

University of Galway

2024

Annual Quality Report
University of Galway
Reporting Period 2022-2023

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PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM
Reporting Period 2022-2023

PREFACE

Note: QQI's provider portal, QHub, is currently under development and will be completed in November 2020. AQR 2021 will be submitted via QHub.

The **Annual Quality Report (AQR)**; formerly AIQR) forms part of Quality and Qualifications Ireland's (QQI) quality assurance (QA) framework of engagement with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The AQR provides documentary evidence of the development and evolution of each institution's internal quality system. It provides QQI with assurance that internal QA procedures have been established and are being implemented consistent with regulatory requirements.

The AQR, particularly part A, should assist with **document management** in the institutional review process and will facilitate institutions in providing review teams with procedural QA documentation in preparation for the external review process. It is an important part of the evidence base considered by external **review teams** as part of QQI's CINNTE cycle of institutional reviews, demonstrating that the institution's internal QA system is aligned with QQI's Core and relevant Sector- and Topic-specific Statutory QA Guidelines, and with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area 2015 (ESG). It enables the review team to satisfy itself of compliance with these requirements for the purpose of the institutional review process.

Each AQR is **published in full on QQI's website**, providing transparency on the HEIs' assurance and enhancement of quality to external stakeholders. (As such, institutions should ensure that their submissions do not contain any data that they consider to be commercially sensitive.) Collectively, the AQRs comprise a single national repository of quality assurance practice in Irish higher education institutions.

Each year, QQI produces a synthesis report of the key themes highlighted across the AQRs, primarily arising from Part B of the reports.

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Guidelines on Completing the Report

The AQR is aligned with QQI's Core, Sector and Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and with the ESG (2015). A mapping of the ESG to QQI Core QA Guidelines is included in Table 1 below; the structure of Part A of this report template aligns with the first column of the table. Additional guidance on completing this template and reference material is included in each section. Institutions should adhere to this guidance and have regard to QQI Core, Sector and Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines. **The guide text within each section should be deleted before submission of the report.**

Submission Process and Timeline

The deadline for submission of the AQR each year is in February of the relevant year, with the call for submission sent to institutions in November of the preceding year. Once the call for submission has been made, QQI will provide access to QQI's provider portal, QHub, to the designated institution contact(s) to facilitate submission of the report. Through QHub, each institution will have access to an editable version of its AQR for the previous reporting period. This document can then be amended/updated to reflect any changes or developments that occurred during the current reporting period before submitting the final report to QQI.

Completing the AQR

- When completing the AQR template, all relevant colleagues in the institution should be consulted.
- Consider whether external audiences will be able to understand the terminology used (particularly local abbreviations and acronyms); it may be helpful to include a glossary.
- Aim to avoid duplication in the report - where information is relevant to more than one section, the first mention may be referenced in subsequent sections.
- Provide reflections on what worked well, but also what may have been tried but did not work.

Report Structure

Part A: Internal QA System

Part A of the AQR comprises a record of each institution's current QA policies and procedures and should provide links to those policies and procedures. Private HEIs may provide links to the policies and procedures approved by QQI during initial access to validation (IAV) or reengagement. It is the responsibility of each HEI to ensure before submission of the AQR that all links are correct and functional, and that the policies and procedures referred to are the most up-to-date versions available. Given that the AQR is submitted in respect of a discrete reporting period, it may be helpful for institutions to establish a SharePoint/OneDrive folder (or similar) for each reporting period that contains the current versions of their policies and procedures, and that hyperlinks to these versions of the documents be provided in the AQR

Part A is to be completed only if there have been **material** changes to QA policies and procedures during the reporting period. Such changes may include the approval and implementation of new policies or procedures, or significant amendments to existing ones.

Part B: Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Enhancement (QE)

Part B of the AQR documents and captures QA activities, developments and enhancements undertaken by institutions **during the reporting period** and their **impact**. Insofar as is possible, institutions should demonstrate in Part B how plans set out in the previous AQR were progressed during the reporting period - these may be plans linked to strategic objectives, to reengagement advices, or to institutional review recommendations.

Case Studies

In each reporting period, QQI may request updates on specific thematic areas or may invite the institution to submit case studies in response to specific topics. Further, institutions may include case studies to share good practice on topics of their choosing, demonstrating QA and QE in action. In formulating case studies, institutions are encouraged to reflect on and highlight areas that may be of interest to other institutions and would benefit from wider dissemination. Further guidance is provided in Part B.

Links to Reference Documents Cited in this Template¹

Legislation

- [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012 \(as amended\)](#)
- [Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 \(as amended\)](#)
- [Technological Universities Act 2018](#)
- [Universities Act 1997](#)

QQI Documents

Statutory QA Guidelines (QAG)

- [Core QAG](#)
- [Sector-specific QAG for Independent/Private Providers](#)
- [Sector-specific QAG for Designated Awarding Bodies](#)
- [Sector-specific QAG for Institutes of Technology](#)
- [Topic-specific QAG for Providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes](#)
- [Topic-specific QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes](#)
- [Topic-specific QAG for Blended Learning](#)

Other QQI Policy Documents

- [QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes, and Joint Awards, 2012](#)
- [QQI's Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners, 2015](#)
- [QQI Policy Restatement on Access, Transfer and Progression, 2015](#)

Other National/International References

- [European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(2015\)](#)
- [IHEQN Guidelines on Collaborative Provision](#)
- [National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland](#)
- [Ireland's Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes, 2019](#)
- [HEA National Framework for Doctoral Education](#)
- [The Salzburg Principles](#)
- [The Salzburg II Recommendations](#)
- [SOLAS Code of Practice for Employers and Apprentices](#)
- [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#)

¹ These links will be updated as further guidance documents are published.

PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

Table 1

Table 1 Mapping of ESG (2015) to QQI QA Guidelines (QAG)				
AQR Part A Section	QQI QAG Core Sub-section No.	QAG Core Sub-section Title	ESG Standard No.	ESG Standard Title
1.0 - Internal QA Framework	2.1	Governance and Management of Quality	1.1	Policy for Quality Assurance
	2.2	Documented Approach to Quality Assurance		
2.0 - Programme Development and Delivery	2.3	Programmes of Education and Training	1.2	Design and Approval of Programmes
4.0 - QA of Research Activities and Programmes			1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 - Monitoring and Periodic Review				
5.0 - Staff Recruitment, Development and Support	2.4	Staff Recruitment, Management and Development	1.5	Teaching Staff
2.3 - Teaching, Learning and Assessment	2.5	Teaching and Learning	1.3	Student-centred Teaching, Learning and Assessment
	2.6	Assessment of Learners		
3.0 - Learner Resources and Supports	2.7	Supports for learners	1.6	Learning Resources and Student Support
6.0 - Information and Data Management	2.8	Information and Data Management	1.7	Information Management
7.0 - Public Information and Communication	2.9	Public Information and Communication	1.8	Public Information
2.0 - Programme Delivery and Development	2.10	Other Parties Involved in Education and Training	1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 - Monitoring and Periodic Review			1.2	Design and Approval of Programmes
9.0 - Details of Arrangements with Third Parties				
2.0 - Programme Development and Delivery	2.11	Self-evaluation, Monitoring and Review	1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 - Monitoring and Periodic Review			1.10	Cyclical External Quality Assurance
4.0 - QA of Research Activities and Programmes	QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes			

Introduction and Overview of Institution

This is the AQR for University of Galway for the reporting period **1 September 2022 – 31 August 2023**. It is to be submitted by **Friday, 23 February 2024**.

The AQR has been approved by University Management Team and is submitted by **Sinéad O'Connor, Director of Quality**.

University of Galway has been inspiring minds since 1845 as a research-led university. It is one of the oldest and largest universities in Ireland. Beginning with just 68 students, our campus community now numbers over 22,000 students and staff, and our 110,000 alumni are located in over 100 countries across the world. From humble beginnings, today we are counted among the Top 250 universities in the world according to QS rankings.

University of Galway is an international university with global ambition, but with deep roots in our region and nationally. Our location on the very edge of Europe gives us a unique perspective. Our university is at the heart of a distinct and vibrant region, renowned for its unique culture, creative industries, medical technologies, marine ecology and economy, and our innovation. We work in partnership with business, industry and government to provide the graduates, skills, knowledge and innovation that drive entrepreneurialism, employment and growth in our region.

The University contributes greatly to the diversity and dynamism of Galway, the most international city in Ireland. With over 3,300 international students and 480 international staff from 122 countries, we are rightly proud of the contribution and vibrancy they add to our campus and wider communities. Through our teaching and research, we attract and develop talent from around the world to address global challenges. Our international impact is strengthened by our alumni network, along with our partnerships and collaborations with leading international universities and organisations around the world. The global impact of our research is evident in the number of our international research collaborations, and the fact that we are home to five of the most highly cited researchers in the world.

We are a comprehensive research-led university with a breadth and depth of teaching and research across the sciences, social sciences and humanities, delivered through four Colleges, 19 Schools, five Research Institutes and a range of research centres and clusters. Our regional footprint is the largest in Ireland spanning the Atlantic seaboard.

The AQR is the responsibility of the Quality Office at University of Galway and is completed by the Director of Quality with input from academic and professional service units across the institution. The draft report is reviewed and approved by the University Management Team and subsequently presented to Academic Council.

Quality and Quality Assurance is overseen by Údarás na hOllscoile through its principal committees – Academic Council, Standing and Strategic Planning Committee and the Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC). Quality and Quality Assurance is a regular item on the agenda of these committees and a fixed item on the agenda of Academic Council. The execution of various quality assurance policies is principally overseen by QEC, chaired by the Deputy President and Registrar. QEC meets at least three times during the academic year to discuss and approve all quality related Policies and Procedures. Membership is made up of representatives of both academic and professional service communities, including the Director of Quality. The Director of Quality is responsible for assuring quality enhancement across all of the University’s units where Quality, Strategy and Performance form a ‘tripartite’ approach to the enhancement of quality and performance. The Director of Quality provides support for the development of Policies and Procedures and is also responsible for engaging with all units and external agencies in the development and improvement of a culture of quality assurance at the University.

Continuous improvement to the quality of all activities across University of Galway is the responsibility of every member of staff through their own individual efforts and through organisational committees and units. Staff are guided in this endeavour through three key external standards:

- [Core Statutory Quality Assurance \(QA\) Guidelines](#)
- [Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Designated Awarding Bodies](#)
- [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area](#)

In addition, staff activities are guided by a number of additional [external guidelines](#) published by [Quality and Qualification Ireland](#) (QQI) and other bodies.

Improving quality is also guided by the University’s strategy [Strategy 2020-2025](#). This plan, launched in January 2020, is built on a foundation of core values that define the University’s purpose and priorities. Through the value of excellence the strategy will deliver an excellent student-centred, research-led teaching and learning experience. In March 2020, the Director of Strategy Implementation was appointed to the Office of the President. The Director of Strategy Implementation works with the President and University Management Team to implement, monitor and review targets/actions of the strategic plan, via the operational planning processes across all Colleges, Schools and Units.

QA is implemented through a comprehensive annual [Operational Planning](#) process linked to Strategic Planning. An update to *QA007 Operational Planning* was approved by Academic Council in October 2020. The School Operational Planning process now includes ongoing reporting on IRRP Research Review Action Plans and major actions from School Quality Reviews.

University of Galway has a comprehensive documented approach to Quality Assurance (QA) illustrated initially through its [Policies and Procedures Repository](#) and an archive of meeting minutes and records accessible via the [Quality Office website](#). University of Galway implements external standards and guidelines through a comprehensive QA system focussed on internal [Policies and Procedures](#) and including specific Policies and Procedures around internal monitoring and [Quality Reviews](#) (QRs).

Decisions around the development and continuous improvement to all internal [Policies and Procedures](#) including those related to internal monitoring and [Quality Review \(QR\)](#) are taken at a number of major committees and meetings. These are led by the [Governing Authority \(Údarás\)](#) and its principle sub-committees that include [Academic Council](#) and the [University Management Team \(UMT\)](#). Decisions around development and changes to Policies and Procedures related to academic activities are taken mainly by Academic Council.

Decisions around Policies and Procedures related to internal monitoring and [Quality Review](#) (QR) are taken by the [Quality Enhancement Committee \(QEC\)](#) which reports to Údarás through [Academic Council \(AC\)](#). The [Quality Office](#) is responsible for executing Policies and Procedures related to internal monitoring and QR and for supporting all units in the development of internal Policies and Procedures.

Both Údarás and the Academic Council have a number of other key subcommittees that discuss quality improvement on various aspects of the University's processes and typically meet immediately prior to the meetings noted above and more frequently, as required. These sub-committees are:

- Colleges and School Boards
- Graduate Studies Board
- Research Committee
- Standing and Strategic Planning Committee
- Academic Council - Standing
- Finance and Resources Committee
- Risk Management Committee
- Library Strategy Committee
- International Committee

The University has adopted a policy for documenting all policies and procedures. All major policies, procedures, regulations and guidelines are made available by various units across the University and guide the behaviour of University staff and students when implementing key University processes. Policies and Procedures are typically documents but may also be manuals, webpages and forms. Policies and Procedures should reflect best practice in the higher education sector and should be written using simple and accessible language for end users. All University Policies and Procedures must be periodically reviewed, and if necessary revised, at least once every seven years.

All University Policies and Procedures must be coded and indexed in the University's P&P Repository available in the Quality Office website. Additional policies and procedures related to this heading and available from the [Policies and Procedures Repository](#) include:

1. QA001 Quality Assurance
2. QA002 Policies and Procedures
3. P&P Repository
4. Quality Office Website

An extensive number of internal [statutes](#) and [organisational structures](#) also define the role, duties and responsibilities of key organisational units and committees and the responsibilities of key individual staff.

University of Galway manages the competing needs of external regulations, internal strategic objectives and [risk management](#) through the enhancement of a responsive culture characterised by a willingness of staff to engage with stakeholders including learners in a way that responds to their needs for continuous improvement to quality.

The post of Dean of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Studies Office are tasked with enhancing postgraduate research in the University. The Graduate Studies Board considers all research degree programmes, and changes to the University Guidelines for Research Degree Programmes and makes recommendations to the Standing Committee of Academic Council. The Board is chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

A key mechanism in the implementation and evaluation of quality research is the Institutional Review of Research Performance (IRRP). The overall aim of [IRRP2024](#) is to enhance research performance at University of Galway and to comply with the *Irish Universities Act* for a peer review of research quality.

The Research Committee reports to Academic Council and is tasked with advising on the implementation of the University's [Research Strategy](#) as embodied in the University's Strategic Plan.

The Research Office has responsibility for the development and promotion of the University's research effort. It works closely with academic and research staff to secure national and international funding, and to further the impact of research and innovation. The Research Office is part of the Office of the Vice-President for Research and works closely with the Innovation Office, Graduate Studies, the Researcher Development Centre and other professional services supporting University of Galway's research community.

Representation of learners and external stakeholders

University of Galway's policy is to engage widely with all of its stakeholders. Stakeholders include learners, Schools, other Colleges and Universities, research funding agencies, general public, industry, national and local government and many more.

Key stakeholders in the context of quality assurance include:

- [Irish Universities Association](#)
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland ([QQI](#))
- Higher Education Authority ([HEA](#))
- Irish Higher Education Quality Network ([IHEQN](#))
- [European Universities Association](#)
- [West North-West Connect](#)
- Research Funding Bodies ([SFI](#), [HRB](#), [etc.](#))

Students are the primary stakeholders and regarded by University of Galway as competent, active and constructive partners as opposed to consumers. Students are regularly invited to engage in programme design, governance and corporate image while also engaging with their own learning.

Learners are represented on all major committees dealing with quality and quality assurance and liaise directly with the University through the committees above and through the Dean of Students. There are three student union members on *Údarás na hOllscoile*.

University of Galway staff also meet regularly with counterparts from other Universities through the [Irish Universities Association \(IUA\) Quality Committee](#) to discuss Policies and Procedures across the sector and also with various external stakeholders, in particular, the [Higher Education Authority \(HEA\)](#), [IUA](#) and [Quality and Qualifications Ireland \(QQI\)](#). These meetings inform University of Galway's key decision-making processes.

External panellists, examiners and authenticators: There are explicit criteria laid down in a number of Policies and Procedures for the recruitment and engagement of external independent panellists, examiners and authenticators. The following Policies and Procedures lay down explicit criteria for the retention of panellists, examiners and authenticators:

- QA003 Review of Schools
- QA004 Review of Research Performance
- QA005 The Role of External Examiners (Taught)
- QA006 Review of Taught Programme

1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision

University of Galway provides a [list of linked providers](#) under the heading ‘collaborative providers’ on its public website and relies on two national guidelines (IHEQN and QQI) to define and implement Policies and Procedures in this area for all Schools and Colleges.

- [Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision \(IHEQN\)](#)
- [Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards \(QQI\)](#)

One internal policy defines the cyclical review process for Linked Providers and draws on legislation:

[QA009 Review of Linked Providers.](#)

Collaborative Provision: University of Galway Policies and Procedures cover all such arrangements including sub-contracting of provision. This is done through Memorandums of Agreement/Understanding and also internal Policies and Procedures for the review of such agreements.

University of Galway provides a [list of collaborative providers](#) on its public website and relies on two national guidelines (QQI and IHEQN) to define and implement Policies and Procedures in this area for all Schools and Colleges:

- [Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards \(QQI\)](#)
- [Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision \(IHEQN\)](#)

2.0 Programme Development and Delivery

2.1 Programme Development and Approval

University of Galway's teaching mission is delivered through [taught programmes](#) at [undergraduate](#), [postgraduate](#) and [professional, part-time and evening](#) levels. The University of Galway [Academic Strategy](#) provides the overarching framework for the design and operation of courses and modules. Responsibility for programme design lies with the Colleges and reviewing and revising programme offerings is a key aspect of quality assurance and enhancement. Successful innovation also requires the availability of accurate and timely information and data, basing major decisions on evidence and on a compelling case which is cognizant of the external context, the developments in academic fields, in other institutions, and the identification of future needs. The design of new programmes and the revision of existing offerings can be facilitated via the support of expertise in the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) providing scope for innovation in pedagogy, assessment and the effective use of technologies and media.

Programme Development: Generally, prior to bringing forward a detailed proposal to the relevant School Committee(s), a proposer should seek approval in principle from the School Executive to ensure the proposed programme is aligned to school priorities. Following approval by the School Committees, budgets are developed in consultation with College Finance and Business Managers and internal stakeholders are consulted in the drafting of the proposed programme. The proposal is then considered by the School Executive prior to submission to the College Committee for consideration.

New programme proposals/proposals for major programme changes must be approved at the College-level before being submitted to the University Curriculum & Programme Board for review in line with [QA050 Curriculum Design and Management Policy](#). The role of the University Curriculum & Programme Board is to provide a level of oversight of the totality of the University's suite of undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes. The University Curriculum & Programme Board reviews all programme proposals to assess programme design, academic quality, evidence of market demand, and coherence with the University's overall programme portfolio. The Board, on behalf of Academic Council Standing Committee, reviews all proposals in detail before making recommendations to Academic Council Standing Committee on each proposal. The University Curriculum Programme Board meets three times per year, ahead of meetings of Academic Standing Committee, in March, May and November.

When a programme is approved by Academic Council Standing the decision will be documented in the meeting minutes which are then submitted for final approval by Academic Council. Academic Council is the chief academic authority and, subject to review by Údarás na hOllscoile (Governing Authority), controls the academic affairs of the University including the curriculum, instruction and education provided by the University.

Policies and Procedures related to programme development and delivery are largely implemented through committee work as well as a number of online systems (e.g. [AKARI](#)) and other forms available from University of Galway's [Syllabus Team](#). Detailed [programme outlines](#) are available to the public through the main University website.

All programmes undergo annual review through [Programme Boards](#) and the [External Examination](#) process and periodic review through the [Quality Review](#) process. [New and major changes](#) to programmes are available on the Quality Office website.

A sample of additional policies and procedures related to this heading and available from the [Policies and Procedures Repository](#) include:

- General Calendar
- Bologna & NFQ Standards and Guidelines
- Course Fee Establishment
- Module Bonding
- New & Changed Modules
- New & Changed Programmes
- General and Academic Calendars

2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification

Students can access University of Galway programmes of learning through a variety of means administered by the [Admissions Offices](#). These include: Leaving Certificate; A Levels, EU & EFTA, Non-EU, International, and Medicine. Access is also provided to Irish, UK and EU/EEA Transfers, Advanced Entry, FETAC, International/Non-EU and Mature Students. All admissions are overseen and approved by senior academic staff mainly through School committees and later approved by University management.

Extensive use is made of the [National Academic Recognition Information Centre](#) (NARIC) for assessing applicants coming from outside the Irish education system.

Student access and progression is dealt with through the following key offices that implement a variety of related Policies and Procedures (Policies and Procedures):

- [Academic Records, Conferring, & Registration](#)
- [Access Office](#)
- [Undergraduate Admissions Office](#)
- [International Office](#)
- [Postgraduate Admissions Office](#)

Policies are in place for

- a. new entrant students wishing to transfer to another First Year Undergraduate programme [QA252 New Entrants to First Year Fulltime Undergraduate Degree Programmes](#)
- b. and for students who have already completed first or subsequent years of an Undergraduate programme wishing to transfer to First Year of another Undergraduate programme [QA251 Existing University of Galway Students to First Year Undergraduate Degree Programmes](#)

Widening participation: The University's [Access Centre](#) aims to create a supportive learning environment where students who have experienced socio-economic disadvantage, students with disabilities and mature students are enabled to access and succeed in third level education. This involves a wide range of educational approaches and specialist services targeted at large numbers of students who are classified by the Higher Education Authority as 'non-traditional.'

The Access Centre helps individuals realise their educational potential irrespective of their educational background, age or personal health circumstances. It provides support for students participating on [access programmes](#), students with [disabilities](#) and [mature students](#).

