

University of Galway

2026

Annual Quality Report
University of Galway
Reporting Period 2024-2025

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PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM
Reporting Period 2024-2025

PREFACE

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 2024 - 31 August 2025.

It is to be submitted by Friday, 27 February 2026.

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 300 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 almost 4,000 international students and 480 international staff from over 110 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, 18 Schools, six 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.

1.0. Internal QA Framework

1.1 Governance and Management of Quality

Under the Irish Universities Act 1997, governance arrangements for University of Galway follow a bicameral model, with Governing Authority (Údarás na hOllscoile) exercising overall governance responsibility and Academic Council (AC) having particular responsibility for the governance of academic affairs. The Academic Council is the chief academic authority and, subject to review by Údarás na hOllscoile, controls the academic affairs of the University, including the curriculum, instruction and education provided by the University. Consequently, AC plays a critical role in setting the academic direction of the University, and its remit includes the development and approval of academic programmes and academic policy. Academic Council meets five times annually.

The University Management Team (UMT) is responsible for the effective day-to-day management of the University, executing the decisions of Údarás through all academic Colleges, Schools and Centres, and major Professional Service Units.

Údarás has an external chair and a broad range of members drawn from different constituencies, inside and outside the university community and has full responsibility for the oversight of quality and quality assurance (QA). It regularly receives quality reports through Academic Council and the Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC). Údarás meets five times annually.

The University's governance structure enforces separation of responsibilities between developers and approvers and their terms of references are known through long-established practice and where appropriate, documented and published.

The University's Organisational Chart can be viewed [here](#).

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 2025-2030](#). This plan, launched in May 2025, is focused on maximising University of Galway's impact in our unique role as a globally connected, research-intensive university on the west coast of Ireland.

The strategy prioritises the core activities of research, education and the student experience, as well as the organisational design required to deliver excellence in an increasingly complex world.



The Director of Strategy Implementation works with the President and University Management Team to implement, monitor and review targets/actions of the strategic plan. Each of our four Colleges will publish **College-level strategies** identifying where and how they will contribute to achieving the collective vision for the University. Implementation of these actions will be monitored over time through rolling five-year business plans, and School and Research Institute annual operational plans.

Thematic Strategies: Professional Services will publish a series of thematic strategies on major university activities – e.g. Academic Strategy, Research & Innovation Strategy, Internationalisation Strategy, Student Success Strategy, Sustainability Strategy – with further details on how we will achieve our stated actions.

Organisational Transformation Office: This new central office will be a key driver of strategy implementation, providing expertise, project management and oversight to ensure that major strategic initiatives are delivered effectively and efficiently for the benefit of our university community.

University of Galway has a comprehensive documented approach to Quality Assurance (QA). University of Galway implements external standards and guidelines through a comprehensive QA system focussed

on internal [Policies and Procedures](#) 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 by a number of major committees. These are led by the [Governing Authority](#) (Údarás) and its principle sub-committees including [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](#) 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 Committee
- Global Committee

The University has adopted a policy for documenting all policies and procedures. All major policies, procedures, regulations and guidelines are made available by units across the University and guide the behaviour of University staff and students when implementing key University processes. 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 on the Quality Office website. Additional policies and procedures related to this heading and available from the [Policies and Procedures Repository](#) include:

- QA001 Quality Assurance
- QA002 Policies and Procedures

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 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.

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.

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 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.

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.

Students are the primary stakeholders and regarded by University of Galway as competent, active and constructive partners. 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 relevant committees and through the Dean of Students. There are three student union members on *Údarás na hOllscoile* and there is student representation on other major

committees including Academic Council, AC Standing, Quality Enhancement Committee and Teaching and Learning.

Key stakeholders in the context of quality assurance include:

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

University of Galway staff also meet regularly with counterparts from other Universities through the [Irish Universities Association \(IUA\) Committees](#) 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 Institutional Review of Research Performance
- QA005 Role of External Examiners – Taught Programmes
- QA006 Review of Taught Programmes
- QA013 Review of Services

1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision

University of Galway provides a [list of collaborative and linked 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, in particular [QA246 Collaborative Partnerships for Taught Awards](#), 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.

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 at least three times per year, ahead of meetings of Academic Standing Committee.

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.

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 the School of 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:

- [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 Widening Participation (WP) Committee promotes, advises, and monitors the University's strategic plans on widening access and participation for the identified learner cohorts.

The University of Galway WP Committee identifies issues and proposes 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.

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 access
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.”

The WP Committee reports annually to the University Management Team (UMT) and EDI Committees and inputs into the HEA compact and National Access planning processes.

Access Centre: 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](#).

University of Galway is 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 EU/EFTA Applicants, CAO Handbook
- NUI 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) that are compliant with the [National Framework for Qualifications](#).

Supports are available through the [Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching](#) (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

Teaching, Learning and Assessment at the University of Galway is governed by 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](#)
- [Assessment](#)
- [Attendance Requirements](#)
- [Learning Outcomes](#)
- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Accessibility](#)
- [Feedback Policy](#)
- [Teaching Evaluation](#)

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

- [Canvas](#)
- [Clickers - TurningPoint Cloud \(TP7\)](#)
- [Qwickly Attendance](#)
- [Turnitin](#)
- [Video Conferencing](#)
- [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](#) provides 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.

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

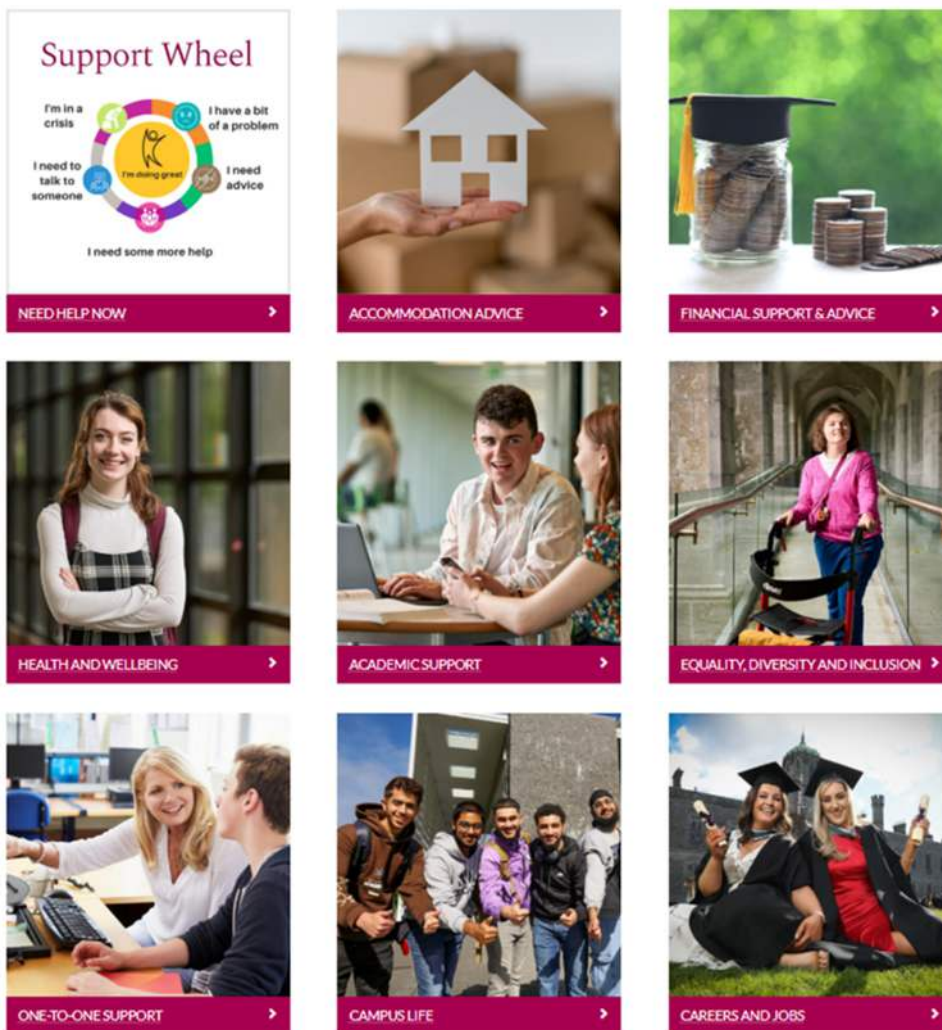
Other related external policies and procedures include:

- 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 EU/EFTA Applicants, CAO Handbook
- NUI 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:



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 James Hardiman Library Customer Charter 803a Cairt Chustaiméara Leabharlann Shéamais Uí Argadáin](#)
- [QA804 Donations Policy](#)
- [QA805 E-Resources Usage Policy](#)
- [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.

Workshops for Students

Academic Skills offer a calendar of workshops for students. These workshops support all Undergraduate and Taught Master's Students in finding, using, and managing information.

- **First Year In:** Get off to a flying start and learn about using scholarly sources, using the Library catalogue & getting the most out of your Library to make your first year a success.
- **Finding Articles and Books:** Learn about the main features of the Library catalogue, how to search for scholarly articles, books and ebooks, search for topics on the Library catalogue and refine results, and discover databases relevant to your subject area.
- **Cite Them Right:** Learn the basics of referencing, tools to help you manage your references and tips on maintaining good academic integrity including emerging challenges such as contract cheating and AI.
- **Literature Review: An Introduction to Searching the Literature:** Learn how to narrow a topic to create a research question, create a search strategy using Boolean commands, truncation and wildcards, identify potential sources and think critically about the information that you encounter.
- **Endnote for Citing & Referencing:** Learn how to use Endnote to manage your reference library and use Cite While You Write (CWYW) to cite and reference your sources.
- **Gen AI and Assignments:** Learn to think critically about Gen AI technology, its application, and its output. This class will demystify the technology, prompt dialogue between students and instructors, and promote and support academic integrity.

Self-Directed Guides

The Library has created dedicated guides for first year students, and advanced undergraduate and Taught Master's Students as well as an essential guide to maintaining academic integrity.

- **First Year In:** Designed to help first year students get off to a flying start and learn about using scholarly sources, using the Library catalogue & getting the most out of the Library to make first year a success.
- **Research Skills for Students:** This comprehensive guide begins with the foundational step of creating a clear, focused research question and progresses through identifying and evaluating scholarly sources.
- **Academic Integrity:** This guide includes avoiding plagiarism, citing and referencing, and study skills resources.

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 on Canvas. 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 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.

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 is committed to advancing University of Galway as a leading global university through the provision of a range of services across Employee Resourcing, Employee Relations, Learning and Development and Equality related issues. HR aims to respect and actively respond to the developmental, professional and personal needs of all colleagues by empowering staff to fulfill their potential, foster their personal and professional well-being, and develop their skills and capabilities.

Following reviews of the HR function, including a quality review in 2019, HR is now structured around three pillars:

1. HR Operations

2. Employee Engagement
3. Development and Strategy

The Human Resources Office delivers on these pillars across a number of teams:

1. **HR Operations Team** are responsible for the administration of Human Resources work relating to staff contracts of employment, entitlements, recruitment and selection, promotions, staff deployment and leave and ensuring this is carried out in a fair and competent manner, according to best practice and in keeping with legislation and university policies.
2. **Human Resources Information Systems team** provides technical leadership and advocacy to colleagues and other stakeholders in respect of the Human Resources systems and processes.
3. **HR Business Partners** are aligned to specific Colleges /Research /Units within the University. They work in partnership with these units to deliver best practice HR solutions that support the University's strategic priorities, in conjunction with specialist HR functions. The HR Business Partners provide specialist coaching and support to University management to enable them to effectively manage their human resources.
4. The **Employee Relations** service forms the bridge between managers and staff in the University. It provides strategic advice to management teams on shaping their service and developing ideas from the concept stage through to implementation.
5. The **Learning and Development team** aims to support the University's strategic plan by delivering training and talent development solutions to all employees and enable them to reach their full potential. The Learning and Development Team provides a comprehensive and wide-ranging service to all employees which includes:
 - Mentoring
 - Workshops and Programmes
 - Bitesize Learning Sessions
 - Further Education Policy Scheme
 - Centralised Inductions
 - Training course admin, coordination and facilitation

University Strategy 2025-2030 – Of Galway, For the World:

The Strategic Plan 2025-2030 outlines the University's desire to strive for recognition in the Top 200 universities in the world and evolve teaching, learning and the student experience to ensure our students are set up for success. The strategy includes plans to design and evolve systems and processes to make them as effective as possible. The steps to achieve these plans are identified in key enablers and priority initiatives. These include areas of development for HR:

Key Enabler: Supportive Environment: *We will enable and support all students and staff to reach their full potential in an engaging, accessible and inclusive learning environment.*

This includes plans to mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion by design and enhancing employee wellbeing and engagement through the development of staff.

Priority Initiatives have also been identified that will be resourced, output-oriented and time-bound:

Priority Initiative: Future Talent Programme:

We will invest to attract new talent in research, teaching and professional services to Galway, develop current staff, and grow our PhD cohort through targeted programmes that advance our strategic priorities.

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.

[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 [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 Recruitment

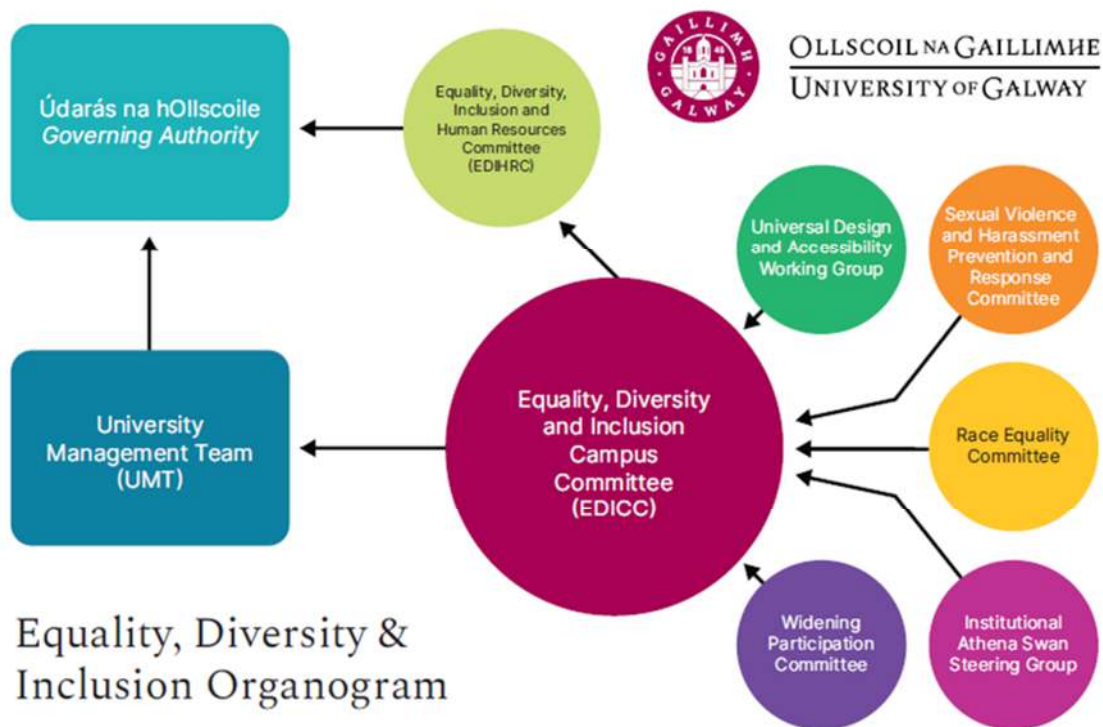
Policies and Procedures for recruitment address:

- Roles, responsibilities and codes of conduct
- Academic/professional/technical standards for all staff
- Pedagogical standards for teaching staff
- Benchmarking staff profiles (at programme level) with those of similar providers
- Recruitment, selection, probation and tenure
- Collection and use of regular and timely learner and other relevant feedback
- Pedagogical training and certification of teaching staff
- Performance management
- Probation for new staff
- 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](#)

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

Significant progress has been made in the implementation of a new Research Information Management System at University of Galway. The system, now referred to as CRIS ([Current Research Information System \(CRIS\)](#)) consists of two core elements:

- 1) a Research Information System and**
- 2) an Award Management System.**

The first CRIS element was successfully launched in Quarter 1 2025 it is designed to capture and presents (to internal and external audiences) the totality of our research activities, outputs/impacts and collaborations. It provides a comprehensive platform that allows us to efficiently manage and display our research activities, while providing insights and valuable reporting. It consolidates data on individual and organisational (including College, School and research unit level) research profiles, publications, awards, and more into a single, user-friendly portal.

Work is underway since Quarter 3 2025 on the second element - the **Award Management System** to manage research funding awards through the procedures of the university from identifying and presenting funding opportunities; to a workflow that records funding proposals and facilitates a system of internal review and approval (financial and technical) for submission; to post award project kick-off, execution and closure. We are working to a timeline of Quarter 3 2026 for an initial launch of the CRIS **Award Management System**, with full implementation anticipated late 2027 at the earliest. Full implementation includes functionality in particular finance that is dependent on integration with other IT systems that are currently undergoing upgrades.

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 Canvas 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](#).

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, in its role as a centre of education and research, holds a great deal of information about the people who study or work here. How we manage this personal information is governed by the Data Protection Act 1988 to 2018 (as may be amended) and the European General Data Protection Regulation 2016.

The University has developed a [suite of policies](#) including 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.

In line with GDPR, University of Galway has appointed a designated Data Protection Officer (DPO). The DPO is a statutory independent role that facilitates data subjects in exercising their rights under the GDPR and the Irish Data protection Act 2018.

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. This [FOI Office](#) is responsible for assisting students, staff and the general public in exercising their rights under the Freedom of Information Act 2014. 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. Freedom of Information and Data Protection requirements are overseen by the Office of Corporate and Legal Affairs in line with the [FOI Policy](#).


Institutional Research

The University’s [Planning & Institutional Research Office](#) (PIRO) role is to provide data to support University of Galway’s planning and management activities directed toward fulfilling the goals and objectives of the University. Institutional research aims to inform decision making and planning at senior management level.


The PIRO provides a comprehensive range of services relating to strategic data management and planning for the University. It provides leadership in the management of strategic information on performance and business intelligence for decision-making and institutional planning and leads in the development of a culture that embeds business intelligence throughout the organisation, enabling the University to measure and monitor activities, outputs and performance on many levels, using metrics aligned with University strategy.

Group_Institutional Research Office Intranet 


Private group




Welcome to the Planning & Institutional Research Office (PIRO) Homepage




University Data & Reports Hub




SDG Outreach Activity




StudentSurveyIE




Market Trends Reports




Research Publications data



Academic Reputation Survey




University Rankings Results




University of Galway at a Glance

News See all




The Planning & Institutional

Institutional Metrics Dashboard - Updated



Institutional Data - Colleges & Schools
Annual University, College, School and Programme metrics...

Gibbons, Claire December 2, 2025
360 views



University of Galway's Institutional Metrics
Our annual Institutional Metrics Report has just been...

Nic Mhathúna, Lina August 5, 2025
126 views

The office:

- Supports and advises on the development and maintenance of performance indicators, operational plans and internal and external teaching, research and social impact benchmarking analysis to support and inform the Universities strategic objectives.
- Coordinates, analyses and reports diverse and complex information to inform decision making across the University and its various Departments.
- Supports the compilation, analysis and timely submission of data for external bodies such as University Rankings, HEA and the IUA.
- Researches demographic and student application trends.
- Analyses and reporting on surveys such as students surveys.

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 for all 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

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:

- QA001 Quality Assurance
- QA002 Policies and Procedures
- QA003 Review of Schools
- QA004 Review of Research Performance
- QA005 The Role of External Examiners (Taught)
- QA007 Operational Plans
- QA008 Programme Boards
- QA009 Review of Linked Providers
- QA012 Review of Research Institutes
- 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	38
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
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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

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) BSc Medicinal 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
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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
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
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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	01/01/2025

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
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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
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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	01/01/2025

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
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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 UK Institute & Faculty of Actuaries (IFoA)
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc Financial Mathematics & Economics
Date of accreditation or last review	31/08/2024
Date of next review	26/02/2026

50. 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	01/01/2025
Date of next review	01/01/2026

51. Type of arrangement	PRSB
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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

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

53. 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

54. 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

55. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	CORU
Programme titles and links to publications	BA Social Care
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2026
Date of next review	01/01/2030

56. 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

57. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Institute of Physics
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc Physics
Date of accreditation or last review	30/06/2025
Date of next review	30/06/2027

58. 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	30/06/2025

59. 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	01/09/2024
Date of next review	30/01/2026

60. 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

61. 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
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62. 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	01/09/2024
Date of next review	30/01/2026

63. 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

64. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	CAMPEP (US)
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc Medical Physics
Date of accreditation or last review	20/09/2025
Date of next review	31/12/2030

65. 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

66. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	The 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

67. 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

68. 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	01/01/2025
Date of next review	01/01/2026

69. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	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	31/08/2024
Date of next review	31/08/2026

70. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)
Programme titles and links to publications	Master of Accounting
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2025
Date of next review	01/01/2026

71. Type of arrangement	PRSB
Name of body:	Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland SCCI
Programme titles and links to publications	MA (Rural Futures Planning & Innovation)
Date of accreditation or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	01/01/2027

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	8
Collaborative programmes	6
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	31/12/2025
Date of next review	31/12/2032

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	31/12/2025
Date of next review	31/12/2032

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	31/12/2025
Date of next review	31/12/2032

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	31/12/2025
Date of next review	31/12/2032

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	Joint/double/multiple award
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	Joint/double/multiple award
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
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9. 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	01/09/2025
Date of next review	01/09/2027

10. 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

11. 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

12. 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

13. 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

14. 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	30/06/2024

15. Collaborative provision	Joint/double/multiple award
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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1. Articulation agreement	Articulation agreement
Name of body (/bodies):	Seychelles Tourism Academy
Programme titles and links to publications	BBS in International Hotel Management
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	01/08/2023
Date of next review	01/08/2030
Detail of the agreement	Articulation

Annual Quality Report University of Galway
PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE
ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT
Reporting Period 2024-2025

PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT

Guidelines on Completing Part B

As outlined in the general guidelines for this template (p.6), **Part B** of the AQR focuses specifically on the effectiveness and impact of the IQA framework on the QA activities and developments across the institution during the reporting period.

