Student Code of Conduct 2013/14

Introduction

All students registered with the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Medical University of Bahrain, are undertaking programmes that will lead to professional healthcare qualifications. Membership of these healthcare professions require the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct.

The RCSI Code of Conduct (herein called the Code) outlines the defined standards and the principles by which you must abide in the academic and clinical setting. These standards are considered by RCSI as evidence of fitness to practice in your chosen profession. The Code applies from the first day of registration, both on and off campus.

The Code is guided by the following professional standards:

- Guidelines for Medical Schools on Ethical Standards and Behaviour appropriate for Medical Students (2011). Irish Medical Council

- Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Medical Practitioners (2009). Irish Medical Council

- Code of Conduct for Pharmacists from the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (2009). The Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland

- Code of Conduct for Pharmacy Students (2010). General Pharmaceutical Council Great Britain


The Code is based on six core principles. You must formally agree to abide by the Code.

The RCSI takes seriously any breach of the Code. If your behaviour fails to meet the standards outlined in the Code, the matter may be referred to the RCSI Professional Conduct Committee for consideration in accordance with the RCSI Professional Conduct Policy. The decisions of the RCSI Professional Conduct Committee will be made on a case by case basis and will be judged by reference to the Principles set out in the Code.
Principles of the Code of Conduct

There are six underlying core Principles of the Code.

As a student you must:

1. Act in the best interest of the patient at all times
2. Develop and maintain a high level of competence
3. Abide by the ethical principles that govern patient care
4. Conduct yourself in a trustworthy and professional manner
5. Recognise the importance of self-care
6. Develop the skills to work in a multidisciplinary team

Principle 1: Act in the best interest of the patient at all times

Throughout your course, you will engage with patients and gain knowledge and experience in the clinical setting. While clinical teaching and training is supervised, you are responsible for behaving in a trustworthy and professional manner. Even when you are not in direct contact with patients, you will be developing knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that you will use as a healthcare professional. You must make the health, well-being and safety of patients your main concern. All other principles must be read in light of this first principle.

As a student you must:

1.1. Always bear in mind your future role as a healthcare professional when studying.
1.2. Ensure that your beliefs do not compromise patient care.
    1.2.1. Recognise and respect the rights of patients.
    1.2.2. Read and comply with the appropriate RCSI policies.
    1.2.3. Be prepared to undertake physical examination of patients if appropriate.
    1.2.4. Adhere to the dress codes of hospitals and clinical placements.
1.3. Make sure that your judgment is not influenced by personal interests
    1.3.1. Do not abuse the trust of a patient and maintain proper professional boundaries.
1.4. Never knowingly mislead others.
    1.4.1. You should introduce yourself by name to patients and always make it clear to patients and the public that you are a student and not a qualified healthcare professional.
    1.4.2. You must never recommend a medical treatment or course of action to anyone unsupervised.
1.5. Raise concerns as soon as possible with an appropriate member of staff if you believe that patient safety or care could be compromised.
Principle 2: Develop and maintain a high level of competence throughout your career

Being able to provide good care is fundamental to training as a healthcare professional. This should guide you in your clinical and academic work. You have engaged in a career of lifelong learning and teaching. It is your responsibility to acquire all necessary knowledge, skills and values to become a competent practitioner and not impede other students in acquiring the same knowledge and skills.

As a student you must:

2.1 Take responsibility for your learning.
   2.1.1 Use every opportunity to learn. Attend classes (in accordance with the RCSI Attendance Policy). Be punctual. Plan and use your time effectively.
   2.1.2 Reflect on feedback about your performance and respond constructively.
   2.1.3 Make informed decisions.
   2.1.4 Commit to developing, and continuously improving your professional knowledge and competence.

2.2 Engage constructively in assessment.
   2.2.1 Complete and submit your course work on time.
   2.2.2 Appropriately reference the academic work of others.

2.3 Recognise and stay within the limits of your competence.
   2.3.1 Recognise your limitations and ask for help.

Principle 3: Agree to be bound by the ethical principles that govern patient care

All healthcare professionals must be guided by their primary responsibility to act in the best interests of their patient without being influenced by any personal consideration. The patient – health professional relationship is a privileged one and is based on trust and professionalism which are enshrined in the ethical principles of beneficence, non-malfeasance, autonomy and justice.

As a student you must:

3.1 Accept and agree to be bound by the ethical principle of Beneficence and Non-malfeasance.
   3.1.1 Act in the best interest of the patient and ensure the patient comes to no harm.

3.2 Accept and agree to be bound by the ethical principle of Autonomy.
3.2.1 Obtain consent from the patient before you interview or examine him or her. The patient should be offered a chaperone if necessary. In the case of a minor patient, obtain the consent of the parent or legal guardian before you interview or examine the minor patient.

3.2.2 Respect the patient’s right to refuse health care or to take part in teaching.

3.2.3 Preserve the confidentiality of the patient at all times. This includes personal data that is in their clinical records as well as information they disclose to you during a consultation.

3.2.4 Make sure that patients, or anyone close to them cannot be identified outside the clinical setting. This includes conversations and discussions on social networking sites, texts or e-mails.

