

ONLINE PG/ DIPLOMA in MSc in HUMAN FACTORS in PATIENT SAFETY

SEPTEMBER
2025 INTAKE



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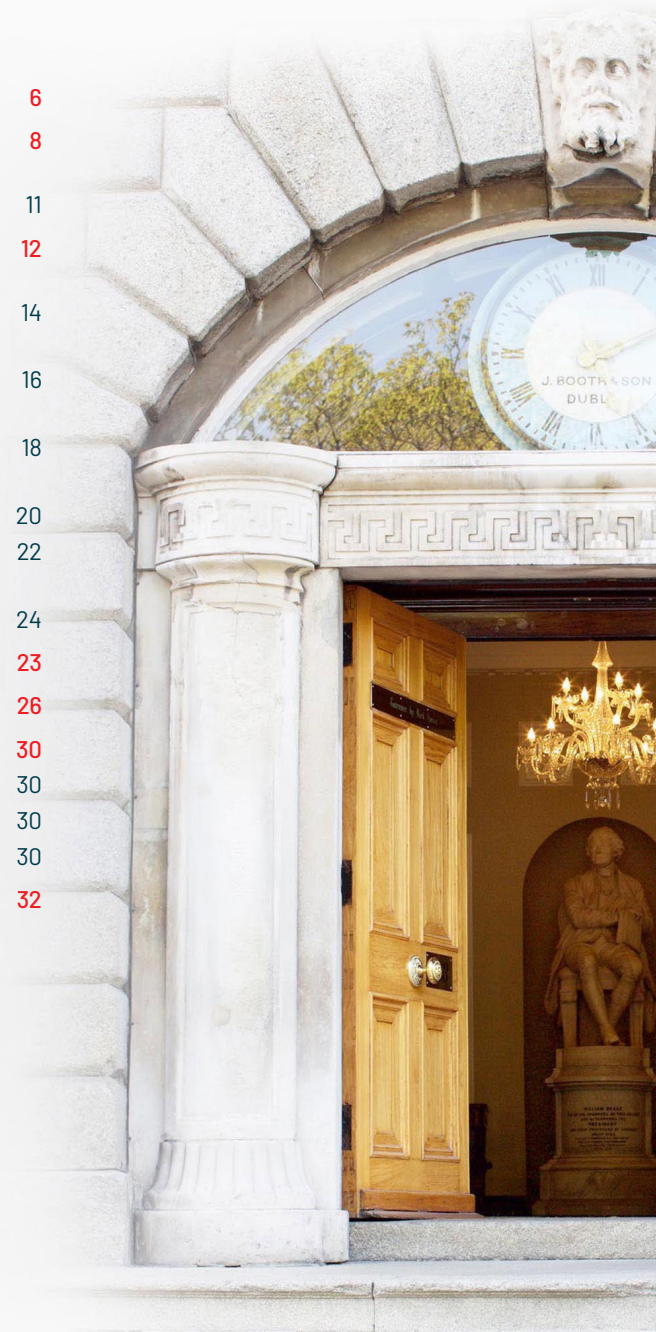


RCSI



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Professor Eva Doherty
Programme Director

WELCOME

The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland welcomes you to our **Online PG Diploma/MSc. in Human Factors in Patient Safety**. This programme, the first of its kind in Ireland, is designed for interprofessional healthcare personnel involved in the care of acute hospital patients.

The aim of this programme is to develop the knowledge, skills, and competencies of health care professionals working in acute hospital medicine. To achieve this aim, the programme will facilitate scholars to explore the evidence regarding error, risk, and safety in complex healthcare systems and to develop their own competencies in all aspects of professionalism, leadership, teamwork and decision-making.

The research component of the programme is designed to support the acquisition of scholarship skills through the application of a range of research methodologies to answer a question relevant to the field of human factors in patient safety. The acquisition of these competencies will develop the performance of health professionals in order to enhance the highest standards of patient care.

Underpinning the Human Factors in Patient Safety programme is a commitment to:

- High standards of patient safety and quality of patient care
- Collaboration and effective teamwork between health professionals involved in patient care in hospital medicine.
- Evidence-based practice
- Patient-centered care.

There are six modules of study - five core taught modules make up the PG Diploma level. The MSc. consists of an Advanced Research and Dissertation module. The course is delivered 100% online and so will suit healthcare professionals from outside Ireland. The programme consists of independent study with participation in online discussion boards plus three days of online teaching per module delivered by recognised national and international experts.

Each module is assessed via an independent assignment and a group assignment which is presented online. The research dissertation will be carefully monitored at the protocol stage and will be supported throughout.

