencing the intensive / relevant clinical attachments and patient contact in their programme. Additional screening for hepatitis C or other diseases may be required prior to commencing the other clinical attachments in the latter years of the programmes.

## **7. Management of Students Infected with Specific Blood Borne Viruses**

In order to ensure their well-being, all students who are infected with a blood borne virus must be under the care of an appropriate physician (usually a Hepatologist or an Infectious Disease

Physician) in Ireland for the duration of their undergraduate studies.

Students with blood borne viruses who do not perform EPPs but who continue to provide clinical care to patients must remain under regular medical supervision. In order to ensure the student's psychological and emotional well-being, those who contract a blood borne virus will also be encouraged to undergo an assessment by a counsellor and be encouraged to undergo such treatment as recommended. The cost of the counselling service will be borne by RCSI. Counselling is confidential.

### **Hepatitis B**

People with genetic variants of hepatitis B virus may be unable to produce the e-antigen (or antibody), but may still be highly infectious. To address this issue, any student who is surface antigen positive (HbsAg +) will be assessed by the Mercer's Medical Centre for chronic hepatitis B infection (non-responders to vaccine may be carriers of hepatitis B). In cases where the student is HbsAg positive, arrangements will be made for testing for additional hepatitis B markers (e antigen, core antibody). Those who are e antigen positive will be excluded from performing exposure prone procedures and will be referred for further assessment and ongoing management by a consultant hepatologist or consultant in infectious diseases. Students who are e antigen negative must have their viral load determined. This will involve the collection of three sequential samples over a six week period. During this time the student must not perform exposure prone procedures. The threshold for ongoing exclusion from EPPs (restrict practice) is currently a viral load in excess of 104 copies/ml. A single measurement in excess of this threshold is sufficient to impose course programme restrictions. Students whose three samples remain below the threshold may continue on their study programme, but will require annual evaluation by the hepatology or infectious disease team.

Some treatment exists for infectious carriers of hepatitis B i.e. a student who is e-antigen positive or e-antigen negative but with a high viral load (in excess of 104 copies/ml). Newer treatments now have fewer side effects and can allow persons to fulfil all of their duties including EPPs once their viral load is within the required limits.

### **Hepatitis C (HCV)**

The following healthcare workers must be tested initially:

- a) Those commencing training for a career that involves performance of exposure prone procedures or
- b) New entrants or re-entrants to the Irish Health System and whose work involves exposure prone procedures.

All students will be tested for antibodies to HCV within the first six months of registration. This test will be carried out a second time just prior to commencement of the intensive clinical attachment in the Intermediate Cycle (medical students only). If positive, the student will then have Polymerase Chain Reaction testing for hepatitis C RNA to further determine their infectivity. Healthcare workers (including students) who are HCV PCR positive must not assist in exposure prone procedures until the risk has been assessed. The assessment will include measurement of viral load. This includes healthcare workers on antiviral treatment who in general must be PCR negative for six months before assisting in exposure prone procedures. Medical and dental students will be retested for HCV

during the programmes as required in order to ensure patient safety.

Any student who suspects they may have been exposed to HCV from any source must notify the Mercer's Medical Centre and seek professional advice and support, including the need for testing, and must cooperate with any look back exercise (i.e. a check of patients with whom the person has had contact) deemed necessary in order to ensure patient and public safety.

Any infected student involved in clinical cases must remain under regular medical supervision in order to support them and to ensure their well-being.

A student who is antibody positive but PCR negative for HCV can continue to assist in exposure prone procedures but must have a PCR test for hepatitis C annually while they continue to undertake exposure prone procedures.

### **Hepatitis B (+ Hepatitis C)**

There is also the possibility that blood testing may reveal evidence that an individual has previously been infected with Hepatitis B (or Hepatitis C) but that the disease is no longer active, and the individual does not pose an infection risk. However, this can change if the individual becomes immunocompromised which can lead to a reactivation of the virus. It is important that the individual and their own current and future doctors are made aware of this possibility. Accordingly, the student will be required to attend Mercer's Medical Centre to discuss this scenario and to be given relevant information to pass on to their doctors. Given that RCSI students may well undertake exposure prone procedures in their undergraduate and postgraduate careers, it is essential that individuals in this situation self-report any change in their health that may affect their immune status to their own physician and also to their clinical manager.

### **HIV**

There is still as yet no vaccine available to protect against HIV infection. Therefore, the policy for protecting students and patients from HIV continues to rely on good general infection control procedures. Any student who is HIV positive cannot take part in exposure prone procedures

Any student who suspects they may have been exposed to HIV must notify the Mercer's Medical Centre and cooperate with any look-back exercise deemed necessary as patient and public safety is paramount. Supportive measures will be put in place along with professional advice including testing if appropriate.

## **8. Procedures for a student who is positive for a BBV**

With the definition and explanation of exposure prone procedures in mind (as per section 4), students who have a BBV may be authorised on a case by case basis, by their School to be involved in some procedures, with appropriate mitigations and where there is no undue risk to the patient regarding EPPs, thereby ensuring patient safety.

Students will be required to meet with the relevant Heads of Departments or nominees in Surgery; Obstetrics and Gynaecology; and Paediatrics. prior to the commencement of clinical rotations.

Reasonable efforts will be made to structure the attachments in such a way that each student with a BBV will not be asked to perform an exposure prone procedure, whilst meeting the learning outcomes. Medical Students who have a BBV must avoid any clinical contact whatever (e.g. physical examination) with acute trauma patients in the Accident and Emergency department as there is an unpredictable risk of injury from fractured bones.

Dental students who have a BBV, must immediately inform their Head of School. Students are advised that it may not be possible to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme. Students who, for any reason, are unable to safely participate in clinical or other professional placements may be required to withdraw from the programme. Applicants who are chronic viral carriers and who successfully undergo treatment, which renders them no longer an infectious risk to patients, may reapply for admission to their chosen course. All efforts will be made to reserve a place on the forthcoming student intake for such individuals, however this cannot be guaranteed.

Physiotherapy or Pharmacy Students must meet with their Head of School prior to clinical placement for advice.

## **9. Students' Responsibilities**

A safe and effective vaccine is available for the protection of students and others from infection with hepatitis

B virus. All healthcare personnel (which includes students) who have direct contact with blood or body fluids, or with patient tissue and who are therefore at risk of acquiring hepatitis B occupationally, must have their anti-HBs status established. In circumstances where the contact may also involve undertaking or assisting in exposure prone procedures, testing must also include anti- HBsAg (hepatitis B surface antigen).

All students who assist in exposure prone procedures must be immunised against hepatitis B virus, unless immunity to hepatitis B virus as a result of natural infection or previous immunisation has been established. Students who are unwilling to be vaccinated when appropriate must be aware that they may face discontinuation from RCSI.

At present there are no vaccines that protect health-care workers from hepatitis C virus and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). All new students to RCSI must be tested for hepatitis C antibodies and if found to be positive PCR testing will be carried out for hepatitis C RNA, to establish if the student is an infectious carrier of hepatitis C. Students found to be infected with HCV who are PCR positive will not be allowed to assist in EPPs until the risk has been assessed. This will be dependent on the viral load.. Students who are unwilling to be tested for hepatitis C virus must be aware that they may face discontinuation from RCSI.

In order to ensure personal and public safety it is incumbent on all students to take steps to ensure that they do not put themselves at risk from infection by a blood borne virus in their private lives. This includes the avoidance of intravenous drug abuse and appropriate precautions in relation to sexual activity.

Any student who suspects they may have been exposed to hepatitis B, hepatitis C or HIV must notify

Mercer's Medical Centre immediately for advice and support. The student must also cooperate with any look-back exercise deemed necessary and seek professional advice, including testing, if appropriate.

Students who fail to notify the appropriate authorities if they suspect that they have been exposed to a BBV may be referred to the Disciplinary Committee under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations and face a sanction up to and including expulsion.

In order to ensure that students are properly supported and monitored, and to minimize any detrimental effects on the provision of training to other students and most importantly to ensure protection of all patients, RCSI will only admit and retain the number of students that it can reasonably accommodate who are positive with a blood borne virus at any one time. The quota may be revised from time to time. Offers are made to students in good faith and are subject to BBV screening. If the student is subsequently found to be positive for a BBV on screening, and if RCSI has reached the maximum number of students which it can reasonably accommodate with a BBV, the offer will be rescinded and all fees paid will be refunded.

Any student who is currently being treated, or who has been treated during or within twelve months before commencing their studies at RCSI, with antiviral therapy and/or interferon for a blood borne virus and is not already known to University authorities must notify RCSI immediately.

## **10. Confidentiality**

RCSI will maintain the confidentiality of a student's medical records as far as possible. These will be kept separate from the main academic student files. Students must be aware that disclosure of medical records to some staff e.g. Heads of Schools, Associate Director for Academic Affairs, clinical staff on-site, is necessary to ensure the safety of patients.

A consent form will be completed and signed by the student consenting to the disclosure of details of their medical (infectious) condition to those persons who are necessarily required to receive the information. This information will be given in confidence, and its purpose is to protect patients from blood borne viral infection, in accordance with best practice and RCSI policy. In addition, it is required to reassure the student that their case is being dealt with in confidence. It ensures that each staff member who is informed of the case of an infected student and who is responsible for ensuring that the students' duties are restricted to protect patients fully appreciates the confidentiality boundaries required.

Data will only be kept on file for so long as is necessary to ensure the safe management and administration of your studies as an undergraduate student in RCSI.

If a student is found not to be compliant with this Policy it could render the student subject to disciplinary action under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations and where appropriate liable to such sanctions being imposed as are outlined in the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations up to and including expulsion.



**RCSI**

**[Annex 2.1.4]**

## **Infectious Diseases and General Health Policy**

RCSI DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE

***The 2026-2027 Infectious Diseases and General Health Policy is not yet finalised. The 2025-2026 policy is enclosed for your reference.***

***The finalised 2026-2027 policy will be provided to you at a future date. We ask that you study this carefully and advise us of any queries that you may have.***

## Contents

1.	General Health .....	1
2.	Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) .....	1
3.	Infectious Diseases .....	3
4.	Pregnancy .....	4
5.	Costs .....	5
6.	Disease/Virus .....	5
	Hepatitis B.....	5
	Hepatitis C .....	5
	Measles, Mumps and Rubella .....	5
	Pertussis (whooping cough) .....	6
	Chicken pox (Varicella).....	6
	Tuberculosis (TB).....	6
	Meningitis C .....	6
	HIV.....	7
	Covid-19.....	7
7.	Outbreak Situations .....	7
8.	ADVICE TO STUDENTS WITH SERIOUS CONTAGIOUS/INFECTIOUS DISEASES.....	7
9.	Summary of Vaccination Process .....	7
10.	Frequently Asked Questions.....	9



# RCSI

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## 1. General Health

Healthcare for RCSI students is provided by the university's primary care service based in Mercer's Medical Centre. The answers to many health queries can be found on the practice [website](#).

Students with significant medical conditions or a known disability should notify RCSI at [learningsupport@rcsi.ie](mailto:learningsupport@rcsi.ie) to enable RCSI to provide support under the [Reasonable Accommodation Policy](#) which is provided by RCSI to support such students.

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

At RCSI's sole discretion and where necessary, the assessment of a candidate's ability to progress through the programme will be made by referral to an independent Occupational Health Consultant.

Students have a responsibility to self-care, both for their own benefit and for that of colleagues and the members of the public with whom they will come in contact. This responsibility takes many forms, and includes the providing the clinicians who are involved in your care in Ireland with adequate advance information on any significant ongoing or chronic health issue you have.

This means that students must attend the RCSI Student Health Service, based in Mercer's Medical Centre, to provide it, in confidence, with details of your diagnosis and ongoing treatment plan, so that they may best assist you. This list is not exhaustive but is meant to facilitate the continuity of good quality medical care. All reports should be in English. Some examples of what might be needed include:

- **Diabetes:** List of current medications and blood results over the previous year
- **Asthma:** List of current medications and copy of previous spirometry
- **Ongoing surgical issues:** Relevant copies of specialist reports and investigations
- **Psychiatric illness:** Relevant copies of specialist reports and current treatment plan
- **Gastroenterological issues:** Relevant copies of specialist reports and investigations, particularly endoscopies
- **ADD/ADHD (Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder):**  
These conditions do require some special attention as there are difficulties in having these diagnoses made and treated in Ireland. If you have been diagnosed with either of these conditions, the information below is requested.

## 2. Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) diagnosis and initiation of treatment:

ADD/ADHD diagnosis and treatment are extremely difficult to obtain in Ireland. There are very few suitable resources available in Ireland and none via the public health system. Private options are expensive and frequently have a waiting time of over a year. Assessment and diagnosis of ADD/ADHD are not available through RCSI's Student Health Service.



# RCSI

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## **Request for ongoing ADHD medication:**

If an RCSI student presents to the RCSI Student Health Service seeking continuation of ADHD medication, (e.g. Ritalin / Concerta/ Equasym / Medikilet / Adderall / Provigil / Strattera, etc) which was originally prescribed elsewhere, then they must provide all of the following documentation:

1. A recent report from a suitably qualified professional. This person must have experience in diagnosing ADHD in adolescents and young adults and must also have trained in differential diagnosis and the full range of psychiatric and learning disorders. Professionals typically qualified to make this diagnosis include:
  - Neurologist
  - Psychiatrist
  - Clinical Psychologist
  - Other relevantly trained medical doctors

Documentation must include the name, title, professional qualifications, and license number of the evaluator, including information about specialisation. All evaluation reports must be typed on formal letter-headed paper, signed, dated, and completely legible. All reports must be in English.

2. The documentation must be based on a full evaluation conducted within the previous 3 years.
3. There must be evidence of current impairment. The assessment should consist of more than a self-report; it should also include the history of attentional symptoms, including evidence of ongoing impulsive hyperactive or inattentive behaviour that has significantly impaired functioning over time.
4. The assessment should explore alternative diagnoses, including psychiatric and medical disorders, as well as any educational or cultural factors, which may impact the student and result in behaviours similar to ADHD. The evaluation should provide a broad comprehensive understanding of the student's relevant background including family, academic, behavioural, social, vocational, medical, developmental, and psychiatric history. There should be an emphasis on how the ADHD symptoms have manifested across various settings over time, how the student has coped with the problems, and what success the student has had in coping efforts.
5. The assessment should contain a comprehensive clinical evaluation and/or standardised clinical measures for an attention hyperactivity and impulsivity as delineated in the DSM-V. Any quantitative information needs to be in standard scores and/or percentiles. However, a comprehensive testing battery alone, without illuminating a pattern of real-world functional impairment, will not be sufficient to establish an ADHD diagnosis.
6. A diagnostic report and summary confirming a specific diagnosis of ADHD based on the DSM-V diagnostic criteria should be provided.
7. If any medication has been issued for the treatment of ADHD, the exact medication, dosage and changes in dosage must be carefully outlined.
8. There must be a plan for regular professional review on at least an annual basis by the main clinician. Inadequate documentation includes:



# RCSI

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- a. A prior prescription or medication bottle
- b. A brief letter or medical record, which does not contain all the criteria listed above
- c. Report of psychological testing or brain imaging studies, which do not include a clinical evaluation

### 3. Infectious Diseases

Students and practitioners in the health care professions have always faced the possibility of exposure to infectious diseases such as Hepatitis B and TB. Equally, students have a responsibility to protect patients, staff and other students from infections which they might introduce. While the risks are small, the increasing efficiency of preventive measures such as vaccination has highlighted the importance of these diseases. RCSI has introduced procedures to ensure students meet this standard.

RCSI students on health professional degrees are classified as Category A Healthcare Workers and, as such, will be screened and vaccinated against the following diseases:

- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis C
- TB
- Varicella/zoster
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Meningitis C
- Influenza

This document should be read in conjunction with the RCSI Blood Borne Virus Policy.

Participation in the RCSI vaccination programme is a mandatory part of registering as a student at RCSI for students registered to dentistry, pharmacy, medicine, physiotherapy and physicians associate studies.

