



RCSI POSTGRADUATE STUDENT AGREEMENT 2016

RCSI DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE



RCSI - ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS IN IRELAND

POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

STUDENT AGREEMENT TO BE BOUND BY RCSI REGULATIONS 2016

This document contains the Postgraduate Code of Conduct, the RCSI Alcohol, Drug and Substance Misuse Policy and an agreement to be bound to all of the College regulations with which you are obliged to comply as a student of RCSI.

Please read the information carefully to ensure that you fully understand the regulations that will be applicable to you as a student during your time at RCSI (referred to herein interchangeably as the “College” and “RCSI”). If there is anything that you do not understand about the regulations, or should you require any further information, please contact the School of Postgraduate Studies, RCSI.

Important note:

By signing up to this document, you are agreeing to be bound, whilst a student of RCSI, by the regulations set out herein.

1. RCSI POSTGRADUATE CODE OF CONDUCT

For the purposes of this Postgraduate Student Code of Conduct a 'research student' is defined as any student at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) who is carrying out research in any topic. This definition applies whether the student is registered full time or part time on a research programme or the research element of a taught programme or a visiting student from another institution carrying out a research placement at RCSI.

A postgraduate is defined as any student who is registered on a postgraduate programme. This definition applies whether the student is registered full time or part time or a visiting student from another institution carrying out an assignment, placement or other postgraduate activity at RCSI.

All postgraduate students at RCSI commit to developing their academic scholarship through learning, research, study and balanced analytical discussion. By registering for an RCSI programme of study, whether full time or part time, whether delivered in the classroom, at a distance or online, research and postgraduate students must accept RCSI's objectives as a third level institution and give their commitment as responsible adults to behave appropriately and abide by this Postgraduate Student Code of Conduct throughout their tenure on their programme.

As a postgraduate of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI), you are preparing to develop a research career in the Health Sciences or to enhance your professional development training in a range of health and allied professions. Entry to and continuing membership of these research and healthcare professions requires the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct.

This RCSI Postgraduate Student Code of Conduct outlines the defined standards and the principles by which you must abide in the research, academic, health profession, clinical or other training environment. These standards are evidence of good research practice and fitness to practice in your chosen profession. This Code applies from the first day of registration, both on and off campus and is guided by the documents listed in appendix 1.

Principles of the Code

The Postgraduate Student Code of Conduct is based on the following four core principles:

1. Act according to the highest ethical principles at all times
2. Demonstrate professional responsibility and behaviour
3. Develop and maintain a high level of competence
4. Be accountable for own actions and self-care

All postgraduate students must formally agree to abide by this Code, any breach of which is taken seriously by RCSI. If behaviour falls outside the standards in this Code, the matter will be referred to an RCSI Professional Conduct Committee for consideration in accordance with RCSI [Professional Conduct Policy](#). The decisions of the RCSI Professional Conduct Committee will be made on a case-by-case basis and will be judged with reference to the principles set out in this Code.

Principle 1: Act According to the Highest Ethical Principles at all Times

As an RCSI research/postgraduate student, I commit to acting ethically at all times in the conduct of my research and/or postgraduate study. In my research, I will adhere to standard internationally recognised ethical principles and practices. Ethical principles incorporate the themes of integrity, honesty, responsibility, training and dissemination. 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; ethical approval practices and accountability.

As a research/postgraduate student I will adhere to the RCSI principles of **Honesty and Integrity**:

- 1.1 The benefits and value of research are absolutely dependent on the integrity of research. I acknowledge responsibility for the trustworthiness of my work.
- 1.2 I commit to being honest in the collection, analysis and reporting of findings from my research or programme of study.
- 1.3 I will not participate in, condone or allow myself to be associated with dishonesty, misrepresentation or fraud.
- 1.4 I will take credit only for work that I have done or generated and, where appropriate, give due acknowledgment when referring to the work of others.
- 1.5 I will not falsify any research information whether in its collection, interpretation or dissemination in any form. I understand that falsification of research information is an extremely serious offence and will be treated with due sanction through RCSI procedures taking full account of legal concerns. Please refer to the RCSI Statement on the Handling of Allegations of Research Misconduct.
- 1.6 I will inform the School of Postgraduate Studies immediately if I am the subject of any legal proceedings.

