

SUMMER STUDENT RESEARCH AWARDS (SSRA)

INFORMATION BOOKLET

2025



SSRA
STUDENT SUMMER
RESEARCH AWARDS



UCD SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

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SSRA KEY DATES - 2025

KEY DATES 2025

DATE	TIME/LOCATIONS	EVENT
Ongoing until Friday; 28 th February 2025	-	Deadline for new project submission – SUPERVISORS ONLY
Tuesday; 20 th May 2025	9.15am - 12.30pm C007 Health Science Centre	Introduction to SSRA & Research Master Class (registration details, communication skills and Research methodology session)
Monday; 2 nd June 2025	-	Last Date for Commencement of SSRA 2025 Projects
Wednesday; 9 th July 2025	1.00 – 2.00pm Brightspace VC	Mid-SSRA Review
Wednesday; 6 th August 2025	12.00pm (Noon) Brightspace Assignment 1 & 2	Abstract: Assignment 1 in Brightspace (All students) Research Report: Assignment 2 in Brightspace (Credit students only)
Monday, 18 th August 2025	12.00pm (Noon) ssra@ucd.ie	**Submission: 1) postcard and 2) presentation heroes
Wednesday, 3 rd September 2025	12.00pm (Noon) Brightspace Assignment 3	Poster PDF: Assignment 3 in Brightspace (All students) Supervisors Report: emailed by supervisors to ssra@ucd.ie (Credit students only)
Tuesday, 9 th September 2025	12.00pm (Noon) - 2pm Charles Seminar Room – Charles Institute	Communications workshop Led by Elaine Quinn (UCD Conway Institute, Communications Manager)
Thursday 11 th September 2025	12.00pm (Noon) - 2pm Charles Seminar Room – Charles Institute	5 minute pitch of research to 2 person communication panel with feedback. No visual aids or slides.
<u>SSRA STUDENTS are RESPONSIBLE FOR PRINTING / PAYMENT A0 POSTER</u>		
Monday 15 th September 2025	12.00pm (Noon), O'Brien Centre for Science	All Students to display posters in the O'Brien Centre for Science.
Tuesday; 16 th September 2025 <u>All SSRA STUDENTS</u>	5.30pm – 9.00pm O'Brien Centre for Science	SSRA 2025 Poster Adjudication / Presentation. ALL STUDENTS
Monday 22 nd September 2025 <u>Gold Medal Finalists Only</u>	12.00pm (Noon) - 2pm Charles Seminar Room – Charles Institute	SSRA Gold Medallist communication preparation - Oral Presentations
Wednesday, 24 th September 2025 <u>All SSRA STUDENTS</u>	5:30 - 9pm; Moore Auditorium, O'Brien Centre for Science	<u>SSRA Gold Medal Final</u> Oral Presentations

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WELCOME TO SSRA 2025

Dear Students,

We are delighted to welcome you to the School of Medicine Summer Student Research Awards (SSRA) programme. We hope this booklet will be of use to you and your supervisor throughout your 8 week research experience this Summer.

The Summer Student Research (SSRA) programme is an undergraduate research initiative to support and showcase undergraduate research affiliated within the UCD School of Medicine. Each year our students are competitively selected for projects based on academic record, personal statement and principal investigator interview for selection as an SSRA undergraduate researcher.

The research projects are submitted by investigators affiliated with and within the School of Medicine including our affiliated hospitals and Irish Charities and internationally placed UCD Alumni. The bringing together of all of the research projects under the one research symposium showcases the breadth and diversity of the projects undertaken by our students allowing student interaction and exchange of experiences.

In most cases, the SSRA scheme gives students their first experience of research. This is an invaluable opportunity, as many will consider possibly undertaking Intercolated MSc's, MDs or PhDs in the future, fostering the idea of careers as true "Clinical Scientists".

In addition to the laboratory and clinical based projects, the SSRA programme endeavours to offer projects involving our Irish Charities under the auspices of Patient Advocate Centered Educational – Research or PACE-R. Understanding the needs of patients and society is a key educational objective for UCD medical, radiography and health science graduates. It also gives an opportunity for our students and their supervisors to partner with voluntary organisations to undertake short research projects exemplified by our PACE-R projects hosted with the Irish Cancer Society (ICS), Cystic Fibrosis Ireland and Debra Ireland as examples.

Importantly, the PACE-R scheme enhances our student's awareness of social responsibility, and the important role of voluntary organisations in advocacy and healthcare research. Establishing such a link at an early stage in their careers will undoubtedly impact not just on the professionalism of our graduates but also on their lifelong engagement with patients, patient advocates and charitable organisations.

Continuing on the success of last year, the programme also includes a number of medical education research projects where students have the opportunity to help develop an evidence base for change in the future of medical education; changes which may benefit both our students and the wider society in the future.

Furthermore, initiated in 2017 we welcomed undergraduate students from the School of Veterinary Medicine under the "One Health" theme. This highlights the potential of the SSRA programme to foster new collaborations within our colleges and become a flagship for undergraduate research throughout UCD.

Each year our International SSRA programme goes from strength to strength. Through utilising the School's extensive alumni networks and institutional affiliations, we have been able to offer opportunities for students to undertake research in locations such as Dana Farber (Boston, USA), NIH (Maryland, USA), The Hospital for Sick Children (Toronto, Canada), the University of Queensland (Brisbane, Australia), Johns Hopkins Hospital (Baltimore, USA), University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, USA), Simon Fraser University (British Columbia, Canada), Penang Medical College (Penang, Malaysia) and many other prestigious research centers throughout the world. In recognition of the tremendous educational opportunities that these projects foster, the Dean of Medicine kindly provides a number of scholarships to students to attend overseas under the remit of

"The Dean's SSRA International Research Scholarship Scheme".