Scholars attending this programme include individuals from different professions and disciplines, this will ensure a rich blend of expertise and experience. We know that you will enjoy your time as a scholar on this programme and that the knowledge and skills gained from your participation will benefit you in your professional development.



Professor Eva Doherty

DClinPsychol., CClinPsychol., (AFPSI), CCLinPsychol., (AFBPS), PFHEA.
Programme Director

WHY STUDY HUMAN FACTORS IN PATIENT SAFETY AT RCSI?



RCSI is one of the **WORLD'S LEADING EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN MEDICINE** and the **HEALTH SCIENCES**. With the University ranking in the **TOP 250 UNIVERSITIES WORLDWIDE**, as well as being **RANKED NUMBER 5** in the world for **SDG3 'GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING'** in the Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings 2023.

FLEXIBLE, PART-TIME and **100% ONLINE LEARNING**.

Scholars will attend **ONLINE INTERACTIVE SESSIONS** and **WORKSHOPS** one day per month. The rest of the multi-disciplinary programme including didactic teaching, discussion boards, reading, and resources are also offered online, which you can access in your own time.



Learn from our Human Factors faculty that are **ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN RESEARCH** to understand how non-technical skills, such as **COMMUNICATION, TEAMWORK, DECISION-MAKING**, leadership impact teams in hospital settings.

Our Online **PG DIPLOMA/ MSc. IN HUMAN FACTORS** in **PATIENT SAFETY** attracts **GLOBAL INTER- PROFESSIONAL SCHOLARS**, coming from a wide variety of backgrounds. From surgeons, pharmacists and nurses to emergency medicine doctors.



Join our **ALUMNI NETWORK**. Join our established **COMMUNITY** of **HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS DEDICATED** to **IMPROVING PATIENT SAFETY** who are experts in the science of human factors. Current alumni activities are an annual conference and a newly released podcast series entitled "Safe and Sound"

OVERVIEW



I am delighted to give you an overview of the **RCSI PG Diploma/MSc in Human Factors in Patient Safety**, which I have the privilege of working on as one of the Senior Lecturers in Human Factors in RCSI.

This programme is particularly unique in how it runs day-to-day. While it is fully online, there is a great deal of interaction between scholars and their classmates, and with the faculty and expert guest speakers, through discussion boards, online interactive days, and group project work. This encourages connection

and shared learning, despite the physical distance between learners.

The PG Diploma/MSc in Human Factors in Patient safety is inter-professional, and both scholars and the programme itself benefit from this professional diversity. Healthcare systems require people to work with a huge range of professions, and by having this range represented in the programme, our scholars gain insight into the perspectives of other professions, and how the theory we discuss relates to those working across the spectrum of healthcare.

Scholars will develop knowledge and understanding of Human Factors and its application to patient safety that they can use for their own work, and incorporate into any clinical teaching they do as part of their role.

As our programme is run entirely online, we are fortunate to have alumni and scholars based across the world. This international element to the programme is key to its success, as we learn from our global colleagues and apply the knowledge gained through the modules to a variety of health services.

The RCSI PG Diploma/MSc in Human Factors in Patient safety is unique in the breadth of topics that are covered within the programme. Modules cover key issues in human factors in healthcare, including but not limited to theories of error and safety, organisational learning, individual non-technical skills, and leadership and team dynamics.

Dr Emily O'Dowd

Programme lead, Online PG Diploma/
MSc. in Human Factors in Patient Safety, RCSI

01 PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The online **PG Diploma/MSc. in Human Factors in Patient Safety** is an inter-professional programme which is open to all health professionals around the world involved in the care of hospital patients. The online programme, which was launched in 2016, has an interprofessional blend of consultants, senior and mid-level trainee surgeons, anaesthesiologists, emergency medicine physicians, obstetricians, radiologists, pharmacists, along with acute care nursing staff and quality managers.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES:

1. to develop participants' knowledge of error, risk and safety in healthcare
2. to advance participants' practical skills to drive safety and quality improvement in the acute hospital setting
3. to develop participants' interpersonal and non-technical skills to support safe and effective patient care and
4. to develop participants' skills to conduct high quality patient safety research in healthcare.

Participants may choose to sign up for our online PG Diploma and progress onto our MSc. in Human Factors in Patient Safety in year two.

The PG Diploma is delivered in year one and involves five modules worth 60 credits. The MSc. is offered in year two (optional for candidates who want to progress) and involves the completion of the research dissertation worth a further 30 credits.

This is an online part-time programme, designed to suit the busy schedules of health professionals working full-time. Courses are delivered using online synchronous and asynchronous teaching.

There are six modules of study: five taught modules which are delivered by experts in Human Factors in Patient Safety. The sixth module - Advanced Research Methods and Dissertation involves an individual research or quality improvement project written as a submission ready research article.

