

[Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology]

2022

Annual Quality Report (Institution)
Reporting Period 2020-2021

[Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology]

2021

**Annual Quality Report (Galway-Mayo
Technology)**

PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

Reporting Period 2020-2021

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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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 **Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)** for the reporting period **1 September 2020 - 31 August 2021**.

It is to be submitted by **Friday, 25 February 2022**.

The AQR has been approved by **Academic Council** and is submitted by **Carmel Brennan, Head of Academic Quality**.

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) was established, in 1972, as Galway Regional Technical College. In January 1993, it became an autonomous institution of higher education under the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992. The Institute was legally designated an Institute of Technology in January 1998 and renamed Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology. The Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 specified that the principal function of a college is ‘to provide vocational and technical education and training for the economic, technological, scientific, commercial, industrial, social and cultural development of the State with particular reference to the region served by the college’ (Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992: section 5.1).

GMIT is a multi-campus, multi-discipline, multi-award Institute serving a diverse student body, with approximately 7, 900 registered students across all campuses on programmes ranging from apprenticeship to PhD. It is a student-centred organisation, with a primary focus on learning and teaching, informed by research. It operates across a wide geographical area with campuses in Galway City (Dublin Road and Centre for Creative Arts and Media), Mayo (Castlebar), Letterfrack (National Centre for Excellence for Furniture Design and Wood Technology) and Mountbellew (Agricultural College). See [HERE](#) for a profile of the Institute. GMIT will provide our students with a transformative university experience, empowering our graduates to fully contribute to the social, economic, and cultural betterment of society. GMIT’s Strategic Plan is available [HERE](#).

The Annual Quality Review is developed with input from across the functions of the Institute and with contribution from the student representative body. It is reviewed by the Executive Board and approved by Academic Council prior to submission.

1.0 Internal QA Framework

1.1 Governance and Management of Quality

Quality Assurance Framework (QAF)

The last two decades have witnessed some significant milestones in the institutional autonomy of GMIT, its validation by external agencies, and by implication its standing within Ireland's higher education sector. In 2004 GMIT was granted delegated authority from HETAC to make awards up to level 8 honours bachelor and level 9 taught masters degrees. In 2005 additional delegated authority was confirmed for research degrees including the awards of Ph.D. in Aquatic Science and Mechanical Engineering. In January 2020 GMIT became a Designated Awarding Body.

GMIT has a robust quality assurance framework (QAF) available [HERE](#) with a suite of Codes of Practice and Academic Policies approved by Academic Council and Governing Body. These codes and policies in addition to national requirements also embed the 2015 European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance. As a supporter of the European Higher Education Area, GMIT is committed to the implementation of the Bologna process and the Institute operates the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). All modules are either 5 credits or multiples thereof. Additionally, all programmes were redesigned in 2004 to be aligned with the learning outcomes-based approach.

Students automatically receive the European Diploma Supplement after graduation and the Institute actively engages in European projects in relation to quality and benchmarking as they arise. Each component of the Quality Assurance Framework is accessible online and updated at least once during the 3-year lifetime of the Academic Council. GMIT's Quality Assurance Framework is implemented uniformly across all campuses. The overarching Quality Framework Policy available [HERE](#) outlines GMIT's approach to academic quality assurance.

Institute Strategy and Governance

GMIT's Strategic Plan 2019 - 2023 underpins the Institute's ambition to become a Technological University (TU) with our CUA partners IT Sligo and Letterkenny Institute of Technology. The CUA has already agreed a vision and mission for the new TU that aligns very closely with the vision and mission encapsulated in this plan. It is appropriate as we move along this new

trajectory that visions and missions converge. The creation of a TU for the Northern and Western region will have a transformative impact on the population served by this new entity in producing employment-ready graduates competent in the skills in demand by business, enterprise, the professions, the community, local interests and other stakeholders.

This Strategic Plan adopts a different approach to previous plans by placing the emphasis predominantly on the student experience and lifecycle. The student enters GMIT as an individual and is shaped both personally and professionally through engagement with the GMIT community. As the student transitions to the workplace or further education the impact of the GMIT experience becomes evident through the added value they bring to their new community. Hence, the three strategic pillars of individual, community and impact permeate the structure of the plan. The three strategic pillars are subdivided into Institute Goals and thirteen Strategic Enablers are identified to support the Institute Goals. Each strategic enabler has several actions identified and it is envisaged these will change annually to reflect the dynamic and flexible nature of the higher education landscape. The plan is available [HERE](#).

GMIT sees itself continuing to increase the provision of STEM focussed programmes at Levels 6/7 (Higher Certificate / Ordinary Degree) and Level 8 (Honours Degree), with advanced entry, exit and transfer opportunities to facilitate student choice and meeting the technology driven skills needs of Ireland. There will also be increased provision of minor and special purpose awards under programmes such as the HEA Springboard and HCI funded initiatives to support workforce up-skilling and re-skilling in line with Ireland's National Skills Strategy to 2025 and enhanced flexible/online learning opportunities. GMIT will also provide Level 9 structured Masters programmes in a flexible manner to meet the needs of our existing workforce.

GMIT aims to foster a culture of gender equality and is implementing the recommendations of the 'Report of the Expert Group HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish HEIS'. GMIT has been awarded the Athena SWAN bronze award. This award recognises a solid foundation for eliminating gender bias and developing an inclusive culture that values all staff. The Athena SWAN ethos depends on assuming collective responsibility for gender equality.

Governance

GMIT is governed by a Body of members representing Institute and community interests and led by the Chair. Membership is listed [HERE](#). GMIT complies with the THEA Code of Governance for Institutes of Technology 2018 available [HERE](#). The Governing Body carries out all its activities in accordance with its statutory functions set out in the Schedule of Matters reserved for Governing Body decisions as established by the IOT Acts 1992 - 2006 and the THEA Code of Governance of Irish Institutes of Technology. The composition of the Governing Body, as determined by the IOT Acts 1992 -2006, is the Chairman, The President and seventeen ordinary members representative of Institute and external stakeholders.

The [President](#) is the Chief Officer of the Institute and the Registrar is the Chief Academic Officer. The Institute's Executive Board, led by the President, comprises the senior management team of the Institute. Its fundamental role is to monitor and implement Institute strategy and to ensure the effective management of the Institute. Its focus is on strategic rather than operational issues.

The Management Group supports the President and the Executive Board in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of managerial actions throughout all functional levels within the Institute. Its primary role is an operational one. GMIT's Organisation Chart is available [HERE](#) and an outline of GMIT's governance structure is available [HERE](#).

Academically GMIT is structured on a school and department basis. The schools in general have a specific disciplinary focus, for example Engineering, Science, Creative Arts, Hotel and Business. Some Schools/Centres have a multi-disciplinary focus such as the Mayo Campus with a focus on Health and Wellbeing programmes.

The Academic Council is the principal academic body of the Institute, responsible for academic standards and for formulating and recommending academic policy. All academic matters are dealt with by the Institute's Academic Council subject to the approval of Governing Body. As currently constituted the membership of the Academic Council comprises forty-seven members, twenty-four of whom are elected by the Institute's academic community, with the President as Chairperson and the Registrar as Secretary. For the purpose of undertaking its workload the Council has eight dedicated sub- committees outlined in the Academic Council Code of Practice (available [HERE](#)) which are:

- Academic Standards Committee
- Programme Amendments Committee
- Research Committee
- Collaborations Committee
- Access and Transfer Committee
- Retention Committee
- Disciplinary Committee
- Examinations Appeals Board

Representation of Learners and External Stakeholders

GMIT is proud to be recognised as a student-centred organisation where the student voice is heard - all Programme Boards, which are advisory to the Academic Council, have student representation; the Students' Union is represented on the Academic Council and Governing Body, and training is provided annually to the class representatives on the Quality Assurance Framework. Students/graduates are represented on the review panels for Academic Units, Functions and Programmes.

Stakeholders such as industry, professional and regulatory bodies, the community are integral to the operations of the Institute at all levels. Governing Body has representatives of five stakeholder groupings, with suggestions for these positions arising from Academic Council. Programme Boards consult with and involve external stakeholders in the design and review of all programmes. All programme validation panels and review panels for Academic Units, Functions and programmes include external stakeholder representation.

Research

Academic oversight and governance of GMIT's research quality assurance is the responsibility of the Academic Council mediated by that Council's Research Sub-committee. The executive management of GMIT's research activity is the responsibility of the Vice President for Research and Innovation and is administered by GMIT's Research and Innovation Office.

1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision

GMIT has QA procedures in place for the collaborative provision of taught programmes available [HERE](#).

This policy document specifies Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology's (GMIT) quality assurance procedures for the collaborative provision of taught programmes, including for joint awards and transnational collaborative provision. It sets out the context, guiding principles, and framework of responsibilities, structures, and processes for:

- the establishment, approval and governance of partnerships for collaborative provision;
- the development of collaborative provision programmes, the validation or re-validation of collaborative provision programmes and awards, and the authorisation to proceed; and
- the on-going management of joint awards and collaborative provision programmes, including delivery, assessment, monitoring, periodic review, evaluation and response, and the provision of information for students and for the general public.

2.0 Programme Development and Delivery

2.1 Programme Development and Approval

As part of its QAF the Institute has a Code of Practice on Validation and Monitoring, available [HERE](#).

New programmes and related awards are normally proposed within the overall context of an Academic Plan for a College/Centre/Campus/School (hereafter referred to as the 'Academic Unit').

There are two separate, but interrelated elements involved in the approval of new programme proposals. Validation is primarily concerned with the academic quality of a proposal and is the responsibility of the Academic Council. However, new programmes may have resource and strategic implications for the Institute. As such, the authorisation to proceed with development, and subsequently to offer the programme following a successful validation, is the responsibility of the Executive Board.

The process is consistent with the generic quality assurance model promoted by the ESG.

Procedures are outlined for the approval of major awards, special purpose, and minor awards. Each is a multistage process. Figure 1 outlines the procedure for validation of major awards:



Figure 1 Stages in Validation of Major Awards

The approval of major awards commences with the programme proposers developing a proposal outlining the rationale for the programme and award, demonstrating the relationship to the Institute's strategy and academic plan, resource requirements and viability. If approved by the Executive Board a full proposal is developed. The development of the proposal requires research and consultation with relevant stakeholders to both justify the need for the programme

and shape the learning outcomes, structure, content and delivery of the programme. Once complete the programme is reviewed by an internal panel, which is intended as a supportive process providing independent, constructive feedback and advice to the proposers, and as a preparation for external validation. The internal panel can approve or reject the programme proposal or make recommendations to amend the proposal as deemed necessary. If the proposal is approved subject to recommendations these are addressed by the proposers prior to the programme proceeding to external validation. The external validation panel consists of discipline experts from academia and industry who review the documentation and meet the proposers to discuss the proposal. If approved, any conditions of approval must be met and recommendations addressed prior to commencing the programme. The programme is approved by Academic Council with authorisation to offer the programme provided by Executive Board and Governing Body, with the programme being granted a Certificate of Approval until the next Programmatic Review.

All stages of the validation process for new programmes requires stakeholder engagement. Beginning with initial approval and progressing to internal and external validation requires evidence of the rationale and need for the programme and of employment opportunities and potential demand for graduates. This requires conducting research with the relevant industry sector aligned to the new programme. At the external validation stage, the external validation panel always contains an experienced practitioner with necessary knowledge and expertise from the industry/services/professional sector, as appropriate.

The Validation and Monitoring code also outlines the procedures for changes to programmes through Differential Validation and minor amendments to modules which are reviewed by the Programme Amendments Committee.

Several GMIT programmes also seek additional recognition for Professional and Regulatory Bodies.

Craft apprenticeships are designed nationally by SOLAS. GMIT is a collaborating provider for two craft apprenticeships - Electrical and Motor Mechanics, delivering 2 phases of each. Programme Boards for craft apprenticeships meet at least once each term. Student representatives participate on the Programme Board providing student feedback on course delivery. Apprentices also complete a course feedback form annually which is used by the

Programme Board to identify areas for improvement. The theory assessments are delivered by GMIT (collaborating provider) at the time and date indicated by SOLAS (coordinating provider). All assessments are carried out in accordance with GMIT's examinations quality assurance policies and procedures. Apprentices are facilitated in reviewing their assessment papers/scripts as part of any recheck request and can request a review or appeal in line with GMIT's procedures. Assessment results are ratified at the end of term examination board meeting. A *Recording and Reporting Matters Relevant to Quality Assurance of SOLAS Apprentice Programmes Form* is completed and signed by the Head of Function and Head of School at the end of this meeting. This form is then submitted to SOLAS. Although, SOLAS, as coordinating provider, is responsible for the quality of assessments pertaining to craft apprenticeship programmes, GMIT, as collaborating provider, furnish SOLAS with detailed feedback for every assessment paper administered in GMIT. This feedback is sent to SOLAS at the end of each term. In delivering SOLAS apprenticeships GMIT adheres to the following:

The further education and training authority SOLAS is the agency with primary responsibility for management of apprenticeship nationally, working in partnership with the Higher Education Authority, Quality and Qualifications Ireland, industry, and education and training providers across

further and higher education. Ireland is actively seeking to expand its apprenticeship provision, and since 2016 educational and industry consortia can seek to develop new apprenticeship programmes from levels 5 to 10 on the National Framework of Qualifications. GMIT is the coordinating provider of the Manufacturing Engineering consortia-led apprenticeship (Levels 6 and 7) working with a number of other Institutes of Technology and the Irish MedTech Association to develop and deliver same. These programmes were developed in accordance with the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for Providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes and GMIT's own quality assurance policies and procedures for new programme validation.