Here, the institution is invited to document the quality enhancements adopted and implemented during the reporting period and describe concisely the impact of these across a selected range of activities. Part B should also be used to demonstrate how plans set out in the previous AQR were progressed during the reporting period. These plans may be linked to strategic objectives, to QQI reengagement advices, or to Cinnnte review recommendations.

Part B of the AQR is an opportunity for self-reflection and critical evaluation of the effectiveness of QA activities over the reporting period. The institution is encouraged to reflect on what worked well and what did not, and to consider impact measures, using both quantitative and qualitative evidence (metrics, benchmarks and feedback/judgement) and detail how they led to specific improvements of and enhancement in QA activities.

Part B provides evidence of quality improvement and enhancement and impact² of QA activities within the totality of the institution's QA system.

Section 1 pertains to internal quality assurance implementation and developments since the previous reporting period.

Section 2 considers the institutional analysis of IQA enhancements and their impact on a range of activities including academic integrity.

Section 3 relates to IQA developments and plans for the next reporting period.

Section 4 provides an opportunity for institutions to showcase IQA in action through case studies in relevant thematic areas.

Institutions are invited to use case studies to demonstrate quality in action and to highlight areas of practice for dissemination at any point in this part of the report.

Case Studies

QQI recommends that written case studies should:

- Be between half a page and two pages in length;

² The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education have considered impact and measures leading to development and improvement specifically in terms of teaching and learning. See: <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/NF-2020-Insights-from-Practice-About-Impact-in-Teaching-and-Learning-web-ready.pdf>. This is a very useful reference, though impact in the context of this report should be considered

- Relate to a specific time- and subject-bound issue;
- Include an introduction that sets out a brief overview of contextual matters;
- Include any relevant supporting data and data analysis;
- Include links to any sources cited;
- Include a clear and concise concluding paragraph with an overview of the key outcomes/learning.

Although case studies will generally be in written form, institutions may also provide links to audio-visual/multimedia case studies. QQI does not prescribe a format for case studies.

1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments

1.1 Strategic QA Updates

The focus of this academic year was on the development of the University's new Strategic Plan (2025-2030) entitled Of Galway, For the World.

A Strategy Development Group was set up to provide leadership, input and oversight for the development of the new strategic plan for University of Galway. The role of the group was to:

- Work with the President on the development of a strategy for the University beyond 2025
- Provide a venue for information sharing and providing input on strategic objectives
- Lead on specific tasks in the strategic planning process, including data gathering, consultation with internal and external stakeholders, seeking submissions from targeted groups, and cascading information to your Colleges/Institutes/Units
- Oversee the production of a strategic plan document at the end of the strategic planning process
- Liaise with the Standing and Strategic Planning Committee of Údarás na hOllscoile
- Produce phased reports on the strategic planning process for the University Management Team, Academic Council, Heads of Schools/Functions Forum, and Údarás na hOllscoile

The group undertook an open consultation process with the university community, involving hybrid (on campus - online) events and online surveys. The themes and methodology were determined by sub-groups of the Strategy Development Group.





The 2030 Think-In

Numbers:

- 16 consultation sessions
- 1,045 registrations
- 3 staff/student/alumni forums
- 142 survey responses



www.universityofgalway.ie/strategydevelopment

The organisers of each of The 2030 Think-in sessions was asked to produce a one-page brief of strategic priorities in their areas, following their consultation. In addition, we held forums with staff, students, alumni and external stakeholders to hear their views.

See more details on the strategy development process and download the published strategy document at www.universityofgalway.ie/strategydevelopment.

The final Strategy (2025-2030) entitled *Of Galway, For the World* was launched in May 2025.

Review of Strategy 2020-2025:

The transition from one strategic plan into another provided an opportunity to review our progress towards achieving the balanced scorecard of 12 strategic targets that we had set in relation to the previous Strategic Plan (2020-2025), entitled *Shared Vision, Shaped by Values*. These can be broadly categorised as follows:

Fully achieved:

- Times Higher Education Impact Awards: Our target of being ranked the top Irish university for our impact on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals was achieved in 2021 and has been maintained since.

Well on our way to full achievement:

- Athena Swan: Our target of achieving an Institutional Silver Award was achieved in September 2025. School Award applications for all remaining four Schools without awards are being submitted as part of the current November 2025-January 2026 application period.
- European Research Funding Success: We have made considerable progress towards our goal of achieving €150m of research income from EU funding programmes over the lifetime of Horizon Europe (2021-2027), with a total of €102.4m in September 2025.

Partially achieved:

- **International Student Recruitment:** Our target of achieving 20% of our student body from outside the island of Ireland by domicile was achieved in academic year 2024/2025. However, our target of recruiting 2,700 students from outside the EU was not achieved and stood at 2,067 in academic year 2024/2025. This target was particularly impacted by the disruption of Covid-19 as well as the detrimental impact to our international student recruitment activities caused by a cyberattack in October 2021.

Not achieved:

- **Research Impact and Reputation:** We fell considerably short of our target to increase the % of publications in the top 25% of journals to 63%, standing at 57% in 2025. Addressing this gap is currently a focus of activity between the Research & Innovation Office, Library, Institutional Research Office and Colleges.
- **ERC Awards Success:** We did not achieve our target of 15% success rate for ERC Award applications, with a running average of 8.2% over the period 2020-2025. There were no additional ERC Awardees in academic year 2024/2025.
- **Spin-Outs:** We had significant success in the target of 25 new spin-outs from the University, achieving 21 spin-outs over the duration of the strategic plan, with 4 in 2024.
- **KeepWell Mark:** We made some progress towards achieving 8 Excellent ratings across the 8 wellbeing topics assessed by IBEC for the KeepWell Mark. We currently have 1 Excellent rating, with 3 at Achievement level and 4 at Commitment level. In 2024, the University was recognised among the Top 100 Companies in IBEC's Leading in Wellbeing report.

Target under review:

- **Student Engagement:** Following a significant and disproportionate drop in student engagement levels in the national StudentSurvey.ie during and emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic, the University was making sustained progress towards improving our scores as benchmarked with our peers when the survey was paused for review in academic year 2023/2024. We look forward to tracking these targets again once the survey is reintroduced in Q1 2026.
- **Student Mobility:** According to our estimates, 93% of our undergraduate students have an opportunity for international mobility. While this falls short of our 100% target, we are conscious of our need to evolve our measure for this metric to include the emerging opportunities for virtual mobility.

Too early to tell:

- **Carbon Neutrality:** We have made significant progress towards reducing our Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions, exceeding national targets, on our road to carbon neutrality.

- **Philanthropy:** Our Meitheal campaign target of €60m extends out to 2027. In September 2025, the total pledged under that campaign stands at €35.9m.

Establishment of the new Institute for Creativity: The new Institute for Creativity was established and Professor Florian Schneider was appointed as the inaugural Research Institute Director in September 2024. This brings to six the number of Research Institutes in the University, and it bolsters research activity in the University's 'Creativity, Culture and Society' research pillar, facilitating international research collaboration, funding applications, networking and reputation-building in this important area of distinction for Galway and the West of Ireland.

Centre for Smart Infrastructure & Data-Driven Engineering: I am pleased to share the news that our University has received a major philanthropic commitment from Ward & Burke Construction Ltd. to establish a new Centre for Smart Infrastructure & Data-Driven Engineering - a significant milestone for the School of Engineering, the College of Science and Engineering and the University as a whole.

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	Athena Swan	<p>University of Galway has been awarded an Athena Swan Silver Award - an important milestone in our journey to advance equality and foster an inclusive culture. Athena Swan is an internationally recognised Charter, promoting both gender equality and additional equality grounds in higher education, and achieving Silver recognises the sustained, evidence-based progress of our community. Much progress has been made details of which can be found here.</p> <p>Our new 2025–30 action plan (GEAP 4) includes the following priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing support for Professional, Managerial, Support and Technical Staff. • Focusing on actively promoting dignity and respect in our community, addressing bullying, harassment and discrimination. • Building trust and improving communication with staff and students. • Having a more intersectional focus: supporting Race Equality and Universal Design and Accessibility in particular. • Further increasing the number of women in senior leadership positions. • Creating a flexible and inclusive working environment to support the wellbeing of all, including parents and carers. • Enhancing Research Staff inclusion, engagement and progression.
2	Strategy	<p>The new University strategy Of Galway, For the World, sets out the priorities for the University’s development over the course of the next five years, with a renewed focus on being a research-intensive globally connected higher education institution. The strategy was launched in May 2025 by Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science James Lawless T.D. The Strategic Plan 2025-2030 will focus on the University’s core mission to nurture talent and generate knowledge for the world. This mission will be guided by the</p>

		<p>University's existing values of Excellence, Respect, Openness, Sustainability, and Belonging - a new value which students asked for.</p> <p>The document sets out areas of strategic priorities: Distinctive Research Impact; Education for the Future; and Effective and Sustainable Organisation that Empowers our People.</p> <p>The Strategic Plan identifies four research pillars in which University of Galway will make a distinctive impact in the years ahead: Innovation for Health; Creativity, Culture & Society; Sustainable & Resilient Environments: Earth & Ocean; and Decisive Data & Transformative AI.</p> <p>The title of the Strategic Plan, Of Galway, For the World, was inspired by the distinctiveness of the University and its city and region, as well as the global impact the university community makes from this unique place.</p>										
3	IRRP	<p>IRRP2024 is 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. Reviewers will also be asked for comment on the performance of the School, given various staffing and resource profiles, constraints and other environment data taking into particular consideration the impact of Covid-19. Prior to assessment, all Schools will produce</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) research outputs (2) a School research environment report, (3) impact case studies. <p>Quality ratings will be allocated by reviewers based on these three aspects of research performance. QA004 IRRP2024 outlines the policy and procedure proposed by the IRRP Steering Group and approved by Academic Council.</p> <p>The following panel chairs have been appointed to oversee the three-year process:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="667 1444 1521 1824"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2" style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white;">IRRP2024 Overall Chairs</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies</td> <td>Prof Tobias Kelly, Edinburgh</td> </tr> <tr> <td>College of Business, Public Policy and Law</td> <td>Prof Joanne Conaghan, Bristol</td> </tr> <tr> <td>College of Science and Engineering</td> <td>Prof David Price, UCL</td> </tr> <tr> <td>College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences</td> <td>Prof Jo Rycroft-Malone, Lancaster</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	IRRP2024 Overall Chairs		College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies	Prof Tobias Kelly, Edinburgh	College of Business, Public Policy and Law	Prof Joanne Conaghan, Bristol	College of Science and Engineering	Prof David Price, UCL	College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Prof Jo Rycroft-Malone, Lancaster
IRRP2024 Overall Chairs												
College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies	Prof Tobias Kelly, Edinburgh											
College of Business, Public Policy and Law	Prof Joanne Conaghan, Bristol											
College of Science and Engineering	Prof David Price, UCL											
College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Prof Jo Rycroft-Malone, Lancaster											

		<p>Year 1: Review Reports for each of the six Year 1 schools were presented by Overall Chairs and Panel Chairs to relevant Deans and University Management on the 3 April 2025 and action plans have now been agreed.</p> <p>In accordance with policy, a report will be provided by the Deputy President and Registrar to the University Management Team (UMT) at the end of each year of the three-year review cycle. The information provided in this report will be extracted from the IRRP2024 Review Reports delivered to the participating Schools in the relevant year and will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Main issues and/or recommendations that may require action by members of UMT 2. Common issues from individual school reports that may be applicable across all schools <p>This report will also include a response to Comments to University Management provided by Overall Chairs in relation to Year 1 assessments.</p> <p>Final agreed Review Reports and Action Plans for all six schools were brought to Academic Council in October 2025.</p> <p>Year 2: Submissions were completed by Year 1 schools on the 20th June 2025. A total of 564 research outputs have been received from the schools and 19 case studies.</p> <p>Each research output will be assessed by two readers and each impact case study and research environment report will be assessed by the panel chair and overall chair. Assessments will be carried by over 70 readers between October and February/March with a view to finalising review reports before the end of the 2024/25 academic year.</p>
4	Library	<p>The project to build a new Library and Learning Commons for the University of Galway continued at pace during 2024/25. Planning permission was secured in August 2024. Enabling works cleared the site of sheds and temporary buildings that had been located there and carried out site investigation works. Procurement of a Main Works contractor resulted in J.J.Rhatigans being appointed to construct the building and construction commenced in May 2025. During Summer 2025 extensive research and benchmarking visits were undertaken to inform the selection of furniture for the new building. Ongoing consultation took place with students throughout 2024/25 to ensure the building will meet the evolving needs of students.</p>

		<p>Work continued on reviewing and preparing library collections for the move to the new Library building. The project is progressing according to programme and remains on target to open in Summer 2027.</p> <p>The Library and Learning Commons will provide quality spaces for individual study as well as collaborative spaces that will enable group work, collaboration and meetings across disciplines. The Makerspace, Digital Scholarship Centre and Recording Studio will mean students and researchers can design, create, and make, enabling the development of innovation and creativity skills. These facilities will also enable new ways of assessing student learning, e.g. podcast and video creation or product prototyping. Access to print and online information resources will be provided in the Library and Learning Commons and students will be exposed to cultural and heritage resources and archives through an exhibition area. Expert staff will be available to support students with all aspects of their learning journey. A Learning Success Hub will provide one-to-one support and a training room will enable the delivery of workshops for the development of academic, digital and creative skills. The building will be accessible throughout and will include a low-sensory study space as well as an Assistive Technology Centre.</p>
5	<p>Reputation audit</p>	<p>The outcomes of the Reputation Audit conducted during 2023/24 included the following strategic keystone initiatives that the University is committed to delivering over the next five years. These have now been identified as Priority Initiatives within the Strategic Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of an Organisational Transformation Office – This central office will bring together expertise in change management, business analysis, data analysis, project management and communications to ensure that major strategic initiatives are delivered effectively and efficiently, streamlining our systems and processes to make it easier to work in and with our university. The position of Deputy President and Registrar is to be recruited on a permanent basis in the near future. The establishment of the Organisational Transformation Office is highlighted as a key area of responsibility with the new role description for the incoming DPR. • Technology Enablement Programme - Significant investment in our ICT operating models and the successful delivery of

		<p>digital infrastructure projects will be critical to our success in the coming years. This has been highlighted as a Priority Initiative within the Strategy 2025-2030.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicating Distinctiveness Project (including Website development) We will amplify our international reputation for research and education through targeted communications and engagement campaigns, including a redesigned website that demonstrates our distinction to the world.• Research Process Improvement Project. The Research Process Improvement - University of Galway <p>Research Process Improvement Project (RPI) Update</p> <p>Phase 2 of the RPI project has now concluded, delivering process improvements across four key areas: Research Recruitment (post-proposal recruitment), Procurement (new supplier set-ups), Project Initiation (monthly clinics for grant awardees), and Research Directories (clarifying points of contact across professional services for research support).</p> <p>Phase 3 is underway, with several workstreams already in progress, including Research Expenses, Research Data Storage, and the next phase of Research Recruitment. Additional workstreams were initiated in December 2025, with activity continuing into the new year: Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs), Ethics Approval, Health and Safety, Research Project Management, and Researcher Pay Scales. The findings from RPI Phase 1 will be integrated with the emerging Research and Innovations Strategy, and a Communications Plan for RPI will be rolled out to the University community.</p> <p>In parallel with these workstreams—and in alignment with the priority initiatives of the new University Strategic Plan—a pilot project will begin in the New Year to develop an AI-enabled integration layer. This pilot will initially connect the CRIS (Current Research Information System) into the Microsoft Azure Platform, followed by HR and Finance systems, enabling the automation of workflows and reporting across currently manual research support processes.</p>
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1.3 Governance and Management

1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

Body	Meeting dates
Údaras na hOllscoile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 Oct 2024 • 18 Dec 2025 • 27 Jan 2025 (Special) • 26 Feb 2025 • 26 March 2025 • 30 April 2025 • 25 June 2025 • 15 Sept 2025 (Special)
Academic Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14th October 2024 • 10th December 2024 • 12th February 2025 • 7th April 2025 • 16th June 2025
Quality Enhancement Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 06th November 2024 • 06th March 2025 • 28th May 2025 • 18th September 2025
University Curriculum and Programme Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13th November 2024 • 16th January 2025 • 18th March 2025 • 22nd May 2025

1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

Appointments

President: Prof David J. Burn was appointed the 14th president of the University of Galway in August 2025. Professor Burn has served as Pro-Vice Chancellor of the Faculty of Medical Sciences, Newcastle University since 2017, where he led transformative change initiatives to restructure faculty, accelerate research performance, advance equality, diversity and inclusion and drive internationalisation. David is also Professor of Movement Disorders Neurology and Honorary Consultant Neurologist for Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust.

Professor Burn serves as Director of an Academic Health Science Centre, the Newcastle Health Research Partnership, which works to deliver improvements to health and wellbeing for the over three million people living in the Northeast of England and North Cumbria. Professor Burn is also President-elect of the International Parkinson and Movement Disorder Society.

Executive Dean of the College of Business, Public Policy and Law: Professor Alma McCarthy was appointed Executive Dean of the College of Business, Public Policy and Law. Prof McCarthy has been Dean of J.E. Cairnes School of Business and Economics since 2021 and is also Professor of Public Sector Management at University of Galway. Her research interests include public sector leadership and human resource development, training, work-life balance, and remote working. Prof. McCarthy's research has influenced national civil service talent development policy and the Government's national remote working strategy. She has extensive experience in designing, delivering, and evaluating leadership and management development training programmes aimed at improving managerial competence, with particular expertise in public and civil service management development. Alma is a Chartered Member of the CIPD, the American Academy of Management, the Society for Industrial and Organisational Psychology, and served as elected Vice-Chair and Chair of the Irish Academy of Management (IAM). She was conferred a Fellow of the IAM for her service to the academy. She is an accredited member of the British Psychological Society (BPS) and certified to administer a broad range of cognitive ability, personality and occupational interest psychometric assessments.

Head of School of Business and Economics: Professor Yan was appointed the Head of the School of Business and Economics. Professor Yan has extensive experience in research and academic leadership. Her research has been published in leading journals including Research Policy and Organization Studies and has been supported by major funding bodies such as the UK's Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council and the Charles Wilson fund. At Durham University, she also served as Co-director of the Centre for Innovation and Technology Management and Chair of the Board of Examiners for the MSc Marketing programme.

She has advised the UK All Party Parliament Group's report on the Metaverse and Web 3.0, and has been featured in The Economist, The Sunday Times and the BBC. In addition to her role as School Dean, Professor Yan will serve as Established Professor of Innovation and Strategic Management, contributing to the School's teaching and research initiatives.

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
Centre for Adult Learning & Professional Development (CALPD)	Feb 2025	CALPD Review Report
Information Solutions & Services (ISS)	Feb 2025	ISS Review Report
Centre for Excellence in Learning & Teaching (CELT)	Mar 2025	CELT Review Report
IRRP Year 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Engineering • Nursing and Midwifery • Computer Science • Psychology • Law 	Submissions complete June 2025	Review reports will be complete in April 2026.
IRRP Year 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School of Biological and Chemical Sciences • School of Business and Economics • School of English and the Creative Arts • School of Geography, Archaeology and Irish Studies • School of Health Sciences • School of History and Philosophy 	IRRP Year 1 Review complete April 2025	The 6 review reports and action plans for Year 1 IRRP2024 are available here => Review report

1.4.2 Expert Review Teams/Panels³ 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	9	6	3				
<i>of those:</i>							
On-site processes	3		3				
Desk reviews		6					
Virtual processes							
Average panel size for each process type*		17**	5				

* excluding secretary if not a full panel member

** University of Galway: Panel size for IRRP includes expert readers for specific subject areas/disciplines leading to large numbers of reviewers for each school.

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

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

³ QQI acknowledges that the terminology used to describe the groups of individuals that conduct peer review/evaluation varies from institution to institution.

Chair	15	8	7				11	4		15	
Secretary	3		3			3					3
Academic/Discipline Specific	97	61	36		3	3	43	50	1	94	3
Student Representative											
QA											
Teaching & Learning											
External Industry /Third Mission	2		2			2					2

2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

Policies and Procedures Repository: The current processes in relation to Policies and Procedures have been in place for approximately twelve 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 work will resume on this project on completion of IRRP.

The existing structure and process for the development of policies continues to operate and below are a sample of policies that were either initiated or further revised during 2024/2025:

- QA031 Bicycles and Personal Powered Transporters
- QA092 Student Reasonable Accommodation
- QA124 Smoking and Vaping Restrictions
- QA195 Incident (Accident and Near Miss) Reporting & Investigation
- QA219 English Language
- QA317 Cash Handling
- QA318 Disposal of Assets
- QA361 Sexual Violence, Harassment Prevention and Response.
- QA412 Student Data Usage
- QA445 Staff Data Usage
- QA810 Noise & Mobile Phone

Schools Quality Assurance Checklist (SQAC): With a view to strengthening the University’s QA System the Quality Enhancement Committee approved the Annual School Quality Assurance Checklist for completion by Heads of School at the end of each Academic Year. The SQAC includes 20 questions relating to key quality assurance processes including Quality Reviews of Teaching and Learning and Research Reviews, Curriculum Design, Programme Boards, External Examiners and Student Feedback. Schools were also asked to include the following reports:

- Taught Programmes List including
 - o Programme Review information for all taught programmes relevant to QA006
 - o Accredited programmes, accreditation period, accrediting body
 - o Collaborative programmes as defined in QA246
- QA221 Feedback on Modules and Programmes:
 - o Summary document outlining the School’s feedback processes and procedures
 - o Annual report/summary document including the following information:
 - Module Code
 - Feedback Method
 - Timing
 - Participation Rate

- Issues Identified
- Actions Resulting
- Feedback to Students

The School Annual Quality Assurance Checklist for Academic Year 2023/2024 was circulated to all Heads of School for completion by 29 November 2024. The following information was also requested as part of this return:

- QA006 Review of Taught Programmes: Taught Programmes List including (template provided by Quality Office)
 - Programme Review information for all taught programmes relevant to QA006
 - Accredited programmes, accreditation period, accrediting body
 - Collaborative programmes as defined in QA246

- QA221 Feedback on Modules and Programmes: The following documents must be submitted to the DPR and relevant Dean (copied to the Quality Office):
 - Summary document outlining the School's feedback processes and procedures
 - Annual report/summary document including the following information:
 - Module Code
 - Feedback Method
 - Timing
 - Participation Rate
 - Issues Identified
 - Actions Resulting
 - Feedback to Students

15 of the 18 schools completed the checklist. Overall, the reported level of schools' adherence to internal QA policies was high. All 15 respondent schools supplied contemporary data on school programme review status, Student Feedback Summary Documents, and Student Feedback Annual Reports providing data on students' lived experience of school Teaching and Learning activities during the academic year 2023/2024.