02 COURSE STRUCTURE



THE PG DIPLOMA PROGRAMME:

The Diploma is obtained following the successful completion of FIVE taught modules worth 60 credits

1. Error and Safety in Acute Healthcare (15 credits)
2. Personal Effectiveness and Non-Technical Skills (15 credits)
3. Leadership of Process and Quality Improvement (5 credits)
4. Professionalism and Advanced Communication (15 credits)
5. Research Methods (10 credits)

Modules run from **SEPTEMBER TO JUNE IN YEAR 1.**

THE MSc. PROGRAMME:

THE MSc. IS OBTAINED FOLLOWING THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE PG DIPLOMA PROGRAMME PLUS THE 30 CREDIT MSc. MODULE

- Advanced Research Methods and Dissertation (30 Credits)

Candidates may be awarded a PG Certificate on completion of modules one and two.

RESEARCH METHODS



The research methods training course will cover the full range of research methodologies including: experimental and quasi-experimental methods, quantitative descriptive/observational research, qualitative and mixed methods research, pragmatic research approaches and research in process and quality improvement. Scholars will apply their skills to the development of a research protocol which will be the basis for their dissertation research.

ADVANCED RESEARCH METHODS AND DISSERTATION



Scholars progressing to the MSc in Human Factors in Patient Safety will undertake a research dissertation in year 2. For the dissertation, scholars will conduct an independent research or quality improvement project which will be submitted as a ready for publication research paper plus an extended literature review.

LEADERSHIP OF PROCESS AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT



In this module, the theoretical principles and the practical strategies behind QI will be explored in depth.

MODULES AT A GLANCE

ERROR AND SAFETY IN ACUTE HEALTHCARE



In this introductory module, we take a systems perspective on the issue of patient safety. This is a foundation module, the seminal literature is explored in depth.

PROFESSIONALISM AND ADVANCED COMMUNICATIONS



In this module, we explore the key areas of professionalism including relationships with patients and ethical practice. In addition, scholars are introduced to the principles and practice of advanced communication including shared decision-making, obtaining consent, open disclosure, breaking bad news and end of life care.

PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND NON-TECHNICAL SKILLS



This module will focus on the factors that contribute to improving personal effectiveness and team performance in healthcare.



LEARN HOW
SYSTEM DESIGN
CAN REDUCE
ERROR AND
CONTRIBUTE TO
BETTER SAFER
PATIENT CARE

COURSE STRUCTURE BY LEVEL AND ACADEMIC YEAR OF DELIVERY

	MODULE	ECTS	#WKS	SEM	WORKLOAD	ASSESSMENT	QUALIFICATION
YEAR 01	Error and Safety in Acute Healthcare	15	10	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly discussion board 3-4 mandatory online resources weekly (articles, videos, etc.) 3 online days (one every 3/4 weeks) Group project to prepare for duration of module Written assignment Optional additional resources available each week 	Discussion Boards: 25% Group Project: 25% Written Assignment: 50%	Postgraduate Certificate Total credits = 30
	Personal Effectiveness and Non-Technical Skills	15	10	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly discussion board 3-4 mandatory online resources weekly (articles, videos, etc.) 3 online days (one every 3/4weeks) Group project for duration of module Written assignment Optional additional resources available each week 	Discussion Boards: 25% Group Project: 25% Written Assignment: 50%	
	Leadership of Process and Quality Improvement	5	5	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-4 mandatory online resources weekly (articles, videos, etc.) 2 online days (one every 3/4weeks) Group project for duration of module Optional additional resources available each week 	Group Project: 100%	Postgraduate Diploma Total credits = 60
	Professionalism and Advanced Communication	15	10	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly discussion board 3-4 mandatory online resources a week to read or watch (articles, videos, etc.) 3 online days (one every 3/4weeks) Group project for duration of module Written assignment Optional additional resources available each week 	Discussion Boards: 25% Group Project: 25% Written Assignment: 50%	
	Research Methods	10	6	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-4 mandatory online resources weekly (articles, videos, etc.) 2 online days (one every 3/4weeks) Written Research Proposal and preparation of presentation Optional additional resources available each week 	Research proposal (written): (80%) Research proposal (oral): (20%)	
YEAR 02	Research Dissertation	30	40	1 and 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 online days (one every 3/4 weeks) semester 1 1-2 mandatory online resources weekly (articles, videos) on different research methods 2 optional online support sessions Research Protocol to prepare Background Literature Review to prepare research Article/Dissertation to prepare Supervisory meetings 	Research Article/ Dissertation: 60% Background Literature Review: 20% Research Protocol: 20%	Masters Degree Total Credits = 90

04 MODULES



TAUGHT MODULES

> Online Interactive days

Taught modules have three online interactive days with the exception of the Research Methods module which has five interactive days. Interactive days involve interactive seminars, lectures, workshops, group work and practice. Sessions are facilitated by expert guest facilitators as well as RCSI faculty.