In September 2019 University of Galway became a designated [University of Sanctuary](#), a movement aimed at promoting the inclusion of International Protection Applicants, refugees and Irish Travellers within the community. The Steering Committee for the movement has embedded the ethos of the Places of Sanctuary across campus with the aspiration of creating an inclusive, inviting and welcoming campus for all people. The overall aim of the University of Galway campaign is to break down the barriers for individuals regardless of their societal positioning, and offer a 'Welcome to University of Galway'.

The University of Sanctuary Campaign is led by the ethos of the Places of Sanctuary Movement: Learn, Embed, and Share. The University of Sanctuary initiative at University of Galway aims to increase public awareness of International Protection, migration and Traveller-specific topics across campus, in an effort to address the low levels of participation of underrepresented groups in third-level education. International Protection Applicants, refugees, vulnerable migrants and Irish Travellers are too frequently excluded from participation in education due to inequitable societal barriers. University of Galway aims to make its university community a much more inclusive and equitable space for all.

[Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\)](#) is a process that allows students to gain admission to a programme of study or to gain exemptions/credit from some parts of a programme, based on demonstrated learning that a student may have achieved through another programme of study, or through work or other learning experiences. RPL recognizes that knowledge and skills can be acquired from a range of learning experiences, including formal, non-formal and informal and may reduce the time and cost of study involved in completing a programme of study. Resources are available for students at the RPL website and the [Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) Policy](#).

RPL in Higher Education Project: University of Galway is one of 14 partner institutions in the **National Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Higher Education Project** and in December 2021 appointed its institutional Project Lead officer. This is a five-year project, funded by the Human Capital Initiative Pillar 3 (Innovation and Agility) and co-sponsored by the Technological Higher Education Association (THEA) and the Irish Universities Association (IUA). The project's aims are:

- i. to continue to **embed, streamline and promote RPL**;
- ii. to work with employers to **increase access and progression opportunities** in areas of skills needs and;
- iii. to **enhance the sector's capacity** to do RPL, through the development of practical tools, resource and CPD programmes.

The RPL in HE project builds on earlier University of Galway RPL practice and achievements and seeks to extend what has already been accomplished within the University. It is designed to drive RPL systematically and strategically across Irish HE in a way that has not been achieved to date. Creating the conditions for a shift in mindset regarding RPL in HE is key to unlocking and embedding a culture of lifelong learning.

A sample of additional external standards and guidelines and internal processes and Policies and Procedures related to this heading from the [Policies and Procedures Repository](#) include:

- QQI Policy on Access Transfer and Progression
- QQI Policy and Criteria for Facilitating the Academic Recognition of Foreign Qualifications
- FAIR Report: Focus on Automatic Institutional Recognition
- CAO Leaving Certificate Grading Scale and Revised Common Points Scale
- Agreed CAO entry requirements criteria for WU/EFTA Applicants, CAO Handbook
- UNIVERSITY OF Matriculation requirements
- Information on MSAP – Mature Student Application Process
- HEAR Scheme - offers places on reduced points and extra college support to school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds who are resident in the Republic of Ireland.

- DARE Scheme- Scheme that offers places for those who have a disability, have experienced additional educational challenges in second level education.
- HPAT– Medicine Entry Admissions Test
- Diploma Supplement – European Standard transcript
- [QA248 Holders of QQI Qualification](#) – Policy for the selection of QQI applicants to degree programmes
- [QA254 Occasional Students](#) – Policy for students who wish to study specific modules for a semester
- [QA228 Undergraduate Marks and Standards](#) – Governs undergraduate student progression
- [QA236 Postgraduate Marks and Standards](#) - Governs postgraduate student progression
- [QA222 Recognition of Prior Learning](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- Scholarships & Fellowships
- Student Attendance
- Guidelines for Work Placement

2.3 Procedures for Making Awards

The design, operation and evaluation of courses is guided by the University's [Academic Strategy](#). It reflects strategic priorities, national and international best practice. It applies to all University of Galway undergraduate, postgraduate (and other) programmes.

All programmes undergo a comprehensive and rigorous design and approval process. Schools and Colleges prepare [programme and module templates](#) that include programme objectives, [learning outcomes](#), progression rules, and student workloads (ECTS) and that are compliant with the [National Framework for Qualifications](#).

Supports are available through the [Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning](#) (CELT) for developing learning outcomes and aligning assessment. These include:

- [Learning Outcomes Quickguide](#)
- [Programme Outcomes Quickguide](#)

[Advice](#) is provided on designing the awards within the National Framework of Qualifications and outlines the implications on the implementation of the framework.

Assessment at University of Galway is governed by [QA277 Assessment Policy](#). [Programme Boards](#) also have oversight and responsibility for a number of key aspects of the assessment process and should ensure that all necessary requirements outlined in the policy are in place and facilitated as appropriate within the management structures/processes of their College and School.

Guidance and resources on aspects of assessment are available through the CELT website. A [Rubrics Guide](#) provides advice on how to use rubrics to clarify expectations for students performance and as learning aids prior to assessment.

Many academics at the University of Galway use self and peer-assessment, as an effective learning method for students. The [Self and Peer Assessment Guide](#) provides an overview on how Self and Peer assessment can be beneficial for both the student and lecturer.

2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Students are engaged in programmes using a variety of Policies and Procedures and supported by the [Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching \(CELT\)](#).

These Policies and Procedures describe how staff engage with the following:

- [Bologna Process](#)
- [Learning Outcomes](#)
- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Accessibility](#)
- [Attendance Requirements](#)
- [Feedback Policy](#)
- [Teaching Evaluation](#)

Different [modes of delivery](#) are encouraged and supported and using a variety of pedagogical methods that include [Canvas](#). University of Galway also provides support for a comprehensive suite of [teaching technologies](#) that includes:

- [Canvas](#)
- [Clickers - TurningPoint Cloud \(TP7\)](#)
- [Kaltura - MediaSpace](#)
- [Kaltura Video in Blackboard](#)
- [Qwickly Attendance](#)
- [Turnitin](#)
- [Video Conferencing](#)
- [Video Basics](#)
- [Mini-studio](#)

When a student registers for a module on the Student Record System, they are given access to the corresponding course on the VLE within 24 hours.

Colleges and Schools across the University have developed an extensive suite of teaching and research focussed laboratories. These laboratories extend to local industry, arts events and the local environment including archaeological sites and weather stations. Details are available within [School websites](#).

Programme assessment is dealt with through a variety of Policies and Procedures and in particular University of Galway's [Marks and Standards](#), [QA277 Assessment Policy](#) and supported by the [Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching \(CELT\)](#). The [Examinations Office](#) provide a number of Policies and Procedures related to examinations, re-checks and special circumstances. Local policies and procedures for assessment exist at the College/School or Programme level.

Policies and Procedures describe how staff engage with the following:

- [Bologna Process](#)
- [Assessment](#)

- [Attendance Requirements](#)

Teachers are made aware of a variety of [assessment methods](#) and receive support from CELT through a range of [professional development courses](#) and personal advice. This guidance includes marking criteria, formative assessment and assessment rubrics.

University of Galway offers all students the possibility to inform examiners of [mitigating circumstances](#) during the assessment process and to [appeal](#) results of the assessment process.

All programmes have marks and standards set up against them. These marks and standards ensure the same process and rules apply to all students within their programme.

External Examiners: Quality assurance and enhancement of academic standards is provided to the assessment process through annual international peer review using external examiners. The process for nominating and approving External Examiners is outlined in [QA278 Nomination and Approval of External Examiners - Taught Programmes](#). External Examiners play a vital role in assuring and enhancing academic standards of modules, programmes and awards. This role is clearly outlined in [QA005 Role of External Examiners – Taught Programmes](#).

Although primarily involved in the review of assessment grades and standards, External Examiners also provide an important consultative and advisory function in the development of modules and programmes and the enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment practices.

External Examiners review samples of exam scripts to ensure marking is in line with their expectations. All programmes go before Examination Boards, chaired by the Dean of College with representatives from the College in attendance also.

The Examination Board determines the progression of students. Students who have a concern about their results can apply to recheck or appeal their examination results.

The Dean of Students has particular responsibility for ensuring that the university structures, environment and support services underpin the educational and personal development of students. The Dean plays a lead role in the implementation of the University of Galway Strategy with particular focus on the objectives and initiatives which support the success of students in their education.

Academic Integrity: The importance of the learning culture has been captured in the University's [Academic Strategy](#) where it is set out as a key priority. The key aspects of this culture are broken down into 1) Learning 2) Curriculum and 3) Assessment. Academic Integrity is fundamental to all areas of scholarship, teaching and learning. The Strategy advocates a range of assessment instruments should be used without over reliance on a single approach (such as traditional unseen written examination papers).

University of Galway advocates a combination of education, good assessment design, and standard procedure to address issues of academic integrity. Academic staff who undertake the Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education take part in a workshop on Academic Integrity, which aims at considering academic integrity within the context of good practice in assessment design. Actions are included in the Academic Strategy to specifically address revision of policies and processes around academic integrity, plagiarism, and examinations.

Efforts to deal with the issues of academic integrity are supported through the [Academic Integrity Policy](#) and the University's Academic Integrity Officer.

A sample of additional Policies and Procedures related to this heading from the [Policies and Procedures Repository](#) include:

- QA228 Undergraduate Marks and Standards
- QA236 Postgraduate Marks and Standards
- QA235 Procedure for the Discussion, Checking and Appeal of Examination Results
- QA005 External Examiners – Taught Programmes Policy
- QA230 Procedures for dealing with breaches of Examination Regulations
- QA248 Holders of QQI Qualification – Policy for the selection of QQI applicants to the University’s degree programmes
- QA254 Occasional Students – Policy for students who wish to study specific modules for a semester or two

Other related external policies and procedures include:

- QQI Policy and Criteria for Facilitating the Academic Recognition of Foreign Qualifications
- CAO Leaving Certificate Grading Scale and Revised Common Points Scale
- Agreed CAO entry requirements criteria for WU/EFTA Applicants, CAO Handbook
- UNIVERSITY OF Matriculation requirements; Information on MSAP – Mature Student Application Process
- HEAR Scheme - offers places on reduced points and extra college support to school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds who are resident in the Republic of Ireland
- DARE Scheme- Scheme that offers places for those who have a disability, have experienced additional educational challenges in second level education.
- HPAT– Medicine Entry Admissions Test
- Diploma Supplement – European Standard transcript
- The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning - Principles of Assessment OF/FOR/AS Learning

3.0 Learner Resources and Support

Student resources and support are delivered primarily through the offices of [Student Services](#), the [Library](#), [Academic Skills Hub](#) and the [Student Registry Helpdesk](#).

Student Services: Student Services provides high quality and comprehensive non-academic support and wellbeing services for students. Student Services offers support around:

- [Access Centre](#)
- [Accommodation](#)
- [Career Development Centre](#)
- [Student Counselling](#)
- [Student Health Unit](#)
- [Clubs and Societies](#)

The services provided are supported by Policies and Procedures including:

- Students' Union Services
- Pastoral Care
- Learner Representation

- The Language Laboratory
- Placement Services
- Student Fees & Grants
- Career Development
- Accommodation Services
- Community Knowledge Initiative (CKI)

Library: The Library provides collections, training in information use and a range of spaces in its building to enable different modes of learning and research. An annual budget for information resources is allocated to provide access to books, journals, archives and other collections across all disciplines.

Library staff provide support, help and training to enable students to get to grips with the literature of their subject and the Library's resources, supporting students with their studies, research, or teaching. As well as being available for one-to-one enquiries, consultations, and [virtual workshops](#), support staff provide training sessions throughout the semester aimed at helping students identify and use the information resources they need. The training programme is also aimed at equipping students with the lifelong skills of information seeking, evaluation and use. The Library and IT Service Desk provides first level advice and support to students and staff on both Library and IT services. The Library implements a comprehensive list of policies and procedures to deliver its services and support students and staff including;

- [QA237 Open Access to Research Outputs](#)
- [QA509 Research Data Management Policy](#)
- [QA802 Collections Strategy](#)
- [QA803 Library Customer Charter 803a Cairt Chustaiméara Leabharlann Shéamais Uí Argadáin](#)
- [QA804 Donations Policy](#)
- [QA805 E-Resources Usage Policy](#)
- [QA806 Work Experience/Employment Opportunities](#)
- [QA807 Exhibiting at the Hardiman Research Building](#)
- [QA807a Hardiman Research Building Exhibition Proposal Form](#)
- [QA815 Long Term Print Journal Archive Policy](#)
- [QA816 Borrowing and Fines Policy](#)
- [QA817 Library Laptop Loan Scheme](#)
- [QA818 Library Open Press Takedown Policy](#)
- [QA819 Archival Collections Acquisition Policy](#)
- [QA820 Self Service Charging Lockers Policy](#)
- [QA821 Digital Preservation Policy](#)
- [QA822 Accessing the Library](#)

The Library has developed a comprehensive strategy, [Library Strategy – Preserving the Past, Enabling the Future](#), the five themes of which are:

- Being Digital: maximise opportunities afforded by online collections, technology enriched spaces, and emerging technologies.
- Opening Scholarship: make University research outputs, educational resources and heritage collections globally and openly available.
- Inspiring Learning: inspire learning by transforming the Library building to promote community and engagement.

- Driving Research: drive research through expert staff, digital infrastructures and collections in print and online.
- Sustaining Excellence: ensure a supportive culture for staff and users, promoting diversity and operating sustainably.

Academic Skills Hub: The [Academic Skills Hub](#) aims to support all University of Galway students to develop the key skills required for academic success. Students are made aware of resources to support their learning through an [online hub](#) which also signposts specific training sessions throughout the academic year. These are in addition to programme specific supports. The adequacy of resources are determined annually by analysing the response of students to questions related to the Supportive Environment in the [studentsurvey.ie](#).

First year students are informed at Orientation, through general and College-specific sessions, of the learner supports available to them. They are provided with a Student Guide which outlines these supports and each first year student is enrolled in a The Learning Centre on Blackboard. The development of the Academic Skills Hub brings all the resources together in one place and ensures that different learner support/resource units benefit from networking.

Supports include:

- IT and Digital skills available online
- [Academic Writing Centre](#) - the Academic Writing Centre which offers one-to-one tutorials on writing skills to over 500 students annually
- [Support for Undergraduate Maths Students \(SUMS\)](#) – a free drop-in centre for undergraduate students where tutors provide support for any area of Mathematics and Statistics
- [Computer DISC \(Drop-In Support Centre\)](#) supports students from all Schools and Colleges with self-directed learning in computing programming and computer related topics and in addition to supports provided by the [Information Solutions and Services](#).
- [Céim](#) - CÉIM supports first year students to transition successfully to University of Galway, make friends and create connections within their subject area, develop a sense of belonging, gain a greater understanding of coursework and ultimately proceed to second year.

Student Registry Helpdesk: The Student Registry Helpdesk offers supports that interface between students and administration services including access, transfer and progression, admissions and examinations.

4.0 QA of Research Activities and Programmes

University of Galway places a strong emphasis on quality impactful research and the quality of training provided to researchers. Relevant national and international standards and guidelines are reflected in our Policies and Procedures and post-graduate research programmes.

The objective of the **Graduate Studies Office** is to enhance postgraduate research in the University. The **Graduate Studies Board** considers all research degree programmes, and changes to the University Guidelines for Research Degree Programmes and makes recommendations to the Standing Committee of Academic Council. The Board is chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

The [Research Office](#), [Graduate Studies](#) and [Innovation Office](#) teams provide a variety of Policies and Procedures for all aspects of University of Galway's research activities. These Policies and Procedures include codes of practice for [research degree programmes](#), [Research Integrity](#), [Intellectual Property Policy](#), governance and open access.

The Research Integrity Policy is aligned to the revised European Code for Research Integrity. As well as revised changes to the relevant national policy, it outlines the procedure for dealing with allegations of research misconduct, and for the first time, in a University of Galway Policy, defines the role of the Research Integrity Officer in dealing with such allegations.

The National Forum on Research Integrity (of which University of Galway is a member) agreed to publish annually a consolidated report about investigations of research misconduct undertaken within the research performing organisations (RPOs) in the preceding calendar year. The Forum agreed that each RPO would report annually in confidence to the National Forum Secretariat with the following information:

- The number of research misconduct investigations concluded in the calendar year;
- The number of said research misconduct investigations where the allegations were upheld;
- An overview of the types of misconduct (based on the OECD definitions included in the National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland).

Integrity training continues to be supported by the RDC using the Epigeum (Oxford University Press) online course materials – this training is mandatory for researchers working on most of the nationally funded projects.

A key mechanism in the implementation and evaluation of quality research is the Institutional Review of Research Performance (IRRP). The overall aim of IRRP2016 was to enhance research performance at University of Galway and to comply with the *Irish Universities Act* for a peer review of research quality. Planning for IRRP 2024 is well advanced.

Research activity takes place within Schools and Colleges of the University and through Research Institutes/Centres. Every Researcher (academic, contract researcher, PhD student) is aligned to a School. Research Institutes or Centres have a primary affiliation with a College or School and are not stand-alone entities. Therefore, in all instances, a reporting relationship exists between a Research Institute or Centre and a College or School, and the reporting line is Principal Investigator (PI), Head of School, Dean of College and President.

The Researcher Development Centre (RDC) is supported by the Offices of the VP for Research and Innovation and the Dean of Graduate Studies, for the specific purpose of providing support and continuing professional development opportunities for researchers at University of Galway.

The RDC mission is to create and foster a culture of continuing professional development (CPD) for researchers; to enable researchers to identify and achieve a range of skills suited to their personal career pathway; to signpost opportunities for researchers both within and beyond academia and to measure the impact of such training/CPD.

The RDC fully supports the EU MISSION ‘to facilitate the development of R1 and R2 researchers to become fully aware of their possible career trajectories and the existing range of career development opportunities open to them, thereby enabling them to make training and occupational choices and to take personal responsibility for the management of their own career.

The RDC aims to ensure that all researchers have a Personal Development Plan, mentoring support, training and professional development opportunities, career support and advice. The RDC has developed a specific [website](#) for researchers, a [Researcher Handbook](#) to help guide staff and a [training portal](#) for researchers to register, attend and keep their training records online for personal access.

The Research Committee reports to Academic Council and is tasked with advising on the implementation of the University’s Research Strategy as embodied in the University’s Strategic Plan. A key objective of Research Committee is to keep under review, policies on research matters and address short comings and anomalies so as to facilitate quality research activities within the University. Each College is represented on the Committee by a Vice-Dean for Research and each Research Institute is represented by its Director. Each College has in place its own Research Committee, chaired by its Vice-Dean for Research. The [Policy on the Governance and Management of Designated Research Institutes](#) provides a framework for the governance and management of University of Galway’s five designated Research Institutes and details the role and composition of an Institute Advisory Board, an Institute-University Board, and an Institute Executive Management Team.

The [Research Ethics Committee](#) is responsible for safeguarding the health, welfare, and rights of human subjects and researchers in research studies, and to afford dignity to the handling and treatment of biological materials, taking into account the scientific procedures and concerns of the local community. The [Animal Care Research Ethics Committee](#) is responsible for facilitating compliance with relevant legislation, ensuring that University of Galway operates to best international standards in any research or teaching involving live animals. Both of these committees are administered through the Research Office.

The Research Office is responsible for verifying eligibility for funder programmes at the pre-proposal stage and endorsing applications for submission to external funders. The [Office of the Vice President of Research and Innovation](#) is also responsible for reviewing and accepting contracts and initiating the set-up of research accounts. To ensure that all research projects are fully costed, University of Galway has in place a requirement that all budget requests in excess of €50K must be reviewed and approved by the Research Accounts Office prior to submission to the funder.

For the most part, the external funder has an important role in the oversight of research activity and through the PI, the University, is contractually bound for the effective and compliant management of the research grant. In meeting the contractual commitments and technical and financial reporting requirements, the PI is supported by the Research Office, the Research Accounts Office, the Technology Transfer Office (TTO), the Procurement Office, Human Resources and other units. Controls in place to ensure project delivery and the overall quality of the research include project oversight or steering groups with funder representatives, Governance Committees, and rigorous financial audits.

The Technology Transfer Office is responsible for the management of the University’s Intellectual Property (IP) and for all negotiations, evaluation, marketing, licensing, assignment and disposal of this IP. The TTO is also responsible, together with the Secretary of the University for assessing cases under the *Conflict of Interest and Conflicts of Commitments* Policy. In 2017, University of Galway contributed to the HEA-commissioned review of Intellectual Property Management and Conflicts of Interest.

A sample of additional Policies and Procedures related to this heading from the [Policies and Procedures Repository](#):

- Code of Good Practice in Research

- Code of Policy and Procedures for Investigating Allegations of Research Misconduct
- QA506 Governance and Management of Research Institutes
- Financial Policy and Procedures Manual Contract Research
- QA512 Research Ethics Committee
- QA500 Animal Care Research Ethics Committee
- QA413 Conflict of Interests and Conflict of Committees
- QA507 Intellectual Property Policy
- Budget sign off
- QA245 University Guidelines for Research Degree Programmes
- QQI Statutory QA Guidelines for Research Degree programmes
- National Framework for Doctoral Education
- National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland
- Inspiring Partnerships – the National IP (Intellectual Property) Protocol Data Management Policy

5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support

[Human Resources](#) (HR) and the [Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching](#) (CELT) have developed a comprehensive range of Policies and Procedures for all aspects of teaching and research throughout the employment lifecycle of teaching staff. HR has developed many Policies and Procedures that [support staff during employment](#) to [staff development](#) and on to [end of employment](#). In addition, CELT offer staff a number of Policies and Procedures that support [learning, teaching and assessment](#). An [Academic Practice Framework](#) has been developed within which modules and qualifications provided by CELT are situated. This offers a range of modules which can either be taken on a 'standalone' basis or combined to build up a series of professional, postgraduate qualifications.

The National Forum's [National Professional Development Framework for all Staff who Teaching in Higher Education in Ireland](#) is being adopted for continuous professional development for staff, through CELT.

