RCSI School of Medicine
Graduate Entry Programme (GEP)
Our **Mission**

‘To educate, nurture and discover for the benefit of human health’

Our **Vision**

‘To be recognised internationally as a leading centre for professional education, research and innovation in healthcare’

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Established in 1784, the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) is an independent, not-for-profit, health sciences institution with a unique international perspective from its headquarters in Dublin to its presence on three continents. Its original purpose was to train surgeons and set national standards for surgery in Ireland. Today RCSI has a wide portfolio of undergraduate and postgraduate academic and professional courses. Its undergraduate medical school is the largest in Ireland. In Dublin, RCSI educates a substantial cohort of international students, alongside Irish and other EU students. To remain competitive in an international market in providing internationally recognised and respected medical and health sciences qualifications and careers, RCSI continually invests in educational standards, innovation and facilities.

As well as undergraduate courses in Medicine, Pharmacy and Physiotherapy, RCSI offers PhD, MD, MCh and MSc degrees by research as well as postgraduate training leading to fellowships in the Faculties of Radiology, Dentistry, Nursing and Midwifery and Sports and Exercise Medicine. Taught postgraduate programmes are available in Ethics, Bereavement, Pharmacy, Surgery, Physiotherapy, Nursing and Leadership. RCSI also offers undergraduate Nursing programmes in Bahrain as well as taught masters programmes in Bahrain, Malaysia and Dubai.

**RCSI Facts and Figures:**
- Established, 11th February 1784 by Royal Charter of King George III of Great Britain and Ireland
- A not for profit registered charity
- Medicine focused; in Education, Research and Service
- Almost 4,000 students
- 60 + Countries represented in student body
- Over 800 staff
- Independent Degree Awarding Status
- National Training Body for Surgery in Ireland
- Postgraduate Faculties of Dentistry, Exercise & Sports Medicine, Nursing & Midwifery and Radiology
- International; delivering programmes from campuses in Bahrain, Kuala Lumpur, Penang and Dubai
Ireland’s worldwide reputation for high quality education is built on the solid foundation of a commitment to excellence. Ireland is a beautiful island, combining contemporary modern cities with an unspoilt countryside, cityscapes steeped in history and a rich natural habitat. Ireland and her people offer the warmest of welcomes to students from all over the world.

- Friendly safe environment
- Internationally Recognised Qualifications
- Long tradition of Educational Excellence
- The quality of Irish Graduates is recognised by leading Global Companies who choose Ireland as their European Headquarters
  - All top 10 Global Technology Companies
  - 8 of the top 10 Pharmaceutical Companies
  - 8 of the top 10 Internet Companies
- US investment into Ireland is greater than Brazil, India, China and Russia, combined

**Interesting facts on Ireland**
- QS World University Rankings – Dublin, 8th Best Student City in the World
- UNESCO - Dublin, UNESCO City of Literature (1 of only 4)
- Trip Advisor - Travellers choice 2012 ‘Best Destinations’ No1 - Ireland
- Trip Advisor - Travellers choice 2012 ‘Top Ten in Ireland’ No1 - Dublin
- Lonely Planet - Top 10 World’s friendliest Countries
- National Geographic - Best walks in the World
Why RCSI for Graduate Entry Medicine

- First to establish a Clinical Research Centre on an Irish hospital site (Beaumont Hospital), 2000
- First to develop an On-line Surgical Education Programme (BeST online) Globally, 2000
- First Medical School in Ireland to independently adopt the standards of the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME) - standards since adopted by the Irish Medical Council as the accreditation standard for all Irish Medical Schools, 2005
- First place in Irish Higher Education Authority International peer-review tender process for Graduate Medical Programmes in Ireland, 2006-7
- First Graduate Medical Programme in Ireland, commenced 2006
- First Graduate Medical Programme to achieve full accreditation by the Irish Medical Council, 2010
- Bespoke programme for the first two years
- Dedicated facilities for the first two years
- Strong clinically focused curriculum with second year delivered by clinicians on a clinical site
- Blended learning approach incorporating traditional didactic teaching, small group problem based learning, on-line teaching, group project work and self-directed learning
- Small class size of 60 students, 30 Irish and 30 International, working in five groups of twelve students
- Success of Residency placement in North America
Professor Seamus Sreenan
Director, Graduate Entry Programme