Schools highlighted the importance of Teaching and Learning quality reviews in giving schools an opportunity to come together as a unit, reflect and review to gain a better understanding of school teaching practices and objectives, assess strengths and potential opportunities for future development or enhancement. Schools felt that review by external reviewers afforded some degree of leverage or influence when seeking resources to support teaching and learning activities.

Schools reported that the process of Institutional Review of Research Performance (IRRP) has been very useful in providing a framework for staff to gather information and data showing transparency in terms of research outputs across academics of the school, evaluate the Research Environment, and afford an opportunity to communicate schools wider societal and research impact, as well as reflect strategically on future directions and innovations. Schools commented that the timeline for compilation of a school's research review portfolio was short, leading to an intensity of workload for certain staff members; while it was felt that the outcome wait time (12 months) did not allow for timely feedback on school research activity performance and subsequent remedial actions. In addition, schools felt that requirements on numbers of publications from researchers at different career points were unhelpful, potentially distorting school evaluation in instances where a school may have undergone significant recent early career recruitment.

The School Annual Quality Assurance Checklist (AY2023/2024) highlighted some areas of improvement for consideration:

- Utilisation of External Reports as an internal quality check, internal school analysis and for future operational plans for the school:
 - 20% of schools responded that External Examiner Reports and action plans were not considered at programme board meetings, and that action plans were not incorporated into the school's operational plan for the subsequent academic year.
- Potential inaccessibility to programme level Quality Assurance related information within schools:
 - 13% of schools reported that they did not maintain a central repository of all relevant programme review documentation (e.g. self-assessment reports, final review reports and action plans). Coupled with the rotating nature of the Head of School role this can be viewed as a potential risk for future inaccessibility or loss of this data resource.
- Timely reporting of student feedback data to the office of the Deputy President and Registrar as per Policy QA221.
 - There appears to be a data-disconnect between schools reporting of their student feedback to the Deputy President and Registrar (QA221), and the submission of same data to this Annual School QA Checklist where 100% of responding schools submitted their reports.
- Consideration of certain elements of the process for conducting Institutional Review of Research Performance (IRRP).

External Examiners: External Examiner reports have been received for over 207 programmes/modules during 2024/25 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:

- Assessment and workload on students
- Feedback
- Academic Integrity
- Artificial Intelligence
- Marking practices/Spread of marks

Programmes of Education and Training

The University Curriculum and Programme Board met on four occasions in **2024/25** and recommended the following major changes to programmes for approval by Academic Council Standing (ACS):

New Programmes Approved	College	ACS approval date
MA (Early Childhood Studies)	CASSCS	19-Nov-24
Postgraduate Certificate (Social Work: Practice Teaching, Supervision and Management)	CASSCS	20-Nov-24
BSc Zoology	CSE	21-Nov-24
Certificate (Foundational Learning and Community)	Access Office	23-Jan-25
Professional Diploma (Strategic Communications)	CASSCS	23-Jan-25
Postgraduate Certificate (Creative Technologies and Emerging Media)	CASSCS	23-Jan-25
MA (International Development)	CASSCS	31-Mar-25
o MA (Archeological Consultancy)	CASSCS	31-Mar-25
MSc Civil Engineering	CSE	31-Mar-25
MSc Energy Systems Engineering	CSE	31-Mar-25
Professional Diploma in Applied Data Analytics and Visualisation	CSE	31-Mar-25
Postgraduate Diploma in Software Development, Cloud Computing and DevOps	CSE	31-Mar-25
Professional Diploma in Applied Cybersecurity	CSE	31-Mar-25
Professional Diploma in Practical AI for Software Developers	CSE	31-Mar-25
Diploma in Manufacturing Automation	CSE	31-Mar-25
Diploma in Digitalisation of Manufacturing Processes	CSE	31-Mar-25
Diploma in Sustainability of Manufacturing Systems	CSE	31-Mar-25
Diploma in Intelligent Manufacturing Industry 5.0	CSE	31-Mar-25
Diploma in Digitally Enabled Connected Medical Devices	CSE	31-Mar-25
Post Graduate Certificate in Key Enabling Technologies	CSE	31-Mar-25
Vascular Access and Infusion Therapy Micro-credentials	CMNHS	31-Mar-25

Major Programme Changes	College	ACS approval date
MA in Social Work (reduction in the requirement of work experience)	CASSCS	19-Nov-24

B.Sc. in Business Information Systems	CBPPL	19-Nov-24
M.Sc. in Marketing Practice	CBPPL	19-Nov-24
MBA AD1 (Masters Business Administration)	CBPPL	19-Nov-24
LLM in International Migration and Refugee Law	CBPPL	19-Nov-24
Physicianeer Stream of Medical Programme, Bachelor of Medicine and Biomedical Engineering	CMNHS	19-Nov-24
BA (Joint Hons. Geography)	CASSCS	23-Jan-25
BSc (Social Sciences)	CASSCS	23-Jan-25
BA (Global Media)	CASSCS	31-Mar-25
BA (Community, Youth and Family Studies)	CASSCS	31-Mar-25
BA (Digital Arts and Technology)	CASSCS	31-Mar-25
B. Comm (Part-time programme)	CBPPL	31-Mar-25
B. Comm suite (BC1,2,3,4,7,8,9) and BCA1, BCA8	CBPPL	31-Mar-25
LLM Master of Laws programmes	CBPPL	31-Mar-25
MSc AgriFood Sustainability & Technology	CSE	31-Mar-25
MSc in Sustainable Resource Management: Policy and Practice	CSE	31-Mar-25
Diploma in Scientific Studies (Apiculture)	CSE	31-Mar-25
BSc Zoology	CSE	31-Mar-25
Masters in Surgery (MCh)	CMNHS	31-Mar-25
MA (Environment, Society and Development)	CASSCS	03-Jun-25
MA (International Development Practice)	CASSCS	03-Jun-25
Master of Science in Entrepreneurship and Venture Management	CBPPL	03-Jun-25
MSc Sustainability Leadership	CBPPL	03-Jun-25
Bachelor of Engineering (Electrical & Electronic Engineering)	CSE	03-Jun-25
Bachelor of Engineering (Electronic & Computer Engineering)	CSE	03-Jun-25
M.App Science in Enterprise System	CSE	03-Jun-25
Bachelor of Medicine (MB) of Surgery (BCh) and of Obstetrics (BAO)	CMNHS	03-Jun-25
Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (MB, BCh, BAO)	CMNHS	03-Jun-25
Applied Clinical Data Analytics	CMNHS	03-Jun-25
MSc Advanced Healthcare Practice and Research	CMNHS	03-Jun-25
MA in Health Promotion	CMNHS	03-Jun-25

Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

The new HR Structure has been implemented and a Deputy Director has been appointed in each of the following areas:

- Human Resources for Employee Engagement
- HR Operations
- Development & Strategy.

The embedding of the structure will continue into 2026.

Policy Development

The newly appointed Head of HR Policy Development and Governance has led out on the development of a policy review/development framework that **ensure** all policies will now be reviewed against going forward.

Recruitment

Executive Search Service: We worked with procurement to create an Executive Search Services Framework, which is now available for all executive hiring and psychometric testing for senior roles as required

LinkedIn: We have engaged LinkedIn for all external competitions thereby widening our reach and pool of candidates.

Recruitment Process Improvements:

- Introduction of new Interview Feedback Form which simplifies the interview feedback assessment and feedback process for Boards of Assessors. We have received consistently positive feedback from hiring managers and selection panels.
- New Reference Check Template Form introduced to simplify and speed up the process for securing reference checks
- Updated Recruitment Process Training for Hiring Managers is currently being finalised, and pilot will commence in January 2026

Development

Employee Wellbeing: The University was successful with accreditation in May 2025. Work will be continuing on a Wellbeing Plan that will be incorporated to the People Strategy. A number of successful events for Wellbeing were provided during the year, including a Be Active programme, men's health events, financial wellbeing events, Connect Café's, engagement with staff on Menopause.

Staff Coaching

- 265 coaching sessions delivered to 87 staff by 13 internal coaches, increase from 206 sessions on previous year.
- Increased to 18 including 2 bilingual coaches offering 1:1 coaching through Irish
- April 2025 – two academics to join the panel from School of Nursing & Midwifery and School of Education
- Ongoing CPD for coaches including peer learning; Systemic Team Coaching training undertaken
- Coaching feedback shows staff are finding benefits of the coaching being provided to them.
- Team coaching delivered to 11 units between December 2024 and April 2025
- Collaborating with other programmes including Leadership Development, CELT, and the Aurora programme.

Employee Engagement

Manager Support Development

- Supporting the monthly clinics for Principal Investigators along with the Finance and Procurement Office

- Supporting new Head of School on appointment in the College with induction
- Information sessions for Principal Investigators on their responsibilities as line managers
- Working closely with colleagues in EDI to support initiative under the Gender Equality Action Plan and Race Equality Action plans.
- Bespoke training provided to units on HR topics as requested.
- Employee Relations Roadshow continued to be delivered for staff and managers

Job Sizing

- A review of the Job Sizing policy based on feedback from managers was undertaken including a survey and some change to the form and feedback have now been included.

HR Excellence in Research Award: As part of the HR Excellence in Research Award the University of Galway is progressing a series of actions scheduled for completion between 2024-2027.

Performance and development – Most researchers will have completed their Personal Development Plan (PDP) documents as part of their career planning. The PDP is a valuable tool for reflecting on and articulating both short and long-term career aspirations. To support more efficient conversations, researchers are encouraged to use their PDP when discussing objectives and training needs with their line manager as part of the P4G process.

Improving the Research environment – A new Research Grant Management/Current Research Information System (RGM-CRIS) has been introduced, and stage 1 has now been rolled out across the university. This new platform is designed to help researchers manage and promote their research more effectively. This innovative portal simplifies how to track research outputs (including publications) but also provides powerful tools to help enhance visibility, build collaborations, and showcase researchers' expertise. Key features for researchers include showcasing research, growing their network, highlighting their expertise with fingerprinting, tracking and promoting publications and collaborating beyond borders among other things.

Talent retention and career development - Processes related to talent retention have been and continue to be reviewed, with a particular focus on exit surveys. Exit survey data is collated and shared with VPRI and Vice Deans for Research to identify strengths and priority areas for improvement.

Researcher participation in decision-making – We continue to collaborate with the Research Staff Network to support ongoing inclusion of the research community.

Supervision training – Online PhD supervision training modules are available. Two specific courses currently available include: Managing Common Challenges in Research Supervision & Research Student Supervision at Galway.

Research mobility – The permission to work outside the university documentation has been reviewed and updated and a Standard Operating Procedure is now in place.

Supporting the Researcher Lifecycle – Our 1-hour bitesize sessions for Principal Investigators have been refreshed to ensure continued relevance. These sessions clarify expectations of the PI role in supporting the researcher lifecycle and outline the HR supports, resources and training available.

Automation of the Post Proposal Form (PPF) – Extensive evidence gathered through the RPI project highlighted the need for clearer status updates and faster response times for the PPF. In response, improvements were made to the submission process following the interview stage. This improved approach ensures that PPFs are directed to the appropriate team immediately upon submission, helping to streamline workflows and reduce delays. All feedback was carefully reviewed, challenges explored and potential solutions discussed at length. After testing and further consultation, a new PowerApp was introduced – [‘Research Recruitment Submission Portal’](#). This tool allows users to:

1. Submit PPFs directly to the correct team

2. Track the status of current and previous submissions
3. Add additional staff members to receive status updates

This streamlined process reduces back-and-forth emails, centralises communication and improves visibility of progress. It also enables data collection and metric generation to help identify and address bottlenecks over time, ultimately improving clarity and saving time for all involved.

Research Project Initiation Clinics: The goal of these monthly project initiation clinics is to improve guidance and resources to ensure that timely and targeted support is provided to research projects to enable efficient planning and ensure that critical processes can get underway.

Academic Promotion Scheme: Rounds 10 and 11 of the Academic Promotion Scheme have now been completed with a total of 40 applicants (22 female, 18 male). Female candidates have had a 77% success rate across all categories with male applicants having a 72% success rate across all categories.

Applicants and Success Rates - Rounds 10 and 11 (Academic Year 2024 - 25):

Promotion Track	Female Candidates			Male Candidates			Total Candidates		
	Applied	Success	Success %	Success	Success%	Applied	Success	Success%	
Professor in (T&L)				1	1	100%	1	1	100%
Professor in (Research)	6	5	83%	7	3	43%	13	8	62%
Professor in (Leadership)	1	1	100%				1	1	100%
Professor in Totals	7	6	86%	8	4	50%	15	10	67%
SL/AP Contract A	3		0%				3		0%
SL/AP Contract B	12	11	92%	10	9	90%	22	20	91%
SL/AP Totals	15	11	73%	10	9	90%	25	20	80%
Grand Total	22	17	77%	18	13	72%	40	30	75%

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. In 2025, a total of 286 employees attended 7 centralised inductions delivered through a blend of in-person and online sessions. In addition, two coffee mornings were held for new and returning employees with the Choir in attendance.

Centralised Induction	2025 total
Attendees	286
Female	161
Male	120
Other/Non-Binary	5
Staff Category of attendees	
Academic	44
Research	161
Support	67

Technical	10
Library/Gen Op	4

Feedback on the induction offered was rated good or excellent by 97% of those who attended:

. Please rate your overall impression of the centralised induction



New Starter Coffee Mornings: New starter coffee mornings were held in February and November 2025. The events were a huge success with over 160 attendees & representatives at both dates. This year we saw an increase in the number of information stands included at the events with more units getting involved.

Further Education Policy (FEP): This is a funding programme which staff can apply to for financial support when undertaking a part-time programme of study. A total of 97 applications (70 female, 26 male and 1 binary) were received in 2024/25 in the following staff categories:

Total FEP Applications: 97*

Total approved: 87

Total not proceeding: 9

Staff Categories (Based on Applications)

Staff Categories	
Academic	19
Support	50
Researcher	15
Technical	10
PTTA / TSS	3
Total	97

Programme Categories of Total FEP applications vs approved FEP applications

	Total FEP applications	Total FEPs approved
Micro-cred	4	3
Certificate	11	11

Diploma	21	12
Bachelors	5	5
Masters	30	30
PhD	26	26
Totals	97	87

The FEP Impact Report 2025 highlighted figures and data from the scheme as well as feedback from staff over the last 5 years. As part of our on-going impact evaluation, staff were asked if they had noticed any improvements in their development since completing their course through FEP. To date, the majority of staff indicated an increase in their knowledge, confidence and competence as a result of undertaking their chosen course or programme:



Workshop Stats

- Total Workshops: 250
- Total Participants: 3465
- Leadership Programme Completion (2025): 86 (Male: 19 Female: 67)

New Workshops Introduced in 2025

- Agresso for Research Accounts
- Excel for Reporting
- MS Power BI for Data Visualisation
- Burnout: Bitesize Learning Sessions
- Introduction to Project Management
- University Strategic Plan & Strategic Risk Register Workshop

Attendance Breakdown

Category	Completed attendances
Administration (incl. Agency)	1,768
Academic (incl. Visitor)	703

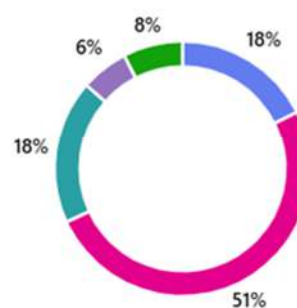
Library	64
Technical	154
Researcher	776
TOTAL	3,465

Workshop Evaluation Highlights

Over half of respondents were within the professional support services category but 2025 saw an increase in respondents from other areas outside of professional support services, in particular research and technical staff.

. Category of Staff

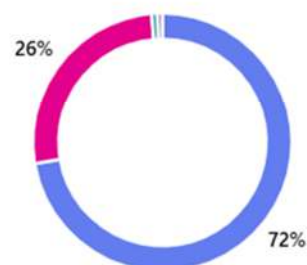
● Academic	117
● Professional Services	336
● Research	122
● Technical	40
● Other	50



72% of respondents were female but there was an increase in the number of staff who identified as non-binary or other in 2025 compared to the previous year:

. Gender (How do you identify?)

● Woman	481
● Man	175
● Non-binary	5
● Other	4



93% of respondents considered the workshops to be either excellent or good which was an increase of 2% compared to 2024:

How would you rate the training programme overall?



There is a clear split between the preferred method of training. With online training at 45% preference, it shows that there is still a requirement to provide a mixed approach to delivery of training/workshops:

Leadership Development Programmes

The leadership programmes continued to support senior and middle-management staff throughout 2025. Our senior leadership development programme, a collaboration between HR and the OVEDI, was delivered in Spring and Autumn. Our introduction to leadership programme was rolled out over the same period. This year we enrolled 3 senior leaders on the new ENLIGHT Academic Leadership programme which began in September 2025.

Bitesize Learning Sessions

L&D continued to encourage internal staff to share their skills and knowledge with colleagues via our Bitesize Learning Sessions. These 60-minute sessions, facilitated by staff for staff, cover a range of topics to suit all cohorts of staff. Some highlights include:

- Creating Accessible Documents
- CRM
- PowerAutomate
- IT Tools & Shortcuts
- AKARI Training
- An Ghaeilge san Ollscoil
- Excel for Reporting

Mentoring Programme

- New Mentees 2025: 44
- New Mentors 2025: 23
- Staff Mentoring Survey Report 2025: Our 2025 report highlighted a number of positive aspects of our mentoring programme while also providing us with constructive feedback and suggestions for improvement. Some highlights from the report are included within the appendices. The full report is available from L&D.

- New Institution to Institution Mentoring: We are currently collaborating with 5 other institutions in Ireland to provide an option for staff to seek a mentor from outside of their own university. This process will be available from early 2026 and will initially be aimed at staff who are in a leadership/management position – with the plan to expand this in the future.

DCM Learning / On-Demand Learning

- Strong uptake in DCM webinar attendance in 2025.
- 1,142 registrations for DCM webinars in 2025
- Strong engagement in particular around AI, Excel and Lean, with AI sessions consistently drawing the highest registration volumes.

Highlights:

- AI topics: AI Tools Demonstration had 102 registrations / 44 attendees (July) and AI Tools for Productivity & Organisation had 45 registrations / 27 attendees (Oct).
- Lean & CI: Lean Principles (47 / 29) and Lean White Belt (28 / 18 in both July & Aug) performed strongly.
- Excel: steady demand across levels (e.g., CPD MS Excel Intermediate 43 / 21; MS Advanced Excel 54 / 21).

ENLIGHT Academic Leadership Programme

- In September 2024, L&D commenced a collaboration with ENLIGHT to create an Academic Leadership Programme for staff across the ENLIGHT network.
- After months of planning with colleagues from 10 institutions across the ENLIGHT alliance, the programme kicked off in Uppsala, Sweden in September 2025.
- 30 participants from across the 10 ENLIGHT institutions have enrolled.
- This programme focuses on university leadership and the development of academic talent and high-quality performance. It investigates the need for transparency and accountability in today's European universities, change management and preparation for the future. Embedded in a European Universities alliance consisting of ten universities, this programme offers a learning environment benefitting from combined academic expertise, international perspectives on higher education and diverse approaches to leadership in a peer-learning context.
- Session 2 was held in Bratislava in December 2025, and University of Galway will host the 3rd session in March 2026.

LiFT Programme: After a successful run of this partnership for the last 3 years, the University has decided to rest the programme and are therefore not seeking to renew the partnership at this stage. A significant factor contributing to this decision at this time is a tightening budget situation. We are hopeful that the University will reactivate the LiFT programme with a clear plan as to how it supports our values. If funding is secured, this could and should then lead to the whole of the University being involved in promoting and actively engaging with the LiFT programme.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) has two dedicated lecturers in sustainability and education for sustainable development (ESD). These two lecturers are taking the lead on embedding ESD in all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in the University. They have developed a curriculum design approach to embedding ESD in the curriculum that reflects a whole of institution and whole of student approach and includes collaborating with colleagues across the university on research and teaching practices involving decolonisation of the curriculum and eco-distress. Primary vehicles for action include:

- **Continuing professional development:** The lecturers developed and administered the second iteration of CEL 6109, Embedding Sustainability in the Curriculum (7, 2.5 hour sessions). Nineteen participants from a variety of disciplines completed the module. The HEA Open Course, Embedding Sustainability in the Curriculum, is open to higher education professionals throughout Ireland. The CELT ESD team developed and administered two of the six sessions. Finally, the team designed a 90-minute workshop for SETU, which was attended by SETU and University of Galway staff. These CPD opportunities provided faculty at the University of Galway and throughout Ireland with guidance on and an opportunity to practice operationalising ESD using a curriculum design approach.
- **ESD Community of Practice (CoP):** In January of 2025, the ESD team established an ESD Community of Practice to enable and promote interdisciplinary collaboration and support efforts to motivate and enhance the embedding of ESD in the curriculum. The CoP currently has 41 members representing a wide variety of disciplines.
- **Tailored workshops and trainings:** The ESD lecturers collaborate with heads of school and programme leads to ensure that students will be empowered to address sustainability challenges in their field of study. They develop bespoke workshops and trainings that support the development of programme level learning outcomes and the integration of sustainability into disciplinary curriculum.
- **ESD events:** The ESD team develops, facilitates, and participates in conferences, symposiums, committees, and working groups on and off campus. Notably, the lecturers hosted the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching 2025 Symposium: Preparing Students for a Challenging World: Education for sustainable development and the socio-emotional domain. The one-day symposium drew over 70 attendees and consisted of keynote speakers and a series of parallel working sessions.

In addition to these efforts, the ESD team is an active member of several Community and University Sustainability Partnership (CUSP) working groups and is working in close collaboration with university units including EDI, Engagement, Students Services, and the Sustainability Office. This ensures that their impact reaches across the University units, emphasizing a whole of university and whole of student approach.

