



Irish College of
Ophthalmologists
Eye Doctors of Ireland
Protecting your Vision

HST 4-HST 7
SPECIALIST TRAINING INFORMATION
2021 OPHTHALMIC SURGERY

Revision Level	Revision Date	Description of Revision	Document Owner/Author	Approved By
Final	21/05/2020	Final Approved Version	Rebecca Martin	YD/ KMcC/ SK
Revision	05/06/2020	Inclusion Paternity Leave	Rebecca Martin	
Revision	23/07/2020	Courses	Rebecca Martin	SK
Updated	16/10/2020	Leave	Rebecca Martin	Yvonne Delaney
Revision	09/04/2021	Amendments for July 2021	Rebecca Martin	Yvonne Delaney
Update	01/10/2021	OOPT Update	Rebecca Martin	YD/SK/KMcC

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1. Welcome

Dear SpR Trainee,

Congratulations on your appointment to Specialty Training in Ophthalmic Surgery (ST4-ST7).

Specialist Training in Ophthalmic Surgery is delivered through a collaborative relationship between the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) and the Irish College of Ophthalmologists (ICO).

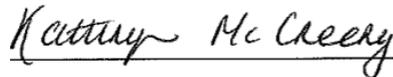
As a specialty, we continually review the training programme and identify areas we can improve upon. Equally, we aim to introduce new incentives that will contribute to the quality of training experience.

There are processes in place and these must be followed in order to ensure the smooth running of the training programme. Take time to read this document as it will aid you in your development through each year of training.

If you require assistance, please speak with your Consultant Trainer in the first instance and with the College or myself as necessary.

I hope that your experience of Specialty Training in Ophthalmic Surgery will be a positive one and may I wish you the best in your surgical training career.

Yours sincerely,



Ms Kathryn McCreery
Programme Director, Ophthalmic Surgery
Chairman Training Advisory Committee, ICO

2. Overview

The surgical ophthalmology curriculum is a seven-year competence-based curriculum, which consists of three core years followed by four years of subspecialty training.

The purpose of the Higher Ophthalmic Surgical Training is to provide in-depth surgical training so as to equip trainees with skills both in cataract surgery as well as in the surgical subspecialties of anterior segment surgery (corneal transplant), glaucoma (trabeculectomy), paediatric ophthalmology and strabismus (strabismus surgery), vitreo-retinal (retinal detachment repair), nasolacrimal, oculoplastic and orbital (enucleations) surgery and neuro-ophthalmology. Higher Surgical trainees, irrespective of preference and future career choice, need to complete training in all subspecialties to successfully complete their training.

3. Training Programme Framework

Trainees commence the four-year Higher Ophthalmic Surgical Training Programme in HST4.

Trainees who entered the Higher Surgical Training Programme in July 2021 must complete **four years** of Higher Surgical Training in accredited posts in Ireland. Out of Programme Training (OOPT) will no longer be available for HSTs who entered the Higher Surgical Training Programme in July 2021.

Trainees who entered the Higher Surgical Training Programme prior to July 2021 may still apply for Out of Programme Training (OOPT). This experience may be recognized for training. Trainees who wish to apply for OOPT must complete a **minimum of three years** on the Higher Ophthalmic Surgical Training Programme in approved accredited posts in Ireland. This is a mandatory requirement for completion of training. OOPT can only be taken in the final year of training. Trainees who are approved for OOPT must continue to meet the mandatory training requirements of HST and submit the required CAPA assessment documentation per 6 months and as outlined in Section 7.4 of this document. Permission to take up a training post outside of the accredited posts in Ireland must be made a minimum of six months prospectively. There is an application process in place, which must be followed for this to be considered, and a maximum of one year applies. Further information is outlined in the OOPT section of this document.

At the end of training, a Trainee is awarded a Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST) if they have achieved the surgical, clinical, personal and professional competences defined in the surgical curriculum, fulfilled the mandatory assessment requirements and passed the FRCSI Exit Examination. Full requirements are outlined in the CCST section of this document.

Retrospective recognition will not be considered for trainees on the streamlined pathway.

4. Accredited Training Post Hospitals

Hospital	Important Contacts
Cork University Hospital	Educational Supervisor: Mr Zubair Idrees
University College Hospital Galway	Educational Supervisor: Ms Deirdre Townley
Mater Misericordiae University Hospital Temple St Children's University Hospital	Educational Supervisor: Mr Ian Flitcroft
Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital St. Vincent's University Hospital	Educational Supervisor: Mr Edward Loane
Our Lady's Children Hospital, Crumlin	Educational Supervisor: Ms. Kathryn McCreary
Sligo University Hospital	Educational Supervisor: Ms Shauna Quinn
University Hospital Limerick	Educational Supervisor: Mr Kevin Kennelly
University Hospital Waterford	Educational Supervisor: Mr John Stokes

5. Curriculum

There are 7 sub-specialties in ophthalmic surgery and the training programme covers all 7:

1. Cataract and Refractive Surgery
2. Paediatric Ophthalmology & Strabismus
3. Corneal and External Diseases
4. Glaucoma
5. Vitreoretinal surgery, medical retina and ocular oncology
6. Neuro-ophthalmology
7. Oculoplastics & Orbital / lacrimal disorders

For further information, please view the Curriculum document on the ICO website:

<http://www.eyedoctors.ie/trainees/Specialist-Training-in-Surgical-Ophthalmology.asp>

6. Mandatory Components

6.1 Human Factors

A programme of training in Human Factors in Patient Safety principles is a mandatory component of ophthalmology training for Trainees at junior and senior levels of training.

Training sessions use a combination of didactic and action-based learning teaching methods. Classes are kept to a maximum of 25 attendees to allow for simulation and practice. Emergency Medicine, Ophthalmology and Surgical Trainees attend sessions together which stimulates multidisciplinary communication. Sessions are facilitated by a Clinical Psychologist/Senior Lecturer and either a Consultant in Surgery, Ophthalmology or Emergency Medicine. Each Trainee attends three full day sessions per year of training.

