



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHÉ  
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY



# Quality Service Charter

Charter & Action Plan 2024 - 2027



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## 1. Introduction

### a. University of Galway

University of Galway has been inspiring minds since 1845 as a research-led university and is one of the oldest and largest universities in Ireland. We are an international university with global ambition, but with deep roots in Galway City and West of Ireland, renowned for its unique culture, creative industries, medical technologies, marine ecology and economy, and innovation. From this unique location, we are passionate about leading the transition to a more sustainable future. Located on the edge of the Atlantic, in a global hub for medical technology, data and IT, and in a city renowned for culture and creativity, we are committed to using our talents and skills to address the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals from multiple perspectives.

University of Galway has a long-established world leading reputation of teaching and research excellence. With an academic community of world-leading researchers working at the forefront of their fields, we offer our students opportunities to collaborate internationally through our programmes, delivered through our four Colleges and six Research Institutes.

The University's main Galway campus sits at the heart of the city, covering over 105 hectares of land along the River Corrib. Our regional footprint is the largest in Ireland, spanning the Atlantic seaboard with over 2,770 staff and 110,000 alumni network worldwide.

### Our Mission

#### **University of Galway is for the public good.**

University of Galway belongs to the people. We are here for our students, our society and our planet. We are distinctive for our transformative and impactful teaching, research and innovation, our inclusive student experience, and our passion for culture and creativity. By engaging in our region, nationally and across the world, we deliver sustainable societal change.

#### **University of Galway is a university for our time.**

We are dedicated to nurturing global citizens and addressing key questions facing the world. We recognise how critical this moment is for our planet, and our students demand that we respond to the challenges through our research, teaching and actions. We invest in our students and research community, confident that they will



be the critical thinkers, entrepreneurs, social activists, public servants and innovators of the future.

**University of Galway is globally distinctive and research-driven.**

We are a wellspring of creative energy and believe in the transformative power of knowledge. Like all great discoverers and adventurers, we look with curiosity over the horizon. We build on the unique strengths of our people, purpose and place for the benefit of individual, societal and environmental wellbeing.

Further information is available on our website [www.universityofgalway.ie](http://www.universityofgalway.ie) or by contacting our Office by phone on 353 (0)91 524411 or by emailing [info@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:info@universityofgalway.ie).

**b. Structure**

We are a comprehensive research intensive university with a breadth and depth of teaching and research across the sciences, engineering, medicine, social sciences and humanities, delivered through four Colleges, 19 Schools, 6 Research Institutes and a range of research centres and clusters, as well as a number of national multi-institutional research centres hosted by University of Galway.

**Our Colleges**

- College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies
- College of Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences
- College of Business, Public Policy & Law
- College of Science & Engineering

Each of the Colleges is led by an Executive Dean who has overall executive and management responsibility for all aspects of College affairs and for providing academic leadership to the College.

For more information on Colleges, Schools and Disciplines, visit:  
[www.universityofgalway.ie/colleges-and-schools](http://www.universityofgalway.ie/colleges-and-schools)



College	Schools
College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies	Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge School of Political Science & Sociology School of Psychology School of Education School of Geography, Archaeology & Irish Studies School of English, Media and Creative Arts School of History and Philosophy School of Languages, Literatures, & Cultures
College of Business, Public Policy and Law	J.E. Cairnes School of Business & Economics School of Law Shannon College of Hotel Management
College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences	School of Health Sciences School of Medicine School of Nursing and Midwifery
College of Science and Engineering	School of Biological and Chemical Sciences School of Computer Science School of Engineering School of Mathematical and Statistical Sciences School of Natural Sciences

### Research Centres & Institutes

Research Institutes	National Research Centres
Data Science Institute (DSI)	CÚRAM SFI Centre for Medical Devices
Ryan Institute	Insight SFI Research Centre for Data Analytics
Institute for Clinical Trials	Construct Innovate
Institute for Lifecourse and Society	Irish Centre for High End Computing (ICHEC)
Institute for Health Discovery & Innovation	
Institute for Creativity	



The three pillars of the organisational structure of University of Galway are:

- Údarás na hOllscoile
- Academic Council
- University Management Team

### **Údarás na hOllscoile**

Údarás na hOllscoile, the University's Governing Authority, is charged with the overall governance of the University in accordance with the Universities Act 1997. It provides active strategic direction and leadership to enable the University to succeed in its mission of education and research.