By participating in this vaccination programme, students are agreeing to the following:

- It is essential that students bring a copy of their pre-existing personal vaccination records to their first appointment for the vaccination programme. If this documentation is not provided, then there is no evidence of previous vaccinations and it will be assumed that the student is not protected.
- Appropriate tests and clinical follow-up for Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C
- Vaccination for Hepatitis B and follow-up testing, if deemed necessary
- Screening for Tuberculosis if necessary
- Screening for immunity to measles, mumps, rubella, and chicken-pox and to subsequent vaccination for these if necessary
- Positive participation in other health screening measures as deemed appropriate by RCSI, e.g. anti- influenza vaccination in clinical years
- RCSI providing evidence of compliance with these procedures to affiliated partners to support student progress through the programme of study.

This is complex work involving individual assessment, the gathering of formal documentation from previous vaccinations, blood tests to confirm current immune status for different diseases, administration of a vaccination



# RCSI

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programme (unique to each individual), and appropriate follow-up. This work is carried out by the RCSI Student Health Service based in [Mercer's Medical Centre](#).

**Students will only be contacted via their registered mobile number or RCSI email address (not gmail or other). It is the student's responsibility to inform RCSI and Mercer's Medical Centre if their mobile number changes, by emailing [registry@rcsi.ie](mailto:registry@rcsi.ie) and calling 01-4022 300 or by dropping the information into the Mercers Medical Centre in-person.**

As this programme continues over several years, it is vital that students inform Mercer's Medical Centre if they have:

- New contact details (address or mobile number)
- Change in their health status (e.g. new diagnosis)

**It is also very important that students attend for appointments when requested.** There are over three thousand attendances required per year to run this programme, and individual appointments cannot be offered. All RCSI staff members are aware of this programme and understand that a student may have to miss some lectures to attend scheduled appointments. Failure to attend because of a lecture is not a valid excuse.

Failure to comply with information requests or to attend appointments at Mercers Medical Centre will be considered a breach under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations and may result in issuance of a sanction under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations..

Please understand that the consequences of failing to engage with the vaccination programme could lead to a sanction up to and including expulsion which, if this were to occur, would mean that a student would not qualify through RCSI.

The most time-consuming element of the programme is vaccination against Hepatitis B which comprises 3 shots over a six-month period with a follow-up blood test two months later to confirm seroconversion. Up to 10% of students will be negative at this point and will need to have the entire course again. This obviously has implications for starting clinical attachments, patient contact, or doing electives, etc., and is another reason to start the programme as early as possible. Many elective hospitals and prospective employers seek confirmation of your immunisation status. If this is not completed and supplied to them, then you will not be granted such an elective or job.

The bulk of this work should be completed in your first year. Subsequent clinical years will require some further appointments.

On average a first-year student will need to be seen on five occasions (although some may need up to ten attendances, e.g. if their initial Hep B course is unsuccessful), while in later years a single annual attendance is likely to be sufficient for most students.

#### **4. Pregnancy**

Most of these vaccines are contra-indicated in pregnancy. It is extremely important that you do not proceed with vaccinations if you are, or may become, pregnant over the course of the immunisations. You should discuss this with the clinical staff in Mercer's Medical Centre. This may impact on your ability to progress on time through the programme.



# RCSI

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## 5. Costs

### a) **New Entrants / First Year: i.e.: all newly registered RCSI students**

A standard vaccination capitation fee, payable by all students, irrespective of past vaccination history or number of attendances required, is charged in your first-year fees. This vaccination fee will cover the Health Screening Package (First year screening and vaccination programme - Hepatitis B; Hepatitis C; Measles; Mumps; Rubella; Varicella; Tuberculosis; Pertussis). There will be an additional charge if Varicella vaccination is needed.

### b) **Other Years:**

#### **Elective Applications**

If a student wishes to have an [elective application](#) form completed, they must make an appointment to see the nurse in Mercer's Medical Centre. Please inform staff at the time of making the appointment that this relates to an [elective application](#) form. Forms will not be signed unless you see the nurse, and each visit with the nurse will incur a fee.

This fee covers:

- Elective form signing (maximum three forms per visit)
  - Copies of blood test results
  - Official certification of immunisation and blood results
  - Vaccination record letter
- If other blood tests are required, there will be a [further charge](#) for the tests.
  - If vaccinations are required for an elective attachment there will be [a charge](#) for vaccines

## 6. Disease/Virus

### **Hepatitis B**

1. First-year students must attend for blood tests (Hepatitis B Surface Antigen, Hepatitis B Core Antibody, and Hepatitis B antibody if you have already had Hepatitis B vaccinations) taken by the RCSI Student Health Service.
2. Non-immune students are required to be vaccinated against Hepatitis B through the programme carried out by the RCSI Student Health Service. Follow-up serology for evidence of immunity must be taken by the RCSI Student Health Service.
3. Students who show evidence of Hepatitis B or other serious infectivity are referred to the RCSI Blood Borne Viruses Policy.

### **Hepatitis C**

1. All students will be screened for Hepatitis C in first-year and again before their clinical attachments.

### **Measles, Mumps and Rubella**

As the clinical interpretation of mumps serology post-vaccine can be challenging, detectable mumps IgG at a



# RCSI

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single time-point is not considered sufficient evidence for immunity. Administration of two doses of MMR vaccine is preferred to repeat serological testing.

1. Students must provide evidence of having received two doses of MMR.
2. Students without any prior vaccination or who cannot provide evidence of having received both doses of MMR will receive the recommended course of MMR (two doses, given at least one month apart) carried out by the RCSI Student Health Service, unless otherwise contra-indicated.

### **Pertussis (whooping cough)**

1. A booster dose of a low-dose pertussis containing vaccine (Tdap-Boostrix) will be administered to students who come into contact with infants, pregnant women and the immunocompromised to prevent transmission of this disease. If records of recent vaccination are not available, this vaccine is part of the first-year Student Vaccination Programme.

### **Chicken pox (Varicella)**

1. Students without a definite history of chickenpox or vaccination will be considered non-immune and will be tested for the presence of immunity to the Varicella Zoster virus (VZV).
2. Non-immune students will need vaccination against VZV through the programme carried out by the RCSI Student Health Service. Vaccination via Student Health will incur an additional cost to the Healthcare Screening Package fee.

Students may choose to get these vaccinations elsewhere e.g. with their family physician, and, if so, it is essential that a copy of the post-vaccination blood test confirming immunity is provided to Mercer's Medical Centre. If a student comes into contact with chicken pox and cannot demonstrate immunity, they will be removed from clinical duties and patient contact for 21 days. Also, students may wish to participate in overseas elective attachments and many of these insist on evidence of immunity to Varicella.

### **Tuberculosis (TB)**

Students registered to any of the RCSI primary healthcare qualification programmes will be assessed in relation to TB as part of the First-Year Vaccination programme.

Quantiferon (IGRA) blood test: this is a screening test to detect the presence of active TB in an individual. This will be compulsory for any students who are identified to be at possible risk based on their declaration of close contact with a TB case, suggestive symptoms, high risk travel or the absence of a BCG scar. The aim is to protect future patients, the students, their classmates, staff and colleagues. This test may need to be repeated in the future for maximal reassurance.

**Medical Referrals:** In the first instance, the Practice Nurse in Mercer's Medical Centre will organise some basic investigations, including blood tests (FBC and CRP), MSU (for sterile pyuria), and chest x-ray (referral form to state "being screened for TB").

The student will then be examined by a nominated doctor in Mercer's Medical Centre who will also review the questionnaire and investigation results. If clinical suspicion of active or latent TB remains, then the student will be referred to a consultant physician for further assessment and/or treatment.

### **Meningitis C**

1. Students should provide evidence of receiving one dose of Meningitis C vaccine.



# RCSI

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2. Otherwise, students will be required to obtain a single shot vaccination offered vaccination (a single shot).

## HIV

The policy for screening health professional students for HIV infection in Ireland is under review at present. Students who are HIV positive or who think they may be, must inform Mercers Medical Centre and the Associate Director for Academic Affairs as soon as possible via [registry@rcsi.ie](mailto:registry@rcsi.ie). Students are referred to the Blood Borne virus policy for further information.

## Covid-19

Even if you have previously been fully vaccinated, it is important to remember that you can still transmit the virus to others (but remain asymptomatic yourself), and also that vaccination is not successful in at least 5% of people. For these reasons, if you become symptomatic, or are a close contact, then restrictions might apply, particularly for clinical placements. Up-to-date advice will be available from [mercersmedicalcentre.com](http://mercersmedicalcentre.com)

## 7. Outbreak Situations

1. 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.
2. Students who contract an infectious illness should adhere strictly to the minimum period of isolation recommended and must not return to the clinical environment until that period has elapsed and they have recovered from their illness.
3. Students should avail of any other appropriate immunisation as and when recommended during an outbreak situation. This may include obtaining boosters to previously completed primary immunisation courses.

## Active Infection

Students who show evidence of active infection at any stage of their professional career will be required to withdraw from patient contact and may also be temporarily excluded from other university activities, undertake treatment, and demonstrate non-infectivity before re-admission.

## 8. ADVICE TO STUDENTS WITH SERIOUS CONTAGIOUS/INFECTIOUS DISEASES

It is unethical for students who believe that they might be infected with a serious contagious disease (e.g. Hepatitis, HIV etc.) not to seek and accept advice from professional colleagues in relation to limiting their studies and practice in order to protect their patients, fellow students and staff. Colleagues who are consulted have a dual role. They must counsel and support the student concerned, but they must ensure that the student does not pose a risk to patients and others. If such a risk exists, the Associate Director for Academic Affairs must be informed as soon as possible.

In the event that a student breaches this policy they will be liable to disciplinary action under the RCSI's Disciplinary Regulations which could lead to a sanction being imposed up to and including expulsion.

## 9. Summary of Vaccination Process

1. It is important that students read the key student policy documents available prior to registration (Infectious



# RCSI

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Diseases and General Health Policy and Blood Borne Virus Policy).

- 2 Mercer's will contact students by email ahead of the start date in RCSI, and students are required to forward relevant vaccination records. This helps the Student Vaccination Programme (SVP) run as efficiently and safely as possible by providing information prior to arrival at RCSI, and determine individual needs for this vaccination programme.
- 3 All new students are invited to an Orientation Day and given further information on this screening and vaccination programme.
- 4 Mercer's Medical Centre will contact students with the date and time of the first appointment. Students must attend at the scheduled time. Mercer's Medical Centre cannot offer alternative appointments. All RCSI staff are aware of this programme and understand that you may have to miss some lectures to attend this. Failure to attend because of a lecture is not a valid excuse.
- 5 Students must return all requested forms on time.
- 6 Follow-up appointments are issued as needed.

In the event that a student breaches this policy, students will be liable to disciplinary action under the RCSI's Disciplinary Regulations which could lead to a sanction being imposed up to and including expulsion.



# RCSI

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## 10. Frequently Asked Questions

### **Where can I get a copy of the Vaccination/Screening Programme Form?**

Full details will be emailed to you.

### **Who must complete the Vaccination/Screening Programme Form?**

All incoming students on primary healthcare qualification programmes, regardless of age, must complete the form.

### **What should I do if my physician doesn't speak English?**

You will need to have the information for the form and all your relevant records translated into English.

### **Can I scan my immunisation records and send them attached to an e-mail?**

No. Mercer's will contact you by email ahead of your start date in RCSI and you will be instructed on how to forward any relevant vaccination records that you already have electronically (currently through the use of MS Forms). This will help us run the SVP as efficiently and safely as possible by providing us with information in advance of your arrival in RCSI. This will allow us to determine what your individual needs are for this vaccination programme and plan accordingly.

### **Do I have to pay for my screening-required immunisations, or are they covered by RCSI?**

You must pay for them. A standard vaccination capitation fee, payable by all students, irrespective of past vaccination history or number of attendances required, is charged in your first-year fees.

Information on charges for electives and other items can be found on Mercers Medical Centre website.

<https://www.mercersmedicalcentre.com/rcsi-students/rcsi-student-electives/>

### **What immunisations are necessary?**

Please refer to the main document above for a complete list and instructions.

### **What should I do if my immunisation records are lost or unavailable?**

You could have special blood tests called IgG titers to show immunity. Vaccinations against those diseases to which you are not already immune will be required

### **Why do I need to have two mumps vaccines?**

In response to an outbreak of mumps on several university campuses in previous years, students entering RCSI must have proof of two doses of a mumps vaccine or MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) or proof of immunity through blood testing. This is also recommended as a way to decrease the risk of mumps among the students and others in the community in which they reside.

### **In my country, a rubella immunisation is required for females only.**

Rubella immunity is required for all students. Regardless of your sex, you must have a rubella immunisation or a blood titre that proves immunity.

### **Will you accept my mother's word that I was immunised for measles, mumps, and rubella?**

No. While your parents may be a reliable source of knowledge about your childhood health, we do require medically documented proof of immunity.

### **What does "documented proof" of immunity mean?**

Documented proof is a written record of your immunisation dates provided by school, university, college, or physician's office, and/or results of laboratory blood testing.



# RCSI

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**My blood titre was equivocal or borderline. Do I need another immunisation?**

Yes, because we cannot accept borderline immunity. You will need another immunisation to boost your immunity.

**Do I need the hepatitis B immunisation if I'm married?**

Yes. The hepatitis B immunisation is required all newly entering students to primary healthcare qualification programmes, regardless of age, gender, or marital status.

**How many shots are there for the hepatitis B immunisation?**

Three. The second injection must be administered at least 28 to 60 days after the first injection. The third injection must be administered six months after the first injection.



**RCSI**

**[Annex 2.1.5]**

## **RCSI Drug & Alcohol Regulations for Students & Scholars**

RCSI DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE

### **Contents**

1.	Context .....	2
2.	Purpose .....	2
3.	Scope .....	2
4.	Policy Statement .....	3
5.	Responsibilities .....	5
6.	Alcohol at social events .....	7
7.	Monitoring .....	7
8.	Appendices .....	7
8.1	Supports and Related Documents .....	7

## **1. Context**

RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences is committed to promoting a safe and supportive environment in which to study and work. Specifically, RCSI wishes to create and maintain a drug-free and healthy-alcohol educational and clinical training environment. In partnership with students,<sup>1</sup> RCSI will ensure the health, safety and welfare of patients, students and staff, and the reputation of RCSI, are not jeopardised through drug, substance or alcohol misuse. RCSI recognises its responsibility to comply with legal requirements regarding the use of alcohol and drugs on RCSI premises. It also recognises its responsibility to consider the needs of those who, for personal, cultural or religious reasons, do not drink alcohol. Drug use and alcohol misuse will be best addressed within the broader context of lifestyle issues and a supportive RCSI environment.

RCSI is committed to educating and raising awareness amongst students on the dangers posed by drugs, alcohol and other substances, and to creating a culture of self and peer-care to support wellbeing.

## **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to set out RCSI's views on drugs, alcohol and illegal substances use and misuse and the responsibilities of RCSI and students relating to drugs and alcohol. Specific objectives of the policy include:

- Promoting the health and wellbeing of RCSI students
- Promoting personal responsibility and social obligation to RCSI and the wider community
- Providing a campus environment where no/low-risk drinking is the 'social norm'
- Providing an environment where not using drugs is the social norm
- Providing education programmes about the adverse effects of drug use and alcohol misuse and ways to intervene if concerned about another's drug or alcohol usage
- Providing tools to support and clear referral pathways for students.

## **3. Scope**

This policy relates to all students registered at RCSI to a programme of study mapped to the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). It applies on and off campus.

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<sup>1</sup> RCSI students include undergraduate and postgraduate students and postgraduate research scholars

#### **4. Policy Statement**

Working in partnership with students, RCSI will strive for an educational environment that is drug use and alcohol-misuse free. RCSI will never condone taking illicit drugs or misusing drugs or alcohol. Creating this culture and promoting engagement with RCSI services will be through education and support. Ensuring no harm – to students themselves, their peers, patients and colleagues – by educating, nurturing and support, will be the core of our approach.

##### **a. Education:**

We - RCSI faculty, staff, and students - are committed to raising awareness and educating our community:

- i. Regarding the impact and dangers of drug use and alcohol misuse.
- ii. On the available support systems should they have concerns regarding the use of drugs or alcohol misuse by themselves or others.
- iii. Through the provision of additional training for those in leadership positions and positions of influence in this area.
- iv. By hosting on-campus events with experts in the area of prevention, addiction support etc.
- v. By designing targeted interventions for high-risk groups.

##### **b. Nurture**

We recognise the importance of creating a culture where zero drug and low/no alcohol use is the norm, alongside early intervention, and where necessary, harm reduction. We acknowledge that students may feel vulnerable and be afraid to seek help for themselves or others.

