



ST3 – ST8 SPECIALIST TRAINING INFORMATION



► NEUROSURGERY 2021

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Prepared by Teresa Byrne

2. Welcome

Congratulations on your appointment to the Specialist Training Programme in Neurosurgery.

This programme is led by the Programme Director (TPD), Mr. Darach Crimmins. Your Intercollegiate Surgical Curriculum Programme (ISCP) training session at 2pm will be followed by an induction with TPD Mr. Darach Crimmins which will be held virtually on MS Teams at 4.00pm.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Specialty Training Administrator for Neurosurgery ST3-8 Trainees:

Teresa Byrne

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Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
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www.rcsi.ie

3. Meeting with the Training Programme Director (if required)

If you have any questions before starting the programme you may wish to meet with the TPD, **Mr Darach Crimmins**. All meetings to be booked through your Specialty Training Administrator: teresabyrne@rcsi.ie.

4. Rotations

You will be on a six year rotation .

- Training post hospitals:
- Beaumont Hospital (BMT)
- Cork University Hospital (CUH)
- Temple Street Hospital (TEMPS)

5. Trainee Portal – Connect SA

Documents Class sign up Help content Sign out

- Documents
- Class sign up
- Help content
- Impersonate

Trainee details

Programme

Current ST year

Allocations

ST year	Year	Training post	AES	+
ST 3	2020	000011078-CAPGH-Gen - 03/07/2020 to 11/07/2021		+ Add AES

Deviations

ST year	Year	Deviations
ST 3	2020	Out of Programme Research - 13/07/2020 to 11/07/2021

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RCSI Web www.rcsi.com Telephone 01 402 2719 Email surgicalaffairs@rcsi.ie
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When you log into your trainee portal using your RCSI credentials you will see all your rotations displayed. You can sign up for your classes, mandatory workshops, Human Factors etc. You can also upload specific documentation related to your Training journey as a document library is available specifically for all trainees.

6. Intercollegiate Surgical Curriculum Programme (ISCP)

General Overview of the Intercollegiate Surgical Curriculum Programme (ISCP)

The Intercollegiate Surgical Curriculum Programme (ISCP) provides the approved framework for surgical training from ST3 to ST8 through to consultant level.

The curriculum guides and supports training up to Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST) in a surgical specialty.

The curriculum enables trainees to develop as generalists within their chosen surgical specialty, to be able to deliver an on-call emergency service and to deliver more specialised services to a defined level.

The curriculum was founded on the following key principles, which support the achievement of these aims:

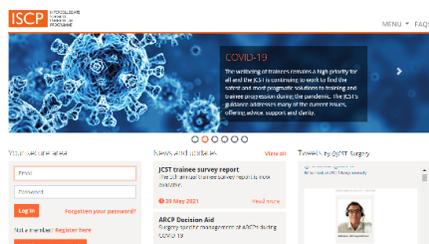
- A common framework across all the specialties within surgery.
- Curriculum standards that conform to the standards specified by the GMC/RCSI.
- Delivery of the curriculum by surgeons who are appropriately qualified to deliver surgical training.
- A robust assessment system to enable systematic progression through to completion of surgical specialty training.
- Regulation of progression through training by the achievement of outcomes that are specified within the specialty curricula.
- Formulation and delivery of surgical care by surgeons working in a multidisciplinary environment.
- Collaboration with those charged with delivering health services and training at all levels.

Each of the individual Surgical Curriculum are available on <https://www.iscp.ac.uk/iscp/surgical-curriculum-from-august-2021/about-the-surgical-curriculum/>

Trainee Registering and Engagement

As a Trainee on the Neurosurgery Higher Specialist Training Programme, you will be required to use ISCP throughout your time in training.

You will need to **register** with the site (www.iscp.ac.uk)
Please do not pay the fee directly RCSI cover this.



The ISCP platform provides a huge amount of information and resources for trainees and we would encourage you to engage with these prior to starting in your rotation. Reference guides and videos can be located [HERE](#)

In 2021 the curriculum was updated, whilst this won't impact you as a new user many of your trainers will be learning new skills and ways of assessment that have been updated in the curriculum. As a trainee you may need to guide them from time to time as they familiarise themselves with the 2021 updates.