Attendance is an important component of the annual assessment and is necessary to permit progression through the training programmes.

The Human Factors Training Calendar is set by the Human Factors department in RCSI Surgical Training and is circulated by email at the start of each training year. Each module is repeated.

Trainees on the HST in Ophthalmic Surgery Programme must attend each of the following five modules once, during their programme;

1. **Leadership**
2. **Safety Management Systems**
3. **21st Century Professionalism**
4. **Advanced Communication: Advocacy & Negotiation**
5. **Bias and Diversity Training**

The following modules are optional to attend in 2021-2022:

1. Train the Trainer
2. Preparation for Practice: Healthcare Management (runs every 2 years)

At the beginning of each training year, details of the modules that are available for registration will be available on the RCSI Trainee Portal, <https://connectsatrainees.rcsi.com/>
In order to login and register on the portal, trainees must use their RCSI account (RCSI email and password).

It is the responsibility of the trainee to ensure that they have attended all five HST modules, in order to be eligible for CCST.

Should you encounter any technical difficulties please contact the ICO immediately.

Additionally the ICO Anterior Vitrectomy Simulation Course (for Yr 3 BSTs and Yr 4 HSTs) has an integrated Human Factors course on Managing Adverse Events. HSTs who have not attended the course during BST will be invited to attend during HST.

6.2 Research Methodology Course for Surgical Trainees

The Irish Surgical Postgraduate Training Committee (ISPTC) 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 4 days in HST4 and HST5 (i.e. 2 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 ST5, some trainees may opt to take time out of surgical training to pursue an MD or PHD through full time research for 2 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 HST4 trainees in all specialties and you will be required to complete the 4 modules in order to be “signed off” in your CAPA at the end of HST5. 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 HST4 will be contacted by RCSI with details of the course including details on applying for an exemption.

Research Methodology Course Modules

Module 1

- Introduction to Evidence Based Medicine
- Developing a research question and mapping to most appropriate study design
- Study design – strengths and weaknesses
- Fundamentals of bias, confounding and causality
- Protocol development
- Introduction to standardised reporting guidelines

Module 2

- Accessing clinical evidence
- Fundamentals of randomised controlled trials
- Fundamentals of systematic reviews and meta-analysis
- Other synopses of evidence, including clinical practice guidelines

Module 3

- Fundamentals of biostatistics
- Nature of data; descriptive statistics
- Hypothesis testing; sample size calculation
- Univariable analysis
- Multivariable analysis

Module 4

- Student presentations- protocol and/or completed research
- Funding of research and grant applications
- Peer review publishing
 - Author
 - Reviewer
 - Editor

6.3 School for Surgeons & Interactive Classroom

SCHOOL for Specialists in Ophthalmology and the Interactive Classroom – SFS is the online component of the training programme and during BST was an obligatory part of the program. From 2018 it is now also a **mandatory** component of HST training. HSTs will be expected to contribute to teaching on the interactive classrooms.

Through the eJournal portal on the SFS site each HST will also be able to access all the peer reviewed journals relevant to ophthalmology as well as other disciplines. Trainees are expected to attend a minimum of **60%** of ICs in order to pass each 6 month rotation of their 4 year training cycle.

The College will email you directly with your SFS login details. Your login details remain the same as those used during Basic Surgical Training. If your login details are not working you can contact the ICO directly.

6.4 ICO National eTutorial Series in Ophthalmology

The ICO National eTutorial Series was launched in January 2021 as part of the online learning programme. The College hosts weekly subspecialty teaching sessions that are aligned to the learning outcomes of the curriculum. Trainees are strongly encouraged to attend and engage in these sessions.

The sessions run for 10 months, September to June, of the training year. The sessions include a 30 minute presentation followed by a short 10 minute Q&A session.

The presentations are recorded and are available for trainees to access via the ICO trainee portal.

*These sessions are for training purposes only and any sharing of this material or links to this material by participants to any persons not registered on an ICO National Training Programme in Ophthalmology is **prohibited**.*

6.5 American Academy of Ophthalmology ONE Network

As a Trainee of the ICO, you have free access to the American Academy's Ophthalmic News & Education (ONE®) Network. The ONE Network is a comprehensive, online educational resource that brings together the most clinically relevant content, news and tools from a variety of trusted sources. The recent updates mean that when you log on to use the ONE Network, you will be able to access a greater extent of new content, such as a library of 3,500 free clinical images, basic skills courses, master class videos and self-assessments. The upgraded facility will also find content easily and quickly using a powerful new search engine and customise a visitors learning experience with the "My ONE Network" tool. The new version also allows you to view clinical content on any mobile device.

Important: Content from the ONE Network will be used in your School for Surgeons assignments and Interactive classroom feedback sessions. For this reason, the College advises you to check that your username and password is functioning and active.

The College has provided the setup details required to the ONE Network and you will be emailed directly with your login details. If your login details are not working or you need instructions on logging in to the ONE Network you can contact the ICO directly or email oneintl@aao.org.

7. HST Assessment

7.1 Examinations

- FRCSI Examination

The Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (FRCSI) is the exit appraisal for the Higher Ophthalmic Surgical Training Programme. The FRCSI examination is a test of competence to practice as an independent specialist (consultant) in ophthalmic surgery and is aimed at trainees who are coming to the end of their Specialist Training in Ophthalmology.

The MRCSI is an entry requirement for the FRCSI and candidates for the FRCSI must be in their **final year** of Specialist Training in Surgical Ophthalmology in Ireland.

You can apply via the RCSI Postgraduate Exams portal and search for the FRCSI exam listing <https://postgradexams.rcsi.ie/public/openexams>

If you have any queries before your exam, you will see listed on the portal a contact person from the RCSI Exams office for the FRCSI exam or you can contact the general exams email address pgexams@rcsi.ie.

For the Regulations and Eligibility Guidelines of the FRCSI Exam, please visit <http://www.rcsi.ie/ophmembersexams>.

