

NFQ: Level 8

Award: **Bachelor of Dental Surgery, BDS (Hons)**

Awarding Body:
National University of Ireland

Duration: **5 years**



RCSI

UNIVERSITY
OF MEDICINE
AND HEALTH
SCIENCES

DENTISTRY

RCSI'S BDS PROGRAMME OFFERS STUDENTS A VERY
DISTINCTIVE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE WITH A
WORLD-LEADING HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY



AT RCSI, OUR STUDENTS ENJOY AN IMMERSIVE EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY WITH A STRONG FOCUS ON ACQUIRING THE CLINICAL AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS NECESSARY TO EFFECTIVELY PRACTICE IN COMPLEX HEALTHCARE ENVIRONMENTS AND TO SERVE DIVERSE POPULATIONS AND CULTURES.

RCSI's Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) programme is studied over 5 years, on a full-time basis. It offers a vertically and horizontally integrated spiralled curriculum utilising a blend of teaching and learning methods, which combine clinical skills training with the acquisition of knowledge, skills, acumen and professional attributes. All teaching and learning activities are patient and student-centred, and are specifically designed for students to experience authentic and contextual learning in dentistry. The programme ensures that students are fully prepared for a primary care dentistry career and, in addition, provides the foundations on which to develop their knowledge and skills, facilitating them to enter dental specialist training programmes where appropriate.

Early patient contact commencing in Year 1 is one of the most important characteristics of this innovative degree programme. These early patient encounters play an important role in developing students' clinical communication and teamworking skills, and understanding the ethos of patient-centred care. Additionally, Years 1 and 2 of the programme lay down the scientific and technical foundations upon which the later, more clinically-intensive years of the course are built. By the end of the second year of study, students will have been introduced to the evidence-based core clinical and technical skills required of modern dentistry and will have developed competence in many aspects of dental care.

Across Years 2 to 5, students gain extensive experience on a wide range of common and important oral and general dental conditions, with continued reference to the science base that

underpins dental practice. The later years of the programme support the gaining of understanding of the patient journey through primary, secondary and specialist dental care. Final year will provide a thorough grounding for contemporary practice through detailed preparation toward the skills required to practice as a primary care dentist immediately after graduation. Students will also be prepared for their working life on qualification through consolidation and strengthening of comprehension, applying information as well as enhancing skills. This year sees students transition from supervised student to independent practitioner.

Small group teaching supports curriculum delivery, and plenaries, practical Science for Dentistry (SfD) sessions and workshops support the programme as appropriate. The RCSI Simulated Dental Learning Environment (SDLE) enables students to develop and consolidate their clinical skills before treating patients safely and is equipped with a comprehensive and extensive range of models, equipment and state-of-the-art patient simulators. It provides a protected environment in which to practise clinical and technical skills.

Clinical teaching and learning will be in one or more of RCSI's Dental Education Facilities (DEF) in Dublin. These facilities are designed specifically to meet the learning needs of dental students and to allow them to gain experience in clinical dentistry in a primary care community setting.

Engagement with local communities throughout the course is one of the keys to dental students developing professionalism and social accountability skills, plus a real understanding of the needs and demands of different groups in the population. Students will spend a considerable proportion of each year working closely with disadvantaged communities and other members of the wider healthcare team in their Inter-Professional Engagement modules.

In summary, the programme's aims are as follows:

- > Provide you with the core skills and knowledge to qualify and register as a dentist with the Dental Council in Ireland.
- > Provide training and education as approved by the Dental Council in Ireland.
- > Develop competence in the clinical skills required to deliver primary care dentistry.
- > Develop your critical and analytical acumens in relation to dentistry.
- > Enhance personal and professional skills, and development of a professional identity.
- > Develop transferable skills for lifelong learning and a career in dentistry.
- > Provide you with opportunities for multidisciplinary working.
- > Develop excellent communication and teamworking skills.
- > Develop capability to underpin a successful future career as a dentist.

International graduates of the RCSI Dentistry programme have a one-year stayback visa option should they wish to practice in Ireland.



YEAR 1

Your clinical education will commence at the start of Year 1. Working in small, integrated study groups, you will learn the core scientific foundations of dentistry in a clinical context. You will explore the scientific basis of healthy structure, function and behaviour, with a focus on dental health, prevention of dental disease and the underlying principles of personal and professional development. You will attend the Simulated Dental Learning Environment (SDLE) from your first few weeks, developing essential clinical skills. From Semester 2 of Year 1, you will experience contact with patients in the clinics,

where you will be able to develop your communication skills under close supervision by primary dental care based teachers, bringing to life the skills acquired in SDLE. Towards the end of the year you have your first experience in community engagement.

MODULES

Integrated Dental Science 1

Clinical Dental Practice 1

Professional Development 1

Inter-Professional Engagement 1

YEAR 2

In Year 2, you will build on your foundations with common dental problems, as well as disease mechanisms considered in much greater depth. Learning will continue in the SDLE as you develop clinical skills for advanced procedures whilst continuing to care for patients in dental clinics approximately two days per week. You will gain insight into the importance of team working in dentistry as you integrate with other members of the team in the clinical environment, and plan and deliver a social engagement project intervention.

MODULES

Integrated Dental Science 2

Clinical Dental Practice 2

Professional Development 2

Inter-Professional Engagement 2

YEAR 3

In Year 3, there will be greater emphasis on self-directed learning as you prepare project assignments, including an engagement project with students from another healthcare profession, and clinical cases. You will consolidate existing skills and undertake more advanced procedures under close supervision. One of the themes for Years 3 and 4 is to consolidate the learning of medically-related issues for the safe practice of dentistry. You will be given an opportunity to learn about dentally relevant medical issues in patient-based demonstrations.