2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification

Attracting, retaining and supporting students are key objectives of GMIT's Quality Assurance system. The Institute's policy on Access, Transfer and Progression is available [HERE](#). The code outlines access routes, entry requirements, transfer mechanisms and withdrawal procedures for GMIT programmes. It allows for the appeal of access, transfer and progression decisions. It provides for admission of students through alternative entry routes targeted at students with disabilities and learning difficulties, mature applicants, and young applicants from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Institute publishes its Garda Vetting for Students Policy [HERE](#) so that prospective students and students are aware of the necessity, process and implications of the vetting process for identified programmes. Information on GMIT's awards with reference to the National Framework of Qualifications is published annually in the [student prospectus](#).

GMIT has been successful in broadening access to its programmes with significant growth in participation from students with disabilities and students from target socio economic groups being testament to the success of its access strategy.

GMIT also seeks to support student access through its policy on the Administration of the Student Assistance Fund and the Student Support Fund (available on the Student HUB) and through its policy on the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations for Examinations and Assessments, available [HERE](#). GMIT offer a range of pre- and post-entry student scholarships, many targeted at increasing access. Details are available [HERE](#). They include 13 Access scholarships funded by the Institute and 1916 scholarships which are funded by the HEA under PATH 2 in collaboration with the West / Northwest Cluster - NUI Galway, Letterkenny Institute of Technology and Institute of Technology Sligo. These scholarships are designed to encourage participation and success by students from sections of society that are significantly under-represented in Higher Education.

The institute actively encourages applications to the Institute on the basis of recognised prior learning and its policy on the Recognition of Prior Learning is available [HERE](#). In collaboration with its partners in the Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA), GMIT has developed an on- line tool to

facilitate prospective students wishing to apply on the basis of recognised prior learning. The tool is accessible [HERE](#).

2.3 Procedures for Making Awards

GMIT became a Designated Awarding Body (DAB) in January 2020 and as such has the authority to make its own awards and set standards for those awards. GMIT make awards within the [National Framework of Qualifications](#). GMIT's Academic Council adopted the QQI generic and discipline standards. Programme learning outcomes (PLOs) for all awards are aligned with those standards when developed. The appropriateness of the level of programme learning outcomes is considered by the external validation panel, and subsequently whether the assessments and students' performance in those assessments meets the relevant standards is confirmed by each programmes' External Examiners.

2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

As part of its QAF the Institute has a Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy, available [HERE](#). In addition, the Institute has assessment guidelines which are made available to all staff through the Office of the Registrar SharePoint.

At GMIT learning and teaching is a core activity of the institute. Through its academic programmes and approach to learning, teaching and assessment, the Institute will ensure that all graduates have a comprehensive understanding of relevant disciplines, professional knowledge and skills appropriate to their awards.

The need for a formal strategy for Learning, Teaching and Assessment arises from a number of challenges and opportunities for the Institution, which include:

- 1) The commitment to providing a high-quality learning experience for all students.

- 2) The importance of developing high quality graduates with robust transfer and adaptable skills.
- 3) The transformation of Irish society, its economy and its cultural and social diversity.
- 4) The internationalisation of education and the impact of globalisation.

The Institute's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (2019-23) is focused on six themes aligned with the Institute's Strategic Priorities as illustrated in Figure 2.



Figure 2 Learning, Teaching and Assessment Themes

The Institute has a detailed annual implementation plan for the Teaching & Learning Strategy which is regularly monitored.

Good practice in teaching and assessment is shared annually at the Teaching & Learning Showcase and each year one or more lecturers are presented with the Presidents' Award for Teaching Excellence.

As part of its QAF the Institute has a Code of Practice on Student Assessment: Marks & Standards, available [HERE](#). The Code of Practice is divided into: Section 1, which deals with the regulatory context of assessment and the general guiding principles; Section 2, which deals

with roles and responsibilities; Section 3, which deals with procedures and regulations, and Section 4, which contains appendices.

GMIT monitor each programme on an ongoing basis to ensure:

- that the programme intended learning outcomes are being attained by students;
- the continuing appropriateness of the curriculum, pedagogy and assessment in relation to the intended learning outcomes;
- that programmes remain current and valid in light of developing knowledge in the discipline and practice in application; and
- that issues arising in relation to the academic quality of programme design, delivery and assessment are identified and addressed on a timely basis.

The responsibility for managing and ensuring the quality of academic processes in accordance with Institute policy lies with the Heads of Academic Units and with Programme Boards. Individual members of staff are required to co-operate with the quality management procedures within the academic structures. The Institute review and evaluate the effectiveness of programme monitoring processes on a regular and systematic basis.

The Registrar is responsible for the overall integrity of the assessment process. Assessment is a core element of the responsibility of lecturers who act as internal examiners. External Examiners with relevant disciplinary knowledge are appointed to programmes to ensure standards and to benchmark GMIT standards against that of other Institutions. The role of the External Examiner is outlined in Marks and Standards and in the Policy and Procedures governing external examining in GMIT which is available [HERE](#).

Academic Integrity is core to the operation of the Institute. GMIT has a range of policies and regulations to support academic integrity in respect of both taught and research programmes: [Research](#), [Research Ethics](#), [Taught Programmes Research Ethics Committees](#), [Plagiarism Policy](#), [Code of Student Conduct](#) , [Exam Regulations](#). Guidelines relating to education about, prevention and detection of plagiarism are outlined in the Plagiarism Policy available [HERE](#). A range of resources to support students in avoiding plagiarism are provided on both the library website and the Student HUB. All first-year undergraduate students undertake the Academic and Professional Skills module which includes a mandatory online unit

on academic integrity. This helps students understand what academic integrity is and why it matters. They explore plagiarism and how to avoid it through learning how to reference. All students are assessed on this element as part of the module.

There are also a wide range of resources available to students relating to academic integrity. The library has an extensive [Libguide](#) on the topic covering academic integrity, plagiarism, referencing, copyright, information literacy, research skills and evaluating information. In addition the library provides various [referencing guide](#) and a [guide to URKUND](#), the text matching software used by the Institute. The Student HUB also has information for students on the topic and it deals with current issues such as academic integrity in open book examinations and essay mills. The Institute has undertaken a campaign to promote academic integrity among students branding it with our own logo as illustrated in Figure 3.



Figure 3 GMIT Academic Integrity Matters Logo

GMIT are members of the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) and engaged with the work of that group. Internally GMIT has established an academic integrity work group which is identifying a roadmap to building a culture of academic integrity among GMIT staff and students.

Given students undertake a range of assessment types, all have been provided with a [Student Guide to Academic Integrity](#) and are encouraged to watch the video produced by the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) [#myownwork](#). Students are required to sign a plagiarism disclaimer when submitting assignment work. An online course for staff titled 'the Academic Integrity Hub' developed by the Teaching and Learning Unit in DCU is available to GMIT staff on Moodle.

Staff involved in postgraduate supervision have two resources available to them, both of which cover the topic of academic integrity

- An online self-directed course on Supervising Masters and PhD students
- A level 9, 5 ECTS module - Postgraduate Supervisory Skills
- An online Research Integrity Course (available to staff and students)

The increased use of technology in teaching and learning and the expansion of online and blended programmes is reflected in the development of new policies related to teaching and learning. The Institute's Social Media Policy available [HERE](#) was recently supplemented by a Digital Learning Charter available [HERE](#) which outlines the obligations that students and staff have to each other as part of a digital community and provides a framework for managing our communication and behaviour in a digital world. The use of data derived from teaching and learning to advantage students is governed by the Learning Analytics for Student Success policy available [HERE](#). GMIT is committed to using data to enhance student success in an open and transparent manner. The digital footprint that students leave as they engage with online services such as Moodle can be an invaluable source of information for institutions as they aim to increase retention, progression and completion rates, protect students' welfare and enhance their depth of learning. Even more importantly, from a student perspective, Learning Analytics has the potential to provide students with constructive and timely feedback on how they are performing and provide them with the information they need to take appropriate action. The Institute's Recording of Lectures Policy available [HERE](#) describes the Institutes policy in relation to recording classes and making those recordings available for students. Whilst recognising that it is not always appropriate to record teaching sessions it acknowledges the benefit of lecture recordings as a learning support.

Work Placements or other forms of professional practice are increasingly being embedded in programmes of study. The Institute's QAF has evolved to reflect this. The Professional Practice policy available [HERE](#) is a principles-based document guiding the use of professional practice learning opportunities within GMIT programmes. Professional Practice provides a unique and valuable learning experience for students to enable them to gain the transferable generic skills that employers seek. Within the context of GMIT, Professional Practice is defined as Work Placement or Work Based Projects. Benefits of Professional Practice include the integration of employability skills into the curriculum, providing students with the opportunity to apply disciplinary knowledge and skills and improving communication between GMIT and outside

organisations. A Student Fitness to Practise Policy available [HERE](#) has been developed in recognition of the Institute's duty of care to the public as well as to support students in fulfilling programme requirements and helping to prepare students for future professional practice in the discipline areas of Nursing, Health Sciences and Wellbeing. This policy document with embedded procedures is intended to be followed in instances where student fitness to practice concerns have been formally raised. It also describes the roles and responsibilities of relevant parties in managing student fitness to practice concerns. This document should be read in conjunction with the necessary policies in GMIT's Quality Assurance Framework (QAF).

GMIT is very active and engaged with a range of national networks advocating for best practice in teaching and learning, and the development of educational resources that benefit both staff and students. National networks where GMIT is represented in teaching and learning development include:

1. National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Ireland (www.teachingandlearning.ie).
2. Educational Developers Network in Ireland (www.edin.ie).
3. ALT, Association of Learning Technology, UK (<https://www.alt.ac.uk/>).
4. Online Learning Consortium in the US (<https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/>).
5. ILTA, Irish Learning Technology Association.
6. RPL Practitioner Network, Ireland.

3.0 Learner Resources and Support

Library

GMIT Library consists of four campus libraries namely Dublin Rd, CCAM, Mayo Campus and Letterfrack Campus. In addition to over 130,000 print items the library offers access to numerous electronic information resources available on a 24/7 basis and operates a very efficient interbranch (between campuses) and document supply service (external libraries) ensuring optimisation of the collection.

Each branch offers study spaces, networked computers and Wi-Fi throughout. The Dublin Road library also has a range of special rooms including an IT room, Training room, Silent Study room, Independent Learning room, an Archive room and a Copy room for copying, scanning and printing. The library also has a suite of fifteen group study rooms which are available for booking by students for student group work. The diversity in library services ensures that all users are catered for, both novice and knowledgeable. Ongoing promotion is maintained through the regular marketing channels and newsletters and guides are available online via the library webpage.

The Information Skills module developed by the library staff in Galway is embedded in the Learning and Innovation Skills module to support first year students. Users with special needs make extensive use of the Independent Learning Unit. This room is equipped with specialist hardware and software for students with visual, reading or physical disabilities.

The library also publishes online help and support guides via LibGuides for subject-focused library information services at: <http://libguides.gmit.ie>. The library continues to develop online tutorials and podcasts to support the learning and teaching of GMIT particularly online/distance education students. These resources are available on the library website at: <https://library.gmit.ie/support/tutorials/> The institutional repository, Research@THEA, available at: <https://research.thea.ie/> contains over 355 full text items based on GMIT research output. Subject Librarians for each school are available to help identify and meet the information needs of all users to deal with in-depth reference questions and to support the informational needs of all users.

Student Transition

All students are provided with a Programme Handbook or equivalent which includes *inter alia* the programme learning outcomes, programme outline, assessment strategy and schedule, regulations, contact details for lecturers and module descriptors.

Orientation and induction are provided for all students. An institute-wide 'Welcome Programme' is delivered over the first five weeks of the first semester, familiarising first year students with the college and student supports and aiding the transition to higher education. College-wide inductions are also provided for transfer and international students. In addition, Programme Boards provide programme level induction for new students. All first-year students complete the Academic & Professional Skills module which aims to provide knowledge and skills required to succeed in college. A peer mentoring programme, PASS, is also provided as widely as possible, to support students in their first year in higher education.

The [Student HUB](#) is an internal communication platform providing students with a wide variety of information and resources in the following general categories:

- Your Studies
- Your IT
- Your Campus
- Your Health & Wellbeing
- Your Student Life
- Your Finance
- Your Future
- Your Rights and Responsibilities

Student Retention

The retention and progression of students is a priority for GMIT. GMIT has approved a policy for student retention along with an associated implementation plan, available [HERE](#). Initiatives include an extended induction programme - First5Weeks, Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS), the Learning and Innovation Skills module and a new Transitions module aimed at easing the transition for students new to third level education.