It has an external chair and a broad range of members drawn from different constituencies, inside and outside the university community.

An up-to-date list of [members, committees and other resources](#) is available on the University's website.

### **Academic Council**

Academic Council plays a critical role in setting the academic direction of the University. It meets regularly to consider reports from all of the core academic and academic support units, and make decisions on matters of academic policy, research, procedures and planning.

Academic Council also provides advice to Údarás na hOllscoile in respect of academic matters, through regular formal reports to the Governing Authority.

An up-to-date list of [members, committees and other resources](#) is available on the University's website.

### **University Management Team**

This team is led by the President who is the Head and Chief officer of the University and appointed for a 10-year period. Acting under the President, the various members of the University Management Team (UMT) each have a specific area of responsibility.

An up-to-date list of [members, committees and other resources](#) is available on the University's website.



## 2. Quality Service Charter

### Quality Service Standards

University of Galway has a long-standing commitment to an outstanding, research-informed academic experience for its student community, with staff and students intent on making a respectful, open and sustainable impact on society, both locally and globally.

Our activities are ambitious, command collective energy and, be they teaching, research, technical services or professional services, are tied together by a common thread – Quality, which can be defined as an individual and collective quest for excellence. We aim to create an institutional culture that will keep quality as the principle, informing a process of transformation and continuous improvement.

Quality assurance is guided by key external standards and guidelines arising from European and National government statutes and in particular the [EU Bologna Process](#), the [Universities Act 1997](#) and [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training \) \(Amendment\) Act 2019](#). The key external guidelines are:

- [Core Statutory Quality Assurance \(QA\) Guidelines \(2016\)](#)
- [Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Designated Awarding Bodies \(2016\)](#)
- [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(ESG\) \(2015\)](#)
- [External policies and guidelines](#) published by QQI (formerly IUQB), IHEQN and HEA.

We recognise our duty to promote responsible research conduct so that research integrity infuses academic culture. The principles underpinning the responsible conduct and management of research throughout the lifecycle of research activity, in line with best practice recommendations as set out in the;

- [National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland \(2019\)](#)
- [European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity \(2017\)](#)

Our institutional structures, roles and responsibilities align with the concept of mutual and collective responsibility for quality and standards and our governance and institutional regulatory frameworks ensure appropriate oversight, responsiveness, and agility in the pursuit of excellence in our teaching, research, and other activities.



## **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**

University of Galway is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity and to creating and sustaining an environment that values and celebrates the diversity of our staff and student body. The principle of equality of opportunity is enshrined in the core values of University of Galway as articulated in the University's strategic plan 2020-2025, in legislation, and in the Public Sector Duty (Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014).

### **Physical Access**

The university aims to minimise difficulties posed to those with mobility difficulties on its campuses. Accessibility is considered in the design of our new buildings and improvements are factored into renovations to existing buildings.

Our university community actively engages students and colleagues as partners in research to enhance campus accessibility. The Access Centre, in partnership with the Insight SFI Research Centre for Data Analytics and its [Crowd4Access](#) Citizen Science project, have mapped campus footpaths on the main campus for accessibility to enable our students, staff and visitors to campus to plan their route.

### **Information**

University of Galway will provide information through the following channels;

- University of Galway website,
- print media,
- eZine,
- email, or
- Social Media.

University of Galway is dedicated to meeting the needs of people with disabilities, and recognises the importance of complying with accessibility standards. We also recognise the challenge and benefits of creating a Web site that focuses not only on complying with standards, but on delivering an excellent online experience to the widest possible audience, including older people and users with disabilities.

### **How to contact us**

Our community can engage with us in the following ways;





- By web-form on our website,
- By email,
- By telephone,
- By post, or
- In person.

The University switchboard system can direct your call, as appropriate, to the most frequently contacted offices including the Accommodation Advisory Service; Fees Office; Exams Office; Accounts Payable; and Registry.