With a track record of involvement in medical education for more than two hundred years, its focus on health professions education and international student community, RCSI provides a unique medical training opportunity in a multidisciplinary health care environment amongst students from all corners of the globe. RCSI’s graduate entry medical programme was set up in 2006, adopting a North American style, four-year curriculum with particular emphasis on development of strong clinical skills. Early clinical exposure is combined with a firm foundation in the basic sciences, population and international health and personal and professional development, with teaching provided by clinicians and scientists who are leaders in their fields. On graduation, RCSI graduate medical students are fit for purpose to practice as clinicians with the knowledge skills and attitudes to succeed in their chosen careers. The College is proud of the success of its graduates to date. The graduate students have enriched the student body bringing a broad range of academic and social experiences to the College together with their enthusiasm and motivation for medicine, which have provided a stimulating, enjoyable challenge to the faculty.

Professor Hannah McGee
Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences

“We aim to nurture, to challenge and to motivate our students to realise their full potential, not just as undergraduates but by creating life-long learners wherever they are in the world. To do this, we work to the highest standards. Our independent degree awarding status requires ongoing commitment to quality enhancement and assurance. Alongside our own internal reviews, we are subject to external reviews and accreditation. In November 2011, the Irish Medical Council reviewed both our undergraduate and graduate entry medical programmes. We were delighted to achieve unconditional approval for the programmes for five years, the highest level of approval that can be issued.’
Curriculum – RCSI Philosophy

The ethos of the Medical School is founded on the principle that the patient’s interest is paramount in clinical teaching, medical practice and research. The curriculum is designed to give the student a sound knowledge of the principles of both the science and the art of medicine. The RCSI curriculum is outcomes-focused and reflects the skills and competencies that students will have on graduation, including the knowledge, skills and attitudes the College believes are required to enable its graduates to perform as competent clinicians. These competencies are outlined in the medical graduate profile.

Vertical and horizontal integration of outcomes relate to the five pillars of the medical graduate profile including basic and clinical sciences, international health and personal and professional development. The College aspires to producing doctors who have a thorough understanding of ethical principles underpinning the practice of medicine and, safety and quality in health care. Students are encouraged to become life-long learners with excellent team working and leadership skills.

A spirit of enquiry is also fostered and students may carry out research in the academic departments of the College during the summer vacations.

Throughout the programme, student are exposed to a variety of specialties and encouraged to develop a balanced perspective of domiciliary, community and hospital care. The clinical teaching facilities combined with the expertise and dedication of the clinical teachers, ensure that the highest training standards are achieved.

The Medical Act of 1886 provided that graduates had to be educated in surgery, medicine and obstetrics and graduates of RCSI received Licentiates in these three subjects. Since 1978, the College has also been a recognised College of the National University of Ireland and graduates are awarded the degrees, M.B., B.Ch., BAO in addition to the Licentiates.
RCSI employs a hybrid approach to teaching and learning, mixing traditional didactic teaching (lectures, tutorials, laboratory work) with problem-based learning where appropriate. The delivery of course objectives utilises a variety of teaching methods throughout the programme, including traditional lectures; case based learning (where a clinical case is used to illustrate or contextualise learning); small group tutorials (both staff and student directed); practicals (e.g. anatomy dissection); computer assisted learning; bedside clinical teaching; grand rounds; shadowing; observation; skills workshops; tutorials; operating room attendance; ward attendance; home visits; simulation-based clinical teaching.

Assessments take place during a module (continuous) or at the end of module (summative) and take many forms including, multiple choice questions (MCQs), short answer written questions, Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs), practical exams, oral exams, team/individual projects and online assessments.

Assessment modes are appropriate to the different types of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and attitudes) and assessments are carefully blueprinted to the course material for each module.
Clinical Teaching

The medical programme focuses on the patient as being paramount. To this end there is a strong emphasis on clinical medicine and clinical competence from the beginning of the programme. As students progress through the programme there is a shift of emphasis with less focus on biomedical sciences and increasing focus on clinical medicine in the later years.