GMIT produces a retention report annually which allows for the monitoring and analysis of student progression and retention across all programmes and stages. In an effort to support students and improve retention, GMIT is developing new supports for students on an ongoing basis. Examples of recent initiatives in this regard are the establishment of the Maths Learning Centre and the Academic Writing Centre supported through the GMIT library. Given the increasing number of students studying remotely these services are available onsite or online.

Deferral and Withdrawal

GMIT recognises that for a myriad of reasons that students may need to interrupt or leave their programmes of study and provides clear information on the methodology and consequences of same as outlined in the Programme Deferral and Withdrawal policy available [HERE](#).

Access Service

The Access and Disability Service provides a range of supports and services to students with disabilities, mature students and students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. These supports and services are designed to ensure students have equality of access, participation and outcome. Underpinning the work of the Access and Disability Service is the recognition that certain categories of students experience barriers, and all services and supports provided are designed to address these barriers through the assessment of individual student needs, and the provision of appropriate academic, technological and financial support. The Institute has recently joined both the [HEAR](#) and [DARE](#) schemes.

The Access and Disability Service provides a range of supports and services for students applying to GMIT and attending full-time and part-time courses within the Institute. It facilitates equality of access and participation for all students. It supports students with physical and sensory disabilities, students with significant ongoing illness, students with mental health difficulties, students on the autism spectrum and students with learning difficulties such as dyslexia. Supports offered include alternative induction, alternative print format, radio aids, accessible class location, personal assistants, interpretation services, note takers, mentoring, one-to-one academic support, assistive technology, examination support and examination accommodations. The Access and Disability service also provides supports for mature students.

The organisation and delivery of support services for students is documented in the Access and Disability Service Procedures and Reference Manual (Version 5: Updated September 2015). This sets out the aims and objectives of the service, the target group of students, and procedures for the approval and delivery of supports and services. This document is distributed to all staff delivering supports and is shared on the internal staff drive. The document also includes as reference the 'HEA Guidelines for the Fund for Students with Disabilities' and includes the Procedures for the Recruitment and Employment of Support Workers'.

GMIT's policy on the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations for Examinations and Assessments is outlined [HERE](#).

Diversity

GMIT is supportive of a diverse student body and has a Student Equality Policy available [HERE](#) which promotes equality of opportunity for all students and a Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy available [HERE](#) in which GMIT recognises the range, type and nature of gender diversity within its community and supports an individual's gender identity and gender expression, ensuring that students & staff experience a positive, safe and non-discriminatory environment within the Institute.

IT Infrastructure

Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) are an integral part of all academic activities in GMIT. Learning is complemented by Moodle (Learnonline) which GMIT uses as its learning management system. This allows students and staff to view course information including lecture notes and other resources. It allows students to be assessed and/or upload assignments online, and for lecturers to monitor student engagement with the module. Each student has access to the full Microsoft Office suite on up to five personal devices along with all the features of Office 365. The Institute is trialling 'Flexilabs' which allows students access to the software they require on a virtual basis on a whenever and wherever they require it basis.

There are 42 designated IT laboratories and approximately 1,100 networked PCs available for students across the Institute for use in classes and for research and assignments. Wi-Fi is available in many locations on each campus.

The Learning Centre on the Galway Campus incorporates the Library and the Information Technology (IT) Centre. The IT Centre has 188 workstations, which are available to students for research, project work, assignments, on-line training and learning and tutorial support. The IT Centre also has a fully equipped training room, a multimedia studio, and technical support facilities.

Student Services

GMIT has a comprehensive range of student services aimed at supporting students throughout their studies in the college:

- The Career Development Centre - helps students make informed career decisions and identify occupations that would suit their interests, personalities and skills.
- Counselling Services at GMIT - offers students the opportunity to discuss any issues of concern to them with a trained professional in a confidential, non-judgemental service.
- Student Health Unit - a low cost and confidential physical and mental health service provided by a team of doctors and nurses.
- GMIT Chaplaincy - assists and supports students, by providing care, helping to build a sense of community and supporting the spiritual life of the student.
- Financial Assistance - GMIT administers two funds to assist students who find themselves in financial difficulty.

Extra-Curricular Activities

The Students' Union operates a wide variety of Clubs and Societies at GMIT promoting community, personal development, and student involvement. A diverse range of sports are catered for with sports facilities available on each campus in many instances in conjunction with local clubs.

Volunteering is supported through an annual volunteering fair and rewarded through the GMIT President's Award for Volunteering (Thrive award). The Thrive Award was developed to recognise and acknowledge the valuable contributions students make to their communities whether that is their home community, the community where they live whilst at college or within the college community.

International Learners

International students are supported by the International Office, as follows:

- Support prior to arrival, as well as induction & orientation events once they arrive and register with the institute.
- Providing visa and immigration support to international students, including arranging appointments with the local Immigration Office
- Providing various levels of supports for international students in conjunction with the Students' Union and the Student Services Team (including the Institute Chaplain).
- Providing career advice to international students in collaboration with GMIT's Career's Office - This incorporates support understanding the various stay back options available to international students along with the application process for employment permits
 - Arranging various activities for international students throughout the academic year including day trips, celebration of international occasions and outdoor activities and sports to encourage socialisation and familiarisation with life in the region.

CUA partner IT Sligo are piloting a free English language course called 'The Native Speaker Experience'. The resource is free to students in all CUA campuses if English is not their first language and focuses on writing and communication skills plus reading and speaking.

Online and Blended Learning

GMIT's Blended and Online Learning Policy (available [HERE](#)) is intended to support GMIT in developing flexible learning opportunities and providing access to higher education. It also guides GMIT in managing the potential risks posed by challenges and complexities in the arrangements for blended and online learning programmes and to safeguard academic standards. GMIT has more recently approved a CUA policy (available [HERE](#))

4.0 QA of Research Activities and Programmes

As part of its QAF the Institute has a Code of Practice on Research, available [HERE](#). This Code of Practice specifies the Institute's policy and procedures for the admission, registration, transfer of registration, and assessment of students who embark on programmes leading to the award of degrees by research and thesis or published work. It follows good practice for the organisation of quality assurance for research degrees in Ireland. It outlines and specifies the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the postgraduate research process, viz. the student, Supervisors, Examiners, College/Schools, the Research Office, the Vice- President for Research and Innovation, and the Vice-President for Academic Affairs & Registrar / Registrar's Office.

Research ethics for research programmes are covered in the Research Ethics Policy available [HERE](#) and for taught programmes are covered in the Taught Programmes Research Ethics Committees Policy available [HERE](#). The latter recognises the research activity that is being conducted in undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes and allows for research ethics approval be considered and granted, if appropriate, by local committees.

Members of the GMIT community developing research funding proposals submit these for budgetary evaluation to the institute's Finance function and for approval to the Research and Innovation Office. Dependent on the grant submission systems of the funding agencies these approvals, and approvals of IP and Technology Transfer aspects, are mediated through the agency platforms.

Online training for postgraduate research supervisors is provided via the Epigeum module "Supervising Doctoral Studies" which is implemented via GMIT's Virtual Learning Environment. The module supports postgraduate research supervisors in developing their supervisory practice, and in ensuring the best possible environment and outcomes for postgraduate research candidates. The course offers comprehensive, flexible and engaging training in the core principles and practices of postgraduate research supervision to equip new and more experienced supervisors to support their candidates' development into independent researchers.

GMIT has also maintained an individual institutional subscription to Epigeum module on “Research Integrity” since 2015. The module provides comprehensive, institution-wide research integrity training and is also implemented via GMIT’s Virtual Learning Environment. It identifies the principles and responsibilities required of every researcher throughout the research process, from planning through to publication, providing practical advice on dealing with complex issues. The programme provides funders with evidence of comprehensive training in the responsible conduct of research at GMIT, building confidence that researchers are working to the highest integrity standards.

5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support

Recruitment

GMIT recruits teaching staff in line with the selection procedures included in the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 and GMIT's procedure for the Review of Recruitment and Selection Decisions. All staff must have a qualification of at least the level of which they are teaching. While L8 is the minimum requirement for a lecturing position with a level 9 desirable, an increasing number of new hires have a PhD qualification. Interview panels are chaired by the Governing Body Chair or nominee. Other panel members include the President or President's nominee and Head of School/Function. In addition, external expertise is provided by a nominee from the Higher Education sector and a relevant industry nominee. The Institute aims to achieve gender balance with all panels. Interview training for managers is regularly offered to those involved in recruitment panels.

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion

GMIT is committed to the principles of equality and diversity in the recruitment, development and support of staff. A new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy was approved in December 2020 available [HERE](#). This policy broadens the scope previously covered in the Equality Policy to include all staff and students and applicants for jobs and seeks to actively promote and mainstream EDI through GMIT. GMIT has operated a minimum 40% gender balance protocol for all interview boards since approval by Governing Body in January 2018. Unconscious bias training contributes to improved decision making on interview boards. This has been provided for staff through the EDI Office since October 2019.

The Institute has an EDI implementation plan to further improve EDI within the Institute. The Institute has committed to take positive actions to ensure inclusivity in the recruitment process, through advertising, use of different recruitment channels and strong messaging on welcoming applications from diverse groups. The collection of gender-disaggregated data is essential to track progress in disciplines/function where there is gender underrepresentation and GMIT has committed to establishing a mechanism for capturing, reporting and retaining data sets on gender and intersectionality across staffing levels, recruitment and promotion processes, composition of committees and boards, and outreach activities. There is a plan to review all HR

policies and procedures, including recruitment documentation, to ensure that language used is inclusive, gender-sensitive and supportive of applications from diverse cohorts. GMIT applied for Athena SWAN Bronze award accreditation in December 2020 and was awarded in March 2021.

Management

There is sectoral support for developing capacity at executive level. A Senior Executive Development Programme funded by the HEA through THEA was delivered by Advance HE. It covered leadership, agile strategic leadership, strategy development and implementation.

Researchers employed on research projects each report to a nominated Principal Investigator within their project. Principal investigators of projects undertaken within GMIT's Strategic Research Centres report to the designated Centre Leader. Principal investigators of projects undertaken outside GMIT's Strategic Research Centres report to the relevant academic Head of Department / School. The Leaders of GMIT's Strategic Research Centres each report directly to the Vice President for Research and Innovation.

Continuing Professional Development

GMIT is committed to supporting the continuous professional development of all staff with a view to providing the best possible learning environments for its students. A general induction for all staff is provided as is a Teaching & Learning Induction for relevant staff annually. The Institute actively encourages staff to be research active and supports staff engaged in Level 9 and 10 research programmes both financially and through its Scheme for Thesis Write up at PhD Level.

GMIT have designed a flexible blended learning MA in Teaching and Learning with elements of this offered annually to staff. In addition to supporting staff in their engagement with accredited teaching development modules, GMIT has developed two new online learning courses for staff that incorporate Digital Skills Badges. The programmes are designed for independent learning and flexible engagement. On completion of the online courses, staff can choose to progress further to the MA in Teaching & Learning.

GMIT also supports staff in attending conferences and provides a schedule of professional development workshops as part of its Staff Development Week each year. GMIT's policy on Continuous Professional Development is available [HERE](#).

Communication with Staff

The Institute communicates with staff using a range of modes. The President holds all staff online meetings. The Registrar's Office communicates changes to policies/procedures annually to all staff via email or cascades messages down through line managers. Policies, procedures and other resources are available to staff on the SharePoint sites of each function including the Registrar's Functional area. School, Department and Function meetings are held regularly to share information.

New staff are provided with the GMIT staff handbook and the link to the online staff induction site which is hosted on the Institute's staff SharePoint.

Staff Wellbeing

GMIT signed up for inclusion in the Healthy Ireland Healthy Campus Charter and Framework by which GMIT agrees to promote health and wellbeing throughout the Institute's mission, strategy and policies, wherever possible. By appointing a working group and providing funding to the group GMIT has adopted a strategic approach to achieving this on campus. The voluntary Healthy Campus Committee consists of representatives from various departments, from GMIT's remote campuses, and students. The committee aims to combine resources and expertise from within GMIT with external partners to make GMIT a healthier and happier place to work and study.

Staff Development regularly organised workshops and/or information sessions related to staff wellbeing and health.

All staff have access to an Employee Assistance Scheme (EAS) which is a confidential counselling service providing support to employees and their family. The EAS is available 24/7, 365 days a year covering numerous topics such as counselling, infertility & pregnancy loss, elder care support, parent coaching, international employee support, legal information, financial information and more.

6.0 Information and Data Management

GMIT utilises a number of information systems to both support student learning and manage information.

Virtual Learning Environment

Moodle is used as the Institute's virtual learning environment (VLE) supporting student learning through information provision, learning resources and its assessment facilities. Online lectures are delivered through MS Teams. 'Landing Pages' are created for each programme through which the student accesses the Moodle pages for each of their modules. The landing pages provide general information relevant to the programme of study.