MODULES

Applied Dental Knowledge 3

Clinical Dental Practice 3

Professional Development 3

Inter-Professional Engagement 3

YEAR 4

In Year 4, clinical activities will expand to approximately three days per week and you will start to prepare clinical cases for Finals. Clinical dentistry will now embrace all aspects of dental care provision expected of a qualified primary care dentist. You will also be trained in advanced restorative techniques and strengthen your competence in treatment planning. You'll gain first-hand experience of the role and services provided by specialists in primary and secondary care, by attending specialist clinics in the various clinical disciplines, such as Oral Surgery, Orthodontics and Restorative Dentistry.

MODULES

Applied Dental Knowledge 4

Clinical Dental Practice 4

Professional Development 4

Inter-Professional Engagement 4

YEAR 5

The emphasis in Year 5 is on the implementation and consolidation of the skills and acumen you have acquired in previous years and is the final preparation for dental practice. You will become more confident with clinical situations, healthcare teams and the principles of professionalism; and discover advances in dentistry being developed for future practice.

MODULES

Applied Dental Knowledge 5

Clinical Dental Practice 5

Professional Development 5

The programme has received full RCSI and NUI recognition. The Dental Council also formally supports the launch of the programme in September 2025. The Council will undertake its first accreditation visit in the 4th year of the programme.

WHY STUDY DENTISTRY AT RCSI?

- > **Small group teaching:** Our approach to small group teaching supports curriculum delivery, and enables you to get to know your lecturers and receive regular feedback in a supportive learning environment.
- > **Early patient contact:** Early patient contact is one of the standout characteristics of the programme. Students experience contact with patients from Year 1 on allowing for the early development of clinical and communication skills under close supervision.
- > **State-of-the-art facilities:** RCSI's Simulated Dental Learning Environment (SDLE) enables students to develop and consolidate their clinical skills in a safe, low-risk environment before going on to treat actual patients.
- > **Community focus:** Students engage closely with local communities throughout the course which develops professionalism and social accountability skills and gives a deep understanding of the needs and demands of different groups in the population.
- > **Multidisciplinary environment:** Study alongside your future colleagues in Medicine, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy and Advanced Therapeutic Technologies, ensuring that the multidisciplinary nature of patient care is reflected in your education at RCSI.
- > **Career readiness:** Students develop transferable skills for lifelong learning and a career in dentistry, and you will also receive intensive support in choosing your own future career path.



DENTISTRY UNDERGRADUATE

NFQ

Level 8

AWARD

Bachelor of Dental Surgery, BDS (Hons)

AWARDING BODY

National University of Ireland

DURATION

5 years

MINIMUM ACADEMIC ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

SCHOOL LEAVER

A LEVEL

Applicants must present a minimum of three A-Level subjects* with minimum grades of AAB, to include Chemistry, one additional laboratory science subject (Biology or Physics), plus one other from the following group: Biology, Physics, Mathematics or Psychology.

All applicants must also have completed a minimum of six subjects at GCSE level, which must include a minimum Grade 4 / C in English and Mathematics.

**All A Level subject examinations must be taken within two consecutive academic years (i.e. school years 12 and 13). Any repeat examinations taken outside of these two years will not be considered.*

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB DIPLOMA)

Applicants must present a minimum score of 36 IB Diploma points (inclusive of bonus points).

The IB Diploma must comprise a minimum of six subjects* (three subjects at Higher Level and three subjects at Standard Level), which must include Chemistry at Higher Level (with a minimum score of 5) and another laboratory science subject (Biology or Physics) or Mathematics** at Higher Level.

If Mathematics is presented with Chemistry at Higher Level, another laboratory science subject (Biology or Physics) must also be presented at Standard Level.

**All IB Diploma subject examinations must be taken within two consecutive academic years (i.e. school years 11 and 12). Any repeat examinations taken outside of these two years will not be considered.*

***Both Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches and Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation are acceptable for application to RCSI.*

INDIAN CURRICULA (CBSE AND ISC)

Applicants must achieve a minimum average score of 90% or above across five subjects in Grade 12, to include minimum scores of 75% in Chemistry, Biology and either Physics or Mathematics.

GRADUATES (HOLDERS OF AN UNDERGRADUATE SCIENCE-BASED DEGREE)

NORTH AMERICA

Applications are invited via Atlantic Bridge from applicants based in North America who hold (or expect to hold by August prior to entry) a competitive GPA* from an accredited, science-based, undergraduate bachelor degree.

Students who enter via this route will be required to complete all five years of the programme.

As this is a new programme, please note that at this stage we are not accepting applications from students based in North America who do not hold or expect to hold by July prior to entry a science-based undergraduate degree. This position will be reviewed in coming years.

REST OF THE WORLD

Applications are invited directly via rcsi.com/dublin from international applicants based **outside** North America who hold (or expect to hold by July prior to entry) a competitive GPA* from an accredited, science-based, undergraduate bachelor degree.

Students who enter via this route will be required to complete all five years of the programme.

**GPAs have different scoring systems and can vary from one country to the next. As a consequence, RCSI does not specify a minimum cut off GPA score and all transcripts are individually reviewed to determine if the GPA is competitive for entry.*

FEES

Fees for the 2025/2026 academic year are listed below as a guideline. Fees are annual.

The Non-EU Dentistry fees are subject to annual increases. The inflationary increase has been in the order of approximately 2% per annum for the past number of years.

Fees 2025/2026
Dentistry* €61,000

**All registered Dentistry students are required to pay a one-off equipment fee of €4,000 at the beginning of Year 2.*



Non EU entry requirements
Dentistry



UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES

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