Furthermore, the ESD lecturers worked closely with colleagues in the Quality Office to integrate ESD into quality policy and procedure documents at the University of Galway. These include the Review of Schools (QA006), Review of Programmes (QA003), and Curriculum Design and Management (QA050). This ensures that programme leads integrate ESD from the outset and align with the University's Sustainability Strategy, which includes action points on the integration of sustainability competencies across programmes.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL): RPL continues to play a critical role in advancing the University of Galway's strategic commitment to access, lifelong learning, workforce responsiveness, and learner-centred education.

RPL supports flexible entry, transfer, and progression pathways and contributes to widening participation by recognising learning acquired through formal, non-formal, and informal contexts.

The Human Capital Initiative (HCI) Pillar 3 – Recognition of Prior Learning in Higher Education Project has enabled the University to move from fragmented local practices towards a coordinated, institution-wide RPL framework. During 2024/25, the University entered a key phase of consolidation and operational embedding, with RPL increasingly integrated into academic practice, student recruitment, quality assurance, and digital systems.

Policy and Governance: During the reporting period, the University’s **RPL Policy and Quality Assurance Framework** continued to be implemented across all Colleges and Schools. The policy aligns with:

- The national Pilot Framework and Technical Definition for RPL in Higher Education
- QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines
- HEA Systems Performance Framework objectives

Clear governance structures are now in place, with RPL oversight coordinated through the Office of the Deputy President and Registrar. Consistent procedures for entry, advanced entry, and module exemption have improved transparency, fairness, and equity for learners, while also supporting academic standards.

Systems, Resources and Staff Development: Significant progress was made in strengthening RPL infrastructure and staff capability:

- Expansion of the **University RPL website**, providing clear guidance for prospective learners and employers.
- Development of **learner-facing supports**, including application guidelines and short information videos.
- Enhancement of the **RPL SharePoint Toolkit**, offering staff assessment guidance, templates, and exemplars.
- Delivery of **RPL information and training sessions** across Colleges and Schools.
- Continued use and growth of the **RPL Consultation System**, supporting early engagement between applicants, academic staff, and professional services.

Learner Access, Experience and Engagement: RPL has demonstrably improved access to higher education at the University of Galway, particularly for:

- Adult and mature learners
- Part-time undergraduate and postgraduate students
- Learners engaging with micro-credentials and stackable pathways
- Employees accessing education through enterprise engagement

Collaboration with the **Centre for Adult Learning and Professional Development** and targeted enterprise outreach during 2024/25 significantly increased awareness and uptake of RPL. The inclusion of RPL information as a standard header on all course webpages further supports informed decision-making by prospective students.

Data, Impact and Outcomes: For the 2024/25 academic year, RPL activity demonstrates strong and growing impact:

- **168 students** accessed RPL pathways (entry, advanced entry, or module exemption).
- RPL activity occurred across all Colleges, with particularly strong engagement in postgraduate provision.

2024/25	Student RPL Numbers			
RPL Type	Entry	Advanced Entry	Module Exemption	Total RPL Students

Total	29	23	116	168
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Quality Enhancement and Institutional Impact: The expansion of RPL has contributed to quality enhancement across multiple dimensions:

- **Academic quality:** Structured assessment of prior learning ensures alignment with learning outcomes and standards.
- **Equity and consistency:** University-wide processes reduce variability in learner experience.
- **Strategic alignment:** RPL supports institutional objectives relating to access, skills development, and enterprise engagement.
- **Reputation and leadership:** The University is recognised nationally as a sector leader, contributing to QQI and HEA policy development and national RPL networks.

Sustainability: As HCI funding approaches completion, sustaining RPL capacity is a key quality objective. The **RPL Officer role** has been central to policy implementation, staff support, data reporting, compliance readiness, and national engagement.

Priorities for 2025/26: Key quality-focused priorities for the next reporting period include:

- Full implementation of automated RPL workflows and Banner integration.
- Strengthening data analytics and reporting for quality assurance and HEA compliance.
- Continued staff development and programme-level support.
- Expansion of RPL engagement with enterprise partners and micro-credentials.
- Ongoing review and refinement of policy and assessment practices.

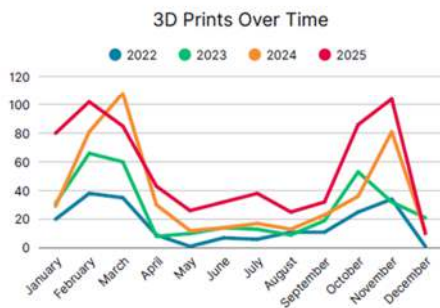
Library: Work proceeded during 2024-25 on the project to deliver a new Library building for our campus. Colleagues in Buildings and Estates led a procurement process for a construction company and appointed JJ Rhatigan as the Main Works contractor for this project. The Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, James Lawless, turned the first sod on May 15th 2025 and construction work commenced swiftly thereafter and has continued at pace and right on track. Meanwhile, the Library team focused on furniture and the selection of study desks, study chairs and soft seating to ensure the most comfortable experience for our students. This work involved learning from other libraries' experiences, researching the market and preparing for consultation with students. Work also continued throughout the year on reviewing and preparing collections of nearly half a million books for the move to the new building and the Bookbot (Automated Storage and Retrieval System). This huge undertaking has been a key staff priority for several years and is crucial to the success of the new Library.

The Library Strategy Committee is a sub-committee of Academic Council and provides governance and oversight to ensure that the Library develops and maintains appropriate services, collections and facilities for staff, students and other users in accordance with the University's strategic plan and the academic needs of the University community. In January 2025, the Library Strategy Committee updated its terms of reference and recommended an update to the Academic Council Schedule of responsibilities and delegated responsibilities relating to Library Strategy Committee, which was approved.

The Archive Strategy Committee has responsibility for advising on the strategic development of archives and special collections in the University in accordance with the University's strategic plan and the academic needs of the University community. In May 2025, this committee updated its terms of reference and became a formal sub-committee of the Library Strategy Committee, which brought it into the formal governance structures of the University.

Snapshot of the Library Services in Figures

The MakerSpace provided 582 3D prints in 2024-25. The graph below shows the ever-increasing popularity of the service.



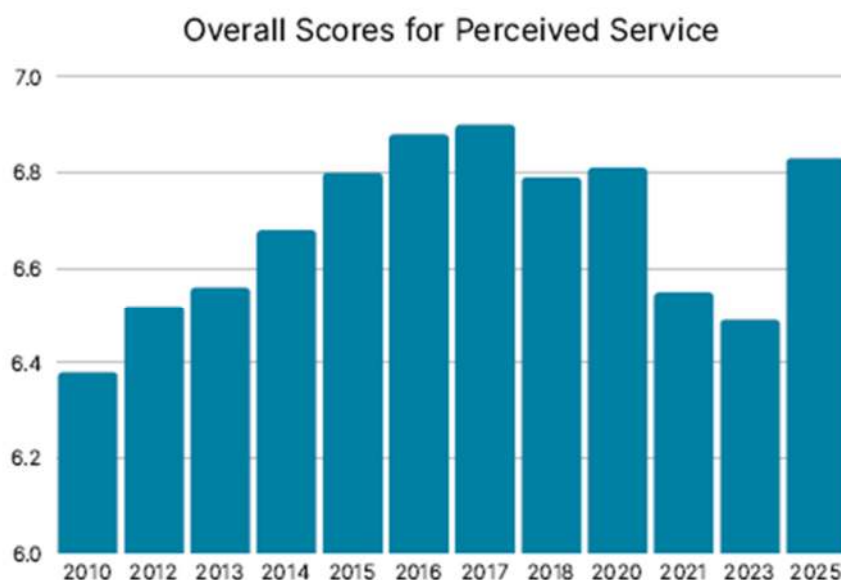
Summary of Activities 2024-25 Academic Year



Conscious of the ethical and sustainability issues of AI Library staff are also keenly aware of the potential for productivity or service improvements. In many areas of library service, staff reviewed and tested how AI might improve their workflows or service and monitored AI related developments from our information resource and system providers. Recognising that AI poses challenges and opportunities in Higher Education, the Library curated and publicised a list of books on AI in Education, continued to include AI advice in information skills workshops and produced a guide to AI for Research.

Bi-Annual User Survey

The Library carried out our biannual LibQual Survey, which gives an insight into users' perceptions of library services in different areas of service and allows comparison with other libraries around the world. After a dip in perceived level of service in the post-Covid years, results showed improvements. However, we are still quite a bit below the scores of other Irish University libraries in LibQual, largely due to a low score on 'Library as Place'. We are confident that our new Library will help us to turn this around.



Widening Participation

Widening Participation Strategy: University of Galway announced its first [Widening Participation Strategy](#), which aims to enhance educational opportunities for traditionally underrepresented groups.

To deliver on its commitment to ensure University of Galway remains at the forefront in developing educational opportunities for the most underrepresented in society, the Widening Participation Strategy 2025-2028 focuses on four overarching goals:

- To increase access and participation in higher education for people from underrepresented socio-economic groups, and minority status groups.
- To develop collaborative strategic partnerships internally within the university to promote the widening participation agenda.
- To engage with schools, Further Education and Training providers, community groups, employers and the wider community to foster sustained change in beliefs and attitudes about higher education.
- To collect and disseminate research on widening participation activities delivered throughout the University.

The Widening Participation Strategy follows on from the University's Access Centre last year marking its 25th anniversary and the 3,500 people from traditionally underrepresented groups and disadvantaged backgrounds who have come through its programmes.



Dr Daniel Savery, Widening Participation Officer, Access Centre; Professor Ciara Meehan, Dean of Students; and Imelda Byrne, Head of Access Centre, University of Galway at the launch of the Widening Participation Strategy (2025-2028). Photo: Martina Regan

From 2019/20 to 2024/25, some 713 students progressed to the University through the Further Education and Training entry route (almost three times the figures on the previous five years).

A key performance objective included in the University's System Performance Agreement 2024-2028 with the HEA is increasing 1st year progression rates for HEAR students and Students with disabilities. University of Galway has exceeded the 24/25 target of 87% first-year progression for Students with disabilities (SWD's) and HEAR. The progression rates are:

- SWD's: 92.7% (5.2% increase on target of 87%)
- HEAR: 93.3% (6.3% increase on target of 87%)

WP Data: Using data from the Student Record System (SRS) the total number of students entering through WP entry routes from 2010 to 2024 is outlined below. During this time, University of Galway has seen a total 29% increase in students entering through these routes.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
HEAR Merit	104	140	187	183	198	193	199	181	166	149	162	113	90	99
HEAR Supported	50	50	48	68	69	82	77	56	68	77	68	77	63	66
DARE Merit	21	16	60	40	70	60	85	96	106	94	118	168	179	200
DARE Supported	17	14	20	38	42	35	37	35	59	67	70	79	102	111
Foundation	50	52	49	37	50	31	40	22	11	11	21	16	7	8
FET	7	25	21	14	6	39	62	46	92	99	153	134	94	119
Mature	220	157	127	87	89	75	57	77	66	73	79	86	71	66
Mature Access	69	55	67	52	41	44	42	35	26	23	29	34	19	19
School Leavers Access	58	43	52	49	52	35	56	38	39	36	38	27	19	20
Total	571	552	631	598	617	594	655	586	633	629	738	734	644	719

The Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) and Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) are two national schemes developed by HEI's to increase the number of students entering HE who have a disability (DARE) or who come from socio-economically disadvantaged groups (HEAR) in society. Both the HEAR and DARE schemes offer reduced points places to students on full-time undergraduate programmes and provide additional University supports to students.

Figure 4 charts the significant increase of students entering through the FET entry pathway.

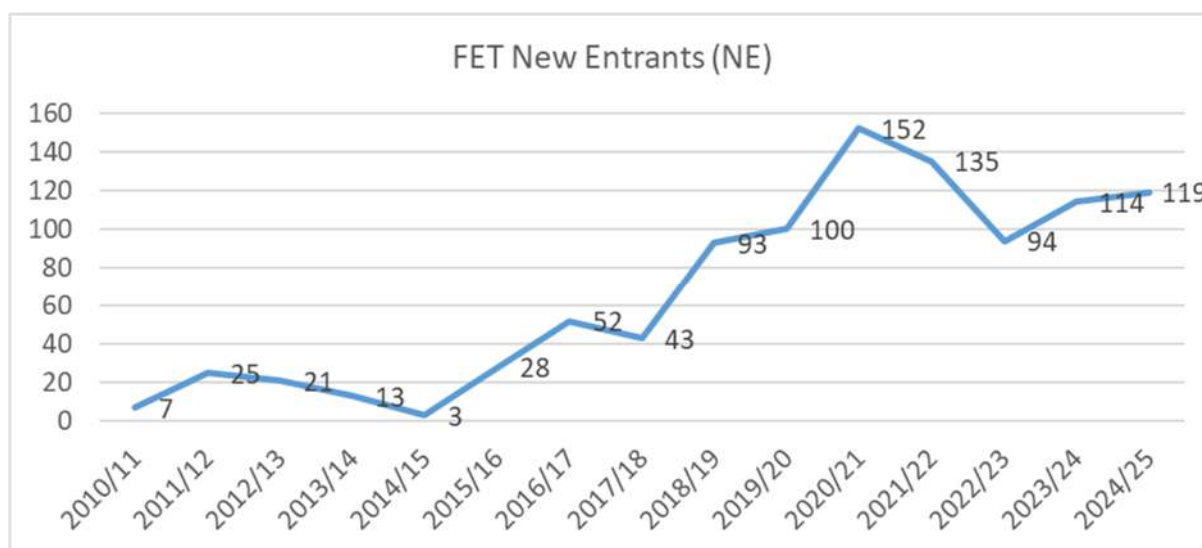
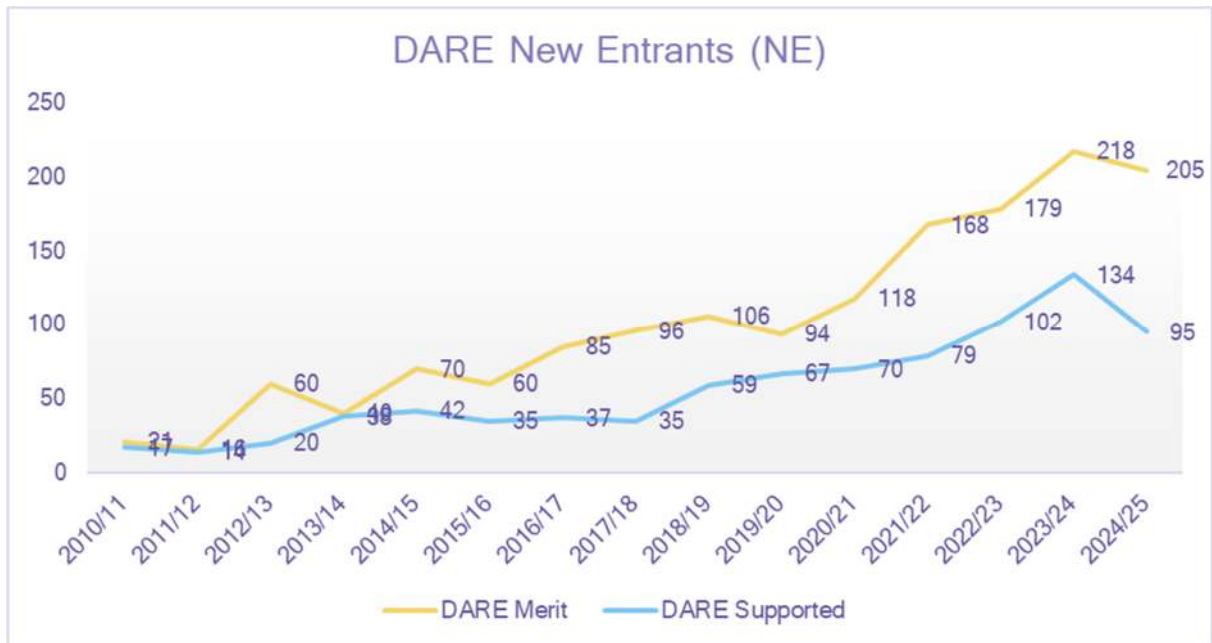
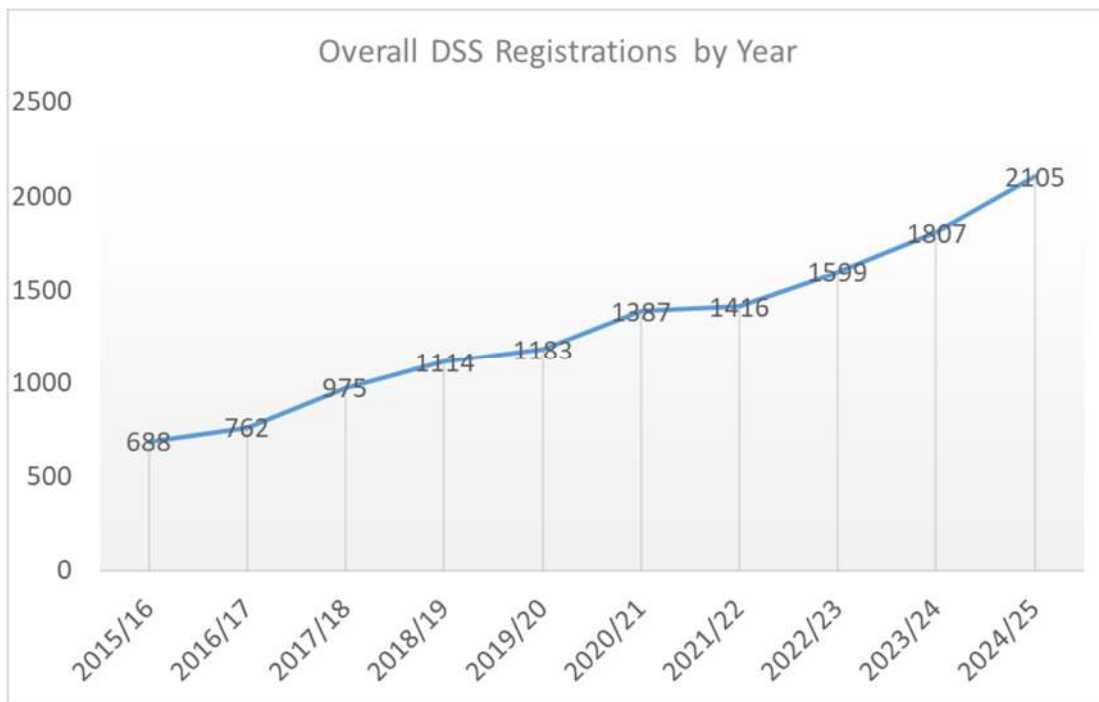


Figure 5 charts the significant increase of DARE students entering full-time UG programmes:



Students with a disability are entitled, under law, to reasonable accommodations. In order to avail of these accommodations, students are invited to register with the Disability Support Service (DSS) in the Access Centre. The total number of students registering with a disability from 2015/16 to 2024/25 is outlined below. Overall, since the academic years 2015/16 and 2024/25, there has been a 206% increase in students registering for disability support.



University of Galway was proud to host the European Access Network Conference 2025 (EAN2025) on 10th and 11th June 2025, in partnership with Ireland's Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD). The European Access Network (EAN) encourages wider access to higher education for those who are currently under-represented, whether for reasons of gender, ethnic origin, nationality, age, disability, family background, vocational training, geographic location, or earlier educational disadvantage. The EAN is the only European-wide, non-governmental organisation for widening participation in higher education. EAN2025 attracted 250 delegates, including 83 international colleagues.

Our conference partners, the CEUD, are part of an EU Commission-led consortium called AccessibleEU that was established to build capacity in digital accessibility across the EU in advance of the European Accessibility Act which came into force in June 2025. They collaborated with the Access Centre to host an AccessibleEU workshop on higher education, and a student-led accessibility trail at University of Galway on 9th June. The accessibility trail, entitled 'Are we all on the same EMpath?' engaged participants with the lived experience of people with different disabilities.

EAN2025 was led locally by the Access Centre and the Office of the Dean of Students, with generous support from the EDI Project Fund and the Office of the Deputy President and Registrar for the provision of bursaries for students from under-represented groups in higher education to participate in the conference and share their lived experience. It was generously sponsored by Medtronic, our industry partners, and Boost Education.

A key focus of EAN2025 was to bring together three highly related communities with shared aims that would benefit from closer alignment - the access and widening participation community, the universal design community and the higher education pedagogy and practice community. 'Inclusion by Design' was the conference theme, with sub-themes on 'Universal Design in Education', 'Collaborations and Partnerships in Widening Participation' and 'Identity and Belonging in Higher Education'.

A further aim of EAN2025 was to amplify the voices of students from under-represented groups. Student advocate, Izzy Tiernan, was employed throughout conference planning and, with the support of staff, led on the EAN2025 Student Champions bursary scheme which brought eight students from across Ireland and four University of Galway students to EAN2025. The impact of their contribution was immense, and delegate feedback showed that their student panel session was a conference highlight. Many of the 36 student delegates co-presented papers with staff, including our own Miriam Collins who delivered an interactive workshop on sensory regulation in the conference Calm Zone with a senior Occupational Therapist from our Disability Support Service.

University of Galway's Widening Participation Strategy was launched at EAN2025 by Head of Access Policy with the Higher Education Authority (HEA), Dr Louise Callanan. Its ambitious, student-centred objectives and targets will ensure that students from under-represented groups, like those who made EAN2025 such a meaningful and engaging experience, will be supported to participate in higher education in the years to come.

Certificate in Foundational Learning and Community: Cumas at University of Galway is planned as a full-time, mixed programme of inclusion for students with intellectual disabilities. The aim of the programme is to provide students with a third level learning experience which will develop their knowledge, social engagement and employment prospects.

Students on Cumas take part in social activities and academic classes with students without intellectual disabilities, as well as participating in classes with other students with intellectual disabilities. The programme also provides students with work experience through placement opportunities. While the primary aims of the programme caters to the students and their needs, it is also envisioned that University of Galway and the wider

community will benefit by developing a greater understanding and appreciation of the potential of people with intellectual disabilities.

The programme is founded on the following four pillars:

1. Quality Education - meaningful learning relating to needs and interests of students.
2. Personal Growth and Independence – confidence building and life skills.
3. Community, Belonging and Advocacy – quality involvement in university life.
4. Employability and Future Pathways – work placement and pathways for further study/lifelong learning.

The programme has three components:

- Cohort learning modules – where participating students learn together as a group. These modules will include skills for learning and academic success, skills for engagement and society, and skills for career development.
- Co-learning modules – where Cumas students learn alongside other students about subjects that are of interest to them. Cumas staff will collaborate with the subject lecturers to ensure meaningful participation.
- Work placement – where Cumas students gain meaningful work experience based on their interests and strengths and develop transferable work skills. Both the student and the work placement provider will be supported by the Cumas team.