It is essential that you pay close attention to the **closing dates** for the exam, as these can be as early as 2-3 months before the examination date.

Trainees must have satisfactorily completed all assessments deemed appropriate by the Training Committee to be eligible to fit the final FRCSI exam and must be in their final year of training.

- **EBO Examination**

The European Board of Ophthalmology Diploma (EBOD) Examination is a test of excellence in ophthalmology. It is designed to assess the knowledge and clinical skills requisite to the delivery of a high standard of ophthalmology care both in hospitals and in independent clinical practices.

The examination takes place every year in Paris, France over two days (usually in early May) and welcomes eligible candidates from all over Europe.

The MRCSI is an entry requirement for the EBO Exam and candidates must be in HST4 or HST5 of Training to apply.

Please visit <http://www.ebo-online.org/ebo-exam/exam-information/> to apply for the exam. Here, you can also read the Exam Regulations and Eligibility Criteria, along with Exam Structure and Fees.

Candidates are required to upload an approval letter from the Programme Director. Applications are not complete without this letter, please contact the ICO to arrange it before applying for the exam online.

If you have any queries regarding the exam, you can contact lisa.flanagan@ebo-online.org or the general exams email address ebo@ebo-online.org.

It is essential that you pay close attention to the **closing dates** for the exam, as these can be as early as 2-3 months before the examination date.

7.2 Ophthalmic Knowledge Assessment programme (OKAPs)

The Ophthalmic Knowledge Assessment programme or OKAPs is an examination administered by the American Board of Ophthalmology. It is a 260 item MCQ that is administered yearly to all residents in ophthalmology training programmes in the USA and is utilized and available to international training programmes. The OKAP assesses 13 subsets and the score is reported as a percentile rank or scaled scores.

The OKAPs will be administered yearly (Spring) in HST Years 4-6. The assessment will be formative in nature.

The dates of the OKAPs will be circulated to trainees closer to the time of the assessment. Further detail regarding the content of the OKAPs can be found [here](#).

7.3 Objective Structured Examinations (OSEs)

The Objective Structured Examinations are structured oral examinations. They will be administered in HST Yr 5 and 6 and will be designed across the 7 subspecialty areas as per the HST curriculum. The dates of the OSEs will be circulated to trainees closer to the time of the assessment.

7.4 Competence and Assessment of Performance Appraisal (CAPA)

Trainees are assessed via Competence and Assessment of Performance Appraisal (CAPA). This is a review session with the HST Programme Director where your progress in relation to fulfilling the mandatory components of assessment is discussed. The formal CAPA assessment takes place annually however trainees must submit CAPA assessment documentation for each six month rotation. CAPA assessment documentation for your first six-month rotation is required in December for review by the Programme Director. CAPA assessment documentation for your second six-month rotation is required in May ahead of the formal CAPA assessment session with the Programme Director in June.

HST CAPA Assessment Documentation

The following documents should be submitted to the ICO office at the completion of each **6 month** rotation for review by the Programme Director and Dean of Postgraduate Education.

Documentation should be submitted in either word or PDF format. **Trainees should avoid, where possible, submitting images of the documents.** Trainees should **retain copies** of all assessment forms for the duration of their HST training.

<p>1. HST Training Assessment Form for Subspecialties (1-7)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This form is a record of Trainees' timetable, clinical skills, professional development, subspecialty assesment including a 6 monthly subspecialty logbook, subspecialty learning outcomes and the Trainer's Report for the 6 monthly rotation. - Trainees must submit details of their Clinical Case Based Discussion, Presentation of Major Clinical Topic, progress in Audit, Peer Reviewed Paper and International Presentation on the Assessment Form that were completed in the <u>6 months</u> of training.
<p>2. HST Summary Logbook (signed by Trainer)</p>

Your Programme Director will also chart your progress in Exams, SFS and Mandatory Courses on a CAPA summary sheet, which is stored in your training file in the ICO.

*Training Assessment Documentation is subject to review and updating by the ICO. Any changes will be communicated to you by the ICO via SFS.

NB: HST CAPA Assessment Documentation can be found on [SFS website](#), it is strongly recommended that trainees download the relevant forms from SFS before completing them to ensure they are using the most up-to-date versions. Those available on SFS will always be the latest versions.

Mandatory Components of HST

1. CAPA Assessment Session	Trainees must submit assessment documentation for first six-months in December and second six-months in May . Trainees must attend the formal CAPA assessment session once per year with the Programme Director and Dean.
2. Audit	Trainees must have <u>one</u> publicly presented audit per training year . The Consultant Trainer(s) will give guidance on an appropriate subject and methodology but it is the responsibility of the Trainee to initiate this within three weeks of starting each new training placement. The audit should include (with attached copies of relevant published literature): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion of the choice of audit subject - Discussion of the choice of national / international standard against which current practice will be audited - Outcome of initial audit of current practice and variance of results from chosen standard - Measures taken to improve practice - Final audit and closure of audit loop
3. Peer Reviewed Paper	Trainees must have <u>one</u> published peer reviewed paper by the end of training .
4. International Presentation	Trainees must give <u>one</u> international presentations by the end of training .
5. Clinical Case Based Discussion	Two clinical case based discussions based on content referenced to the learning outcomes of the subspecialty curricula should be presented locally every six months .
6. Presentation Major Clinical Topic	One major clinical topic, referenced to the learning outcomes of the subspecialty curricula should be presented locally or nationally every six months