ISCP Curriculum Assessment and Feedback

Central to the assessment framework is professional judgement. Assessors are responsible and accountable for judgements about trainee performance, leading to structured formative feedback to trainees. Trainees' reflection on feedback is also a necessary component of all assessments. The programme of assessment is described in each curriculum.

It is highly recommended that you cultivate **good organisational habits** from the start of the programme and keep up-to-date with your on and off-line paperwork, to ensure your trainers have the correct information available to them to assess and evaluate your progress through training.

Assessment and feedback comprises of an integrated framework of examinations, assessments in the workplace and judgements made about trainees during their approved programme of training.

All the assessments in the curriculum are designed to include a feedback element as well as to identify concerns in multiple ways, particularly:

- Learning agreement meetings
- Workplace-based assessments covering knowledge, clinical judgement, technical skills and professional behaviour and attitudes in conjunction with the RCSI surgical logbook of procedures to support the assessment of operative skills
- Examinations
- An annual review of competence progression (ARCP)

The key assessment is the **Multiple Consultant Report (MCR)** through which trainees are assessed on the high-level outcomes of the curriculum; the CiPs and GPCs.

CIPS – Capabilities in Practise – the same 5 CIPS apply to each specialty.

1	Manages an outpatient clinic
2	Manages the unselected emergency take
3	Manages ward rounds and the ongoing care of the in-patients
4	Manages an operating list
5	Manages multi-disciplinary working

Each of the 5 CiPs is assessed via a supervision level chosen by the trainee’s supervisors. These trainers determine how well a trainee can perform each CiP against the benchmark of a Day 1 Consultant.

- **GPCs - General Professional Capabilities.** These are the professional standards that all doctors must adhere to. The GPCs are listed under 9 domains which represent professional behaviour for doctors. They can be marked for the trainee as ***Appropriate for Phase of Development Required.***

The GPCs carry equal weight to the CiPs in a trainee’s assessment. Professional skills are just as important as technical skills.

Both CIPs and GPCs are assessed via the Multiple Consultant report / MCR

Multiple Consultant Report (MCR)

The assessment of the Capabilities in Practice (CiPs) and Generic Professional Capabilities (GPCs) – the high-level outcomes of the curriculum – is through the Multiple Consultant Report (MCR). It involves the global professional judgement about a trainee’s suitability to take on particular responsibilities or tasks that are essential to consultant practice. The professional judgement of a group of supervisors about a trainee in both their technical and professional skills is now key to a trainee’s assessment.

The MCR assessment is carried out by the consultant Clinical Supervisors (CSs) involved with a trainee, with the AES contributing as necessary to some domains (and particularly to GPC domains 6-9). The MCR includes a global rating in order to indicate how the trainee is progressing in each of the CiPs. This global rating is expressed as a recommendation:

Trainee Self-Assessment (SA)

Trainees must complete a Self-Assessment for each MCR. This form is identical to the form the Clinical supervisors use for the MCR report. The trainee's Self-Assessment captures his/her own impressions of their progression in training. A trainee should highlight which areas they believe they need to develop, and also those areas they believe they are good. By describing self-identified areas for development with free text or CiP/GPC or GPC descriptors.

The completed SA will be compared with the supervisors MCR report at the trainees feedback meeting, allowing time to generate discussion and highlight areas where further action is needed so that the trainee can progress according to his /her own needs. Wide discrepancy between the self-assessment and the MCR allows identification of over or under confidence and for support to be given accordingly.

Work based Assessments (WBA)

WBAs are primarily aimed at aiding learning through constructive feedback that identifies areas for development. They provide trainees with educational feedback from skilled clinicians that should result in reflection on practice and an improvement in the quality of care. **WBAs are only mandatory for the assessment of the critical conditions and index procedures.** They may also be useful to evidence progress in targeted training where this is required e.g. for any areas of concern. They should be collated in your learning portfolio and are regularly reviewed during each placement, providing evidence that informs the judgement of the AES reports for the ARCP.

Case Based Discussions

The CBD assesses the performance of trainees in their management of a patient case to provide an indication of competence in areas such as clinical judgement, decision-making and application of medical knowledge in relation to patient care. The CBD process is a structured, in-depth discussion between the trainee and a consultant supervisor.