The programme received 22 applications. All the applicants were invited to interview. The interview format was prepared in collaboration with UCC id+ programme. It involved a group activity and interviews. 13 students were selected and offered places, all of which accepted.

The students began semester 1 on February 26th 2024 which lasted 12 weeks. During this time the students learned their way around campus and the services available to them. They learned to use the library and the university Canvas system. They sat in on lectures and participated in group activities with other students.

From June to August 2025 the team prepared the content of the course modules. The co-learning aspect of the programme began with engagement with academics. The response was very positive and co-learning modules from each college will be available to Cumas students in 2026.

The work placement aspect of the programme began with a meeting between the Cumas team and several services and government departments involved in this area. This meeting was helpful with a lot of information shared and a commitment to work together on the work placement part of the programme in 2026.

Professional Engagement Module (PEM)

Since 2018, students studying the business stream on the Diploma in Foundation Studies: Access Programme have completed the PEM module, in collaboration with Grant Thornton. In 2023, we were delighted to announce the expansion of the programme and welcome Medtronic onboard as a partner. This has given students studying the science and engineering stream of the programme the opportunity to be matched with Mentors from Medtronic.

This experiential based model of learning matches professional Mentors from Grant Thornton and Medtronic with Mentees from the Access programme in a module of structured interactive learning.

As a result of taking part in the programme, students:

- Gain exposure to a professional working environment.
- Develop an insight into career progression.
- Hone a skillset for career readiness.
- Cultivate a working/ supportive relationship with their assigned Mentors.

- Develop an understanding and insight into the core requisites of a professional working environment.

As part of PEM in the last year, 10 students received invaluable professional mentoring support from Medtronic, while 12 students spent time with their assigned Mentors at Grant Thornton.

UNI4U+

Uni4U+ is a programme for secondary school students to engage with the Access Centre through a suite of workshops and events. The programme was offered to 27 DEIS schools and 6 non-DEIS linked schools in Galway, Clare, Roscommon and Mayo.

We engaged with 1,171 6th year students, 528 2nd year students and 94 parents in our semester one in-school programme, delivering a presentation on Pathways to Higher Education, Study Skills and Public Speaking workshops.

We also engaged with 257 secondary school students in our semester 2 on-campus events, which included school visits during July Provision for students with disabilities, an Easter Revision Course for 3rd and 6th year students and two new initiatives this year, our Basketball Competition for 1st year students and a collaboration with Acadamh na hOllscoile for 5th year students in Gaeltacht DEIS schools.

1st Year Basketball Competition: 96 1st year students from Merlin College, Coláiste Cholmcille, Archbishop McHale College, Galway Community College and Scoil Phobail Mhic Dara participated in a 3v3 basketball competition. Teams were mixed of pupils from different schools, which gave them a great opportunity to make friends in other schools.

5th Year workshops with Acadamh na hOllscoile: 97 students from Coláiste Cholmcille and Scoil Chuimsitheach Chiaráin participated in a range of workshops including Grammar work, table quiz, pathways to education and a campus tour. They also got an insight into the courses on offer in the Acadamh

Traveller and Roma Outreach - Educational Transition Programme:

The Education Transition Programme (ETP) was another significant initiative for the 2024/25 academic year. The Educational Transition Project for Irish Traveller students builds on existing initiatives and works directly with community organisations in supporting prospective members of the Irish Traveller community to progress to higher education. ETP is a multi-disciplinary project, designed to support Irish Traveller students, both School Leaver and Mature Students, to achieve their desired educational goals.

The programme was held from July 1st to July 17th, on the University campus. The graduation from the programme took place on July 18th which saw 17 members of the Traveller community receiving certificates of participation from Imelda Byrne, Head of the Access Centre.

The three-week programme focused on skill development, facilitating participants' inclusion in education, employment, and society. It was a collaborative effort, drawing contributions from various university departments such as the College of Business, Public Policy & Law, Flirt FM, the Careers Development Centre, the English Language Centre, and Student Services.

TARGET Grinds:

TARGET is designed for Secondary School students from 1st year through to Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied Year 2 students. The grinds take place online with Professional Master of Education students within the University. The grinds are offered in a range of subject including English, Irish, Maths, History, Biology, Physics and German. In 2025, 6 Leaving Certificate students, 4 Junior Certificate students and 2 second year

students availed the grinds. The students came from 10 participating schools. Throughout the year, the 13 students completed 532 grinds.

Statistics on grinds effectiveness:

- 47% of the students found the grinds extremely helpful
- 38% of the students found the grinds helpful
- 15 % of the students found the grinds somewhat helpful

Support for Care Experienced Students: University of Galway encourages students with care experience to link in to explore pathways into higher education and supports for your time studying here while acknowledging that navigating the application process and adjusting to life at university can be particularly challenging for care experienced students.

‘Care experienced’ may be defined as any individual who has lived in alternative care (i.e., not under parental care) for any amount of time before the age of 18. Being care experienced means an individual will have spent time with foster carers, in residential care, in special care, or were adopted. It can also mean a person lived with relatives or friends in a formal or informal arrangement because they were unable to live with their parents; this is called kinship care.

There is a range of services and provision that the University can offer people leaving care or those who have previously spent time in care and are thinking of applying to the University including financial support, prioritised accommodation for first year students and/or advice and guidance from a dedicated advisor. A [guide](#) to the supports available for Care Experienced Students has been developed.

Supports and resources for learners



Tús Maith | Good Start 2024-25

Tús Maith | Good Start 2024-25 supported incoming undergraduate students with a suite of resources and events by offering streamlined information and supports. Communication began before arrival with Starter Pack, a self-paced interactive e-module. Engagement continued through warm Web and Campus Welcomes, peer-supported drop-ins, an on-demand first-year-specific information hub, and ongoing activities throughout the first semester and semester two.

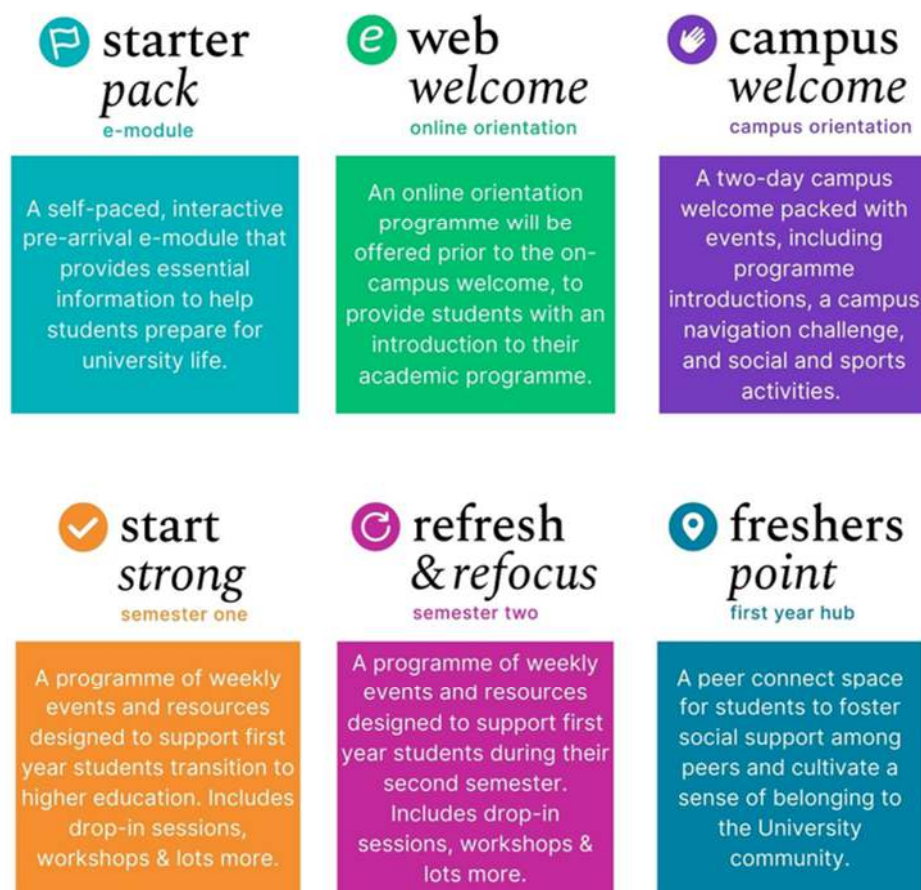


Figure 1: Tús Maith | Good Start programme elements

Orientation

First-year Orientation is offered to circa 3,300 new undergraduate students each year. In 2024, as per the previous three years, the start of teaching for first-years was later than that for all returning students. The Office of the Dean of Students worked closely with College teams to create orientation schedules that would provide students with an engaging two-day Campus Welcome and online orientations (Web Welcomes), where required, with an emphasis on essential information and minimal duplication and/or gaps in the schedule. Colleges concentrated on academic and related content while the Office of the Dean of Students covered student experience elements of the programme.

Attendance and engagement at orientation

In previous years, attendance on the second day of orientation was significantly lower than the first. It was hoped that running the second day of orientation on a weekday would encourage greater attendance, however this was not the case with total attendance at Welcome to University of Galway talks lower than in previous years (1155).

Previous years for reference: 2023: 2160 (day 1), 1010 (day 2) and 2022: 2495 (day 1), 1315 (day 2). A clear pattern of diminishing attendance the later in the schedule the talks featured.

Student feedback on orientation

Students were asked to provide feedback via a survey which was circulated through the ezine and the Colleges. 403 students responded. Overall feedback was positive, with satisfaction levels of 4 or above overall for all questions asked and the vast majority (75-85%) self-rating as knowing essential information, feeling welcomed, optimistic and a sense of belonging to the University community. The elements most students found helpful were the Programme Introductions and the Welcome to University of Galway talks.

The graphs in Figure 2 below indicate a self-rated improvement in students' preparedness for university life after Orientation, averaging from less than 6/10 to more than 7.5/10 with those rating themselves at 8-10 on the scale increasing by more than 100%.

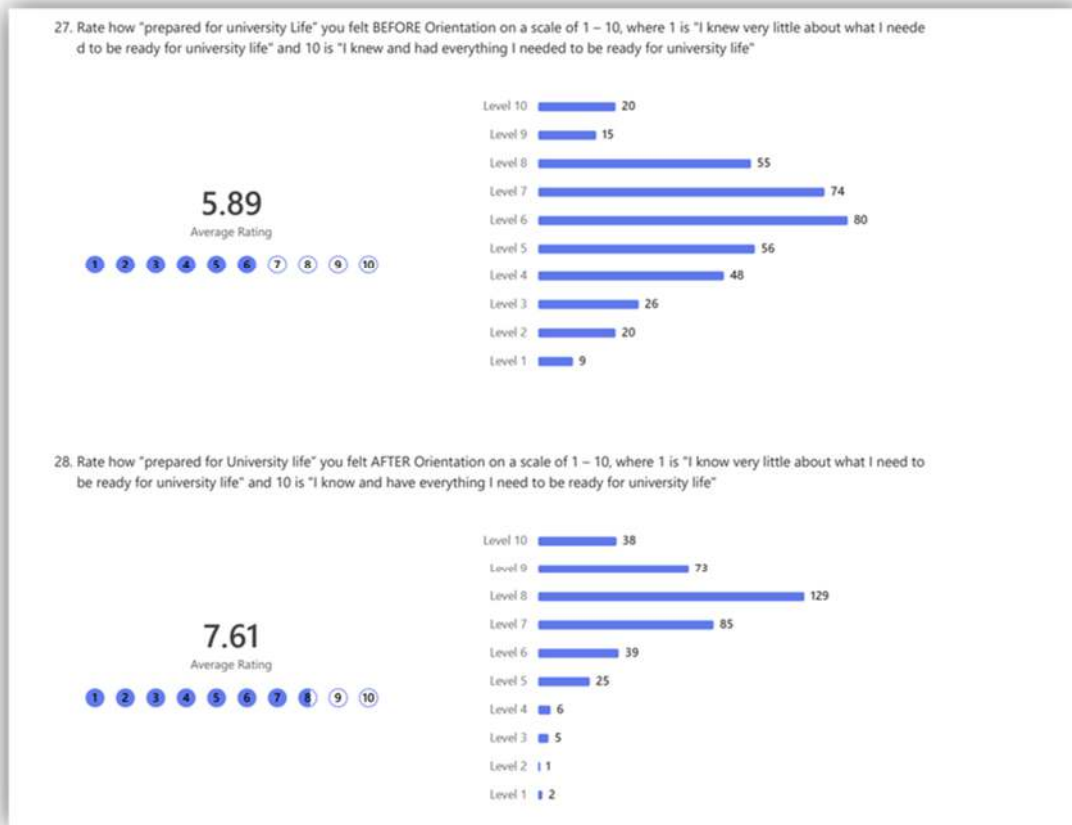


Figure 2: How prepared for university life students felt before and after orientation.

Freshers' Point – peer-facilitated weekly drop-in social point

The focus for the Freshers' Point initiative was peer support and connection among first-year undergraduate students. The purpose of the first-year drop-ins were to provide an informal, accessible, safe, and inclusive space to enable peer connection in a social environment, thereby contributing to a culture of belonging on campus. The sessions were facilitated by trained student facilitators who had completed first year.

Approximately 201 unique visits were recorded with some returning visitors noted. Many participants said they would recommend Freshers Point to a friend, felt comfortable making friends, and felt a sense of belonging to the university community.

The initiative's pilot results highlight its potential to fill gaps in support for students not involved in traditional clubs or societies, offering a vital alternative for social connection. Moving forward, scaling the initiative with refinements in its implementation, such as improved marketing and course-specific events, will further enhance its impact. Ultimately, Freshers Point aligns with best practices in promoting mental health and wellbeing in educational settings, laying a solid foundation for broader Healthy Campus initiatives.

Semester one and Semester two programmes: Start Strong and Refresh & Refocus

The semester-specific programmes offered events and resources designed to help students settle in to university life, one week at a time. The programmes offered a mix of events, bite-sized resources and student-created content offered by units across the university, under weekly themes. The events and resources were collated by the Student Engagement team and communicated through the weekly first-year specific e-zine. As the events and activities vary and are offered by various units, overall engagement numbers are not available.

Universal Design

University of Galway has continued to expand and build on progress towards a universally designed campus and community in 2024/25 and has renewed its commitment to this work by adopting the ALTITUDE Charter for Universal Design in Tertiary Education. Some key actions at a local level, and with national and international partners, are outlined below.

Calm Zone

- Sensory-friendly Calm Zone offered during large-scale campus events, for example, First Year Orientation and high stress campus events, for example, the exam period
- Developed by the Access Centre, the Neurodivergent Student Society, the Neurodivergent Staff Network and the Galway Autism Partnership
- Co-created with and staffed by neurodivergent students

Universal Design Manager

- 5 Year Post funded by the 2024/25 Strategic Fund
- Based in the Office of Vice-President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Incorporates the statutory role of Access Officer for all students, staff and visitors

HEIs as Places for People: Inclusive Infrastructures to Support Intersectionality in HEIs

- National multi-partner project, led by Trinity College Dublin, in partnership with University of Galway, the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and Technological University, Dublin
- Funded by the HEA's EDI Enhancement Fund
- Circa 18 months
- Exploring infrastructure and the intersectionality of barriers experienced by students from under-represented groups in city HEI campuses that have a mix of new and heritage buildings through a series of mutual learning exchanges, culminating with a larger symposium in May 2026

European Access Network Conference (EAN) 2025, 10th and 11th June 2025

- EAN2025 hosted by University of Galway in partnership with the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design, part of the National Disability Authority
- Conference theme: 'Inclusion by Design', sub-themes: 'Universal Design in Education'; 'Collaboration and partnerships in widening participation'; Identity and belonging in higher education.

AccessibleEU Workshop, 9th June

- AccessibleEU is an EU Commission-led consortium that was established to build capacity in digital accessibility across the EU in advance of the European Accessibility Act which came into force in June 2025.
- The Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD) represents Ireland as part of this consortium

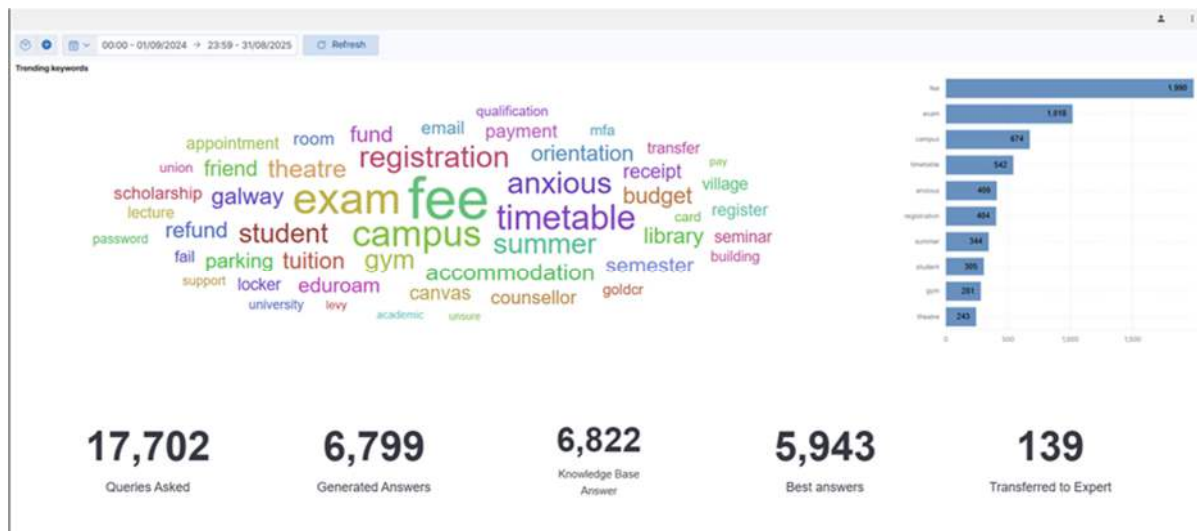
- On 9th June 2025, the CEUD in partnership with Access Centre hosted an AccessibleEU workshop at University of Galway entitled 'Universal Design in Education - Connecting Voices and Sharing Experiences

Cara - Virtual Assistant for Students



Cara is 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.

Usage outside of office hours continues to be popular, with the percentage of questions asked on Cara outside of 9-5pm rising to 48.77%. Fees and exams again emerge as the top two topics of interest for students.



Usage has dropped slightly over the last year to below 18,000 questions. A solution has been developed to integrate information from the student e-zine on a regular basis with the information automatically disappearing from the knowledge base after a set period of time, and therefore its relevancy, passes.

The Web Governance group is overseeing the creation of a chatbot focused sub-group which will help determine the future of a University chatbot.

Changes to Artificial Intelligence (AI) & User Interface (UI)

Cara's evolution has continued with changes to the UI leading to an easier user experience. Sources for an answer are now available at request of the user and each query also shows the energy consumption required to generate it.

Personality control for Cara now resides with the Cara theme allowing us to customise Cara’s tone or how it might approach conversations.

Reachout Upgrades

In addition to the sensitive flow continuing to evolve, reachouts have been designed to mirror the needs based pathways to support that the Support Wheel encourages.



Future Plans

Efforts are underway to allow control and administration of the “Reachout” campaign capabilities to be transferred to the Cara team, removing the reliance on the software supplier for assistance.

EARLY ALERT SYSTEM: The Early Alert System (EAS) is a Student Services initiative to identify students at risk of non-progression. By analyzing key engagement indicators it enables timely interventions leading to individual success and hopefully increased progression rates.

EAS – Data Collection and Analysis: Development started in Jan 2025 to analyse data relevant to the early recognition of students at risk of academic failure. A pilot is currently ongoing.

EAS Score: Every University of Galway student is assigned a 0-5 engagement score. An engagement score is a standardised and weighted combination of

- Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) activity
- Attendance recording
- Central Applications Office (CAO) points

The engagement score is combined with the record for all 20k students, to offer a one-stop decision support tool. At present the focus is on those students on lower scores but their ‘trajectory’ over a 3 week period is also taken into consideration.