The [President's Awards for Excellence in Teaching](#) recognise outstanding efforts of teaching staff to ensure University of Galway students receive the highest quality learning experience. The scheme was reviewed in 2018 and awards are made at both College and University levels.

The [Graduate Studies Office](#) offers staff training on [research supervision](#) and the Researcher Development Centre continues to provide support for the training and career development needs of University of Galway's Research Communities.

University of Galway operates a comprehensive communication network mainly through committees that involve comprehensive reports that are circulated to all staff. The University also has an internal staff newsletter and many opportunities for staff to engage in discussions surrounding teaching and learning through conferences, seminars and training workshops.

A sample of the many additional Policies and Procedures related to this heading from the [Policies and Procedures Repository](#):

- Equality and Diversity
- Further Education Policy
- Sabbatical Leave
- Carer's Leave

- Temporary Absences
- Transition to University Teacher (Grade II)
- Triennial Travel Grant (Academic Staff)
- Unpaid Leave of Absence for Academic Staff

Staff Development

All Staff members have access to support and opportunities for development based on a voluntary approach to the identification of their continuing professional training and development needs.

An internal system of support for newly recruited and newly-qualified staff, or staff with minimal experience in operation in terms of Induction, Probation and Professional/personal development also exists. An annual staff training programme is available to all staff alongside funding supports including the [Further Education Scheme Policy](#) (FEP) to support all staff to engage in further education programmes, supporting both their professional and personal development, funded by the University.

Staff Recruitment

Policies and Procedures for recruitment address:

1. Roles, responsibilities and codes of conduct
2. Academic/professional/technical standards for all staff
3. Pedagogical standards for teaching staff
4. Benchmarking staff profiles (at programme level) with those of similar providers
5. Recruitment, selection, probation and tenure
6. Collection and use of regular and timely learner and other relevant feedback
7. Pedagogical training and certification of teaching staff
8. Performance management
9. Probation for new staff
10. Induction for new staff

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

In accordance with the recommendations of the University of Galway Gender Equality Task Force 2016, the University has put in place a cohesive governance structure to guarantee clear and consistent leadership, responsibility, accountability, and oversight of equality, diversity, and inclusion.

The structures put in place allow for information to flow from local School or Unit level through the appropriate committee and into the Governing Authority. There are two Institutional EDI Committees - [The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Campus Committee](#) was established in 2016, and following from that, the [Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Human Resources Committee](#) of Údarás na hOllscoile (Governing Authority) was established in May 2017. The remit of the EDI Committee has since been expanded to include HR matters - accordingly, the title of the committee is changed to EDIHRC. Both of these committees work toward progressing the equality agenda in all areas at University of Galway. You can find out more about their work, membership, and remit by reviewing the information available on this website.

The [structures at College, School, and Unit level](#) continue to progress, with development of local EDI committees and the introduction of College Vice-Deans for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

The EDI governance structure is supported by extensive training and development opportunities in the following areas:

- [Race Equality](#)
- [EDI in Higher Education](#)
- [Unconscious bias training](#)
- [Women’s Leadership Development Programme](#)
- [Work/life balance](#)
- [Equal Opportunity](#)
- [Inclusion Training Programmes](#)

An extensive suite of [policies and procedures](#) has also been developed including:

- [QA152 Equal Opportunities](#)
- [QA153 Equality Impact Assessment Guidelines \(Equality Impact Assessment Form\)](#)
- [QA155 Staff Guide to Disability in the Workplace](#)
- [QA181 Gender Identity and Gender Expression](#)
- [QA414 Protected Disclosure](#)
- [QA182 Universal Design and Accessibility Policy](#)

Equal Opportunity Grants are available to support the implementation of the [EDI Strategy](#):

- [QA154 Athena Swan Mid-Career Lecturer Research Capacity Building Grant 2022 \(QA154 - Appendix 1 - APPLICATION FORM\)](#)
- [QA151 Research Grant for Returning Academic Carers](#)
- [Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Project Fund](#)

Widening Participation Committee: Established in 2020, University of Galway’s Widening Participation (WP) Committee is a sub-Committee of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Campus Committee (EDICC). This committee works specifically towards progressing the WP agenda in all areas of the University. The governance structure for this committee is as follows

One of the initial tasks of the WP Committee was to establish an agreed upon definition of WP for the institution, which would capture three key elements:

1. WP is about creating a more inclusive environment for students who would be traditionally regarded as underrepresented in Higher Education
2. WP involves a set of policies and activities developed to improve
3. These WP activities and policies take place across the full student lifecycle: Pre-entry, transition, post-entry, and employment.

Accordingly, WP may be defined as follows:

“Widening participation refers to a set of policies and activities which aim to create a more inclusive environment for students who would traditionally be regarded as underrepresented in higher education. These activities cover the full duration of the student lifecycle: pre-entry, transition, post-entry, and employability.

Purpose of Widening Participation Committee: The Widening Participation (WP) Committee will promote, advise, and monitor the University’s strategic plans on widening access and participation for the identified learner cohorts.

The University has committed to the above flagship actions by 2025. The Access Centre (AC) and the Centre for Adult Learning and Professional Development (CALPD) will contribute to these goals, however further progress is dependent on the leadership provided by a strategically focused WP committee to embed the goals of widening access and participation into all aspects of the University's work.

The University of Galway WP Committee will identify issues and propose actions pertaining to the University's policies and practices vis-a-vis under-represented student cohorts from pre-entry to successful completion, for e.g.

- school leavers from socio-economically dis-advantaged backgrounds
- students with disabilities
- Mature Students
- Travellers
- adults beginning their higher education
- those studying on a flexible, part-time basis
- people who wish to continue learning and pursue intellectual enrichment and fulfilment.

The WP Committee will report at least once per year to the University Management Team (UMT) and EDI Committees and input into the HEA compact and National Access planning processes.

Staff Communication

Effective two-way internal communications is vital to the promotion of a culture of quality throughout any organisation, particularly one as large and diverse as the University of Galway. The University is committed to internal self-monitoring and ensuring that staff are kept informed of issues, changes and enhancements to our work practices.

The University's Internal Communications Officer works with colleagues across campus to provide a cycle of internal communications aimed at staff. These channels are used to raise awareness of changing work practices and policies, and to celebrate success and achievement across the wide range of University activities. They include:

1. An Dialann: weekly staff news and events ezine
2. Ollscéala: quarterly staff magazine
3. Campus screen network
4. Presidential All-Staff Addresses
5. Staff Calendar system

6.0 Information and Data Management

University of Galway operates a number of learner information systems supported by comprehensive information systems services and supports. The Quercus student record system is the provider and consumer of data to and from a number of other University information systems, including, [Canvas](#), Campus Account Self Service (CASS), [Akari](#), OAS, Email (Microsoft Active Directory), Discoverer and Microsoft Dynamics CRM.

Quercus provides integrated data and data archives for:

1. Student Records
2. Registration Records
3. Exam Records
4. Graduation Records

DANte, a Business Intelligence/Data Analytics solution, was developed using the Microsoft PowerBI reporting tool to support strategic decision making for University staff. DANte offers a single University of Galway facility for both tabular and attractive visual reporting based on a range of data sources including student and staff records (Quercus & CoreHR), financial data (Agresso) and some data from other systems including Blackboard and Wi-Fi records. Some reports integrate data from a range of sources. Other information systems provided and supported by University of Galway are available through the Information Systems [service catalogue](#).

Research Metrics are centrally managed through the [Institutional Research Information System \(IRIS\)](#) that supports the quality enhancement of activities such as research funding, publications, PhD performance and teaching workloads. The [impact of QA activities](#) is measured by a specific set of KPIs that are also used in the development of self-assessment reports used during quality review.

Quality Review data is provided by the [Quality Office](#) who publish results of all quality reviews and action plans. The Quality Office Intranet manages data related to Reviewers and External Examiners and reports related to the University's External Examination Process.

Financial Data on areas such as student fees, capital investments, budgeting and financial planning is provided by the [Bursars Office](#) and informs decisions by Schools around programme development and enhancement. The Bursars Office also provides data on research funding.

Library resources includes [ARAN](#) a digital collection of open access scholarly publications. Authors of peer reviewed articles and peer-reviewed conference papers resulting from research carried out at University of Galway must deposit a copy in the ARAN repository. ARAN enables easy discovery of University of Galway publications through global search engines such as Google and complements [IRIS](#) by linking from author profiles to the full text of University publications.

Information Solutions and Services

The Information Solutions and Services unit provides IT services to the entire University. IT change projects are delivered using key elements of the PRINCE 2 methodology.

Development: ISS has established a governance process based around the University IT Strategy and its programmes. High level governance is provided by the Information Technology Planning and Priorities Committee (chaired by the Chief Operating Officer). This is underpinned by a series of programme boards and associated project boards. ISS operates a Change Review Board to manage the initiation of all projects and 'small changes'. Where a project/change results in a release of software or configuration change the change must be approved at the ISS Release Management Board before being put into production. Evidence of appropriate user testing and signoff is required by the Board.

Operations: ISS has developed a defined Service Catalogue. Public facing services have a customer facing service definition published on the [ISS website](#). For each service a Service Delivery Plan has been developed. Incidents and service requests are tracked against the individual services. All logged tickets are assigned to technicians for resolution. Service targets have been established for fulfilment of Service Requests against a number of services. Escalation procedures are defined. Security incidents are notified to the IT Security Committee and all critical incidents are managed through the Critical Incident process. The ISS Service Group meets monthly, chaired by

the Assistant Director for Operations, to review service targets and review major incidents. Below is a sample list of a large number of policies, procedures, processes and IT systems:

- QA404 Password Policy
- QA405 Partnering Policy
- QA406 Remote Access Policy
- QA407 IT Asset Protection Policy
- QA408 Logical Access Policy

QA Record Maintenance and Retention

Most records related to the quality review process are made publicly available through the Quality Office website. Records available to the public include policies and procedures, review schedules, review reports and actions plans, review team names and affiliations and quality enhancements. Evidence is provided by publicly accessing records through the Quality Office website. Non-public records are available through the Quality Office intranet.

Data Protection

University of Galway holds a large amount of personal data to perform its various functions and takes its obligations to protect personal data very seriously. The University has developed a Data Protection Policy, A Data Breach Procedure and a Record Retention Policy. Staff are supported through Data Protection training both online and in person. The University Data Protection website provides a suite of resources and guides to assist staff and students in their daily affairs.

Freedom of Information

The University is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2014 (the “FOI Act”) which provides a legal right of access to records held by the University. The FOI Act also sets out rules and procedures to be followed by public bodies when a request is received.

University of Galway operates a [Freedom of Information Office](#) for servicing information requests from students, staff and the public. Responsibility to comply with FOI requests received is delegated to the Head of School or Head of Unit (or nominee), to act as local decision makers with overall responsibility for the initial decision on FOI requests from their School or Unit, i.e. to decide whether to release all the records, partially release the records or deny access. Advice is provided by the University Freedom of Information team. Timelines involved in processing an FOI request are reflective of the time obligations imposed by the *FOI Act* which provides that requests, save for limited circumstances, must be responded to within four weeks.

The University is acutely aware of its duties in relation to Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation. The Office of the Chief Operating Officer oversees compliance in these areas. Freedom of Information and Data Protection requirements are overseen by the Chief Operating Officer, the Data Protection Officer, the University Solicitor and an Administrative Assistant.

A sample of policies in place regarding [Data Protection](#) include the following:

1. QA400 Data Protection

2. QA401 Data Handling
3. QA402 Data Classification
4. QA412 Student Data Usage
5. Data Breach Procedure
6. QA442 Record Retention Policy
7. GDPR Training provided to key units and to Unit/Department Heads and Administrative Officers.

Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are provided by the [Institutional Research Office \(IRO\)](#) and are used extensively throughout University of Galway and during quality reviews. These indicators, developed from [Strategy 2020 – 2025](#), include data on student population profiles, student progression, student completion rates, international and non-traditional student participation, and career paths, as well as a wide range of research performance data. Indicators are also informed by University and Subject Area ranking schemes, in particular those developed by [THE](#) and [QS](#) University ranking agencies.

The [Institutional Research Office](#) prepares a number of management information reports to senior management, Colleges and Schools to fulfil the principles relating to data to inform self-monitoring, planning and help feed into the internal quality assurance system. For example, regular reports prepared and disseminated by the Office of Planning & Institutional Research include:

1. Annual Key Performance Indicator reports for the overall University, each College and each School, with historic data including data on research performance, student body composition, International students, non-traditional students and retention rates for the annual operational planning process to help inform the Annual Operational Planning process.
2. Market Analysis reports detailing CAO applicants, their demographic and national trends and demand at key points during the year
3. Annual StudentSurvey.ie report – analysis and dissemination of the annual studentsurvey.ie, for the University, each College and programme each year. Includes national benchmarking data.
4. HEA institutional profile each year, detailing a number of staff and student metrics including forecast profiles to help inform University's progress of HEA Compact targets.
5. Annual international QS Subject Ranking analysis including Scival benchmarking and research metrics
6. Provision of bibliometric research data from SciVal and the KPIs for the Institutional Review of Research Performance process, internal promotion and external hiring processes.
7. Annual analysis of PHD cohort, completion rates and times for Graduate Studies
8. Biannual PGRstudentsurvey and action plans

Student Satisfaction and Feedback data are developed from results of the national [studentsurvey.ie](#) and University of Galway's student feedback policy ([QA221 Feedback on Modules and Programmes](#)) where all staff receive and act on student feedback. Studentsurvey.ie participation and [results analysis](#) is carried out by the Planning and Institutional Research Office. Other survey data collected include surveys of Graduates, First Year Students, International Students, Graduate Employment and Facilities.

7.0 Public Information and Communication

University of Galway has a policy of providing a wide variety of Teaching, Research and QA related information to the public. This is done mainly through the comprehensive [public website](#) including websites of all its Schools, Colleges and Student Services. Other mechanisms include information booklets and press releases from the [Press and Information Office](#).

Publicly accessible information includes results of all [Quality Reviews](#) and access to publicly available [Policies and Procedures](#). Academic staff also use the Library's publicly accessible [ARAN repository](#) for research publications. Other information is available under [Freedom of Information](#).

A sample of other information sources are outlined below for illustration with links provided.

1. [Programmes and Modules](#)
2. [Research](#)
3. [Library Collections](#)

Cois Coiribe

The first of its kind in Ireland, *Cois Coiribe* is University of Galway's online publishing platform for views and opinions from our top academics and university community. We offer a window to the world of ground-breaking research, cutting-edge innovation and expert insight.

The Content Unit collaborates with all Colleges, the Research Office and Research Institutes and Centres to develop a dynamic programme of content which showcases the impact and scale of their research.

This aim aligns with the objective outlined on page 35 of the *University of Galway Strategy 2020-2025*: "We will develop a compelling content programme to showcase the outcomes and impact of our research and innovation, nationally and internationally."

Aims

- Drive quality engagement with exciting, multimedia content.
- Offer content and design that mirrors academic excellence.
- Extend reach, plugging into other media platforms such as *The Conversation*.
- Respond to a gap in the Irish market for expert views and opinions from a reputable university.
- To elevate our position in rankings and increase student numbers.

8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review

University of Galway has a number of key policies related to self-evaluation and monitoring and that include the topics [Quality Review \(QR\)](#), [Operational Planning](#), [External Examinations](#) and [Student Feedback](#). Specific [Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures](#) related to this heading are listed below and available from the Quality Office:

1. QA001 Quality Assurance
2. QA002 Policies and Procedures
3. QA003 Review of Schools

4. QA004 Review of Research Performance
5. QA005 The Role of External Examiners (Taught)
6. QA007 Operational Plans
7. QA008 Programme Boards
8. QA009 Review of Linked Providers
9. QA012 Review of Research Institutes
10. QA013 Review of Services

The QR process is comprehensive and involves key steps around self-assessment, benchmarking, independent peer review, stakeholder interviews and surveys, recommendations for quality enhancement and action planning.

The independent peer review process begins with the selection of expert panelists, examiners and authenticators from similar organisations outside Ireland who are prepared to declare their ability to maintain confidentiality, that they have no deep or long-standing relationships with the unit being assessed and that they have received gender bias training. All panelists, examiners and authenticators receive payment for their services in return for providing value to the University in terms of a thorough and comprehensive review of quality and statements of recommended changes that will enhance quality.

QA001 Quality Assurance and QA002 Policies and Procedures guide the development of all Policies and Procedures in use across University of Galway. The majority of Policies and Procedures follow the P&P template that aids policy writers in the design of Policies and Procedures that improve communication, encourage revision and lower risk. Most Policies and Procedures are made available to the public in a variety of formats through the University's website.

Programme Review

All Taught Programmes (e.g. BSc, MSc) must be reviewed in compliance with [QA006 Review of Taught Programmes](#). Programmes must also be monitored by Programme Boards and External Examiners annually in compliance with [QA005 External Examiners \(Taught\)](#). Taught Programmes may be reviewed at least once every seven years in compliance with [QA006 Review of Taught Programmes](#). Some Taught Programmes may be reviewed by professional, regulatory or statutory bodies (PRSBs) and in compliance with [QA244 Accredited Programmes](#) and are deemed to have met compliance with QA006 above. All new and major changes to Taught Programmes are approved by the Academic Council Standing Committee.

Monitoring Student Feedback

Student feedback is vital to maintaining the quality of our teaching. Students are surveyed across all modules, and this feedback is collated and shared with academic colleagues at a College, School and Discipline level. All modules and programmes are required to conduct student feedback either mid or end of term. The policy [QA221: Feedback on Modules and Programmes](#) requires all academic staff to gather student feedback, create and implement action plans and communicate changes to students typically in the following year. The process is independently monitored by the Head of School or nominee (e.g. Head of Discipline) and annual compliance reports can be requested by the Deputy President and Registrar. The University is a strong supporter of the [studentsurvey.ie](#) and consistently performs well against other Irish Universities in our participation rates. The University produces reports on the [studentsurvey.ie](#) indices at a College and programme level, which are presented to Academic Council and filtered down to staff through their College.

9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties

9.1 Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

Type of arrangement	Total Number
PRSBs	36
Awarding bodies	0
QA bodies	0

1. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Engineers Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	BE (Energy Systems Engineering)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	01/11/2027

2. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Engineers Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	BE (Biomedical Engineering) ME (Biomedical Engineering)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	01/11/2027

3. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Engineers Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	BE (Civil Engineering) BE (Electrical & Electronic Engineering) BE (Electronic & Computer Engineering) BE (Mechanical) ME in Civil Engineering ME (Mechanical)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	01/01/2027

4. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Engineers Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	ME in Electrical & Electronic Engineering
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	01/11/2027

5. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Engineers Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	ME in Electronic & Computer Engineering ME in Energy Systems Engineering
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	01/11/2027

6. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Engineers Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	ME in Mechanical Engineering
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	01/01/2027

7. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Engineers Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc Hons in Computer Science & Information Technology
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	31/08/2028

8. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	NMBI
Programme titles and links to publications	Honours Bachelor of Nursing Science (Mental Health) Honours Bachelor of Midwifery Science Honours Bachelor of Nursing Science (General)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/06/2021
Date of next review	01/06/2026

9. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	NMBI
Programme titles and links to publications	Higher Diploma in Midwifery
Date of accreditation or last review	25/06/2019
Date of next review	25/06/2024

10. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	NMBI

Programme titles and links to publications	Certificate in Nursing (Nurse/Midwife Prescribing)
Date of accreditation or last review	15/03/2021
Date of next review	15/03/2026

11. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	NMBI
Programme titles and links to publications	Master of Health Sciences Nursing (Education) Postgraduate Diploma in Nursing (Education)
Date of accreditation or last review	12/10/2021
Date of next review	01/02/2026

12. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	NMBI
Programme titles and links to publications	Postgraduate Diploma in Nursing/Midwifery (Advanced Practice with Prescribing)* Master of Health Sciences (Advanced Practice Nursing/Midwifery with Prescribing) (Consortium with UCC, UCD, UL and Trinity College)
Date of accreditation or last review	15/03/2021
Date of next review	15/03/2026

13. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	NMBI
Programme titles and links to publications	Masters in Health Sciences (Acute Medicine) Masters in Health Sciences (Emergency Care) Master/Postgraduate Diploma of Health Sciences (Intensive Care) Master/Postgraduate Diploma of Health Sciences (Perioperative) Master/Postgraduate Diploma of Health Sciences (Gerontology) Masters in Health Sciences (Children's Palliative & Complex Care) Master/Postgraduate Diploma in Health Sciences (Wound Healing & Tissue Repair) Masters/Postgraduate Diploma of Health Sciences (Diabetes) Masters/Postgraduate Diploma of Health Sciences (Obesity)
Date of accreditation or last review	02/06/2021

Date of next review	02/06/2026
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14. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	NMBI
Programme titles and links to publications	Master/Postgraduate Diploma of Health Sciences (Oncology & Haematology)
Date of accreditation or last review	29/05/2021
Date of next review	29/03/2026

15. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	NMBI
Programme titles and links to publications	Master/Postgraduate Diploma of Health Sciences (Public Health Nursing)
Date of accreditation or last review	24/03/2021
Date of next review	24/03/2026

16. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Royal Society of Chemistry
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc Biopharmaceutical Chemistry (Level 8) BSc Chemistry (Level 8)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2024
Date of next review	01/09/2029

17. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Teaching Council
Programme titles and links to publications	Undergraduate (UG) Bachelor of Arts (Mathematics & Education) Bachelor of Arts Education (Computer Science & Mathematical Studies)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	01/01/2027

18. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Teaching Council
Programme titles and links to publications	Graduate/Postgraduate (PG) Professional Master of Education Máistir Gairmiúil san Oideachas

Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	01/01/2027

19. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Psychological Society of Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc Psychology
Date of accreditation or last review	01/09/2019
Date of next review	01/09/2024

20. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Psychological Society of Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc in Applied Behaviour Analysis
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2026

21. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Psychological Society of Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	HDip Psychology (full and conversion)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2019
Date of next review	01/01/2024

22. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Psychological Society of Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc/PG Dip in Health Psychology
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2026

23. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Psychological Society of Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	Doctor of Clinical Psychology/for Applied Clinicians
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2026

24. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	CORU
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc Speech and Language Therapy

Date of accreditation or last review	01/07/2020
Date of next review	01/07/2025

25. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Irish Association of Speech & Language Therapists of Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc Speech and Language Therapy
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2017
Date of next review	01/01/2025

26. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Association of Occupational Therapists of Ireland (AOTI)
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc in Occupational Therapy
Date of accreditation or last review	01/09/2020
Date of next review	01/09/2027

27. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	CORU
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc in Occupational Therapy
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2026

28. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	International Union of Health Promotion & Education
Programme titles and links to publications	MA in Health Promotion
Date of accreditation or last review	01/04/2020
Date of next review	01/04/2025

29. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	International Union of Health Promotion & Education
Programme titles and links to publications	Post Graduate Diploma in Health Promotion
Date of accreditation or last review	01/04/2020
Date of next review	01/04/2025

30. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	College of Podiatry UK, The Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists of Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	B.Sc. (Hons.) Podiatric Medicine
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	31/08/2024

31. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc Strategy, Innovation and People Management
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2024
Date of next review	01/01/2025

32. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc Human Resource Management
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2024
Date of next review	01/01/2025

33. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Association of MBAs (AMBA)
Programme titles and links to publications	Executive MBA
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	01/01/2027

34. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	The Medical Council
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Medicine (MB) of Surgery (BCh) and of Obstetrics (BAO)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2023
Date of next review	31/08/2028

35. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Parlaimint na hEorpa / European Parliament - DG LINC & DG SCIC

Programme titles and links to publications	MA (Ateangaireacht Chomhdhála / Conference Interpreting)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2023

36. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Chartered Accountants Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	Master of Accounting
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2024
Date of next review	01/01/2025

37. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Chartered Accountants Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	B Commerce, B Comm (Accounting) & B Comm (Global Experience), B Comm (Gaeilge), B Comm (International with French), B Comm (International with German), B Comm (International with Spanish)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2024
Date of next review	01/01/2025

38. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)
Programme titles and links to publications	B Commerce, B Comm (Accounting) & B Comm (Global Experience), B Comm (Gaeilge), B Comm (International with French), B Comm (International with German), B Comm (International with Spanish)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2024
Date of next review	01/01/2025

39. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA)
Programme titles and links to publications	B Commerce, B Comm (Accounting) & B Comm (Global Experience), B Comm (Gaeilge), B Comm (International with French), B Comm (International with German), B Comm (International with Spanish)

Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2024
Date of next review	01/01/2025

40. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Irish Taxation Institute
Programme titles and links to publications	B Commerce, B Comm (Accounting) & B Comm (Global Experience), B Comm (Gaeilge), B Comm (International with French), B Comm (International with German), B Comm (International with Spanish)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2024
Date of next review	01/01/2025

41. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Certified Public Accountants (CPA)
Programme titles and links to publications	B Commerce, B Comm (Accounting) & B Comm (Global Experience), B Comm (Gaeilge), B Comm (International with French), B Comm (International with German), B Comm (International with Spanish)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2024
Date of next review	01/01/2025

42. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Certified Public Accountants (CPA)
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc International Accounting & Analytics
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2024
Date of next review	01/01/2025

43. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc International Accounting & Analytics
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2024
Date of next review	01/01/2025

44. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Chartered Accountants Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc Corporate Finance
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	01/01/2023

45. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc Corporate Finance
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2024
Date of next review	01/01/2025

46. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	EPAS
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc (Business Information Systems)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	01/01/2027

47. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	AACSB
Programme titles and links to publications	School of Business and Economics
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2026

48. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	The Association for Health Promotion Ireland (AHPI)
Programme titles and links to publications	Specialist Certificate in Health Promotion (Youth Health)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2020
Date of next review	01/01/2025

49. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	The Association for Health Promotion Ireland (AHPI)
Programme titles and links to publications	PgCert (Health Promotion [Cardiovascular Health and Diabetes Prevention])

Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2020
Date of next review	01/01/2025

50. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	The Association for Health Promotion Ireland (AHPI)
Programme titles and links to publications	PgCert (Health Promotion [Workplace Wellness])
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2020
Date of next review	01/01/2025

51. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	The Association for Health Promotion Ireland (AHPI)
Programme titles and links to publications	PgCert (Health Promotion [Mental Health Promotion])
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2020
Date of next review	01/01/2025

52. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Institute & Faculty of Actuaries
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc Financial Mathematics & Economics
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2020
Date of next review	31/08/2024

53. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Department of Education & Skills
Programme titles and links to publications	PG Diploma Special Educational Needs
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2023
Date of next review	01/01/2024

54. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	DES. Centre for School Leadership
Programme titles and links to publications	Professional Diploma in School Leadership Dioploma Gairmiúil i gCeannaireacht Scoile (Joint degree with UL, UCD & University of Galway)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2025

55. Type of arrangement	PRSB
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Name of body:	Department of Children & Youth Affairs
Programme titles and links to publications	BA Hons in Early Childhood Studies & Practice
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2028

56. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	CORU
Programme titles and links to publications	MA (Social Work)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2017
Date of next review	01/01/2027

57. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	The Honorable Society of King's Inns
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Laws (LLB)
Date of accreditation or last review	30/06/2023
Date of next review	01/07/2031

58. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	CORU
Programme titles and links to publications	B.Sc. (Hons.) Podiatric Medicine
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	01/01/2027

59. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	CORU
Programme titles and links to publications	BA Social Care
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2026

60. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	AHPI
Programme titles and links to publications	Specialist Certificate in Health Promotion (Youth Mental Health)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2020
Date of next review	01/01/2025

61. Type of arrangement	PRSB
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Name of body:	Institution of Occupational Safety & Health UK
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc (Environmental Health & Safety)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/03/2022
Date of next review	01/03/2027

62. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Institute of Physics
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc Physics
Date of accreditation or last review	27/03/2023
Date of next review	27/03/2025

63. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Institute of Physics
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc Science GY301 (*Physics and Climate Physics & *Physics and Applied Physics)
Date of accreditation or last review	27/03/2015
Date of next review	27/03/2023

64. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	British Occupational Hygiene Society
Programme titles and links to publications	HDip Occupational & Environmental Health & Safety
Date of accreditation or last review	01/09/2016
Date of next review	01/09/2024

65. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Irish Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland (Category 2)
Programme titles and links to publications	HDip Occupational & Environmental Health & Safety
Date of accreditation or last review	01/03/2022
Date of next review	01/03/2027

66. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Institution of Occupational Safety & Health UK
Programme titles and links to publications	HDip Occupational & Environmental Health & Safety
Date of accreditation or last review	01/03/2022
Date of next review	01/03/2027

67. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	British Occupational Hygiene Society
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc Occupational & Environmental Health & Safety
Date of accreditation or last review	01/09/2016
Date of next review	01/09/2024

68. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Irish Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland (Category 2)
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc Occupational & Environmental Health & Safety
Date of accreditation or last review	01/03/2022
Date of next review	01/03/2027

69. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	CAMPEP (US)
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc Medical Physics
Date of accreditation or last review	31/03/2021
Date of next review	01/04/2025

70. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	CORU
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc (Hons) Podiatric Medicine
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	31/12/2027

71. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Association for Health Promotion Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	Specialist Certificate in Health Promotion [Youth Mental Health]
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	01/01/2025

72. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Society for Human Resource Management
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc Human Resource Management
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	31/12/2026

73. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Global Association of Risk Professionals
Programme titles and links to publications	MEconSc International Finance
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2024
Date of next review	01/01/2025

74. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	REPS Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc/Dip/Certificate Exercise Physiology and its application in Therapy
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	31/08/2025

9.2 Collaborative Provision

Definitions:

QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes, and Joint Awards, 2012 defines collaborative provision as a process that occurs where two or more providers are involved by formal agreement in the provision of a programme of higher education and training.

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (as amended) defines 'joint award' as a single award made jointly by two or more awarding bodies

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (as amended) defines 'linked provider' as a provider that is not a designated awarding body but enters into an arrangement with a designated awarding body under which arrangement the provider provides a programme of education and training that satisfies all or part of the prerequisites for an award of the designated awarding body.

Type of arrangement	Total Number
Joint research degrees	0
Joint/double/multiple awards	6
Collaborative programmes	13
Franchise programmes	0
Linked providers (DABs only)	1

1. Collaborative provision	Joint/double/multiple award
Name of body (/bodies):	University of Galway and IT Sligo
Programme titles and links to publications	Level 8 Certificate in Regulatory affairs & Operations
Date of last review	01/01/2018
Date of next review	01/01/2027

2. Collaborative provision	Joint/double/multiple award
Name of body (/bodies):	University of Galway and IT Sligo
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc in Medical Technology Regulatory Affairs & Quality
Date of last review	01/01/2015
Date of next review	31/12/2023

3. Collaborative provision	Joint/double/multiple award
Name of body (/bodies):	University of Galway and IT Sligo
Programme titles and links to publications	Higher Diploma in Medical Technologies Regulatory Affairs & Quality
Date of last review	01/01/2018

Date of next review	01/01/2025
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4. Collaborative provision	Joint/double/multiple award
Name of body (/bodies):	University of Galway and IT Sligo
Programme titles and links to publications	Level 8 Cert in medical Technologies Regulatory Affairs & Quality
Date of last review	01/01/2018
Date of next review	01/01/2025

5. Collaborative provision	Joint/double/multiple award
Name of body (/bodies):	Burgundy School of Business, Dijon, France
Programme titles and links to publications	BComm
Date of last review	01/07/2022
Date of next review	01/07/2027

6. Collaborative provision	Collaborative programme
Name of body (/bodies):	Pforzheim University of Applied Sciences
Programme titles and links to publications	BComm
Date of last review	31/12/2018
Date of next review	30/06/2029

7. Collaborative provision	Collaborative programme
Name of body (/bodies):	ICN- Artem, Nancy, France
Programme titles and links to publications	BComm
Date of last review	30/11/2019
Date of next review	30/11/2024

8. Collaborative provision	Collaborative programme
Name of body (/bodies):	UCD
Programme titles and links to publications	Masters Children's Palliative and Complex Care
Date of last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2026

9. Collaborative provision	Collaborative programme
Name of body (/bodies):	UCC and NUI Galway

Programme titles and links to publications	MSc in Technology Management, Postgraduate Diploma in Technology Commercialisation, Postgraduate Diploma in Innovation Management
Date of last review	01/01/2019
Date of next review	01/01/2023

10. Collaborative provision	Collaborative programme
Name of body (/bodies):	RTÉ and University of Galway
Programme titles and links to publications	MA (Cleachtas Gairmiúil sna Meáin)
Date of last review	01/09/2018
Date of next review	01/09/2025

11. Collaborative provision	Collaborative programme
Name of body (/bodies):	Academy of Play and Child Psychotherapy
Programme titles and links to publications	PG Cert and PG Diploma in Practice-based Play Therapy
Date of last review	01/01/2018
Date of next review	31/12/2024

12. Collaborative provision	Collaborative programme
Name of body (/bodies):	National Youth Council of Ireland and University of Galway
Programme titles and links to publications	Specialist Certificate in Health Promotion (Youth Health)
Date of last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2024

13. Collaborative provision	Collaborative programme
Name of body (/bodies):	Dental Health Federation and NUI Galway
Programme titles and links to publications	Specialist Certificate in Health Promotion (Oral Health)
Date of last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2022

14. Collaborative provision	Linked provider
Name of body (/bodies):	Burren College of Art
Programme titles and links to publications	https://www.burrencollege.ie/programme/
Date of last review	01/01/2024

Date of next review	01/01/2031
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15. Collaborative provision	Collaborative programme
Name of body (/bodies):	UL, DCU
Programme titles and links to publications	Professional Diploma Mathematics Teaching (English) directed from University of Galway (located in UL)
Date of last review	01/10/2019
Date of next review	01/01/2026

16. Collaborative provision	Collaborative programme
Name of body (/bodies):	UL, UCD
Programme titles and links to publications	PG Dipl School Leadership PDSL / (Diplóma) Gairmiúil I gCeannaireacht Scoile DGCS
Date of last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2025

17. Collaborative provision	Collaborative programme
Name of body (/bodies):	Seychelles Tourism Academy
Programme titles and links to publications	BBS in International Hotel Management
Date of last review	01/08/2019
Date of next review	01/08/2030

18. Collaborative provision	Collaborative programme
Name of body (/bodies):	CROI
Programme titles and links to publications	Postgraduate Certificate in Health Promotion (Cardio vascular Health and Type 2 diabetes prevention)
Date of last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2023

19. Collaborative provision	Collaborative programme
Name of body (/bodies):	National Youth Council of Ireland & Jigsaw
Programme titles and links to publications	Postgraduate Certificate in Health Promotion (Youth Mental Health)
Date of last review	01/01/2021
Date of next review	01/01/2024

20. Collaborative provision	Joint/double/multiple award
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Name of body (/bodies):	Catholeike Universiteit Leuven Belgium
Programme titles and links to publications	B Comm
Date of last review	01/01/2023
Date of next review	31/01/2028

9.3 Articulation Agreements

Definition:

Per the IHEQN Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision, an articulation agreement may be defined as a process whereby all students who satisfy academic criteria on one programme are automatically entitled (on academic grounds) to be admitted with advance standing to a subsequent stage of a programme of a degree awarding body. These arrangements are subject to a formal agreement between the parties.

Articulation agreements - Total number	1
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Annual Quality Report University of Galway
PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE
ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT
Reporting Period 2022-2023

PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT

1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments

1.1 Strategic QA Updates

Strategic Objectives: University of Galway continues to implement a ‘tripartite approach’ to enhancement and improvement by integrating quality, strategy and performance. Quality assurance is the responsibility of every member of staff through their own efforts and through their work on many organisational committees and units – including all [Colleges, Schools and Professional Services](#). All units periodically undergo internal [Quality Review \(QR\)](#) while also continuously complying with and external [Policies and Procedures](#). Quality is also assured through the effective implementation of policies on [External Examination](#) and Student Feedback. Units assure quality by implementation of the University’s strategic plan [Strategy 2020 - 2025](#) and the [HEA’s Mission-Based Performance Compact](#) both executed through an annual system for [Operational Planning](#) that incorporates quality, performance and capacity related enhancements.

Strategy 2020-2025: The Director of Strategy Implementation works with the President and University Management Team to implement, monitor and review targets/actions of the strategic plan, via the operational planning processes across all Colleges, Schools and Units. While progress on the implementation of the strategy was somewhat challenged by the pandemic, significant progress has been made since its launch in January 2020. Regular Strategy Implementation Progress Reports are prepared and presented to UMT and Údarás.

Our Balanced Scorecard: Following consultation with the Strategy Advisory Group, University Management Team, Academic Council and Údarás na hOllscoile, we have established a set of key performance indicators grouped by our core values. This dashboard of macro-level KPIs will show at a high level the impact of the collective work, advances and initiatives at a local level across Colleges and Units.

Respectful NUI Galway	Sustainable NUI Galway
<p>Employee Wellbeing (KeepWell Mark overall score)</p> <p>Student Engagement (StudentSurvey.ie: overall evaluation; Supportive Environment index)</p> <p>Athena SWAN (Level of Institutional Award & Number School Awards)</p>	<p>SDG Rankings (<i>THE</i> Impact Ranking overall score)</p> <p>Energy & Carbon (% reduction in energy usage since 2006; tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions)</p> <p>Sustainability in Teaching (% modules with focus on sustainability/SDGs)</p>
Open NUI Galway	Excellent NUI Galway

<p>Access (% of students from under-represented groups)</p> <p>International Diversity (% international students; # FTEs from outside EU; % UG students with opportunity for international mobility; % UG students availing of above; % international academic staff FTEs)</p> <p>International Research Collaboration (% papers co-authored internationally on Scopus/SciVal))</p> <p>Off-campus Learning (% programmes with work-based/community-based learning)</p> <p>Alumni & Friends (Philanthropic support for development, research and scholarship; Alumni participation metric to be developed)</p> <p>Partnership (to be developed)</p>	<p>Student Progression (% student completion; % student progression UG Y1-Y2)</p> <p>Graduate Employment (% graduates in employment/further study)</p> <p>Student Recruitment (% of all high achieving (≥ 500) LC students attending NUI Galway; % PG students)</p> <p>Research Citations (5 year Field-Weighted Citation Impact (SciVal))</p> <p>Research Reputation (% of publications in Top 25% of Journals (SciVal); QS Academic Reputation positioning)</p> <p>Research Funding (Funding awarded through EU programmes in 2021-2027 cycle; Total funded research activity)</p> <p>ERC awards (# ERC Award applications across strands; # ERC Awards across strands)</p> <p>Innovation (# spin-outs established; # collaborative research agreements with industry)</p> <p>Societal Impact (to be developed at sectoral level)</p>
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Annual performance across the KPIs and Strategic Targets

*Data incomplete or needs further context

Respectful University of Galway

Employee Wellbeing	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 Target
KeepWell Mark overall score	-	-	7/1/0	-	3/5/0		0/0/8
Student Engagement (StudentSurvey.ie)	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2025 Target
Overall evaluation	83.4%	82.1%	65.7%	73.9%	79.1%		Top University
Supportive Environment index	30.07	28.78	22.47	27.7	29.4		Top University
Position among universities	4&5/7	5&5/7	6&7/7	7&6/7	?		Top University
Athena SWAN	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2025 Target
Level of Institutional Award	Bronze	Bronze	Bronze	Bronze	Bronze		University Silver
School Awards (of all colours)	1	3	8	9	13		18 Awards

Open University of Galway

Access	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	
% of students from under-represented groups	22%	23%	24.7%	24.7%			
International Diversity	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2025 Target
% international students	20.8%	17.2%	13.9%	16%	15.5%	17.17%	20%
# FTEs from outside EU	1,310	1,463	1,274	1,455	1,586	1,784	2,700
% UG students with opportunity for international mobility	-	-	-	92%	93%		100%
% UG students availing of above	-	16%	-	20%			
% international academic staff FTEs	-	19.5%	19.9%	19.5%			
International Research Collaboration	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	

% papers co-authored internationally on Scopus/SciVal	60.5%	63%	61.4%	65.6%	66.6%*		
Off-campus Learning	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	
% programmes with work-based/community-based learning	69.8%	72.2%	72.9%	73.4%			
Alumni & Friends	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Meitheal Campaign Target
Philanthropic support for development, research, and scholarship	€2.33M	€3.72M	€2.29M	€4.09M	€3.39M* (€8.99M outstanding pledges)		€60m (€39m: 2023-27)
Alumni engagement (to be developed)	-	-	-	-			
Partnership (to be developed)	-	-	-	-			

Sustainable University of Galway

SDG Rankings	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2025 Target
<i>THE</i> Impact Ranking overall score	-	68 (4/7)	82 (5/7)	47 (1/7)	34 (1/7)		Top University
Energy & Carbon	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2050 Target
Tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions	31,780 tonnes CO ₂ e	25,430 tonnes CO ₂ e	60,000 tonnes CO ₂ e	-			0 tonnes CO ₂ e
% reduction in energy usage since 2006	34%	40%	54%	52%			
Sustainability in Teaching	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	
% programmes with sustainability-focused module	-	9.9%	12%	20.5%			

Excellent University of Galway

Student Progression	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
% student completion	75.8%	77.1%	78.1%	78.1%	77.2%	
% student progression UG Y1-Y2	84%	88%	84%	81%	83%	
Graduate Employment	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
% graduates in employment/further study	-	93.3%	97.7%	97.4%	-	

Student Recruitment	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	
% of all highest achieving (≥500) LC students attending University of Galway	-	10%	9%	10%			
% PG students	-	23.4%	25%	25.8%			
Research Citations	2014-18	2015-19	2016-20	2017-21	2018-22	2019-23	
5 year Field-Weighted Citation Impact in SciVal	1.74	1.63	1.57	1.60	1.56*		
Research Reputation	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 Target
% of publications in Top 25% of Journals in SciVal	53.9%	58.1%	57.3%	55.4%	61.3%*		63%
QS Academic Reputation positioning	398	351	321	322	335		
Research Funding	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2021-27 Target
Funding awarded through EU programmes in 2021-2027 cycle	-	-	-	€32.36m cumulative	€68.6m cumulative		€150m
Total funded research activity	€70.6m	€56.8m	€70.9m	€72.8m	€82m		
ERC Awards	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 Target
ERC Award success rate	23.5%	10.5%	4.5%	12%	5.6%		15%
# ERC Awards across strands	4	2	1	2	3		
Innovation	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2020-25 Target
# Spin-outs established	1	4	5	4	3		25
# Collaborative research agreements with industry	46	46	53	40			30% increase
Societal Impact (to be developed)	-	-	-	-			

1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR

No.	Planned objectives (Previous AQR) Note: Include reference to the relevant section of the preceding AQR, where applicable	Update on Status Provide brief update on status, whether completed or in progress. If an action was planned in the previous AQR, but not completed, provide reasons/short reflections for the delay/non-completion.
1	Implementation of the Academic Strategy	<p><i>Full implementation of AI policy and constant monitoring and development of this in a rapidly changing environment:</i> The Academic Integrity Officer (AIO) was appointed in April 2023. Since his appointment, the AIO has undertaken investigatory work associated with identified suspected breaches, developed and supported staff training and development in academic integrity, and worked to raise awareness of the new policy and broader academic integrity issues. The role of AIO is a fundamental component in assuring the quality of the university's programmes, awards, and assessments. During the academic year 2022-23, an agreement was reached to appoint an Academic Integrity Support Officer (AISO), enabled by Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement (SATLE) funding, to support the activities of the Academic Integrity Officer. Finally, the university began to explore the potential requirements for an Academic Misconduct Register, and the various logistics related to its acquisition and implementation.</p> <p><i>Further enhancement of sustainability and the UN SDGs in the curriculum:</i> A Director of Sustainability has been appointed by the University charged with establishing a Sustainability Office and leading the implementation of our ambitious sustainability strategy. Two sustainability lectureship posts are being funded to support the work of this office and our sustainability strategy.</p> <p><i>Launch of new MSc in Sustainability Leadership:</i> The recent launch of a new MSc in Sustainability Leadership expands the University of Galway's suite of sustainability-focused postgraduate courses. The new Sustainability Leadership course provides students with training in the leadership skills needed to address the challenges and opportunities that contemporary businesses face in the areas of environmental sustainability and corporate leadership. With contributions from the College of</p>