The Learning Agreement

The Learning Agreement is fundamental to the whole training process. And, it works in conjunction with the MCR. The aim of the LA is to develop the trainee's progression incrementally throughout their training. Each process in the LA adds to or feeds into the next, for example, the Objective Setting of the LA feeds into the MCR. The MCR feeds into the Learning Agreement meetings which in turn feed into the AES report which then feeds into the ARCP process. Each individual step along the LA trail adds to and enhances the trainee's progression towards the end goal - that of a day one consultant.

Figure 1 shows the sequence of assessment during a rotation.

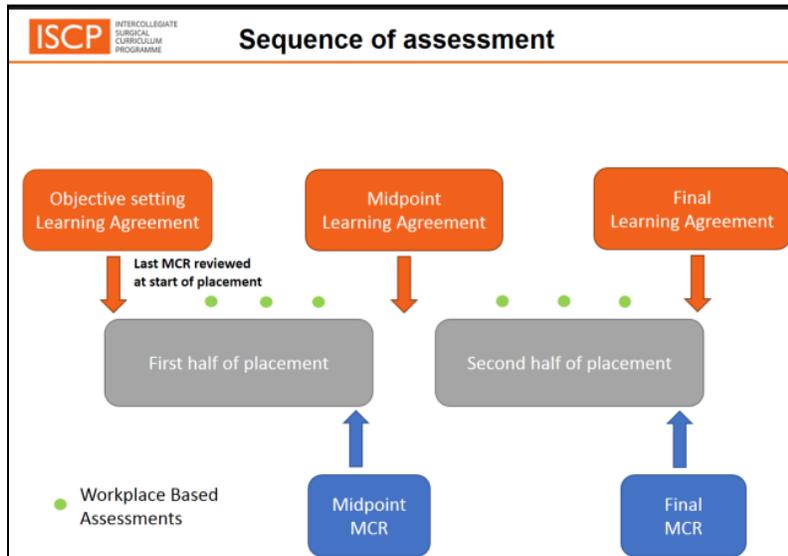
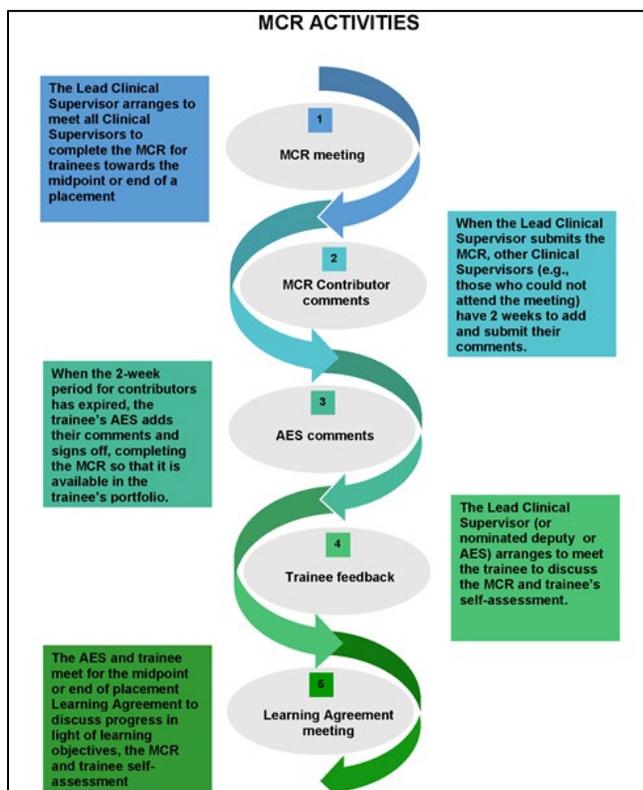


Figure 2 shows the sequencing for the use of the Multi Consultant Reports (MCR)



7. Certificate of completion of surgical training (CCST) in Neurosurgery

Please click on this link <https://www.jcst.org/irish-trainees/certification/> for the guidelines for the award of a CCST in Neurosurgery.

8. Retrospection

You may meet the **strict criteria** to be considered for retrospection, and thus, shorten your training by a maximum of one year.