7. Teaching and School for Surgeons	<p>Trainees are expected to engage with any in-unit training as well as the School for Surgeons (SFS) online training programme. Participation on SFS assignments, the Interactive Classroom (IC) feedback sessions and the end of term MCQ are mandatory components of the HST programme.</p> <p>A minimum of 60% of assignments are required to be completed and a minimum of 60% of ICs to be attended.</p>	
8. Logbook	<p>(1) A logbook showing all procedures should be prepared for <i>each six-month rotation</i>. (This is included in the subspecialty HST Trainers Assessment Form)</p>	
	<p>(2) A HST Summary Logbook of all procedures to date (cumulative HST record) should be prepared for <i>each six-month rotation</i>.</p>	
9. Exams	<p>(1) The EBOD exam should be sat in <i>HST4 or HST5</i>. (2) The FRCSI exam should be sat in <i>HST7</i>.</p>	
10. Mandatory Courses	<p>(1) Human Factors - One to two modules must be attended <i>per training year</i>. All five HST modules must be attended over the course of the four years. (2) RCSI Research Skills Course must be completed in <i>HST4 or HST5</i>. Trainees may be considered for exemption of this course if they have a research degree. (3) ICO Anterior Vitrectomy Simulation Course</p>	
11. Recommended Courses / Meetings	<p>Certificates of completion of recommended courses and meetings should be submitted at <i>the formal CAPA assessment session</i>.</p>	
12. HST Trainers Assessment Form	<p>Trainer Report: This report is contained within the subspecialty HST Assessment Form and should be completed by the Consultant Trainer at <i>each six-monthly assessment</i>.</p>	
<p>13. Core Competency Forms contained within 12.</p> <p><i>Measured across seven sub-specialty sections. Each has a corresponding</i></p>	1. Oculoplastic, Adnexal & Lacrimal Surgery	<p>Each section is sub-divided into objective, essential clinical experience and recommended reading.</p> <p>Depending on the sub-specialty opportunity of each rotation, the</p>
	2. Cornea and External Diseases	
	3. Cataract & Refractive	

<i>HST Trainers Assessment Form.</i>	Surgery	relevant form(s) are chosen for completion. These forms may be repeated again later in training depending on the rotation and are a useful marker for progress. It is not recommended that these forms are completed and 'signed off' in the first year of training but rather completed incrementally as the Trainee progresses through his/her years of HST training.
	4. Glaucoma	
	5. Retina, Vitreous, Uvea incl. Ocular Oncology	
	6. Neuro-Ophthalmology	
	7. Paediatric Ophthalmology & Strabismus	
14. HST Competencies Assessment	Yearly assessments will take place which assess the ability of trainees to evaluate, diagnose and formulate treatment plans for ophthalmic conditions. These assessments serve to encourage ongoing learning and preparation for the final FRCSI in Ophthalmology.	

HST TRAINING SUMMARY

As part the CAPA documentation, the ICO completes a cumulative HST Training Summary for each trainee which details whether or not the training requirements as outlined above have been successfully attained for each year of training. This document is continually reviewed by the Programme Director and the Dean ahead of each CAPA session. At the final CAPA, this document will also be reviewed alongside the CAPA documentation submitted by the trainee to determine a trainee's eligibility for CCST.

HST TRAINING SUMMARY

Trainee Name:		Start Date:	
Out of Programme Experience <i>(if any)</i>			
Retrospection <i>(if any)</i>			
CCST Date			

CAPA REQUIREMENTS	HST4A	HST4B	HST5A	HST5B	HST6A	HST6B	HST7A	HST7B
	Post	Post	Post	Post	Post	Post	Post	Post
HST Assessment Form <i>(1 per rotation)</i>								
SFS <i>(Assignment 60%, IC 60%)</i>								
Human Factors <i>(1-2 Modules per year)</i>								
Research Methodology								
Publication <i>(1 per training)</i>								
Intl Presentation <i>(1 per training)</i>								
Audit <i>(1 per year)</i>								
Local/Nat Presentations <i>(1 per rotation)</i>								
CBDs <i>(2 per rotation)</i>								
Logbook <i>(1 per rotation)</i>								
HST Assessments	OKAP:				OSCE:			
Exams	EBOD:				FRCSI:			
Mandatory Courses	Anterior Vitrectomy:							

CAPA= Satisfactory

CAPA=Unsatisfactory

FINAL CAPA SIGN OFF			
Final CAPA Satisfactory:	Yes / No	3 Years of scheduled rotations completed: 4 Years* of scheduled rotations completed: <i>*From July 2021 inclusive</i>	Yes / No Yes / No
Programme Director Signature:			
Dean Signature:			
CCST to be Awarded:		Yes / No	

8. Courses

➤ **Mandatory Courses**

Human Factors, RCSI
Research Methodology, RCSI
School for Surgeons & Interactive Classroom
Anterior Vitrectomy Course, ICO

➤ **Recommended Conferences & Meetings**

ICO Annual Conference:
ARVO; Association for Research & Vision in Ophthalmology
AAO; American Academy of Ophthalmology
ESCRS; European Society for Cataract & Refractive Surgeons
BEAVRS; British & Eire Association of Vitreo Retinal Surgeons
EU Retina

➤ **Recommended Management Course**

The college recommends that a management course be completed.
There are a range of courses available from short courses to Diplomas.
Please contact the College if you need any guidance when selecting a course.

➤ **Recommended Subspecialty Course**

Strabismus Course, Waterford
RCOphth Oculoplastics Course
Vitreo Retinal Course Moorfields Eye Hospital
Neuro-Ophthalmology Course, Beaumont Hospital
Lasik Course, Moorfields
Glaucoma Course, Moorfields Hospital
Medical Retina Course – Adare, Limerick
Moorfields Medical Retina Course, London

➤ **Wet Labs**

Artisan IOL wetlab ESCRS
DSAEK wetlab ESCRS

9. Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST)

Trainees must achieve the surgical, clinical, personal and professional competences defined in the surgical curriculum, fulfil the mandatory assessment requirements, pass the FRCSI Exit Examination and in approved accredited posts in Ireland to be awarded CCST.