Academic Planning Process

GMIT has developed a robust academic planning process which allows us to predict and plan for future student enrolments. An academic planning template has been developed to accurately forecast student numbers based on historic student retention data. All relevant functions (including Academic Units, Buildings and Estates, HR, Computing Service, Academic Affairs and Student Services) are involved in the academic planning process to ensure a holistic approach to academic planning whereby staff recruitment, infrastructure development and procurement are linked to the academic plan to ensure that predicted student numbers can be accommodated and supported.

To assist in the academic planning process and in the development of realistic and viable academic plans, the Institute has developed a series of reports to assist those involved in the academic planning process. These include target student numbers, planned vs. actual intakes in prior years, retention rates by programme and stage, summary charts of various student cohorts, etc.

Predictive models aid in decision making and planning for first year intakes. A model for the prediction of first year intake has been developed based on historic analysis of application numbers and accepts over several years. This model has proved helpful in planning resource requirements in advance of CAO offers and accepts.

GURU

Following a review of examination processes, GURU, a secure system for the submission, transmission and review of examination material has been introduced. GURU collaborated with DCU in the development and roll-out of GURU and subsequently this system has been adopted by other Higher Education Institutes. In addition to secure submission, transmission and review, the system also supports External Examiner nominations and allows for better management of External Examiners and their annual reports. The system allows for monitoring of External Examiner review of assessment material and report submission and facilitates replies annually to externs from the Heads of School addressing any issues raised.

Statistics

GMIT utilises the data from the Student Record System (Banner) to provide relevant and timely information to the Institute's managers. A template has been developed for weekly monitoring of student enrolments by Academic Units against the academic plan to ensure that we are meeting our student enrolment targets.

An interactive dashboard to display HEA SRS data relevant to decision makers has been developed. The dashboard allows managers to access the required information easily and to view trends in student statistics, graduate statistics, etc. over time.

GMIT annually produces retention reports which are broken down by programme stage. A report showing trends overtime is also available. This data is used by programme boards in their annual Programme Board reports, by School/Campus executives in developing their retention strategies and by the Retention sub-committee of Academic Council in developing Retention policy. To enhance the usability of these reports the Institute has identified targets for different programme stages and has developed a traffic light system to indicate how programme stages and Schools/Campuses are performing. Programme stages which are identified as performing less well are identified and discussed when School Executives meet with the Retention Committee.

Student Retention

To complement the Institute's Annual Retention Reports a suite of module performance reports have been developed for use by Programme Boards. The purpose of these reports is to review

the performance of cohorts of students in their assessment in each module in an exam sitting, and over time. These are not retention or progression reports, but rather focus on one of the factors which impacts on student retention and progression i.e. their success or otherwise in their module assessment. The module performance reports available are as follows:

- Module Performance by Examination Sitting
- Programme Specific Module Performance
- All Programmes Module Performance
- Result Category Crosstab
- Trends in Overall Module Performance

Unit Costing

A process for the reconciliation of timetabled teaching hours vs. contracted staff hours for each programme has been developed through the extraction of data from the Timetable System and reconciliation to staff contract hours as recorded on the HR system. This informs our Unit Costing.

Student Engagement

Student engagement and satisfaction is measured, annually, through StudentSurvey.ie, formerly the Irish Student Survey of Engagement (ISSE). GMIT has been active in increasing response rates each year. A summary report of the feedback received is prepared and circulated to staff and students while a more detailed analysis is provided to the Executive and to each Academic unit. A number of new initiatives including placement on BIS programme, more site visits on construction programme, a tailored Academic & Professional Skills module on Science programme, upgraded labs, revised library website and development of an assessment strategy have been implemented at GMIT as a result of student feedback.

To make the feedback from StudentSurvey.ie more accessible, a data model was developed to visualize student feedback. The visualisation includes benchmarking of GMIT scores against the scores of all Institutes of Technology both at index and individual question level. It also allows for the comparison of ISSE scores between academic units within GMIT, benchmarking of discipline areas, trends in scores over time and easy access to responses to free text questions.

Graduate Outcomes Survey

GMIT participate in the annual HEA “Graduate Outcomes Survey” which is used to improve higher education policy and outcomes for future graduates from all higher education institutions in Ireland. The data obtained from this survey is centrally defined by the HEA in consultation with HEIs, and locally managed by HEIs. The Graduate Outcomes Survey provides consistent data across institutions in the following areas:

- Data on graduate qualifications and employment both within Ireland and overseas
- Relevance of employment to area of study
- Data on graduate further study
- Data on graduate unemployment and unavailability for work
- Graduate perceptions of the quality and relevance of their higher education experience.

Within, GMIT, the Careers Service manages the Graduate Outcomes Survey project and produces a customised report with GMIT specific outcomes. This report includes analysis of GMIT graduates, those employed and those seeking employment, in addition to levels of participation in further study and training. The survey gives information concerning the salaries, region of employment and migration patterns of graduates. It also provides feedback on the student experience at college and course level. This report is presented annually to Academic Council and published for Schools and programme boards to consider and make improvements as relevant. A dashboard to display GMIT output from the survey has been developed. Data from the survey is decoded and displayed in this dashboard which is accessible by all staff via the Office of the Registrar SharePoint site.

Module/Programme Database

Academic Module Manager, the module and programme database used by GMIT, is used to create and store module and programmes. The newest version allows for recording of new delivery modes, collecting information on exit awards, and allowing display of programme themes and assessment matrices. It provides for better reporting for Heads of Department in relation to delivery, and clearer programme documents for review panels. It is planned that it will link to the public website when that is redeveloped.

Programme Boards

Programme Boards have access to and consider several reports on an annual basis to inform programme improvement:

- Student Retention
- Student Performance
- External Examiner
- Student Feedback (from the QA3 end of year survey)

As part of [Code of Practice No. 2 \(Validation and Monitoring\)](#), each Programme Board is required to complete an annual report. The Head of School compiles all these reports into a School report, which is presented to Academic Council for consideration and review.

Academic Council Reports

Each year several reports are presented to Academic Council including the following:

- Exam Results
- Award Classifications
- Student Retention
- External Examiner
- Student Exam Appeals
- Disciplinary Committee Outcomes
- School Annual Reports
- Graduate Outcomes Survey
- External Examiner Feedback

Data Management

GMIT holds and processes personal data about many different types of people such as its current, past or prospective employees, applicants, students, alumni, suppliers, contractors, members of the public, etc. The Institute processes this personal data to carry out its business and administrative functions and to comply with statutory requirements. This personal data is subject to data protection legislation, specifically the GDPR and Data Protection Acts. GMIT is committed to a policy of protecting the rights and freedoms of individuals with respect to the processing of their personal data. GMIT's Data Protection Policy is available [HERE](#). Data subjects have a number of rights under GDPR. GMIT's Data Subject Rights Procedure is available [HERE](#).

GMIT is a body established for a public purpose and thus falls within the scope of the Freedom on Information (FOI) Act 2014. The FOI Act 2014 provides the following statutory rights:

- A legal right for any person to access records held by GMIT
- A legal right for individuals to have personal information relating to them amended where it is incomplete, incorrect or misleading
- A legal right for any person to obtain reasons for an act of GMIT which affects them and in which they have a material interest.

GMIT's Guide to Freedom of Information is available [HERE](#).

Key Performance Indicators

In the development of its compact with the HEA, GMIT has identified a number of KPIs that are monitored regularly in preparation for the strategic annual dialogue with the HEA. As part of our ambition to become a TU, the three merging partners developed a common CUA Compact objective with a key focus on the metrics required for designation.

7.0 Public Information and Communication

The main platform for communication with the general public - locally, nationally and internationally is GMIT's website - www.gmit.ie The website has been designed as an external facing platform, and as such provides information on (inter alia) :

- GMIT's programmes of study
- Admissions, Registration, Fees and Scholarships
- Guidance for cohorts including international, Further Education, students with disabilities
- Student Services
- Institute Facilities
- Student Life
- Campuses and Schools
- Research and Innovation
- Sustainability
- Governance
- Quality Assurance

The Marketing Officer uses several social media platforms including [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), LinkedIn and [Instagram](#) to communicate key messages to prospective students and other stakeholders.

Prospective Students

The Institute publishes both a printed and on-line version of its prospectus which gives details of the programmes on offer in the Institute along with admission requirements, selection criteria and qualifications awarded, etc. The on-line prospectus is available [HERE](#).

GMIT's School Liaison Officer visits schools and attends career fairs to provide information on GMIT and its programmes. Open Days/Evenings are held during the year targeting particular cohorts of students to provide information on programmes of study and student life in GMIT. The Institute has developed a 24/7 Virtual Open Day which can be accessed [HERE](#). Recently, the college has also been delivering live open events and school talks through an online platform.

Employers

Amongst the information available for Employers the Careers Office provide details of how they can support employers seeking to recruit students [HERE](#). The Institute has published an Employability Statement available [HERE](#) profiling how the college develops employability within our students.

All GMIT graduates receive the European Diploma Supplement, part of the Europass framework transparency tools after graduation. Details available [HERE](#).

Research

The [website](#) is used to communicate with prospective research students and with industry who may be seeking research. It provides an overview of GMIT's research centres and the activities and services provided by GMIT's enterprise centres (iHubs). Details of GMIT's Technology Transfer Office is included as is the GMIT Campus Company Policy and Spin-Out Procedure (available [HERE](#)) and Intellectual Property Policy (available [HERE](#)).

Quality Assurance

GMIT's Quality Assurance Framework is available on the public website [HERE](#) in addition to being published internally on the Office of the Registrar SharePoint. The reports from all validations and reviews - programmatic, academic unit, function and institute - are also published on the public website [HERE](#).

GMIT's Quality of Service Charter sets out the nature and quality of service which our stakeholders can expect to receive from Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology. The term 'stakeholders' refers to all those we deal with including students, alumni, staff, career guidance teachers, industry, professional bodies, research funders, local communities, the general public, local authorities, regional assemblies and government agencies and departments. This charter is based on the twelve Principles of Quality Customer Service for Customers and Clients of the Public Service. In addition, GMIT has also published a specific student charter. This is a formal statement of what our students can expect from the Institute and in turn what GMIT expects from our students. This Charter has been developed by the Students' Union of GMIT together with the Institute.

The Code of Student Conduct outlines the general rights of students and what they can expect and what is expected of them in relation to Learning, Teaching and Assessment. This includes, for example, the provision of full information on programmes, an outline of module content, adequate notice of, and feedback following, assessments etc. Most of this information is provided to the student in a Programme Handbook, details of which are included in Code of Practice No. 2. The Code of Student Conduct is available [HERE](#).

At GMIT, the Academic Module Manager is a central repository of all approved programme documents and module descriptors. It is planned to make module descriptors accessible via the public website in the future.

Irish Languages Act

Tá GMIT tiomanta do chur chun cinn agus d'fhorbairt na Gaeilge ar champas. Tá mar sprioc againn chomh maith raon agus cáilíocht na seirbhísí atá ar fáil i nGaeilge don phobal a mhéadú. Tá breac-chuntas le fáil ar ghealltanais GMIT i leith na Gaeilge i [Scéim Ghaeilge GMIT 2019-2022](#). Leagann an Scéim seo amach raon na réimsí ina bhfuil an Institiúid tiomanta d'fheabhas a chur ar na seirbhísí dátheangacha sna blianta atá amach romhainn. Ullmhaíodh an Scéim seo faoi alt 11 d'Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla 2003.

(GMIT is committed to the promotion and development of the Irish language on campus. We also aim to increase the range and standard of services available in Irish to members of the public. GMIT's commitments to the Irish language are outlined in the [GMIT Irish Language Scheme 2019-2022](#). This Scheme sets out a range of areas in which the Institute has committed to improving bilingual services in the years ahead. This Scheme was prepared under section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003.)

8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review

GMIT implements a range of actions to ensure the quality of its programme delivery and management. In accordance with GMIT's policy on Programme Validation and Monitoring available [HERE](#), the Heads of Academic Units and Programme Boards are responsible for managing and ensuring the quality of academic processes. The Head of Academic Unit is responsible for strategic planning, implementation and co-ordination of academic and related processes, staffing and other resource requirements, programme development, and management of change. The Head of Department has responsibility for all programmes/awards in his/her department including, the day-to-day delivery of programmes, timetabling, and ensuring the ongoing quality and continued development of programmes.

A Programme Board is established for each programme, consisting of all lecturers on the programme(s), the Head of Academic Unit, the Head of Department and at least two students per stage (with gender balance where possible) of the programme. The Programme Board monitors the design, delivery, academic standards, students' performance and academic development of programmes and awards. Formal meetings of the Programme Board are held at least three times during the academic year. Programme Boards consider *inter alia* student feedback, External Examiner reports, graduate surveys, retention reports, and will annually devise a continuous assessment schedule, and review programme design, delivery and assessment as part of planning for the forthcoming year.

In addition to providing feedback through the Programme Board, students are provided with the opportunity to evaluate their programme of study and support services through module evaluation forms, and an end of stage Programme Survey. They also have an opportunity to participate in StudentSurvey.ie, Ireland's national student engagement survey available [HERE](#).