The SSRA programme has been modularised since 2009 allowing our students to obtain 5 credits for their Summer research endeavours. The module is grade point neutral with outputs of Pass/ Fail and for exceptional research endeavours a Distinction (Ds) will appear on the student transcript. In relation to our Graduate Entry Medicine (GEM)

Students, all students can undertake SSRA for audit, however, only the **Stage 1 GEMs** can take SSRA for 5 credits.

Research outputs from the scheme continue to result in peer reviewed full articles and span all of the programmes within the UCD School of Medicine namely Undergraduate Medicine, Graduate Entry Medicine, Radiography, BSc in Biomedical Health and Life Sciences and 3rd/4th Year Physiology in addition to students from the School of Mechanical and Materials Engineering and School of Veterinary Medicine. Moreover, the programme brings together students from each of these programmes with the overall remit of undertaking translational clinical research which is a key theme within the UCD School of Medicine.

In summary, the success of this scheme has been due to the participation of our many colleagues as supervisors, mentors and administrators within the UCD School of Medicine, our affiliated teaching hospitals, institutes and patient advocate organisations.

On behalf of the SSRA Committee, we wish you every success in your research endeavours for the Summer of 2025.

Dr Melinda Halasz
Chair SSRA Committee

1. Introduction

This booklet describes the policies and requirements that apply to the SSRA 2025 Scheme. In embarking on your research programme it is essential that you are aware of these requirements so that you can proactively plan your work and studies to satisfy them and achieve your research and career development goals.

- If you require clarification about these requirements, you should discuss them in the first instance with your principal supervisor/co-supervisor.
- If sufficient information is not available, please contact us via email: ssra@ucd.ie
- For all other information regarding SSRA, please visit the SSRA website at: <https://www.ucd.ie/medicine/ssra/>

SSRA Projects and further information can be accessed as follows:

1. Log onto the above website address and click the “[Student Hub](#)” window.
2. Click the “Available Projects” link.
2. The Available Projects link will bring you to a Google Page with available projects in PDF format.
3. Once you have chosen a project(s), email the project Supervisor(s). You should include the completed **SSRA Student Project Application Form (2025)** in this email (found at the bottom of the page in the Student Hub section of the SSRA website).
4. Wait for the Supervisor to respond to your email (this can take a few weeks in some instances).
5. If the Supervisor chooses you, please email the SSRA office with the Project Number and confirmation email from the Supervisor: ssra@ucd.ie
6. If you have sourced your own SSRA Project through a Supervisor you have approached, your chosen Supervisor can submit the project details for review through the Project Portal found [HERE](#)

2.0 MODULE DESCRIPTOR



Module Descriptor for MDSA30280 in 2025

Short Title				Long Title		
SSRA Research Elective I				SSRA Research Elective I		
Level	Credits	Semester	Passing Grade	Available on BrightSpace	Module Coordinator	Last Modified
3	5.0	Semester 3	DPF	No	Dr Noreen Sheehy	21 st October 2024
Total Places		Core/Option	In Prog	Gen Electives		
100		n/a	0	0		

Module Description

This is an 8-week research module offered to UCD School of Medicine (SM) students involved in supervised laboratory, clinical based, PACE-R (Patient advocate centred educational research), medical education based or Internationally based research initiatives during their undergraduate course in UCD SM.

Student supervision will be carried out by staff within and associated with the UCD SM and affiliated hospitals, institutes, PACE-R and International hosts. Project selection for this research elective, and the mechanism of student assignment to each project is the responsibility of the module coordinator and a designated committee of academics and relevant project supervisors.

Applicants will be expected to:

1. Review all the Proposed Research Projects on the designated web site.
2. Complete the SSRA Student Project Application Form (2025). This should document their academic record to include a 100 word summary detailing why they would like to undertake this research.
3. Students may be selected on academic record and /OR may have to present for interview with the relevant Lead and co-supervisor(s).
4. In conjunction with your supervisor(s), complete and submit relevant ethics documents relating to their project.
5. Once selected, undertake a minimum of 8 week research project from June to August (Semester 3).
6. Complete your Research Report signed by the Lead and / OR Supervisor.
7. Write an abstract in the style of the Irish Journal of Medical Science (IJMS).

OUTSIDE OF THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS:

All students **are required** to present their research activity as a poster which will be adjudicated by a panel of academics for the Gold, Silver and Bronze Medals for excellence in Research with the winners to be announced at the Annual Student Summer Research Award (SSRA) Symposium.

IMPORTANT:

Please be advised that the final assessment for this module will appear as DISTINCTION / PASS / FAIL.

	LEARNING OUTCOMES				
	On completion of this module students are expected to have fulfilled the following learning outcomes: <div><div>1.</div><div>Adhere strictly to designated guidelines for completion of application forms for project selection.</div></div> <div><div>2.</div><div>Demonstrate report writing skills by submitting a research report following the guidelines provided in Brightspace. This is required for credit students only and is part of the assessment process.</div></div> <div><div>3.</div><div>Display an authoritative understanding of the research question in hand and design a coherent experimental strategy to critically evaluate the research question.</div></div> <div><div>4.</div><div>Understand why particular experimental approaches have been used to address the research question in hand.</div></div> <div><div>5.</div><div>Demonstrate an understanding of the requirement of ethical approval.</div></div> <div><div>6.</div><div>Demonstrate an understanding of the statistical tests used in determining the significance of the findings if appropriate.</div></div> <div><div>7.</div><div>Following a strict set of AUTHOR guidelines to submit an abstract in the style of IJMS. Assessment will be based on adherence to journal style, word count and designated journal format.</div></div>				
	Workload				
Type			Hours		
Placement/Work Experience			120		
Total			120		
	Assessment Details				
Description	Timing	Score By	Must pass	% Final Grade	
Write their research as a 250-word abstract following the guidelines for the Irish Journal of Medical Science (IJMS). Submit to ssra@ucd.ie	Unspecified	LET	Yes	20%	
Submission of their Research Report, signed by their supervisor and / or co-supervisor to include Cover Page an initial meeting form, Ethics Confirmation Form and your project abstract.	Unspecified	LET	Yes	40%	
Supervisors Report submission to ssar@ucd.ie	Unspecified	LET	Yes	20%	
Submission of a PDF of poster to Brightspace	Unspecified	LET	Yes	20%	
Total				100%	
Module Equivalents					
	Module Remediation Strategies				
	Remediation If you fail this module you may repeat, re-sit or substitute where permissible.				