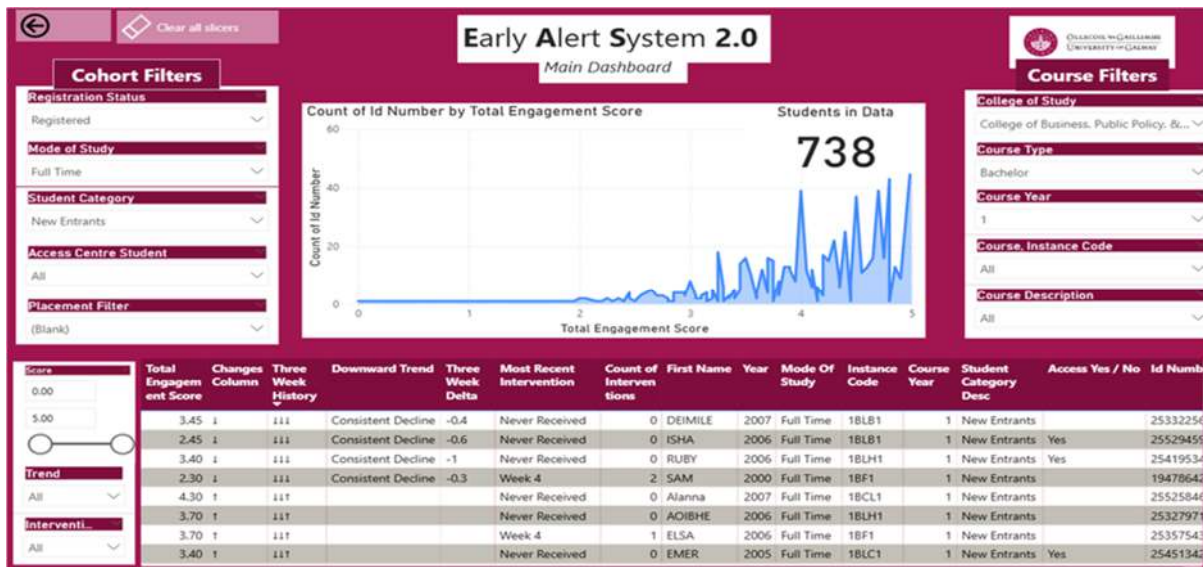
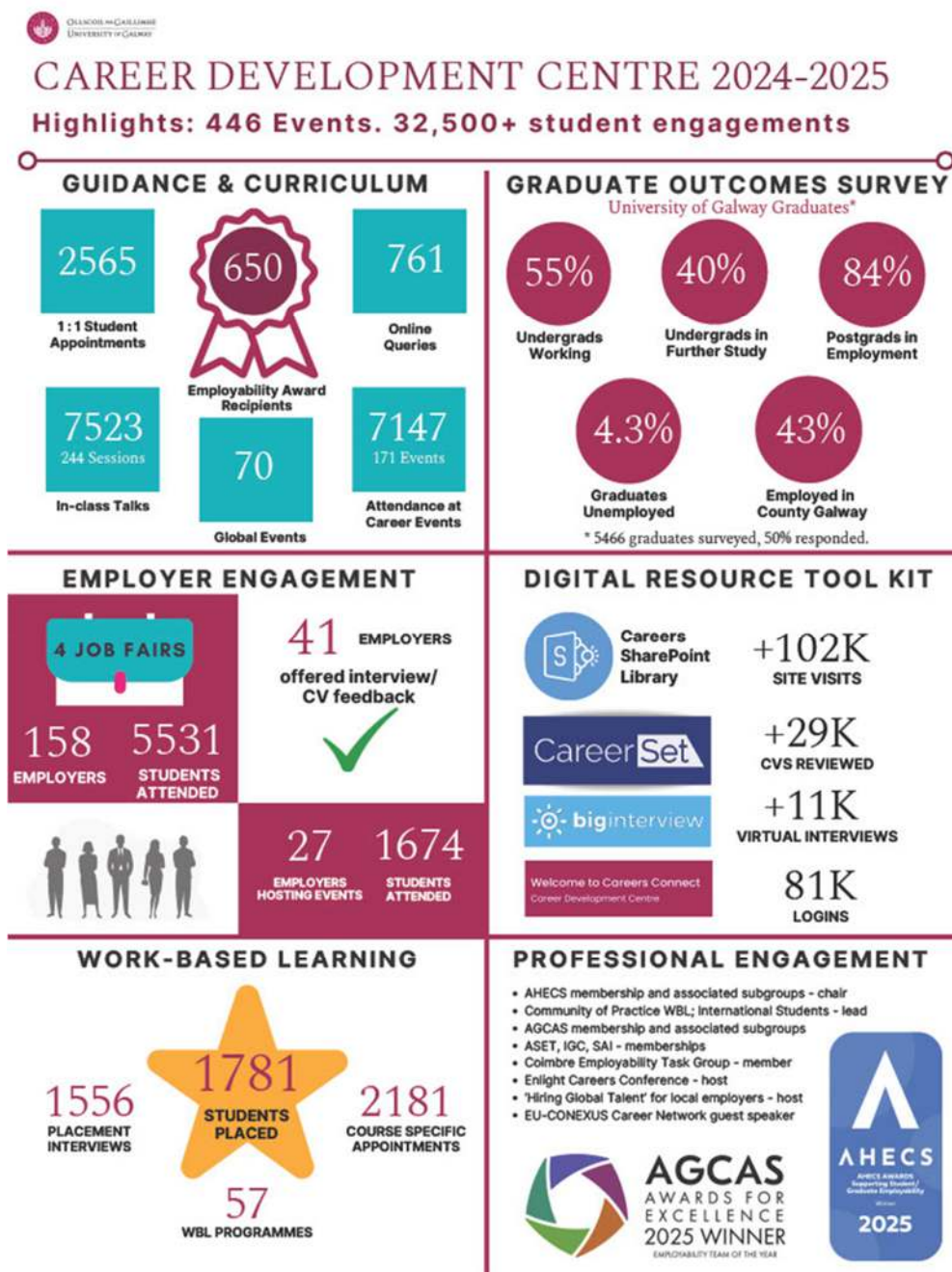


Figure 1 EAS Dashboard shows standardised scores for all students with selectable category filters e.g. Registered, new entrant, undergraduates in the College of Business Public Policy and Law (CBPPL) above.

Decision Support: A personalised EAS decision support dashboard is shared with the Student Support Officers (SSO) and the Access Centre student support team. Updates are reviewed in a weekly working group that analyses and plans for the students that indicate as most in need of additional supports (least engaged), the intervention types, efficacy and outcomes. Interventions with students are tracked with the aim of clarifying their value and benefit. The analysis enables us to understand patterns and predictors of academic risk.

EAS is being piloted across all schools and colleges with a focus on undergraduate students. The aim is to show definitive relationships between identification, intervention and progression at the end of the 2025/26 academic year. Thereafter investment will be required to automate and resource the analysis.

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.



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.



2025/2026
Semester 1

CÉIM
SHARED LEARNING

What students said about CÉIM this semester

CÉIM helps me connect with other people in my course and provides me with all the tools to help me succeed.
1st year student

I met my best friend in CÉIM
1st year student

Low pressure environment where you could be honest and ask for help. CÉIM leaders understood our struggles because they have been there.
1st year student

I really enjoyed the welcoming community that was built at each session, all the leaders were very approachable and I wasn't scared to ask questions.
1st year student

I liked that I could revise the lecture content with other people from my course.
1st year student

I really liked the teamwork and sense of community among leaders, as well as how well-structured the sessions were. It's great to see students engaging more confidently every week!
CÉIM leader

I valued the peer-to-peer learning environment that made me feel like an active participant. It's somewhere that you can learn the content of your course while also meeting the people on your course.
1st year student

CÉIM has greatly improved my communication skills and made me inspired by being able to make positive impact for first years.
CÉIM leader

The CÉIM leaders themselves were incredibly kind and helpful. They created a great environment and gave great advice on things in the university.
1st year student

When I was in 1st year, I was extremely shy, and my leaders indirectly, through CÉIM sessions, allowed me to meet new people. I've noticed in my sessions that I see 1st years very similar to me, and I try to subtly get them to come out of their shell.
CÉIM leader

Semester 1

SHARED LEARNING

Supporting 1st year student success

It's hard to believe that the CÉIM peer learning programme is now in its thirteenth year of operation! CÉIM provides targeted academic, social and wellbeing support for 1st year students at University of Galway and is now one of the largest academic peer learning programmes in higher education in Ireland. Uniquely delivered via a partnership between University of Galway Students' Union, University of Galway and students, CÉIM is based on the well-evidenced Supplemental Instruction/Peer Assisted Learning model, providing small group academic peer learning on a weekly basis throughout the entire academic year.



Smooth Transition to University of Galway



Learning Communities & Social Networks



Academic Success



Skills Development



Health & Wellbeing Support



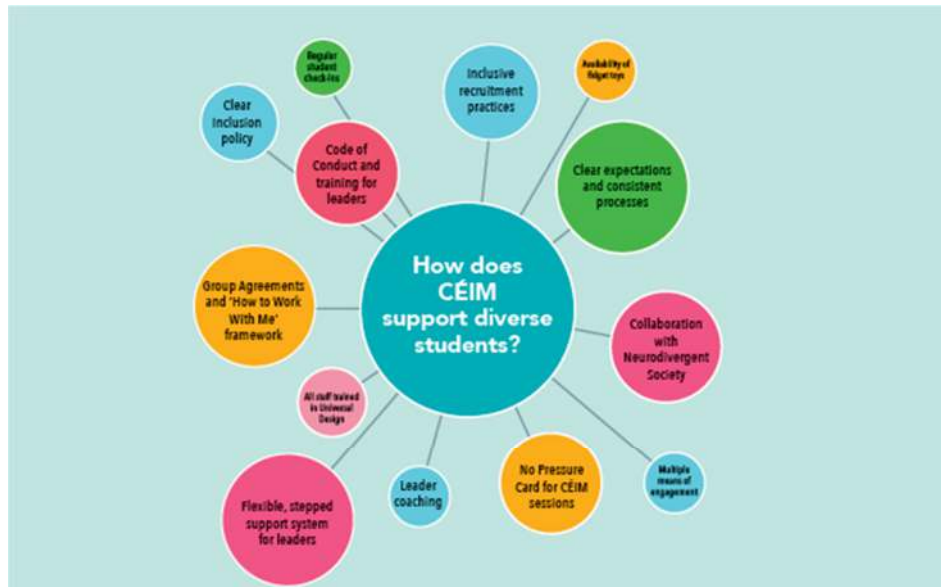
Progression to 2nd Year

Skills development - There has been increased focus in CÉIM sessions this semester on developing students' questioning, critical thinking and academic integrity skills, and critically discussing AI. Efforts were ramped up to coach individual teams of CÉIM leaders to further support leaders with session planning and group dynamics and this has proven very beneficial.

CÉIM expansion - CÉIM was piloted in Agricultural Science and Physics this semester. Next year, the programme will be piloted with 1st year students in Earth and Ocean Sciences; Marine Science; and Financial Mathematics and Economics.

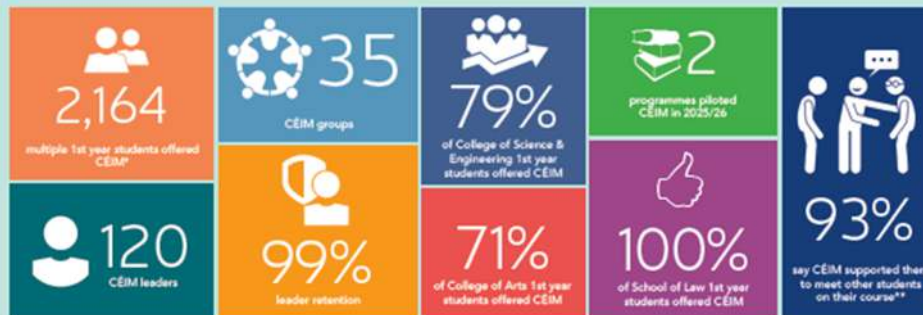
Orientation - CÉIM had over 2,000 interactions with 1st year students during Orientation this academic year. Two hours of Orientation teambuilding and campus tours were delivered again this year to 600 students in the College of Science and Engineering and feedback on this has been very positive.

Inclusive practice - CÉIM is continuing to work with student leaders and academic staff to make CÉIM as inclusive as possible. The No Pressure Card is being used in CÉIM sessions to support small numbers of students who want to take a step back and continues to be positively received. This is what students had to say about the No Pressure Card this year: *'So grateful this exists'* and *'Really helped me engage with CEIM without feeling under pressure to speak out'*.



Conferences and collaborations - This year, CÉIM staff and CÉIM student leaders presented at the Global SI Leader Summit and the ENLIGHT Teaching and Learning Conference in Uppsala, and CÉIM staff also spoke at the AHEAD Conference in Dublin. We were delighted to have a visit from Minnesota State University and look forward to collaborating with peer learning colleagues in Scotland in 2026.

Irish peer learning collaboration - The Ireland Network of Peer Assisted Learning (INPAL), which was co-founded by CÉIM in 2024 with colleagues in TU Dublin and TUS, continues to go from strength to strength. The group had its first in-person meeting co-hosted by Maynooth University in May 2025, which provided a valuable forum for networking and discussion on academic peer learning in the higher education sector in Ireland.



* Many Arts students are offered CÉIM in multiple subjects
 ** Survey of 1st year students offered CÉIM in Nov 2025

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

Information Solutions Services (ISS): The period from **October 2024 to September 2025** has been transformative for **Information Solutions and Services (ISS)**. ISS continues to play a pivotal role in enabling the University's mission of teaching, research, and innovation through the delivery of secure, reliable, and forward-looking digital services. ISS is the backbone of the University's digital ecosystem, providing essential infrastructure, enterprise applications, and data services that empower academic and professional communities. By aligning technology initiatives with institutional priorities, ISS ensures that digital capabilities underpin the University's strategic ambitions, fostering operational excellence and enhancing the student and staff experience.

Strategic Initiatives

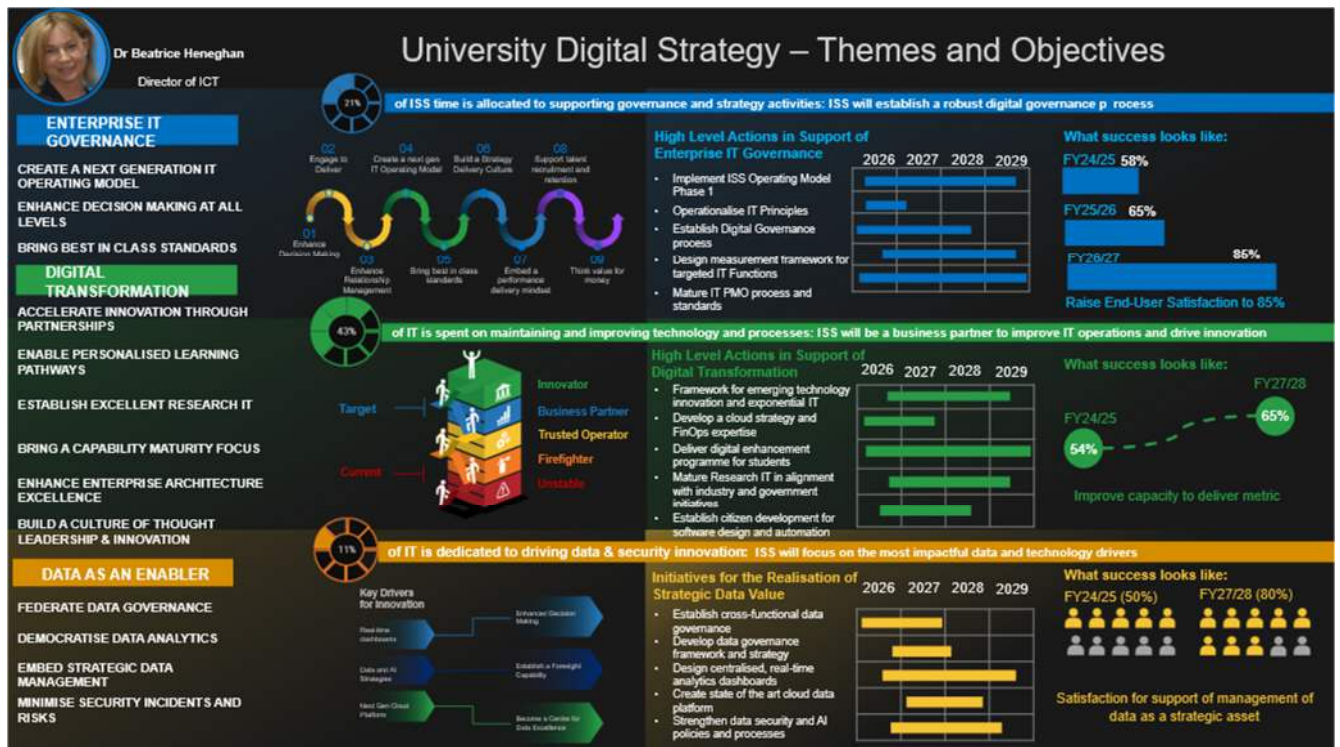
1. ISS Operating Model Implementation

During this reporting period, ISS advanced the development and rollout of a **Next Generation IT Operating Model**, designed to strengthen governance, improve agility, and embed a culture of service excellence. This model introduces a capability maturity approach, ensuring ISS operates as a trusted business partner to the University and supports innovation across all domains.

2. University Digital Strategy

ISS led the creation of the University's **Digital Strategy** (Appendix A), following extensive stakeholder engagement and alignment with the University's overarching strategic plan. The strategy articulates three core themes:

- **Enterprise IT Governance:** Establishing robust governance and a strategy delivery culture.
- **Digital Transformation:** Accelerating innovation, enabling personalised learning pathways, and enhancing research IT capabilities.
- **Data as an Enabler:** Federating data governance, democratising analytics, embedding strategic data management, and minimising security risks.



3. 3-Year Roadmap: The strategy will run in parallel to the University strategy with a 3-year roadmap of deliverables. This roadmap positions the University to leverage technology for operational efficiency, academic excellence and research leadership over the next five years.

Key Achievements (2024/2025):

ISS delivered enhancements across the following areas in 2024/25:

- IT Governance
- ISS Operations
- Student Digital Pathways
- IT Security Developments
- Applications and Data
- A sample of these enhancements includes the following:
 - Significant expansion of **WiFi** facilities across the main Campus, enhancing the availability and capacity of WiFi by over 50%. This expansion was focused in the main teaching and learning areas, as well as areas of student congregation, including upgrade of the WiFi infrastructure in the James Hardiman Library and An Bialann restaurant. Alongside these works, a new Guest WiFi Service went live, allowing visitors to the University to readily avail of WiFi services on campus using temporary credentials that can be accessed on a self-service basis. This service is also available to hosts of large groups of visitors, such as for Conferences and Seminars.
 - A new enhanced print service, known as UniPrint, went live providing greatly enhanced printing options and capabilities for staff and students.
 - A major infrastructural upgrade project resulted in an increase in the University's connectivity to the internet from 10 Gigabit per second to 100 Gigabit per second.

- Further investment was made in on-premise data centres and the campus network to increase capacity, resilience and security; this included upgrade of the University network firewalls to provide enhanced protection from cyberthreats.
- There was continuing investment in student PC facilities and software, including the upgrade of student PC Suites to Windows 11.
- Disaster Recovery (DR) testing performed of the network, storage and compute across the two on-campus ISS Data Centres, proving the investment in highly available architecture over recent years, can provide resilience during power outages or other potential incidents
- Policy updates: There were a number of significant policy updates over the year including the Retired/Leavers/Movers policy, the server hosting policy and a new Privileged Access Policy.
- Upgrades to the Quercus student records system were completed during FY 24/25 ensuring the system remains within a supplier supported version, hosted in a secure infrastructure platform and providing priority Business Change requests.
- Enhancements to Exam Paper Management tool, providing efficiencies for exams management
- Enhancements to Exam results processing to improve efficiencies and controls
- Automations of fees processes, saving significant staff time during student registration period
- Provision of University of Galway online Course Catalogue for Enlight Programme
- Provision of Student Engagement data feeds and support for ongoing expansion of Student Engagement reporting
- Design of a new Architectural Framework for University of Galway Data Platform which will provide the foundation for new strategic data management, data integrations and data presentation. The implementation of this new data architecture is a key strategic initiative through 2025/30 to ensure the resilience of key data stores, optimum availability of data to inform decision making and enhance the student experience and delivery of University Strategy.

Public Information and Communication

IMPACT & OPINIONS AND COIS COIRIBE – ACADEMIC YEAR 2024/25

The Content Unit supports the delivery of University of Galway's [Of Galway, For the World Strategy 2025–30](#) by translating the University's research, impact, and expertise into clear, compelling content for diverse audiences. As a university for the public good, we require coordinated, high-quality storytelling that communicates our societal contribution across multiple platforms and formats. Through Impact & Opinions, the University's in-house publishing platform, the Content Unit provides the four Colleges and 19 Schools with a trusted channel to highlight research, innovation, and impact in accessible and engaging ways, ensuring these stories cut through an increasingly crowded communications landscape. Content is delivered across multiple formats, including flagship [articles](#) and [magazines](#), alongside [podcasts](#), [videos](#), speciality series, and curated collections. It also facilitates collegial spirit, supporting stories created outside of the Content Unit, leveraging wider expertise to extend reach and scale impact.

STATS & Performance 2024/25: Impact & Opinions and Cois Coiribe Magazine

Across the Academic Year 2024/25, Content Unit produced and published two Cois Coiribe distinct editions of the alumni magazine. This included the [Winter 24/25 Edition – Innovate Together](#) and the [Summer 25 Edition – In Focus](#) digital magazines.




Each edition leveraged social channel and media exposure, with 27 articles amplified to the magazine’s target readership. The campaigns’ highest achieved Click-Through Rate (CTR) of 0.84% and 0.78% was recorded across Meta and LinkedIn respectively, with a total of 7.8 million impressions on social channels and 3.9 million impressions through display ads, with over 50,000 clicks on one campaign alone.

Articles were campaigned across various news and media outlets, including the Irish Times, the Irish Independent, the Guardian, the Irish Examiner, Breaking News, and Echo Live. Native articles benefitted an audience of 2,275,000 per week, engaging undergraduate, postgrad, business decision-makers, and stakeholders with a 0.61% CTR (exceeding the benchmark more than 4x). Canada (0.78%) and the US (0.74%) delivered the highest CTRs, showing strong engagement. The UK (0.61%) and Ireland (0.53%) remained a core focus and delivered meaningful engagement.

Creative formats across campaigns included multiple ratios and display sizes, with targeting focused on key sectors, including alumni, academics, policymakers, and professionals. From September 2024 to August 2025, the web platform received 82,749 visits (up 19.7% from the previous interval) and 107,116 pageviews (up 11.9% from the previous interval). Top visitor locations were Ireland (40K), the United Kingdom (22K), and the United States (12K). Visits resulted through various channel types, including campaigns (29%), direct entry (24%), websites (23%), and search engines (17%), with organic social accounting for remaining 7%.