T 353 (0)91 524411

For all other queries, please email [info@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:info@universityofgalway.ie) and we will respond in a timely manner with contact details for the relevant office or forward your query directly to that section for their attention.

### **Contacting our Colleges**

#### **College of Arts, Social Sciences, & Celtic Studies**

T +353 (0)91 493954

E [collegearts@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:collegearts@universityofgalway.ie)

[www.universityofgalway.ie/colleges-and-schools/arts-social-sciences-and-celtic-studies](http://www.universityofgalway.ie/colleges-and-schools/arts-social-sciences-and-celtic-studies)

#### **College of Business, Public Policy, & Law**

T +353 (0)91 494051

E [cbppl@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:cbppl@universityofgalway.ie)

[www.universityofgalway.ie/business-public-policy-law](http://www.universityofgalway.ie/business-public-policy-law)

#### **College of Science & Engineering**

T +353 (0)91 492101

E [science-engineering@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:science-engineering@universityofgalway.ie)

[www.universityofgalway.ie/science-engineering](http://www.universityofgalway.ie/science-engineering)

#### **College of Medicine, Nursing, & Health Sciences**

T +353 (0)91 495960

E [cmnhs@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:cmnhs@universityofgalway.ie)

[www.universityofgalway.ie/medicine-nursing-and-health-sciences](http://www.universityofgalway.ie/medicine-nursing-and-health-sciences)



## **Where to find us**

### **Campus Locations**

The University of Galway's main Campus is in the centre of Galway City, on the west coast of Ireland.

[View on Google Earth](#) | [View on Google Maps](#)

In addition to our main Campus, University of Galway is also located in;

- Medical Academies in Letterkenny Co. Donegal, Castlebar Co. Mayo, Sligo and Ballinasloe Co. Galway,
- Environmental Research Facilities in Carna Co. Galway and the Burren Co. Clare,
- Gaeltacht Centres in Carna Co. Galway, Carraroe Co. Galway and Gweedore Co. Donegal, and
- Shannon College of Hotel Management in Shannon Co. Clare.

## **Timeliness and Courtesy**

Our success depends on creating a shared environment where we respect and value each other. We believe that cultivating a culture where our work and interactions are rooted in trust and respect, and approached with positive intent, will have a profound impact on the success and sustainability of our people and communities. This ethos will underpin our engagement in our communities, city, region and the world.

## **Complaints**

University of Galway is committed to ensuring that students have a positive student experience. The University constantly monitors and evaluates its academic courses, administrative systems and student support services with a view to improving their quality. Many formal and informal mechanisms exist within the University to allow students to express grievances and resolves issues as they arise. Students are encouraged to use the existing mechanisms available to them and where possible to resolve any complaints or difficulties they may be facing in an informal way.

The University recognises however that resolution through these mechanisms may not always be possible or may not result in a satisfactory outcome. The University has a Student Complaints Procedure, the purpose of which is to provide a formal mechanism for students to have their complaints heard and resolved.



The University intends that this complaints procedure will allow for matters to be dealt with fairly, transparently and in a timely fashion, for the benefit of current and future students and the wider University Community.

## **Appeals**

University of Galway maintains a formalised, well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of appeal and review for those who are dissatisfied with decisions in relation to services.

The University website contains detailed information on the various appeals processes that are available.

## **Consultation and Evaluation**

University of Galway recognises that all members of the university community, including staff and students, have legitimate, though sometimes different, perceptions and experiences. The University and the Students' Union value the diversity of the student population and are committed to ensuring all students have a sense of belonging to the University.

Specifically, the University and the Students' Union aim to collaborate to deliver real and positive change in the areas of:

- Student-Centred Decision-Making
- Student Participation and Engagement

In articulating specific goals in these areas, together we are emphasising the importance of – and the value we place on – the student voice, student engagement and student partnership in the ongoing evolution and development of our university.

### **Student-Centred Decision-Making**

Through partnership, we aim to increase the student voice in decision making in our university community. We affirm the important and mutual benefit of having a more student-centred approach to relevant university activities

### **Student Participation and Engagement**

We all want our students' experience at the University to be a transformative one, where they are actively engaged in our university community, developing



friendships, passions and skills for life, fostering a sense of belonging, defining their idea of success and fulfilling their potential. We affirm the important and mutual benefit of increased student participation and engagement in relevant university activities.