2. MODULE REQUIREMENTS FOR 5 CREDIT AND AUDIT

Credits	Placement/Work Experience	Description	% of Final Grade
REQUIREMENTS: 5 CREDITS & AUDIT		<p>All students are strongly advised to keep detailed records of their research activities throughout their projects as they are essential for the preparation of abstracts / posters and publications. Please consult your supervisors about the format of these records.</p> <p>Students are required to submit their abstracts which may be published in</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Annual SSRA Book of Abstracts. 2) The Irish Journal of Medical Science (IJMS). 3) All students must submit and present one poster for display at the SSRA Poster Presentation Night on Tuesday 16th September 2025 4) Students must attend the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Communications Workshop on 9th and 11th September 2025, 12-2pm. - SSRA Poster Presentation Night Adjudication on Tuesday 16th September 2025. - The SSRA Gold Medal Night on Wednesday 24th September 2025. 	All Results are GRADE POINT NEUTRAL
MDSA30280 5 CREDITS	8 WEEKS	<p>Students must submit the following via Brightspace for assessment purposes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) An abstract of their work in 250 words following the guidelines of the Irish Journal of Medical Science (IJMS) to Brightspace (Assignment 1) 2) Research Report. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusion of Cover Page, Initial Meeting Form (IMF), ethics confirmation form, Module Registration Form and a hard copy of the abstract – Submission via Brightspace 3) Supervisors report to be submitted directly by supervisors to ssra@ucd.ie (September 1st 2025) 4) An A0 copy of your poster PDF must be submitted via Brightspace 	20% 40% 20% 20%
AUDIT	6 – 8 WEEKS	<p>Students must submit the following via Brightspace. This research material is not Assessed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) An abstract of their work in 250 words following the guidelines of the Irish Journal of Medical Science (IJMS). 2) An A0 copy of your poster PDF 	

MODULE REGISTRATION

ALL SSRA Students are to complete the SSRA Module Registration Form, available in the Student Hub window of the SSRA website and return to email a PDF copy to ssra@ucd.ie by Friday 23rd May 2025.

This form needs to be signed by you and your supervisor if you are Auditing SSRA.

A further signature from Dr Halasz is needed if you are completing SSRA for Credit – Simply contact Dr Halasz via email (melinda.halasz@ucd.ie) to arrange a short Zoom meeting to discuss your Project.

All Students will be registered to the SSRA module through the SSRA Office.
******DO NOT WEB REGISTER FOR YOURSELF FOR THIS MODULE**

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

- Please tick ONE of the following on the form:
 - Audit (No credit loading)
 - **MDSA30280** (5 credits)
- All registered undergraduate students (UGM, GEM, Radiography, BSc Biomedical Health and Life Science, Physiology students) within the School of Medicine, School of Veterinary (*subject to approval*) and School of Mechanical and Materials Engineering (*subject to approval*) can undertake the SSRA research programme.
- Please note the following:
 - Only GEM Stage 1 students can take the SSRA for 5 credits. All other GEM students (Stages 2, 3 & 4) can only take the SSRA for Audit.
 - School of Veterinary Medicine and College of Engineering and Architecture students can undertake the SSRA research programme for 5 Credits subject to approval.
 - If you have registered previously for the **5 credit SSRA module** and if you want to do SSRA again you can only do it on the second occasion for audit.

If you intend to take the module for credits you need to meet Dr Melinda Halasz in advance to discuss your project. Please email Melinda at melinda.halasz@ucd.ie to arrange a meeting.

IMPORTANT DATES

- The deadline for submission of the SSRA module registration form to ssra@ucd.ie is **Friday 23rd May 2025**.
- Please note that all SSRA projects must be commenced by Monday 2nd June 2025.
- All abstracts, whether for credit or audit, must be submitted as Assessment 1 in Brightspace by Wednesday 6th August 2025.
- All PDFs of posters, whether credit or audit, must be submitted as Assignment 3, by Wednesday 3rd September 2025.
- Students undertaking the module for Credit must submit a Research Report as Assignment 2 in Brightspace by Wednesday 6th August 2025.

REGISTRATION IMPLICATIONS

- When students are registered to this module in 2025 their fees for 2025/26 will change once they are registered.
- As the credits for this module will be assigned to the 2025/26 academic year, students should take a reduced credit load in 2025/26.
- **Students taking the five credit SSRA module should register for five credits less during their online registration in 2025/26.**
- Students on a grant and taking the SSRA module for 5 credits **may** be liable for fees for this module.
- Please contact the Fees Office for confirmation of this before completing your registration form.
- Queries in relation to this should be directed to the student desk at the following link: <https://www.ucd.ie/students/studentdesk/contact/>
- Auditing this module will not incur a fee liability.

CREDITS FOR 2025/26

- In relation to credits for SSRA appearing on your transcript, please note that the credits for the Summer 2025 module, will be assigned to the forthcoming 2025/26 academic year and will be added to your academic record after the Examination Board in October 2025.

For further information on this module please contact ssra@ucd.ie

3. GUIDELINES FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL FOR SSRA PROJECTS

Prior approval from the relevant Research Ethics Committee (REC) is required for all SSRA Projects.