> Online Content

In addition to the online interactive days, the 'core' course content is delivered online through Moodle - the virtual learning platform at RCSI. Within each module, every week is associated with a specific learning topic. Essential and optional readings are provided for each topic, along with selected online video resources and other online learning resources such as reports and websites.

> Weekly discussion boards

A weekly discussion board topic is posted each week that is based on the weekly reading and resources. Scholars submit a 300-word post on the set topic for each week. Scholars engage with each other and with faculty over the weekly discussion board.

> Group projects

For each taught module scholars will present an inter-professional group project on an assigned topic. Groups work online to develop their project and presentation. Groups present their project on the final online interactive day of the module.

> Written assignment

The taught module requires a 2,000-word end of module written assignment. Scholars will use the resources provided and independently sourced literature to investigate the written assignment topic.



ADVANCED RESEARCH AND DISSERTATION MODULE

In this module scholars undertake an original research or quality improvement project. Scholars will have undertaken extensive research methods training in Module 5 following which they will have submitted their research protocol for approval by the research faculty. This protocol will be the blueprint for the research dissertation. Throughout the dissertation period there will be regularly scheduled meetings with the supervisory team and there will be milestones for the delivery of various research outputs.

MODULE 1:

Error and Safety in Acute Healthcare (15 Credits)

In this introductory module, we take a systems perspective on the issue of patient safety. We conceptualise healthcare as a system of human, technical, procedural, organisational and cultural factors that interact in complex ways to create risk or reliability. This is a foundation module and the seminal literature is explored in depth.

Module Aims

1. To introduce scholars to models, theories, frameworks, and methodologies of human factors in healthcare
2. To present the evidence around error and harm in healthcare
3. To explore the notion of hospitals as complex socio-technical systems
4. To provide examples of risk and error management strategies from other industries and explore their application to healthcare
5. To explore the notion of organisational culture and its relevance to healthcare.

Module Topics

The following topics will be covered in this module:

1. The case for patient safety
2. The nature and scale of error and harm
3. The science of human factors
4. Understanding complex organisations
5. Understanding error 1- theories and models of error
6. Understanding error 2 – violations, migrations, and problems
7. Infection prevention and control
8. Patient safety and invasive procedures
9. Improving medication safety
10. The investigation and analysis of clinical incidents (Systems Analysis)
11. Safety culture
12. Just culture
13. Organisational learning
14. Measuring safety.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this module, scholars will be able to:

- explain the emergence of human factors in healthcare and critique its application to patient safety
- explore error and risk in hospitals from a sociotechnical perspective and evaluate risk management strategies
- evaluate risk management strategies associated with infection prevention and control, invasive procedures and medication safety
- apply knowledge of systems analysis to critically analyse an error or adverse event using evidence-based methodologies and in accordance with national guidelines
- examine the notion of safety culture and just culture and their role in creating and maintaining safety
- evaluate reporting and learning systems in healthcare
- critique methods of safety measurement and monitoring in healthcare.

Delivery Modes

There will be three days of online interactive teaching and interactive workshops for this module along with 10 weeks of online learning and discussion boards.

Assessment

Discussion Board – 25%

Group Project – 25%

Written Assignment – 50%





MODULE 2:

Personal effectiveness and non-technical skills (15 Credits)

This module will focus on the factors that contribute to improving individual effectiveness and team performance in healthcare. Non-technical skills include: (i) personal resource skills such as stress coping strategies, and resilience; (ii) cognitive skills of decision making and situation awareness; (iii) interpersonal skills of leadership, teamwork, and communication.

Module Aims

1. Introduce scholars to the concepts of resilience and emotional intelligence
2. Present the evidence around stress and burnout in healthcare
3. Experience interventions designed to enhance healthcare professionals' well-being
4. Examine the research evidence linking non-technical skills to patient safety and other performance indicators
5. Experience how non-technical skills contributes to team effectiveness and patient safety
6. Facilitate scholars' understanding of the methods and challenges of conducting research in this domain.