		Business, Public Policy & Law, the College of Science and Engineering and the SDG- focused research centre the Ryan Institute, students will receive tuition in areas ranging from Responsible Management and Leadership to Sustainable Information Systems, students will leave the programme with a holistic understanding of sustainability challenges and opportunities.
2	IRRP2024	<p>IRRP 2024 policy and guidelines were approved in June 2023 together with the review schedule. The general principles underpinning the IRRP are Equity and Equality. The review is also committed to the principles in the July 2022 Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment to which the University is signatory, including a commitment to diversity inclusiveness and collaboration. This recognises not only the diversity of research activity, but also the need to ensure gender equality, and equal opportunities on other grounds.</p> <p>Heads of Schools will be required to submit a response to the Review Report within three months of receipt. This response should include a commentary on the findings and actions that will be taken as a follow-up. UMT members including the Deputy President & Registrar, the VP Research & Innovation, the Secretary for Governance and Academic Affairs and Deans will engage annually with schools on Operational Planning as outlined in QA007 Operational Plans where this will include a follow up of agreed actions arising from this research assessment.</p>
3	SDP	<p>The delivery of the Student Digital Pathways Programme (SDP) has been delayed due to 3rd party partners non-delivery on contractual commitments. The University has initiated formal mediation to resolve the issues. This is currently ongoing. The University is continuing to work with partners on a new re-baselined delivery plan. It is important to note that the University team remain confident that the procured platform is the appropriate technology to meet University requirements. Significant work has progressed on important Programme deliverables during 2023, with the in-house SDP team.</p>

4	Library	<p>In November 2022 an Integrated Project Design Team, led by the architects RKD, was appointed to lead the design of a new Library and Learning Commons for the University of Galway, following a procurement process. A fast-paced, iterative design process was undertaken, building on detailed requirements which had been developed over the previous years. This work resulted in the design of an inspirational, landmark building which will provide a shared space for scholarship and community at the heart of the University campus. The design provides spaces that enable: individual and collaborative study, digital creativity and innovation, access to knowledge in digital and printed formats, and access to expert support on all aspects of the student's learning journey. The building will also include an exhibition area and event space to showcase the University's research as well as our archival and special collections, with a view to inspiring and informing our students and the wider community. The design has sustainability as a core underlying principle and ensures accessibility throughout, as well as providing a dedicated area for assistive technologies and supports for students with a disability. In August 2023, approval was granted for the design.</p>
5		

1.3 Governance and Management

1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

Body	Meeting dates
Údaras na hOllscoile	13 October 2022, Special 26 October 2022, 15 December 2022, 28 February 2023, 29 March 2023, 26 April 2023, 26 June 2023, 22nd September 2023. Special
Academic Council	13 th October 2022 6 th December 2022 8 th February 2023 6 th April 2023 19 th June 2023
Quality Enhancement Committee	9 th November 2022 1 st March 2023 25 th May 2023
University Curriculum and Programme Board	14 th November 2022 16 th March 2023 24 th May 2023

1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

Údarás na hOllscoile (2021-2025) was in its second year which was characterised by work to implement the terms of the HEA Act 2022 in respect of its future size, composition and functions. In line with the provisions of the HEA Act 2022, it was agreed that a new Údarás na hOllscoile would be established to take office on 1 September 2023. To bring this into effect, a Nominations Committee of Údarás na hOllscoile was set up, a new competency and skills matrix was agreed and Regulations and Procedures were developed and approved by Governing Authority and the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. In September 2023, the University's Governing Authority, Údarás na hOllscoile, was reconstituted. The new Governing Authority, whose term runs to January 2025, differs substantially from previous boards in terms of its size (19 members) and composition. Membership includes staff, students and external members who are appointed on the basis of their competencies and who bring significant expertise and a diverse range of experiences. The Governing Authority is responsible for oversight of the University's overall strategic direction and performance and is accountable to the Minister and the Higher Education Authority.

Appointments

Dean of Students: Professor Ciara Meehan joined was appointed Dean of Students on 4 September 2023. A graduate of UCD (BA, 2003 and PhD, 2007), Ciara worked there for six years before relocating to the University of Hertfordshire in 2013. During her ten years at Hertfordshire, she served as Head of History and Heritage Studies and Associate Dean of the School of Humanities, later the School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Education, and she was also a Reader in History.

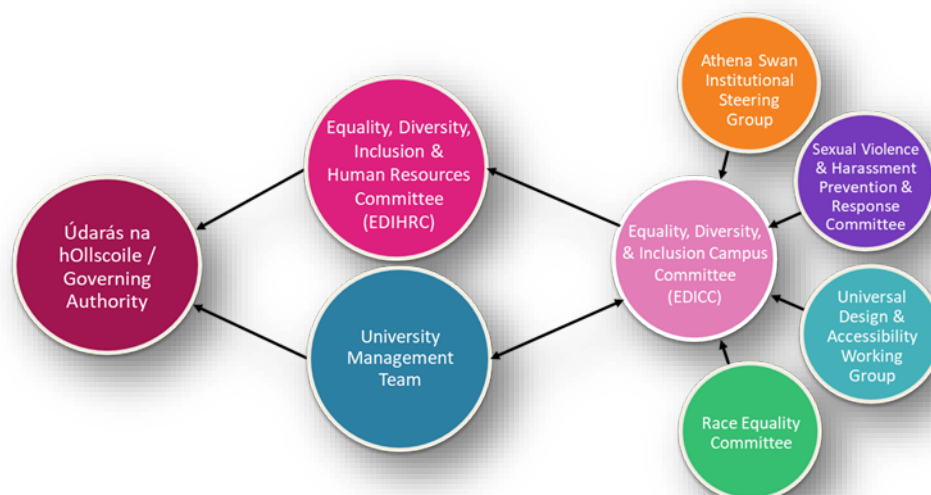
She has published extensively on the transformation of independent Ireland. Her major works include *The Cosgrave Party: a History of Cumann na nGaedheal, 1923-1933* (2010), *A Just Society for Ireland? 1964-1987* (2013) and *Saving the State: Fine Gael from Collins to Varadkar* (2020), which she co-wrote with political journalist Stephen Collins. Most recently she authored, *A Woman's Place? Challenging Values in 1960s Irish Women's Magazines* (2023).

Academic Integrity Officer: Dr Justin Tonra was appointed to the role of Academic Integrity Officer in March 2023. The role of the Academic Integrity Officer is central to implementing, evaluating, and refining the University's [Academic Integrity Policy](#) and its associated processes. It is a unique position which combines academic, administrative, and partnership skills. The post is based in the Centre for Excellence in Learning & Teaching (CELT) but will also work directly with other units and services across the university.

Justin received his PhD in English from the University of Galway in 2010. He has worked as a Lecturer in the Discipline of English since 2016 after holding previous appointments at University College London and the University of Virginia. He is the current Course Director of the MA Literature and Publishing and has previously been Director of the Structured PhD in Digital Arts and Humanities. He also holds membership on Academic Council and the Executive Committee of the Moore Institute.

Formation of Committee

Race Equality Committee: The Race Equality Committee was formed in September 2022 to oversee the implementation of the University of Galway [Race Equality Framework](#) and [Action Plan](#) (2023 – 2027). This has been reflected in the University's overall EDI governance structures.



Formation of Research Centre:

The University launched the [Centre for Creative Technologies](#) in September 2023. The aim of the new centre is to foster and support research and teaching activities that explore and develop links between creative practice and technology and creativity as a principle and practice that extends beyond the arts. Building on the University's strong relationships with the creative community in the western region and beyond, including the Strategic Education Partnerships with Galway International Arts Festival and Druid, the Centre for Creative Technologies will explore the impact on the traditional creative industries of rapid technological change in areas such as immersive reality, artificial intelligence and virtual production processes. The Centre's newly launched PhD in Creative Technologies brings together research that combines critical enquiry with technological and artistic practice to investigate important developments in this field.

The Centre for Creative Technologies is the first research centre of its kind in Ireland, exploring the intersection of creativity and technology across disciplines from within the traditions of the arts. As creative engagement with technology is an increasingly central element of our responses to global challenges, the centre will enable researchers, academics and those involved in the arts to bring their expertise and insight to a diverse range of areas of activity, from healthcare to manufacturing to the societal responses to climate change.

Student Partnership Agreement: University of Galway and the University's Students' Union announced a formal partnership. The aim of the agreement is for staff and students at the University to collaborate to deliver real and positive change in the areas of student-centred decision making and student participation and engagement.

The Student Partnership Agreement seeks to enable a culture of change through collaboration, reciprocity and shared responsibility between staff and students. It sets out a commitment to regular and open communication at various levels between the University and the Students' Union "in a spirit of respect and positive intent".

Among the aims are to increase the student voice in decision-making and to bring about greater student representation on relevant committees. As part of the agreement, training will be offered to students who wish to participate in this way and for staff who wish to work with students in this way.

The partnership also aims to gather feedback from students to inform meaningful and positive change. The University also commits to funding orientation programmes; on-campus social events to build a sense of community; academic skills development training, including exam support; health and well-being; and personal, professional and civic development training.

Formation of Research Institute:

University of Galway announced the establishment of Ireland's first Institute for Clinical Trials. The new institute will transform the clinical research landscape by creating an environment where scientific advances are translated into improved care for patients. The Institute for Clinical Trials will transform lives by ensuring patients get access to the latest medicines and treatments in a timely way. Through its ambitious programme of research excellence, the Institute will position Ireland at the forefront of clinical and biomedical discovery.

A major component of the Institute's activity will be to improve how trials are done, integrating innovative methodologies, with enhanced technologies and better molecular analysis to create the trial of the future and position Ireland as a leader in clinical trials.

The Institute, which is led from the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, will transform the clinical research landscape in Ireland by creating a comprehensive end-to-end programme that supports the development and delivery of clinical trials, from concept to implementation of findings. It will consolidate resources, build on clinical research expertise and improve the lives of patients and the health of our population, leveraging the academic strengths of the University and its healthcare partner Saolta University Healthcare Group. Additionally, the Institute will focus on developing sustained, mutually beneficial partnerships with industry and academic partners, positioning the West and Northwest as the medtech centre of Ireland. The cross-sectoral activities of the Institute for Clinical Trials will be nationally distinctive, will align with Ireland's regional development strategies and will enhance economic competitiveness by attracting investment, jobs and talent, in addition to its core mission of improving the health of the population.

1.4 Internal Monitoring and Review

1.4.1 Overview of Periodic Reviews

Unit of review for which report has been published during reporting period	Date of completion/reason for conducting review (if not planned) or non-completion (if planned but not conducted)	Links to relevant publications
School of Business and Economics	15 th September 2023	Review Report
School of Hotel Management, Shannon	31 st January 2023	Review Report
School of Mathematical and Statistical Sciences	22 nd February 2023	Review Report
School of Medicine	15 th September 2023	Review Report
School of Natural Sciences	8 th March 2023	Review Report
School of Biological and Chemical Sciences	1 st March 2023	Review Report
School of Political Science and Sociology	15 th March 2023	Review Report

1.4.2 Expert Review Teams/Panels² involved in IQA

(i) Expert Review Team/Panel Size and Related Processes

	Total	Academic Schools/ Department	Professional Services/Support Unit	Approval/Review of Linked Provider	Programme Approval	Programme Review	Other
Number of review/ evaluation processes	7	7	0	0	0	0	0
<i>of those:</i>							
On-site processes	5	5					
Desk reviews	2	2					
Virtual processes							
Average panel size for each process type*	4	4					

* excluding secretary if not a full panel member

(ii) Composition of Expert Review Teams/Panels involved in IQA

Please delete guide text before submission.

Type of Expert/ Role on Panel	Total	Gender			Internal	National	International			Institution Type	
		Male	Female	Other, or unspecified			UK, incl. NI	Other European	Outside of Europe	Similar	Different

² QQI acknowledges that the terminology used to describe the groups of individuals that conduct peer review/evaluation varies from institution to institution.

2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

Governance and Management of Quality

Policies and Procedures Repository: The current processes in relation to Policies and Procedures have been in place for approximately ten years. In that time the University has gone through unprecedented growth and change. The governance and management structures have radically changed with the introduction of devolved management of colleges and the introduction of a new budgeting model. A fit for purpose policy management framework has become increasingly important in this new devolved world to ensure that there is a shape and a consistency to how the University operates.

During 2022/23, the Quality Office began work on drafting a new, fit for purposes policy management framework. Consultation has taken place with key stakeholders including members of UMT and a draft framework will be presented to UMT for consideration in 2023/24.

The Policies and Procedures below are a sample that were either initiated or further revised during 2022/2023:

QA073 Performance for Growth
QA090 Work Allocation Model
QA110 Probation
QA207 Academic Promotions
QA208 Alternative Assessment
QA209 Extenuating Circumstances
QA212 Ph.D. Inter-Institutional Co-Supervisory Agreement
QA213 Taught Student International Travel
QA220 Academic Integrity
QA305 Invoicing and Debt Management
QA313 Recording and Recognition of Income
QA400 Data Protection
QA440 Freedom of Information
QA442 Data Retention Schedule
QA442 Records Retention
QA445 Staff Data Usage
QA180 Hybrid Working

External Examiners: External Examiner reports have been received for over 220 programmes/modules during 2022/23 in accordance with [QA005 Role of External Examiners: Taught Programmes](#). The main areas highlighted by External Examiners in their recommendations are summarized under the following headings:

- Feedback
- Marking practices/Spread of marks
- Assessment load on students
- Resourcing
- High teaching workload for a research-led institution
- Academic Integrity

External Examiners also commented on:

- the need for greater clarity in relation to their role
- information provided to them by programme directors and access to materials to support their work

Programmes of Education and Training

The University Curriculum and Programme Board met on four occasions in 2022/23 and recommended the following major changes to programmes for approval by Academic Council Standing:

Programme	College	Type	ACS approval date
MSc Sustainability Leadership	Business, Public Policy and Law	New Approval	01/12/2022
MA Digital Art, Design and Cultures	Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies	Major Changes	01/12/2022
MSc Business and Hospitality	Business, Public Policy and Law	Major Changes	01/12/2022
MSc Hospitality, Performance, Revenue and Asset Management	Business, Public Policy and Law	Major Changes	01/12/2022
MSc Global Hospitality Management and Intercultural Communication	Business, Public Policy and Law	Major Changes	01/12/2022
MSc Computer Science (Adaptive CyberSecurity)	Science and Engineering	New Approval	28/03/2023
MSc Applied Clinical Data Analytics	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	New Approval	28/03/2023
ENLIGHT Proposal for the Creation of a new Postgraduate Taught Course Instance	Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies	New Approval	28/03/2023
BSc Agricultural Sciences	Science and Engineering	Major Changes	28/03/2023
BSc Genetics and Genomics	Science and Engineering	Major Changes	28/03/2023
BSc Energy Systems	Science and Engineering	Major Changes	28/03/2023
BSc Mechanical Engineering	Science and Engineering	Major Changes	28/03/2023
PgCert Artificial Intelligence for Managers to PgCert Artificial Intelligence for Professionals	Science and Engineering	Major Changes	28/03/2023
Higher Diploma and Data Analytics and Visualisation	Science and Engineering	Major Changes	28/03/2023
Certificate Social Care (year 1 of the BA Social Care)	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Major Changes	28/03/2023
MPY1 Preventive Cardiology	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Major Changes	28/03/2023
CPR1 Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Major Changes	28/03/2023
MHSc Nursing (Intensive Care)	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Major Changes	28/03/2023

MHSc Nursing (Emergency Care)	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Major Changes	28/03/2023
MHSc Nursing (Oncology and Haematology)	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Major Changes	28/03/2023
MHSc Children's Complex and Palliative Care	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Major Changes	28/03/2023
MHSc Health Sciences (Wound Healing and Tissue Repair)	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Major Changes	28/03/2023
MHSc Nursing (Gerontology)	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Major Changes	28/03/2023
MHSc Nursing (Acute Medicine)	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Major Changes	28/03/2023
MHSc Obesity (Nursing)	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Major Changes	28/03/2023
MHSc Diabetes (Nursing)	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Major Changes	28/03/2023
Postgraduate Diploma Health Sciences (Clinical Education) [1CED9/1CED10]	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Major Changes	28/03/2023
Master/Postgraduate Diploma Health Sciences (Oncology and Haematology)	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Major Changes	28/03/2023
MSc Applied Multilingualism (reintroduction of the programme)	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Major Changes	28/03/2023
BA (Francis agus Léann an Aistriúcháin)	Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies	Major Changes	06/06/2023
BA (History and Globalisation Studies)	Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies	Major Changes	06/06/2023
MA (Digital Arts, Design and Cultures)	Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies	Major Changes	06/06/2023
MA (Film Studies: Theory and Practice)	Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies	Major Changes	06/06/2023
MA (Landscape Archaeology and Heritage)	Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies	Major Changes	06/06/2023
MA (Politics and Sociology)	Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies	Major Changes	06/06/2023
Postgraduate Diploma in Arts (Practice Teaching, Supervision and Management)	Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies	Major Changes	06/06/2023
CNI1 Postgraduate Diploma in Construction Innovation	Science and Engineering	New Approval	06/06/2023
MSc in Evidence Based Future Healthcare	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	New Approval	06/06/2023
MSc in Ageing and Public Policy	Business, Public Policy and Law	Major Changes	06/06/2023
MSc Advanced Healthcare Practice and Research	Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Major Changes	06/06/2023
MA Future Planning and Innovation (Geography)	Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies	Major Changes	28/09/2023

Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

Academic Promotion Scheme: Seven rounds of the Academic Promotion Scheme have now been completed with a total of 51 applicants (27 female, 24 male). Female candidates have had a 52% success rate across all categories with male applicants having a 46% success rate across all categories.

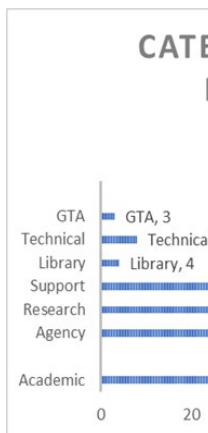
Rounds 6 and 7 (Academic Year 2022-23)

Promotion Track	Female Candidates			Male Candidates			Total Candidates	
	Applied	Success	Success %	Applied	Success	Success %	Applied	Success
PP Totals	6	2	33%	6	4	67%	12	6
Professor in Totals	7	3	43%	4	2	50%	11	5
SL Totals	14	9	64%	14	5	36%	28	14
Grand Total	27	14	52%	24	11	46%	51	25

Learning and Development

Centralised Induction: A centralised induction training event is held for new staff members to the University. The programme provides new staff with the opportunity to hear about the University's structure, governance, and strategy. It aims to be an informative and engaging event for new staff with the opportunity to meet new colleagues and ask questions of existing staff. It is a one day, online event which is held approximately every six weeks to accommodate all new employees. In 2023, a total of 7 courses were held, two of which were in person, attended by 261 employees:

Induction	2023
Attendees	261
Female	141
Male	120
Evaluations	108



Further Education Policy (FEP): This is a funding programme to which staff can apply for support when undertaking a part-time programme of study. A total of 73 applications (54 female, 19 male) were received in 2022/23 in the following staff categories:

Staff Categories FEP 2023 2024	
Academic	20
Research	9
Support	36
Library	1
Technical	4
Buildings	3
	73

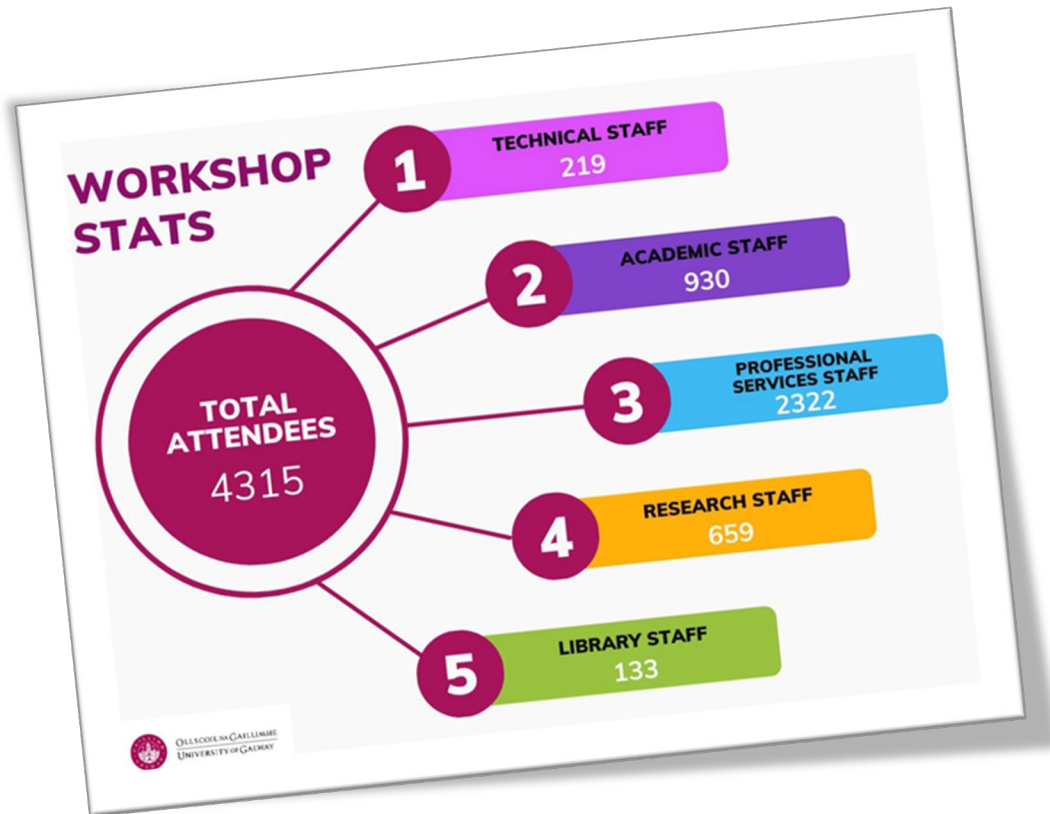
Applications were made in the following programme categories:

PhDs	21
Masters	18
Bachelors	6
PG cert/diploma	28
	73

Workshops: A total of 212 (2022: 108) professional development workshops were run by HR in 2023 including:

- Bitesize Learning sessions (13)
 - Short workshops (60 mins) which allow internal staff to share their expertise and knowledge with colleagues on a range of topics including:
 - Introduction to CRM
 - Introduction to PowerAutomate
 - IT Tools & Hacks
 - Customer Service at University of Galway
 - An Ghaeilge san Ollscoil
 - Strength Based Coaching
 - These workshops are designed and facilitated by university staff for university staff
- Leadership Development
- SharePoint / MS Teams/OneDrive
- Irish Traveler Cultural Awareness Training for Irish Traveler Ethnicity week
- Spectrum Life Health Seminar Day

A total of 4,315 people attended these workshops across the following categories of staff:



Other initiatives

- **Collaborate Programme:** An Inter-Institutional Peer Mentoring Programme
 - A collaboration with 8 other institutions across the island of Ireland. 5 week programme supporting a particular cohort of staff. Programme 1 catered for staff who were new to people management roles and Programme 2 catered for PI's/Researchers. Each session has a different theme with a guest speaker specialising in that area. Participants are broken up into groups to discuss issues/concerns and share knowledge. The 2023/24 programme kicked off in November and covers staff at Grade 4/5 level. -+
 -
- **Mentoring:**
 - A number of workshops held throughout the year and continuing to create Mentoring Champions within a number of colleges and units. Stats to date:
 - Mentees: **114**
 - Mentors: **124**
- **On- Demand Learning:**
 - New DCM Learning hub: [University of Galway Learning Hub](#) , [University of Galway Learning Hub Brochure](#)
 - Over **200** attendees on DCM Learning Webinars in 2023

- LearnUpon – new Neurodiversity module, Unconscious Bias and EDI training.
- **Memberships:**
 - The University of Galway is a member of a number of external organisations which provide an extensive range of tools and resources for staff.
 - A detailed membership brochure was created in 2023 to provide staff with details on how to gain membership access and how to access all tools and resources available to them.
- **New Starter Coffee Morning:**
 - The first new starter coffee morning was held in September 2023. The morning was a huge success with over 100 attendees & representatives.inte
- **Policy Information sessions**
 - Hybrid Working: 386 attendees.
 - Probation policy update: 24 attendees
 - Performance for Growth: 186 attendees
 - Reviewer/Reviewee workshops: 668 registrations

LIFT: In 2021 LIFT Ireland and University of Galway announced a unique partnership aimed at improving leadership skills among students and staff. LIFT Ireland is an initiative to raise the level of leadership nationwide, working with organisations and individuals in a variety of settings to develop key leadership attributes. LIFT's partnership with University of Galway is the organisation's first formal partnership with a third-level institution. It will see more than 200 staff and students trained as LIFT facilitators. These facilitators will then go on to deliver the LIFT leadership programme to a further 1,500 staff and students at the University. LIFT's leadership programme is delivered through regular roundtable sessions, led by a volunteer facilitator. Each session focuses on one of eight key leadership values, such as honesty, competence, accountability, empathy, respect and positive attitude. The programme supports participants to develop these leadership attributes and set personal goals on an ongoing basis.

LIFT is an 8-12 week programme, about 30-40 minutes a week where participants engage in a small roundtable group either online or blended and complete the values below:

1. Listening
2. Honesty and Integrity
3. Respect
4. Positive Attitude
5. Competence
6. Dedication and Determination
7. Accountability
8. Empathy and Understanding
9. Resilience
10. Innovation

Numbers 2023

- Participants: **180**
- Facilitators: **48**
- **32** roundtables created
 - 20 completed
 - 12 active
 - 1 group as Gaeilge
- Academic Participants **34**
- Academic Facilitators **3**



In order to promote this programme and attract more participants, all new starters to the University are now invited onto the programme at induction. This will also ensure new staff gain access to a network and support their integration into the university.

Employee Assistance Programme: The [EAS](#) is a free and confidential professional counselling and information service that provides support to University of Galway employees, their partners and dependents over the age of 18 and residing at the family home to resolve personal and work related concerns. EAS is available 24/7, 365 days a year covering numerous topics such as:

- Counselling
- Mental health support for worries around COVID-19
- Infertility & pregnancy loss
- Elder care support
- Parent coaching
- International employee support
- Legal information
- Financial information and more.

Following a procurement process the contract for this service was awarded to [Spectrum.Life](#), Ireland's largest provider of allied health services who deliver evidence-based health innovation to clients across Ireland and the UK. They currently support over 2,000 corporate companies and their employees in their health and wellness programmes and Employee Assistance Services (EAS). As well as contact options via telephone, through an online chat function on the platform, or by requesting a call back, Spectrum.Life also provides a wellbeing app that provides access to hours of wellbeing content. Topics covered are based on the three core areas of mental wellbeing, nutrition and exercise. Track steps and kilometres exercise, find recipes, log and track your calories, find fitness plans to suit individual needs and complete courses in stress management, sleeping better, dealing with anxiety and more.

Performance for Growth: A new Performance Management and Development Framework, was introduced in August 2023 which will be known as Performance for Growth. Performance for Growth is part of the ongoing effort to support staff development and promote fairness and transparency across the University.

Each year, all eligible staff will go through the process of self-evaluation and be assessed on how well they achieved the objectives which had been set in the previous cycle. This is an opportunity for staff to highlight

achievements over the period and for self-reflection and feedback. This process will also provide further clarity for staff and managers on alignment of expectations and support required for the upcoming period.

[Performance for Growth](#) was rolled through the hosting of information sessions together with a suite of resources available for all staff. Reviewer and Reviewee workshops are available on an ongoing basis.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Academic Strategy: The Academic Strategy was developed and approved in AY21/22 and formally launched in December 2022. The Strategy serves to guide activities and developments over a 4 -5 year period and will be subject to monitoring and review. A key dimension is the recognition of the value of CPD for academic staff and others who support teaching and learning and this has been reinforced by agreement to fill a second lectureship post in CELT (Centre for Excellence in Learning & Teaching) to allow the university to expand its formal and informal training offerings on these aspects.

VLE – Change of Learning Management System/Virtual Learning Environment: In AY22/23 the university undertook a major transformation project, led by CELT and ISS, to transition from Blackboard Learn VLE to Canvas. This involved conversion of all existing content, integration with student records, curriculum management, and other IT systems, as well as developing new connectivity to a wide range of external teaching tools and software. All users (staff and students) had to migrate and/or archive their existing content and have opportunities for training and support in the new system. Additional support was provided by Instructure (the owners of Canvas) in terms of training materials and the Learning Technologies team (based in CELT and in the Colleges) rapidly developed an extensive programme of workshops, video walk-throughs, and regular 'office hours' support throughout the transition period. The project was successfully completed in time for the start of AY23/24 at which point the Blackboard system and its related tools were fully decommissioned. From user feedback and operational metrics, it is clear that the project was completed successfully.

Teaching Environment: The AV and Classroom Systems section of CELT successfully applied for €750K from an HEA provided capital projects fund in order to support the upgrade and modernisation of a large number of key teaching venues across the institution. In total, combined with existing budgets, over 80 venues were upgraded with new lecterns, PCs, displays and ancillary equipment. This work took place largely in the summer period of 2023, but commenced at the start of that year.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL): University of Galway is one of 14 partner institutions in the national *Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Higher Education* Project which is funded by the Human Capital Initiative-Pillar 3 (Innovation and Agility). The project is co-sponsored by the Technological Higher Education Association (THEA) and the Irish Universities Association (IUA). The project's aims are:

- to continue to embed, streamline and promote RPL;
- to work with employers to increase access and progression opportunities in areas of skills needs and;
- to enhance the sector's capacity to do RPL, through the development of practical tools, resource and CPD programmes.

The project is co-ordinated by a Project Management Office (PMO) based in THEA, with 18 Project Leads (the 'Project Network') managing the roll out of the project across 14 technological universities, universities and

institutes of technology. Strategic guidance is provided by a Steering Group which draws its membership from senior sectoral leaders, enterprise and learner representatives, and national and international RPL experts.

The University of Galway RPL Steering Group draws its membership from a range of stakeholders both internal and external to the University to augment, support and advise the work of the *Recognition of Prior Learning in Higher Education* Project and project personnel.

Significant progress has been made in relation to the promotion of RPL as an access, transfer and progression route for learners.

- a. The University has developed a new *Recognition of Prior Learning* [Website](#):
- b. In June 2023 the University updated QA222, its *Recognition of Prior Learning* [Policy](#)
- c. A new *Recognition of Prior Learning* Communications [SharePoint](#) was developed to support University staff in the implementation of RPL across programmes of study at the University.
- d. The University added a new RPL heading to its course webpage template. This will enable courses to specifically highlight their provision of RPL to facilitate course access and module exemptions.
- e. Information and guidance on the use of RPL is provided by the RPL Project lead: Email rpl@universityofgalway.ie
- f. To highlight the benefits of RPL for learners and for enterprise two promotional videos were developed in collaboration with the Irish Universities Association. [Video-Learners](#) and [Video-Enterprise](#)
- g. The RPL Project Lead has commenced a data collection exercise to capture the level of RPL activity that is currently taking place across the University. This data will help to develop a consistent and coherent baseline dataset for RPL activity in the University.

One of the objectives of the RPL in HE project is to work collaboratively with employers to identify opportunities that enable workers to ensure that their knowledge, skills and competences remain relevant and fit for purpose. RPL creates agility in our system, helping us to value the learning achieved outside formal education and develop courses sensitive to employee's existing skillsets. As such RPL offers solutions for upskilling, reskilling, organisational development and talent retention in the enterprise sector. The RPL Project Lead promoted the benefits of RPL for employers and workers at a range of enterprise engagement events throughout the year.

UDL: The Access Centre in collaboration with the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching delivered the Digital Badge in Universal, Design and Learning to over 25 staff in 22/23.

Designing Futures: University of Galway's Designing Futures was awarded €7.57m in funding for a period of 5 years, 2020-2025. The aim of this programme is to enhance graduates' employability, through promoting greater engagement with civic society, community and enterprise during their studies, while enhancing their overall education and preparedness for life in the challenging future emerging.

Within the University of Galway, there is an agreed Graduate Attribute Statement as set out in the [Teaching and Learning Strategy](#) 2021-2026. This provides the anchor for the Designing Futures Framework for Student Development. All identified skills and dispositions are linked back to this agreed and validated structure.

Given the complex range of initiatives involved in the DF project, it was important to develop a core framework that would specify the core skills and dispositions being addressed by the project. This framework is a key

resource underpinning all the innovative initiatives created within the project. It also underpins the use of externally developed approaches, including the 'Design your Life' programmes created by [Stanford University's Life Design Lab](#) and on trans-disciplinary learning models pioneered by [Georgia Institute of Technology](#). The Designing Futures framework includes a specific set of KPI's which is being closely monitored year on year:

Key Performance Indicators



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

KPI	Measurement of Impact	Indicator of Success	Time	AY 2021/22 (Year 2)	AY 2022/23 (Year 3)	AY 2023/24 (Year 3, up to Jan 2024)
Students receiving coaching support => personalised skills strategy	Number of students receiving coaching support	300+ students to be coached each year (Arts and Science)	Year 1-5	875 student coaching engagements: 788 attended 48 workshops, 87 attended 1-2-1 sessions, 193 attended events	1,067 student coaching engagements: 861 attended workshop /group coaching, 206 attended 1-2-1 sessions, 2,465 attended events 418 DYI Module engagements	2,384 student coaching engagements: 2,243 attended group coaching, 141 attended 1-2-1 sessions, 2803 attended events ??? DYI Module engagements
The design, development and integration of core transversal skills into existing first year curriculum	Number of students receiving core transversal skills education in 1 st Year	750+ Arts and Science students receiving core transversal skills in 1 st Year	Year 3-5	Year 3 start	Year 3 start	Year 3 start: 1,322 registered for classes with core transversal skills
Design, develop & deploy new trans-disciplinary modules in partnership enterprise/International partners	Number of Modules designed, developed and delivered	16 new modules, 2 nd year upwards; 400 students by Year 5	Year 3-5	2 modules in S1, 3 modules in S2, 357 students registered (272 from target cohort)	5 modules in S1, 6 modules in S2, 681 students registered (617 from target cohort)	12 modules in S1, 9 modules in S2, 681 students registered (996 from target cohort)
Engagement with Human Centred Design Studio	Number of student, staff and industry engagements with the HCD throughout the year	HCD Studio will have over 1,500 engagements each year	Year 1-5	3,087 student engagements with HCD 774 enterprise engagements with HCD	4,023 student engagements with HCD 1,272 enterprise engagements with HCD	1,907 student engagements with HCD 585 enterprise engagements with HCD
Design, develop & deploy new modules (innovative and entrepreneurial skills of our students)	Number of Modules designed, developed and delivered	4 new modules available 150 student enrolled each year (Entrecomp Competency Framework (2018))	Year 1-5	Design of Modules: Complete Delivery AY 2021/22: SI: 3 modules SII: 5 modules	Design of Modules: Complete Delivery AY 2022/23: SI: 7 modules SII: 2 modules	Design of Modules: Complete Delivery AY 2022/23: SI: 4 modules SII: 4 modules
Effective enterprise university partnership	Levels of enterprise and academic engagement spanning the new enterprise university framework	Numbers of enterprises engaged across different framework levels	Year 1-5	On target – 774 enterprise engagements with HCD	On target – 1,272 enterprise engagements with HCD	On target – 585 enterprise engagements with HCD
Evaluation and Impact	Reports and implementation models created to expand the model to other HEI's	Number of new institutional partnerships developed	Year 1-5	Ongoing with outputs expected from 2022 onwards.	Interim Reports by Imitative disseminated each semester	Final Evaluation Report planned for Sept 2024.

The team continue to innovate and have introduced "CreateHER," the University of Galway's female pre-incubator programme. The programme is competitive with only 10 participants selected to participate for each cycle of the programme. CreateHER will open minds to the possibility of developing skills and ideas to create new business now or in their future careers. CreateHER is designed to enhance self-belief, financial literacy, innovation mind-set and leadership skills and increase the number of female led innovative businesses developed during participants time in University.

The CreateHER graduate is one who is confident and innovative. They actively seek out opportunities to develop and grow. They have developed their communication and storytelling skills. They are well networked and a role model for other students of the University. They have an entrepreneurial mind-set and are ready to create their future.

Core Elements

- 6 week co-curricular programme
- 10 undergraduate female students from across all disciplines
- Working on personal growth and development
- Themed roundtables
- One to one weekly mentorship
- Access to an expert community of innovators and entrepreneurs

Supports and resources for learners

- [Cara Chatbot](#) – responded to over 14k questions on everyday student life in AY22/23

- [Support Wheel](#) developed and widely promoted to support students identify and access both internal and external supports.
- [Galway 100](#) – a student panel representing the demographics of the student population, contributed to over 6 reach out campaigns via Cara to inform on student issues and concerns influencing the further development of exam supports, study spaces, podcasts etc.
- [Galway Exams 101](#) – a continuously updated programme of supports for students before and during exams. This included the development of the [Exam Jam Podcast Series](#) in AY 22/23
- [Weekly Student Ezine](#) – addressing topical events in the student journey and signposting to supports, events and opportunities each week. Continuously developed with an emphasis on student developed content in 22/23.
- Establishment of a working party to draft the university’s Student Reasonable Accommodation policy. The working group includes representatives from the Office of the President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, the Office of the Dean of Students, Student Services, Lecturing Staff, the Student’s Union, and the Disability Support Service/Access Centre.
- Collaboration with the university’s Academic Writing Centre to provide targeted writing support to students linked to the Access Centre. This includes priority slots for individual support, monthly workshops held exclusively for students accessing disability support, and a writing group for students with dyslexia.
- Collaboration with the university’s SUMS Mathematic Support Centre to provide targeted mathematics support to students linked to the Access Centre. Collaboration with the university’s Student Health Unit to provide targeted mental health support to students accessing disability support.
- In semester one 2022/23, the Access Centre allocated funding to 55 students from underrepresented groups through the Higher Education Authority’s (HEA) Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH 2) 1916 Bursary fund. This funding was allocated as follows:
 - o 16 students awarded €5000 per year for the duration of their studies
 - o 10 students awarded €2000 per year for the duration of their studies
 - o 29 students awarded once-off payments of €2000
- Throughout the year, the Access Centre also distributed 337 laptops to undergraduate students as part of the Laptop Loan Scheme (LLS).
- Chaplaincy unit providing dedicated study environment to support students with specific needs.
- Seas Suas team collaborated with local community partners to provide support and information to students regarding well-being, welfare, and referral pathways. Partners include organisations such as: the HSE Suicide Prevention Office (Galway); Jigsaw Galway; Western Region Drug & Alcohol Task Force; the Samaritans; Claddagh Watch Patrol.
- The Chaplaincy collaborate with An Garda Síochána to facilitate information sessions focusing on personal and community safety. Students will receive support in terms of raising awareness, reporting incidents, and accessing personal support.

Student Success Strategy: The Student Success Strategy development process was paused in March 2023 pending the appointment of a new Dean of Students. The new Dean was appointed in September 2023 and work will now resume on the strategy.

Student Services: Student Services continues to develop and enhance the supports offered to students. Its aim is to ensure that students feel part of the university community, learn and enjoy their time in Galway while

recognising that student life comes with its own unique challenges that at times can be difficult. Student Services has developed the Support Wheel as an easy way to see what support is available, based on a student's needs and how they are feeling.



The Support Wheel provides useful links for students designed to help them depending on where they are on the wheel.

Student Services has responded to specific needs with the following enhancements:

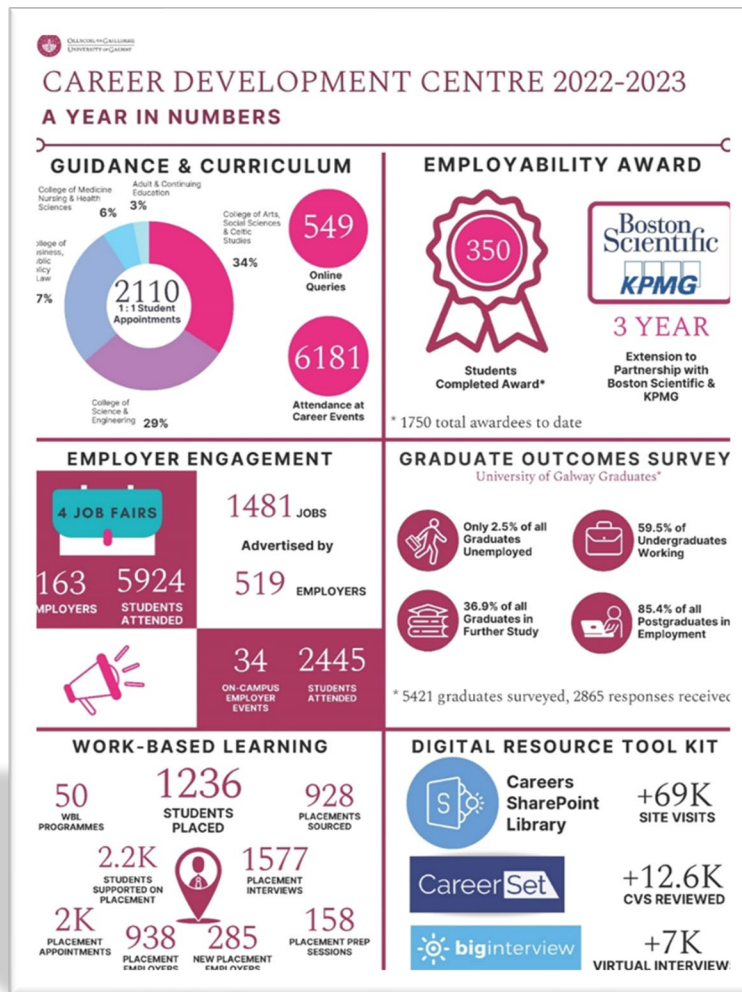
- **Safe Zone App:** [SafeZone](#) is the University's mobile app designed to help keep students safe and give extra peace of mind across our campuses. The SafeZone app is free to download and easy to use. You can use SafeZone to:
 - 'Check in' any time of day – to keep you safe on campus, such as if you're studying or working late or alone on campus
 - Quickly and discreetly call for assistance whenever you feel unsafe on campus
 - Get medical assistance quickly – whether it's for first aid, an accident or an emergency
 - Keep up to date – notifications sent directly to your phone if there is an incident on campus
 - See it, Say it! – Log relevant non-urgent issues with Security through the tip reporting feature



- **Accommodation crisis:** The University reached the completion of Dunlin Village. The project on the north campus of the University is made up of four distinct buildings with 674 bedrooms in various apartment designs and communal facilities, including meeting rooms and student social and collaboration zones; high quality and capacity wifi; a large communal reception; a 24-hour reception and security, on-location bicycle storage. It also includes 35 accessible bedrooms, located across all four blocks, designed in line with best practice for people with disabilities.

- **Students in need of support:** The University has developed Cara, the virtual assistant for current University of Galway students. Available 24/7/365 to support students with questions about day-to-day university life. Cara is a virtual extension of the Student Enquiry Centre.

Career Development Centre: The Career Development Centre provides students at University of Galway with ongoing quality career guidance and an information service focused on facilitating and empowering students to manage their own career development and make effective career transitions.