3.2.5 Recognise the circumstances when confidential information may be disclosed without consent.

3.3 Accept and agree to be bound by the ethical principle of Justice.

3.3.1 Respect the legal and human rights of the patient to fair treatment and care.

**Principle 4 : Conduct yourself in a trustworthy and professional manner**

The public trusts healthcare professionals. As a student of RCSI, and throughout your career, you must justify that trust by acting with integrity and professionalism.

**As a student you must :**

4.1 Obey the law.

4.1.1 Inform the Vice President of Academic Affairs immediately if you are the subject of any legal proceedings.

4.2 Comply with RCSI Policies, Rules and Regulations.

4.2.1 Refrain from any activity that would negatively affect the reputation of the RCSI.

4.2.2 Respect all College, hospital and clinical placement property.

4.2.3 Ensure that you are contactable, by RCSI e-mail, by provision of a mobile phone number and up to date address details.

4.3 Be honest and trustworthy.

4.3.1 Use research and laboratory data honestly and ethically seeking permission to use data as required.

4.3.2 Ensure any funds you are responsible for are used for the purpose they are intended.

4.3.3 Identify yourself truthfully.
4.3.4 Represent your qualifications, position and abilities honestly on all applications.

4.3.5 Respect that RCSI letter headed notepaper is college property and must not be used for your own personal use.

4.3.6 Decline the offer of inappropriate gifts from the Pharmaceutical, Medical Device or Biotechnology Industries.

**Principle 5: Recognise the importance of self-care**

You should be aware of your own health and how it impacts on you, your studies and your professional responsibilities.

**As a student you must:**

5.1 Take responsibility for your own health, especially if it may impact negatively on other people.

5.1.1 Seek prompt and appropriate professional advice about your general wellbeing, i.e. your physical or mental health, or substance use or other issues which may impact on your ability to complete your studies or interact with patients, staff or colleagues.

5.2 Inform appropriate RCSI staff if there is anything that could impair your ability to study or to practice as a professional.

5.2.1 Inform appropriate RCSI staff if you are being affected by a major life event e.g. bereavement.

5.2.2 Inform appropriate RCSI staff if you have, to your knowledge, any disability or medical condition that might affect your ability or role as a healthcare professional, or that might put patients at risk.

5.2.3 Inform appropriate RCSI staff if you take medicines that may impair your judgment and impact on the safety of others.

5.2.4 Respect the confidentiality of your colleagues but appropriately disclose information of concern to include information regarding 5.1.1 above as relevant to your colleagues.

5.3 Comply with health and safety requirements.

5.3.1 Comply with the University’s health requirements (RCSI Infectious Diseases and General Health Policy, RCSI Blood Borne Virus Policy).

5.3.2 Comply with RCSI Alcohol and Drugs Misuse Policy.

5.3.3 Cooperate with formal investigations about you or others.
Principle 6: Develop skills to work in a multidisciplinary team in order to deliver a high standard of care and ensure patient safety

You need to be able to work effectively with patients, staff, colleagues and other healthcare professionals.

As a student you must:

6.1 Learn how to work in partnership with patients, their carers and others to manage a patient’s treatment and care.
   
   6.1.1 Recognise the expertise of other healthcare professionals.
   
   6.1.2 Respect the knowledge and skills of those involved in your education.
   
   6.1.3 Be aware of the limitations of your knowledge and skills.

6.2 Treat others politely with consideration and respect.

   6.2.1 Recognise diversity and respect the cultural differences, values and beliefs of others, in keeping with appropriate RCSI policies.
   
   6.2.2 Listen to, and respect, others’ opinions and be non-judgemental in your attitudes toward them.

6.3 Learn how to communicate effectively.

   6.3.1 Ensure you have adequate English language skills.
   
   6.3.2 Learn how to listen to patients and their carers and communicate effectively with them in a way they can understand.

As stated at the outset of this policy, RCSI takes seriously any breach of this Code. If your behavior fails to meet the standards outlined in this Code, the matter may be referred to the RCSI Professional Conduct Committee for consideration in accordance with the RCSI Professional Conduct Policy.

Upon commencing studies at RCSI, students should familiarize themselves with all RCSI Policies and Regulations with which RCSI students are obliged to comply. These are available at all times on the RCSI Virtual Learning Environment.

Acknowledgements

RCSI acknowledges the permission of Mr Damian Day of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (RPSGB) to reproduce extracts from the Code of Conduct for Pharmacy Students, written by the RPSGB and adopted by the General Pharmaceutical Council of Great Britain.
STUDENT STATEMENT

Agreement to abide by the RCSI Code of Conduct

Student Name (Block letters)……………………………………………………………………

Student Number………………………………………………………………………………

Programme……………………………………………………………………………………

Year Commencing Programme……………………………………………………………..

I have read and understood the RCSI Code of Conduct expected of students in RCSI and I hereby agree that I will comply with all of the provisions of this Code as detailed therein.

Student signature………………………………………………………………………………

Date……………………………………………………………………………………………

Please return this signed document to:

Student Records Office

Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

Medical University of Bahrain