Principle 2: Demonstrate Professional Responsibility and Behaviour

As an RCSI research or postgraduate student, I am part of the broader RCSI community and as such am expected to conduct myself with integrity and professionalism. When engaged in patient care, the care of animals or humans involved in the research, I must be guided by my responsibility to act in the best interests of all concerned without influence of any personal consideration.

As a research or postgraduate student I will abide by the following codes:

Professionalism

- 2.1 Where ethical approval is required for the conduct of research, I will ensure that appropriate ethical approval is obtained in advance of the study and will exercise appropriate care and confidentiality in the collection, recording and storage of research data.
- 2.2 I commit to keeping clear, accurate records of all research in ways that will allow verification and replication of my work by others.
- 2.3 I will avoid any conflict of interest and make relevant parties aware of any potential risk of having my judgement influenced by my personal interests.
- 2.4 I acknowledge that I am responsible for sharing my data and findings openly and promptly, as soon as I have had an opportunity to establish priority and ownership claims. This applies to dissemination in poster, written report, oral, thesis or other format, regardless of the audience to which the information is presented.
- 2.5 Where I become aware of any incident of irresponsible research, I will inform the relevant authorities within RCSI. Please refer to the RCSI Statement on the Handling of Allegations of Research Misconduct.

Respect

- 2.6 I will act with civility, dignity and respect towards all with whom I come into contact for my research both at RCSI and its associated centres.
- 2.7 I will behave in a manner that demonstrates respect for equality and diversity.
- 2.8 I will not engage publicly in degrading comments about others that include culture, nationality, ethnicity, colour, race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation or size.

- 2.9 I will demonstrate appropriate respect for the knowledge, insight, experience and expertise of others.
- 2.10 I will work in a spirit of fairness towards others.

College Reputation and Identity

- 2.11 I commit to the disclosure of any information if I believe that someone may be at risk of harm, or involved in damage or theft of RCSI property or its associated centres.
- 2.12 I will behave in a manner that does not bring myself, others or RCSI into disrepute including online activity and the use of social networking services.
- 2.13 I will avoid using the RCSI identity to promote self interest that is not in keeping with the values, rules, statutes or interests of RCSI.
- 2.14 I will engage with third parties under the supervision of an RCSI supervisor only.
- 2.15 I will not accept gifts or incentives in any form or engage in any commercial exercise that might harm the reputation of the research endeavour of RCSI.

- 4.7.2 impact my ability to use laboratory or research equipment
- 4.7.3 impact my ability to use research facilities
- 4.7.4 impact my ability to follow procedures
- 4.7.5 impact my own safety or the safety of others

- 4.9 I commit to respecting the confidentiality of my colleagues.
- 4.10 I commit to appropriately disclosing information of concern including seeking prompt and professional advice about my general wellbeing or that of others.
- 4.11 I will co-operate with formal investigations about myself or others.

Principle 3: Develop and Maintain a High Level of Competence

Competence, the overall integration of knowledge, skills and abilities into professional practice, is dynamic and demands that I keep abreast with change in order to maintain and continually develop my competencies. I will do this by engaging in continuing professional development. Specifically:

- 3.1 Where necessary, I will make a judgment as to whether I am competent to carry out a particular role or function.
- 3.2 I will acknowledge any limitations of competence and refuse in such cases to accept delegated or assigned functions, particularly when engaged in activities that involve patients or research subjects.
- 3.3 I will take measures to develop and maintain the competence necessary for professional and research practice.
- 3.4 I will actively engage in appropriate training in the areas required for the conduct of my research and seek out opportunities for development and growth.
- 3.5 I will seek advice and support when experiencing difficulties related to my learning and research.

Principle 4: Be Accountable for Own Actions and Self-Care

As an RCSI research/postgraduate student, I commit to being accountable for my own actions and to ensure that I manage care of myself.

- 4.1 I will comply with all relevant RCSI health and safety requirements.
- 4.2 I will be aware of any conditions of my funders or sponsors and will abide by the conditions of my contracts and/or agreements.
- 4.3 I will be accountable for the proper use of funding over which I have control.
- 4.4 I will familiarize myself with and abide by intellectual property rights; regulations; relevant contractual agreements regarding disclosure of data and confidential information.
- 4.5 I will be aware of my own health and how it impacts on me and my academic, research and professional responsibilities.
- 4.6 I will inform appropriate RCSI staff if I am affected by a major life event e.g. bereavement.
- 4.7 I will inform appropriate RCSI staff of any disability or medical condition that might affect my ability or role as a research or postgraduate scientist; that might put patients at risk or have an impact on animal welfare.
- 4.8 I will inform appropriate RCSI staff if I take medicines that may
 - 4.7.1 impair my judgment

2. RCSI ALCOHOL, DRUG, AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY

Rationale for an RCSI Alcohol, Drug and Substance Misuse Policy

High-risk drinking has an impact on academic achievement, personal problems and attrition. Drug and substance misuse is of particular concern for healthcare students who may have access to medicines in their future careers.