Clinical teaching in Year 1 includes the following weekly;
- Clinical case introduced by clinicians
- Case discussion facilitated by clinicians
- Clinical data interpretation related to weekly case
- Attendance at hospital grand rounds by video conference link
- Clinical skills tutorials (history taking and examination of system related to weekly case)
- One half day in attendance at hospital site (semester 2)

In addition there is a one month clinical attachment on the hospital site at the end of the first academic year.

Clinical teaching in Year 2 includes the following weekly;
- Clinical case introduced by clinicians
- Case discussion facilitated by clinicians
- Clinical data interpretation and therapeutics related to weekly case
- Attendance at hospital grand rounds and other departmental conferences
- Ward tutorials (history taking and examination of system related to weekly case)
- Community medicine teaching (every other week)

In addition there are four-week clinical attachments in January and June on the wards at Connolly Hospital and the National Orthopaedic Hospital, regular attendance at post-mortem examinations, one day laboratory attachment, one afternoon community geriatric medicine attachment on site at affiliated elderly care facilities, an introduction to Ophthalmology and Otorhinolaryngology (ENT) and communication skills teaching.

In the final two years, students are based exclusively on clinical sites for the following attachments: Medicine and Surgery, Primary Care, Psychiatry, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Paediatrics, Anaesthesiology, Ophthalmology, ENT.

Students also complete a one month of sub-internship in the final year where they function as a member of clinical teams.
RCSI is committed to supporting and nurturing an active research community for the enhancement of human health. As part of this, we offer rewarding research experiences to undergraduate and postgraduate students. We aim to attract the highest-calibre research-active academic staff and students to RCSI and build strong research relationships between clinicians and scientists.

Research in RCSI is at the centre of our activities as it is the foundation of clinical education and practice. RCSI Faculties have successfully secured significant funding from industry, domestic and international health research institutions and other bodies to enable it to develop its research programme. RCSI’s taught modular programme continues to grow and has facilitated collaboration between many of the College’s faculties, departments and other third-party institutions.

Established areas of research:
- Cancer
- Cardiovascular Research
- Nursing
- Infection, Immunity & Inflammation
- Medicine
- Neuroscience
- Bioengineering
- Gynaecology, Obstetrics & Perinatal Health
- Pharmacy, Pharmaceutical Sciences & Chemistry
- Surgery
- Population Health Sciences
Electives

RCSI has formal elective arrangements with the Institutions below. Students work with the Vice Dean for Careers to secure electives in their areas of interest to prepare themselves for Residency Placement. Additional electives are also available through the RCSI Alumni and Research network.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospital / University</th>
<th>No. of Electives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baystate Medical Center</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland Clinic</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia University</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke University</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana Hospital</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Hopkins Hospital</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayo Hospital, Rochester</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMaster University</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research opportunities</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple University</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tufts University</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University California Irvine</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Hospital Network</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Massachusetts</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Pennsylvania</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Residency Placements

The ability of US and Canadian graduates to secure Residency Placements in North America after completing their medical programme overseas is essential.

Residency Placements secured by the US and Canadian graduates from the Class of 2012 are shown in the tables to the right:
Current Student Testimonials

Waasil Kareem – Senior Cycle 2 (USA)

RCSI has a proven track record of helping students achieve their career goals of returning home for residency training. Starting early in a student’s academic career the school invites all interested students to attend both faculty and senior student led tutorials covering major USMLE topics. Access to online materials such as question banks, virtual tutorials, and review e-books is made available to all students. Diagnostic tests simulated in real exam settings are also offered. In addition, Residency Seminars held throughout the school year aimed at mentoring students at all stages of their medical education about the steps that they should be taking to optimize their return to North America. Some examples of topics covered at these seminars range from creating a USMLE study plan, organizing electives, and navigating the residency application and interview process.

In addition, due to the unparalleled success of previous RCSI North American students attaining coveted residency positions, a wide ranging alumni network has been created allowing current students to learn from their experiences. RCSI’s ever-growing collaborative agreements with medical schools and hospitals in both Canada and the United States enables students to spend elective months during their Senior Cycle years to gain essential clinical experience at some of the most reputable North American Medical Centers. The single most contributing factor however, to RCSI students gaining residency back in North America, is the solid reputation that RCSI has across the Atlantic; a testament to the superior clinical education provided by the school.