At the final CAPA assessment session, it is confirmed if the following mandatory components of the training programme have been successfully attained:

- Satisfactory outcome at all CAPA assessment sessions HST4 – HST7
- Cumulative Record of HST Assessment Forms
- Participation in Teaching Activities and School for Surgeons
- Completion of the Human Factors in Patient Safety programme
- Completion of the Research Methodology course
- Peer Reviewed Paper Publication
- International Presentation
- Audit
- Clinical Case Based Discussions and Presentations of linked Major Clinical Topic
- Logbook: Final Six-Monthly Logbook and HST Summary Logbook
- Exams: EBOD Exam and FRCSI Exam
- Mandatory Courses: Anterior Vitrectomy
- Minimum three years* in approved accredited posts in Ireland
- Four years** in approved accredited posts in Ireland

Award of the CCST will allow the Higher Surgical Trainee to be registered on the ophthalmic surgery registrar of the Irish Medical Council and will indicate that the Trainee has reached the curricular standards of competence to practice independently as an Ophthalmic Surgeon in Ireland.

*Pre July 2021 (applies to trainees who entered the HST programme before July 2021)

** July 2021 inclusive (applies to trainees who entered HST in July 2021 inclusive and subsequent years)

10. Checklist for Completion of Specialist Training (CCST)

TRAINEE CHECKLIST:

- HST Subspecialty Assessment Forms for Year 4A, 4B, 5A, 5B, 6A, 6B, 7A & 7B
- SFS – Achieved 60% in assignments and attended 60% of Interactive Classrooms.
- Completion of the Human Factors in Patient Safety programme.
- Completion of the Research Methodology course.
- 1 Publication
- 1 International Presentation
- 1 Audit for Year 4, Year 5, Year 6 & Year 7
- 1 Local/ National Presentations for Year 4A, 4B, 5A, 5B, 6A, 6B, 7A & 7B
- 2 Case Based Discussions for Year 4A, 4B, 5A, 5B, 6A, 6B, 7A & 7B
- HST Summary Logbook for Year 4A, 4B, 5A, 5B, 6A, 6B, 7A & 7B
- Satisfactory CAPA Year 4, Year 5, Year 6 & Year 7
- Successfully attained EBOD examination
- Successfully attained FRCSI examination
- Mandatory Courses: ICO Anterior Vitrectomy

11. Surgical Fellowships & Awards

The ICO seeks industry support to help make funding available to ophthalmology trainees to access training opportunities outside of the formal programme. Details on a range of scholarships and travel grants/bursaries as they are confirmed will be circulated. The RCSI also provides a number of grants and bursaries for education and further information is available on the College website. The HSE, through the Dr Richard Steeven's Scholarship annually funds a number of senior trainees to take up overseas fellowship posts. For information on the Richard Steeven's Scholarship, please visit: <http://www.rcsi.ie/steevensscholarship>

Applicants must be Fellows or Members of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland who are in good standing.

12. Recognition of Prior Posts (Retrospection)

The recognition for training of prior posts only applies to those on the traditional pathway – those who commenced BST prior to 2015.

It may be possible for a Trainee to have prior experience recognized towards the completion of their specialist training if they entered HST via the traditional pathway (pre-July 2015). A maximum of one year can be awarded for recognition of post(s) carried out after Basic Surgical Training and prior to commencing the Higher Ophthalmic Surgical Training Programme. The ICO would encourage applications for recognition of prior experience to be made in HST4 but applications can be submitted in subsequent training years. There is a formal application process in place if a Trainee wishes to apply for recognition of prior experience, and this is outlined below.

1. Consider the Prior Post

Consider the prior experience you wish to be assessed for recognition towards training. The post should be one of the following:

- Post is approved for HST training but was not filled by a HST Trainee at the time
- Post was subsequently recognized for HST training

2. Discuss your Intention to Apply

Discuss your intention to apply for recognition of prior experience with your local Consultant Trainer(s) and your Programme Director. If there are no concerns raised, you may submit an application.

3. Application Form

Complete the Application for Recognition of Prior Experience, which requires the following details on the prior post:

- Date of Post
- Location of Post

- Weekly Timetable
- Subspecialty Experience
- Surgical Logbook
- Comments and Signatures of the post's Consultant Trainer(s)

Submit the completed application form to the Training Programme Manager in the ICO. Please note that applications with any fields omitted or missing Consultant Trainer(s) signatures will not be accepted.

4. *Assessment*

After the Training Programme Manager has quality checked the application form, it is circulated to the Programme Director and the Retrospection Panel of the ICO Manpower, Education & Research Committee for review and a decision on recognition of prior experience is made. If your application is not approved, you will be notified in writing of the reasons for the decision. If your application is approved, you will be notified in writing and your re-calculated CCST date will be stated.

13. Out of Programme Training (OOPT)

Out of Programme Training (OOPT) is no longer part of Higher Surgical Training in Ophthalmology. The decision to remove OOPT from the programme was approved at the Irish Surgical Postgraduate Training Committee (ISPTC) on 29th September 2021. This decision comes into effect as of July 2021 inclusive.

Trainees who commenced Higher Surgical Training prior to July 2021 may apply for Out of Programme Training (OOPT), which can only be taken in the final year of training.

Approval for OOPT is subject to the appropriate application process. The post must be deemed suitable for the training programme. Trainees must continue to meet the requirements of the programme while they are on OOPT. A maximum of one year OOPT can be recognised for training.

There is a formal application process in place should a trainee intend to apply for recognition of this experience, and this is outlined below.

1. *Discuss your Intention for OOPT*

Discuss your plan for Out of Programme Training with the Programme Director and the Dean of Postgraduate Education. You may wish to seek advice also from Research Supervisors and Educational Supervisors. If your OOPT plans are supported by the Programme Director and Dean, you can notify the ICO.

2. *Notify the Training Body/ICO*

Notifications to the training body must be made no later than **6 months prior** to your intention to leave on OOPT. You will need to confirm the details below in writing to the Training Programme Manager in the ICO:

- Reason for OOPT
- The exact dates of the OOPT
- Content of the planned OOPT

The Programme Director, in conjunction with the Dean will review the submission and will determine a provisional agreement with respect to the OOPT including the requirements that the trainee must meet during the time away to satisfy the subsequent review of experience, with a view to deciding the appropriate training recognition. All trainees on OOPT, looking for recognition of training, must complete the mandatory HST requirements for the CAPA appraisal as outlined in section 7.4 above.