### **Choice**

University of Galway provides options for study on a full-time or part-time basis, through its suite of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes offerings, which include programmes delivered through Classroom Based Learning, Distance Learning or Blended Learning. Our classes are delivered using the latest digital technologies to deliver education and provide continuous support and feedback throughout the learning experience.

### **Official Languages Equality**

The University's commitment to the Irish language was first set out in the University College Galway Act 1929 and this was reiterated in the University College Galway (Amendment) Act 2006, which states that one of the principal aims of the university is "the provision of education ... through the medium of the Irish language".

The University's Strategy 2020-2025 goes even further and commits to developing and implementing an ambitious and future-focused strategy for the Irish language, in partnership with national stakeholders and Gaeltacht communities, based on our values of respect and sustainability.

### **Better Co-ordination**

University of Galway participates in inter Departmental and cross Governmental fora, including the Higher Education Authority, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and the Irish Universities Association to ensure that our approach to service delivery is consistent with best practice across the Public Service.

### **Internal Customer**

University of Galway recognises employees as internal service users and ensures that they are supported and consulted with regard to service delivery.



### 3. Quality Service Action Plan

#### a. Our Commitment to the Guiding Principles

Principle	Commitment
<b>1. Quality Service Standards</b>	
Publish a statement that outlines the nature and quality of service which customers can expect and display it prominently at the point of service delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will publish a Quality Service Charter and Action Plan that outlines the nature and quality of service that can be expected and we will display it on our website.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion</b>	
Ensure the rights to equal treatment established by equality legislation, and accommodate diversity, so as to contribute to equality for the groups covered by the equality legislation (under the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller Community). Identify and work to eliminate barriers to access to services for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, and for those facing geographic barriers to services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>University of Galway is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity and to creating and sustaining an environment that values and celebrates the diversity of our staff and student body.</li> <li>Our <a href="#">EDI Strategy</a> articulates our commitment and plans to enable an environment where different outlooks and experiences are visibly and openly valued.</li> <li>The <a href="#">Race Equality Framework</a> and Action Plan is University of Galway's co-ordinated approach to eliminating racism in all its forms in the University.</li> <li>The <a href="#">University of Galway Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Reports</a> provide an overview of the range of actions and activities undertaken to advance the core strategic goals of the University's EDI Strategy.</li> <li>To facilitate access for socio-economically disadvantaged and non-traditional groups, the University, led by our <a href="#">Access Office</a>, has established a range of Access and Foundation pathways for school-leavers and adults.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Physical Access</b>	
Provide clean, accessible public offices that ensure privacy, comply with occupational and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As elaborated upon in our <a href="#">Universal Design and Accessibility Policy</a>, University of Galway is</li> </ul>



<p>safety standards and, as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities and others with specific needs.</p>	<p>committed to addressing Universal Design and accessibility in so far as institutional capacity and resources allow in order to make services, information provision, buildings, teaching and learning and visitor experience accessible and inclusive for all regardless of age, size or ability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The accessibility route across the main campus for the mobility impaired and locations of parking bays designated for people with disabilities can found on this <a href="#">Campus Map</a>.</li></ul>
<b>4. Information</b>	
<p>Take a proactive approach in providing information that is clear, timely and accurate, is available at all points of contact, and meets the requirements of people with specific needs. Ensure that the potential offered by Information Technology is fully availed of and that the information available on public service websites follows the guidelines on web publication. Continue the drive for simplification of rules, regulations, forms, information leaflets and procedures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It is our aim that the University of Galway website and communications are, as far as possible;<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ technically accessible, in that it is possible for all users to access all information and functionality;</li><li>○ equally usable, in that it is not prohibitively difficult or time consuming for users with disabilities to carry out normal tasks;</li><li>○ capable of being adapted or configured by individual users to meet their specific needs and preferences;</li><li>○ capable of interfacing with appropriate, widely available assistive technologies employed by users.</li></ul></li><li>• The <a href="#">University of Galway Accessibility Statement</a> outlines how we deliver and maintain an accessible website.</li></ul>
<b>5. Timeliness &amp; Courtesy</b>	
<p>Deliver quality services with courtesy, sensitivity and the minimum delay, fostering a climate of mutual respect between provider and customer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We will ensure that all our community is treated with courtesy and respect and that all enquiries are dealt with promptly and efficiently.</li></ul>