Every five to seven years, programmes undergo Programmatic Review to ensure and assure *inter alia* that required academic standards are being attained; that programmes and awards remain relevant and viable; that student needs including academic and labour-market needs are addressed; the quality of programmes and awards is enhanced and improved; and public confidence in the quality of GMIT's programmes and awards. The Programmatic Review Policy is available [HERE](#). Programmatic Review involves a self-evaluation review and an external

peer review process. The Programme Board involves a range of stakeholders in reviewing the programme including *inter alia* students, graduates, employers and industry/professional bodies.

A review of each Academic Unit (AU) is scheduled prior to a programmatic review of programmes in that AU. The Policy for the Strategic Review of Academic Units is available [HERE](#). The main elements of the review are a self-evaluation and an external peer review process. The review of Academic Units focuses on the performance of the academic unit since the last review and involves an environmental review and a self-evaluation identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the unit and plans to deal with the opportunities and challenges facing it. The findings from the review of academic units feed into the programmatic review process.

Reviews are also undertaken of Support Services and Facilities, the policy for which is available [HERE](#). The main elements of the review are a self-evaluation and an external peer review process. This review of support services focuses on the contribution of each of the services and how they can be developed to enhance the quality of provision to learners, staff, and all stakeholders.

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) carry out an Institutional Review of GMIT on a cyclical basis. Institutional Review is an element of the broader quality framework for Institutes of Technology undertaken by QQI. It is interdependent on and integrated with a wider range of QQI engagements: Quality Assurance Guidelines, GMIT's Quality Assurance Procedures; Annual Institutional Quality Reports (AIQR); and Dialogue Meetings; DAB Status and Sectoral Protocols. Institutional Review is a key and critical element of Quality Assurance. It evaluates the effectiveness of institution-wide quality assurance procedures for the purposes of establishing, ascertaining, maintaining, and enhancing the quality of education, training, research and related services the institution provides. The Institutional Review measures institution accountability for compliance with European standards for quality assurance, regard to the expectations set out in the QQI quality assurance guidelines or their equivalent and adherence to other relevant QQI policies and procedures as established in the lifecycle of engagement between the institution and QQI. Institutional Review explores institution enhancement of quality in relation to impacts on teaching, learning and research, institutional achievements and innovations in quality assurance, alignment to the institution's mission and

strategy and the quality-related performance of the institution relative to quality indicators and benchmarks identified by the institution. GMIT's Institutional Review Policy is available [HERE](#).

External Experts

External experts are appointed to provide an independent expert overview and input into the validation of new programmes and the reviews of programmes, academic units and functions.

In the case of External Examiners, they must have an award at least equivalent to the level of the award that they have responsibility for external examining. The Head of Schools, in consultation with Programme Boards, will nominate the External Examiners to the Registrar for ratification, having regard to the requirements of the programme, and discipline area, the need for independence, and avoidance of conflicts of interest. External Examiners may be from academia or industry and are approved by Academic Council.

Independent reviewers also participate in programme validations, programmatic review, academic review and function reviews. The nominees should have the necessary academic and professional expertise to engage in the review. They are nominated by the Registrar following consultation with the relevant Head of Academic Unit/Function. Ideally panels are gender balanced. The move to online panels has allowed the involvement of more international panel members, and this will be continued even after the return to onsite panels.

9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties

9.1 Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

Type of arrangement	Total Number
PRSBs	19
Awarding bodies	-
QA bodies	-

1. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI)
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc (Hons) in General Nursing BSc (Hons) in Psychiatric Nursing
Date of accreditation or last review	28th November 2018
Date of next review	2022/23

2. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Engineers Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	B.Eng (Hons) Civil Engineering Level 8 B.Eng Civil Engineering Level 7 B.Eng (Hons) Energy Engineering Level 8 B.Eng Energy Engineering Level 7 B.Eng (Hons) Mechanical Engineering Level 8 B.Eng Mechanical Engineering Level 7 B.Eng (Hons) Software and Electronic Engineering Level 8 B.Eng Software and Electronic Engineering Level 7 https://www.engineersireland.ie/Professionals/Membership/Become-a-member/Accredited-third-level-courses/Find-accredited-programme/
Date of accreditation or last review	06/06/2019
Date of next review	2023

3. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	The Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc Construction Management (Level 7) BSc (Hons) Construction Management (Level 8) https://d7.ciob.org/sites/default/files/Overseas%20Accredited%20Jan21%20v2.pdf?_ga=2.95230239.2010875753.1612430841-1297416483.1612430841
Date of accreditation or last review	05/05/2016
Date of next review	2021 (deferred due to COVID-19, provisionally scheduled for 2022)

4. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	The Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering (Level 8) https://d7.ciob.org/sites/default/files/Overseas%20Accredited%20Jan21%20v2.pdf?_ga=2.95230239.2010875753.1612430841-1297416483.1612430841
Date of accreditation or last review	05/05/2016
Date of next review	2022

5. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	The Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland (RIAI)
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc (Hons) in Architectural Technology (Level 8) BSc in Architectural Technology (Level 7) https://www.riai.ie/careers-in-architecture/how-to-become-an-architectural-technologist
Date of accreditation or last review	Nov 2016
Date of next review	2022

6. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT)
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc (Hons) in Architectural Technology (Level 8) https://architecturaltechnology.com/education/study.html?q=galway&search_by=location
Date of accreditation or last review	10/02/2021
Date of next review	2026

7. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (SCSI)
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc (Hons) in Quantity Surveying & Construction Economics (Level 8) https://scsi.ie/students/studying/where-you-can-study/#1603289706160-c95f180e-784b
Date of accreditation or last review	23/11/2017
Date of next review	2023

8. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc (Hons) in Quantity Surveying & Construction Economics (Level 8) http://www.ricscourses.org/Course/#Establishment=Galway-Mayo%20Institute%20of%20Technology/Country=Ireland/
Date of accreditation or last review	23/11/2017
Date of next review	2023

9. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Chartered Association of Building Engineers (CABE)
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc (Hons) in Architectural Technology (Level 8) BSc in Architectural Technology (Level 7) BSc (Hons) in Quantity Surveying & Construction Economics (Level 8) B.Eng (Hons) Civil Engineering (Level 8) B.Eng Civil Engineering (Level 7) BSc (Hons) Construction Management (Level 8) BSc Construction Management (Level 7) https://cbuide.com/page/cabe_academic_partners_and_accredited_courses
Date of accreditation or last review	23/11/2017
Date of next review	2022

10. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Teaching Council
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc (Hons) in Education (Design, Graphics and Construction) Bachelor of Education (Hons) in Art, Design & Graphics
Date of accreditation or last review	2021
Date of next review	2022

11. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Institute of Biomedical Science, UK
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc (Hons) in Medical Science https://careers.ibms.org/students/accredited-degree-courses/undergraduate-non-uk-courses/
Date of accreditation or last review	2021
Date of next review	2023

12. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Institute of Physics
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc Physics & Instrumentation (Honours - Level 8) GA783. BSc Physics & Instrumentation (Level 7) GA773 Institute of Physics Register of Recognised Courses: https://www.iop.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/register-recognised-courses.pdf
Date of accreditation or last review	Annual (July 2020)
Date of next review	Annual (July 2021)

13. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc Forensic Science and Analysis https://www.csofs.org/Accredited-course-search
Date of accreditation or last review	September 2020
Date of next review	June 2022

14. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	National Strength & Conditioning Association (NSCA)
Programme titles and links to publications	NSCA Recognised Education Partner (BSc) BSc Sports & Exercise Science Journal of Strength & Conditioning Research (JSCR); Strength & Conditioning Journal (SCJ)
Date of accreditation or last review	2019
Date of next review	2022

15. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	United Kingdom Strength & Conditioning Association (UKSCA) UKSCA Recognised Education Partner (MSc)
Programme titles and links to publications	MSc Strength & Conditioning Professional Strength & Conditioning Journal
Date of accreditation or last review	2020
Date of next review	In perpetuity (based on a member of staff is accredited with the UKSCA)

16. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Accounting Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting Bachelor of Business in Accounting & Financial Management (Mayo Campus) Bachelor of Business (Hons) in Accounting (Mayo Campus) https://www.accaglobal.com/ie/en/help/exemptions-calculator.html
Date of accreditation or last review	Feb 2021
Date of next review	Dec 2025

17. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
Name of body:	Chartered Accountants Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Accounting Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting Bachelor of Business in Accounting & Financial Management (Mayo Campus) Bachelor of Business (Hons) in Accounting (Mayo Campus)
Date of accreditation or last review	Feb 2018
Date of next review	Dec 2022

18. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	
Name of body:	CPA Ireland
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in Accounting Bachelor of Business in Accounting & Financial Management (Mayo Campus) Bachelor of Business (Hons) in Accounting (Mayo Campus) https://www.cpaireland.ie/Become-A-Student/Exemptions/Courses/Exemptions-Results?col=16
Date of accreditation or last review	
Date of next review	2022

19. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	
Name of body:	CIMA
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in Accounting Bachelor of Business (Hons) in Accounting (Mayo Campus) Bachelor of Business (Hons) Bachelor of Business in Business Information Systems Bachelor of Business in Rural Enterprise and Agri-business https://www.cimaglobal.com/Starting-CIMA/Starting-CIMA/Exemptions/Exemption-Search/Galway-Mayo-Institute-of-Technology-GMIT-9552/
Date of accreditation or last review	2020
Date of next review	2023/2024

20. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	
Name of body:	Qualifications and Advisory Board for the Early Learning and Childcare Sector
Programme titles and links to publications	https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation-information/c2e6b-qualifications-advisory-board-qab-for-the-early-learning-and-care-elc-sector/#list-of-approved-programmes-with-adherence-to-the-professional-award-criteria-and-guidelines
Date of accreditation or last review	March 2021
Date of next review	

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	-
Joint/double/multiple awards	2
Collaborative programmes	5
Franchise programmes	-
Linked providers (DABs only)	-

1. Collaborative provision (Type of collaborative provision)	Joint Award
Name of body (/bodies):	Ghent University (BE), University of Pierre and Marie Curie (FR), University of Western Brittany (FR), University of the Algarve (PT), University of Oviedo (ES), Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (IE), University of the Basque Country (ES), Polytechnic University of Marche (IT), University of Bergen (NO)
Programme titles and links to publications	International Masters in Marine Biological Resources www.imbrsea.eu
Date of last review	2018
Date of next review	2022

2. Collaborative provision (Type of collaborative provision)	Joint Award
Name of body (/bodies):	NUI Galway
Programme titles and links to publications	Certificate in Science, Technology and Engineering (Foundation Studies) https://www.gmit.ie/science/foundation-studies-diploma-science-engineering-and-technology-joint-nui-galway-and-gmit
Date of last review	18/06/2018
Date of next review	2022

3. Collaborative provision (Type of collaborative provision)	Joint Award
Name of body (/bodies):	NUI Galway
Programme titles and links to publications	Certificate in Business Studies (Foundation Studies) https://www.gmit.ie/business/foundation-studies-diploma-business-galway
Date of last review	18/06/2018
Date of next review	2022

4. Collaborative provision (Type of collaborative provision)	Consortium-led Apprenticeship (Post-2016) GMIT is the co-ordinating provider.
Name of body (/bodies):	Collaborating providers include: IMDA Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) Institute of Technology Sligo (IT Sligo) Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)
Programme titles and links to publications	BEng in Manufacturing Engineering (Apprenticeship) Higher Certificate in Manufacturing Engineering (Apprenticeship) https://www.gmit.ie/sites/default/files/public/about/docs/beng-manufacturing-engineering-apprenticeship.pdf
Date of last review	17 th February 2017
Date of next review	2022
5. Collaborative provision (Type of collaborative provision)	Collaborative Provision
Name of body (/bodies):	Irish MedTech Association
Programme titles and links to publications	Higher Diploma in Medical Technology Regulatory Affairs
Date of last review	11 th November 2020
Date of next review	2022
6. Collaborative provision (Type of collaborative provision)	Collaborative Provision
Name of body (/bodies):	Europus
Programme titles and links to publications	Ard-Diplóma i nGaeilge Fheidhmeach agus Aistriúchán Higher Diploma in Applied Irish and Translation https://www.gmit.ie/humanities/ard-diploma-i-ngaeilge-fheidhmeach-agus-aistriuchan
Date of last review	2014
Date of next review	2022

7. Collaborative provision	Collaborative Provision
(Type of collaborative provision)	
Name of body (/bodies):	Mountbellew Agricultural College
Programme titles and links to publications	BSc in Agriculture and Environmental Management (L7 and L8) https://www.gmit.ie/agri-science/bachelor-science-hons-agriculture-and-environmental-management Bachelor of Business in Rural Enterprise and Agri-Business (L7 and L8) https://www.gmit.ie/agri-business/bachelor-business-hons-rural-enterprise-and-agri-business BEng in Agricultural Engineering (L7 and L8) https://www.gmit.ie/mechanical-industrial-engineering/bachelor-engineering-hons-agricultural-engineering
Date of last review	2014
Date of next review	2022

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. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	St Lawrence College, Kingston, Ontario, Canada
Programme titles and links to publications	BBs Hotel and Catering Management (Bachelor of Business in Hotel and Catering Management GMIT) Hospitality Diploma
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	June 2020.
Date of next review	June 2024
Detail of the agreement	This agreement provides opportunities for student study for Canadian and Irish students plus degree completion opportunity for SLC students in GMIT. The latter is part of the IOT Ontario Colleges agreement which first began in 2012.

2. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Lingnan Normal University, Guangdong province, China.
Programme titles and links to publications	BA Hons Culinary and Gastronomic Sciences GMIT and Bachelor Hons Food Science and Food Engineering, Lingnan Normal University, China.
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	March 2020
Date of next review	March 2025
Detail of the agreement	This agreement provides multiple opportunities for students in culinary and gastronomic sciences. The agreement is part of the Chinese Ministry of Education joint programme process and provides advanced entry routes for Lingnan students to GMIT BA Hons Culinary and Gastronomic Sciences programmes. In addition, GMIT faculty will visit Lingnan annually to deliver modules and there are opportunities for reciprocal international work placement which is a key component of the award.

[Higher Education Institution]

2022

Annual Quality Report (Institution)
PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE
ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT
Reporting Period 2020-2021

1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments

1.1 Strategic QA Updates

This section is divided into three topics:

- A. QA updates related to the implementation of GMIT's Strategic Plan
- B. QA Framework Updates

A. QA updates related to the implementation of GMIT's Strategic Plan

GMIT's Strategic Plan for 2019-23 adopts a different approach to previous plans by placing emphasis predominantly on the student experience and lifecycle. Students enter GMIT as an individual and are shaped both personally and professionally through engagement with the GMIT community. As the student transitions to the workplace or further education the impact of the GMIT experience becomes evident through the added value they bring to their new community. Thus, the strategic pillars of individual, community and impact permeate the structure of the plan. The Institute's goals relate to:

- Learning
- Wellbeing
- Fundamental Disciplinary Knowledge
- Skills for the 21st Century Citizen
- Diversity Arising from Opportunity, Equality and Inclusion
- Innovation Through Cross-Disciplinary Working
- Research Leadership in Niche Areas
- A Healthy Community Rooted in a Positive Culture
- Destination of Choice for Students and Staff
- Best Prepared Graduates in the Region
- Research and Innovation Excellence to Support Regional Development
- Support for Enterprise
- An Integral Part of the Social, Cultural and Economic Ecosystem in the West of Ireland

To support these goals the Institute identified enablers:

- Programmes with an Applied Focus
- Online Learning
- Employability and Professional Practice
- Innovation in Teaching
- Coherent Research Themes
- Collaborative Culture
- Cross-disciplinary Projects
- Infrastructure and Facilities
- Community and Outreach Programmes
- Health and Wellness
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- Staff Expertise and Development
- International Programme

Below is a summary of progress and updates relating to relevant enablers:

1. Programmes with an applied focus

GMIT continues to ensure that its programmes have an applied focus consulting and often working directly with industry during programme development. For example, in the period under review the Certificate in Peer Support Practice was developed in conjunction with the HSE, the MSc in Applied Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory Practice worked closely with staff in the Bons Secours Hospital Galway, and a number of new programme teams worked closely with the medical technology industry. Once again GMIT was successful in attracting funding from Springboard+ for a number of new and existing programmes in response to industry needs as outlined in Table 1.

School of Science
Postgraduate Diploma in Advanced Biopharmaceutical Science (HCI)
Higher Diploma in Advanced Analytical Chemistry (HCI)
Higher Diploma in Science in Software Development
Higher Diploma in Science in Data Analytics
Certificate in Food Innovation & Entrepreneurship
Higher Diploma in Medical Technology Reg Affairs (Collaborative)
School of Business
Higher Diploma in Business Analytics (HCI)
School of Engineering
Post Grad Diploma in Building Information Modelling (HCI)
Postgrad Diploma in Circular Economy for a Sustainable Environment (HCI)
Bachelor of Engineering (Add-On) in Industrial Engineering
Bachelor of Engineering (Add-On) in Manufacturing Engineering
Certificate in Industrial Automation
Certificate in Engineering in Building Information Modelling
Certificate in Drones and SMART Agriculture Sensors
Galway International Hotel School
Certificate in Culinary Skills (Consortium)
Higher Certificate In Culinary Skills (Consortium)

Mayo Campus
Higher Diploma in Cybersecurity Risk & Compliance
Certificate in Digital Media & Marketing
Certificate in Network Cybersecurity
Certificate in Digital Mapping and GIS (SPA)
Certificate in Building Digital Healthcare Communities
Certificate in Business Sustainability Leadership

Table 1: Springboard+ and HCI Programmes Approved in 2021

The School of Engineering established the TRANSCEND project which will be driving the development of the disciplines of advanced manufacturing, automation and robotics within GMIT through leading out on a pilot project on Industry 4.0. The project will build on the success of the Bachelor of Engineering in Automation and Robotics (Level 7) to deliver level 8 and 9 offerings in Automation, in Robotics and in Medical Device Design. This pilot project will increase the relationships with industry and place GMIT at the centre of knowledge in the area of advanced manufacturing, automation and robotics.

The applied nature of GMIT's programmes is evidenced by the performance of our students and graduates. For example, Roisin Ni Cathain, an accomplished Architectural Technologist and graduate of the first BSc in Architectural Technology cohort in 2010, has been voted CIAT Architectural Technologist of the year 2020 in the UK. Roisin is Director of Architecture BPTW London. Fergal Keane from RTE, interviewed Mechanical Engineering student Cian Dalton for Seascapes on RTE Radio One. Cian discussed his award-winning final year project which examined 'The Design and Development of a Waste Removal Robot for Marine Waters and Rivers'. The interview is available on podcast at www.rte.ie/seascapes. Postgraduate students on the new *M.Sc. in Design and Innovation* at GMIT worked on a research project with the Galway Parkinson's Association and local medical device company Synecco, aimed at assisting patients and their families with medication adherence. The new GMIT MSc in Design and Innovation course, developed by the School of Engineering, is inspired by the Stanford d. School's Design Thinking philosophy and has been developed by a cross-disciplinary team in GMIT using expertise from Engineering, Design and Creative Arts, and Business led by the Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering.

GMIT is playing a key role in the strategic evolution of apprenticeships and in developing Green Papers on emerging issues linked to the newly launched Action Plan for Apprenticeships. This is facilitated by the Registrar chairing the THEA strategic apprenticeship committee namely: the Technological Higher Education Apprenticeship Committee (THEAC).

2. Online Learning

The trajectory towards increasing the volume of online learning escalated due to necessity with the arrival of COVID-19. During the reporting period the CUA partners developed and approved in each Institution a Policy on Online and Blended Learning.

The Teaching and Learning Office continues to be proactive in the development of resources and provision of training to support staff engaged in online training using a SharePoint site as a portal for staff to access tools and upskilling. Sharing of good practice also took place when 20 digital teaching and learning cases provided by over 30 CUA contributors were published in 'The DigitalEd Book' available at www.DigitalEd.ie/Book. This outlines a suite of teaching and learning practice cases implemented in 2020-21. In addition, a suite of introduction videos is now available on each theme in the book, providing an insight on the cases by the various authors.

A DigitalEd Week, *Building Digital Teaching and Learning Capabilities in the CUA*, was delivered in May 2021 which covered a variety of digital teaching and learning themes to include student engagement, assessment, online course showcases, open education resources and practices, design thinking, academic integrity, H5P, TEL tools, lessons learned teaching during a global pandemic in addition to a Microsoft Education Development Day to learn about the suite of applications available from the Microsoft Education (e.g. OneNote, Forms, Power Automate, Excel and Power BI) and how to support students online with accessible content. Furthermore, an online Digital Insights Symposium was held in June 2021 to explore the wide range of digital programmes and projects in development across all GMIT campuses, schools, and functions. 21 digital learning projects presented progress and outputs to date. This special event formed part of the DigitalEd.ie (iNOTE CUA Project) programme activities and event series.

New digital badges learning pathways for professional services and academic staff was developed in 2020-21 and piloted in May-September 2021. The badges pathway is providing self-directed learning opportunities to build digital teaching and learning capabilities across the CUA.

Under the iNOTE project a Digital Academic Champion network was established. Digital Champions undertook a digital training programme and accredited L9 10 ECTS module to enable them to mentor their colleagues in online delivery in each academic department. In 2020, 20 academic staff completed the training programme and in 2021 a further 20 staff have signed up across the CUA. This digital education programme forms part of the DigitalEd.ie knowledge platform learning pathway options.

Various digital tools to support online learners have been piloted including [Mentimeter](#), which allows for the creation of fun and interactive presentations, and helps make events, presentations, lectures, and workshops innovative and memorable. A user experience survey was distributed at the end of the pilot in December 2021 to all staff ($n=132$) who engaged with Mentimeter. Most respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that Mentimeter's setup and platform features were easy to use, improved their online teaching/delivery, enhanced their teaching practices/presentation skills, increased the level of engagement with their students/audience, and met their expectations. A new interactive tool, [Vevox](#) (similar to Mentimeter), was recently introduced to GMIT staff and students for engagement in meetings and classes. Pilots were also established to test staff and student experience of Padlet (online noticeboard) and PebblePad (portfolio tool).

A range of student resources were developed to support online students to include:

- A total of 60 PASS Leaders went live on Teams from September 2020 to help enhance the experience for first year students and ease the transition to third level.
- Through the BOLT (Blended and Online Learning and Teaching) initiative, several Online Graduate Student Mentors started in GMIT in September 2020 to support students learning remotely. The TLO supported the Student Mentors and provided relevant training.
- GMIT's [Digital Learning Charter](#) was developed, in conjunction with the BOLT initiative, to outline 10 Digital Communication Principles GMIT seeks to uphold in our digital learning environments.
- GMIT [Steps to Success](#) in Learning Online was developed by the TLO to support the online student learning experience.
- An [Academic Integrity Guide](#) for Students was created to help students understand academic integrity and how to manage their college work.
- In collaboration with the Careers Office, GMIT's Online Employability Module aligns with the Institute's Employability Framework which prepares students to the highest standards before contacting employers for placement or graduate jobs.
- Through a range of interactive activities, real student voices, and sophisticated pedagogy, the Being Well, Living Well Online Toolkit was introduced to equip students with the practical tools and knowledge needed to develop strategies for coping and prevention of mental, physical, emotional, and financial wellbeing.

The library continues to enhance its services to students through increased access to online services. The library website was revamped during the summer of 2021 to ensure it is more user friendly and accessible. The suite of databases were expanded through the purchase of the following during 2021: Sage Research Methods, Flipster, Mintel, Academic Video online, Academic Search Ultimate, Hospitality and Tourism Complete, I2i National Standards, and Vocational Studies Complete. The library also increased its ebook stock. In addition it increased its online presence through a new

section on the Student HUB. Information skills training provision pivoted online for 2020 and interactive tutorials were developed and available in LearnonLine. Library tours were also virtual. Users can now avail of a new service to book individual virtual appointments with any member of the library staff. Online coffee mornings were held with academic staff to outline the new library services and a series of virtual lunchtime talks were delivered during the year. The libguides are continually added to which includes a Wellbeing libguide, Open Educational Resources and open access guides. Given students were studying partially remotely and in some instances fully off-site a scan and deliver service was also implemented to provide scanned chapters of books to users in accordance with copyright licensing regulations.

3. Employability and Professional Practice

Work Placements are a key element of many programmes in GMIT and contribute to the applied nature of the education that GMIT delivers. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic there was a high degree of uncertainty around the organisation of work placements, with many employers unable to offer placements and placements abroad being cancelled. The inherent value of placements was acknowledged by Programme Boards and every effort was made to secure placements for students, although in some instances they were delayed or reduced in duration. Some industries suffered the impact of the pandemic more than others, for example construction and hospitality, with a knock-on consequence for placements. A Work Placement Group consisting of a range of internal stakeholders involved in the placement of students was formed to consider the issues raised by the prevailing environment. They agreed the following general principles:

- Where feasible placements will proceed as per the Approved Programme Schedule and module descriptor.
- All students going on placement will be fully briefed on their personal responsibilities in relation to COVID-19 for their own safety and that of others they will be working with.
- All placement providers will be asked to confirm their compliance with COVID-19 public health guidelines.
- Where feasible placements in Ireland will involve minimal travel and/or remote working.
- Students with Very-High Risk Medical Conditions will be facilitated in engaging with the placement module or a suitable approved alternative where feasible.
- Alternatives to placement will be considered by each Programme Board to provide for students unable to source placement due to implications of COVID-19 pandemic or due to local or national restriction preventing or interrupting placements.
- QA mechanisms will be put in place to approve alternatives to placements which allow students to achieve the relevant learning outcomes.