Students have a responsibility to seek help and the University will take a supportive approach to their studies, as long as the student engages with the help and support available and there is no risk of harm to themselves, patients, peers or staff.

##### **i. RCSI Services – contact information**

- (1) [CoMPPAS - Student Welfare and Wellbeing](#) - our social worker-led student welfare service provides direct, confidential and practical help and guidance. They can arrange for specialist service referrals and interventions to assist students with drug and/or alcohol concerns.
- (2) [Mercers Medical Centre](#). It is important to note that while Mercer's is affiliated with

RCSI, the University does not have access to any part of the clinical notes of any student. Confidentiality is of the utmost importance to Mercer's. Notes will not be released from Mercer's Medical Centre without the consent of the patient.

**ii. External Services including HSE**

<https://www.drugs.ie/phone> Drugs.ie is managed by the HSE National Social Inclusion Office. Information and tools about drugs, where to get help and services available are provided in a range of languages.

<https://www2.hse.ie/alcohol/> HSE Drugs and Alcohol Helpline: Freephone 1800 459459 for confidential information and support.

<https://niteline.ie/> - Niteline is run by students for students. They are a listening, support and information service run by and for the students of DBS, MU, NCAD, RCSI, TCD, TUD & UCD and their affiliate colleges. You can talk about anything; no problem is too big or too small. Phone: 1800 793 793 between 9pm and 2.30am every night of term.

[RCPI: Tackling Alcohol Health Harm](#) – RCPI are committed to reducing alcohol health harm in Ireland and have a range of policy documents and resources available to assist health professionals to reduce harm in people.

[Alcoholics Anonymous \(AA\)](#) Ireland – Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problems and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.

[Narcotics Anonymous \(NA\)](#) Ireland – Narcotics Anonymous message: An addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use and find a new way to live. Anyone who wants to stop using drugs may become a member of Narcotics Anonymous. Membership is not limited to addicts using any particular drug. Those who feel they may have a problem with drugs, legal or illegal, including alcohol, are welcome in NA. Recovery in NA focuses on the problem of addiction, not on any particular drug.

**c. Support**

We will support students who seek help for themselves or others. Within this context, it is important that RCSI students and scholars understand they are prohibited from attending any educational environment whilst they have any of the following in their systems: alcohol; illegal drugs; controlled substances; designer (synthetic) drugs; over-the-counter, prescription-only drugs used outside of the recommended or prescribed manner; legal “highs” or psychoactive mushrooms. RCSI students should not:

- i. Misuse alcohol on or off campus including when representing RCSI at sporting or other events;
- ii. Attend the educational environment if they could be impaired by alcohol;
- iii. Be involved in the supply or sale of drugs;
- iv. Bring drugs or use drugs on any RCSI or affiliated clinical sites.

If there is a perceived risk caused by a student's use of drugs and/or alcohol misuse, in such a way that their health, performance, or any other person or patient's safety could be perceived to be adversely affected, then RCSI will work with the student involved to remove this risk. This could involve students' engaging in treatment and support; being monitored; practising under supervision; taking a leave of absence, or in some cases being required to leave the programme.

Every effort will be made to support the student's welfare and their future career. However, this may not always be possible, particularly if the student refuses to seek help; does not co-operate with treatment or behaves in a manner which places themselves or others in immediate or continued risk. Action may be taken under the relevant RCSI Regulations.<sup>2</sup>

## **5. Responsibilities**

### **a. RCSI**

- i. RCSI recognises the place of moderate alcohol consumption in many areas of society. We wish to create an environment within RCSI which promotes a healthy attitude while accepting the potential of alcohol misuse to adversely affect the wellbeing of individuals.
- ii. Commits to providing a supportive environment which assists in informing students to make healthy choices that promote health and wellbeing.
- iii. Provides support to those who may require assistance (counselling or referral to appropriate medical services) during their time in RCSI, as far as is reasonably practicable.
- iv. Student Services & the School of Postgraduate Studies are responsible for assisting and advising students in running events in a safe and healthy way.
- v. CoMPPAS is responsible for assisting and advising students, including referral to external specialised services if required.
- vi. Registry Services is responsible for advising staff and students on the relevant policies and regulations and their applications.
- vii. Will provide appropriate training as required to key student-facing staff.
- viii. Staff who suspect that a student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, especially if the

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<sup>2</sup> RCSI Codes of Conduct; RCSI Fitness to Study; RCSI Disciplinary Regulations

student is showing behaviour that could put themselves or someone else in danger, should:

- (a) Seek help for the student by informing the relevant first aider/front of house staff if it is during normal operating hours
  - (b) Dial 999 if the student is in imminent danger or their health is at risk
  - (c) Inform [registry@rcsi.ie](mailto:registry@rcsi.ie) as soon as possible.
- ix. Staff who suspect that a student may have a problem with drug dependency or alcohol misuse should seek advice from [registry@rcsi.ie](mailto:registry@rcsi.ie) or CoMPPAS [swo@rcsi.ie](mailto:swo@rcsi.ie).

#### **b. RCSI Students**

- i. Should ensure they are in a fit state and not in any way impaired, to attend an educational, research or clinical environment.
- ii. Must never be under the influence of drugs, or alcohol in any formal educational, research or clinical environment.
- iii. Must be responsible for their actions at all times. Students are reminded of their obligations to respect the rights of others and to comply with RCSI rules and regulations and the relevant RCSI Codes of Conduct.
- iv. Must not be in possession of any drugs or alcohol in any formal educational, research or clinical environment. RCSI does not permit the possession or use, of any intoxicant on RCSI property, except at an approved RCSI-organised special event.
- v. If concerned about a fellow student, should seek help by contacting [swo@rcsi.ie](mailto:swo@rcsi.ie) or Mercer's Medical Centre. If there is imminent risk to the other student:
  - (a) During an RCSI event, they should inform an RCSI Student Services representative, front of house staff or Security
  - (b) If in an emergency, they should ring 999.
- vi. Students should notify RCSI Learning Access and Facilitation Services at [learningsupport@rcsi.ie](mailto:learningsupport@rcsi.ie) if they are taking prescribed medication that could affect their ability to work or study.

#### **c. Students' Unions – Undergraduate and Postgraduate**

- i. The Students' Unions (SUs) are available as a point of contact and support.
- ii. SU's will regularly publicise support services through their social channels.
- iii. SU's will organise a range of activities and calendar of events that are educational and informative.
- iv. SU's will organise a number of alcohol-free social events.
- v. At the planning stage for any events at which it is intended to serve alcohol, students must

apply in advance for an alcohol permit.

- vi. Any sponsorship funding obtained by students (Unions, Societies etc.) may not be used to fund alcohol at events.

## 6. Alcohol at social events

RCSI has a diverse student population and for many, socialising around alcohol is not always the norm. All student events on RCSI premises where it is intended that alcohol will be available must be approved through the relevant procedures. The Student Services Office will oversee the schedule of undergraduate social events and related expenditures to promote a responsible approach to alcohol use among students.

Sponsorship of student events by drinks companies is prohibited.

## 7. Monitoring

To protect the physical and mental wellbeing of students, the safety of patients and to assure the maintenance of a healthy drug-free environment, issues of ongoing concern in relation to a student with a drug or alcohol problem can require a student to be subject to drug or alcohol testing/monitoring.

## 8. Appendices

### 8.1 Supports and Related Documents

[RCSI Code of Conduct](#)

[RCSI Postgraduate Scholars Code of Conduct](#)

[RCSI Code of Conduct BScATT](#)

[RCSI Disciplinary Regulations](#)

[RCSI Fitness to Study Policy](#)

[CoMPPAS - Student Welfare and Wellbeing](#)

[Mercers Medical Centre](#)

### 8.2 Definitions and Legislative

#### Background Definitions

**Alcohol, drug and substance misuse** is defined as the intermittent or continual use of alcohol or any drug or substance which impacts health, functioning or performance in placement or study,

which affects efficiency, productivity, safety, attendance, time-keeping or professional conduct. **Drug** – this includes any substance (other than alcohol) that produces physical, mental, emotional or behavioural changes in the user. It also includes any medicines where the medicines have not been prescribed for the person possessing or using them and/or such medicines which are not taken in accordance with the directions.

### **Legislative Background**

RCSI is cognisant of the legal framework within which these regulations will operate. The possession and supply of drugs is illegal and covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act (1977) and the Criminal Justice (Psychoactive Substances) Act (2010). RCSI recognises that it is a criminal offence to take, possess, manufacture or sell illegal drugs. This policy aligns with current national government policy and strategy including;

- Public Health (Alcohol) Act, 2018
- National Drugs Strategy Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery, 2017 –2025
- Framework for Response to the Use of Illicit Substances within Higher Education (2020).



**RCSI**

**[Annex 2.1.6]**

## **Student Privacy Policy**

RCSI DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE

### **Contents**

Information We Collect, and How We Use It .....	1
Legal Bases .....	3
Sharing Your Information.....	4
Data Transfers .....	5
Your Rights .....	5
Retention of Information.....	6
Amendments.....	6
Contact Us.....	6



# RCSI

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We invite you to read this privacy policy (“**Policy**”), which explains our data protection practices and how we handle your information in the context of your education and the administration of your studies at RCSI (the “**Services**”). This Policy describes the types of information collected and created in the context of your studies at RCSI, how and why we use such information, who we share it with, and your legal rights.

When we refer to “**RCSI**”, we mean the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, which is the controller of your personal information. We also use the “**College**”, “**University**”, “**we**”, “**us**” and “**our**” to refer to RCSI in this Policy.

Please also read the RCSI Student Agreement and the other RCSI regulations and policies referenced in it, which set out the terms governing your role and position as a student at RCSI. Violating these rules or aspects of such policies may lead to disciplinary action, and may render you liable to disciplinary sanctions or penalties, including suspension, or in some cases expulsion/discontinuation.

### **Information We Collect, and How We Use It**

RCSI collects and processes your personal information for the purposes of ensuring the safe and effective management and administration of your studies as an RCSI student; to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Student Agreement and related policies; and pursuant to legal obligations to which it is subject. This data may include sensitive information, for example information relating to your health or medical circumstances, where it is necessary to collect and process such information for the purposes outlined in the Student Agreement and to provide RCSI support services to you.

For example, we may collect or receive the following information:

- *Application information:* When you apply to RCSI, or register as a new student, or register annually as a student, as the case may be, and from time to time, you provide, as appropriate, your name, contact details, application details, CV/resumé, academic results and references, and confirmation that you have not been expelled from any academic institution. We use this information to manage and administer your role, position and journey as a student at RCSI, including to verify and validate your application.
- *Profile information:* When you apply to RCSI, or register as a new student, or register annually as a student, as the case may be, and from time to time, you provide, as appropriate, data to describe your profile such as first generation to attend university, gender, disability, ethnicity. We use this information internally to understand our student demographic to inform decisions about student supports and we also use this information for reporting, in aggregate and on an anonymised basis, for external purposes such as university rankings, government agencies and/or accreditation bodies.
- *Government Sponsors* When registering, you may also provide other information, such as contact details of your government sponsors and next-of-kin. We may correspond with your government sponsors in connection with any continuance, and/or progress, in the University, in connection with your academic examination results, or, in cases of emergency, in relation to your health and general welfare.
- *Next-of-kin:* We may correspond with your nominated next-of-kin, in cases of emergency, and in relation to your health and general welfare.
- *Medical examinations or procedures.* The COVID 19 Pandemic has created the need for a greater level of oversight, vigilance and reporting. COVID 19 is a reportable disease, and as with all other



reportable diseases, our student medical services will notify our public health services accordingly. This is completely in the interest of the safety of you, your fellow students, college and hospital staff and the wider community. In addition to the explicit consent you have provided pursuant to Art. 9.2 (a), this processing may also be required to protect your vital interests or that of another (Art. 9.2 (c)) and/or for reasons of public health (Art. 9.2(i) & Recital 54).

- *Alcohol and drug testing.* In certain cases, such as where recommended by the RCSI Disciplinary Committee (who may make such recommendation on reasonable suspicion that a student may be using drugs, or as part of a student's rehabilitation monitoring), you may be required to undergo alcohol or drug testing. More information is available in the Alcohol, Drug and Substance Misuse Policy.
- *Vetting (Police Clearance) and criminal information.* If work or activities you undertake constitutes "relevant work or activities" within the meaning of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 (as amended) ("**Vetting Act**"), RCSI will submit an application to the National Vetting Bureau for a vetting disclosure relating to you. In addition, during your study, you are obliged under RCSI policies to promptly disclose to the RCSI Associate Director for Academic Affairs details of any criminal investigations<sup>1</sup> and criminal convictions other than "spent" convictions, together with details of any pending criminal charges against you. We may use this information to determine if you are permitted to carry out "relevant work or activities" under the Vetting Act and/or to determine if you are suitable to continue as a student in RCSI. Any student (aged 18 or over) who has been resident outside of Ireland for a continuous period of six months or more, is also required to provide an original Police Clearance Certificate from the jurisdiction where they were previously resident. This Police Clearance Certificate must cover the period of residency in that country and confirm whether the student has any record of convictions whilst residing there. If this Certificate is not in English, the student must provide a certified English version. More information is available in the Vetting (Police Clearance) Disclosures Policy.
- *University communications.* We will communicate with you during the application process and throughout your time as a student at the University for various purposes, including University notifications and updates. Such communications may occur by email or post, over the phone, and, in limited cases, by SMS.
- *CCTV.* Your image may be captured on CCTV on RCSI's campuses. Such images will be processed in line with RCSI's CCTV Policy.
- *Recorded lectures.* Where lectures are recorded for the purposes of facilitating and enhancing the student experience, you may be photographed and/or filmed as part of group scenes in classes or and any contributions you make in class may be recorded. These recordings are likely to be hosted on Panopto, Microsoft Azure, (or whatever video hosting platform is best suited) and will be made available on Moodle.
- *Simulation skills sessions.* Where sessions are recorded for the purposes facilitating and enhancing the student experience, you may be recorded for feedback purposes.

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<sup>1</sup> Criminal investigations include being arrested or interviewed under caution by a police officer whether in the Republic of Ireland or elsewhere.



# RCSI

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- *University videography and photography:* RCSI will capture select University events and student activities through videography (live or recorded) and/or photography. This video and photography is archived for the University records and may also be used for the purposes of promoting the University activities through the media, digital channels and on marketing materials.
- *IT monitoring.* Where a formal investigatory (or similar) process is required and approved as appropriate by RCSI's senior managers, RCSI may, in very limited circumstances, review the content, logs, metadata and/or other administrative information concerning communications made and activities undertaken using RCSI's computing resources in line with the IT Acceptable Usage Policy and the Student Agreement.
- *Research.* We routinely collect Central Applications Office (CAO) data, student feedback and examination results for internal quality assurance purposes. We may use such information in an aggregated and anonymised manner to inform the continuing development and improvement of the student experience. We may share such aggregated information where it is of value to the research community, particularly with regard to the education of healthcare professionals, and it may be submitted for publication (subject to relevant ethical approval). We may also participate in, or facilitate research that requires data collection via surveys and / or focus groups. Relevant student groups may be invited to participate in such research on the understanding that participation is voluntary and the data will always be anonymised.
- *Analytics.* Learning analytics will be performed on individual student performance throughout the academic year to produce aggregate, anonymised reports which will identify where additional support and interventions may be required to enhance the overall educational experience at RCSI and take individual action. The aggregate data may be used by RCSI in the future for research purposes.

## Legal Bases

We rely on a number of legal bases to collect, use, share, and otherwise process the personal information we have about you for the purposes described in this Policy. This means that we may rely on the following when processing your personal information:

- As is necessary to perform the Student Agreement and to provide the Services;
- Where you have consented to the processing (noting that you may revoke such consent at any time);
- For RCSI to comply with a legal obligation, a court order, or to exercise and defend legal claims;
- To protect your vital interests, or those of others;
- Where you have made the information public;
- Where necessary in the public interest; and
- Where necessary for the purposes of RCSI's, or a third party's, legitimate interests, such as those of visitors, members or commercial partners. In certain cases, described in more detail below, we may process 'sensitive' or 'special categories' of information, such as relating to your health. Along with the above list, we may process such information:



- Where necessary for RCSI to carry out obligations and exercise specific rights in the context of social security and social protection law;
- Where necessary for the purposes of preventive or occupational medicine, medical diagnosis, the promotion and provision of health or social care or treatment or the management of health or social care systems and services; and
- Where necessary for reasons of public interest in the area of public health.