HUMAN SUBJECTS

For the most part, we expect that SSRA projects will be exempt from full ethical review in UCD. Various types of projects will fall into this category. As some projects will require full ethical review by the UCD School of Medicine Undergraduate and Taught MSc Research Ethics Committee (UTMREC), please allow enough time for this to take place in advance of the project start date.

Further information and relevant Ethics compliance forms for the UCD School of Medicine UTMREC can be found at this address:

<https://www.ucd.ie/medicine/research/researchethics/>

ANIMALS

Please note SSRA students are NOT permitted to conduct procedures on live animals or to kill animals as part of their research activity. If your project involves working with specimens from animals, you need to apply for an Exemption from Full Review from the Animal Research Ethics Committee (AREC) in UCD. If your project requires this type of approval, you need to contact john.baugh@ucd.ie who will be able to advise you on the application process. Please note a copy of your exemption form will need to be included as one PDF with your Research Report as this forms part of the assessment criteria if you are doing the module for credits.

4. Research Report – For Credit Students ONLY

Your Research Report is a record of your research activity during your project. Please note that assessment of your Research Report accounts for 40% of your final grade for the module. It is critical that you include all your procedures and data in Research Report in a timely fashion while you are conducting project work.

The layout for your report is as follows:

1. SSRA Research Report Cover Page (Form in Student Hub)
2. Module registration form
3. Initial meeting form
4. Ethics confirmation form
5. Abstract
5. Research report using the following guidelines

PREPARATION OF THE TEXT

Title: The title should capture the conceptual significance for a broad audience (20 words max)

Introduction: The introduction should provide background information necessary to place the subject into its general biological/clinical context in sufficient details to render the report understandable to non-specialists. The introduction should end with a clear description of the hypothesis/research question(s) being addressed in the study (max 600 words)

Materials and methods: This section needs to provide concise details of key methods/approaches used in the study. Standard procedures may be referenced (max 300 words)

Results: This section should present clearly but succinctly the experimental findings: a concise summary of the data presented in all display items (figures and tables) should be included. This section may be divided with sub-headings. All results (including negative results and/or failed experiments) may be reported along with discussion and interpretations. The maximum number of figures and/or tables should not exceed 6 (max 500 words)

Figure and table legends: Each legend should be as concise as possible and self-sufficient. Every table must have a descriptive title and enough explanatory information so the reader can understand the data without reference to the text. Legends should not repeat details present in the main text and should generally not include references. Figure titles should describe the main result of the figure and should be different from subtitles in the result section.

Discussion: The discussion should explain the significance of the results (in the context of previous studies, as appropriate). In the report, you are also expected to provide a critical evaluation of the results presented, some ideas of how to address any shortcomings in the study and select follow-up experiments. Describe any limitations of the study and how they might be overcome. (max 600 words).

Author contributions and acknowledgments: You should clarify your contribution to the study (i.e. which experiments/analyses you carried out).

All sources of funding for SSRA projects must be acknowledged. These could include the UCD School of Medicine Dean's scholarships, Alfred Myles Smith, Clare O'Connor, Kathleen Lynn scholarships and funding from the HRB, Wellcome Trust or any other sources of funding you may have received.

Literature cited: You may cite a maximum of 30 articles in the Vancouver style, which must be published or in press. Citations can be numbered in the text. Unpublished data, submitted manuscripts, and personal communications may only be cited within the text.

Bibliography - Example

1. Drummond PD. Triggers of motion sickness in migraine sufferers. Headache. 2005; 45(6):653-6.
2. Halpern SD, Ubel PA, Caplan AL. Solid-organ transplantation in HIV-infected patients. N Engl J Med. 2002; 347(7):284-7.
3. Geck MJ, Yoo S, Wang JC. Assessment of cervical ligamentous injury in trauma patients using MRI. J Spinal Disord. 2001; 14(5):371-7.

More than six authors:

Gillespie NC, Lewis RJ, Pearn JH, Bourke ATC, Holmes MJ, Bourke JB, et al. Ciguatera in Australia: occurrence, clinical features, pathophysiology and management. Med J Aust. 1986; 145:584-90.

REPORT – SPECIFICATIONS

Please note the use of ChatGTP or an equivalent program for any part of this report is prohibited. Evidence of the use of such software will mean the report is excluded from the assessment process.

- Report length and number of display items (figures and/or tables): The total length of the report (including all sections, except title, tables, references and figure legends, author contributions and acknowledgments) should not exceed 2000 words (+/- 10%). Please note that word limits indicated for each section are preferred guides. The maximum number of figures and/or tables should not exceed 6
- Display items (figures and tables), along with their corresponding legends, should be included and called out in numerical order within the text. Dimensions should be as small as possible, without compromising the clarity.
- Style and format: Use single spacing and Times New Roman 12 for the text, 11 for figure legends. Pages should be numbered and references included using a bibliographic analysis software.
- Nomenclature and abbreviations: For gene and protein names, you must adhere to accepted conventions in the field of study. Nonstandard abbreviations should

be defined when first used in the text. Use of abbreviations should be kept to a minimum.

- Numerical data should be analyzed using appropriate statistical tests. Detailed information for each statistical test applied should be provided.

Deadline for submission: August 6th 2025 via Brightspace under Assignment 2 saved as a PDF using your PROJECT NUMBER ONLY in the subject line .

5. ABSTRACT PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION



UCD SCHOOL OF MEDICINE (SoM) SUMMER STUDENT RESEARCH ELECTIVE 2025 SSRA ABSTRACT SUBMISSION FORM

All SSRA students, whether taking the module for credit or audit, are required to submit an Abstract of their research by Wednesday August 6th 2025.

Student Name _____

Project Number (eg: Project 75) _____

Please confirm that both you and your supervisor wish to publish your abstract in the following publications.