To satisfy the time component of HST, an extended period of OOPT will have an impact on the CCST date.

If you are employed outside the Irish hospital service and you cease to pursue, for any reason, the research or other activity, which has been agreed, you must inform the Programme Director and Dean promptly with the ICO Training Programme Manager in copy. It will then be decided, in consultation with the ICO Training Regulations & Standards Committee, whether it is appropriate for you to remain within the training programme.

If you are employed outside the Irish hospital service and wish to begin or return to the Training Programme, you must accept a reasonable offer of a suitable training post. Offers of training posts will, as far as possible, take into account your training need.

NB: Trainees who are successful in their application and granted permission to partake in OOPT, will be required to attend a HST training review session prior to commencing OOPT which will consist of a review of the trainee's core skills, HST surgical logbook and other competencies as laid out in the HST Curriculum and Section 7.4 of this guide, as well as timing and eligibility for CCST.

14. Out of Programme Checklist

Up-to-date CV	
Signed offer letter	
Letter of support from Training Programme Director showing exact dates of OOPT period and whether the time is counting towards training	

Application for OOPT must be completed & approved not less than 6 months prior to commencement.	
Educational contract signed by Trainee and OOPT site Supervisor, which includes details of Learning Agreements and Objectives and timetable	
Job description	
Name and contact details of the OOPT Supervisor	
Logbooks from two previous incumbents of the post or a report from the Supervisor	

15. Leave

The ICO recognizes that for a variety of exceptional reasons a trainee may require time off the program. If this situation arises please contact the ICO at the first available opportunity to discuss this in more detail. If a trainee takes leave an annotation to the training agreement may be required and this will be discussed and agreed with the Programme Director and the Dean.

If you are returning from leave the ICO will endeavour to ensure you have access to a suitable training post but for reasons outside our control this may not always be possible

14.1 Unplanned Leave

Any period of unplanned leave, beyond the normal entitlement to study and annual leave, may interrupt the acquirement of skills during each 6 month rotation. Therefore, a period of unplanned leave in excess of 2 weeks per 6 months, may require a further period of training to be undertaken.

14.2 Maternity Leave

As Maternity Leave affects the CCST date, Trainees are required to inform the Programme Director and the College of their Maternity leave start and finish dates when they have them. Trainees must also inform their employer as per their HSE contracts.

If a trainee takes maternity leave an annotation to the training agreement may be required and this will be discussed and agreed with the Programme Director and the Dean.

15.3 Paternity Leave

Under the Paternity Leave and Benefit Act 2016, ([for further information see here](#)), a period of 2 weeks of paid Paternity Leave may be availed of. Trainees intending to take Paternity Leave must inform the College in advance stating start and finish dates once confirmed. Trainees must also inform their employer as per their HSE contracts.

If a trainee takes paternity leave an annotation to the training agreement may be required and this will be discussed and agreed with the Programme Director and the Dean.

14.4 Career Break

Please see [here](#) the HSE circular in relation career breaks. 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 [here](#) for the list of agencies with public service employees funded by the HSE.

For further information, please visit: <http://www.rcsi.ie/TraineeInformationFAQ>

If a trainee takes a career break an annotation to the training agreement may be required and this will be discussed and agreed with the Programme Director and the Dean.

Continuing Communication Agreement while on leave

A Continuing Communication Agreement will be made between the trainee and the College to ensure the trainee is kept informed on relevant training matters. Trainees on statutory leave are under no obligation to respond to the communication whilst on leave.

Return to training following a period of leave

The trainee may return to higher training at the appropriate stage, although the nature of training rotations is such that returning to the same posts as planned at the outset of their training rotation may not be possible. The College cannot guarantee the date or the location of the trainee's return placement. It is therefore important that the College is advised well in advance of a trainee's wish to return to clinical training. The College will attempt to identify a placement as soon as possible but trainees should indicate their intention and preferred time of return as soon as they are able to do so. If a trainee, having indicated that they are returning to the training program, subsequently declines the place offered, then there is no guarantee that another place can be identified although every effort will be made to do so.

Trainees on extended leave will be assessed on their return to the program, to establish their eligibility for recommencing the pathway. This may result in repeating a period of training on the program or progressing to the next stage of training with specific learning targets identified by the Programme Director, the Dean and the Educational Supervisor. This will be reflected in the Annotated Training Agreement.

16. Voluntary Exit

A doctor who has left the programme voluntarily may reapply to specialty training but prior training will not be recognised.

17. Flexible Training

17.1 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.

The HSE NDTP Guidance Document 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 in December for the training year commencing the following July. Applicants will then be notified of the outcome of their application for the scheme by the end of January each year.

To view the HSE NDTP Guidance Document and access the Application Form, please visit: <http://www.rcsi.ie/TraineeInformationFAQ>

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the necessary approval is obtained from both the training body and the employer in a timely manner, a minimum of three months prior to commencement of the post.

16.2 Post Reassignment Request

A post reassignment request can be submitted to the Programme Director and Dean of Postgraduate Education of the ICO via email if there has been a significant change to personal circumstances or for other personal reasons. It is important to note that rotations are confirmed to trainees ahead of time so flexibility cannot always be guaranteed.

17.3 Job-sharing

Postgraduate trainees can avail of job sharing opportunities for a set period. 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.

***Important**

Please note that flexible training options are currently under review with the HSE NDTP. Any resulting changes to flexible training will be communicated to you but you may also wish to check

the HSE NDTP Flexible Training webpage for updates <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/ed/flex/>

18. Support Structures

The College recognises that trainees may face stressful situations during the program which can impact on their performance and progress. Trainees may underperform and not achieve the desired performance requirements of the curriculum. There may be many reasons for this underperformance. Coping with the demands of a busy profession, maintaining skills and knowledge and balancing family and personal commitments can be difficult. The College is committed to provide support to trainees to assist them appropriately through difficult situations. Trainees can contact the College if they wish to discuss any aspects of their training with the Dean of Postgraduate Training and an appointment can be organised on their behalf.