Alumni Links e-zine | Cois Coiribe Alumni Magazine

Duration	Recipients	Opens	Clicks
8 - 22 December 2025	41,823	14,253	1,141

<p>The Meta "Youth Informing Health Policy" creative accounted for 62.45% of Innovate Together impressions, with a CTR of 0.50%.</p> 	<p>The English Rory static asset from the In Focus consideration phase delivered 2,628 clicks from 103,747 impressions; it accounted for 42% of Meta link clicks across the campaign.</p> 	<p>The In Focus display campaign delivered 3.9M impressions. It had an overall CTR of 0.61% vs. a KPI of 0.15%, exceeding benchmark more than 4x.</p> 
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WEB PLATFORM SEP 2024 – AUG 2025



Page titles



PAGE TITLE	PAGEVIEWS	UNIQUE PAGEVIEWS
Cois Coiribe Home - Cois Coiribe	27,629	24,127
Cois Coiribe The SH2AMROCK Project – A Galway Solution to a Global Problem - Cois Coiribe	9,480	9,171
Cois Coiribe From Connemara to New South Wales: A Chat with Consul General Rosie Keane - Cois Coiribe	5,522	5,318
Cois Coiribe The Irish Centre for Human Rights – A Beacon for Human Rights - Cois Coiribe	3,942	3,723
Cois Coiribe Cois Coiribe In Focus 2025 - Cois Coiribe	3,011	2,741
Cois Coiribe Defining the Future of Agri-Food: Methane Mitigation Strategies For Ruminants - Cois Coiribe	2,827	2,693
Cois Coiribe Distracted Driving: A Deadly Risk on the Road - Cois Coiribe	2,453	2,290
Cois Coiribe All Boats Rising: An Introduction to the Ryan Institute - Cois Coiribe	2,106	1,985

Country



COUNTRY	VISITS
Ireland	40,099
United Kingdom	22,256
United States	12,035
Canada	1,929
Germany	633

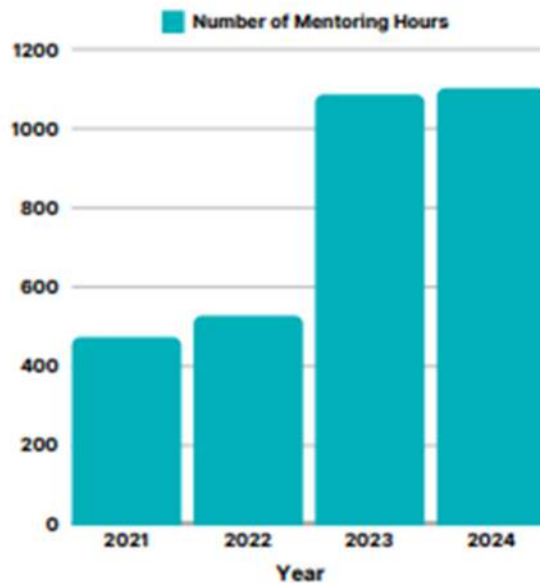
Other Parties Involved in Education and Training

IdeasLab: IdeasLab stands as a vibrant, inclusive hub for innovation and creativity, connecting students across disciplines and supporting entrepreneurial and problem-solving skills development. By extending programmes to second-level students, it fosters the next generation of entrepreneurial thinkers.



Enterprise Partnership: A key enabler of IdeasLab's success lies in its active and expanding engagement with enterprise partners across diverse sectors, including technology, MedTech, corporate services, insurance, regulated industries, and creative fields. It has developed significant collaborations that offer students unique opportunities to solve real-world challenges in tandem with enterprise experts.

Enterprise and Student Mentoring



3190 Mentoring hours from Enterprise to Students 2021-2024

47 Enterprises currently engaged with IdeasLab

Driving Regional Impact and Entrepreneurship: Employment impact assessment for Start100, the first multidisciplinary early stage student incubator programme in the West of Ireland.

Of the 45 participants to date who have completed Start100, 15 are still completing their studies. Seven businesses were created and are currently active employing 29 directly. Start100 incubated businesses have led to 38 employed directly in the Galway region, and 22 employed elsewhere including counties Cork, Meath, Laois, Offaly and Tipperary. Five of these businesses are in high-tech or highly skilled tradable businesses which typically experience more rapid growth scaling.



Global Projects: IdeasLab’s engagement in EU projects offers students unparalleled opportunities to participate in European programmes and gain valuable mobility experience. Through initiatives like EIT Health’s SCI FI, a health and pharma innovation programme addressing real-life challenges; I-Days, which encourages students to create solutions for pressing health issues; and the Women Entrepreneurship Bootcamp, which has collectively helped participants raise over €37 million in funding, IdeasLab equips students and early-stage innovators with critical skills in entrepreneurship, teamwork, and resilience.

Collaborating with an EU consortium that included members of the ENLIGHT European University Alliance on the i2i project, we focus on developing capacity for complex problem-solving, connecting our students to Europe’s broader innovation ecosystem.

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 2024/25 including the [University's Institutional Review of Research Performance 2024](#). Follow ups have also been conducted with units reviewed in 2023/24 to ensure that recommendations from the Quality Review Report have been actioned.

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

Quality Assurance of Research Activities and Programmes

IRRP 2024: IRRP2024 is 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](#). Reviewers will also be asked for comment on the performance of the School, given various staffing and resource profiles, constraints and other environment data taking into particular consideration the impact of Covid-19. Prior to assessment, all Schools will produce (1) research outputs (2) a School research environment report, (3) impact case studies. Quality ratings will be allocated by reviewers based on these three aspects of research performance. [QA004 IRRP2024](#) outlines the policy and procedure proposed by the IRRP Steering Group and approved by Academic Council.

The following panel chairs have been appointed to oversee the three-year process:

IRRP2024 Overall Chairs	
College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies	Prof Tobias Kelly, Edinburgh
College of Business, Public Policy and Law	Prof Joanne Conaghan, Bristol
College of Science and Engineering	Prof David Price, UCL
College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	Prof Jo Rycroft-Malone, Lancaster

Year 1: Eight Panel Chairs were appointed for Year 1:

- 4 Female and 4 Male
- 4 REF and 4 Non-REF

84 Readers assessed the 652 outputs submitted by the schools. The 22 case studies and 6 Research Environment Reports were assessed by the overall and panel chairs.

Review Reports for each of the six Year 1 schools were presented by Overall Chairs and Panel Chairs to relevant Deans and University Management on the 3 April 2025 and action plans have now been agreed.

In accordance with policy, a report will be provided by the Deputy President and Registrar to the University Management Team (UMT) at the end of each year of the three-year review cycle. The information provided in this report will be extracted from the IRRP2024 Review Reports delivered to the participating Schools in the relevant year and will include:

1. Main issues and/or recommendations that may require action by members of UMT
2. Common issues from individual school reports that may be applicable across all schools

This report will also include a response to Comments to University Management provided by Overall Chairs in relation to Year 1 assessments.

Final agreed Review Reports and Action Plans for all six schools were approved by Academic Council in October 2025 and can be viewed [here](#).

Year 2:

Summary of Submission Data:

School:	Computer Science	Education	Engineering	Psychology	Nursing & Midwifery	Law	Total
FTE Number of Permanent & Fixed Term Lecturing Staff contracted to do research	33	24	56	28	17	30	188
Research Outputs	99	72	167	84	51	91	564
Research Impact Case Studies	3	2	6	3	2	3	19

Submissions were completed by Year 2 schools on the 20th June 2025.

Each research output will be assessed by two readers and each impact case study and research environment report will be assessed by the panel chair and overall chair. Assessments will be carried by over 50 readers between October and February/March. Final review reports will be presented to University Management at an in person IRRP Advisory Meeting in April 2026. The meeting will be attended by 4 Overall Chairs, Year 2 Panel Chairs and incoming Year 3 Panel Chairs.

Year 3:

Year 3 schools are at the early stages of the process with a submission date of June 19th 2026. It was agreed by the Steering Group, in consultation with Head of School, that Shannon College of Hotel Management could not be reviewed under the IRRP2024 policy for reasons including its structures and high practice-based teaching workloads. The School is to develop a School Research Strategy with support from the Dean of the College of Business, Public Policy and Law.

Research Information Management System (RIMS): Significant progress has been made in the implementation of a new Research Information Management System at University of Galway. The system, now referred to as CRIS (**Current Research Information System (CRIS)**) consists of two core elements 1) a Research Information System and 2) an Award Management System.

The first CRIS element was successfully launched in Quarter 1 2025, it is designed to capture and presents (to internal and external audiences) the totality of our research activities, outputs/impacts and collaborations. It provides a comprehensive platform that allows us to efficiently manage and display our research activities, while providing insights and valuable reporting. It consolidates data on individual and organisational (including College, School and research unit level) research profiles, publications, awards, and more into a single, user-friendly portal.

Work is underway since Quarter 3 2025 on the second element - the Award Management System to manage research funding awards through the procedures of the university from identifying and presenting funding opportunities; to a workflow that records funding proposals and facilitates a system of internal review and approval (financial and technical) for submission; to post award project kick-off, execution and closure. We are working to a timeline of Quarter 3 2026 for an initial launch of the CRIS Award Management System, with full implementation anticipated late 2027 at the earliest. Full implementation includes functionality in particular finance that is dependent on integration with other IT systems that are currently undergoing upgrades.

Research Process Improvement Project (RPI): Phase 2 of the RPI project has now concluded, delivering process improvements across four key areas: Research Recruitment (post-proposal recruitment), Procurement (new supplier set-ups), Project Initiation (monthly clinics for grant awardees), and Research Directories (clarifying points of contact across professional services for research support).

Phase 3 is underway, with several workstreams already in progress, including Research Expenses, Research Data Storage, and the next phase of Research Recruitment. Additional workstreams were initiated in December 2025, with activity continuing into the new year: Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs), Ethics Approval, Health and Safety, Research Project Management, and Researcher Pay Scales.

The findings from RPI Phase 1 will be integrated with the emerging Research and Innovations Strategy, and a Communications Plan for RPI will be rolled out to the University community.

In parallel with these workstreams—and in alignment with the priority initiatives of the new University Strategic Plan—a pilot project will begin in the New Year to develop an AI-enabled integration layer. This pilot will initially connect the CRIS (Current Research Information System) into the Microsoft Azure Platform, followed by HR and Finance systems, enabling the automation of workflows and reporting across currently manual research support processes.

AERO (Academic Engagement Reputation Outreach) Pilot Project: A pilot project called AERO – Academic Engagement, Reputation and Outreach – which aims to strengthen and elevate the visibility of our research on the global stage has commenced. It directly supports our commitment to delivering Distinctive Research Impact coalescing around our four University of Galway research pillars launched this year: Innovation for Health, Creativity, Culture & Society, Sustainable & Resilient Environments: Earth & Ocean, Transformative Data & AI. The AERO project aims to enhance our academic profile and reputation with academic audiences around the world, helping us to connect and communicate our research strengths to key audiences. Other institutions using the AERO model have seen very real benefits, including increased citations, new collaborations, invited talks, and improved visibility with academic stakeholders.

Using the latest research-ranking data and ensuring representation across Colleges and Research Institutes, we are currently working with a small group of colleagues to:

- Map key academic audiences and potential collaborators worldwide
- Amplify research case studies, expertise, and news through priority channels
- Identify media opportunities aligned to our strengths
- Highlight or secure conference, networking, and speaking opportunities

A small number of research areas have been selected for the pilot, with a view to enhancing the approach for a broader rollout next year.

Graduate Studies Board: The Graduate Studies Board (GSB) highlighted the following enhancements in its annual report:

- Uplift in stipends to €25k approved for internal scholarship holders
- Increased budget allocation to support centrally funded Hardiman Scholarship stipends
- Removal of non-structured PhD options from marketing, recruitment and admissions processes
- Amalgamation of ‘Approval for Examination’ (EOG021) and ‘library submission’ forms (EOG051) into one version applicable to all PGRs, and update of EOG021 to track theses submission by monograph or by article
- Introduction of CV templates for colleges to consider appointment of external examiners and external co-supervisors
- Implementation of visiting research student approval and registration process
- Introduction of Research Masters International Merit Scholarship
- Approval of Enlight Framework for Joint PhDs
- Arrangements for the completion of the University of Galway accredited PhD (Home Economics) at the former St Angela’s College [ATU].
- Approval that PhD supervisors who have not yet supervised a PhD to successful completion are required to attend supervisory training during, or prior to, their first year of supervising
- **National Student Survey for PGR Students in 2025:** The biennial National Survey of PGR students was implemented in 2025 with a national report, University of Galway report, and College/School action plans developed. University of Galway had the highest survey completion rate of 59%.
- **Graduate Studies Office:**
 - Hosted MA *Thèse en 180 secondes* at University of Galway in May 2025, an annual event organised by the IUA and French Embassy
 - Won a bid to host the European University Alliance-Council for Doctoral Education Annual Meeting in Galway in June 2026
 - Led on development and setting of university wide KPI for new entrant doctoral students for 2030/2031, as part of University of Galway Strategic Plan 2025-2030
- **Other initiatives for PGR students during 2025**
 - An allocation, lottery-based, of on-campus beds made available to international PGR students for the first time in summer 2025
 - Arranged a summer ‘re-orientation’ barbeque for continuing PGR students in August 2025.

The GSB carried out an Annual Review of Postgraduate Research Programmes with each college for AY 2024/25. The reviews included discussion of PhD completion rates, External Examiners, Doctoral Conferrals and IRC/Research Ireland GOIPG Awards, PGR survey and action plans and engagement with the Researcher Development Centre.

Third-mission activities, societal and community engagement

Launch of Innovative New Courses for School Pupils

In January 2025, the University of Galway introduced innovative courses for school pupils, designed to enhance Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths (STEM) education and encourage early engagement with higher learning. The courses offer hands-on experiences in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, aiming to inspire the next generation of researchers and professionals. This initiative supports SDG 4 (Quality Education), which seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. By providing these opportunities, the university contributes to building a skilled and knowledgeable workforce.

€4m charitable investment in breast cancer research launched

The announcement of a €4 million charitable investment in breast cancer research at University of Galway will support pioneering studies aimed at improving outcomes for breast cancer patients through earlier detection, innovative treatments, and personalised care. This investment reflects the University's commitment to advancing medical research that addresses critical public health challenges, working in partnership with charities, clinicians, and patients. The initiative highlights the power of research-driven innovation in tackling non-communicable diseases and improving wellbeing.

University of Galway awarded Smarter Travel Mark

University of Galway has been awarded the Smarter Travel Mark by the National Transport Authority. The award recognises the University's significant progress in promoting sustainable travel initiatives on campus. University staff and students accepted the award at an event during Bike Week 2025. The award recognises the University's commitment to reducing its transport-related carbon footprint through active travel initiatives, sustainable commuting plans, and community engagement. By encouraging cycling, walking, and public transport use, the University is helping create a healthier, more sustainable urban environment for students, staff, and the wider Galway community. This success highlights how integrated travel planning and infrastructure improvements can support climate goals, air quality, and wellbeing, contributing to more live-able and resilient cities.

Sensory-Friendly Santa's Grotto Brings Christmas Magic to Children and Their Families

In December 2024, the University of Galway organised a sensory-friendly Santa's Grotto, providing an inclusive holiday experience for children and families, particularly those with sensory sensitivities. The event featured adapted lighting, sounds, and interactive activities to ensure comfort and enjoyment for all participants. By creating accessible and inclusive events, the university fosters a sense of belonging and community among diverse populations.

Celebrating Irish Traveller History & Culture

University of Galway launched the Mincéirs Archives, a comprehensive collection dedicated to preserving and celebrating the history and culture of the Irish Traveller community. This initiative focuses on the transformative period from the 1960s onwards, highlighting the community's experiences amid Ireland's social, economic, and cultural changes, as well as the emergence of the Traveller rights movement both nationally and across Europe. The archive encompasses materials related to Traveller human rights, education, employment, accommodation, music, folklore, and photographs, providing a rich resource for understanding the community's diverse experiences. Notably, it includes official documents such as the 1963 Report of the Commission on Itinerancy and records from various Traveller advocacy organisations. The Mincéirs Archives aim to integrate Traveller

history and culture into the University's teaching, learning, and research activities, promoting greater understanding and respect.

Partnership with Galway Science & Technology Festival

The University of Galway has partnered with the Galway Science & Technology Festival to promote STEM education and inspire future generations of scientists and engineers. The festival, which includes interactive exhibits, workshops, and expert talks, aims to engage students, families, and the public in hands-on scientific discovery. Through this partnership, the university is reinforcing its commitment to making STEM education more accessible and engaging for young learners. By fostering curiosity and innovation, the initiative encourages more students to consider careers in science and technology.

University of Galway Launches Nelson Mandela Fund

In March 2025, the University of Galway introduced the Nelson Mandela Fund to honour the legacy of the renowned South African leader. This initiative aims to support students from underrepresented backgrounds, particularly those from the Global South, by providing scholarships and fostering educational opportunities. By promoting inclusivity and diversity within the academic community, the fund seeks to empower individuals who might otherwise face barriers to higher education.

Internationalisation

Key Internationalisation Initiatives 2024/25

In line with the University's new Strategic Plan, Of Galway for the World, launched in May 2025, significant progress was made during 2024/25 in advancing the University's internationalisation objectives. A new Global Strategy is now being developed to ensure alignment with the refreshed institutional vision and priorities.

Strengthening Global Engagement and Partnerships

The University intensified its international engagement by leading cross-disciplinary delegations to Vietnam and Hong Kong (November 2024), Canada (November 2024) and Indonesia (April 2025), aimed at scoping collaboration opportunities across education, mobility and research. In addition, 26 incoming visits from overseas partners were hosted on campus over the duration of the academic year. As a result of sustained engagement, 76 partnership pathways are currently in development, with six completed in time for the 2025/26 recruitment cycle.

In June 2025, the Global Recruitment Team also hosted an agent conference welcoming 24 international education agents, showcasing the University and strengthening relationships with key influencers in applicant decision-making.

Recognition for Erasmus and Digital Mobility

Global Galway's Erasmus Programme was selected as a European Student Card Initiative (ESCI) Champion in recognition of significant progress in implementing Erasmus Without Paper (EWP). This designation reflects the University of Galway's commitment to sustainable, efficient and student-centred mobility, with all inter-institutional agreements now transitioning to a fully digital format. As an ESCI Champion, the University will contribute to European-level workshops and collaborative initiatives, helping to shape the future development of EWP.

Quality Assurance and External Validation

The University received a positive outcome from its TrustEd Quality Mark review, providing external validation of the robustness of institutional standards, processes and compliance in the area of international education. This outcome reinforces confidence in the University's governance, student support structures and quality assurance mechanisms.

Growth in Applications and Market Diversification

The 2024/25 recruitment cycle saw strong growth in international demand, with applications increasing by between 15% and 46% across Africa, North America, the Middle East, Latin America, South East Asia and South Asia. This reflects the impact of targeted market engagement, strengthened partnerships and enhanced applicant support.

Expansion of English Language Centre Activity and Academic Collaboration

The English Language Centre (ELC) continued to support strategic international initiatives, welcoming 15 junior Indonesian academics to campus as part of a seven-week Bridging Programme linked to a four-year funded PhD scholarship scheme sponsored by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia (DIKTI).

Collectively, these developments demonstrate sustained progress in embedding internationalisation across institutional priorities. The development of a new Global Strategy will now build on this momentum and provide a clear framework for the next phase of the University's global engagement.

ENLIGHT Funded Projects: In November 2025 University of Galway were awarded 25 funded projects with ENLIGHT partners. These projects are feeding into our strategic pillars of education and research by delivering innovative international education initiatives and seeding research collaborations which will seek to apply for external funding.

These funded projects involve University of Galway academics working with their counterparts and external stakeholders in ten countries on areas linked to our key research pillars of Innovation for Health, Creativity, Culture and Society, Transformative Data and AI and Sustainable and Resilient Environments. These projects cover diverse topics such as Multilingualism, Accessible AI Transformation, Migration, Neurotherapies, Pain and Cancer Research and developing Hydrogen Ecosystems.

Short Term Mobilities and Joint Programmes

Many short-term innovative programmes are currently being advertised to University of Galway students. Students can attend modules in ENLIGHT partners and visiting students can be hosted by ENLIGHT partners. Processes to enable short term exchange lifecycle should be incorporated into the universities current processes to enable this to upscale, linked to our HEA compact metrics. The mobility team are working with the relevant units to establish a process for the issuing of transcripts to ENLIGHT partners for these activities. Our recent successes in the ENLIGHT calls outlined above will result in a significant upscaling of these activities. We have 43 students enrolled for short term mobilities on 13 modules being offered across the alliance in the current academic year.

Four of the funded projects are focused on building joint programmes with ENLIGHT institutions at master's level. Joint programmes were prioritised in the ENLIGHT funding calls as transnational joint degrees are a key

deliverable of the European University Initiative. University of Galway need to review our regulations and guidelines around joint programmes to ensure that we can facilitate recently funded joint programme activity with our partners. The Global Committee will be a key support for these activities and intend to establish a sub-group of key stakeholders to review our institutional approach.

ENLIGHT University System

ENLIGHT partners universities have drafted AISBL legal statutes to enable the alliance to operate as a single entity rather than ten partner universities. Once this has been established this will form the basis for an alliance cooperation agreement that will enable the sustainability of the alliance into the future beyond the current funded period. Legal officers are also working on an alliance cooperation agreement which will outline agreed alliance activities that could be sustained beyond EU funding.

ENLIGHT Teaching and Learning Conference and Awards, Uppsala 2025

The ENLIGHT Teaching and Learning Conference was held in Uppsala in October 2025 on the theme of 'Playfulness for the Future of Higher Education'. University of Galway had a delegation of 30 including staff and students in partnership with the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. Some of the topics presented examine the sustainability and quality considerations for international education cooperation.

The call for papers for the 2026 ENLIGHT T&L conference has recently opened, and the conference will take place in Bern in 2026.

Integration of UN sustainable development goals (SDG)

Over the past year, the University of Galway has made significant strides in advancing its sustainability ambitions, underpinned by the launch of our new Strategic Plan 2025–2030, which places the SDGs at the heart of the University's mission.

University of Galway was ranked Ireland's top university for sustainable development for the fourth consecutive year, and among the top three in the EU, in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2025. The rankings assessed 2,526 universities from 130 countries on progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with participation up 65% on last year, making this recognition even more significant. Among the highlights: top 50 globally for SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption), SDG 3 (Good Health), and SDG 17 (Partnerships); top 75 for SDG 6 (Clean Water) and SDG 14 (Life Below Water). Our green campus initiatives, biodiversity enhancements, certified green labs, and halving of greenhouse gas emissions since 2016 showcase our leadership in creating a sustainable future.

University of Galway hosts second annual SDG Week

The University of Galway hosted its second annual Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Week from September 16th to 21st, underscoring our dedication to global sustainability. The event featured a variety of student and staff-led activities, including guided walks along the University's biodiversity and SDG trails, seminars, roundtable discussions, poster presentations, a second-hand clothing sale, and a quiz night. A notable highlight was the panel discussion titled "Engineering a Sustainable Transport System for Galway and the West Region," which addressed traffic congestion and featured engineering experts discussing topics such as the Galway City Transport Strategy, Very Light Rail, and the Galway to Oughterard Greenway. Deputy President & Registrar,

Professor Becky Whay, emphasised the University's role as Ireland's leading institution for sustainability and its designation as a national SDG Ambassador. The week also included a talk by Professor Leon Tikly from the University of Bristol on decolonising higher education. Additionally, the University launched its Annual Sustainability Report for 2023/24, highlighting contributions toward advancing the SDGs. This initiative aligns with SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 13 (Climate Action), reflecting the University's commitment to promoting education, sustainable urban development, and environmental stewardship.