It was recognised that there would not be a 'one size fits all' in relation to scenarios where the normal placement of students is not feasible. In instances where an alternative to placement may be required the following broad approach was suggested:

- Alternatives to placement should be agreed by Programme Boards and approved through the appropriate quality assurance mechanism.
- Alternatives to placement should allow students to achieve the relevant learning outcomes.
- The requirements of Professional Bodies should always be considered, and any solutions implemented should not disadvantage students in the long term.

Where restrictions locally or nationally interrupt placement and inhibit or prevent the student from completing placement as planned the following should apply, as appropriate and determined by the Programme Board:

- Students can continue their placement when safe to do so.
- If the Programme Board deem the student has met the module learning outcomes the requirement for the remaining period of placement may be waived.
- Students may be given relevant project work which in conjunction with the part-placement are deemed to meet the module learning outcomes.
- In instances where public health guidelines prevent students from engaging with placements or it is not feasible to source placement due to the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic the following approaches inter alia may apply where there is not already an approved alternative:
 - Students can defer their placement until it is safe or feasible to complete it, progressing and carrying the associate credits if required.
 - Students may be allowed undertake a project which if possible, will be work-based.
 - Students can take other modules amounting to the requisite number of credits which support the work placement and/or programme learning outcomes including The Next Step module if not completed previously.
 - Students can complete an institute approved supplemental award designed to meet the work placement module learning outcomes.

A differential validation took place for relevant programmes to approve their alternatives to work placement. Ultimately, as was preferable it was not necessary to use an alternative for most students.

The Preparation for Placement Programme was developed to assist students in securing their work placements, in an extremely competitive placement sector. Students are brought through a comprehensive programme of workshops on CV and Cover letter preparation, 1 to 1 CV reviews, Interview Preparation, Mock Interviews, Job sector analysis, and LinkedIn, to ensure that they are ready to hit the ground running to secure available placements. The Careers Service collaborated in the delivery of this programme with the Schools of Business, Engineering, & Science and the programme was delivered to approx. 300 students. Feedback has been positive.

The Careers Service has enhanced its offerings to students through the provision of software students can access when and where they wish. The Service has rolled out CareerSet, an online career platform that gives students actionable, personalized feedback on their CV. This innovative tool, powered by AI, gives immediate, actionable steps to optimize their CV and to tailor it to specific job opportunities. Students get an overall CV rating with targeted suggestions to ensure they make it as effective as possible. CareerSet is designed to support students, before visiting a career advisor for further guidance. To date since its introduction in November 2020 there have been 2,093 CV uploads.

GMIT organised Virtual Careers Fairs throughout the academic year to enhance student employment prospects. This involved over 900 individual students meeting with employers evidencing that the demand to meet GMIT students is extremely high. Employers met GMIT students directly online, through one-to-one appointments and through group meetings. In advance of the fair, the Careers Service provided guidance and tools to students to ensure they were well prepared. Feedback was positive with comments such as “students were really engaged and asked fantastic questions”, “I was delighted at the quality of students”, “It gave us the opportunity to speak to exceptional students who were well prepared with great questions”, “The 1:1 online career fair chat function allows both the students and company to have that personal interaction again.’

The Careers Service is also actively involved in student retention through activities such as the ‘Drop in Before you Drop Out’ Initiative, offering careers counselling to students thinking of leaving their course, advising first year students about course transfer options, advice on elective choice and providing psychometric testing for incoming students.

4. Innovation in Teaching

The focus of teaching development was on online assessment and assessment transformation given increased off-site teaching and the upcoming Programmatic Review. A series of institute wide workshops at School level were delivered. Programmatic Review also prompted the creation of a new creating [Learning Outcomes resource](#) for all academic staff to support module updates for Programmatic Review.

GMIT Teaching and Learning Office have led out on the development of a series of Learning Enhancement Projects (LEP) for GMIT under the SATLE 2 (2020-21) National Forum for Teaching and Learning Enhancement fund and this has included the development of the following:

- NutriPD: Growing Professional Competence in Nutrition

- Re-imagining Assessment and Feedback for Student Success - a CUA Project
- Student Success through Sustainability Engagement and Action
- Digital Professional Practice Experiences in Science and Culinary Arts
- The First Step: Innovative Strengths Profiling Programme for First Year Students in GMIT
- Remote Professional Practice and Projects for Creative Arts & Media Students
- Display Stands and Electronic Terminals to Aid in the Digitisation of Exhibition Events
- Opensource Collaborative Robots
- The Digital Craftsperson's Perspective
- Student-designed Assessment through e-Portfolio Construction in Physics and Instrumentation Modules
- Digital Learning Transformation for Clinical Skills
- Self-assessment of Competence in the Building Regulations
- Digital CAD Online Learning Support/Tutor Pilot Project

Innovations in teaching have been primarily in the online/blended space given the environment and are detailed in the section of the report pertaining to online delivery.

The move to online learning has seen a significant shift in the delivery and assessment of mathematics in the Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering where lecturers have been innovating in their delivery to students. The Workshop tool in Moodle has been used to facilitate online anonymous peer review for both first- and second-year students. This allows all students to participate more meaningfully as they reflect critically on the quality of their peers' work and their own. Additionally, the Microsoft OneNote app is being used to deliver lectures and tutorials. This allows for live interaction between students and lecturers as it provides a platform for students to upload their work in personal folders. These folders allow the lecturer to give individual and instant feedback when required and serve as a portfolio of completed work for each student. Regular formative assessment is now a feature of the online mathematics classroom with the use of a variety of online quizzes allowing for instant feedback which is a key feature of this type of assessment.

5. Coherent Research Themes

Research and innovation activities at GMIT feature various types of quality assurance processes. At present many of our practices are currently under review as we prepare for transition to Technological University. Quality is addressed in two capacities:

1. Quality in the R&I function; and,
2. Quality in the overall institute's research culture.

From an internal perspective, critical aspects of our research and innovation operations are monitored and reported on through an Internal Control Framework process. Under this process various operational risks and the management of same are examined and reported on.

GMIT also monitors and reports on its research activities through formal quarterly and annual reporting to Knowledge Transfer Ireland and biannual reporting to the HERD survey. The HERD survey collates information on direct research income and its expenditure on Pay, Non-pay and Capital expenditure.

KTI reports monitor GMIT's activity against knowledge transfer metrics such as the number of collaborative research agreements with industry, the number of innovation voucher project agreements with industry, and commercialisation metrics (e.g.: the number of licenses, options and assignments executed, and the number of spin-out companies developed).

The R&I function supports researchers in applying for funding to various commercial, government and third sector funding organisations. As part of these processes and associated grants various degrees of endorsements of quality and assurances are furnished to the funders. These application processes serve to further scrutinise and ensure quality in the research teams applying for the funding.

The function supports the assurance of quality in other capacities. Our strategic objectives to identify and cultivate emerging research activity, and to encourage and support staff engagement in the teaching and supervision of post-graduate students have been well advanced.

The President's Awards for Research Excellence and Impact have since 2019 been expanded to more broadly recognise the outstanding contributions of GMIT staff to the achievement of GMIT's mission and the commitment of our research community to excellent, relevant, innovative, and impactful research in all disciplines. Categories of Award now include Early Career and Established Researcher Awards, each recognising research excellence commensurate with career stage, and a Postgraduate Research Supervision Award, recognising excellent postgraduate research supervision and contributions to the early career development of postgraduate research students.

Another aspect of quality assurance that has been utilized by the institute to ensure compliance with regulations, adopting best practice and changing organisational focus has been the retention of experts and consultants by the institute. Recent examples of the successful retention of consultants have included the review of our ethical processes and procedures conducted by BH Associates (Boland and Hazelkorn). Furthermore, a report was provided by Michael Loftus regarding the Institute's engagement with the Med Tech industry and opportunities to strategically advance collaboration in R&D and training.

The development of more structured Masters programmes that meet TU criteria for research designation has been majorly advanced by the validation of several new programmes at GMIT.

The expansion of Level 10 Delegated Authority will now focus on the autonomy and authority arising from designation as a TU. While the above items do not speak to QA from the RO perspective, they clearly inform quality as to research culture across our operations at the institute.

The work of School of Engineering staff has led to engagement with SFI Research Centre's LERO and CONFIRM. LERO brings together expert software teams from universities and Institutes of Technology across Ireland in a coordinated centre of research excellence with a strong industry focus. This will be GMIT's first step in having research recognised in a Science Foundation Ireland Research Centre. CONFIRM, (the Science Foundation Ireland Research Centre in Smart Manufacturing) members benefit from the centre's collaborative networks, its expertise, and its access to funding. CONFIRM has expertise across the Industry 4.0 Smart Manufacturing ecosystem and works to identify business needs in partnership with industry.

The library is part of the Elsevier open Access agreement that includes approval of open access articles free of charge to GMIT researchers up to a certain allocation limit per year. The Librarian took part in a judging panel with the Open Scholarship Cafe Group competition that took place in May 2021.

6. Collaborative Culture

GMIT continued to work closely with its CUA partners in preparing to make a submission to the HEA for designation as a Technological University. Strategic approaches that evidence this collaboration include:

- The establishment of a joint CUA Governing Body sub-committee with the remit of each Governing Body establishing a sub-committee to work on high level cross-institutional agreements prior to merging of the three autonomous, independent institutions. In particular, this sub-committee would focus on progress towards achieving the metrics, oversight of preparations towards submitting an application for designation and achieving alignment between the Strategic Plans of the three institutes.
- Successfully secured TURN funding to support the achievement of the metrics to become a TU and the necessary infrastructure to support the submission for designation.
- Funding allocated towards the development of Research Centres. Draft QA Code of Practice for Research agreed.

- The three Student Unions collaborated on developing a new constitution for a single Student Union in the TU.
- Independent audit confirmed the CUA had achieved the metrics necessary for designation.
- A common CUA Employability Statement was agreed, based on the one developed in GMIT.
- A common Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy for the CUA was agreed as was a Student Services strategy.
- Terms of reference were agreed for the establishment of a CUA joint Academic Council sub-committee. The purpose of this sub-committee is identified as to promote a culture of communication and collaboration in advance of the TU vesting date. This preparation period will allow the joint sub-committee to consider the academic functions associated with a new Institution and will mitigate the risks associated with transition from multiple academic councils into a single entity. The joint sub-committee will not assume the powers of an Academic Council; however, the sub-committee may make for consideration by the new Governing Body of the TU.
- A working group was established of the CUA libraries: GMIT, LYIT and Sligo to prepare a CUA TU position paper that was completed in June 2021.
- A common CUA response to the HEA Compact was agreed.
- A review of the counselling services across the three Institutions was initiated.
- A set of draft Exam Regulations were jointly developed and agreed by each of the three existing Academic Councils. These regulations will form the basis of the Marks & Standards for the new university.

The submission was successfully made and representatives from across the three partner institutes met with the international panel in July.

GMIT is collaborating with its CUA colleagues in the innovative Higher Education 4.0 - HCI Funded Project which started in the 2020/2021 academic year. The full title of the project is:

“HigherEd 4.0: Enabling agile responsiveness from Higher Education to the skill needs of individuals and employers and providing highly flexible access to quality higher education through new technology enabled models.” This is an ambitious, innovative and disruptive project from the members of the Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA), working collaboratively towards becoming a Technological University. This ground-breaking proposal consists of a set of inter-linked innovations underpinned by a series of demonstration sub-projects to:

- build and prove lean systems necessary to respond rapidly and effectively to training and education needs of employers and individuals;
- cost-effectively develop new flexible modes of Higher Education (HE) to engage younger and lifelong learners.

The National Recognition of Prior Learning in Higher Education Project is a four-year collaboration from the Technological Higher Education Association, Irish Universities Association and the Technological University, Dublin. The aim of the project is to put in place a consistent and coherent approach to recognition of prior learning (RPL) within and across the 19 publicly funded higher education institutions participating in project. The project is funded under the HEA's Human Capital Initiative Pillar 3 (Innovation & Agility), which seeks to promote innovative and responsive models of programme delivery, and to enable the higher education system to respond rapidly to changes in both skills requirements and technology. The Registrar of GMIT is representing the CUA partners on the national steering committee of this project. In addition, there are very strong synergies between this project and the Higher Ed 4.0 project on RPL and the CUA have the same personnel participating in both projects.

GMIT is part of the West / North-West Cluster together with CUA partners LYIT, IT Sligo and NUIG. The partners are concentrating on widening access initiatives by developing and delivering mentoring initiatives to socio-economically disadvantaged students. In partnership with community organisations, each HEI in the cluster aims to provide a multi-stranded mentoring programme to support students through access, transition, and success.

- I. Significant progress has been made in the development of a formal Mentoring Programme within GMIT. Through the use of the Foróige/ Big Brother Big Sister mentoring approach, GMIT now has developed an application process, interviews system, training programme and support system. Furthermore, GMIT has written up a research document and in conjunction with Foróige a Guidelines document has been developed.
- II. There was initial interest and applications from 20 mentors and 20 mentees but due to various challenges 15 mentors and 15 mentees emerged. 10 Peer Mentors have been accessed in relation to the Peer-Mentoring Programme.
- III. In relation to the mentoring element of the ATS Project organisation, the key community link has been Foróige/ Big Brother Big Sister - a number of formal meetings took place with the aim of adjusting the BBBS model to suit the needs of third level students. Information sheets, application forms, assessment forms, training guides etc. were all updated, and consideration was given to any different issues that may arise in the third level setting.