Information and Data Management (including analysis and impact of information gathered via the national Student Survey)

Student Digital Pathways: The delivery of the Student Digital Pathways Programme (SDP) has been delayed due to 3rd party partners non-delivery on contractual commitments. The University has initiated formal mediation to resolve the issues. This is currently ongoing. The University is continuing to work with partners on a new re-baselined delivery plan. It is important to note that the University team remain confident that the procured platform is the appropriate technology to meet University requirements.

Significant work has progressed on important Programme deliverables during 2023, with the in-house SDP team:

- Programme High level Solution Design is completed.
- Admissions Capability is in User Acceptance Testing
- Design workshops have advanced on a number of Capabilities – Curriculum Management, Enrolment & Registration, Student Administrations

- Successful pilot go-live of new Student Placement solution, InPlace, with four programmes for Careers Development Centre. Plans in place to rollout to all programmes in early 2024 and extend the offering to Study Abroad, Nursing & Health Services and Medical students later in 2024.
- Exams Scheduler - working with vendor on solutions design with a target go-live for Semester 2 exams.
- The implementation of a new timetabling solution, Syllabus Plus, for class scheduling, including integrations for Student registrations, is being progressed. Discussions have advanced with Colleges and Registry regarding a new operational model.
- A plan for implementation of the new Curriculum Management software, CourseLeaf, is imminent. Design workshops are advancing.
- Go live of Digitary – system to allow issuing of certified electronic version of documents to students and graduates.

DANte: DANte is a Business Intelligence/Data Analytics solution which has been developed for and by the University of Galway. Reports have been developed using the Microsoft Power BI reporting tool in a number of key areas to support strategic decision-making – and also some useful daily functions - for University staff. DANte offers a single University of Galway facility for both tabular and visual reporting based on a range of data sources including student and staff records (Student Records (Quercus) & CoreHR), Financial System and some data from other systems. Some reports integrate data from a range of sources. In AY 2022/23 ISS scoped, designed and deployed additional reporting infrastructures with further development of the data warehouse planned for 2023/24.

Student Survey: University of Galway undertakes the StudentSurvey.ie annually and prior to COVID-19 outbreak consistently performed well against other Irish universities in both our participation rates and student satisfaction rates. It appears that, on average, University of Galway students were more negatively affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, which may in large part be related to distinctive features of our student demographics. University of Galway students are more geographically dispersed than other universities and we have a higher proportion of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. These factors may have had a disproportionately negative impact on our students' ability to adapt to online and remote learning during the pandemic.

2685 of University of Galway students responded to StudentSurvey.ie (formerly known as ISSE) survey in 2023. This number yields a response rate of 26%. Of these 1273 were First Year students (Y1), 697 were Final Year students (YF) and 697 were Postgraduate Taught students (PGT) (response rate 31.5%, 23.5%, 22.9% respectively). Historical responses to the two main questions of the survey are reported in Table 1.

Results: Overall Satisfaction

Table 1. 'How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?'

How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?								
(Percentage of students who responded positively [^])								
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Uni Of Galway (%)	86.3	84.6	84.8	83.4	82.1	65.7	73.9	79.1
Other Irish Unis (%)	85.1	84.9	83.8	83.8	81.8	69.3	79.9	80.3
If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?								
(Percentage of students who responded positively*)								

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Uni Of Galway (%)	86.3	88.5	88.6	87.8	87.0	81.4	80.2	84.4
Other Irish Unis (%)	87.9	88.4	87.9	86.8	86.5	86.0	85.1	85.6

^ Percentage of students who responded as good or excellent; * Percentage of students who responded probably or definitely

Table 1 demonstrates the overall satisfaction amongst University of Galway students. In 2023 79.1 % of University of Galway students rated their overall educational experience at University of Galway as Excellent/Good (73.9 % in 2022, 80.3 % Other Unis in 2023). 84.4 % of University of Galway students stated they would come to University of Galway if they had to start over again (80.2 % in 2022, 85.6 % Other Unis 2023) rating their educational experience at University of Galway as good or excellent.

A drilldown into specific questions can identified key areas of intervention:

- Learning strategies: A relatively high proportion of students report that they are not identifying key information from recommended reading materials, they are not reviewing notes after class and they are not summarising what they learned in class or from course materials.
- Effective Teaching Practices: A relatively high proportion of students report not receiving feedback on their draft work, tests or completed assignments.
- Learning, Creative and Social Skills: New index – a relatively high proportion of students report that their experience here contributed little to their skills in speaking clearly and effectively, thinking critically and analytically, working effectively with others, solving complex real-world problems and being an informed and active citizen.

Following on from this College reports were made available over the summer including results for individual Schools and Programmes. Schools were asked to identify a small number of key actions to improve student engagement in areas where they are below average to help improve the overall student experience.

Student Services: There have been a number of developments in information and data management:

- o Establishment of an IT solution to facilitate the sharing of students with disabilities' recommended reasonable accommodations with key stakeholders within the university.
- o Contributed to the annual Association for Higher Education Access & Disability (AHEAD) report designed to capture participation rates of students with disabilities in Higher Education for the Academic Year 2022/23.
- o In December, University of Galway published its [first annual Widening Participation Committee Report](#), which coincided with the official launch of the new Access Centre in Áras Uí Chathail. Both were opened/launched by Minister of State at the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Anne Rabbitte TD. This annual report provides data on the number of underrepresented students in the University, their progress and data on the supports they are engaged with.

Public Information and Communication

Cois Coiribe: *Cois Coiribe*, the University's in-house digital platform **bridges the gap between news and academic output**. The University is now the **primary publisher** of its own content, **the first of its kind in Ireland**. The University of Galway [Shared Vision, Shaped by Values Strategy 2020- 25](#) requires content in multiple formats

that reflects the quality of research, analysis and thinking within our University community to align with best international practice. While the University has always communicated its successes through short press releases and academic case studies – there was a dearth of accessible, dynamic storytelling around the University’s societal impact and ground-breaking research and innovation. To increase global ranking, funding opportunities and student numbers, University of Galway must stand out among the digital clutter and tell its story. With four Colleges and 19 Schools, the University produces a wide range of content daily. Ensuring a consistent standard across all strategic, external communications presented a challenge. Communication channels had become oversaturated with campaigns from various units with different objectives, diluting the impact.

Guided by university-wide consultation and benchmarking analysis, University of Galway has created one centralised, marketable pathway for content – ensuring coherent brand representation and positioning across the University’s digital presence. [Cois Coiribe](#) counts researchers, industry experts, students, staff and high-profile alumni among its contributors.

From 1 January, 2022 to 30 September, 2023, the Content Unit published **230 articles**. The platform received a total of **409,065** page views and **11,331,397** impressions on social media. Visitors spent an average of **2m 19s** on each page.



Rebrand: The University rebranded to University of Galway in September 2022. The rebrand was designed to strengthen the University’s identify and clarify its university status to international audiences, where NUI Galway and the abbreviation NUIG were not clearly identifiable acronyms. The new name and identity was developed to reflect our essence as well as our place in Ireland and in the world.

A comprehensive communications, public affairs and marketing campaign was implemented with a view to informing audiences of the new name, while a campus wide project was implemented to update everything from signage to marketing materials in a phased basis. This work will continue in 2023/24 including the formal process to legally change the institution's name.

Other Parties Involved in Education and Training

- o University of Galway and Medtronic plc, a global leader in healthcare technology, announced a five-year €5 million signature innovation partnership focused on three pillars: developing the MedTech ecosystem, STEM and research. This marks the first signature partnership between University of Galway and industry. Medtronic's investment will enable significant expansion of the University's MedTech ecosystem and progress its current range of STEM programmes, and offer access to early-stage seed funding for new collaborative research projects.

The partnership will also support the establishment of two new research institutes at University of Galway. The first being the new Institute for Clinical Trials, which was launched in May 2023. The second, still in development, will focus on medical technologies and advanced therapeutics.

The institutes, and the support afforded through the University of Galway-Medtronic partnership, will facilitate sustained, research-led development, further positioning Galway as the centre of Ireland's global MedTech hub, a significant contributor to economic growth and regional development and the University as integral to research for the public good on the world stage.

- o Funding has been provided through the HEA's Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH 3) fund, enabled the Access Centre to deliver a community mentoring programme (FET2HE mentoring) with prospective science and engineering students. This programme was delivered in collaboration with Galway Community College (GCC) and Galway Technical Institute (GTI) in order to increase progression to higher education from the further education sector.
- o In collaboration with Atlantic Technological University (ATU), the Access Centre also appointed a Traveller Education Officer to deliver its Mincéirs Mis'd in Education (MMIE) Project. In addition to funding provided by PATH 2 and PATH 3, the Access Centre was also allocated additional funding through PATH 5 to support Irish Traveller and Roma students in higher education through three separate initiatives: An Education Transition Project (ETP) for Traveller and Roma Students; The Grinds4Mincéirs programme; A Targeted Primary Schools Programme for Traveller and Roma Students.

Self-evaluation, Monitoring and Review:

[QA003](#) and [QA013](#) outline the University's policies and processes in relation to the quality review of schools and professional services. A key part of the review process is the site visit carried out by an externally led review team on campus over three days. The visit includes meetings with all key stakeholders in the school or unit including head of unit, self-assessment team, staff, students and external stakeholders. Following on from the challenges presented by the pandemic and the need to move to online reviews the University has now returned fully to in person reviews.

A detailed schedule of quality reviews was implemented for 2022/23 and policy approved for the [University's Institutional Review of Research Performance 2024](#). Follow ups have also been conducted with units reviewed in 2021/22 to ensure that recommendations from the Quality Review Report have been actioned.

The University's Institutional Research Office provides significant support and insight into [studentsurvey.ie](#) results, [rankings](#) and [research metrics](#).

Quality Assurance of Research Activities and Programmes:

Research grant management / research information system (RIMS) to support building research networks for researchers: The University is currently undertaking the implementation of a comprehensive new Research Grant Management/Current Research Information System (RGM-CRIS). The system consists of two core elements;

- i) a Research Information System that captures and presents (to internal and external audiences) the totality of our research activities, outputs/impacts and collaborations and
- ii) a Research Grant Management system to manage research grants through the project lifecycle from proposal to close-out.

The Researcher Profile functionality of the CRIS allows researchers (staff and students) to capture and display the full range of their research expertise, collaborations, outputs and impacts, allowing them to build and establish research networks over their research careers.

CoARA – Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment: The University was one of the first signatories of the initial Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment in late 2022 and led the process through which the members of the Irish University Association joined the coalition. The current institutional review of research performance (IRRP) has been developed in close alignment with the European and national debate on assessment models and principles.

The CoARA commitments align almost perfectly with university strategy. CoARA members commit to primarily use qualitative methodologies in research assessment and to a process, either as an individual university or as part of wider collectives, of critical self-reflection and learning around assessment. The latter commitment articulates the Meitheal³ model of direct, collective reflection that sits at the heart of all university strategy development at Galway. The values for the university identified through this process are respect, excellence, openness, and sustainability. These fulfil the first CoARA aspiration to have clear qualitative criteria used in assessment. Our Institutional Research Review Process uses these values to identify the substantive evaluative criteria for the qualitative evaluation process.

Our engagement with CoARA commitment one, recognising the diversity of contributions to excellent research, has already influenced our assessment methodology. Research staff who do not have academic appointments, but who are judged to be producing independent work, will for the first time be assessed in their own right. This change in our research methodology advances our practice of inclusion beyond other universities and systems. Another change inspired by our response to the CoARA commitments has been to introduce the possibility for researchers to offer different numbers of outputs for assessment of the research of a unit. Finally, our use of metrics is firmly orientated toward commitments two, three and six.

To date we have worked with our partner universities in Enlight and as co-lead with Ghent University and Comenius University have produced a report with overview of the ongoing debate on the reform of research and

³ Meitheal - from the Irish word meaning 'team-work, or co-operative'

researcher assessment, complemented by case studies from the ENLIGHT partner universities. These case studies highlight innovative responsible assessment practices that contribute to reshaping the research and researcher assessment landscape, with the potential to culminate in a transformative shift in the evaluation culture within academia.

ENLIGHT

ENLIGHT Refunded for Second Phase: The ENLIGHT alliance has been refunded for a second phase from November 23 – October '27. ENLIGHT was among the 30 selected alliances and will receive €14.4 million for the next four years. A significant portion of this funding is allocated for academic initiatives, emphasising ENLIGHT's commitment to supporting academic collaboration. ENLIGHT is pleased to welcome the University of Bern as its newest alliance member in this second phase. This collaboration strengthens the diversity and impact of the alliance, furthering its mission to develop a university of the future.

University System Working Group: The ENLIGHT University System group is looking at regulations in each university to agree on a common framework to link together to form an ENLIGHT University System. The aim of the system-working group was to establish ENLIGHT as an open, integrated space or European 'University System'. During the pilot phase, the first steps in exploring the open space concept have centred around our main target group: our ENLIGHT learners. A first important achievement and essential dimension of the 'ENLIGHT system' has been the development of a joint ENLIGHT Competence Framework and Quality Approach, assuring comparable quality, mutually accepted institutional practices and similar 'degree and learning path value' and hence enabling automatic recognition between our institutions

In the next phase ENLIGHT aims to expand the open space and gradually integrate other dimensions, such as access to all facilities and services of local student life (library, sports and cultural facilities, student associations), and establish a structural shared pool of support tools for research, (international) outreach, global engagement, HR & talent recruitment, IT, funding and investment in large research infrastructure.

Plans for academic year 23/24: In this academic year there are 24 joint ENLIGHT Education initiatives planned, this ranges between joint modules, summer schools, seminars and workshops involving students at all levels up to PhD students. The ambition is to grow joint education initiatives within the second phase incentivised using funded calls to incentivise participation and embed ENLIGHT in each institution. The ENLIGHT team are working with registry and ISS colleagues to ensure ENLIGHT modules can be captured in our exam processes and in future system needs. The education initiatives all follow the common ENLIGHT quality approach agreed in the pilot phase.

ENLIGHT Teaching and Learning Conference: The ENLIGHT Teaching and Learning Conference took place in the University of Bordeaux in Oct 23 and University of Galway had 18 successful submissions to share best practice on our teaching and learning practices. The Teaching and Learning conference will take place in Tartu in October 2024. University of Galway are leading on the T&L conference in phase 2 of ENLIGHT.

Third-mission activities, societal and community engagement

Health Professional Taster Day: University of Galway's College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences held an interactive taster programme for transition year students, offering hands-on experience of how healthcare teams

work together. The Health Professional Taster Day took place in April 2023 in the University's new state-of-the-art simulation facility, located at the Clinical Science Institute on the grounds of Galway University Hospital. The facility – the Irish Centre for Applied Patient Safety and Simulation at the School of Medicine - opened in 2022 and is recognised as an international centre for excellence in education.

The taster programme was open to post-primary students in the 41 schools in Galway city and county. It is the first of its kind to bring healthcare professions together to demonstrate all skill sets across multiple degrees - Medicine, Nursing, Midwifery, Occupational Therapy, Podiatric Medicine and Speech and Language Therapy.

Glassary Initiative by University of Galway Students: Glassary ("green glossary") is a University of Galway student-led sustainability initiative which reduces household waste generated across campus accommodation residences, whilst simultaneously providing support to local community and voluntary organisations. Donation points are set-up at student residences at the end of each semester, where students can then donate their leftover household items. These items are then collected and re-distributed to future students or local organisations. Alongside tackling SDGs related to the environment such as SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), Glassary also helps alleviate the effects of poverty (SDG 1) and provides our students an opportunity to become active with civic engagement. The delivery of Glassary at the end of Semester 2, 2023 was hugely successful with a significant donation made to a local homelessness-prevention charity, the [Galway Simon Community](#).

Strategic Cancer Research Collaboration: Cancer researchers at University of Galway and Notre Dame's Harper Cancer Research Institute have come together to establish the Biseach Initiative, a strategic cancer research collaboration, which aims to build on the ideas, talent and infrastructure of both universities for global cancer impact. Director of the University of Notre Dame Harper Cancer Research Institute, and Director of the Saolta-University of Galway Cancer Centre, signed a memorandum of understanding at University of Galway to build interdisciplinary cancer research collaborations and strengthen links between both institutions through student and faculty exchange programmes. To date there have been collaborative successes with joint *Naughton Fellowships* in the areas of bone metastasis and kidney cancer. Further research collaborations are planned with researchers in the Lambe Institute, Centre for Chromosome Biology, and the Apoptosis Research Centre at University of Galway.

Galway International Arts Festival and University of Galway announce five-year partnership: Following 13 years of partnership, the University of Galway have announced a new [five-year partnership with Galway International Arts Festival](#) (GIAF) which will see even closer collaboration between the organizations. Galway International Arts Festival is a cultural organization that holds an annual arts festival in Galway, Ireland. The new partnership will see the introduction of a new course in creative arts management; the development of SELECTED, the professional development programme for emerging artists, theatre makers, curators and producers studying at University of Galway, and the Festival Volunteer Programme. Additionally, the partnership will see development of the First Thought Talks programme; further development of the GIAF archive housed in the University library; an exploration of how the partnership can help to develop the creative industries in the West; and further development of GIAF's volunteer programme.

University of Galway and county libraries encouraging young people to engage with STEM : The University of Galway based STEM programme [ReeLIFE SCIENCE](#) has presented six libraries around Ireland with audiovisual equipment to help young people in schools and youth groups take part in an innovative science video competition. ReeLIFE SCIENCE challenges young science enthusiasts and filmmakers across the island of Ireland, north and south, to produce fun, 3-minute science videos to educate and entertain the public. The videos can

communicate any aspect of STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics), including topics like: Climate Action, How Things Work, Emerging Technology and Marvels of Medicine. With a prize fund of more than €5000, the best videos from primary schools, secondary schools and youth organisations will be screened for the public at the Galway Science and Technology Festival at University of Galway in November 2023. ReelLIFE SCIENCE is supported by Science Foundation Ireland's Discover Programme, University of Galway's College of Science and Engineering, the CÚRAM SFI Research Centre for Medical Devices, and the Cell EXPLORERS science outreach programme.

Internationalisation

Global Galway: The Global Galway Project is about building a strong international future for the University of Galway and it marks a step-change in the University's internationalisation ambition. It will create a new and sustainable internationalisation structure with robust processes and collaborative ways of working that will position the university for global growth.

A new Unit has been established which incorporates the International Office. The Unit has 40 staff and 8 regional representatives. It encompasses Global Recruitment, Global Mobility, Global Partnerships, Finance & Global Operations, ENLIGHT, the English Language Centre (in transition) and the Office of the Vice President International.

Building regional expertise was a key focus in 2022-2023. We now have regional responsibilities across Recruitment and Partnerships and on-the-ground presence and expertise within each global region. The latter, together with on-line activities, will help reduce our carbon footprint, enable us to better service the needs of prospective students and increase understanding of recruitment in different regions amongst Galway-based colleagues across the university.

The Global Mobility Team has been focusing on increasing physical exchange opportunities for staff and students and working with academics across our Colleges to incorporate more diverse and creative global experience approaches into our teaching and learning. The newly formed Global Partnerships team is reviewing the policies and processes needed to expand our articulations, dual and joint degree offerings and working with our Colleges to develop and support their partnership strategies.

The business case to move **the English Language Centre** into the University (from Commercial Services) was approved by UMT in March 2022. The transition was completed in March 2023. The focus for 2024 will be on continuing to expand the proportion of students who receive language and academic skills support both before they start study with the University and during their studies. As a self-financing centre within the Office of the Vice President International, the business model requires that the fees for pre-sessional courses subsidise the in-sessional supports.

In terms of **governance**, the International Committee, a sub-committee of Academic Council is responsible for the strategic and ethical framework of internationalisation and the development and implementation of international strategy in the University. The committee is comprised of the Colleges' Vice Deans International and senior colleagues representing areas across the university key to driving forwards the internationalisation strategy.

Work to improve our **cross-unit processes and ways of working** for global student recruitment, global mobility and student support continues. A proposal to expand the global careers was approved in 2023 and new posts have been appointed dedicated not only incoming international students career goals, but to enable domestic students to further their goals for international careers, a first among Irish universities.

The Global Galway Project officially ended in September 2023. On-going activities have have been embedded within business-as-usual. An institutional internationalisation strategy is being developed with extensive consultation across all areas of the University to ensure it is embedded in business as usual in all areas. An integrated planning process with Colleges and professional service units is being gradually rolled out which will over time ensure that Schools and Programme Directors are more bought-in to diversity and sustainability strategies relating to student recruitment, mobility and partnerships.

Integration of UN sustainable development goals (SDG): *University of Galway ranks 34th in the world for progress on the SDGs:* The University of Galway has further increased its ranking in the [Times Higher Education \(THE\) Impact Rankings](#). THE Impact Rankings represent the only global performance table that assesses university performance across the UN SDGs. The University of Galway is the highest ranked Irish institution and has increased its ranking by ten places to 34th in the world, placing the university in the top 2 percent of universities globally. The University of Galway has been recognized as making significant contribution to 11 of the 17 SDGs and ranks number five in the world for progress on SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production.

The University of Galway's approach to embedding the SDGs centres on a [Learn-Live-Lead](#) model. The focus of learn is to continue to embed SDG literacy into all aspects of University learning and research. The focus of live is to implement the principles of the SDGs through campus operations and engagement activities. From a lead perspective, the aim is to play a central and transformative role in attaining the SDGs by 2030. Our Learn-Live-Lead model is organised around six key themes: Research & Learning; Energy & Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Nature & Ecosystems; Health & Wellbeing; Built Environment; and Governance & Leadership.

LEARN:

1. Awarding of Student Sustainability Leadership Internships for 2023

The University of Galway's [Student Sustainability Leadership Awards](#) scheme provides paid internships to University of Galway students seeking to develop their sustainability knowledge and skills. These internships aim to provide enthusiastic, sustainability-minded students with an opportunity to work with our sustainability team's on-campus. For the year 2023, two SDG-focused internships in *Sustainability Research* and *Sustainability Communication and Engagement* were awarded to two students that demonstrated outstanding awareness and commitment to sustainability during the competitive interview process. Over an 8-week period, students will collaborate with staff to arrange an SDG-showcase event, compile sustainability-related learning tools and resources, refresh the university's sustainability website and document the University of Galway's on-going progress in progressing the SDGs.