Module Topics

The following topics will be covered in this module:

1. Stress and burnout in healthcare
2. Stress management in healthcare

3. Personality, resilience and emotional intelligence
4. Non-technical skills and performance
5. Studying teamwork
6. Teamwork and patient safety
7. Team communication
8. Skilled performance: situation awareness and decision making
9. Inter-professional collaboration
10. Team training
11. Team performance assessment
12. Leadership theories and principles
13. Clinical leadership
14. Leadership and culture change.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this module, scholars will be able to:

- critically evaluate strategies to reduce and manage stress and burnout
- discuss the evidence for fatigue in healthcare workers and its effect on performance
- evaluate the evidence supporting non-technical skills on error prevention and team performance
- discuss common biases in human decision-making which can lead to error
- describe theories of decision making and situation awareness
- critically evaluate the evidence around team training and team performance assessment
- identify facilitators and barriers to inter-professional practice and demonstrate the ability to work efficiently and respectfully in a multi-professional environment
- communicate vision and strategy to create a culture of safety and accountability
- describe and explain leadership principles, theories, and frameworks
- demonstrate skills of effective leadership of inter-professional teams.

Delivery Modes

There will be 3 days of online interactive teaching and interactive workshops for this module along with 10 weeks of online learning and discussion boards

Assessment

Discussion Board – 25%

Group Project – 25%

Written Assignment – 50%

MODULE 3:

Leadership of process and quality improvement (5 Credits)

The discipline of process and quality improvement is concerned with improving the quality and safety of healthcare services. In this module, the theoretical principles and the practical strategies behind quality improvement will be explored in depth. Scholars will build on the theory, principles and techniques learned in this module to design a quality improvement project tackling a real healthcare problem.

Module Aims

1. Introduce scholars to the main theories and principles of process and quality improvement.
2. Demonstrate the main techniques and strategies and methodologies of process and quality improvement and Lean methodologies.
3. Provide scholars the opportunity to practice quality improvement skills in the classroom context and in the context of a quality improvement project.
4. Present the scholar with up to date resources to support their continuing learning in process and quality improvement.

Module Topics

The following topics will be covered in this module:

1. Process and quality improvement principles
2. Fostering a culture for quality improvement
3. Implementation science
4. Quality improvement techniques and methodologies
5. Measuring improvement
6. Conducting research in process and quality improvement

Learning outcomes

At the end of this module, scholars will be able to:

- describe and discuss the main theories, principles, and methodologies of process and quality improvement
- describe the processes and known frameworks for successful implementation of change in complex organisations
- appraise and select implementation strategies for different types of improvement project.
- explain how patient safety can benefit from quality improvement methods
- explain advancements in improvement measurement
- demonstrate the ability to devise and plan a process and quality improvement project
- display proficiency in applying the tools, techniques, and methodologies of process and quality improvement to a real healthcare problem.



Delivery Modes

This module starts with a two-day interactive workshop on process and quality improvement and Lean methodologies. On the final day of the module scholars will return for a further day to present their quality improvement projects to the class and to expert judges. The reading and resource materials will be delivered online through Moodle.

Assessment

Group quality and process improvement project presentation - 100%

Groups will develop a quality improvement project to respond to a need in the healthcare system. Groups will utilise at least two methodologies or quality improvement tools learned on the course and present their implementation plan.



MODULE 4:

Professionalism and advanced communication (15 Credits)

In this module, we explore the key areas of professionalism: relationships with patients, relationships with society, ethical practice, honesty and integrity, continuity of care, consent, evidence-based medicine, maintaining fitness to practice and scholarship. In addition, this module seeks to introduce scholars to the principles and practice of advanced communication. Scholars will develop the skills to tackle difficult interactions with patients and relatives such as breaking bad news and discussing end of life care. Other advanced skills included shared decision-making, obtaining consent, open disclosure.

Module Aims

1. To introduce scholars to the four main tenets of professionalism: values, knowledge, competency and ethics.
2. To introduce scholars to the most important literature on shared decision making, continuity of care, consent, evidence-based medicine, and scholarship
3. To facilitate scholars to explore the core professional values of compassion, empathy and cultural sensitivity; and to explore how healthcare culture can impact on these positively and negatively
4. To familiarise scholars with the key ethical principles in healthcare
5. To demonstrate key skills when managing difficult conversations with patients, relatives, and colleagues.

Module Topics

The following topics will be covered in this module:

1. Introduction to professionalism - professional conduct and professional regulation
2. Relationships with patients: respect, compassion, empathy, and cultural sensitivity
3. Relationships with patients: communication, shared decision making

4. Consent
5. Specialist communication – breaking bad news/end of life care
6. Open disclosure of error/ medical litigation
7. Relationships with colleagues: interdisciplinary and inter-professional practice
8. Conflict management
9. Medical ethics
10. Continuity of care/handover
11. Confidentiality
12. Evidence-Based Medicine
13. Fitness to practice/ Scholarship
14. Governance.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this module, scholars will be able to:

- examine the principles of good professional practice in the Irish healthcare context
- analyse the key legal and ethical principles applicable in healthcare
- explain the principles of consent and demonstrate skills in obtaining consent
- demonstrate the ability to communicate risk appropriately to patients
- review and assess the principle of continuity of care
- review and assess the principles of evidence-based medicine
- demonstrate the skills of advanced communication with patients and relatives
- critically evaluate different handover tools and methodologies and demonstrate proficiency in structured handover techniques
- identify the processes involved in open disclosure of error and demonstrate skills in error disclosure
- demonstrate the ability to effectively manage difficult interactions between healthcare professionals.
- be familiar with the advanced skills of shared-decision making and end of life care

Delivery Modes

There will be three days of online interactive teaching and interactive workshops for this module along with 10 weeks of online learning and discussion boards.