## Our Legitimate Interests

Where we rely on legitimate interests, we may process your information in line with the following interests:

- *Keeping the University safe and secure.* We may process your information as is necessary to pursue our and our students' legitimate interests in ensuring the University is safe and secure, such as by implementing and enhancing physical and technical security measures and protections, protecting against fraud, spam and abuse, and enforcing our Student Agreement.
- *Providing, developing and improving the Services.* We may process your information to provide the Services and develop and improve them over time. For example, we may carry out analyses to determine where additional support and interventions may be required to enhance the educational experience at RCSI for you and/or others (including the student body generally).
- *Providing seamless Services with our affiliates.* Where the Services require the engagement of affiliated organisations, we share your information with such affiliates to provide and improve the Services. For example, we may disclose vetting (police clearance) information to student placement sites where appropriate.
- *Continuing the relationship between you and RCSI after you graduate.* Upon graduation, RCSI will continue to engage with you through the Alumni Relations Office in both our and your legitimate interest to keep you up to date on University matters described above.
- *Advancing the University's mission.* Upon graduation, RCSI will continue to engage with you to seek your support for student initiatives in the context of the legitimate interests of advancing the University's mission to 'educate, nurture and discover for the benefit of human health.'
- *Maintaining accreditation standards:* We may process your information to report in aggregate for external purposes such as university rankings, government agencies and/or accreditation bodies.

## Sharing Your Information

In certain cases, we may share your personal information with third parties, including service providers. Such sharing may be necessary for the purposes described in this Policy, for the management and administration of your studies as an RCSI student, or otherwise for the provision of the Services. In addition to the receipts described elsewhere in this Policy, your information may be shared in the following ways:

- *Third party service providers.* In the course of providing the Services, we may share your personal information with third parties who provide services to RCSI, in accordance with University policies. These third parties are contractually required to process such information on our behalf for the limited purposes we instruct, and are required to protect and secure your information.



# RCSI

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- *Third party controllers.* We may share certain information with third party controllers who can use the information for their own specific purposes. For example, we are required to share information with the Department of Education and Science and the Higher Education Authority of Ireland for statistical and funding purposes. We share the results of the United States Licensing Examination (USMLE), although the University does not require all students to take these examinations. This information is required to maintain student eligibility for US Financial Aid and is used for statistical and funding purposes (Medical students only). We share information with relevant professional regulatory bodies to certify that you have completed and passed all the examinations for the award in order to facilitate registration. Details of postgraduate research projects (eg thesis title, supervisor name, course) are made available in public presentations such as researcher profile web pages and printed communications. We also make Garda vetting (police clearance) disclosures available to student placement sites where it will be held on file for the period of time that you are carrying out your student placement.
- *Legal and safety reasons.* We may retain, preserve, and share your personal information if we have a good faith belief that it is reasonably necessary in order to (i) respond to a legal request, such as a search warrant, court order, or other request from government or law enforcement; (ii) detect, prevent, investigate or address security issues, fraud or or suspected illegal activity; (iii) protect our or any third party's rights, property or safety; (iv) enforce the Student Agreement or any other agreements we have with you; or (v) prevent physical injury or other harm to any person or entity, including you, other students, staff and members of the public.
- *Aggregated information.* We may share certain aggregated information and statistics with third parties as described throughout this Policy. For example, we may share certain aggregated information where it is of value to the research community, particularly with regard to the education of healthcare professionals.

## Data Transfers

In certain cases, we may transfer personal data outside the EEA in accordance with EU data protection law for the purposes of RCSI's administration and management of its students, including where it is necessary to provide the Services and perform the Student Agreement. We may use a legal mechanism known as the "standard contractual clauses" to protect information transferred outside the EEA. These are contracts that contain standard commitments approved by the EU Commission protecting the privacy and security of the information transferred.

You understand that we may transfer and store your data outside your home country, including to, and in, the US, as described in this Policy. The privacy protections and the rights of authorities to access your personal information in some of these countries may not be the same as in your home country. RCSI will only transfer personal data as permitted by law, and will take steps intended to ensure appropriate protection of your personal information.

## Your Rights

You have a number of rights under EU data protection law in respect of your personal information:

- *Access and porting.* You can access much of your information by logging into the Student Gateway. If you require additional access, contact us at [registry@rcsi.ie](mailto:registry@rcsi.ie) to request a copy of your information. Where legally required, we can provide your information in an easily accessible format and assist in transferring some of this information to third parties.



# RCSI

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- *Restrict, Rectify, Limit, Delete.* You can also rectify, restrict, limit or delete much of your information by contacting us at [registry@rcsi.ie](mailto:registry@rcsi.ie).
- *Object.* If we process your information based on our legitimate interests explained above, or in the public interest, you can object to this processing in certain circumstances. In such cases, we will cease processing your information unless we have compelling legitimate grounds to continue processing, or where it is needed for legal reasons. Where we use your data for direct marketing, you can always object using the unsubscribe link in such communications or by emailing us at [registry@rcsi.ie](mailto:registry@rcsi.ie).
- *Revoke consent.* Where you have previously provided your consent, you have the right to withdraw your consent to the processing of your information at any time. In certain cases, we may continue to process your information after you have withdrawn consent if we have a legal basis to do so or if your withdrawal of consent was limited to certain processing activities.
- *Complain.* Should you wish to raise a concern about our use of your information (and without prejudice to any other rights you may have), you have the right to do so with your local supervisory authority or RCSI's lead supervisory authority, the Irish Data Protection Commission.

Office of the Data Protection Commission  
21 Fitzwilliam Square South  
Dublin 2  
D02 RD28  
Ireland

Phone +353 (761) 104 800 | LoCall 1890 25 22 31 | Fax +353 57 868 4757 | email [info@dataprotection.ie](mailto:info@dataprotection.ie)

### **Retention of Information**

We may retain your information for as long as necessary in order to ensure the safe management and administration of your studies as an RCSI student, and, upon successful completion of your studies, for the administration of your records as an *Alumnus* of RCSI, subject to any legal obligations to further retain such information or in order to defend against legal claims.

### **Amendments**

From time to time, we may make changes to this Policy, so please review it periodically. If we materially change our Policy, we will take steps to notify you in advance of the change, for example by emailing you or by posting a notice in Moodle.

### **Contact Us**

Our Data Protection Officer can be contacted at [dataprotection@rcsi.ie](mailto:dataprotection@rcsi.ie)



**RCSI**

## [Annex 2.1.7]

# RCSI CCTV Policy

RCSI DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE

## Contents

1.	Introduction .....	1
2.	Purpose & Scope of this Policy .....	1
3.	CCTV Purposes .....	1
4.	Proportionality & Legitimate Usage of CCTV Monitoring .....	1
5.	Notification – Policy and Signage .....	1
6.	Security of CCTV system .....	2
7.	Storage and Retention of CCTV images.....	2
8.	Covert Surveillance .....	2
9.	Access .....	2
10.	Responsibilities .....	4
11.	Security Companies and Service Providers.....	4
12.	Implementation & Review.....	5

## **1. Introduction**

Closed Circuit Television Systems (CCTV) are installed in Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) for the purposes outlined in section 3 of this policy.

All CCTV systems, under the control of RCSI, will operate in compliance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018 and will only be used for the purposes specified in this policy.

## **2. Purpose & Scope of this Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to inform staff of the correct usage of and access to the CCTV system, and to ensure that authorised third party contractors are aware of their duties and responsibilities when using RCSI's CCTV system.

This policy relates to the location and positioning of CCTV cameras, the usage of the CCTV system and the monitoring, recording, retention and subsequent usage of such recorded material, in compliance with Data Protection legislation.

## **3. CCTV Purposes**

CCTV at RCSI is used for the purposes of:

- protecting college property and assets
- promoting the health and safety of staff, students and the general public;
- investigating insurance claims;
- preventing crime and anti-social behaviour (including theft and vandalism);
- supporting the Gardai in their role to prevent and/or investigate criminal activity; and
- ensuring that the College rules are respected and upheld

## **4. Proportionality & Legitimate Usage of CCTV Monitoring**

A privacy impact assessment has been carried out on the existing CCTV system by the Records & Information Compliance Manager in conjunction with Estates and Support Services to ensure that the monitoring and usage of the CCTV system is proportionate to the CCTV principles outlined above, whilst safeguarding the privacy of those individuals identifiable.

This privacy impact assessment will be reviewed on an annual basis and new cameras or new positioning of existing cameras will be reviewed on an individual basis.

CCTV monitoring of public areas is limited to uses that do not violate the individual's reasonable expectation of privacy.

## **5. Notification – Policy and Signage**

RCSI will provide a copy of this CCTV Policy on request to staff, students and the general public. In addition a copy of same is available on the staff and student portals.

Adequate signage is positioned and prominently displayed at all RCSI entrances. Signage shall include the name and contact details of the data controller (RCSI) as well as the specific purpose(s) for the CCTV system. The exact positioning of the signage is detailed in the privacy impact assessment.

**WARNING**  
**CCTV cameras in operation**

***Images are being monitored and recorded for the purpose of crime-prevention, for the safety of our staff and students and for the protection of RCSI and its property.***

***This scheme is controlled by RCSI Estate and Support Services Department and operated by Security Service provider.***

***For more information contact Estate and Support Offices 01 4022101***

**6. Security of CCTV system**

The monitoring equipment and related digital footage is securely stored in a restricted access area. Unauthorised access to this area is not permitted at any time. The area is locked when not occupied by authorised personnel. A log of access to CCTV images and recordings is maintained, and only possible via password.

**7. Storage and Retention of CCTV images**

The images captured by the CCTV system will be retained for a maximum of 30 days, after which time they will be automatically overwritten. Where an issue has been identified which requires further investigation using CCTV images, and which is in line with the purposes specified in this policy, images will be specifically retained in the context of an investigation/prosecution of that issue.

The images/recordings will be stored in a secure environment with a log of access kept. Access will be restricted to authorised personnel. It is the responsibility of the Estate and Support Services department to supervise the access and maintenance of the CCTV System. Estates and Support Services delegate the administration of the CCTV System to specific managers within the department; day-to-day operation and surveillance of the CCTV system is contracted to a third party security provider.

Secure measures will be employed when using disk storage, with automatic logs of access to the images created.

**8. Covert Surveillance**

RCSI does not engage in covert surveillance.

Where An Garda Síochána request to carry out covert surveillance from RCSI premises, such covert surveillance will be formally requested by appropriate senior members, District / Station Superintendent from An Garda Síochána to Estate and Support Services and authorised / approved by same.

**9. Access**

**Authorised access**

Access to the CCTV system and stored images will be restricted to authorised personnel only i.e. designated Managers within Estate and Support Services and approved RCSI contract security staff.

CCTV footage may be accessed in line with CCTV principles and in the following circumstances:

- By An Garda Síochána where RCSI are required, by law, to make a report regarding the commission of a suspected crime;
- Following a request by An Garda Síochána when a crime or suspected crime has taken place and/or when it is suspected that illegal/anti-social behaviour is taking place on / near RCSI property,
- To assist the relevant appropriately appointed College Officer in establishing facts in cases of suspected breach of RCSI's Student Code of Conduct;
- To assist the relevant appropriately appointed staff or externals in establishing facts in cases of suspected breach of relevant RCSI's policies and procedures;
- To data subjects (or their legal representatives), pursuant to an access request where the time, date and location of the recordings is furnished to RCSI,
- To individuals (or their legal representatives) subject to a court order;
- To investigate insurance claims.

### **Requests by An Garda Síochána**

Any requests for CCTV recordings/images from An Garda Síochána must be supported by a declaration, in writing, from the appropriate District / Station Superintendent confirming that CCTV is required as part of an investigation. This is retained on file by the Estates and Support Services Office for a duration of 3 years, after which time it is destroyed.

### **RCSI Staff request for access as part of an investigation**

In certain circumstances as deemed necessary, the recordings may also be viewed by appropriately appointed College Officers in line with the CCTV principles set out in section 3.

Any requests for CCTV recordings/images from RCSI staff must be supported by a declaration, in writing (email), confirming that CCTV requests form part of an investigation – investigation pertaining to crime-prevention, safety of our staff and students, for the protection of RCSI and its property or to investigate suspected breach of RCSI's Student Code of Conduct. This request is retained on file by the Estates and Support Services Office.

When CCTV recordings are being viewed, access will be limited to authorised individuals.

### **Access requests under Data Protection Acts or Freedom of Information Act:**

On written request, any person whose image has been recorded can make a request under the Data Protection Acts or Freedom of Information Act for recordings in which they are identifiable. Where the image/recording identifies another individual, those images may only be released where they can be redacted/anonymised so that the other person is not identified or identifiable. To exercise their right of access, a data subject must make an application in writing to the RCSI Records & Information Compliance Manager.

Information obtained through the CCTV system may only be released when authorised by the nominated RCSI Estate and Support Services Managers – Building and Estates Manager, Front of House Manager or Engineering Manager, in conjunction with RCSI Legal Counsel.

## 10. Responsibilities

Estate and Support Services will:

- Ensure that the use of CCTV systems is implemented in accordance with this policy
- Oversee and co-ordinate the use of CCTV monitoring for safety and security purposes within RCSI
- Ensure that all existing CCTV monitoring systems will be evaluated for compliance with this policy
- Review camera locations and be responsible for the release of any information or recorded CCTV materials stored in compliance with this policy
- Maintain a record of access (e.g. an access log) to or the release of tapes or any material recorded or stored in the system
- Ensure that recorded images are not duplicated for release
- Ensure that the perimeter of view from fixed location cameras both internally and externally do not unnecessarily invade the privacy of the individual
- Maintain a list of the CCTV cameras and associated monitoring equipment located in RCSI and the capabilities of such equipment
- Approve the location of temporary cameras to be used during special events that have particular security requirements and ensure their withdrawal following such events. NOTE: [Temporary cameras do not include mobile video equipment or hidden surveillance cameras used for authorised criminal investigations by An Garda Síochána].
- Give consideration to both students and staff feedback/complaints regarding possible invasion of privacy or confidentiality due to the location of a particular CCTV camera or associated equipment
- Ensure that adequate signage at appropriate and prominent locations is displayed
- Ensure that external cameras are non-intrusive in terms of their positions and views of neighbouring residential housing
- Ensure that monitoring recording are stored in a secure place with access by authorised personnel only
- Ensure that images recorded on DVDs/digital recordings are stored for a period not longer than 30 days and are then erased unless required in line with the CCTV principles outlined in section 3 of this policy
- Ensure that camera control is solely to monitor suspicious behaviour, criminal damage etc. in line with CCTV policy and not to monitor individual characteristics
- Ensure that camera control is not infringing an individual's reasonable expectation of privacy in public areas
- Ensure that where An Garda Síochána request to set up mobile video equipment for criminal investigations, legal advice has been obtained and such activities have the approval of RCSI Legal Counsel.

## 11. Security Companies and Service Providers

The CCTV system in RCSI is controlled by a Private Security Authority licensed security company contracted by Estate and Support Services. The following applies:

RCSI has a written contract with the security company which details the areas to be monitored, how long data is to be stored, what the security company may do with the data, what security standards should be in place and what verification procedures apply. The written contract also states that the security company will give RCSI all reasonable assistance to deal with any subject access request made under applicable legislation which may be received by RCSI.

Security companies that place and operate cameras on behalf of RCSI are considered to be "Data Processors." As data processors, they operate under the instruction of data controllers (their clients). Applicable legislative requirements place a number of obligations on data processors. These include having appropriate security measures in place to prevent unauthorised access to, or unauthorised alteration, disclosure or destruction of, the data, in particular where the processing involves the transmission of data over a network and against all unlawful forms of processing. This obligation can be met by having appropriate access controls to image storage or having robust encryption where remote access to live recording is permitted. Staff of the security company have been made aware of their obligations relating to the security of data.

## **12. Implementation & Review**

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated from time to time. On-going review and evaluation will take cognisance of changing information or guidelines (e.g. from the Data Protection Commissioner, An Garda Síochána, audit recommendations (internal and external to RCSI), legislation and feedback from students, staff and others.