Definition

Alcohol, drug and substance misuse is defined as the intermittent or continual use of alcohol or any drug or substance which causes detriment to students' health, functioning or performance in placement or study, which affects efficiency, productivity, safety, attendance, time-keeping or conduct in the place of learning.

Policy Statement

The RCSI / Clinical Placements are places of learning and one of RCSI's primary responsibilities is to provide a safe and healthy environment for its students. If such an environment is put at risk by students who use alcohol and other drugs / substances in such a way that their health, performance, conduct and / or patient safety are adversely affected, RCSI will consider such behaviour (that includes damage to RCSI property / Clinical Placements) as a serious breach of the RCSI Regulations and the RCSI Student Code of Conduct.

Specific objectives of the Policy include:

- Promoting health and wellbeing of RCSI students
- Promoting personal responsibility and social obligation to the RCSI community
- Providing for a campus environment where no/low risk drinking is the 'social norm'.

This RCSI Alcohol, Drug and Substance Misuse Policy is based on three principles: education, care and discipline and how best these can be applied in order to minimize the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol.

RCSI is committed to maintaining a drug-free environment. It is the policy of RCSI and stipulated in the RCSI Student Code of Conduct, that students are prohibited from studying at RCSI whilst they have any of the following in their systems: 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. The illegal dispensing, distribution, manufacture, possession or use of such drugs is also prohibited.

The use / consumption / presence of alcohol, drugs, substances etc on RCSI premises is not permitted, with the exception of organized events where alcohol may be served if a permit has been granted by RCSI Student Services for the event.

Student Union and Student Services - Implementation of Alcohol Policy

All events where it is intended that alcohol will be available must be approved by RCSI Student Services. Student Services will oversee the schedule of undergraduate social events and related expenditure to promote a responsible approach to alcohol use among students. At the planning stage for any events at which it is intended to serve alcohol, students must apply in advance for an alcohol permit.

Sponsorship of student events by drinks companies is prohibited (monetary sponsorship may be accepted subject to approval by RCSI Student Services).

Develop Alternative Social and Recreational Opportunities

RCSI has a diverse student population from different ethnic and religious backgrounds where socialising around alcohol is not the norm. The RCSI Student's Union and Post Graduate Student's Union are responsible for providing a schedule of entertainment that is an attractive alternative to alcohol related recreation.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

RCSI recognises the place of moderate alcohol consumption in many areas of society. However it is important to create an environment within RCSI which promotes a sensible attitude to drinking while accepting the potential of alcohol abuse to adversely affect the well-being of individuals.

It is the responsibility of RCSI to:

- commit to providing a supportive environment which assists in informing students to make healthy choices that promote health and well-being
- encourage those with alcohol or drug/substance related problems to seek help voluntarily
- provide support to those who may require assistance (Counselling or referral to appropriate medical services) during their time at RCSI as far as is reasonably practicable.

Issues such as alcohol misuse cannot be tackled in isolation and may be best addressed within the broader context of lifestyle issues and a supportive RCSI environment.

Students

It is the responsibility of each RCSI student to ensure they are in a fit state to study or be on clinical placement. All students are responsible for timely attendance and for ensuring that their perception and performance of duties is unimpaired by alcohol or drugs. Students must never be under the influence of alcohol or drugs in a clinical or laboratory environment. Students are expected to be responsible for their actions at all times. They are obliged to respect the rights of others and to comply with the RCSI Rules and Regulations and the RCSI Student Code of Conduct.

Application of the RCSI Alcohol, Drug and Substance Misuse Policy for students

Staff who in the course of their duties, encounter students considered to be under the influence of either alcohol or drugs should firstly ensure their own safety, the safety of any patients placed at risk and the safety of other students. The staff member should refer the student for support and notify the relevant Head of School or Department / Cycle Director, as appropriate. The student should be encouraged to seek support from their GP, Mercer's Medical Centre or the Student Counselling Services. A Concern Form will be submitted to the Associate Director for Academic Affairs who will initiate the procedures of the Professional Conduct Policy.