Assessment

Discussion Board – 25%

Group Project – 25%

Written Assignment – 50%

MODULE 5: **RESEARCH METHODS** (10 CREDITS)

The research methods module is designed to cover all of the major research designs: experimental and quasi-experimental research, quantitative descriptive and observational research, qualitative research, mixed methods research, pragmatic research and research in process and quality improvement. Scholars will emerge with an excellent grounding in research design and methods.

Content is covered through interactive workshops and online lectures and resources. At the end of this module, scholars will be proficient in the research design, data collection and analysis techniques associated with the methodologies they may utilise in their dissertation research. In addition, this module will provide scholars with instruction on how to develop a research question and map it to the most appropriate research design. Following this, scholars will write a research protocol, using standardised reporting guidelines. The culmination of the research training phase is the submission of a research protocol which will be implemented in the Advanced Research Methods and Dissertation module.

Module Aims

1. To familiarise scholars with the array of research methodologies, tools, and techniques in human factors health care research
2. To develop scholars' proficiency in using an array of qualitative and quantitative methodologies
3. To facilitate scholars understanding of research phenomenology in human factors.

Module Topics

The following topics will be covered in this module:

1. Research design
2. Writing a research protocol
3. Experimental methods
4. Quantitative descriptive method
5. Quantitative methods: Questionnaire and survey research
6. Qualitative research and qualitative content analysis
7. Qualitative research: structured Interviews, and critical incident interviews
8. Fundamentals of systematic reviews and meta-analysis
9. Task Analysis: Cognitive Task Analysis (CTA), Hierarchical task Analysis (HTA)
10. Error identification and analysis methods

11. Training needs analysis
12. Introduction to standardised reporting guidelines
13. Writing a research report

Learning outcomes

At the end of this module, scholars will be able to:

- apply the fundamental principles of research in healthcare towards the identification of an appropriate research question that complies with the FINER criteria
- select an appropriate research strategy to answer the research question write a research protocol to the standard of a publishable protocol
- demonstrate familiarity with the basic qualitative and quantitative methodologies in human factors research
- implement the appropriate research strategy and methodology to answer the research question
- connect the research hypothesis to the wider knowledge in the subject area

Delivery Modes

The learning content for this module is presented using blended synchronous and asynchronous lectures as well as readings and other online resources. . . The module is ten weeks in duration and will culminate in the presentation of the research protocol which will be marked by an expert panel. Following this students will submit a research protocol with an introduction, full methodology, research design, and data analysis plan.

Assessment

Research proposal (written)(80%)

Research proposal (oral)(20%)



MODULE 6:

Advanced Research Methods and Dissertation (30 Credits)

In this module, scholars will undertake an advanced four-day research methods course and will engage in an independent research or a quality improvement project.

They will utilize the knowledge, skills and techniques developed over the previous five modules towards the implementation and execution of their own research protocol. This will include achieving ethical approval, implementing the recruitment, data collection, and data analysis plan, interpreting the findings in the context of the literature and writing the research in the format of a manuscript ready for submission to a peer-reviewed journal.

Module Aims

1. To apply the knowledge acquired in the previous modules to the development of an independent research or quality improvement project that is of publishable quality.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this module, scholars will be able to:

- demonstrate an ability to execute an original research investigation
- submit a research ethics application if indicated to the appropriate research ethics committee
- implement the appropriate research strategy and methodology to answer the research question
- connect the research hypothesis to the wider knowledge in the subject area
- demonstrate data management and analysis skills for qualitative and quantitative data
- interpret the research findings in the context of existing knowledge in the area
- synthesise the knowledge in the chosen area into an extended literature review
- execute, analyse and report research to the standard of a high-quality research article.

Delivery modes

This module will commence with a four-day research methods workshop followed by independent execution of the research protocol with supervision and support. There will be regularly scheduled meetings with the supervisory team throughout the dissertation period and there will be milestones for the delivery of various research outputs.