## Appendix 1 – Definitions

Definitions of words/phrases used in relation to the protection of personal data and referred to in the text of the policy;

- CCTV – Closed-circuit television is the use of video cameras to transmit a signal to a specific place on a limited set of monitors. The images may then be recorded on video tape or DVD or other digital recording mechanism.
- The Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018 confer rights on individuals as well as responsibilities on those persons handling, processing, managing and controlling personal data. RCSI staff must comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Acts when collecting and storing personal information. This applies to personal information relating both to employees of the organisation and individuals who interact with the organisation.
- Data - information in a form that can be processed. It includes automated or electronic data (any information on computer or information recorded with the intention of putting it on computer) and manual data (information that is recorded as part of a relevant filing system or with the intention that it should form part of a relevant filing system).
- Personal Data – Data relating to a living individual who is or can be identified either from the data or from the data in conjunction with other information that is in, or is likely to come into, the possession of the data controller.
- Access Request – this is where a person makes a request to the organisation for the disclosure of their personal data under the Data Protection Acts.
- Data Processing - performing any operation or set of operations on data, including:
  - Obtaining, recording or keeping the data,
  - Collecting, organising, storing, altering or adapting the data,
  - Retrieving, consulting or using the data,
  - Disclosing the data by transmitting, disseminating or otherwise making it available,
  - Aligning, combining, blocking, erasing or destroying the data.
- Data Subject – an individual who is the subject of personal data.
- Data Controller - a person who (either alone or with others) controls the contents and use of personal data.
- Data Processor - a person who processes personal information on behalf of a data controller, but does not include an employee of a data controller who processes such data in the course of their employment, for example, this might mean an employee of an organisation to which the data controller out-sources work. The Data Protection Acts place responsibilities on such entities in relation to their processing of the data.

**Appendix 2**

**RCSI CCTV Privacy Impact Assessment**

Prior to installing new CCTV, the following privacy impact assessment is carried out.

This is an important procedure as a contravention may result in action being taken against RCSI by the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner, or may expose the college to a claim for damages.

Proposed Camera location:	
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1. What is the purpose for using / installing additional CCTV images? What are the issues/problems it is meant to address?
2. Is the system necessary to address a pressing need, such as staff and student safety or crime prevention?
3. Is it justified under the circumstances?
4. Where is the proposed location?
5. Who will have access to the system and recordings/images?
6. What security measures are in place to protect the CCTV system and recordings/images?
7. Are those who will have authorised access to the system and recordings/images clear about their responsibilities?
8. Does RCSI procedure ensure that recordings/images are erased or deleted as soon as the retention period (30 days) has expired?

Camera location confirmed:	<b>Yes / No</b>
Privacy Impact Assessment created by:	
Approved by:	

**Appendix 3 – Risk assessment**

Risk no.	Describe the source of risk and nature of potential impact on individuals. Include associated compliance and corporate risks as necessary.	Likelihood of harm	Severity of harm	Overall risk
		Remote, possible or probable	Minimal, significant or severe	Low, medium or high
1	Accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to, CCTV recordings.	Remote	Significant	Medium
2	Lack of privacy information leading to non-compliance with first data protection principle i.e., requirement to ensure processing is fair, lawful and transparent.	Remote	Significant	Medium
3	Local installation of surveillance equipment without Estate and Support Services involvement.	Remote	Significant	Medium
4	Excessive data capture e.g., placement of multiple cameras covering one location or capture of footage 24 hours per day 7 days per week.	Possible	Minimal	Low
5	Excessive data retention i.e., retention of surveillance footage for longer than needed.	Remote	Minimal	Low
6	Excessive sharing within RCSI i.e., as a result of failure to lock-down access on a need-to-know basis.	Remote	Significant	Medium
7	Unlawful sharing with 3rd parties i.e., disclosure to third parties without appropriate GDPR safeguards in place.	Remote	Significant	Medium

8	Privacy intrusion e.g., location of cameras near accommodation block windows, private residences, in changing rooms, toilets etc.	Remote	Significant	Medium
9	Poor quality recordings unable to fulfil their intended purpose.	Possible	Minimal	Low
10	Risk that CCTV is renewed and/or installed without following policy requirements e.g., undertaking a DPIA to minimise privacy risk.	Remote	Minimal	Low
11	Risk of function creep i.e., reuse of surveillance footage for a secondary, incompatible purpose.	Remote	Significant	Medium

**Appendix 4 – Identify measures to reduce risk**

Identify additional measures you could take to reduce or eliminate risks identified as medium or high risk				
Risk	Options to reduce or eliminaterisk	Effect on risk	Residual risk	Measure approved
		Eliminated, reduced or accepted	Low, Medium or High	Yes/no
1	All footage is stored securely on University servers or a secure cloud. Access to footage is restricted to authorised personnel in line with CCTV policy and GDPR requirements.	Reduced	Low	Yes
2	Privacy notices published and communicated to data subjects widely e.g., via campus signage.	Reduced	Low	Yes
3	All works on campus are coordinated and approved solely by Estate and Support Services and their function is to identify the need for CCTV installation, thus ensuring compliance with this DPIA and a consistent approach.	Reduced	Low	Yes
4	Careful consideration during renewal/first time installation to ensure the number of cameras in situ is not excessive. RCSI CCTV Privacy Impact Assessment checklist is completed to ensure all installations are (a) fit for purpose and (b) not excessive and (c) not privacy intrusive.	Reduced	Medium	Yes

5	Agreed retention periods are set out in this CCTV policy. Deletion is automated so risk of excessive retention is low. Where records have been manually flagged for extended retention, standard operating procedures will ensure they are deleted as soon as they are no longer required.	Reduced	Low	Yes
6	Access is restricted as outlined under Access within this CCTV policy. When CCTV is being reviewed by Estate and Support Services staff measures are taken to restrict viewings to those authorised to do view same.	Reduced	Medium	Yes
7	Access will be restricted on a need-to-know basis. Records of any 3rd party disclosure will be maintained by Security team and communicated to Estate and Support Services.	Reduced	Medium	Yes
8	Camera locations are not located where privacy intrusion may occur.	Reduced	Low	Yes
9	Chosen surveillance hardware is fit for purpose i.e., can record footage at a high enough quality to support the purpose.	Reduced	Low	Yes
10	In line with CCTV policy a CCTV Privacy Impact Assessment checklist is completed to ensure all installations are (a) fit for purpose and (b) not excessive and (c) not privacy intrusive.	Reduced	Low	Yes
11	Accepted uses for surveillance footage are set out in this CCTV policy thus the risk of secondary re-use is low as all.	Reduced	Low	Yes



**RCSI**

## [Annex 2.1.8]

# Acceptable Usage Policy for RCSI Computing and Network Systems

RCSI DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE

## Contents

1. Purpose .....	1
2. Policy Scope .....	1
3. Policy .....	1
Acceptable Use .....	1
Unacceptable Use .....	2
4. Roles and Responsibilities .....	3
5. Breaches of Policy .....	4
6. Supporting Policies for Students .....	4



# RCSI

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## 1. Purpose

Providing an efficient, secure, and reliable computing and networking service, as well as access to communications devices, to Staff, Students, Researchers and Alumni depends on the cooperation of all Users. It is therefore important that you, as a User, are aware of your responsibilities.

The purpose of this policy is to provide all Users of the RCSI's IT Resources with clear guidance on the acceptable, safe, and legal way in which they can use the RCSI's IT and Network Resources.

By using any of the RCSI's IT and Network Resources, you agree to comply with the terms of this policy. This policy is without prejudice to the right to privacy as protected by the constitution and the European convention on human rights.

## 2. Policy Scope

This policy covers documentation of policy, procedures, and standards relating to:

- RCSI Information Assets
- RCSI IT and Network Resources

This policy applies to all Users of the RCSI's IT resources which include, without limitation, its networks (accessed on site or remotely), business systems and data contained therein, and/or communications devices hereinafter the RCSI's IT resources. This policy takes precedence over any policies which may be developed at a local level.

## 3. Policy

### Acceptable Use

- You undertake to comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations.
  - If you process (or intend processing) personal data about others on a computer, you are obliged to comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Acts as amended, updated, or replaced from time to time and the RCSI's Student Privacy Policy.
  - Users must store and process RCSI data in compliance with the Data Management Policy and the relevant Data Protection legislation.
- You agree not to engage in any activity that is illegal under national or international law.
- You agree that all activity on the RCSI Network is monitored and audited for breaches to the acceptable usage policy; this includes email, network and internet access and any network traffic transiting between devices and accounts connected to the RCSI networks, either directly or via remote access methods authorised by RCSI.



# RCSI

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- You must use the RCSI's IT Resources and RCSI's Information Assets in a responsible, safe, and lawful manner and to respect the integrity of computer systems, communication devices and networks to which they have access.
- You agree to adhere to the IT system security standards set by the RCSI that include but not limited to regular password resets where the password adheres to the password policy, regular updating of antivirus and malware software on all devices used on the RCSI network etc.
- You must follow any standards and guidelines (including those set out in this policy) relating to the use of the RCSI's IT Resources and RCSI Information Assets. See IT Policies on the RCSI VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) and the Staff Portal.

## **Unacceptable Use**

- Using IT provided accounts as a business email account or in such a way as RCSI or the RCSI name might be associated with an individual's business or used to promote any individual business. In particular, the account is not intended to be used as a means of providing professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment, or to imply a license to practice or deliver professional advice that is not also supported by state credentialing, licensing, or other independent qualification.
- Using this account to undertake commercial activities or to otherwise further commercial objectives which are not a part of your affiliation with the RCSI.
- Using IT services for non-RCSI related activities such as:
  - Misrepresenting or incorrect association with the RCSI.
  - Impersonating a RCSI employee, affiliate or third party in a manner that does or is intended to mislead, confuse, or deceive others.
  - Registering and using student accounts for non-RCSI related use (Amazon, Netflix, Spotify etc.).
- Other than while performing their duties, knowingly access, download or distribute illegal or inappropriate material, including material that is in any way pornographic, obscene, abusive, racist, libelous, defamatory, or threatening.
- Using RCSI systems to engage in any form of bullying or other behaviour which is illegal or likely to cause harassment to others.
- Using social media to degrade, bully or intentionally offend Staff, Students or other Users or using these tools, e.g., Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok, Reddit etc., to bring the reputation of the RCSI into disrepute. Please reference the RCSI's Social Media Policy for more details.
- Gaining unauthorised access to the account, systems, or equipment of any third party - attempts at 'hacking' may result in criminal prosecution in Ireland or elsewhere.



- Using another Users RCSI account or allowing others to use your RCSI account for any reason. This includes the provision of your RCSI account information in response to unsolicited information requests via email or phone.
- Performing any activities which contravene the laws of the State, or the destination country in the case of data being transmitted abroad.
- Infringing the copyright, patent or other intellectual property rights of any person including, by downloading unlicensed software or other unauthorised materials.
- Infringing the data protection or other privacy rights of any person. Please refer to the [Student Privacy Policy](#).
- Using of RCSI systems or resources to facilitate plagiarism or cheating in exams or assignments. Please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).
- Accessing, modifying, or interfering with computer material, data, displays, or storage media belonging to the RCSI or another User, except with the Owner's permission.
- Connecting unauthorised equipment to the RCSI network.
- Loading or executing unlicensed software or other material on the RCSI's IT Resources where this is likely to breach the licensing conditions or other Intellectual Property rights.
- Knowingly introducing any virus, malware or other destructive program me or device into the RCSI's systems or network. The User should take all reasonable steps to ensure that they do not inadvertently introduce such programmes or devices into the systems or network.
- Storing sensitive or confidential RCSI data on personal devices or mobile devices without explicit permissions from appropriate approvers. Please refer to the Student Privacy Policy.

#### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

- The RCSI IT resources are to support the activities of the RCSI. **Personal use of RCSI resources is not advised as access to IT accounts and resources will cease on completion of studies.**
- RCSI has provided students with an IT account, email account and system access to assist with the successful completion of their studies. Access to the student account, email and all other systems will cease on exiting the RCSI for any reason, including graduation. Please see the RCSI Alumni [website](#) and the supporting email policy relating to access options after graduation.
- Should you have a genuine need to retain access to your OneDrive and email in relation to ongoing research activities, RCSI will assess this need on a case-by-case basis prior to deciding whether to grant such access for a defined period. RCSI retains absolute discretion in this regard. Compliance with RCSI policies is mandatory during this period.



# RCSI

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- The RCSI reserves and intends to exercise the right to review, audit, intercept, assess and disclose all messages created, received, or sent over the electronic mail system for any purpose. Notwithstanding the RCSI's right to retrieve and read any electronic mail messages, such messages should be treated as confidential and accessed only by the intended recipient. Users of RCSI facilities are not authorised to retrieve or read any email messages that are not sent to them. However, the confidentiality of any message should not be assumed: even when a message is erased it may still be possible to retrieve and read that message.
- The RCSI reserves the right to review, audit, intercept, and assess data stored on any RCSI owned equipment connected to the RCSI network, should there be a need to do so because of a security breach or disciplinary and/or legal action due a breach of RCSI policies. This includes but is not limited to laptops, desktops, iPads, mobile devices, external storage devices etc.
- RCSI retains absolute discretion to access any data held on the shared services in your name. RCSI may use any data saved within, including email archives, where RCSI is satisfied that such use will benefit the development of the institution's "education and research potential".
- RCSI has provided undergraduate students with a laptop to assist them in the successful completion of their studies. The use of the laptop is required for online study, producing, and submitting assignments, and for examinations. It is the student's responsibility to maintain the RCSI laptop and it is also their responsibility to replace it, should it be damaged, lost or stolen. If the student decides, for any reason, they do not want the laptop it must be returned to the RCSI, with all accessories, and in good working condition. If a student withdraws from RCSI before graduation, they must return the laptop upon deregistration, as it is the property of the RCSI. The [RCSI Student Laptop Policy](#) outlines the details of provision of laptops to RCSI undergraduate students.
- Should any RCSI device (laptop, mobile device, smart phone, tablet) provided to students for RCSI business or academic purposes, be lost or stolen, this must immediately be reported to the RCSI IT Department. Should the lost or stolen device contain any personally identifiable information (PII) this should be reported to the RCSI Data Protection Office at [dataprotection@rcsi.ie](mailto:dataprotection@rcsi.ie).

## 5. Breaches of Policy

Persons found contravening these regulations will be subject to the RCSI's disciplinary procedure up to and including dismissal, and/or criminal procedures.

## 6. Supporting Policies for Students

- [Policies and guidelines for Undergraduate study at RCSI Dublin](#)
- [Policies and guidelines for Postgraduate study at RCSI Dublin](#)
- [Data Protection Policy](#)
- [RCSI Student Laptop Policy](#)
- [RCSI Alumni Email](#)



**RCSI**

## [Annex 2.1.9]

# Student Vetting (Police Clearance) Disclosures Policy

RCSI DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE

## Contents

1.	Which Students Need to be Vetted? .....	1
2.	The Vetting Process .....	1
3.	The Vetting Process for Non-Irish-Domiciled Students.....	3
4.	All Students - Provisional Registration .....	4
5.	RCSI's Consideration/Evaluation of Information Contained in Vetting Disclosures.....	4
6.	Completion of the Vetting Process.....	5
7.	Appeals .....	5
8.	Re-vetting .....	5
9.	Costs .....	6
10.	Confidentiality and Data Protection.....	6
	Appendix 1 - Vetting Invitation Form (NVB1).....	7
	Appendix 2 - Parent\Guardian Consent Form (NVB 3).....	8



# RCSI

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## Background

The National Vetting Bureau (NVB) (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 (as amended by the Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016) ([“Vetting Act”](#)) came into effect on 29 April 2016 and requires the Royal College of Surgeons Ireland (“RCSI”), to obtain vetting disclosures in respect of any persons undertaking “*relevant work or activities*” relating to children or vulnerable persons on behalf of RCSI.<sup>1</sup>

Students completing the RCSI programmes listed below will be required to undertake “*relevant work or activities*” (relating to children or vulnerable persons) on behalf of RCSI, while completing placements, including with external agencies, as part of the educational and training requirements that form part of their programme. RCSI is, therefore, under a statutory obligation to obtain vetting disclosures in respect of any such students before they undertake any placement. RCSI is committed to ensuring that only appropriate persons will have the opportunity to access children or vulnerable persons as part of their programme. The student’s continued registration on their programme is dependent on RCSI receiving, reviewing, and being satisfied with the contents of a vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau (“NVB”) and an appropriate Police Clearance Certificate/Statutory Declaration or equivalent for non-Irish domiciled students.<sup>2</sup>

### 1. Which Students Need to be Vetted?

Vetting disclosures must be obtained for students on the programmes listed below (this list is subject to review as deemed necessary).