The process, if eligible, involves producing certain paperwork as per checklist below to the TPD via your ST Administrator. Your application will then be considered by the **Neurosurgery Training Committee** at their nearest interim meeting and if approved, your documentation along with TPD letter of support will be submitted to the JCST. The JCST will then present it to the SAC in the UK. If approved, the JCST will email you an approval letter of retrospection with your amended CCST date. Here is the link to the JCST website and their list of items: <http://www.jcst.org/irish-trainees/counting-previous-training>

Retrospection application checklist

Letter from you to the Training Programme Director	
Up-to-date CV	
Name and contact details of Research Supervisor	
Details of research (not a full thesis)	
Satisfactory reference from Supervisor demonstrating that higher degree has been written up and submitted	
Evidence of publication resulting from your research period in a peer-reviewed journal, which the SAC considers to be of an appropriate level; i.e. copies of the paper(s) published	
Confirmation that a higher degree has been awarded i.e. letter awarding your degree/copy of your parchment	

Please note: the JCST needs everything listed on this checklist plus a letter of support from the Training Committee, otherwise it will delay your application with the JCST.

9. Out-of-programme training

If deemed appropriate by the Training Committee, you can apply for **time out of programme**, both in the UK and overseas, to count towards training. To go on OOP training you will need to:

- Discuss your intention with your Training Programme Director (TPD) and gain their support.
- Contact the RCSI and ask which applications you need to make to them to gain their support.
- Once you have the support of your TPD, you will need to make an initial application to your SAC for prospective support.

There are **restrictions on the amount of OOPT** you can count towards training i.e. across the whole of your training a **maximum of 12 months OOPT** can be counted towards training, and you cannot get retrospection and OOPT, in Ireland. The SAC must prospectively approve any OOPT activity if you intend it to count towards certification.

Out of programme training application checklist

Up-to-date CV	
Signed offer letter	
Letter of support from Training Programme Director showing exact dates of your fellowship/OOPT period and whether the time is counting towards training	
Confirmation that Deanery are aware of Out of Programme Training	
Educational contract signed by you and your Fellowship Supervisor, which includes details of Learning Agreements and Objectives and your Timetable	
Job description	
Name and contact details of your Fellowship Supervisor	
Logbooks from two previous incumbents of the post or a report from the Supervisor on the expected number of operations	

OOPT link on JCST website:

- <http://www.jcst.org/irish-trainees/out-of-programme>

10. Job-sharing

Postgraduate Trainees can now avail of job-sharing opportunities for a set period of time. Job-sharing works on the basis that **two Trainees will share one full-time post** with each Trainee working 50% of the hours. The aim of the job-sharing policy is to retain doctors within the medical workforce who are unable to continue training on a full-time basis.

Please see MSurgery Link:

www.msurgery.ie/job-sharing

Post reassign

Career break

Flexible training

11. Post-reassignment request

The post reassignment process has been established to support Trainees who have had an **unforeseen and significant change in their personal circumstances** since the commencement of their current training programme (ST1 - ST8) which requires a change to the agreed post/rotation.

This process is managed by Postgraduate Training and governed by the specialty and ISPTC. Please see mSurgery Link for further details and an application form.

<https://msurgery.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Post-reassignment.pdf>

12. HSE national flexible training scheme

The HSE National Flexible Training Scheme for Higher Specialist Trainees is a national scheme managed and funded by the Health Service Executives National Doctors Training and Planning (NDTP) Unit. The scheme provides for a **limited number of supernumerary places** to facilitate doctors at higher specialist training level to continue their training in a flexible manner for a set period of time.

<https://msurgery.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Flexible-Training-Policy-2017.pdf>

The guide sets out the current details of the National Flexible Training Scheme and provides information for Trainees about the programme and the application process. Applications generally open at the beginning of August and close at the end of December for the training year commencing the following July.

13. Alternative flexible arrangements

Trainees wishing to avail of flexible training options out with of the HSE supernumerary offering should discuss options with their Training Programme Director and Hospital MMM.

Other alternatives can be explored for e.g. a 4 day week, week on week off in line with both your training requirements and those of the hospital you work in.

Trainees can also avail of job-sharing opportunities for a set period of time. Job-sharing works on the basis that **two Trainees will share one full-time post** with each Trainee working 50% of the hours.

The aim of any approach to flexible training is to retain doctors within the medical workforce who are unable to continue train on a full-time basis .

It is important to note that any flexible training option approved will result in an extension to your CCST date.

Please see m-Surgery link: www.msurgery.ie

14. Career break information for NCHDs

NCHDs who **travel abroad** can now apply for a **career break** and if approved will remain on the **superannuation scheme**.