Assessment

Research Article/ Dissertation: 60%

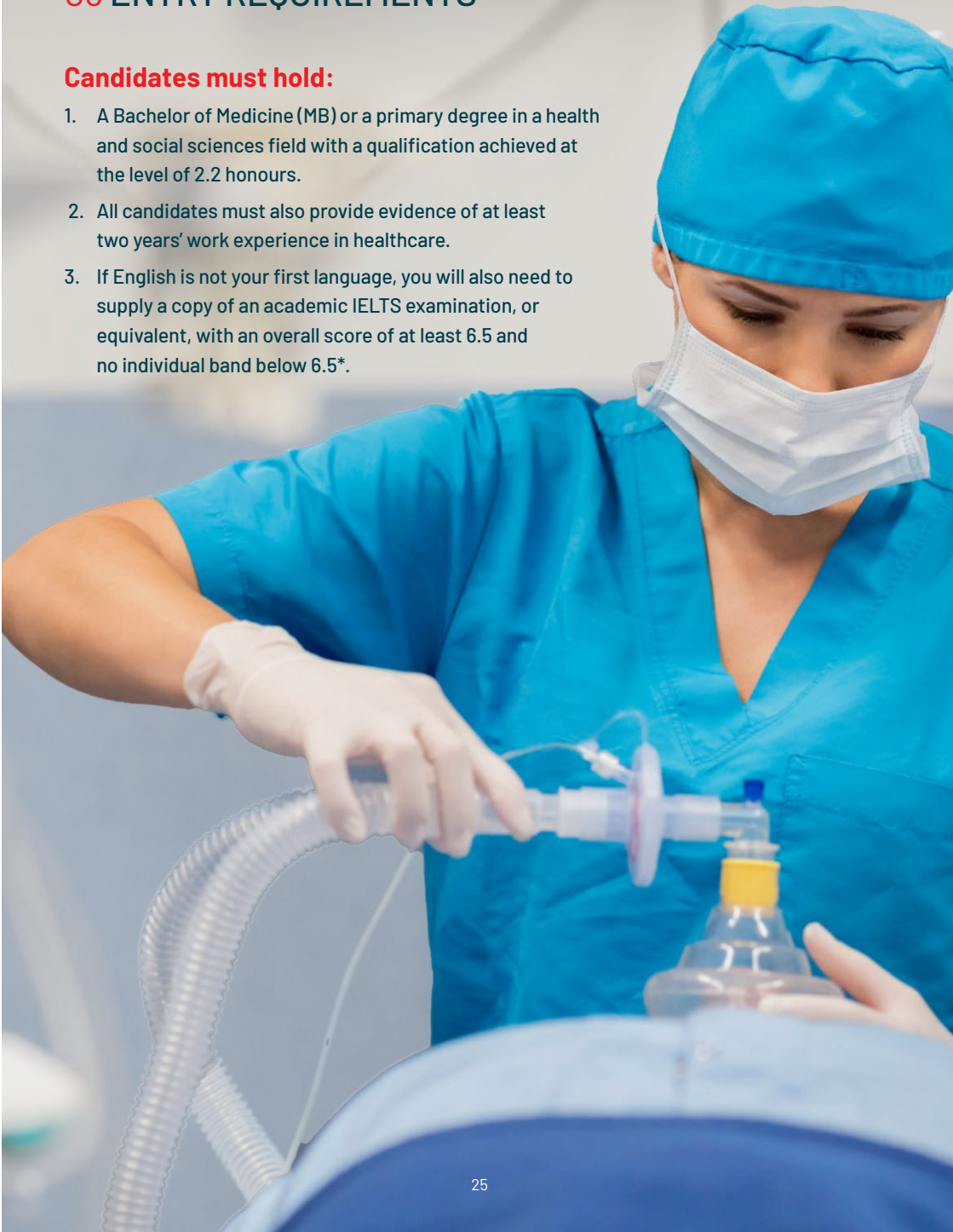
Background Literature Review: 20%

Research Protocol: 20%

05 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Candidates must hold:

1. A Bachelor of Medicine (MB) or a primary degree in a health and social sciences field with a qualification achieved at the level of 2.2 honours.
2. All candidates must also provide evidence of at least two years' work experience in healthcare.
3. If English is not your first language, you will also need to supply a copy of an academic IELTS examination, or equivalent, with an overall score of at least 6.5 and no individual band below 6.5*.



ALUMNI – MAKING AN IMPACT IN THE FIELD

Advocating for Patient Safety

Developing Research

Making a Difference



ALUMNI – MAKING AN IMPACT IN THE FIELD

INTERVIEWS WITH OUR SCHOLARS

Ms. Sue Markey

MSc in Human Factors in Patient Safety, *Class of 2024*

I am a nurse working as an Assistant Director of Nursing (ADON) for Sepsis and Deteriorating Patients across the Dublin and North East Region. I am a member of the National Sepsis Team and work with ADONs representing all regions across the country. There is a strong patient safety focus to the work I do every day linking in with equally passionate people working to improve patient safety in all hospitals in this region.