#### Undergraduate Programmes

1. RC001 Medicine
2. RC101 Graduate Medicine
3. RC004 Physiotherapy
4. RC005 Pharmacy
5. RC007 Dentistry

#### Postgraduate Programmes

5. MSc Physician Associate Studies

Students who join certain RCSI Clubs and Societies may also require vetting. Students who take part in volunteer or outreach activities may also be required to undergo vetting.

### 2. The Vetting Process

The following sections outline the various stages in the vetting process for all students undertaking “*relevant work or activities*” relating to children or vulnerable persons on behalf of RCSI.

#### Stage 1 - Completion of the Vetting Invitation Form (NVB 1)

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<sup>1</sup> “*Relevant work or activities*” relating to children and vulnerable persons is defined in Schedule 1, Part 1 and Schedule 1, Part 2 of the Vetting Act.

<sup>2</sup> “Domicile” refers to the student’s country of permanent residence.



# RCSI

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Registration/continued registration on an RCSI programme is conditional upon RCSI receiving and being satisfied with the contents of a vetting disclosure, as well as being satisfied that the person is suitable for the role, in advance of any placement being undertaken.

Once contacted, students must promptly complete and return the Vetting Invitation Form (NVB1) to the RCSI Registry at [gcvu@rcsi.ie](mailto:gcvu@rcsi.ie). This will initiate the vetting process (Appendix 1). Delays in returning a completed NVB1 may be deemed a breach of the Student Code of Conduct and the student may be subject to disciplinary procedures. The student is responsible for ensuring that the completed form has been submitted to RCSI Registry. If the student is under the age of 18, a completed Parent/Guardian Consent (NVB3) form must also be submitted (Appendix 2).

The information on the form may be used to determine if the student is permitted to carry out “*relevant work or activities*” under the Vetting Act and/or to determine if the student is suitable to continue as a student in RCSI.

#### Stage 2 - Completion of the NVB online form

Within several days of submitting the Vetting Invitation Form (NVB1) to RCSI Registry, the student will receive an email to their RCSI email address from [evetting.donotreply@garda.ie](mailto:evetting.donotreply@garda.ie). The student will then be required to complete the NVB online form. The student should do so promptly within the timeframe indicated. Delays in completing the form may be deemed a breach of the Student Code of Conduct and the student may be subject to disciplinary procedures.

#### Stage 3 - RCSI submits the application to the NVB

The completed online form is then electronically returned to the RCSI Vetting Liaison Officer. Once the Vetting Liaison Officer is satisfied that all sections of the form have been duly completed, and the student’s identity has been verified, the form is submitted to the NVB for processing.

#### Stage 4 - NVB returns a vetting disclosure to RCSI

The NVB responds to the vetting request by providing a vetting disclosure letter to the Vetting Liaison Officer. The NVB will return a vetting disclosure that includes either:

- (a) information regarding a criminal record, or other information, which may include:
  - (i) particulars of the criminal record (i.e. convictions and any pending prosecutions); and/or
  - (ii) a statement of specified information<sup>3</sup> (if any), relating to the person being vetted;
- or**
- (b) a statement that there is no criminal record or specified information relating to the person being vetted (a “nil disclosure”).

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<sup>3</sup> Defined as information concerning a finding or allegation of harm to another person that is received by the NVB from: (a) the Garda Síochána or (b) a scheduled organisation (pursuant to s19(1) or (2) of the Vetting Act), in respect of the person and which is of such a nature as to reasonably give rise to a *bona fide* concern that the person may (i) harm any child or vulnerable person (ii) cause any child or vulnerable person to be harmed; (iii) put any child or vulnerable person at risk of harm; (iv) attempt to harm any child or vulnerable person; or (v) incite another person to harm any child or vulnerable person.



The following is an example of the type of information that could be included in a vetting disclosure referenced at (a)(i) above:

Dáta na Cúirte / Court Date	Cúirt / Court	Cion / Offence	Toradh / Result
25/05/2018	Court No. 8 (CCJ)	No Insurance ( User)	Fine: €200
25/05/2018	Court No. 8 (CCJ)	Fail to Produce NCT Test Certificate ( User)	Taken Into Consideration
25/05/2018	Court No. 8 (CCJ)	Failure To Produce Insurance Certificate	Taken Into Consideration

#### Stage 5 - Confirmation of information contained in the vetting disclosure

In the event of a discrepancy between the information received from the student and the vetting disclosure received from the NVB, the student will be allowed an opportunity to clarify whether the information contained in the vetting disclosure is correct. If the student disputes any details contained in a vetting disclosure, they will be requested to outline the exact basis of the dispute, in writing, to the Vetting Liaison Officer, who will then submit the student's report and the application file to the NVB. Further checks will be carried out by the NVB who will correspond with the Vetting Liaison Officer.

#### Stage 6 - Evaluation of information

Once the information in the vetting disclosure has been confirmed, it is then reviewed by the Vetting Liaison Officer in consultation with the Associate Director for Academic Affairs as appropriate and in keeping with relevant RCSI procedures to classify as follows:

- No previous convictions/specified information recorded
- Minor offences (including prosecutions or convictions)/specified information)
- Serious offences (including prosecutions or convictions)/specified information).

Thereafter, RCSI will deal with the information as outlined below in Section 5 RCSI's Consideration/Evaluation of Information Contained in Vetting Disclosures.

### **3. The Vetting Process for Non-Irish-Domiciled Students**

#### Police Clearance Certificates

Any student (aged 18 or over) who has been resident outside of Ireland for a continuous period of six months or more, is required to provide an original Police Clearance Certificate from the jurisdiction where they were previously resident. This Police Clearance Certificate must cover the period of residency in that country and confirm whether the student has any record of convictions whilst residing there. If this Certificate is not in English, the student must provide a certified English version.

If the student cannot provide a Police Clearance Certificate from a particular jurisdiction,<sup>4</sup> then the student may be asked to provide a statutory declaration to explain that a Police Clearance Certificate cannot be provided

<sup>4</sup> This could be in the case of political upheaval in the country in question.



# RCSI

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and that they have no criminal convictions current or pending. The statutory declaration should indicate if there is:

- (a) information regarding any criminal activity, or other information, which may include:
- (I) particulars of the event and record i.e. convictions and any pending prosecutions; and/or
  - (II) any statements of concern relating to the person which may reasonably give rise to a concern that the person may: (i) harm any child or vulnerable person (ii) cause any child or vulnerable person to be harmed; (iii) put any child or vulnerable person at risk of harm; (iv) attempt to harm any child or vulnerable person; or (v) incite another person to harm any child or vulnerable person;

or

- (b) a statement that there is no criminal record or statements of concern relating to the person, specifically that the student does not have any convictions or concerns that would make them unsuitable to undertake relevant work or activities that involve having access to, or contact with, children or vulnerable persons.

Any disclosures will be evaluated in accordance with the procedures set out in section 5 below.

Delays in returning Police Clearance Certificate(s) may be deemed a breach of the Student Code of Conduct and the student may be subject to disciplinary procedures. The student is responsible for ensuring that the relevant documentation has been submitted to the RCSI Registry.

#### 4. All Students - Provisional Registration

The student signs the RCSI Student Agreement in advance of registration, accepting that their registration is dependent upon the vetting requirements being met.

The student's continued registration on a programme is strictly subject to RCSI receiving and being satisfied with the required documentation as appropriate:

- Vetting disclosure received from the NVB
- Police Clearance Certificate(s)/Statutory Declaration(s)
- Evidence of good standing from Sponsors

#### 5. RCSI's Consideration/Evaluation of Information Contained in Vetting Disclosures

The decision regarding the student's suitability to undertake relevant work or activities on behalf of RCSI, and the decision to continue the student's registration, is at the discretion of the Vetting Liaison Officer in consultation with the Associate Director for Academic Affairs, and subject to the relevant RCSI regulations and policies.

In all cases, a copy of vetting disclosures will be retained on the student's file.

RCSI may classify the vetting disclosures as follows:

**a) No criminal record/no specified information**

If a nil disclosure is returned, the student's registration will be completed/confirmed.

**b) Minor offences (including prosecutions or convictions)/specified information**

With regard to minor offences, i.e. offences which, within the relevant RCSI guidance and at the absolute discretion of the Vetting Liaison Officer are not considered to pose any risk to children or vulnerable adults, and which have been declared in advance by the student, the Vetting Liaison Officer will record these on the student's file.



# RCSI

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If the criminal record/specified information has not been disclosed by the student, the Vetting Liaison Officer will write to the student seeking an explanation for the non-disclosure. This non-disclosure constitutes a breach of the Code of Conduct and may mean the student is subject to disciplinary proceedings which could result in their expulsion/discontinuation.

### **c) Serious offences (including prosecutions or convictions)/specified information**

With regard to serious offences, i.e. offences which, in RCSI's view, could potentially indicate a risk to children or vulnerable adults, the Vetting Liaison Officer will inform the Associate Director for Academic Affairs, who will review the matter under the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations. The Vetting Liaison Officer will write to the student to inform them that their return is being considered under the Disciplinary Regulations.

If the criminal record/specified information has not been disclosed by the student, the Vetting Liaison Officer will write to the student seeking an explanation for their non-disclosure. This failure to disclose constitutes a breach of the Code of Conduct. The student will be informed that their return to the programme is being considered under the Disciplinary Regulations which could result in a sanction up to and including expulsion/discontinuation.

The student's ongoing registration is conditional upon RCSI receiving a vetting disclosure, and being satisfied with the contents; as well as being satisfied that the person is suitable for the role. RCSI can, therefore, decide to discontinue the student based on information contained in a vetting disclosure. This decision will take into account the safety of children and vulnerable adults and may also be impacted by the requirements of relevant professional bodies.

## **6. Completion of the Vetting Process**

**Students who have satisfactorily completed the vetting process will be approved to continue on the register as students of RCSI.**

**RCSI reserves the right to pause or terminate the student's registration if the student does not comply with the vetting requirements.**

## **7. Appeals**

If the student is dissatisfied with a decision made as a result of the Vetting process, the student may appeal to have their case reviewed under the RCSI Appeals Regulations if:

- New evidence that directly impacts the decision becomes available
- There is evidence of procedural or administrative irregularity that may have impacted the decision

To appeal, students should follow the RCSI appeals policy.<sup>5</sup>

## **8. Re-vetting**

RCSI may require all students undertaking relevant work or activities on behalf of RCSI to be re-vetted in accordance with section 20 of the Vetting Act (once commenced).

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<sup>5</sup> The RCSI Student Appeals Policy is available on the [SARA Moodle page](#).



# RCSI

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Given the duration of degree programmes, RCSI reserves the right, at its discretion, to require students to undergo a further vetting process at any time.

Students are also under a continuing obligation to disclose to the RCSI Garda Vetting Liaison Officer and/or the Director of Academic Affairs any criminal investigation,<sup>6</sup> criminal charge, pending prosecution and/or conviction of an offence arising during their studies whether in the Republic of Ireland or elsewhere.

## **9. Costs**

The student is liable for any costs that may arise as part of the University's vetting process.

## **10. Confidentiality and Data Protection**

All information submitted and received as part of the vetting process will be managed and protected in line with the Vetting Act and according to data protection law.


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<sup>6</sup> Criminal investigations include being arrested or interviewed under caution by a police officer whether in the Republic of Ireland or elsewhere.



RCSI

Appendix 1 - Vetting Invitation Form (NVB1)



**RCSI** FACULTY OF MEDICINE  
& HEALTH SCIENCES

RCSI Student, Academic & Regulatory Affairs (SARA)  
Registry Services  
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland  
Coláiste Ríoga na Máinleá in Éirinn  
123 St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2, Ireland

Student ID no:

**Form NVB 1**  
**Vetting Invitation**

**Section 1 – Personal Information**

Under Sec 26(b) of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016, it is an offence to make a false statement for the purpose of obtaining a vetting disclosure.

Forename(s):

Middle Name:

Surname:

Date Of Birth: 

D	D	/	M	M	/	Y	Y	Y	Y
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Email Address:

Contact Number:

Role Being Vetted For: 

S	T	U	D	E	N	T	C	L	I	N	I	C	A	L
P	L	A	C	E	M	E	N	T						

Current Address:

Line 1:

Line 2:

Line 3:

Line 4:

Line 5:

Eircode/Postcode:

**Section 2 – Additional Information**

Name Of Organisation:

I consent to the making of this application and to the disclosure of information by the National Vetting Bureau to the Liaison Person pursuant to Section 13(4)(e) National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016. Please tick box

Applicant's Signature:

Date: 

D	D	/	M	M	/	Y	Y	Y	Y
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Note: Please PRINT and return this paper form to RCSI Registry Services (SARA Office). Scanned copies will not be accepted. An invitation to the e-vetting website will then be sent to the above Email address.

If you are a RCSI staff member seeking Garda Vetting please contact Human Resources - [staffvetting@rcsi.ie](mailto:staffvetting@rcsi.ie)

EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE IN SURGERY MEDICINE PHARMACY PHYSIOTHERAPY NURSING & MIDWIFERY RESEARCH LEADERSHIP POSTGRADUATE STUDIES RADIOLOGY DENTISTRY SPORTS & EXERCISE MEDICINE





**RCSI**

**[Annex 2.1.10]**

## **Academic Integrity Policy**

**RCSI DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE**

***The 2026-2027 Academic Integrity Policy is not yet finalised. The 2025-2026 policy is enclosed for your reference.***

***The finalised 2026-2027 policy will be provided to you at a future date. We ask that you study this carefully and advise us of any queries that you may have.***



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## Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
2. Academic Integrity Statement.....	3
3. Academic Misconduct .....	3
3.1. Plagiarism .....	4
3.2. Falsification <sup>ix</sup> .....	4
3.3. Contract Cheating.....	4
3.4. Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI).....	4
4. Academic Integrity and Student Responsibilities .....	5
5. Suspected Incidences of Academic Misconduct.....	6



## 1 Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out RCSI's arrangements and supports for enabling students\* to understand and value academic integrity; and to provide a framework for effective, fair, consistent, and timely processes in the event of an allegation of academic misconduct being made against a student. The policy includes the pathways for investigating an allegation of academic misconduct against a student, at School and University level.<sup>i</sup>

(\*refers to both undergraduate students and postgraduate scholars and the term "student(s)" in this policy applies to either category of student as appropriate)

This policy, and any associated procedures, apply to all work submitted for assessment by all students registered to RCSI, on all taught and research programmes.

## 2 Academic Integrity Statement

RCSI, as a health sciences university, espouses the highest standards of professionalism among its students both at undergraduate and postgraduate level – the showing of respect for the work of others and acting with honesty and responsibility in preparing and submitting coursework and completing examinations are key components of professionalism and underpin all academic activities.

Academic integrity is defined as "*the commitment to and demonstration of honest and moral behaviour in an academic setting by the enrolled learner*".<sup>ii</sup>

It involves compliance by all RCSI enrolled undergraduate and postgraduate students with ethical and professional principles, standards, practices and a consistent system of values, that serves as guidance for making decisions and taking actions in education, research and scholarship.<sup>iii</sup>

The six fundamental values for academic integrity as identified by the International Centre for Academic Integrity (2021) are honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage.<sup>iv</sup>

Responsibility for demonstrating academic integrity lies with the enrolled learner, and this includes: "*compliance with ethical and professional principles, standards and practices and consistent system of values, that serves as guidance for making decisions and taking actions in education, research and scholarship*".<sup>v</sup>

Academic integrity is relevant to all areas of academic endeavour undertaken by the enrolled learner. This includes, but is not limited to, all activities related to the achievement of academic credit for awards; all methods of learning practice including in the classroom, research, online, distance and work-based learning; in all methods and forms of assessment including examinations and various forms of continuous assessment and in academic scholarship.