NCHDs wishing to avail of a career break under this arrangement must apply to their **Employer** in sufficient time before the expiry of their current contract. For those NCHDs participating in a Specialist Training Scheme they must also apply to the relevant postgraduate medical training body and obtain the formal written approval of the relevant postgraduate medical training body. This formal written approval must be attached to the career break application to their employer.

Please see mSurgery Link

<https://msurgery.ie/home2/specialist-training#>

15. Maternity/Paternity leave /Childcare

As Maternity/Paternity Leave also affects the CCST date, you will be required to **inform your programme Director** and the **College** of your Maternity/Paternity leave start and finish dates when you have them. Trainees must also inform their **employer** as per their HSE contracts.

Childcare

RCSI provides a subsidy and has an agreement in place with Giraffe Crèches (at its Dublin sites) [click here](#) for a limited number of childcare places for children of RCSI staff and registered full-time students in the Schools of Medicine (including Physician Associates programme), Physiotherapy, Pharmacy and School of Postgraduate Studies students studying full-time on a Research programme i.e. MCh by Research, MSc by Research, MD and PhD. Please note this offer does not extend to Postgraduate Surgical or Emergency Medicine Trainees who are not in full time education in RCSI. Giraffe develop and operate childcare and early learning centres for pre-school children from three months and upwards. Emergency care is also available when other care arrangements are temporarily unavailable

16. Exceptional leave

You can be granted **three months exceptional leave** for **illness/exceptional circumstances**. This will add three months to your expected CCST date.

The SAC require a letter from you outlining the reasons for the exceptional leave and what you will be doing during this time. A letter from the TPD is also required to confirm their agreement for you to take exceptional leave and confirm your new completion date. Trainees must also inform their employer as per their HSE contracts.

17. Joint Committee on Surgical Training (JCST)

Link to JCST website for Republic of Ireland Trainees:
<http://www.jcst.org/irish-trainees>

You will need to supply a copy of your Certificate of Completion of Basic Surgical Training (CCBST) or Core Surgical Training Certificate (CST) to your ST Administrator email: teresabyrne@rcsi.ie as soon as you have received the certificate. If you have entered the specialty programme via the Pathway programme (ST2) please note you do not automatically receive a CST certificate and will need to apply for this, if you have not already done so. Please contact the CST Administrator, Sara Gross in relation to this saragross@rcsi.ie. The JCST needs your CST/CCBST certificates in order to register you with the Specialty Advisory Committee (SAC).



18. Mentor programme

The Training Committee will hold an **Interim & Annual Review of Competency Progression (ARCP) meeting** to review your paperwork twice a year, once in December (interim review) and the second in May (Annual review). You will need to have all your ISCP paperwork i.e. Learning Agreements, Work Based Assessments etc. completed a week prior to your review.

19. Funding

Funding is available to Trainees via four different funds. Please see table below for a brief overview of all funds. The guidelines and refund forms for all the Mandatory, Specialist, Surgical Loupes and clinical courses and examination funds are located near the bottom of the page using this link: [mSurgery/financial-supports-for-sprs](#)

SPECIALIST TRAINING FUND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Run by RCSI on behalf of HSE/NDTP. ▪ For training courses/activities, equip, books, expenses. ▪ EUR 500 per year per Trainee. ▪ Funding is carried over year-on-year e.g. three years unclaimed will give the Trainee €1500 to claim.
CLINICAL COURSES AND EXAMS FUND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Run by HSE/NDTP for courses and exams only on the approved list. ▪ EUR 450 per claim, no restrictions on how many claims can be submitted per year. ▪ Trainees must claim for this fund through the HR Departments in their hospital within 6 months of attending the exam/course.
SURGICAL LOUPES FUND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Amount available to Trainees dependant on number of claims in the year. ▪ The Surgical Loupes application form will be emailed to you as soon as it is available. (March 2020) ▪ Trainees must submit application and loupes receipt in order to qualify for funding to their ST Administrator.

RCSI pays fees for Trainees for:

INTERCOLLEGIATE SURGICAL CURRICULUM PROGRAMME (ISCP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Available to ST3-ST8 (dependant on Specialty). ▪ EUR 300 per year.
STATISTICAL PACKAGE FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES (SPSS Statistics Package)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Available to all Trainees on the ST Programme and should help with research. ▪ This can be downloaded using your RCSI log on through https://vle.rcsi.ie/, then follow the path: Support → IT Support → 4. RCSI Software Library → SPSS ▪ Normal purchase cost EUR 1100 per Trainee.
ENDNOTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Available to all Trainees on the ST Programme and should help with research. ▪ This can be downloaded using your RCSI log on through https://vle.rcsi.ie/, then follow the path: Support → IT Support → 4. RCSI Software Library → Endnote ▪ Normal purchase cost EUR 300 per Trainee.