What were some human factors-related challenges you faced/ observed as a Deteriorating Patient Lead?

In my role as Deteriorating Patient / Sepsis lead, understanding why staff don't always escalate deterioration and follow protocol has been a challenge from the beginning. Staff face many challenges in the clinical environment and there are many variables that have an impact on the choices they make.

What made you want to embark on a qualification in Human Factors in patient safety?

I heard about the Human Factors postgrad / Masters from some of my colleagues working across the region and it was the first course that I felt could have a really positive effect on the work I do in helping to support staff to keep patients safe while also helping me to understand the complexities of healthcare systems.

What did you find most valuable or enjoyable about the course?

Working in a full-time role, the online programme really suited my hours and it gave me greater accessibility to attend. We had a mix of participants who had very similar experiences from both national





and international healthcare settings and I think we learned a huge amount from each other. The group projects were a great way to challenge each other and collaborate. I learned a huge amount about myself and really pushed myself to learn as much as possible about the science of Human factors and the impact it can have in the acute healthcare sector.

Can you describe any recent changes you have made in your practice that has improved patient safety after completing the diploma/MSc?

The MSc programme is changing the way I look at escalation in the clinical area. If staff don't escalate some of the time, then why do they escalate most of the time and human factors is helping me to change the narrative around this.

I carried out some research across 2 hospitals with the support from management and the staff to look at the barriers and enablers to escalation resulting in some interesting findings. I have presented early findings at 2 conferences in the last few months: the Irish Human factors and Ergonomics Society and the 4th RCSI Human Factors in Patient Safety Conference and submitted a poster for the Dublin and North East Nursing Research conference.

I am planning to present the findings to both hospitals and at regional level.

ALUMNI – MAKING AN IMPACT IN THE FIELD



Ms. Yvonne Young

MSc in Human Factors in Patient Safety, Class of 2023

I am a Group Assistant Director of Nursing with UL Hospitals Group.

I am passionate about ensuring every patient receives the highest standard of care for the best possible outcomes.

It's crucial to create systems that support healthcare workers in doing the right thing and to continuously improve healthcare and patient safety. Acute healthcare is complex and comes with many challenges. It is becoming increasingly saturated with demand, limited resources and ever increasing patient acuity. I undertook the MSc in Human factors to enhance my knowledge and expertise in the area of patient safety. I want to do everything I can possibly do to make a difference in my area of work and to enhance patient safety and facilitate staff being able to come to work and work safely.

The MSc has given me a completely different lens to how I look at things, to how I approach patient case reviews, QI projects and how I undertake audits and the development of clinical decision tools.

Undertaking a MSc in human factors gave me a greater appreciation and understanding of systems, the power and importance of culture, human behaviours and how humans interact with each other, psychological safety, situation awareness, the impact of civility and incivility, stress, burnout, team work and much more. I feel the MSc has increased my own self-awareness and it has given me access to a like-minded community and to experts in patient safety from around the world. That connection has been an invaluable support to me.

Engaging with like-minded colleagues energises me and drives me to continue to do what I can do to improve healthcare. The virtual aspect of the course makes it more accessible and the course facilitators are extremely supportive and very mindful that the majority of participants are working full time in busy and demanding jobs.

We cannot eliminate error, risk and human fallibility in healthcare but we can optimise best practice and constantly review how we can moderate or reduce risk. But we must include the science and expertise of human factors to optimise patient outcomes. I feel the MSc in human factors patient safety has been invaluable to me on both a personal and professional level.

06 APPLICATIONS DETAILS

Fees

Places on this programme are **limited**.

Fees for the academic year **2025-2027** are as follows:

EU/Non EU Fees: PG Diploma: €6,195 (Year 1)

MSc.: €4,045 (Year 2)

**The fee includes an annual NUI fee of €45.*

Application Date

Applications are now open for the course starting in **September 2025**.

Interested candidates can apply now at www.rcsi.com/humanfactors

Application Checklist

As part of the application process you are required to submit the following supporting documentation:

- CV
- Copy of passport
- Copy of educational transcripts
- Proof of sponsorship (*where applicable*)
- A 500-800 word response to the question "Why is healthcare still not safe".
References are optional and are not included in the wordcount.
- Letter from current employer
- Evidence of English language qualification* (*where applicable*)





Any queries regarding the online PG Diploma/
MSc. in Human Factors in Patient Safety should
be addressed to the following:

Email: PostgradSA@rcsi.ie

Web: rcsi.com/humanfactors



SCAN the QR Code to
view course website



RCSI

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