## 3 Academic Misconduct

Any behaviour or action which contravenes academic integrity and breaches its fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage is considered to constitute Academic Misconduct. Academic misconduct is any attempt to seek unfair advantage in relation to any academic activity including through unauthorised content generation. Unauthorised content generation is "*the production of academic work, in whole or in part, for academic credit, progression or award, whether or not a payment or other favour is involved, using unapproved or undeclared human or technological assistance*".<sup>vi</sup> Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- Plagiarism
- Cheating in any forum or form
- Misrepresentation of research (e.g. data falsification and fabrication of data)
- Contract cheating
- Copy-editing
- Purchase or any unauthorised procurement of examination material
- Breaches of the Examinations and Assessment Regulations
- Impersonation
- Unauthorised use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI)
- Any other act which dishonestly uses information to gain academic credit.

### 3.1 Plagiarism

The unacknowledged inclusion, whether intentional or unintentional in any form of assessment for a programme of study of material without due acknowledgement of its original source.

It may include but is not limited to the following:<sup>vii</sup>

- Presenting in your own name, work authored by a third party, such as other students, friends or family (with or without permission), or work purchased through any source or given to you by a third party<sup>viii</sup>, including organisations such as essay mills. The original source may be in written form or in any other media (for example, audio or video);
- Presenting ideas, theories, concepts, methodologies or data (including research data) from the work of another without due acknowledgement;
- Presenting text, digital work (e.g. computer code or programs), video recordings or images copied with only minor changes from sources such as the internet, the output of GenAI, books, journals or any other media, without due acknowledgement;
- Paraphrasing (i.e. putting a passage or idea from another source into your own words), without due acknowledgement of the source;
- Failing to include appropriate citation of all original sources;
- Representing collaborative work as solely your own;
- Presenting work for an assignment which has also been submitted (in part or whole) for another assignment at RCSI or another institution (i.e. self-plagiarism).

### 3.2 Falsification<sup>ix</sup>

The presenting or making use of fictitious, altered or misrepresented data, evidence, references, citations or experimental results. It also covers documents submitted or used when seeking accommodations, including through Exceptional Circumstances, Appeals or other university procedures, or any other information that could be used to gain an unfair academic advantage.

### 3.3 Contract Cheating

Contract cheating is a form of academic misconduct when a person uses an undeclared and/or unauthorised third party, online or directly, to assist them to produce work for academic credit or progression, whether or not payment or other favour is involved.<sup>x</sup> Contract cheating services include ghostwriting and essay mills. Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI)

Artificial Intelligence refers to systems that appear to have “intelligent behaviour by analysing their environment and taking actions – with some degree of autonomy- to achieve specific goals”.<sup>xi</sup>

Gen AI tools automatically generate content in response to prompts written in natural-language conversational interfaces and can be used to transform, produce or generate any kind of content such as text, images, art, music or programming code. Different technologies, including machine learning and neural networks, are used to develop the capabilities of these tools.<sup>xii, xiii</sup>

#### 4 Academic Integrity and Student Responsibilities

The purpose of assessment, both formative and summative, is to support learning, ascertain learner understanding and demonstrate the achievement of specific learning outcomes by that learner. It is the responsibility of the enrolled learner to ensure that all submitted work for assessment purposes in an academic setting, which includes but is not limited to text, graphics, tables, formulae, results or any representation of ideas in print, electronic or any other media, in addition to artefacts, computer software and algorithms, does not constitute unauthorised content generation and correctly acknowledges the source of any data which is not original to the learner.<sup>xiv</sup>

In the completion of any work submitted for assessment the learner is responsible for critiquing its output in terms of logic, consistency, accuracy and bias. This includes where GenAI is used as authorised.

All students must be willing to sign a declaration that the work they are submitting is their own; that there is no unauthorised content generation, no unacknowledged use of another person’s work; and that the work has not been previously submitted by the student or anyone else.

Students must not mislead an examiner by submitting work that suggests that the information gathered and analysed was their own when this was not the case.

Students need to be aware that legislation pertains in Ireland which allows students to be prosecuted for breaches of academic integrity, specifically the provision or advertising of cheating services. Section 43A of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 as amended specifically empowers the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) agency to prosecute those who facilitate academic cheating. The provisions cover: impersonation; provision of or advertising of cheating services and the publishing of advertisement for cheating. QQI is responsible for bringing prosecutions in respect of these offences.

The provision of the necessary support, encouragement and learning opportunities is essential if the integrity, reputation and culture of academic honesty within RCSI is to be maintained and students are to commit to and pursue their studies in accordance with the principles which underpin academic integrity. In addition to this policy, there are various supports available to students including:

- i. The RCSI Examination & Assessment Regulations
- ii. The RCSI Library’s guides and tutorials including those on EndNote®, Referencing and GenAI
- iii. The Marks & Standards for the programme they are completing (as appropriate)
- iv. Undergraduate and Postgraduate Student Codes of Conduct
- v. Professionalism In the Health Sciences module (Foundation year medicine and physiotherapy)
- vi. RCSI online Academic Integrity resource
- vii. Any individual statement(s) or resources introduced locally by a School/Academic Unit to support its students to demonstrate academic integrity and avoid academic misconduct. If a student is in doubt as to what constitutes academic integrity, they are encouraged to seek advice and guidance from a member of the academic staff.



The RCSI Academic Council requires all students to successfully complete the RCSI online Academic Integrity resource on at least one occasion while completing their studies. Individual Schools/Academic Units may mandate their students to successfully complete the resource on more than one occasion.

It is important to acknowledge that not all suspected incidences of academic misconduct are intentional. RCSI acknowledges that students are learners of varying abilities and the skills of appropriate scholarly research and referencing require time to learn. It is further acknowledged that some students come from different educational cultures with varying perceptions and accepted styles of referencing and acknowledging original work. These students may require time to learn what is required to demonstrate academic integrity as it applies to higher education in Ireland.

Notwithstanding the various resources available, some students at the commencement of their educational journey at RCSI may unintentionally fail to fulfil the required standards of academic integrity. Where it becomes apparent that students in the early stages of their programme of studies or research are not learning as expected, a supportive approach to addressing their shortcomings with regard to demonstrating academic integrity will be adopted by the University.

## **5 Suspected Incidences of Academic Misconduct**

Any behaviour or action which contravenes academic integrity (including that which constitutes unauthorised content generation) and breaches its fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage, is considered to constitute Academic Misconduct.

RCSI reserves the right to avail of any technological or other means available to it to detect academic misconduct in respect of any assessment or other academic activity undertaken by any of its students.

Where a suspected incidence of academic misconduct occurs during an examination, it will be addressed in accordance with the University's Examinations & Assessment Regulations. Suspected incidences of academic misconduct by any student other than in an examination setting will in the first instance be investigated in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

Where a suspected incidence of academic misconduct comes to the attention of any member of the University's staff, they are required to bring that to the attention of the relevant authority such as Programme Director, Cycle Director, Year Lead or equivalent in the School or Academic Unit in which the student is enrolled. Following an assessment of the suspected breach by the appropriate subject matter expert(s), the relevant School or academic unit will classify the response level (Level 1, 2 or 3) for the suspected breach in accordance with the criteria provided for in Table 1 below.

The classification of response level identified on a case-by-case basis will determine the further course of action to be pursued in respect of the suspected breach. The determination of the relevant response level will be made under the supervision of the relevant Programme Director, Cycle Director, Year Lead or equivalent in consultation with the Head of School or Academic Unit as appropriate.

To guide the classification of response level in accordance with Table 1, a breach of academic integrity associated with academic misconduct of a serious nature involves any behavior or activity, which would likely have the effect of more than marginally enhancing the grade or outcome awarded to the student as part of any associated assessment process. The advice of RCSI Registry may be sought by the relevant School/Academic Unit in its determination of the appropriate response level in any individual case.

When adjudicating upon any suspected incidence of academic misconduct, it is sufficient to establish that academic misconduct has occurred based on ‘the balance of probabilities’ standard of proof rather than ‘beyond all reasonable doubt’.”<sup>xv</sup>

Any determination made in accordance with the provisions of this policy may be reviewed in accordance with the appeal provisions of the University’s Disciplinary Regulations.

**Table 1 Response Levels to Academic Misconduct**

<b>Response Level</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Associated Course of Action</b>
Level 1: Poor academic practice/conduct	Unintentional breach of Academic Integrity resulting in academic misconduct considered to be of a less serious nature: first occasion. Examples include, but are not limited to poor referencing, limited plagiarism etc.	Academic Integrity retraining. Support the student in addressing the deficiencies in their knowledge, understanding and awareness of what is required to demonstrate Academic Integrity and avoiding committing further acts of academic misconduct. A Level 1 response does not normally incur sanctions such as penalties in respect of the grade awarded but this is at the discretion of the School/Academic Unit on a case-by-case basis. The School/Academic Unit will advise Registry for noting the details of each incidence where a Level 1 response is applied to an individual student.
Level 2: Academic misconduct (minor infringement)	Breach of Academic Integrity resulting in academic misconduct considered to be of a less serious nature: first occasion <b>OR</b> Breach of Academic Integrity resulting in academic misconduct considered to be of a less serious nature where a Level 1 response has previously been applied to that student.	Academic Integrity retraining. The School/Academic Unit to determine the sanction to be applied and the corrective action to be undertaken by the student within a specified timeframe, including any penalty in respect of grade awarded. Where a Level 2 response is applied to a student, the School/Academic Unit will advise Registry of the relevant details for formal recording in the individual student’s record.



<p>Level 3: Severe academic misconduct (major infringement)</p>	<p>Breach of Academic Integrity Standards by a student resulting in academic misconduct considered to be of a serious nature</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>Breach of Academic Integrity Standards resulting in academic misconduct where a Level 2 has previously been applied to the student</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>Failure by a student to satisfactorily comply with an approved course of action identified under either a Level 1 or Level 2 response</p>	<p>The School/Academic Unit to refer the alleged breach of academic integrity to Registry for investigation and referral as appropriate for adjudication by a committee convened in accordance with the University's Disciplinary Regulations.</p>
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## Endnotes

- <sup>i</sup> University College Dublin (UCD) *Student Plagiarism Policy*. Available at: [https://sisweb.ucd.ie/usis!/W\\_HU\\_MENU.P\\_PUBLISH?p\\_tag=GD-DOCLAND&ID=222](https://sisweb.ucd.ie/usis!/W_HU_MENU.P_PUBLISH?p_tag=GD-DOCLAND&ID=222). Accessed 15/2/2021
- <sup>ii</sup> University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, The Writing Centre. <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/esl/resources/academic-integrity/> Accessed 19/03/24
- <sup>iii</sup> ENAI (2018). European Network for Academic Integrity *Glossary for Academic Integrity*. [https://www.academicintegrity.eu/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/EN-Glossary\\_revised\\_final\\_24.02.23.pdf](https://www.academicintegrity.eu/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/EN-Glossary_revised_final_24.02.23.pdf) Accessed 06/02/24.
- <sup>iv</sup> International Centre for Academic Integrity (2021). *The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)*. Available at [https://www.academicintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/20019\\_ICAI-Fundamental-Values\\_R12.pdf](https://www.academicintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/20019_ICAI-Fundamental-Values_R12.pdf). Accessed 22/02/21
- <sup>v</sup> Tauginienė, L., Gaižauskaitė, I., Glendinning, I., Kravjar, J., Ojsteršek, M., Ribeiro, L., Odiņeca, T., Marino, F., Cosentino, M., Sivasubramaniam, S., Foltýnek, T. Glossary for Academic Integrity. ENAI Report 3G [online]: revised version, October 2018. Accessed 20/03/24
- <sup>vi</sup> Foltýnek, T., Bjelobaba, S., Glendinning, I., Khan, Z.R., Santos, R., Pavletic, P. and Kravjar, J., 2023. ENAI Recommendations on the ethical use of Artificial Intelligence in Education. *International Journal for Educational Integrity*, 19(1), p.12
- <sup>vii</sup> University College Dublin (UCD) Student Plagiarism Policy. Available at [https://sisweb.ucd.ie/usis!/W\\_HU\\_MENU.P\\_PUBLISH?p\\_tag=GD-DOCLAND&ID=222](https://sisweb.ucd.ie/usis!/W_HU_MENU.P_PUBLISH?p_tag=GD-DOCLAND&ID=222). Accessed 15/2/2021
- <sup>viii</sup> The purchasing of work from any such source is prohibited under Section 43A of the Qualifications & Quality Assurance (Education & Training) Act 2012 as amended by the Amendment Act 2019
- <sup>ix</sup> University College London (UCL). Academic Integrity- Students. Available at <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/exams-and-assessments/academic-integrity>. Accessed 21/2/2021
- <sup>x</sup> The National Academic Integrity Network (2020). Academic Integrity- National Principles & Lexicon for Academic Integrity. Quality & Qualifications Ireland
- <sup>xi</sup> European Commission (2018) Artificial Intelligence for Europe. European Commission. Brussels. 24 April, 2018. Available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=COM:2018:237:FIN>
- <sup>xii</sup> Foltýnek, T., Bjelobaba, S., Glendinning, I., Khan, Z.R., Santos, R., Pavletic, P. and Kravjar, J., 2023. ENAI Recommendations on the ethical use of Artificial Intelligence in Education. *International Journal for Educational Integrity*, 19(1), p.12.
- <sup>xiii</sup> Guidance for generative AI in education and research (2023). UNESCO. p8
- <sup>xiv</sup> The National Academic Integrity Network (2020). Academic Integrity- National Principles & Lexicon for Academic Integrity. Quality & Qualifications Ireland
- <sup>xv</sup> NAIN Framework for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Case Management. QQI. August 2023 (1st edition)



**RCSI**

**[Annex 2.1.11]**

## **Student Dignity and Respect Policy**

RCSI DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE

### **Contents**

1. Introduction .....	1
2. Definitions and Examples .....	2
3. Procedure.....	3
4. Sources of Support:.....	3
5. Right of Appeal.....	4



# RCSI

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## **RCSI Student Dignity & Respect Policy Statement**

The purpose of this policy is to outline RCSI's policy guidance and procedures relating to Dignity and Respect in the RCSI environment. The policy sets out to achieve the following:

- To support good communications and to set standards of behaviour which are reasonably expected of a student healthcare professional, and in keeping with the RCSI Student Code of Conduct.
- To raise awareness of such a policy in relation to the prevention of bullying and harassment and the means by which to resolve these issues (formally or informally) as quickly and confidentially as possible.

Bullying and harassment can affect a student's health, confidence, morale and performance. As well as contravening RCSI policy and the RCSI Student Code of Conduct, many forms of bullying are unlawful. Bullying can also interfere with the opportunity for students to participate in a supportive and productive learning environment.

### **Introduction**

RCSI is committed to the promotion of an environment where diversity is respected and the dignity and respect of students is upheld. RCSI supports every individual's right to study in an environment which is free from any form of discrimination.

The Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004 prohibits discrimination on the following nine grounds:

1. The gender ground: a man, a woman or a transsexual person;
2. The marital status ground: single, married, separated, divorced or widowed;
3. The family status ground: pregnant, a parent of a person under 18 years or the resident primary carer or parent of a person with a disability;
4. The sexual orientation ground: gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual;
5. The religion ground: different religious belief, background, outlook or none;
6. The age ground: this only applies to people over 18 except for the provision of car insurance to licensed drivers under that age;
7. The disability ground: this is broadly defined including people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions.
8. The race ground: a particular race, skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin;
9. The Traveller community ground: people who are commonly called Travellers, who are identified both by Travellers and others as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, identified historically as a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland.

It is the responsibility of all members of the RCSI community to abide by RCSI regulations enshrined in the RCSI Student Code of Conduct, to treat others politely and with respect and consideration. This does not affect academic freedom, the values of free open enquiry, discussion of ideas, or humour. Care needs to be taken, however, not to cross the line into unacceptable behaviour which is offensive, abusive or intimidating.



# RCSI

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## Definitions and Examples

**Harassment** is defined as any act or conduct which is unwanted and unwelcome and which could reasonably be regarded as offensive, humiliating or intimidating on any of the following discriminatory grounds: gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, or membership of the traveller community.

**Sexual Harassment** is any form of verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. The unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material.

It is the unwanted nature of sexual harassment and the damaging impact it has on the recipient that distinguishes it from flirtatious or sexual behaviour which is entered into freely and mutually.