2. Launch of new MSc in Sustainability Leadership

The recent launch of a new [MSc in Sustainability Leadership](#) expands the University of Galway's suite of sustainability-focused postgraduate courses. The new Sustainability Leadership course provides students with training in the leadership skills needed to address the challenges and opportunities that contemporary businesses face in the areas of environmental sustainability and corporate leadership. With contributions from the [College of Business, Public Policy & Law](#), the [College of Science and Engineering](#) and the SDG-focused research centre the [Ryan Institute](#), students will receive tuition in areas ranging from Responsible Management and Leadership to Sustainable Information Systems, students will leave the programme with a holistic understanding of sustainability challenges and opportunities.

3. An Introduction to the SDGs incorporated to the New Staff Induction Programme

A topic entitled *An Introduction to the SDGs* has been integrated into the University of Galway's New Staff Induction Programme. The University of Galway's [Sustainability Strategy](#) places an emphasis on the central role that staff play in the University's sustainability journey and is committed to incorporating sustainability as part of staff induction and professional development. By incorporating the SDGs into the staff induction programme, incoming staff will not only improve their own knowledge of the SDGs but will also be empowered to implement

the SDGs into their own teaching curricula. In this way, the integration of the SDGs into the university's staff induction programme not only represents exciting progress towards our own Sustainability Strategy, but also the SDGs more broadly.

LIVE

1. *Launch of accessible bike shelters:*

The installation of new accessible bike shelters across the campus further embeds sustainability on our campus, providing families and people with impaired-mobility a new facility to store their bikes. The [United Nations](#) has highlighted the benefits of cycling for environmental and health reasons. For those with impaired mobility, such as the elderly or individuals with physical disabilities, a lack of facilities can act as a major barrier to the uptake of cycling. Similarly for families who may rely on larger cycling equipment such as cargo bikes, a lack of storage facilities may act as a barrier to engaging with cycling as a means of transport to school and work. For these reasons, the installation of new bike shelters represents exciting progress on the SDGs on our campus.

2. *New Drinking Water Fountains*

The installation of new water fountains across campus demonstrates University of Galway ongoing commitment to progressing SDGs 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being). The installation of new water fountains has increased the total number of water fountains to over 20 internal water fountains and 4 external hands-free stations across campus. In line with SDGs 6 and 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and the university's Sustainability Strategy, the University of Galway aims to reduce total water consumption by 10% across campus and eliminate the use of single-plastic items such as water bottles. The installation of new drinking water fountains represents an important step towards achievement of these goals.

LEAD

1. *Panel Discussion on the SDGs at All-Staff Meeting*

The University of Galway's most recent All-Staff Meeting dedicated time to discuss and raise awareness the University of Galway's progress on the SDGs. Members of the [Community and University Sustainability Partnership group](#) and sustainability researchers spoke on the importance of the SDGs for the University of Galway and the university's receipt of [SDG Champion status](#). The panel discussed current progress on sustainability initiatives in the university, including the [implementation of the SDGs into university curricula](#), improvements to the [university's sustainable energy systems](#) and new and upcoming [case studies](#) on the university's progress on the SDGs. The University of Galway's receipt of [SDG Champion status](#). The panel discussed current progress on sustainability initiatives in the university, including the [implementation of the SDGs into university curricula](#), improvements to the [university's sustainable energy systems](#) and new and upcoming [case studies](#) on the university's progress on the SDGs. The University of Galway's receipt of SDG Champion Status for the year 2023/24 represents an exciting opportunity for staff to become more involved with the SDGs and staff have been implored to become involved with sustainability initiatives on-campus for the upcoming year.

2. *Government's Consultative Forum on International Security Policy on Friday June 23*

The University of Galway hosted the second day of the [Government's Consultative Forum on International Security Policy](#) on Friday, June 23rd. The Forum aims to improve public understanding on Ireland's foreign, security and defence policies. The forum was open to members of the public and provided civilian, military experts and practitioners the opportunity to discuss issues including Ireland's efforts to protect the rules-based international order through peacekeeping and crisis management, international humanitarian law, and conflict prevention and peacebuilding.



3. University of Galway hosts inaugural SDG Week:

In September 2023, University of Galway hosted its first [SDG week](#) to increase awareness, engagement, and action to help achieve the SDGs. SDG Week was organised on the back of the Government of Ireland designating University of Galway as a national SDG Champion. SDG Week formed part of the wider European Sustainable Development Week, which this year ran from September 18 to 23. Over 25 events took place throughout the week, including a mix of student and staff-led events, from seminars to seed sowing, an environmental summit, poster presentations, workshops, a quiz night, a guided walk and a community recycling day. SDG week was developed to raise awareness of the SDGs and share our learnings and experiences with others so we can all make a difference by integrating them into our work and daily activities. SDG week was open to all including students' staff and community partners.



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

SDG Week

18-23 September 2023

Celebrating the UN's Sustainable
Development Goals across campus.

www.universityofgalway.ie/sdgweek

Monday 18 September

- 11.30am: SDG Poster Presentation by Business & Economics
- 3pm: Action for the SDGs - ALIVE workshop
- 4pm: UN Webinar: Implementation of the SDGs in Higher Education
- 5pm: EcoSprint: Designing a Sustainable Campus for your Future with the IdeasLab

Tuesday 19 September

- 11am: Sustainable Food Systems & the SDGs
- 12.30pm: How Data Science is making an impact on the SDGs
- 1pm: Land, Housing & the SDGs
- 1pm: SDGs at First Year Socs Day
- 5.30pm: ROAMing Citizen Science Workshop
- 7pm: Students' Union SDG Quiz Night

Wednesday 20 September

- 12pm: SDGs @ Clubs' Day
- 1pm: Enter Net Zero with Deloitte: Employer workshop
- 3pm: Spotlight on the SDGs: Commerce Students as Change Makers
- 5pm: LIFT Leadership Facilitator Training

Thursday 21 September

- 9am: 2-day PEI Summit: Prevention & Early Intervention
- 10am: Free WEEE Recycling Days
- 11am: The SDGs & My Volunteer Work Experience
- 11.30am: Seed Collection & Sowing event



Full event listing, venues
and registration at:
www.universityofgalway.ie/sdgweek

Friday 22 September

- 11am: Student-led Environmental Summit
- 2pm: Speech & Language Therapy & the SDGs: Community & University collaborations

Saturday 23 September

- 10am: 'Just 3 x SDG' Pledge
- 11am: Guided Biodiversity and Heritage Walk of the Campus

2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

An important precursor to initiatives at University of Galway related to academic integrity in the academic year 2022-23 was the introduction of the university's inaugural **Academic Integrity Policy (QA220)** in June 2022. This document, which succeeded the university's previous Plagiarism Policy, came into effect that month, and represented a more holistic approach to the broad topic of academic integrity, and the many categories of academic misconduct, than its predecessor. Its effective operational introduction began in September, at the commencement of the 2022-23 academic year.

The impetus for the new policy was to provide guidelines and protocols for the management of a broad range of types of academic misconduct and to catalyse the development of complementary university infrastructures, processes, and protocols for academic integrity.

The policy was developed with the consultation of a number of international experts in the field of academic integrity, and with the support of NAIN's Academic Integrity: national Principles and Lexicon of Common Terms. The entire university community in Galway (including alumni, who are also subject to the policy) are stakeholders in this initiative, and many of the developments at the university since the new policy's introduction have focused on the task of building wide-ranging awareness of the policy among the community.

The broad outcomes of the new policy are not yet known, nor will they be known until all of its related infrastructures and processes are fully established and embedded, and a sufficient time to gather relevant data has elapsed. However, it is possible to comment on some preliminary impacts of the new policy and its associated infrastructures and processes.

Key to the implementation of the new policy was the appointment of the university's first **Academic Integrity Officer (AIO)**, Dr Justin Tonra, who began work in the post in April 2023. The role of the AIO is central to implementing, evaluating, and refining the policy and its associated processes. The post combines academic, administrative, and partnership roles and is based in the Centre for Excellence in Learning & Teaching (CELT). The AIO works as part of that unit, but also works directly with other units (including Colleges and Schools) and services across the university.

The AIO is responsible for working with Academic Integrity Advisors (academic staff in the disciplines, Schools, and Colleges) and others to ensure consistency of practice on academic integrity matters. Since his appointment, the AIO has undertaken **investigatory work** associated with identified suspected breaches, developed and supported **staff training and development in academic integrity**, and worked to **raise awareness** of the new policy and broader academic integrity issues. The role of AIO is a fundamental component in assuring the quality of the university's programmes, awards, and assessments. During the academic year 2022-23, an agreement was reached to appoint an **Academic Integrity Support Officer (AISO)**, enabled by Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement (SATLE) funding, to support the activities of the Academic Integrity Officer. Finally, the university began to explore the potential requirements for an Academic Misconduct Register, and the various logistics related to its acquisition and implementation.

Information: relevant information about new developments and changes in academic integrity is primarily communicated to staff through regular updates to the network of Academic Integrity Advisors (AIAs) across the university. This information is then, in turn, communicated to students by members of academic staff and through documentation provided to students for modules, courses, and programmes. Relevant information for all members of the university community is available through a dedicated university-level webpage and collections of academic integrity resources are provided by the CELT and university library websites. Relevant information for senior management is disseminated through conventional staff reporting mechanisms and at the university's Teaching and Learning Committee.

NAIN Resources: new university resources and documents related to academic integrity are consistently aligned with resources and publications issue by NAIN. For example, new training courses on academic integrity that are currently in development use agreed terms from the NAIN Lexicon of Common Terms.

Support Resources: in addition to publishing and publicising the Academic Integrity Policy, the university's academic integrity webpage provides a simplified Q&A section to help learners understand their obligations and repercussions of engaging in academic misconduct. A dedicated "Academic Integrity for Students" training course currently in development by the Academic Integrity Office will also communicate these topics in a clear fashion. In this new course, and as detailed above, the Academic Integrity Office provides information for learners on different supports that will help them to develop and maintain good academic integrity practices. Such resources are provided by units across the university, including: Students' Union, University Library, International Office, Academic Writing Centre, Student Services, etc.

3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period

3.1 QA and QE supporting the Achievement of Strategic Objectives

No.	Relevant objectives Note: Include reference to the relevant section of the preceding AQR, where applicable	Planned actions and indicators <i>Note: Include details of unit responsible, and how planned action will address the relevant strategic priority and/or reengagement advice/CINNTE recommendation.</i> <i>If the institution is preparing for cyclical review, include how the planned actions will address the relevant review objective(s).</i>
	IRRP	IRRP2024 is a research assessment exercise for eighteen schools of the University. It will be a peer review process where reviewers of high international regard will rate the quality of research of a School. The purpose of the rating will be to compare the school's research quality with international best practice, in accordance with the principles of the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment. The following 6 schools will be assessed in 2023/24: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Biological and Chemical Sciences 2. Business and Economics 3. English and the Creative Arts 4. Geography, Archaeology & Irish Studies 5. Health Sciences 6. History and Philosophy
	Strategy	A Strategy Development Group has been set up to develop the next University wide strategy with representation from key areas across the University. An initial meeting of the group has taken place to look at Terms of Reference and plans for the year ahead. Discussions are ongoing in relation to the 'Values-led' approach to Strategic Planning and whether this will be continued for the next strategy and in this context a Values Survey is planned to go out to the University community.
	Digital transformation	Digital transformation will be delivered mainly through the Student Digital Pathways programme. The Student Digital Pathways (SDP) programme, as the largest digital programme the University has ever embarked on, will continue over the next several years. The programme has been challenged by the underperformance of our delivery

		partners and we are currently going through a legal mediation process which has focused all parties on the requirement to deliver on the contractual agreement.
	Reputation audit	<p>The University of Galway is currently undertaking a reputation audit to understand its reputation and the drivers of its reputation amongst both domestic and international academics and researchers and other internal and external audiences, particularly for key research areas. The research will highlight reputational strengths and weaknesses and contribute to the development of a reputation strategy. The university's research community is a key element of both the audit and the resulting strategy. The project objectives are: to understand how the university's academic reputation is perceived by key external stakeholders in comparison with the internal perception, to understand the drivers of the university's academic reputation amongst key identified audiences including researchers, to understand and establish a reputational baseline of identified research areas and to understand the university's research areas of excellence from a regional, national and international perspective. The audit is due for completion in Q1 2024, and the Reputation Strategy is due for completion in Q3 2024.</p>

3.2 Reviews planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods

3.2.1 Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period

Unit to be reviewed	Date of planned review	Date of last review
School of Biological and Chemical Sciences (R)	June 2024	2023 (T)
School of Business and Economics (R)	June 2024	2023 (T)
School of English and the Creative Arts (R)	June 2024	2022 (T)
School of Geography, Archaeology and Irish Studies (R)	June 2024	2019 (T)
School of Health Sciences (R)	June 2024	2020 (T)
School of History and Philosophy (R)	June 2024	2022 (T)
Registry (S)	Feb 2024	2017
Burren College of Art (L)	Feb 2024	2017

Note: (S): Support and Services; (R): Research; (L): Linked Provider (T): Teaching & Learning

3.2.2 Reviews planned beyond Next Reporting Period

Details of all upcoming reviews can be found [here](#).

4.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies

CASE STUDY 1

Title: Cara – Virtual Assistant for Students

Theme: Use of Analytics

Keywords (2-3 words): AI Student Support

In 2021 in response to the challenges presented by the Covid 19 pandemic, Student Services explored potential online solutions to support students' need for easy access to information and supports. A pilot project progressed to a full launch of the [Cara chatbot](#) in 2022. In the academic year 22/23, our students asked Cara over 15,000 questions, answered over 13.5k questions with only 225 transferred to a staff member. Cara won the 2023 Times Higher Education Award for Technological or Digital Innovation.

Cara answers questions on everyday student life, providing information on supports and wellbeing to typical exams and fees queries. It is available 24/7, 365 days of the year with 40% of queries outside of the '9 to 5' availability of on campus help desks extending services to out of hours. Managed by the *Student Engagement team* in Student Services, the content management system is a mix of traditional question and answer content and specific university URLs that Cara can access to find answers to student questions. Unlike many chatbots in enterprise support services, Cara does not follow prescribed conversation flows thus avoiding frustrating conversations that loop without a satisfactory response for the user. While most interactions with Cara are anonymous, each student has the opportunity to pose any specific question to a human if Cara does not offer a satisfactory response.



Students questioned Cara over 15,000 instances, at all times of the day and year, with high levels of response accuracy and with minimal human intervention required.

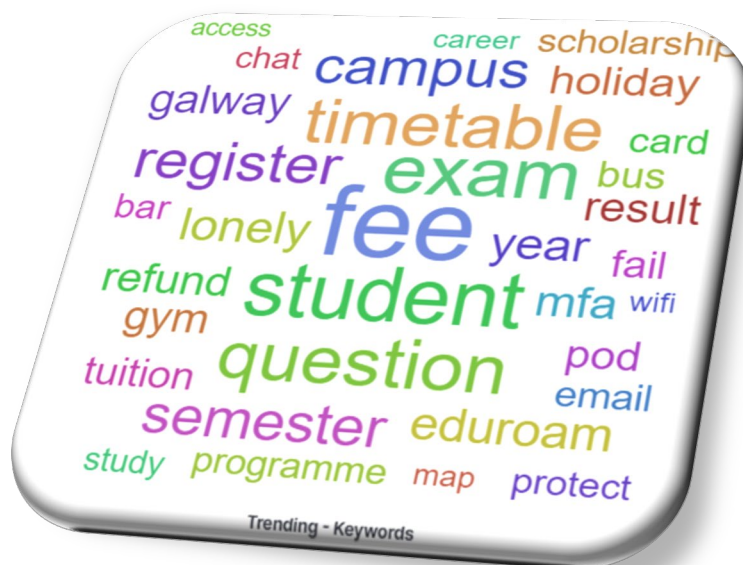
A special “sensitive flow” is triggered if a student uses a word or phrase that is concerning e.g. depression, suicide, sexual assault and Cara will respond accordingly with specific information on relevant supports.

While local, national and international surveys provide insights into student needs, typically, there is a time lag on results and related decisions, and the window of opportunity to address these needs may have closed or the issues escalated. The analytic capabilities built into Cara ensure that we now have

real time insights into student needs and issues and our responses are based on this rather than our assumptions about what student needs are. A sophisticated dashboard gives vital information which is used to drive content for the weekly student ezine ensuring our 'push' communications are timely and based on existing student issues.

We have further developed Cara's capability to proactively reach out to students to get their feedback on a variety of topics. Students can be prompted to "Tell" Cara their opinions on topics and the sentiment analysis we developed summarises and reports on the feedback. Developed in 2023 Tell Cara was used to reach out to all new first years in Sept 2024 and we have further developed this in AY23/24.

On its own Cara is valuable. However, the true value is in integrating it with other "listening" channels to triangulate the feedback. Our Student Advisors and Student Enquiry Centre staff validate the needs identified on Cara based on their in-person interactions with students, while we "test" the feedback and our proposed responses to the feedback with our student panel "[The Galway 100](#)". Combining the feedback from Cara with other feedback channels has led to significant enhancements to our services to students including the [Support Wheel](#), enhanced [exam supports](#), a podcast series as well as proactive advocacy with other services and units across the University to drive change based on verified student needs.



Word-cloud showing thee topics of student queries to Cara chatbot, AY22-23

While the Cara project has been very successful, it was not without its challenges. Funding for the project continues to be a concern and we need to progress from project funding to a more sustainable model now that it is long-term operational. While Student Services lead the project, Cara is accessing information from many other services and from multiple URLs and has necessitated our involvement driving website updates and development of information outside our own units. Our supplier, while

hugely responsive has at times over promised on technical capabilities resulting in developments taking longer than planned.

Cara significantly improves student's access to information and resources as well as providing a perceptive portal on immediate student needs and suggestions – ensuring the appropriate service improvements are presented in a timely manner.

CASE STUDY 2

Title: Widening Participation at the University of Galway

Theme: Access, Transfer, Progression (ATP) - exploring pathways and innovations from FE to HE.

Keywords (2-3 words): Access and participation

The University of Galway's first annual Widening Participation Committee [Report](#) was launched by Minister of State at the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Anne Rabbitte TD during the report period. Established in June 2020, the Widening Participation Committee (WPC) is a sub-committee of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Campus Committee (EDICC) (see figure 1). It was established to support and monitor the University's strategic plans on widening access and participation. The committee is comprised of members from the University's four Colleges, students, professional services staff, and external stakeholders.

Figure 1: Widening Participation Committee Governance Structure



The first annual Widening Participation Committee Report outlines the University's efforts to increase the equality of opportunity for students who would traditionally be regarded as underrepresented in Higher Education (HE). A large part of the report contains data from Student Record System (SRS), with information on the number of students progressing to University of Galway through some of the specific entry routes that have been developed, nationally and institutionally, to ensure the student population in Higher Education Institutes (HEI's) reflects the social mix of the population we find more broadly in society. These entry routes include: Further Education and Training (FET), Mature, Higher education Access Route (HEAR), Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) and Access programmes.

It also contains data on the number of students with disabilities, the ethnic diversity of our student body and the many important widening participation activities that are taking place across campus.

The importance of having good data on widening participation activities in Higher Education Institutes (HEI's) has been outlined in successive HEA (Higher Education Authority) National Access Plan's. For example, priority goal three of the HEA's National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-19 (NAP) spoke directly to the need to gather 'accurate data and evidence on access and participation and to base policy on what that data tells us' (HEA, 2015, p. 28). In the most recent NAP 2022-28, this requirement for good data and an evidence-driven approach to access and participation remains a specific goal (HEA, 2022). By collating and publishing data on widening participation activities on an annual basis, University of Galway has a stronger and more robust evidence-base for the work undertaken in this area and, ultimately, will be key in informing us on where we plan to go as an institution in the future.

The collection of good institutional data in the area of widening participation has also been key to University of Galway securing additional [HEA Performance Funding \(€833,333\)](#) to deliver a number of additional widening participation initiatives. The University of Galway's three year (1st January 2023 – 31st December 2025) *Widening Access and Participation Project* (WAPP) promises to further drive excellence in supporting access and participation across the student lifecycle for those most underrepresented in University of Galway. This project contains three pillars:

1. **Pre-entry** – Increasing progression to Higher Education for the following target groups: DEIS, Disability and care-experienced students.
2. **Progression and Retention** – Using innovative technological solutions to support student progression
3. **Data and impact** – Developing a strong evidence-base for the Access Centre's widening participation initiatives

Each of the project pillars aligns with important strategic commitments and key performance indicators (KPI's) outlined in the HEA's National Access Plan 2022-28. For example, with its focus on students in DEIS schools (KPI 6), FET Students (KPI 2), students with disabilities (KPI 5) and care-experienced children, this project is closely aligned with broader national strategy. Indeed, a central focus of pillar one of this project is to directly engage with these identified target groups through targeted outreach initiatives. With the expansion of the DEIS programme to include 8 additional post-primary schools in the western region, the additional strategic focus on FET to HE progression in *The National Further Education and Training Strategy 2020-24*, the 'particular needs and challenges in accessing higher education' experienced by those in the care system (NAP 2022-28) and the findings of the recent *AHEAD Students Disabilities Engaged with Support Services in Higher Education in Ireland*

2019/20 outlining the underrepresentation of certain categories of students with disabilities in HE, the University of Galway is well situated to do its part in delivering on these strategic objectives.

Crucially, to continue to be at the forefront in establishing a strong evidence-base for the work we do in this area, pillar three will focus on establishing best practice internationally on the most effective interventions when supporting underrepresented students. These findings will also be included in future iterations of the University of Galway's Widening Participation Committee's annual report.