Monitoring

To protect the physical and mental well-being of students, the safety of patients and assure the maintenance of a drug-free environment, issues of ongoing concern in relation to student with an alcohol or drug problem, may require that a student would be subject to alcohol or drug testing. This will be conducted if recommended by the Professional Conduct Committee on reasonable suspicion that a student may be using drugs or as part of a student's rehabilitation monitoring.

AGREEMENT TO BE BOUND BY RCSI REGULATIONS

Having fully read this document, you are required to indicate your acceptance of the regulations by signing your acceptance.

I have read, understand and agree to be bound by the regulations contained herein:

- I accept that my entry to RCSI is conditional on my continuous 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 the College or subversive of discipline shall render me liable to such penalties as outlined in the RCSI disciplinary regulations.
 - I accept that I have read and understood the RCSI Postgraduate Code of Conduct. I agree that I will comply with all of the provisions of this Code as detailed therein.
 - I accept that the College may correspond with my Sponsors in connection with any continuance in and progress in the College, in connection with my academic results or in cases of emergency in relation to my health and general welfare AND I hereby authorise the College to release to my Sponsors, all information concerning such matters.
 - I accept that the College may correspond with my nominated next-of-kin in cases of emergency in relation to my academic, health and general welfare AND I hereby authorise the College to release to my nominated next-of-kin, information concerning such matters.
 - I accept that I shall not be permitted to change my fee status (NON-EU to EU) following admission to the College.
 - I accept that if my tuition fees are not paid by the required date, I will not be allowed sit my examinations, including term, continuous assessment or end-of year; and that I may not be able to progress to the next stage of my course and /or graduate.
 - I accept that if I fail to pass my examinations/assessments at the prescribed times that I may be discontinued in accordance with the regulations applicable for the Academic Year in which I fail.
 - I certify that I have never been dismissed from any academic institution.
 - I accept that I may be required to submit to alcohol or drug testing if so recommended by the RCSI Professional Conduct Committee who may make such recommendation on reasonable suspicion that I may be using drugs or as part of my rehabilitation monitoring.
 - I agree to disclose, in writing to the Manager of the School of Postgraduate Studies prior to RCSI Registration, any criminal offences of which I have been charged in Ireland and / or elsewhere and in respect of which a court hearing may be pending or as a result of such charged offences, whether on conviction or otherwise, a penalty has been imposed by a Court of Law which may include imprisonment, a suspended sentence, probation, fine, community service, a curfew order, an exclusion order, a restriction on movement order and / or any other penalty.
- I understand that the College routinely collects data which include student feedback and examination/assessment results for internal quality assurances purposes. These data are used to inform the continuing development and improvement of the student experience. These aggregated and anonymised data can occasionally reveal information that is of value to the research community, particularly with regard to the education of healthcare professionals and may be submitted for publication (subject to relevant ethical approval). The College 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.
 - I consent to RCSI holding and processing personal data including sensitive personal data, such as medical records, relating to me and to transfer such information inside and outside the European Economic Area provided that such transfer is for the purposes of RCSI's administration and management of its students and business or is done pursuant to the RCSI Data Protection Statement herein.
 - I accept that during my time as a student, RCSI may amend alter or vary College regulations and I agree to be bound by any variation thereof.
 - I understand that College regulations are available to all registered students on RCSI's Virtual Learning Environment for reference and must be read, understood and signed off electronically each year in order to re-register as an RCSI student.

RCSI Data Protection & Administration:

- I understand that data held on the RCSI student database will only be kept on file for so long as is necessary to ensure the safe management and administration of my studies as an RCSI Student. Such data shall be used by RCSI only in accordance with this purpose and will only be retained for as long as required for this purpose. RCSI fully respects your right to privacy and actively seeks to preserve the privacy rights of the students of RCSI. Any personal information which you volunteer to RCSI shall be treated with the highest standards of security and confidentiality, in accordance with the Data Protection Acts, 1988 and 2003 as amended.
- I consent to my student details being made available to the Department of Education and Science and the Higher Education Authority of Ireland for statistical and funding purposes.

Please sign, date and return to your Programme Office

I confirm that I have been truthful in my application to RCSI and that I did not omit important information relevant to my application.

I understand that if RCSI discovers that I have been untruthful in my application this may lead to my offer of a place being withdrawn or following Registration, termination from RCSI.

Student Name (PLEASE PRINT)

Signature of Student:

Date.....

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