** Please note while it is our intention to meet all mandatory training requirements, funding will be subject to review and approval by the HSE/ NDTP on an annual basis.*

20. Research Methodology Course for Surgical Trainees

The Irish Surgical Postgraduate Training Committee is committed to ensuring that surgical trainees have good exposure to Academic Surgery as an integral part of surgical training. As a first step, a taught course in research methodology was introduced in 2015. This is a modular programme which runs over four days in ST3 and ST4 (i.e. two days in each training year). The programme gives a comprehensive introduction to research methodology relevant to surgeons and is delivered in RCSI by Professor Tom Fahy and his team. After ST4, some trainees may opt to take time out of surgical training to pursue an MD or PhD through full time research for two years. However the taught programme is intended for all surgical trainees, even if they do not plan to pursue an MD or PhD later. The ISPTC has deemed this programme mandatory for all ST3 trainees in all specialities and you will be required to complete the four modules in order to be “signed off” in your ARCP at the end of ST4. However, those trainees who have already completed a taught MCh, or MD or PhD are exempted from the research methodology course as they have already completed a similar course as part of their higher degree. Trainees commencing in ST3 will be contacted with details of the course including exemption details. A copy of the Research Methodology exemption form is available for download from mSurgery.

21. Student card/library

You will need an **RCSI email** to access journals on the RCSI website, electronic library and also to gain entry to the library. Your student identification **card** may be obtained from the **IT department**, ground floor, RCSI, 121 St. Stephens Green.

22. The Irish Surgical Training Group (ISTG)

The Irish Surgical Training Group is a group of Surgical Trainees who represent all sub-specialty Trainees in Ireland from ST 1-8. The aims of the group are as follows:

- To provide leadership for Surgical Trainees of all disciplines.
- To represent the voices of Surgical Trainees as key stakeholders in planning of surgical training with all training bodies and committees.
- To provide a forum for the discussion of surgical training issues through meetings:
 - Training information evening and AGM: get the inside track on life as senior Trainee on your sub-specialty of interest.
 - Annual meeting of ISTG and Bosco O'Mahoney lecture: part of Charter day meeting: themed meeting on issues affecting surgical Trainees, reports from recent fellowships.
 - Annual Trainee dinner and presentation of Silver Scalpel Award.

The ISTG can provide support and advice to Trainees and can be contacted at irishsurgicaltraininggroup@gmail.com. It would be a good idea to email this group and request they put you on their mailing list.

23. Important events to note

January	February	March	April	May	June
	 Charter Day Tuesday 11 th February – Saturday 15 th February 2020	 Usually Surgical Loupes application deadline			 FRCS Intercollegiate Exam part 1   ST2 Information Session/ST3 Induction  Annual ARCP (Date TBC)

July	August	September	October	November	December
 FRCS Conferring				 Millin Meeting Friday 13 th November 2020  FRCS Intercollegiate Exam part 2 	

24. RCSI surgical fellowships and awards

The College is committed to encouraging the acquisition of **additional training and skills** outside the structured programmes of the College and, to this end, provides a range of **scholarships and grants** in postgraduate surgery to assist surgeons-in-training and recently-appointed Consultant Surgeons to gain additional expertise in centres of excellence overseas. Applicants must be Fellows or Members of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland who are in good standing. http://www.rcsi.ie/fellowships_and_awards

25. Important contact details

Training Programme Director

Mr Darach Crimmins

Darach.crimmins@cuh.ie

Surgical Training Office, 1st Floor 121 St. Stephens Green

Specialty Training Administrator Neurosurgery

Ms. Teresa Byrne

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JCST – Mr Erik Majaus, queries to go through your ST Administrator

RCSI Reception

121 Stephens Green - (01) 402 2422

123 Stephens Green - (01) 402 2263

RCSI IT Department

(01) 402 2273 helpdesk@rcsi.ie

RCSI Library (01) 402 2409 librarysec@rcsi.ie

RCSI Student Academic and Regulatory Affairs Office (SARA) ssqsara@rcsi.ie