Valerie Curren – Senior Cycle 1 (USA)

Being a GEP student at RCSI has been an incredible opportunity. One of my favourite aspects of the programme has been the emphasis on developing a strong clinical acumen from Day 1. The small class size creates a supportive bond among students with diverse cultural and educational backgrounds. In addition to lectures, several smaller group sessions each week provides valuable time for discussion of clinical case examples, ethical issues and to nurture history taking and physical exam skills. These invaluable tools in the art of medicine have been lost in many medical school curriculums, but remain a vital core of RCSI’s superior teaching. Outside of the classroom, hospital-based attachments starting in first year provide an opportunity to practice skills, examine potential career paths, and provide real life examples to enhance learning medicine. On attachments, GEP students are often entrusted as the first point of contact for patients presenting to hospital, which helps develop professionalism and responsibility. Additionally, being located next to the hospital allows for superior pathology teaching with very dedicated physicians and weekly post-mortem observations. Following on from outstanding cadaver based anatomy teaching in first year, these two subjects (anatomy and pathology) are highlights of the RCSI programme.

Outside of the classroom, life in Dublin has been a lot of fun. Not only does the vibrant city have a lot of offer, but also provides affordable travel access to Europe and beyond.

Overall, studying at RCSI has provided me with an exceptional medical education and an amazing experience while living in Ireland. The support of staff and students at the College is unparalleled. I highly recommend RCSI to applicants looking for not only a great education, but also for a bit of adventure along the way.

Caroline Brandon – Senior Cycle 1 (Canada)

Research has always played an integral part of my academic life in Canada, from my undergraduate summer research project to my master’s thesis. One of the most attractive features of RCSI is the multitude of research opportunities that one can pursue, ranging from basic science to clinical research, as well as the psychosocial aspect of health and medicine. The RCSI Research Summer School (RSS) Programme is an excellent starting point for students to liaise with clinicians and scientists who may share similar interests and can provide a platform upon which to build a research project, regardless of previous experience. Students foster relationships with prominent minds in medicine, learn how to communicate effectively with peers, and develop a greater appreciation for the intricate relationship between basic science, clinical audit, and clinical practice. Projects can be limited to the eight-week programme, or have the possibility of carrying on throughout the year and potentially evolve into a life-long passion.

While my previous research experience was molecular in nature, I have since developed an interest in conducting clinical research that will improve the standard of clinical care. RSS provided me with a chance to work closely with leading physicians to establish a pilot study on the diagnosis of upper gastric cancers. This project is now gaining momentum and will be presented to my peers in the near future. More importantly, it has reinforced the importance of engaging in medical practice in a holistic manner, encompassing practical skills, a solid foundation of knowledge, and a curious mind to expand beyond the current status quo.
Graduate Testimonials

Dr Miriam Burns –
Canada, (Class of 2010)
I received my medical degree from RCSI in 2010, as part of the country’s first ever Graduate Entry Program (GEP). I will forever be grateful to RCSI for providing me with the solid foundations of my medical career.

I remember fondly many renowned and dedicated physicians who played a pivotal role in the doctor I am today. Furthermore, the size of RCSI’s GEP program fostered a community feeling, enabling support and mentorship by our tutors, staff, professors, and directors. We had early clinical exposure to the hospital through direct observation during our first two years, and were fully integrated into medical teams for the latter two. We had access to simulation labs and brand new facilities for lectures and studying. RCSI’s GEP is akin to North American undergraduate medical education, and more than adequately prepared me for my Pediatric residency in Ontario, Canada. Moreover, RCSI was extremely supportive of my application to residency programs overseas, and facilitated necessary aspects of the application process. In fact, in comparison to the other Irish medical schools attended by international students, RCSI was by far the pioneer in supporting and advocating for Canadian students to return home and it was RCSI students who founded CIMSA (Canadian Irish Medical Students’ Association). I recall my mom’s words of wisdom when I was accepted to RCSI, “If you get into a good medical school, you go...”. And, she was mostly right. RCSI was an excellent medical school.

