



**RCSI**

Leading the world  
to better health

# PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE SCHEME

Welcome to the **RCSI Professional Competence Scheme**. All doctors who hold Specialist, General or Supervised registration with the Irish Medical Council are required by law to maintain professional competence. The PCS year commences 1 May and ends 30 April of each year.

Professional Competence has been defined by the Medical Council as presently having two key components:

- i. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- ii. Clinical / Practice Audit

» In order to comply with the requirements of the Scheme as mandated by the Medical Council, doctors are expected to accumulate 50 CPD credits on an annual basis and complete one clinical / practice audit per year.

These 50 credits must include: 20 external credits, 20 internal credits, 5 personal learning credits and an additional 5 credits in any category including Research and Teaching.

The clinical / practice audit is a stand-alone requirement and cannot be counted as part of the 50 CPD credits. It is a quality improvement process whether clinical or non-clinical.

Professional Competence Schemes requires year on year compliance. There is no Professional Competence 'cycle'. There is no mechanism to 'carry forward' credits or competence from year to year.

CPD is measured in hours. One hour of educational activity = 1 CPD credit.

CATEGORIES	CREDITS
MANDATORY	
External (eg conferences / meetings/seminars/ courses)	20 CPD credits
Internal (eg grand rounds / Morbidity /mortality / Multi-disciplinary mtgs)	20 CPD credits
Personal Learning (eg self directed education, journal reading/ study for exam)	5 CPD credits
DESIRABLE	
Research or Teaching (eg article publication / poster presentation / examiner / lecturer)	2 CPD credits
Additional credits (any category)	3-5 CPD credits
TOTAL REQUIRED (MANDATORY)	
Minimum credits required per year	50
AND	
One clinical / practice audit per year	
If you have reached a total of 50 CPD credits in one year but have failed to reach the minimum requirement in any of the mandatory categories outlined above, you are not compliant with the requirements.	
And The clinical / practice audit is a <b>stand-alone requirement</b> and cannot be counted as part of the 50 CPD credits. It is a quality improvement process whether clinical or non-clinical.	

## STATEMENTS OF PARTICIPATION

Statements of Participation are issued on a yearly basis and are available in May each year. The Statement will reflect what you have recorded on your PCS portfolio. The Medical Council may ask you for evidence of participation in a Professional Competence Scheme and your Annual Statement of Participation is appropriate evidence for this purpose.

## VERIFICATION PROCESS

Practitioners should retain evidence of participation in activities as you may be selected for a verification process by RCSI or an Audit by the Medical Council. RCSI would encourage you to upload evidence of participation in CPD activities to your PCS portfolio.

## ABSENCE FROM WORK – CERTIFIED LEAVE

The Medical Council recognise that periods of certified leave such as maternity leave / sick leave / Carers Leave / Parental Leave / Bereavement and Adoptive leave longer than 3 months can result in a doctor not being able to maintain their professional competence over that period. **Doctors should inform RCSI PCS department and complete the absence from work**

**form if their absence has occurred for three months or more during the professional competence year (which runs from 1 May to 30 April).** We will record the absence on a doctors PCS portfolio. An annotation will be made on the relevant year on the doctor's Statement of Participation in a Professional Competence Scheme.

## Please notify the Professional Competence office by email if you are

- » no longer on the Supervised, General, or Specialist section of the (Irish) Medical Council's Register
- » based overseas, don't intend to practise medicine in Ireland for more than 30 days in a given year and have formally notified the Medical Council that you will be maintaining your professional competence overseas
- » have enrolled in a different Scheme
- » withdrawn from the Medical Council Register
- » have commenced a Postgraduate Training Programme

**Please contact the office by email [pcs@rcsi.ie](mailto:pcs@rcsi.ie)** if you are having difficulty meeting the requirements or require advice or support. The earlier you contact us the better as it may not be possible to remedy matters later.

Failure to meet your professional competence requirements may put your registration at risk

**For further information, please visit [rcsi.ie/pcs](http://rcsi.ie/pcs)**