For a variety of reasons a Trainee may be underperforming in their post. To help trainees, the ICO provides support so that Trainees can maximise their development and career progression.

The support escalations are outlined below:

1. Consultant Trainer.
2. Educational Supervisor
3. Programme Director or the Dean of Postgraduate Education who may, in appropriate situations, bring any problems to the attention of the Training Committee.

Further information on available supports can be found on the RCSI mSurgery website here: <https://msurgery.ie/home/trainee-support-section/>

All trainees are encouraged to use those resources available to them during their time on the program should they encounter any problems during their training or wish to seek career advice.

19. Appeal

Trainees have a right to appeal a decision of the Dean and Training Committee that affects their progression through the program. The appeals procedure is available from the ICO and on the [trainee portal](#) page.

20. HSE National Coaching Service

The HSE offers a National Coaching Service to all its employees in recognition that coaching aims to help people when they feel stuck and want to bring about personal change in their lives and work, to shift their perspective, reflect on their choices and realise their individual potential. The

National Coaching Service offers 4-6 one to one sessions over the phone with each session lasting 1-hour max.

To find out more about the coaching service please visit <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/coaching.html>.

You can apply for a coach confidentially by contacting National Human Resources Division, Workplace Relations Unit, Staff Development Section by email hr.staffdevelopment@hse.ie.

21. HSE National Doctors Training & Planning



The Irish College of Ophthalmologists wish to acknowledge the support provided by the HSE National Doctors Training & Planning and its contribution to the development of postgraduate medical training in Ireland in an evolving health service.

22. Funding

Funding is available to Trainees via four different funds. Please see table below for a brief overview of all funds.

<p>SPECIALIST TRAINING FUND</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Run by RCSI on behalf of HSE/NDTP. ▪ For training courses/activities, equip, books, expenses. ▪ €500 per year per Trainee. ▪ Funding is carried over year-on-year e.g. three years unclaimed will give the Trainee €1500 to claim.
<p>CLINICAL COURSES & EXAM FUND</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Run by HSE/NDTP for courses and exams only on the approved list. ▪ Please see further details here. ▪ Trainees must claim for this fund through the HR Departments in their hospital within 6 months of attending the exam/course.
<p>SURGICAL LOUPES FUND</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Surgical Loupes fund is open to trainees in years ST3- ST8. ▪ Applications open in February each year and close end of March. ▪ Applications will be emailed directly to trainees with a link to the webpage for further information. ▪ Amount of funding available depends on number of claims.
<p>Training Support Scheme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Additional Training Support Funding has been made available to by HSE NDTP to NCHDs from July 2019 onwards. ▪ Funding is allocated based on Grade for each registration training year, July – July. ▪ €2,000 is available to each SpR for certain approved clinical courses, conferences and examinations

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.

As of July 2019, the Mandatory Training Fund ceased and was replaced by the Training Support Scheme.

Further information is available on the HSE website [here](#).

RCSI pays fees for Trainees for the following:

<p>STATISTICAL PACKAGE FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES (SPSS Statistics Package)</p>	<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 €1100 per Trainee.
<p>ENDNOTE</p>	<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 €300 per Trainee.

23. ICO Member & Trainee Portal

The ICO uses a member’s portal to communicate with its members, trainees and affiliates.

For all trainees, this will be the college’s primary means of communication for the duration of your training. On commencement of the Training Programme with the ICO, you give your permission for the college to create a trainee profile on our portal and to be contacted via the portal.

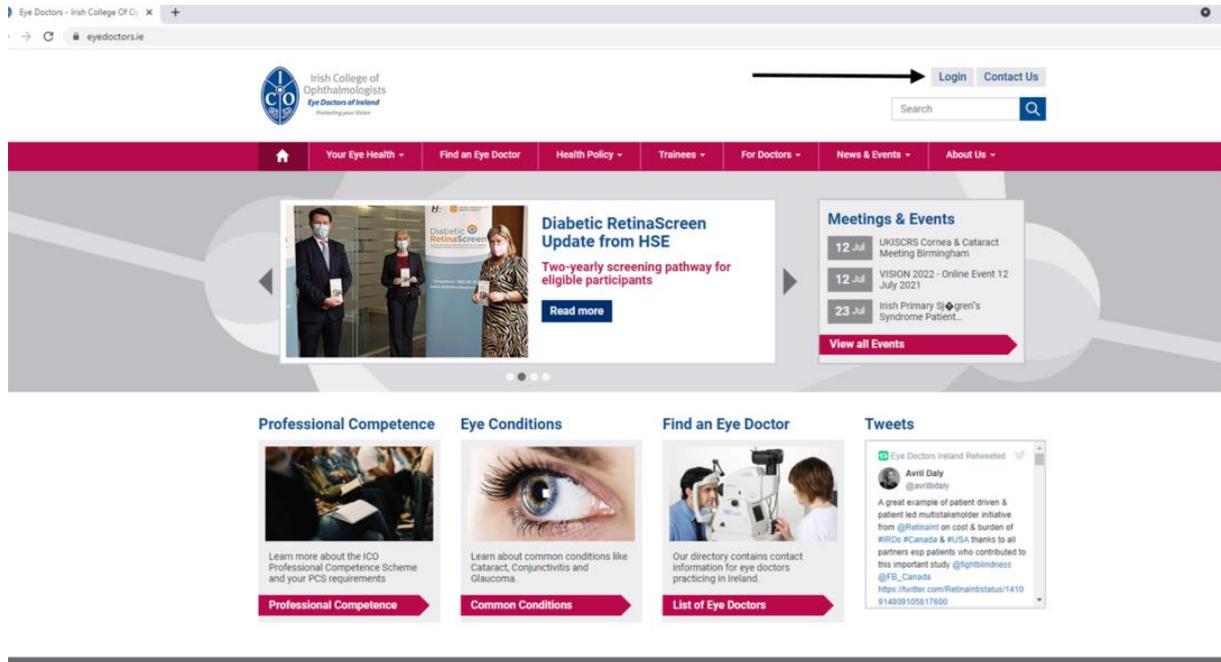
Trainees must not unsubscribe from these communications, by doing so, you will not receive pertinent information regarding your training, which may adversely affect your training.

