



27 July 2020

Dear Trainee,

I hope that you are settling in well to your new ST2 post since 13 July and that you are enjoying your chosen surgical specialty. RCSI is committed to supporting you throughout your life as a surgeon and we will do everything we can to provide you with the best possible training experience over the duration of your training programme. Our aim is to help you develop to your full potential as a highly skilled, caring and professional surgeon for the 21st-century.

I am aware that the processes and rules around your surgical training journey can sometimes appear very complex and even confusing! However, everything that you need to know about your surgical training journey is readily accessible on the mSurgery app, mostly in the sections "Core Surgical Training" or "Policies, Procedures and Guidelines".

I am writing to you today to give you more detail about your RCSI-based classes and assessments for the coming academic year. These comprise the Operative Surgical Skills (OSS) Course and the Human Factors in Patient Safety Course. These programmes are an integral part of your training and your performance on these programmes contributes significantly to your progression score for advancement to ST3.

As you know, your programme for the past few months has been significantly disrupted by COVID-19. We were not able to complete all of your planned classes or, most importantly, your end of year assessments in OSS or Human Factors. We are therefore arranging to have your CST 1 assessments in September because these form an important part of your progression score for ST3 next March. In preparation for the Human Factors OSCE assessment, you will be required to complete some online course work.

Operative Surgical Skills Course

Course Director: Dr Dara O’Keeffe

Technical skills acquisition is an integral part of Surgical Training and RCSI places a high priority on delivering high-quality technical skills teaching in our simulation centre. Our Operative Surgical Skills (OSS) Course is designed to give you the skills necessary to maximise the value you get from working in your hospital post. The course is based on a long-established syllabus of technical skills and is delivered by an experienced faculty of surgeon-educators.

You will attend 5 days of OSS Course teaching in RCSI over the coming year:

- Trauma and Acute Emergency Care
- Management of Acute Surgical Conditions
- Trauma A (blended Human Factors day)
- Trauma B (blended Human Factors day)
- Specialty-specific training day

Each module (except for the specialty-specific training day) is repeated several times so that you will have a choice of dates to choose. However, there is a limit on places available for each date, so please book yourself in early for a date that suits you. Also, please liaise with your consultant trainers and other team members to ensure that the dates you choose for your classes do not conflict with other team arrangements in your hospital. It is your responsibility to make sure that you can attend on the dates chosen!

In addition to your 5 training days, there will be a formal assessment of technical skills in February of 2021. This assessment counts for 5% of the total marks for progression to ST3. Non-attendance at any of the 5 training days will incur a penalty deduction from your assessment score and, obviously, this will impact on your competitiveness for ST3 progression.

Human Factors in Patient Safety

Course Director: Professor Eva Doherty

RCSI has long recognised the importance of human factors in patient safety and indeed we were the first surgical training programme in the world to introduce formal syllabus-based human factors training for surgical trainees 15 years ago. The human factors programme is now an integral and well-established part of our training in RCSI and is mandatory for all Core Surgical Trainees. Our programme is based on a clearly defined syllabus of non-technical skills which was designed and delivered by an expert faculty comprised of both surgeons and psychologists. The programme for Year 2 usually consists of 3 days of face-to-face teaching, 2 of which are combined with the OSS classes:

- Managing Stress (Human Factors only)
- Trauma A (blended OSS and Human Factors)
- Trauma B (blended OSS and Human Factors)

The classes are delivered using a heavy emphasis on high-fidelity simulation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated some changes to our usual delivery model although the learning objectives, content and assessment will remain as before. For the coming year, the Human Factors in Patient Safety programme will involve 2 days of on-site attendance at RCSI (the 2 blended OSS/Human Factors days), plus 1 day/module which will be covered through online learning.

The year-end assessments will, as usual, involve an on-site OSCE which contributes significantly (5%) to your score for progression to ST3.

The 2 days on-site will be delivered largely through simulation in our state-of-the-art simulation facilities. The face-to-face teaching days will be repeated several times so that you can choose a date that suits. However, it is important that you enrol yourself for this course as soon as possible as there are limited places available on each day.

The online day will require you to complete certain courses which are available on mSurgery. Your participation in these courses will be monitored online.

- The online course, Professionalism in 21st-Century Medical Practice is a comprehensive programme consisting of 12 modules which cover every aspect of Professionalism and is based on the Medical Council's "Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Medical Practitioners".

We expect all surgical trainees to complete the 12 modules of the online course over the 8 years of surgical training but there is 1 module which is required to be completed in the coming year in order to address the learning objectives of CST 2:

1. Module 8: Maintaining Health and Fitness to Practice

The module requires you to watch an introductory video, then complete the reading/viewing in the Learning Resource area, then complete a MCQ test in order to get your Certificate of Completion which you will need to upload to verify your participation.

In addition to the Professionalism module, you will need to complete the following online course which is on mSurgery (Courses/Open Online Courses):

- Clinical Handover

Finally, you will be expected to participate in a live webinar on “Bystander Intervention” which will be delivered on several dates over the coming months. Places on each webinar are strictly limited so, again, enrol EARLY!

In Jan/Feb 2021 we will have an online 90-minute class to review the content that you have completed online and to help you prepare for the OSCE in February.

In summary, your commitments for Human Factors in Patient Safety for the coming academic year are:

1. Year 1 OSCE assessment: Sept 2020 (deferred from May 2020, 5% of ST3 marks).
2. Two training/simulation days in RCSI which are blended with your OSS classes (Trauma A and Trauma B).
3. One module from RCSI Professionalism course:

Module 8: Maintaining Health and Fitness to Practice
4. One short online course:

Clinical Handover
5. Participation in live webinar: Bystander Intervention
6. Online class to prepare for year-end OSCE
7. Year 2 OSCE assessment, Feb 2021 (5% of ST3 marks)

I hope that these arrangements are clear. The coming year will be challenging for all postgraduate training bodies and for trainees because of the ongoing limitations imposed by COVID-19. However, we will continue to do all we can to ensure that you have the best possible training experience. If you have any queries or issues about your training, please contact the relevant member of our training support team:

OSS Course: Lorraine O’Keeffe 01-402-2719 / email: oss@rcsi.ie

Human Factors Course: Simone Brennan 01-402-2524 / email: humanfactors@rcsi.ie

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Oscar Traynor".

Professor Oscar Traynor MCh FRCSI

Dean of Postgraduate Surgical Education and Training