- 1) PUBLICATION IN THE Irish Journal of Medical Science (IJMS) **TICK** YES/NO

Yes ☐ No ☐

- 2) PUBLICATION IN THE BOOK OF SSRA 2025 ABSTRACTS FOR THE ADJUDICATORS **TICK** YES/NO

Yes ☐ No ☐

- 3) Did you receive funding to complete research within your SSRA Project?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(If yes, please state where funding was obtained and value)

Funding Body:
Value in €:

- 4) Please indicate below if you are interested in attending a 1 hour focus group to provide feedback on your SSRA experience.

Yes ☐ No ☐

PLEASE ADHERE TO ALL OF THE GUIDELINES AS DETAILED:

Your abstract **should not exceed 250 words** excluding the title, author(s) name(s), address(es), references and acknowledgement of any external funding. The text should be single spaced, Times New Roman, font size 11 and justified. The abstract must have no more than **ONE** table that fits on the same page as your abstract and figures are **NOT allowed**. When using abbreviations, spell out the full name on first mention. Avoid excessive use of abbreviations.

YOUR ABSTRACT SHOULD BE STRUCTURED AS FOLLOWS:

- A descriptive title in **BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS (NOT UNDERLINED)**
- The initials and surname of the author(s) without titles or degrees should appear below the title.
- The department(s), institution(s) and city(ies) /town(s) should be listed next. (Not written in *italics* or **BOLD**)
- The text should be single spaced, Times New Roman, font size 11 and justified.

The abstract should be of the informative type containing **FOUR** paragraphs but **without any** subtitles or paragraph headings:

- Brief Background and specify the purpose of the study
- Outline the methods used, for example study design, study population, statistical test(s).
- Results of the study and include key statistical data.
- **Outline the main implication(s) of the study.**

Up to two references in the Vancouver style can be included (See examples provided below) References: (YOU ARE ONLY ALLOWED TO HAVE 2); Please adhere to the following format

JOURNAL ARTICLE:

1. Drummond PD. Triggers of motion sickness in migraine sufferers. Headache. 2005; 45(6):653-6.
2. Halpern SD, Ubel PA, Caplan AL. Solid-organ transplantation in HIV-infected patients. N Engl J Med. 2002; 347(7):284-7.
3. Geck MJ, Yoo S, Wang JC. Assessment of cervical ligamentous injury in trauma patients using MRI. J Spinal Disord. 2001; 14(5):371-7.

MORE THAN SIX AUTHORS:

Gillespie NC, Lewis RJ, Pearn JH, Bourke ATC, Holmes MJ, Bourke JB, et al. Ciguatera in Australia: occurrence, clinical features, pathophysiology and management. Med J Aust. 1986; 145:584-90.

SUBMITTING:

The abstract should be submitted through Brightspace Assignment 1.

PLEASE NOTE:

Only Abstracts submitted in using **WORD Doc.** and submitted to Brightspace Assignment 1 can be reviewed.

EXACT EXAMPLE OF WHAT YOUR ABSTRACT SHOULD LOOK LIKE

IL6 TARGETING IN TRIPLE NEGATIVE BREAST CANCER (TNBC) ENHANCES THE EFFICACY OF THE ANTI-PROLIFERATIVE CHEMOTHERAPEUTIC PACLITAXEL (TAXOL®).

O' Malley C¹, Gorzel K², O'Reilly E², McCann A^{1, 2}

¹UCD School of Medicine, University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4.

²UCD Conway Institute of Biomedical and Biomolecular Research, University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4.

Triple Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC) is a subset of breast cancer immunohistochemically negative for the expression of the oestrogen receptor, progesterone receptor and the tyrosine kinase receptor HER-2. TNBC is associated with poor prognosis, early relapse and a significantly shorter survival rate following disease recurrence when compared to non-TNBC cancers [1]. This aggressive subset of breast cancer relies critically on the cytokine IL-6 to drive tumour growth and suppress apoptosis [2].

The aim of this research was to (a) investigate what impact targeting the IL-6 pathway in triple negative breast cancer cells has on IL6- mediated growth and (b) investigate how this affects the resultant cellular response to the anti-mitotic chemotherapeutic drug Paclitaxel (Taxol®).

The cytotoxic effects of the anti IL-6 monoclonal antibody MAB206 and Paclitaxel on MDA-MB-231 TNBC cells was assessed using the MTT assay. MDA-MB-231 cells were seeded (5000 cells/well) in 96-well plates in culture medium containing the Paclitaxel IC50 concentration in one treatment and then Paclitaxel and MAB206 in combination. Levels of the cytokine IL6 were analysed using an IL-6 ELISA (Immuntools®). Cell viability decreased when MDA-MB-231 cells were treated their Paclitaxel IC50 values in combination with MAB206 compared to Paclitaxel treatment alone. This was concomitant with clinical data that shows low IL-6 expression is associated with a better disease free survival in breast cancer patients (DFS).

The results demonstrate that the combination of an IL-6 monoclonal antibody and Paclitaxel attenuated cellular proliferation in a synergistic manner and enhanced the cytotoxic effects of the chemotherapeutic Paclitaxel.

Acknowledgment:

The author would like to acknowledge funding from the Pathological Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

References:

1. Rodler E, Korde L, Gralow J, *et al.* Current treatment options in triple negative breast cancer. *Breast Disease*. 2010, vol. 32(1-2):99-122.
2. Hartman Z, Poage G, Hollander P, *et al.* Growth of Triple Negative Breast Cancer Relies upon Coordinate Autocrine Expression of the Proinflammatory Cytokine IL-6 and IL-8. *Cancer Res*. 2013; vol 73(11); 1-11.