6. Complaints	
Maintain a well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of dealing with complaints about the quality of service provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The University has a <a href="#">Student Complaints Procedure</a> that enables, University of Galway in a clear, simple and fair manner to resolve, in a timely fashion, any legitimate complaints which students may have in relation to the provision of courses and services to them.</li></ul>
7. Appeals	
Similarly, maintain a formalised, well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of appeal/review for customers who are dissatisfied with decisions in relation to services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The University maintains a well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple to use system of <a href="#">appeals</a> and <a href="#">rechecks</a>.</li><li>If a matter relating to service delivery remains unresolved after all review procedures have been fully exhausted, service users can appeal to the Office of the Ombudsman by:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Clicking on the 'Make A Complaint' link at <a href="http://www.ombudsman.ie">www.ombudsman.ie</a></li><li>Or writing to: Office of the Ombudsman, 6 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2, D02 W773</li><li>Or calling the Ombudsman on 01 639 5600, if you have any queries or if you need help making your complaint.</li></ul></li></ul>
8. Consultation & Evaluation	
Provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by, the customer in relation to the development, delivery and review of services. Ensure meaningful evaluation of service delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The University and the Students' Union aim to collaborate to deliver real and positive change in the areas of:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Student-Centred Decision-Making</li><li>Student Participation and Engagement</li></ul></li><li>Enhancements arising from quality reviews and internal monitoring are measured through key performance indicators that are monitored and updated regularly by the <a href="#">Institutional Research Office</a> and include indicators relating to Teaching, Research &amp; Reputation.</li><li>Quality monitoring and finding evidence of effectiveness is done mainly through <a href="#">surveys</a> across all major academic and service units of the University.</li></ul>



<b>9. Choice</b>	
Provide choice, where feasible, in service delivery including payment methods, location of contact points, opening hours and delivery times. Use available and emerging technologies to ensure maximum access and choice, and quality of delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The University provides teaching through four Colleges and 19 Schools up to PhD level, for primary and postgraduate Degrees and for a wide variety of Diplomas, Certificates and, more recently, Micro-credentials.</li> <li>• 68 separate programmes of study are offered for undergraduate students, with over 190 taught programmes at postgraduate level and over 90 structured postgraduate research programmes.</li> <li>• The University also provides a programme of Adult Learning and Professional Development and conducts a number of Summer Schools.</li> </ul>
<b>10. Official Languages Equality</b>	
Provide quality services through Irish and/or bilingually and inform customers of their right to choose to be dealt with through one or other of the official languages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will comply with our obligations as set out in the Official Languages Act 2003 (as amended).</li> <li>• We will ensure that those who wish to conduct their business through Irish can do so.</li> <li>• The aims of our Strategy for the Irish Language 2021-25 are articulated in the following five key strategic priority areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Space, Resources, Premises &amp; Buildings for the Irish Language Community</li> <li>○ University Administrative &amp; Management Structures</li> <li>○ The Use of Irish in the University</li> <li>○ Academic Affairs</li> <li>○ A Pillar for the Language Community</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>11. Better Coordination</b>	
Foster a more coordinated and integrated approach to delivery of public services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will participate in inter Departmental and cross Governmental fora, to ensure that our approach to service delivery is consistent with best practice across the Public Service.</li> </ul>
<b>12. Internal Customers</b>	
Ensure staff are recognised as internal customers and that they are properly supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will recognise all staff as internal service users and aim to ensure that they are properly</li> </ul>





and consulted with regard to service delivery issues.	<p>supported and consulted with regards to service delivery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We will keep staff informed of all relevant developments through use of internal channels of communication.</li><li>• We will continue to provide high quality on-line and in person training and development for all staff.</li></ul>
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