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RCSI degree held in high regard

GETTING a degree, especially a medical qualification is an experience.

But for students of the Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland, being in Ireland and at the institution is by itself an experience.

Situated on the western edge of Europe, Ireland is an island with a population of just under five million people spread over a variety of countryside and over 5,500km of largely unspoilt coastline.

Ireland is renowned for its art, and above all its writers such as Jonathan Swift, Oscar Wilde, James Joyce, George Bernard Shaw, Samuel Beckett, William Butler Yeats and most recently Nobel Laureate, Seamus Heaney.

Located in its largest city, an enchanting Georgian city with over a million inhabitants and many universities, colleges and other specialised institutions of higher learning, is the Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland.

Situated in the heart of Dublin, the college was founded in 1784 by a Royal Charter granted by King George III of Great Britain and Ireland to educate surgeons at a time when surgeons were trained separately from physicians.

In 1886, the undergraduate training of surgeons and physicians was merged and the college established as a medical school.

The College is a recognised college of the National University of Ireland and medical graduates receive the MB, BCh and BAO degrees from the National University of Ireland (NUI), as well as the historical qualifications LRCP&SI - licentiates of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons in Ireland.

Pharmacy graduates receive the honours degree B.Sc (Pharmacy) and gain professional recognition by the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland.

Graduates of the physiotherapy course are awarded the honours degree of B.Sc (Physiotherapy) and professional recognition by the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists.

Given the historical background, tradition inevitably plays a part in the workings of the college.

The RCSI building dates from 1810 and is one of Dublin's best known historical landmarks.

But inside the elegant historical buildings are modern, purpose-built facilities, with an adjoining medical library and on-campus accommodation.

In the 19th century many of the surgeons and doctors educated at the college continued their training in continental Europe, and today the medical school has a strong international reputation.

Over 50 different countries are represented in its student population of 1,500 students who will return home with qualifications and skills that are held in high international regard.

In addition to the undergraduate medical, pharmacy and physiotherapy courses, the college also provides a range of courses and examinations at the postgraduate level for major specialities such as anaesthesia, radiology, dentistry and nursing.

The college has also conferred honorary fellowships on outstanding people of the world.

Notable recipients include Louis Pasteur (1886), William and Charles Mayo (1921), Prince Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (1988), Sultan Azlan

Shah (1991), Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohammed (1991), President Mary Robinson (1994), His Excellency the Emir Shaikh Isa bin Sulman Al Khalifa (1995), Mother Teresa of Calcutta (1995), President Nelson Mandela (1996), Seamus Heaney (1998), President Mary McAleese (1998) and the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Azlan Shah (2000).