Presenting Author: Cian O'Malley
Supervisor: Dr Amanda McCann
Co-Supervisor: Dr Karolina Weiner Gorzel

2025 ABSTRACT ASSESSMENT

SCORE SHEET /15	MARK
1. A descriptive title in BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS (<u>NOT UNDERLINED</u>).	
2. The initials and surname of the author(s) without titles or degrees should appear below the title.	
3. The department(s), institution(s), city(ies) and town(s) should be listed next (<u>NOT IN BOLD OR ITALICS</u>).	
4. The abstract should be of the informative type containing <u>FOUR SEPARATE</u> paragraphs, <u>WITHOUT ANY</u> subtitles or paragraph headings.	
- Specify the purpose of the study and include a brief background statement.	
- Outline the methods used. For example: Study design, study population, statistical test(s).	
- Summarise the results of the study and include key statistical data.	
- Outline the implication(s) of the study. For example: It is not satisfactory to state "results will be discussed".	
5. The abstract <u>MUST NOT EXCEED 250 WORDS</u> - Excluding title, author(s) name(s), Address(es) and any reference.	
6. The text should be single spaced.	
7. The font size (Times New Roman) should be 11point.	
8. The Abstract must have no more than one table. Figures are not allowed.	
9. The abstract must be contained <u>WITHIN THE WIDTH</u> of the above margins.	
10. When using abbreviations, spell out the full name on first mention. Avoid excessive use of abbreviations.	
11. Up to 2 references in the <u>VANCOUVER STYLE</u> can be included.	
12. Keywords <u>ARE NOT TO BE INCLUDED</u> at the bottom of the abstract.	
TOTAL	/15

PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED IRISH JOURNAL OF MEDICAL SCIENCE (IJMS) SSRA ABSTRACTS

- 2023 <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11845-024-03683-9>
- 2022 <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11845-023-03398-3>
- 2021 <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11845-022-02939-6>
- 2020 <https://link.springer.com/journal/11845/volumes-and-issues/190-4/supplement>
- 2019 <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11845-019-02130-4>
- 2018 <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11845-018-1941-8>
- 2017 <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11845-017-1711-z>
- 2016 <https://link.springer.com/journal/11845/186/1/suppl/page/1>
- 2015 <http://link.springer.com/journal/11845/184/12/suppl/page/1>
- 2014 <http://link.springer.com/journal/11845/183/12/suppl/page/1>
- 2013 <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11845-013-1039-2>
- 2012 <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11845-012-0861-2>
- 2011 <http://link.springer.com/journal/11845/180/14/suppl/page/1>
- 2010 <http://link.springer.com/journal/11845/180/1/suppl/page/1>
- 2009 <http://link.springer.com/journal/11845/179/6/suppl/page/1>
- 2008 <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11845-009-0307-7>
- 2007 <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11845-007-0106-y>

8. SUPERVISION

Prior to commencing your research you will need to meet with your Supervisor and complete an Initial meeting form (IMF) – copy in **Appendix 7**. An electronic version can be found in on the SSRA Website in the Student Hub window. Please complete this form **prior to** the commencement of your project and make sure it has been signed by your supervisor. Please encourage your supervisor to submit their report (**Appendix 9**) at the end of your 8 week Projects as this forms part of your assessment.

9. COMMUNICATIONS WORKSHOP

Effective communication and presentation skills are vital components of the transferable skill portfolio of any student particularly in the healthcare space. Whether presenting to peers during Grand Rounds or speaking with a patient about their medical condition and treatment options, the ability to communicate in a clear and succinct manner will be of distinct advantage particularly when the average consultation time in Ireland today is 12 minutes.

The SSRA poster and Gold Medal nights are a unique opportunity for students to present the findings of their research project primarily to an audience of academics and clinicians. In preparation, all SSRA students are invited to take part in a communications workshop. Students will learn about the principles of effective communication and explore audience, content and presenter considerations when preparing for the SSRA competition. How do I cope with nerves in front of all those people? What should I say in my pitch?

After looking at the basic principles and challenges in communication during this interactive workshop, we peel back to the essence of effective communication – the ability to tell a good story. The aim is for students to begin tailoring their research message to a particular audience and exploring how to engage the audience as they tell their research story.

SSRA 2016 WORKSHOP PARTICIPATION FEEDBACK:

‘Very engaging and helpful in improving presentation skills. Helped me to identify my strong and weak points.’

‘Very useful and informative, great tips – I will definitely alter my pitch’.

Facilitator

Elaine Quinn

Institute Manager (Communications & Education), UCD Conway Institute

COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP KEY DATES

Day/Date	Time	Description	
Monday, 18th August 2025	12 Noon	**Submission: postcard and presentation heroes	Email to ssra@ucd.ie
Tuesday, 9th September 2025 (parallel sessions)	12pm- 2pm	Communications workshop Led by Elaine Quinn (UCD Conway Institute, Communications Manager)	Seminar Rooms 1 + 2 Charles Institute
Thursday, 11th September 2025	12-2pm	5 min pitch to 2 person communication panel with feedback. No visual aids or slides	Seminar Rooms 1 + 2 Charles Institute
Monday, 22nd September 2025 Gold Medal Finalists only	12noon-1:30pm	Presentation with slides for feedback	Charles Seminar Room, First Floor, Charles Institute

**** SUBMISSION IN ADVANCE OF WORKSHOP - Monday, 18th August 2025**

1. Write a postcard to your Gran describing your research simply (100 word max)
2. Search online for an example of an excellent speaker and list the traits you think make them a good presenter. Find an example of a bad presenter and list the reasons why they do not make a good impression on you. Submit your compiled list of web addresses, names of speakers & videos that you are nominating and why.

10. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS(FAQ'S)

QUESTION 1: WHY TAKE SSRA?

- ☐ It is a supportive environment to undertake a supervised research project in world class research facilities during your degree programme.
- ☐ The opportunity to establish collaborations and professional networks that may play a critical role in your future career path.
- ☐ The chance to have your research published as conference proceedings or as part of a peer reviewed paper.
- ☐ The potential to secure 5 credits towards your undergraduate degree programme.
- ☐ An opportunity to present your own work to senior academic faculty.
- ☐ The chance to win a Gold, Silver or Bronze SSRA Medal.
- ☐ The opportunity to gain International Research Experience if completing an International project.