Launch of the Sustainability Champion Digital Badge

The University of Galway has launched the Sustainability Champion Digital Badge as part of its University Skills Passport (USP) initiative, which recognises extracurricular and co-curricular learning and leadership skills developed by students. This credential is awarded to students who complete a structured programme combining sustainability learning, action, and advocacy. For example, participants attend a sustainability orientation session, contribute to sustainability-focused working groups, take part in practical initiatives such as reducing waste, promoting energy efficiency, or supporting biodiversity and complete a reflection on their impact. The badge acknowledges personal growth in leadership, systems thinking, and project management, while contributing to the University's wider environmental and social goals. In June 2025, nine exceptional students were awarded the badge in recognition of their dedication and tangible contributions to fostering a more sustainable campus. Designed to be digital and shareable, the badge enhances students' profiles on LinkedIn, CVs, and portfolios, showcasing their alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the University's leadership in campus-wide sustainability transformation.

Other key achievements include:

- Established the Institute for Health Discovery and Innovation, driving cutting edge health research aligned with SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing)
- Launched the Sustainability Engagement Fund to empower student and staff projects advancing SDGs 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and 14 (Life Below Water).
- Secured the Smarter Travel Mark, recognising leadership in sustainable transport.
- Achieved the An Taisce Green Campus Flag for a sixth theme (green labs)
- Created a Pocket Forest on campus to boost biodiversity, support carbon sequestration, and provide a living sustainability lab.
- Signed the Durham Declaration on Earth Day 2025, reinforcing our commitment to climate leadership.
- Launched the Sustainability Champion Digital Badge empowering students and staff to actively lead sustainable change across campus and beyond.
- Co-hosted the 2025 Climate and Nature Conference with the Mary Robinson Centre, advancing action on SDG 13 (Climate Action).
- Celebrated 10 years of sustainability leadership through our Community and University Sustainability Partnership (CUSP), established in 2015 alongside the launch of the UN SDG framework

2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

The initiatives outlined below were driven by a shared commitment to strengthening academic integrity through improved detection of misconduct, heightened awareness, and more resilient assessment design. Over the course of the year, the Academic Integrity Office collaborated with internal and external partners, including the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), the Disability Support Service (DSS), the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN), and other higher education institutions, to advance policy and practice. Key stakeholders included learners, academic and professional staff, and sectoral partners. These efforts resulted in the creation of new resources, broader engagement through presentations and training, and enhanced systems for data collection and reporting.

Overview of Initiatives

Assessment Design Improvements:

- **Updated Guidance on GenAI Use:** Published revised sample statements on Generative AI use and guidance for staff on procedures to follow in suspected cases of unauthorised GenAI use (21/01/25).
- **Workshops on GenAI & Assessment:** Delivered multiple workshops across constituent Colleges between January and February 2025, with attendance ranging from 39 to 102 participants and recordings circulated for wider reach.
- **Collaborative Discussions:** Met with Heads of School (June 2025) to discuss authentic assessment and plan for implementing Epigeum Academic Integrity learner training module in AY25/26.

Impetus: To improve assessment robustness and clarify expectations around AI use.
Evidence of Effectiveness: High attendance at workshops; follow-up engagement with Schools; adoption of updated statements on staff resource pages.

Awareness Campaigns:

- **Academic Integrity Week** (Oct 2024): Included webinars, learner discussion events, and a TikTok competition.
- **Presentations and Talks:** Delivered sessions to CELT Seminar Series, School forums, and orientation for visiting learners (~350 attendees).
- **External Engagement:** Presented papers at national and international conferences (CCT Dublin, Limerick, King's College London) and participated in QAA Quality Insights panel (Feb 2025, 1,100 registered delegates).

Impetus: To raise awareness among staff and learners and promote preventative measures.
Evidence of Effectiveness: Attendance metrics; engagement with external audiences; increased visibility of academic integrity in university communications.

Staff Upskilling:

- **Training for AIAs:** Held start-of-year briefing (Sept 2024), Courageous Conversations training (Sept 2024), and refresher sessions (April 2025).
- **Appeals Process Training:** Delivered to Executive Deans (Sept 2024), with recordings and slides circulated.
- **Integration into Staff Development:** Collaborating with DSS, contributed academic integrity content to monthly staff training module on supporting learners with disabilities (Nov 2024).

- **Staff Academic Integrity training:** Soft launch of Epigeum Academic Integrity staff training module in early 2025. Formal promotion to follow in AY25/26.

Impetus: To ensure consistent application of policy and confidence in handling misconduct cases and appeals. Evidence of Effectiveness: Attendance records; positive feedback from CELT seminars; integration into institutional training modules.

Learner Support and Training:

- **Epigeum Training Course Rollout Preparation:** Engaged with Heads of School and Programme Directors to plan implementation for all learners in AY25/26. Delivered multiple training sessions and published guidance document for staff on using the module (March 2025).
- **Learner-Facing Events:** Orientation presentations and Academic Integrity Week activities.
- **Policy Accessibility:** Irish-language version of academic integrity policy published on the university website (Sep 2024).

Impetus: To provide clear guidance and resources for learners on academic integrity obligations. Evidence of Effectiveness: Preparatory work for full rollout of formal academic integrity training course; engagement with programme leadership; orientation reach.

Data Collection:

- **Case Review & AIA Survey:** Completed annual review of academic misconduct cases and completed survey of AIAs to gather information on their experiences in the role during AY24/25. Continued progress on developing permanent Academic Misconduct Register system.

Impetus: To monitor and evaluate university-wide compliance with academic integrity policy and procedures; to develop more efficient and sustainable misconduct record management system. Evidence of Effectiveness: Annual review approved by Teaching and Learning Committee; review process uncovered aspects of policy that require updating during AY25/26.

Technological Investments:

- **CaraBot Integration:** Trained, tested, and deployed university chatbot on Academic Integrity website (Oct 2024) to provide instant answers to staff and learner queries.

Impetus: To improve accessibility of information and reduce response times. Evidence of Effectiveness: To date, relatively limited learner engagement with academic integrity queries via Cara: up to 300 queries relating to academic integrity during AY24/25.

National and International Engagement:

- **NAIN Participation:** Attended plenaries throughout the year; AIO appointed Deputy Chair of NAIN (June 2025) and member of Steering Committee (May 2025).
- **Policy Leadership:** AIO appointed to HEA Advisory Group on Generative AI in Teaching and Learning (Jan 2025).
- **Conference Contributions:** Delivered invited talks nationally and internationally (HEA Teaching & Learning Conference, Dec 2024; Guernsey Institute, May 2025).

Impetus: To align with sector best practice and influence policy development. Evidence of Effectiveness: Leadership roles in NAIN; invitations to national advisory groups; dissemination of University of Galway practices at sector events.

Additional Considerations

Information Dissemination:

- Dissemination: Academic integrity updates were shared via AIA network, College Vice-Deans, CELT SharePoint, Teaching & Learning Forum Teams group, and university web and social channels. Recordings and slides from training sessions were circulated widely.

Actions Based on Regulatory Updates:

- Regulatory Updates: No direct actions arising, but revisions to appeals documentation (Sept 2024), updates to GenAI guidance (Jan 2025), and other actions detailed above are in response to the broad landscape of academic integrity, which is also reflected in QQI regulatory updates.

Incorporation of External Resources:

- External Resources: Resources from NAIN (Guidelines, Principles, Lexicon) were consistently referenced in policy updates and training materials.

Learner Support Resources:

- Support for Learners: Resources included guidance documents, online training course (Epigeum), and orientation sessions. DSS collaboration ensured accessibility for learners using assistive technologies.

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>
	Strategy implementation including Educational Excellence Strategy	<p>College Strategies & Business Planning: Each of our four Colleges will publish College-level strategies identifying where and how they will contribute to achieving our collective vision for the University. Implementation of these actions will be monitored over time through the Colleges rolling five-year business plans, and School and Research Institute annual operational plans.</p> <p>Thematic Strategies: Our Professional Services will publish a series of thematic strategies on major university activities - e.g. Educational Excellence Strategy, Research & Innovation Strategy, Internationalisation Strategy, Student Success Strategy, Sustainability Strategy - with further details on how we will achieve our stated actions.</p> <p>The Educational Excellence Strategy will support quality enhancement and the achievement of strategic objectives. The strategy is being developed through a structured, evidence-informed and consultative process, incorporating analysis of the national and European teaching and learning landscape, including current and emerging policy, pedagogical, and regulatory priorities. A comprehensive mapping exercise has been completed to align the new strategy with the University's overarching strategy (2025 - 2030), the previous Academic Strategy (2021 - 2026), and commitments under the HEA Performance Agreement (2024 - 2028). Key internal stakeholders were identified early, with initial consultations informing the design of a series of facilitated focus groups led by an expert in strategy with a professional</p>

		<p>background in Higher Education (HE). These focus groups were deliberately and consciously structured to ensure diversity of role, experience, and perspective; and included representation from Heads of School, Vice Deans for Teaching and Learning, Professional Service Units (including Library, IT / Technology, Careers, Irish Language Office), Centre for Adult Learning and Professional Development, Recognition of Prior Learning, Centre for Excellence in Learning & Teaching, Academic Integrity and the Students' Union. Where attendance was not possible, targeted follow-up engagement was facilitated. Separate facilitated focus groups were also conducted with students, identified in partnership with the Students' Union, to ensure representation across all Colleges and levels (undergraduate, postgraduate, mature, and part-time/hybrid), a particular focus was including students who contested representative roles where possible, to ensure wider representation of the student perspective. An additional facilitated focus group with senior stakeholders was held to ensure alignment and identify points of intersection with cross-cutting strategies such as Sustainability, Research, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), and Quality. Supporting interviews and consultations are continuing to explore emerging thematic areas (e.g. oral assessment as a response to the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in assessment) and an additional session with Graduate Studies and the Researcher Development Centre (RDC) is scheduled to further consider PhD and Postgraduate Taught (PGT) students as part of this strategy development. Following from the completion of most focus groups and sessions by the third week of January, outputs have been coded and analysed to identify and validate key themes, informing the initial draft of the strategy, which was completed in early February. The draft is progressing through engagement with The Governing Authority - Standing, Strategic Planning and Governance Committee, the Teaching and Learning Committee, Academic Council and UMT for feedback, refinement and ratification prior to publication.</p>
	Library	<p>Learning Commons Project: This project is progressing according to programme and remains on target to open in Summer 2027. The Library and Learning Commons will provide quality spaces for individual study as well as collaborative spaces that will enable group work, collaboration and meetings across disciplines. The Makerspace, Digital Scholarship Centre</p>

		<p>and Recording Studio will mean students and researchers can design, create, and make, enabling the development of innovation and creativity skills. These facilities will also enable new ways of assessing student learning, e.g. podcast and video creation or product prototyping. Access to print and online information resources will be provided in the Library and Learning Commons and students will be exposed to cultural and heritage resources and archives through an exhibition area. Expert staff will be available to support students with all aspects of their learning journey. A Learning Success Hub will provide one-to-one support and a training room will enable the delivery of workshops for the development of academic, digital and creative skills. The building will be accessible throughout and will include a low-sensory study space as well as an Assistive Technology Centre.</p>
	IRRP	<p>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 5 schools will be assessed in 2025/26:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. School of Natural Sciences 2. School of Languages, Literature and Culture 3. School of Medicine 4. School of Maths and Statistical Sciences 5. School of Political Science and Sociology
	AERO	<p>AERO (Academic Engagement Reputation Outreach) Pilot Project: A pilot project called AERO – Academic Engagement, Reputation and Outreach – which aims to strengthen and elevate the visibility of our research on the global stage has commenced. It directly supports our commitment to delivering Distinctive Research Impact coalescing around our four University of Galway research pillars launched this year: Innovation for Health, Creativity, Culture & Society, Sustainable & Resilient Environments: Earth & Ocean, Transformative Data & AI. The AERO project aims to enhance our academic profile and reputation with academic audiences around the world, helping us to connect and communicate our research strengths to key</p>

		<p>audiences. Other institutions using the AERO model have seen very real benefits, including increased citations, new collaborations, invited talks, and improved visibility with academic stakeholders.</p> <p>Using the latest research-ranking data and ensuring representation across Colleges and Research Institutes, we are currently working with a small group of colleagues to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Map key academic audiences and potential collaborators worldwide• Amplify research case studies, expertise, and news through priority channels• Identify media opportunities aligned to our strengths• Highlight or secure conference, networking, and speaking opportunities <p>A small number of research areas have been selected for the pilot, with a view to enhancing the approach for a broader rollout next year.</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 Languages, Literatures & Cultures	June 2026 – April 2027	2018
School of Math & Stat Science	June 2026 – April 2027	2018
School of Medicine	June 2026 – April 2027	2018
School of Natural Sciences	June 2026 – April 2027	2018
School of Political Science & Sociology	June 2026 – April 2027	2018
Building and Estates	March 2026	2019
HR	March 2026	2019
Global Galway	March 2026	2019

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

From Experimentation to Formal Embedding: Empathy at Scale and Depth in the University of Galway

Starting Point: Co-Curricular Innovation as a Deliberate Choice

Over time, the Empathy Studio has evolved from a deliberately co-curricular space of experimentation into a formally embedded component of the University's accredited curriculum. This progression reflects sustained institutional learning, evaluation, and demand, and marks a point at which empathy education now demonstrates both depth of learning and scale of impact across the University.. What began as deliberately co-curricular experimentation has now translated into formal, accredited curricular provision, demonstrating both depth of learning and scale of impact across the University.

As of Academic Year 2025/26, empathy is formally embedded across all accredited entrepreneurship and innovation modules delivered through University of Galway IdeasLab, representing five modules in total. Within each module, empathy is articulated explicitly within learning outcomes, practiced through immersive and reflexive pedagogy, and assessed within approved curricular and quality assurance frameworks. These modules typically enrol cohorts of up to 25 students, enabling intensive, small-group engagement that supports deep reflection, ethical awareness, and human-centred innovation practice.

This depth-oriented model is complemented by a significant expansion in scale through the School of Medicine, where empathy education constitutes the largest pedagogical component of a core 10-credit module enrolling 109 students. This module was first delivered in AY 2025/26 following a formal curriculum redesign within the School of Medicine. The redesign was directly informed by insights, evaluation evidence, and pedagogical approaches developed through earlier Empathy Studio co-curricular and pilot activity.

The medical curriculum represents a qualitative shift in the institutional positioning of empathy. Rather than being an adjunct or optional enhancement, empathy is now a central, assessed learning capability within a high-enrolment core curriculum, governed through College-level approval processes, aligned with the University's Marks and Standards, and subject to external examination. Governance structures developed during the co-curricular phase, including Patient and Public Involvement, were intentionally retained and strengthened to ensure ethical integrity and authenticity in the representation of lived experience.

Taken together, this configuration demonstrates a dual achievement:

- Depth, through small-cohort entrepreneurship and innovation modules that enable immersive, reflective, and highly scaffolded learning.
- Scale, through the integration of empathy as a core pedagogical pillar within a large, accredited medical programme reaching over 100 students in its first delivery.

This transition marks a clear point of progression from the original QQI submission. Empathy is no longer explored at the margins of the student experience, nor confined to pilot activity or optional engagement.

It is now a recognised, assessed, and quality-assured component of the University's accredited learning ecosystem, supported by robust evaluation, governance, and continuous quality enhancement.

Learning from Practice: Evidence, Demand and Institutional Insight

As the Empathy Studio matured, two interconnected insights emerged. First, evaluation data and reflective outputs consistently indicated that students were developing empathy in meaningful and articulate ways. Students began to describe empathy not as an innate disposition, but as a capability that shaped how they approached professional judgement, ethical decision-making and innovation.

Second, the optional nature of co-curricular provision increasingly surfaced questions of access, equity and recognition. Students were engaging deeply with complex learning, yet this development was not formally credited within their academic progression. At the same time, academic colleagues began to recognise the pedagogical and professional value of this work and to question whether empathy education should remain peripheral to the curriculum.

These insights marked a turning point. Rather than asking whether empathy could be embedded within curricula, the question became how to do so without losing the experiential richness, ethical grounding and responsiveness that characterised the co-curricular work.

Designing a Pathway: From Co-Curricular to Curricular

The transition from co-curricular to curricular provision was approached as a progressive and scaffolded process, rather than a simple transfer. The Empathy Studio began to redesign selected co-curricular programmes using curricular principles: learning outcomes were made explicit, reflective assessment was formalised, and evaluation frameworks were strengthened.

This intermediate phase created a bridge between innovation and accreditation. It ensured that empathy-based learning could meet the expectations of formal curricula while retaining its immersive and human-centred ethos. Importantly, it also allowed academic and professional staff to build shared understanding and confidence around assessment, governance and quality assurance.

This progression reflects a key learning from the first QQI submission: that co-curricular innovation and curricular provision should not be treated as separate domains, but as part of a connected learning ecosystem.

Curricular Embedding: From Pilot to Programme

The most visible outcome of this progression is the integration of empathy as a core learning outcome within accredited curricular modules, most notably within the School of Medicine. Insights gained through earlier co-curricular pilots—particularly those involving lived experience—were translated into formal modules governed through College-level approval processes and aligned with the University's Marks and Standards.

Within these modules, empathy is articulated explicitly, practiced through immersive and reflexive pedagogy, and assessed using validated instruments alongside reflective work. Governance structures developed during the co-curricular phase, including Patient and Public Involvement, were retained and strengthened, ensuring ethical integrity and authenticity in the representation of lived experience.

This stage represents a qualitative shift from the original submission. Empathy is no longer explored at the margins of the student experience, but embedded within the core curriculum, with full academic oversight and external examination.

Quality Assurance as Enabler, Not Constraint

Across this evolution, quality assurance has functioned as an enabler rather than a constraint. Curricular modules are fully aligned with QQI requirements and University governance structures, while co-curricular provision continues to operate with clear learning outcomes and evaluation frameworks.

Evaluation has played a critical role in enabling this transition. Pre- and post-engagement measurement, combined with structured reflexivity, has provided the evidence base required to support curricular embedding and quality enhancement. This continuity of evaluation across co-curricular and curricular spaces reflects a maturing institutional approach to innovation and learning.

Evaluation, Evidence and Learning

Evaluation has been a defining feature of the Empathy Studio's development and has played a central role in its transition from co-curricular innovation to accredited curricular provision. From the outset, empathy was treated not as an assumed outcome, but as a capability that required evidence, reflection and ongoing interrogation.

1. Measuring Empathy Development

Across both co-curricular and curricular provision, empathy development has been evaluated using a combination of validated instruments and qualitative insight. In the accredited medical education modules, the Jefferson Scale of Empathy has been embedded as a pre- and post-module measure, providing a consistent and recognised means of assessing changes in students' empathic orientation.

Analysis of cohort-level data (N = 98 pre and post) indicates a positive directional shift in self-reported empathy over the duration of the module. While the scale captures perceived empathy rather than behavioural enactment, the pattern of results provides indicative evidence that empathy can be intentionally supported through structured, immersive and reflexive learning. Importantly, the scale has functioned not as a summative judgement, but as a developmental tool—informing curriculum design, facilitation approaches and quality enhancement.

“These sessions reminded me that medicine is as much about listening as it is about treating. Understanding a patient’s story can often reveal far more than a list of clinical symptoms ever could, and it reshaped how I now think about what good care actually means.” Student quote 2025/26 Cohort)

2. The Role of Reflexivity as Evidence

Quantitative measurement has been intentionally complemented by structured reflexive practice. Reflexivity has been embedded across programmes through guided reflective writing, facilitated discussion and debrief sessions following immersive experiences. These reflective spaces have consistently surfaced insights that could not be captured through measurement alone.

Students frequently articulated shifts in how they understood lived experience, professional responsibility and ethical complexity. Many reflections moved beyond emotional reaction toward critical examination of assumptions, positionality and the limits of technical or clinical perspectives. This depth of engagement was particularly evident following lived-experience-led activities, where students were required to reconcile theoretical knowledge with the realities of daily life and long-term conditions.

“I assumed most people’s experience of diabetes was similar, which in hindsight was naïve. Listening to each patient’s individual story made me realise that treating the disease is not the same as treating the person, and that my role as a future doctor must adapt to that difference.” Student quote 2025/26 Cohort)

3. Learning from Feedback and Iteration

Reflexive feedback has also played a critical role in shaping programme design. Student insights have informed decisions around facilitation, pacing, emotional support and scaffolding of immersive experiences. In several instances, reflective feedback highlighted the importance of structured debriefing to support students in processing complex or emotionally charged experiences responsibly.

“Patients may not remember every piece of medical advice, but they will never forget the way a doctor made them feel. The structured reflection and debriefing helped me understand how crucial communication and empathy are in shaping whether patients stay engaged with their care.” Student quote 2025/26 Cohort)

This iterative use of evaluation evidence has strengthened both co-curricular and curricular provision, ensuring that empathy education remains ethically grounded, pedagogically sound and responsive to learner experience.

Evaluation as a Driver of Quality Enhancement

Taken together, quantitative measurement and reflexive insight have provided a robust evidence base to support the transition from co-curricular experimentation to curricular embedding. The combination of

validated instruments and qualitative reflection has enabled the University to demonstrate impact, refine pedagogy and justify accreditation within formal quality assurance processes.

Crucially, evaluation has not been treated as an endpoint, but as a continuous learning mechanism. The Empathy Studio's evaluative approach supports ongoing quality enhancement, institutional learning and confidence in scaling empathy-based education across disciplines.

Where We Are Now: A Coherent Learning Pathway

This submission represents the next stage in the Empathy Studio's evolution. Students now encounter empathy through a coherent pathway: initial exposure through co-curricular engagement, deeper practice through structured programmes, and formal development and recognition through accredited modules.

This pathway ensures accessibility, progression and recognition, while preserving the agility and responsiveness that defined the Studio's original design. It also offers the University a replicable model for transitioning innovative pedagogies into the curriculum in a way that is evidence-informed, ethically grounded and quality assured.

Looking Forward: Scaling with Integrity

Looking ahead, the University of Galway intends to extend this model beyond Medicine, embedding empathy-based learning across disciplines such as engineering, business, design and public service. As higher education responds to technological acceleration, demographic change and ethical complexity, the intentional development of human-centred capabilities will remain essential.

This submission therefore builds directly on the first QOI case, demonstrating not only impact, but institutional learning and progression. It shows how co-curricular innovation can evolve into accredited curricular provision without losing its pedagogical integrity—offering a sustainable and quality-enhanced approach to embedding empathy within higher education.