Dr Mo Sarhan –
USA, (Class of 2011)
As a graduate and now an internal medicine resident at the University of Pennsylvania, I can look back at my time at RCSI and safely say that I believe it is the best equipped medical school outside of the United States in assisting its students in matching to an American residency programme. RCSI offers student and professor led sessions in USMLE preparation, as well as access to question banks and assessments for board preparation. It has strong bilateral educational relationships with and sends dozens of students for rotations at nearly thirty of the top medical institutions in the United States, including Johns Hopkins, the University of Pennsylvania, Duke, the Mayo Clinic, and Tufts. The Dean’s Office is receptive to the needs and requests of students aiming for a North American residency and has garnered a strong, easily accessible alumni network for advice to current students. There are opportunities for extra-curricular activities in sport, culture, research, local aide, and elective excursions in the developing world.

I can retrospectively say that the emphasis of clinical-based learning and physical diagnosis is unparalleled and has vastly helped me in mastering “the art” of medicine. And most importantly, Paris, Barcelona, Berlin, Rome, Amsterdam, London, and the snow-capped Alps are all within a two-hour flight from Dublin!

Kerac Falk –
Senior Cycle 1 (USA)
My journey through RCSI has been as adventure. As in any medical school the coursework is tough and requires a high level of time and dedication, but there is a definite balance to the way of life here. When classes and clinics are over, there are limitless opportunities to relax and have fun at the school, in Dublin and abroad. Personally, I have found enough time to frequent the gym, cook, play tag Rugby, tutor, do research, travel and regularly meet friends around town.

RCSI is a constant source of events to help students decompress. The Clubs and Societies of RCSI are consistently putting on large-scale events such as the College Ball, Ballad Sessions, Cultural Nights, Drama Productions, Debates, Keynote Speakers and Fashion Shows. RCSI students also stay very active. There are over a dozen competitive Sports Teams to choose from, including Rugby, Soccer and Volleyball. On any given weekend there are organised trips such as Rock Climbing in the Wicklow Mountains, Surfing in Sligo or Skiing in the Alps.

In order to help build a competitive CV, there are plenty of academically-focused extracurricular opportunities. I chose to be a tutor in the Peer Led Teaching Programme, which organizes student-led tutorials in exam revision, clinical skills and USMLE preparations. This has been a great opportunity to hone my teaching, leadership and public speaking skills. Other academic pursuits include the Student Medical Journal, which fosters and publishes original student research, as well as several school Societies which focus on every medical discipline and professional interest.

Of course, RCSI has an enviable location on the doorstep of Europe, making cheap and quick travel easy and accessible. I have travelled less than many of my classmates, yet have managed to visit London, Scotland, Spain, Croatia, Stockholm and most of Ireland.
When I think back at my past 5 years here at RCSI many things come to mind: the friends I made; the staff that taught and inspired me; the opportunities I was exposed to; the tradition and culture of RCSI. All these things contributed a great deal in their own unique way to my experience as an RCSI student and words would barely do them justice.

RCSI draws students from around the world and having such a large proportion of international students made the adjustment of studying abroad very easy for me.

I found the College to be very serious about supporting their students to become more all-rounded professionals and developing them both personally and academically. During my time at RCSI, I engaged in clinical and biomedical research, went on sports tours and got involved in numerous societies on the academic and charity front.

In my current role as Student Union President I am able to appreciate first hand the commitment and dedication that the College has towards its students and towards building on the heritage and tradition of RCSI. As a future Alumnus I find this most encouraging.

It has been an amazing experience - Dublin, the Irish and RCSI have become a significant part of my life – and if I could, I would do it all again!
Dublin is a wonderful city in which to be a student and RCSI with its international mix of students offers a unique opportunity to be a student in the heart of one of Europe’s great capital cities. Student Life is an important and vibrant aspect of the RCSI experience, and students get just as much satisfaction from their social and cultural activities as they do from their studies.

The College has over 70 Clubs and Societies with a range of offerings to suit all tastes. Students are encouraged to become involved in College life as the ideal counter balance to a busy academic schedule. Whether you are interested in sports, arts, volunteering or just fancy a work out in the gym, RCSI student life will provide the perfect conduit to find like-minded friends and colleagues to share your interests.

Careers begin and are fostered at RCSI.
North American candidates should contact The Atlantic Bridge Programme for further information and application materials.