QUESTION 2: WHO CAN REGISTER FOR SSRA?

- ☐ All registered undergraduate students (UGM, GEM, Radiography, BSc Biomedical Health and Life Science, Physiology students) within the School of Medicine and School of Veterinary Medicine (with approval).
- ☐ Subject to approval, students from the College of Engineering and Architecture undertake the SSRA research programme for 5 credits.

QUESTION 3: CAN I TAKE A STUDENT SUMMER RESEARCH MODULE FOR CREDIT?

- ☐ It is possible to take the SSRA for either credit or audit. Please note however that the SSRA Module can be taken for credit **ONCE ONLY**.
- ☐ With the exception of stage 2-4 GEM students, all students can take the module for credit (5 credits)
- ☐ College of Engineering and Architecture (*subject to approval*) can also undertake the SSRA research programme for 5 credits or audit.
- ☐ For students who complete the module FOR AUDIT ONLY, their research activity

will be recorded on the diploma supplement which all UCD students may request

- ☐ Please note that credits for the summer 2025 module will be assigned to the forthcoming 2025/26 year and **NOT** the current year.
- ☐ Credits will be assigned to Students Academic Record after the Programme board in October.

QUESTION 4: WHAT IS THE DURATION OF THE PROJECT?

- ☐ If you are taking the SSRA for credit your project should last a minimum of 8 weeks duration.
- ☐ If you are taking the SSRA for audit it should last a minimum of 6 weeks duration.

QUESTION 5: HOW CAN I FUND MY PROJECT?

- ☐ Funding opportunities for International placements are detailed in **Appendix 3 and 4**.
- ✓ To apply for the “*Deans SSRA 2025 International Research Scholarship*” please email ssra.international@ucd.ie

QUESTION 6: DO I HAVE TO PRESENT MY PROJECT AS A POSTER?

- ☐ All students must display their posters from Monday 15th September 2025 to Tuesday 16th September 2025 in the O’Brien Centre for Science.
- ☐ All students must present a poster at the SSRA Poster Presentation Adjudication Night on Tuesday 16th September 2025.

QUESTION 7: CAN I DO MY RESEARCH PROJECT OUTSIDE OF IRELAND?

- ☐ SSRA students have undertaken their research projects in various international locations including:
 - Dana Farber (Boston, USA),
 - NIH (Maryland, USA),
 - The Hospital for Sick Children (Toronto, Canada),
 - The University of Queensland (Brisbane, Australia),

- Johns Hopkins Hospital (Baltimore, USA),
- University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, USA),
- Simon Fraser University (British Columbia, Canada),
- Penang Medical College (Penang, Malaysia).

QUESTION 8. AM I LIABLE FOR FEES FOR THIS MODULE?

- When students register to this module in 2025 their fees for 2025/26 will change once they are registered.
- As the credits for this module will be assigned to the 2025/26 academic year, students should take a reduced credit load in 2025/26.
- Students taking the five credit SSRA module should register for five credits less during their online registration in 2025/26.
- Students on a grant and taking the SSRA module for 5 credits, **may** be liable for fees for this module.
- Please contact the Fees Office for confirmation of this before completing your registration form.
- Queries in relation to this should be directed to the student desk at the following link: <https://www.ucd.ie/students/studentdesk/contact/>
- Auditing this module will not incur a fee liability.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1

UCD CODE OF PRACTICE IN RESEARCH (2016)

Please see link below for UCD Code of Practice in Research

<https://www.ucd.ie/t4cms/Code%20of%20Good%20Practice%20in%20Research%20090216.pdf>

APPENDIX 2

WORLD MEDICAL ASSOCIATION DECLARATION OF HELSINKI (2024)

Please see link below for the World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki

<https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-helsinki/>

APPENDIX 3

SUMMER STUDENT RESEARCH FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES WEBSITES

PLEASE CHECK CLOSING DATES FOR APPLICATION FOR FUNDING.

Funding body	Deadline(s)	Further information
Association of Clinical Pathologists	Various projects	http://www.pathologists.org.uk/
Wellcome Trust	Various projects	https://wellcome.org/grant-funding
Health Research Board	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2025	https://www.hrb.ie/funding-scheme/summer-student-scholarships-ss-2025/ Closing date: TBC
Pathological Society of Great Britain and Ireland	Undergraduate Elective Bursary UB0222	https://www.pathsoc.org/grants_lectures_awards/grants/183/undergraduate_elective_bursary_ub0225 Closing dates: 28 February and 28 April 2025
Wellcome Trust	Biomedical Vacation Scholarships	https://wellcome.org/grant-funding/schemes/biomedical-vacation-scholarships
Irish Cancer Society	Irish Cancer Society Summer Studentships	https://www.cancer.ie/cancer-research/researchers-hub/apply-for-funding/summer-studentships Applications open in Q1 each year. Please see Open Calls for more information.

APPENDIX 4

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCHOOL FUNDED INTERNATIONAL SSRA PLACEMENTS 2025

The Student Summer Research Awards (SSRA) programme is an undergraduate research initiative to support and showcase Undergraduate Research affiliated within the UCD School of Medicine. SSRA is a 5 credit 8-week elective module, which provides an ideal opportunity for undergraduate students to undertake a supervised research project. Each year, many of our students compete for highly-prized international summer elective opportunities at locations all over the world. A long-established feature of our undergraduate programmes, clinical and research electives allow students to develop their knowledge and understanding of issues and themes relevant to their study of medicine, and the opportunity to publish a peer reviewed article.