### Examples of Sexual Harassment

- **Verbal:** unwelcome sexual advances, suggestive jokes and innuendo, requests for sexual favours.
- **Non-verbal or indirect:** sexually suggestive pictures or written material; staring or gestures.
- **Electronic:** sexually suggestive messages or images transmitted by e-mail or other electronic means while social networking.
- **Physical:** unwelcome physical contact up to and including assault.

**Racial Harassment** is harassment on the grounds of race/ethnic origin which is defined as unwanted or unwelcome conduct based on a person's race that is offensive to the recipient and which might threaten a person's security or create as stressful, hostile or intimidating work or study environment.

### Examples of Racial Harassment

- Verbal: offensive jokes about a person's race or ethnic origin ridicule based on stereotypes.
- Non-verbal or indirect: exclusion, hostile or demeaning attitudes, spreading malicious rumours.
- Visual: production, display or circulation of materials offensive to a particular racial or ethnic group e.g. cartoons or racial propaganda.
- Physical: physical assault, threats of physical assault.

**Bullying** consists of repeated inappropriate behaviour whether by word, by physical action or otherwise, directly or indirectly applied, by one or more persons against another person or persons at the place of work or study which undermines the individual person's right to personal dignity. It may arise as a result of personal conflict but it could arise where a victim has not been involved in any conflict with the perpetrator but finds him or herself in a situation through no fault of their own where acts of aggression and frustration are exerted.

Bullying can take many forms from open aggression, threats and shouting to subtle comments or exclusion. It can be verbal physical or psychological.

It should be noted that the issuing of reasonable work related instructions, student discipline or study related matters, or the exercise of lawful management rights or duties would not be construed as bullying



# RCSI

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## Examples of Bullying

- **Verbal:** Personal insults and name calling, persistent unjustified criticism and sarcasm. Public or private humiliation; shouting in public and/or private, instantaneous rage.
- **Non-verbal** Exclusion, hostile attitude, spreading malicious rumours; using e-mail, mobile phone texting and social networking sites as potential tools for bullying.
- **Abuse of Power:** excessive criticism, withholding essential information, providing inaccurate information.
- **Physical:** aggressive behaviour, physical intimidation unwelcome physical contact up and including assault; suggestions that sexual favours may further someone's career, or that refusal may damage it.

**Cyberbullying:** Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conduct by an individual or group against others. Cyberbullying or online bullying refers to bullying which is carried out using the internet, mobile phone or other technological devices. Cyber bullying takes a psychological rather than a physical form but is often part of a wider pattern of 'traditional' bullying. Technology can be used to cyber bully through personal intimidation; impersonation; exclusion; personal humiliation and false reporting. This constitutes unacceptable use of the RCSI IT infrastructure and is contrary to the Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy for RCSI Computing and Network Systems.

Resolving Incidents of Bullying or Harassment

RCSI is committed to providing an environment where all persons working or studying in RCSI are treated with respect and dignity. All complaints of harassment or bullying will be treated seriously with due regard to the sensitivities of the complainant and to the rights of the person against whom the complaint has been made. The issue will be handled sympathetically and where possible confidentiality will be maintained. Every effort will be made to resolve the issue promptly.

## Procedure

For those who feel that they have been the subject of bullying or harassment, there are informal and formal procedures to resolve such difficulties. The objective of RCSI is to resolve such difficulties with the minimum of conflict and stress for the individuals involved. The following may be appropriate where the student simply wants the offensive behaviour to stop and can include one or all of the following:

- a) The complainant may ask the perpetrator to stop, make it clear that their behaviour is unwelcome, unacceptable and offensive. This may be all that is required to resolve the problem. However, it does not constitute consent to bullying or harassment if the student feels unable to do this.
- b) The complainant may seek support to assist the complainant to raise the issue informally and constructively at source.

## Sources of Support:

### Contact persons include:

1. Personal Tutors
2. Mentors
3. Student Welfare Officers
4. Associate Director for Student, Academic & Regulatory Affairs (SARA)



# RCSI

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5. Heads of Department
6. Heads of Schools/Cycle Directors

If there has been no resolution or the complainant finds it difficult to approach the perpetrator or they do not wish to seek support outlined above to resolve the complaint informally, the complainant may make a formal complaint as per the RCSI Complaints Procedure.

Before making a formal complaint, a student who feels subjected to harassment is advised to consult the Associate Director for Student, Academic & Regulatory Affairs (SARA) or contact person. Consultation with a contact person is strictly confidential and no further action will be taken without the consent of the complainant. If the harassment is deemed serious by the contact person and the problem cannot be resolved by informal means, the contact person will assist the complainant in making a formal complaint in writing to the Associate Director for Student, Academic & Regulatory Affairs (SARA) (see RCSI Student Complaints Procedures). If the matter is reasonably deemed sufficiently serious by the Associate Director for Student, Academic & Regulatory Affairs (SARA), the complainant may also be advised to consult a member of An Garda Síochána (the Irish police force). Formal complaints of harassment must identify the alleged offender(s).

If a student is found to contravene this policy for Dignity and Respect, RCSI will take appropriate action in accordance with the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations, which may include suspension or expulsion. It is therefore incumbent on all students to be familiar with the appropriate policies and procedures of RCSI.

### **Right of Appeal**

A student, against whom a complaint of harassment is substantiated, has the right to appeal in accordance with the RCSI Disciplinary Regulations.

### **References**

[Policy and Procedures for Student Dignity and Respect at the University of Limerick](#)

[Trinity College Dublin Dignity and Respect Policy](#)

[University College Dublin Dignity and Respect Policy](#)



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## [Annex 2.2.1]

# Disciplinary Regulations

RCSI DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE

## Contents

1.	Disciplinary Procedure .....	1
2.	Serious Misconduct or Poor Performance .....	1
3.	Investigations .....	2
4.	Searches.....	3
5.	Meetings .....	3
6.	Precautionary measures .....	3
7.	Disciplinary Hearing .....	3
8.	Sanctions and Stages .....	4
	1 <sup>st</sup> Stage Warning .....	5
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Stage Warning .....	5
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Stage and Final Warning .....	5
9.	Appeal .....	5
10.	Amendments .....	6



## Disciplinary Regulations

The objective of the Disciplinary Regulations is to help and encourage all students to behave in a professional manner including but not limited to adherence to the current Code(s) of Conduct(s) and all relevant policies available on RCSI's virtual learning environment.

You must behave professionally at all times whether **on or off** campus.

Generally, for less serious concerns about professional behaviour or performance, the University will attempt to deal with these concerns on an informal basis rather than through the Disciplinary Procedure. However, if these concerns cannot be resolved informally, the Disciplinary Procedure may subsequently be invoked.

### 1. Disciplinary Procedure

The purposes of the Disciplinary Procedure include to:

- 1.1 identify any deficits in your behaviour or performance
- 1.2 assist you in remediating any deficits identified in your behaviour or performance
- 1.3 guide and warn you as regards substandard behaviour or performance
- 1.4 prevent any re-occurrence of poor behaviour or performance
- 1.5 promote good standards of behaviour and performance
- 1.6 provide fair procedures in relation to any disciplinary issues that might involve you

### 2. Serious Misconduct or Poor Performance

In the case of serious unprofessional behaviour or performance or a breach of any of the Policies RCSI may proceed to take disciplinary action with sanctions up to and including immediate expulsion.

You should be aware that unprofessional behaviour, which might not constitute serious misconduct on the first occasion, may amount to serious misconduct if committed on a second or subsequent occasion.

The following are some examples of conduct/behaviour which are normally regarded as serious misconduct.<sup>1</sup> This is not an exhaustive list:

- 2.1. Being on the premises under the influence of alcohol, non-prescribed or illegal drugs;
- 2.2. Consuming alcohol or using non prescribed illegal drugs on the premises;
- 2.3. Theft;
- 2.4. Deliberate damage to or removal of RCSI property without authority;

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<sup>1</sup> Students on programmes leading to professional registration should also refer to the profession specific guidelines and regulations issued by the relevant professional body, including CORU, Dental Council of Ireland; Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland; Medical Council of Ireland; Pharmacy Society of Ireland



# RCSI

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- 2.5. Fraud or deliberate falsification of any documents or records;
- 2.6. Unethical or criminal conduct;
- 2.7. Threats; assault; fighting or abusive behaviour;
- 2.8. Conviction for a serious offence;
- 2.9. Failing to observe safety regulations; or any personal action that endangers self or others;
- 2.10. Gaining or attempting to gain unauthorised access to any of our IT systems including in any way attempting to interfere (such as DOS attacks and infecting systems with viruses or malware) with our systems;
- 2.11. Using our IT system to download, distribute or access inappropriate sites or material;
- 2.12. Bringing the University into disrepute or harming the good name or reputation of the University; and/or
- 2.13. Bullying, harassment or sexual harassment of others.
- 2.14. Breaches of academic integrity constituting academic misconduct as provided for in the University's Academic Integrity policy.
- 2.15. A breach of any of the Policies.
- 2.16. Failure to assist and/or fully co-operate in any disciplinary proceedings brought under the RCSI's Disciplinary Regulations.

### **3. Investigations**

In some cases, the extent and nature of the alleged breach of the Code, Regulations or the Policies will be self-evident or admitted. In such cases there may be no need to carry out an investigation into the alleged breach. In other cases, it may be necessary for an investigation to be carried out.

Consequently, at any stage in the procedure, where RCSI considers it appropriate, a fact gathering exercise and investigation may be carried out by an appointed investigating officer. The extent of the fact gathering exercise will depend on the nature of the facts and evidence, the seriousness of the complaint and other relevant factors.

Students are required to assist and give full co-operation to RCSI in the carrying out of any investigation in connection with the Disciplinary Procedure. This applies not only to the student who may be under suspicion but also to any student who may have information that might be of assistance to the carrying out of such investigation.

Failure to assist and/or fully co-operate shall, of itself, be grounds to invoke the Disciplinary Procedure under the Disciplinary Regulations against any student. Students who have any relevant information are required to come forward with such information even if not interviewed by an investigator.



**RCSI**

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#### **4. Searches**

Students are required to submit to an appropriate examination or search of their person or property by any person duly authorised by RCSI (any investigator carrying out an investigation under this Disciplinary Procedure shall be deemed to be duly authorised). Failure to submit to such examination or search may result in inferences being drawn.

#### **5. Meetings**

If a student is under suspicion and/or investigation they will have the right to be accompanied by a fellow student at any investigation meeting and any Disciplinary Hearing. The accompanying person should be independent of and otherwise uninvolved with the incident or matter under investigation.

Any investigation will be fact gathering and will only determine whether the alleged breach of the Policies or misconduct or poor performance should proceed to a Disciplinary Hearing before the disciplinary committee.

#### **6. Precautionary measures**

If the matter is deemed to be of a sufficiently serious nature or deemed necessary for carrying out of a proper investigation you may be temporarily suspended from RCSI on such terms as are deemed appropriate pending the outcome of the investigation and the Disciplinary Process. Other precautionary measures may include, but are not limited to: restrictions on attendance; limits to communicating with other staff or students; restrictions on IT access etc.

It is important to note that suspension in this context is a precautionary measure only. It is not a penalty or sanction and it does not indicate that RCSI has concluded students have breached the RCSI Code of Conduct or committed serious misconduct.

Failure of a student to comply with the terms of a temporary suspension or any other precautionary measures imposed will, of itself, be regarded as a disciplinary matter which may attract further disciplinary sanction under the Disciplinary Regulations up to and including expulsion.

#### **7. Disciplinary Hearing**

Once any investigation has been completed, or if the circumstances do not warrant an investigation, a decision will be made whether you have a case to answer. If it is decided that you have a case to answer then you will be required to attend a Disciplinary Hearing before a Disciplinary Committee.

In advance of any Disciplinary Hearing you will receive in writing:

- 7.1. The allegation(s) against you;
- 7.2. The complaint
- 7.3. The basis of the allegation



# RCSI

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- 7.4. A copy of the relevant Policy, if relevant
- 7.5. A copy of the investigation report (if any) and/or any written statements taken; and
- 7.6. An indication, if the allegation(s) are found to be substantiated, of the maximum sanction that may be imposed.
- 7.7. A copy of the signed Student Agreement and copy of the Disciplinary Regulations

In advance and at the Disciplinary Hearing student's will be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations. The manner in which a hearing is conducted may vary depending upon the subject matter of the allegations and shall be at the sole discretion of the Chair. Without prejudice to that discretion, the hearing shall, at all times, be conducted in accordance with fair procedures and natural justice.

Witnesses or anybody who has provided a written statement will not normally be required to attend at the Disciplinary Hearing unless the person or body conducting the hearing considers their attendance appropriate and/or necessary for due process. In such case, the person or body conducting the hearing may adjourn or postpone a hearing for the purposes of securing the attendance of any particular person.

The decision ("Disciplinary Outcome") will not normally be communicated at the Disciplinary Hearing but will be reserved and furnished in writing as soon as is practicable after due consideration.

## 8. Sanctions and Stages

- 8.1. In relation to sanctions that may be applied, the Disciplinary Committee shall have absolute discretion to apply any sanction it deems appropriate. Without limiting this discretion sanctions may include:

- Requiring you to repeat, partially or wholly, a course or courses, which may include a period of exclusion from RCSI for a defined period;
- Withdrawal of any academic credits, award or qualification;
- Removal of any privilege or privileges for a defined or indefinite period;
- Withdrawal of right to sit an exam(s) or submit an assignment(s) and which may include a period of exclusion from RCSI;
- Withdrawal of right to participate in research, or other progress milestones as applicable and which may include a period of exclusion from RCSI; or
- Expulsion from RCSI and/or the termination of your course without refund of any money paid by you or on your behalf, and without any academic award being conferred

Depending on the nature and seriousness of the alleged breach of conduct or performance, RCSI will decide, at its absolute discretion, whether to use the incremental stages as outlined below or skip some or all of the stages.



## 8.2. Stages

### *1<sup>st</sup> Stage Warning*

If your professional behaviour or performance is unsatisfactory or if it is in breach of one of the Policies you may be issued with a formal 1<sup>st</sup> stage warning in writing or verbally. If this is a verbal warning it will be followed up in writing. The warning issued will, if appropriate, advise you of the improvements required and the timescale in which the improvement is to be achieved.

### *2<sup>nd</sup> Stage Warning*

If your professional behaviour or performance does not improve or another matter arises in relation to your professional behaviour or performance or an initial breach is deemed serious enough then you may be issued with a 2<sup>nd</sup> Stage Warning. This written warning will, if appropriate, advise you of the improvements required and the timescale in which the improvement is to be achieved.

### *3<sup>rd</sup> Stage and Final Warning*

If your professional behaviour or performance does not improve or another matter arises in relation to your professional behaviour or performance or an initial breach is deemed to be so serious, then you may be issued with a 3<sup>rd</sup> Stage and Final Warning. This written warning will, if appropriate, advise you of the improvements required and the timescale in which the improvement is to be achieved. The warning will also advise you that if RCSI has occasion to take any further disciplinary action against you that you may be expelled as a student and would exit from RCSI without an academic award.

### ***Termination of programme of study***

If you have been issued with a 3<sup>rd</sup> stage warning, and your professional behaviour or performance does not improve or another matter arises in relation to your professional behaviour or performance you may be terminated or expelled as a student of RCSI. If a decision is made to expel you as a Student you will be written to setting out the basis and reason for such termination in these circumstances. You would exit from RCSI without an academic award.

## **9. Appeal**

If you wish to exercise your right to appeal you may do so, in writing, by lodging your Notice of Appeal with the Registry office within fourteen days of receipt of the written notice advising you of the initial decision together with a fee (as advised on Moodle or by Registry). Appeals filed without the accompanying fee will be treated as invalid.

The Appeal Notice must set out, in detail, the grounds of your appeal together with any supporting documentation on which you wish to rely.

An appeal may be against:

- i. The decision and the sanction; or



**RCSI**

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- ii. The sanction alone.

An appeal notice may be processed without a hearing or, at the discretion of the person or body considering an appeal, by way of a hearing. An appeal of a decision or sanction will not stop the sanction being applied. However, if, on appeal, the sanction is reversed and/or ameliorated then any previously applied sanction will be reversed and/or ameliorated to the extent necessary to give effect to the appellate decision.

## **10. Amendments**

This policy is intended as a general statement of current policy and procedure and therefore RCSI reserves the right to amend the policy and/or procedure, with or without notice, as necessary to meet any changing requirements or to depart from the policy and/or procedure as set out where RCSI deems appropriate.