It is the responsibility of the trainee to ensure they are receiving emails. Should you encounter any difficulty in receiving these emails, firstly check that they are not going into your spam folder, should this happen you will need to mark the emails as “not spam”. If the problem persists, please contact the ICO Training Programme Manager who will be able to assist you.

In addition to the portal being used as a communication tool, the portal will also contain all relevant training information including but not limited to; training requirements, policies, training guides etc. Any changes to this information will be updated on the portal.

Accessing the portal

To login to the portal, go to the ICO website and click the “login” button in the top right hand corner of the screen.



Alternatively click here: <https://www.eyedoctors.ie/members/login/>

In order to login, please enter the below information:

Username: email address provided to the college

Password: This will be your IMC number and your initials in capitals, for example: 123456JS.

You can change your password by clicking “Forgot Password” on the login page, or alternatively once logged in you can click on the blue member icon and select “change password”.

If you experience any technical difficulty in accessing your profile, please contact the College who will be able to assist you.

24. Training Events Calendar

A calendar which lists upcoming training events including courses, exams, eTutorials, CAPA deadlines etc is available on the trainee portal page or via the link below:

Link:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1wtuwBZAi9lftn9d18lhEdKkSPpmDLPSRVVnmpkl0nCM/edit?usp=sharing>

Dates may be subject to change, any amendments will be updated in the calendar. Trainees should therefore check the calendar regularly to have the most up to date information.

25. RCSI Trainee Portal- Connect SA

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.






[Documents](#)
[Class sign up](#)
[Help content](#)
[Sign out](#)

Documents

Class sign up

Help content

Impersonate

Trainee details

Programme TEST Programme 2021 ▼

Current ST year ST 3

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

Forgotten password

[Reset your password with SSPM](#)

Contact us

RCSI Web www.rcsi.com Telephone 01 402 2719 Email surgicalaffairs@rcsi.ie

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26. Data Protection

Data Protection is an increasingly important issue for all organisations. Like all organisations that hold and use personal data, the ICO must meet certain obligations relating to the manner in which it collects, stores, uses and disseminates personal data of individuals.

The ICO is committed to meeting its obligations under the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2018. ICO needs to collect personal data, as defined by the Acts, for a variety of purposes, in order to conduct its business as a professional and post graduate training body. ICO collects data relating to trainees who come into contact with the college in the course of its activities. Personal data is collected, managed and used for a variety of purposes including, but not limited to, the admission, assessment and examination of trainees and their clinical performance.

ICO is committed to compliance with the eight principles of data protection as set out in the Acts:

1. To obtain and process personal data fairly

ICO will obtain and process personal data fairly in accordance its legal obligations.

2. To keep it only for one or more specified and lawful purposes

ICO will keep data for purposes that are specific, lawful and clearly stated and the data will only be processed in a manner compatible with these purposes.

3. To use and disclose it only in ways compatible with the stated purpose(s)

ICO will only use and disclose personal data in ways that are necessary for the purpose/s or compatible with the purpose/s for which it collects and keeps the data.

4. To keep it safe and secure

ICO will take appropriate technical and organisational security measures against unauthorised access to, or alteration, disclosure or destruction of the data and against their accidental loss or destruction.

5. To keep it accurate, complete and up-to-date

ICO will take appropriate measures to ensure high levels of data accuracy and completeness and to ensure that personal data is kept up to date.

6. To ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive

Personal data held by the College will be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose/s for which they are kept.

7. To retain it for no longer than is necessary for the purpose for which it was collected

ICO will have a defined retention period policy for personal data and appropriate procedures in place to implement such a policy.

8. To give a copy of his/her personal data to an individual, upon request.

ICO has procedures in place to ensure that data subjects can access a copy of his/her data held by ICO, in compliance with sections 3 & 4 of the Data Protection Acts.

The ICO does not share personally identifying data with third parties unless requested to do so for a specific regulatory purpose by the HSE or the Medical Council.

27. Important Contact Numbers / Emails / Portals

Irish College of Ophthalmologists

121 Stephen's Green, Dublin 2, D02 H903

Tel: 01 402 2777

www.eyedoctors.ie

Ms Kathryn McCreery, Programme Director

Email: kathryn.mccreery@eyedoctors.ie

Miss Yvonne Delaney, Dean of Postgraduate Education

Email: yvonedelaney1@gmail.com

Ms Rebecca Martin, Training Programme Manager

Email: rebecca.martin@eyedoctors.ie



ICO Trainee Portal <https://www.eyedoctors.ie/members/login/>

Training Events Calendar

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1wtuwBZAi9lftn9d18lhEdKkSPpmDLPSRVVnmpkl0nCM/edit?usp=sharing>

School for Surgeons <https://vle.rcsi.com/login/index.php>

RCSI National Surgical Training Centre (NSTC) - Admin Offices

Ms Isabella Finn, Email: isabellafinn@rcsi.ie

RCSI Human Factors

RCSI Trainee Portal <https://connectsatrainees.rcsi.com/>

Section Mailbox Email: humanfactors@rcsi.ie

Ms Simone Brennan, Course Co-ordinator. Email: simonebrennan@rcsi.ie

RCSI Research Skills Course

Ms Isabella Finn, Email: isabellafinn@rcsi.ie

RCSI Reception

121 Stephens Green 01 402 2422

123 Stephens Green 01 402 2263

RCSI IT Dept 01 402 2273 helpdesk@rcsi.ie

RCSI Library librarian@rcsi-mub.com

RCSI mSurgery <https://msurgery.ie/>