Each year the Medicine International Office offers students Dean's Scholarships to undertake research in world class institutions such as:

- The Garret FitzGerald Lab in the University of Pennsylvania
<https://www.med.upenn.edu/fitzgeraldlab/>
- The Institute of Public Health at Washington University in St. Louis
<https://publichealth.wustl.edu/>
- Texas Children's Hospital, Baylor College of Medicine_
<https://www.bcm.edu/about-us/affiliates/texas-childrens-hospital>
- University of British Columbia Centre for Substance Abuse
<https://www.bccsu.ca/>
- Hospice Africa Uganda_
<https://www.hospice-africa.org/uganda/>
- Medical College of Wisconsin
<https://www.mcw.edu>

Details of 2025 projects will be advertised to students directly in Semester 1.

OTHER INTERNATIONAL SSRA 2025 PLACEMENTS (NOT SCHOOL FUNDED)

Students are encouraged to source their own SSRA project internationally. In 2024 SSRA had many projects located internationally such as:

- University of Manitoba Ottawa Hospital.
- Laureate Institute for Brain Research - Tulsa, OK, USA.
- University of Calgary, Canada.
- University of Manitoba Queen's University, Canada.
- Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago / Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.
- University College London.
- Duke-NUS IACUC affiliated.
- SickKids Hospital Toronto.
- National University Hospital Singapore National Institutes of Health, Maryland USA.
- The Ottawa Hospital Research Institute (OHRI), Ottawa, ON, Canada.

For all International SSRA queries please contact ssra.international@ucd.ie

The UCD School of Medicine International Office supports students taking international SSRA projects in a variety of locations. For information, please contact ssra.international@ucd.ie

Our International Team leads the School's support to international students and to Irish students on overseas placements. They provide support and advice to current and prospective students and to academic staff on the School's and University's global partnerships, international mobility programmes and related matters.

The Team is committed to answering overseas queries and provides dedicated support and advice to international students in our undergraduate and graduate programmes.

We are also the first point of contact for prospective international students regarding admission, the School and its programmes and visits to our campus. On behalf of the School, the Team coordinates its formal international activities and liaises with international ambassadors, education attachés, recruitment agents and global partners.

The office is led by the Associate Dean for International Relations, Dr. Patrick Felle, this team works closely with the academic leaders of various internationally-focused programmes, the UCD Health Science Programme Office, UCD International, and UCD Alumni Relations. Administrative Support for the Associate Dean is the International Relations Manager Ms Margaret Tiuchta and international Relations Coordinator Ms Smaranda Sava.

APPENDIX 5

INTERCALATED MSc



School of Medicine & Medical Science
Scoil an Leighis agus Eolaíocht an Leighis UCD



School of Medicine & Medical Science
Scoil an Leighis agus Eolaíocht an Leighis UCD

Intercalated Masters in Medical Science



"This year "out" has affirmed my belief that the interplay between researchers and clinicians is crucial to bringing out unique perspectives to understand human disease. It has kept my passion for medicine burning and I thoroughly enjoyed it!"
Isaac Teo Beng Loong
Intercalated MSc: 2012-2013

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

- Combine undergraduate and graduate study
- Gain MSc in Medical Science during your undergraduate studies
- Engage with our extensive research portfolio
- Prepare for a career in medical or biomedical research
- Financial scholarship towards fees and living expenses

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

For students who wish to pursue a career in medical or biomedical research, the School offers an innovative Intercalated MSc in Medical science. This one year intercalated research programme is designed for students with 180 credits from their undergraduate medicine degree programme and graduate entry medicine students with a primary degree in a science-based discipline.

Scientific knowledge and discovery is at the heart of all our undergraduate degree programmes and our mission is to create life-long learners who are fired by a desire to add to the knowledge base through enquiry and investigation. The programme is designed to increase research opportunities within our undergraduate programmes and expose students to research that enhances our understanding of disease with the ultimate aim of improving human health.

Intercalated Masters in Medical Science



CAREER OPTIONS

The programme is specifically designed to facilitate those medical students who wish to establish a research career after graduation. The School offers an extensive array of taught and research masters and doctoral programmes across all major clinical specialties including MD, MCh, MAO, MSc and PhD.

Many clinicians lead successful translational research programmes within the School and are principal investigators with our major associated research centres. The School is committed to research that enhances our understanding of disease with the ultimate aim of improving human health. It has over 75 principal research investigators with research grants under management to the value of approximately €35 million and annual research income of over €7.5 million.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The programme is open to undergraduate direct entry medicine students with 180 credits, or graduate entry medicine students with a primary degree in a science-based discipline. Preference will be given to candidates with previous research experience (e.g. UCD Summer Student Research Award Scheme or an independent science/medicine project).



MORE INFORMATION

For further information and application form please contact: Dr. Noreen Sheehy,
Programme Coordinator
E: Noreen.sheehy@ucd.ie
W: www.ucd.ie/medicine/research

T: +353 1 716 6686
E: school.medicine@ucd.ie
W: www.ucd.ie/medicine

UCD School of Medicine & Medical Science, UCD Health Sciences Centre,
Belfield, Dublin

T: +353 1 716 6686
E: school.medicine@ucd.ie
W: www.ucd.ie/medicine

UCD School of Medicine & Medical Science, UCD Health Sciences Centre,
Belfield, Dublin 4.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Dr Melinda Halasz
Chair SSRA 2025 Committee

UCDSchoolofMedicine
CRID, Belfield, Dublin 4
E: MELINDA.HALASZ@UCD.IE

UCD SSRA OFFICE

Room C123 Health Sciences Centre
Belfield, Dublin 4
E: SSRA@UCD.IE

Dr Noreen Sheehy
Intercalated MSc

UCDSchoolofMedicine
E: NOREEN.SHEEHY@UCD.IE

School of Medicine International Office

Room C141 Health Sciences Centre
Belfield, Dublin 4
E: SSRA.INTERNATIONAL@UCD.IE

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



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<https://www.ucd.ie/medicine/ssra/>