During 2020-21 a number of MOUs were signed deepening relationships with international colleges, student placement sites and local industry (See Table 2).

IBEC
HSE Digital Transformation Team and Aurion Learning
Thermoking, Galway
Western Management Centre

Saolta University Healthcare Group
Cavan Monaghan Hospital
Regional Hospital, Mullingar
Irish Blood Transfusion Service
Midland Regional Hospital
University Hospital Limerick
Cobotics Skillsnet
The University of Danang (Vietnam)
Professional Practice Placement Provider
Business in the Community Ireland (BiTCI) - World of World programme
Mayo County Council
Western Carolina University
Ghent University, Belgium - Postgraduate Studies in Blue Resources for the Blue Economy"
Tampere University of Applied Sciences
"Digital Academy for Sustainable Built Environment" (DASBE) - IoTs and Industry Partners
Western Management Centre/ICE Group

Table 2 MOUs signed 2020-21

GMIT Student Services worked with the HSE Connecting for Life (Ireland's National Plan to reduce Suicide) - to agree action items for the Connecting for Life Plan 2021 to 2024. GMIT in collaboration with CUA partners, IT Sligo and LYIT have drafted a policy for Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment for the Atlantic Technological University. This development of this policy was guided by the PROPEL policy documentation and other good practice guidelines to ensure that policy clearly addresses sexual violence and harassment. Extensive consultation with key bodies across the three CUA Institutes was engaged in from June-October 2021; feedback was collated and incorporated into an updated draft (November 2021). The accompanying procedures are at an advanced stage, and it is expected that this policy and procedures will be endorsed by the three Institutes in Q1 2022.

The graduation of GMIT's first professional degree awarded through the Apprenticeship Mode took place. The programme, Manufacturing Engineering Apprenticeship, marked a milestone in Engineering Education in Ireland. Working with partners in industry and the Institutes of Technology sector, GMIT developed the academic content for the programme. GMIT are the lead in the consortium with IT Sligo, Limerick IT and Cork IT, delivering the programme over a wide geographical area.

The School of Engineering has teamed up with Thermo King, Galway, to develop a higher certificate and BEng in Automation and Robotics. The BEng in Automation and Robotics team along with Industry partners Thermoking were announced as Trane Technologies 2020 President's Award Winner for Innovation and Growth - one of the company's highest honours. This follows on from the BEng in Automation and Robotics winning the Exceptional Leadership Award at the Regional Skills West 2020 Award ceremony.

In response to Thermo King's parent company's 2030 sustainability aspirations and the commitment to reduce its customers' CO2 emissions by one gigaton by 2030 - equivalent to 2% of the world's annual emissions or, the annual emissions of France, Italy and the UK combined - Thermo King has become the first manufacturer in Ireland to be granted ISO 14064-1 by the NSAI, which allows Thermo King to certify their new assembly line in the Galway plant as 'Carbon Neutral'. This project was made possible by two groups of GMIT Engineering students, working with their lecturer. The success of the project has been included in Thermo King's parent company report to Wall Street as part of their corporate earnings call. Thermo King responded with the introduction of ADVANCER, a disruptive new re-imagining of the trailer refrigeration unit. The Thermo King ADVANCER project has been recognised by winning the 'Innovation & Sustainability' project of the year in the 2020 Engineers Ireland Excellence awards. Engineers Ireland specifically recognised the School of Engineering in GMIT as one of the 3rd Level institutes which Thermo King worked with throughout the project, especially with the support on Sustainability Solutions/Carbon Neutral Assembly line.

GMIT in partnership with LIT, AIT, Tipperary Energy Agency (TEA) and Irish Green Building Council (IGBC) held the first meeting of the Digital Academy for the Sustainable Built Environment (DASBE) on November 10th, 2020. DASBE is a HCI Pillar 3 Project. Overall funding for the project is €7.5 million over 5 years of which €1.95 million will be allocated to GMIT. DASBE will enable rapid design, development and deployment of education and training programmes to construction workers and professionals using a wide variety of on-line, blended and face to face approaches. It will focus on provision of programmes which are flexible and responsive to the needs of the sector. DASBE will utilise a network of 20 National/International experts in the sustainable building sector thus enabling access to international research drawn from the DASBE network of international collaborators. The project will connect past, current and future R&D activities with education and training activities to ensure that participants and learners are exposed to leading expertise, knowledge and data with relevant fields. DASBE partners are already involved in numerous large-scale R&D projects including Horizon 2020 Projects such as Superhomes2030, HP4All, LIFE e.g., Life Level(s) and Erasmus Plus Knowledge Alliances e.g., BIMzeED, Construction Blueprint. Thus, it will build on previous work, utilise capacity and synergies between past and ongoing research work. The School of Engineering have also been successful in securing funding from the Dept of Public Expenditure and Reform for the Build Digital project.

Installation of the new €1.2m Medical Imaging Suite within the iHubs is complete. Philips engineers provided a week of training for GMIT technicians and researchers in November. The new facility will be used by the Medical and Engineering Technologies Gateway following approval by the EPA's radiological protection inspector. MET staff and colleagues are discussing use of the Medical Imaging Suite by GMIT's new Procedural Sedation and Cath Labs programmes.

7. Infrastructure and Facilities

Progress was made across a number of large- and small-scale projects in GMIT managed via the Buildings and Estates including:

- All statutory consents required for the new 5500sqm PPP STEM building were secured. Market tender documentation was completed during 2021 and Bundle 2 was released to market in August 2021.
- The €4.25 million Enterprise Ireland iHub extension is nearly complete and due to open in Q4 2021.
- An additional ca 4 hectares of land was acquired, at a cost of circa €9.0m to enable future expansion of the Galway campus of the ATU, at a location within 200m of that campus.
- A circa €1.0 m reinstatement of the GMIT's canteen, kitchen and servery, following a fire in 2019, was safely and successfully completed during 2020.
- Approximately €1.3m was expended in 2020 and approximately €1.6m in 2021 on minor works improvements across all schools and functional units of the Galway, CCAM, Mayo and Letterfrack campuses.
- Considerable work was undertaken maintaining Building and Estates physical responses to COVID-19, including ventilation analysis and improvements.
- A new 200m running track was opened by Galway Community College near the CCAM campus with GMIT obtaining preferential usage rates at that facility.
- Works to new GAA facilities at Liam Mellows GAA Ballyloughaun where GMIT will benefit from licenced access/ use, continued to completion during 2021, with access and usage planned for Q3 2022.

The library continues to enhance its facilities through the installation of additional PCs, and redecoration initiatives, the introduction of a booking system and people counter.

8. Communications and Outreach

The Academic Information Systems & Reporting Office continued to develop and improve academic information systems and their use. In response to the COVID-19 emergency, a suite of online forms for students with associated approval flows were developed using Power Automate. This development was very well received by both staff and students as it improved access to these forms for students and led to significant efficiencies for both Heads of Department and administrative staff.

Several other projects aimed at digitalising student administration and enhancing the student experience were undertaken. Standard letters were made available to students via the Student Credentialling system. Up until then, students would approach the student query desk for such letters or request them via an online form. Electronic parchments were developed for issuing to graduates via the Student Credentialling system. These will be rolled out to graduates of minor and special purpose awards in the 2021/2022 academic year. The facility for students to register online for Autumn repeat examinations was introduced. Two key functional users contributed to the blueprinting phase of the Banner 9.0 upgrade project.

A number of dashboards were developed using Power BI to provide greater access to detailed student data in the areas of student retention, graduation figures, student withdrawal and student withdrawals. While this information had been available in excel dashboards, the introduction of Power BI dashboards gives more detailed data and presents data in different formats. Work is ongoing on broadening access to these resources for all staff.

Regular GMIT all-staff meetings have been organised by the President. These act as a tool for enhancing quality in terms of building a positive community in GMIT through communication and transparency, but also about disseminating good practices across the organisation through shared positive stories (e.g., MFRC, Letterfrack etc). Attendance at these meetings have been strong and staff have welcomed the two-way communication opportunity.

The Schools Liaison Function has targeted mature and Further Education students through the publication of a [Mature Student Handbook](#) for Mature/FE/ PLC students. In addition, this cohort were provided with a dedicated 'Pathways to GMIT' event. COVID-19 restrictions have prompted the further development of the online platform [openday.gmit.ie](#) which is used to host all Open Days, Guidance Counsellor Information Sessions, and Transition Year Taster Days. These have grown from presentations, to panel discussions, virtual booths (2hr - 6hours) and two live streams. One-on-one Campus tours have been introduced to compensate for the lack of onsite open days.

The Access and Participation Office (APO) continue to reach out to communities and individuals that can benefit from their service working with colleagues across the Institute. Examples of activities include:

- CIF Build a Home Project - APO engaged with Youthreach Tuam to mentor nine students through a building and design competition in conjunction with the School of Engineering.
- Radius Project - Two MA students from the Centre for Creative Arts and Media worked with a group of 20 4th year students in Merlin College to complete a 10-week art & media programme with a final project completed and designed by students involved.

- Strength profiles were provided to students in two schools, Our Lady's College and St. Pauls Oughterard. 62 students engaged with and completed analysis of results alongside a workshop with the GMIT careers team.
- Studyclix is an online revision and exam preparation service. The APO took part in the "Sponsor a School" project where institutes can pay a per student fee to make this service available to selected schools. GMIT connect sponsored upgrades for 125 6th year leaving certificate students in 3 DEIS schools - Coláiste Einde, Our Lady's Galway and Roscommon Community College. 123 students used this service.
- Yooni is an online career guidance platform that was provided by GMIT Connect to Galway Community College. This service allows for students to create an online profile, undertake psychometric testing and access career guidance through a simple online platform. 19 Students created profiles and engaged with this project.
- The GMIT Connect Mentoring Programme model was developed in conjunction with our community partner Foróige. 18 students were involved in 2020/21 and 30 mentors trained and available across all 5 GMIT campuses.
- GMIT developed a new Access and Participation Office in August 2020 to develop and co-ordinate the Institute's multi-campus support structure and facilities for students gaining entry via the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) and support access of under-represented group to Higher Education. Specific projects included developing an interactive HEAR/ DARE Flipbook to support students to apply for these Access Schemes. This interactive Flipbook was circulated to all schools in the Western Region.
- The Access and Participation Office worked with the local newspaper (Galway Advertiser) in Spring 2021 to deliver a series of Articles to promote Access to Higher Education. Presentations have been delivered to more than 30 Schools and Community Groups in 2020/21 to promote Access Schemes and Scholarships.
- The Access and Participation Office co-ordinated the development and submission of the GMIT Submission to the National Access Plan Consultation. Furthermore, the Access and Participation Office contributed to the HEAR Review Process.

9. Health and Wellness

A working Group for the implementation of the Framework for Promoting Consent and Preventing Sexual Violence was established following an institute-wide call for expressions of interest. The working group met for the first time in January 2021 and in March 2021, the GMIT Action Plan for Promoting Consent and Preventing Sexual Violence was submitted to the HEA. In the same month, a publicly accessible webpage on the institution's approach to preventing sexual violence and harassment was published. The website contains a section outlining GMIT's commitment to the

implementation of the consent action plan and responsibility for the same. The action plan contains a statement of endorsement from GMIT's senior management team.

Regular updates on the commitments outlined in the Action Plan and progress made are communicated to all staff. A counsellor from GMIT's Student Counselling service represents GMIT on the national working group who meet every two weeks to work on the data management strategy, communications and support for the Speak Out tool across the 18 HEI's. Locally in GMIT, a counsellor, the EDI manager and a representative from HR are set up as admin users for the speak out tool and are responsible for meeting monthly to review/manage the data, compile national aggregated statistics and advise on targeted initiatives to be implemented based on the local data gathered. Members of the working group along with members of LYIT's working group participated in two sessions of disclosure training delivered by the Galway Rape Crisis Centre. Awareness-building and support initiatives directed at students include the following:

- Roll out of NUI Galway Active Consent Workshops to students during the first 5 weeks welcome programme.
- Inclusion of consent information in the online student induction course available on our VLE, promotion of the National Campaign #UnmuteConsent (social media and on-campus posters) and the roll out of the #NeverOK campaign. Information and links to external support services are included in the Speak Out anonymous reporting tool and the internal Student HUB (student SharePoint).
- The website contains a page dedicated to information on Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence and Harassment including a link to the action plan and video on 'Active Consent'.
- Diversity workshops were delivered to students at the Letterfrack campus to raise awareness of diversity broadly, and to set a foundation for workshops for students on sexual violence which will follow in semester

Information and resources are available to staff online, through induction, regular communication and workshops



Additional posts were approved, and the recruitment process commenced for the following health and wellbeing posts: Occupational Therapist, Mental Health and learning Support Co -Ordinator's (2), UDL Development Co -Ordinator, Additional Student Counsellors (2), Mental Health Programme Facilitator, and a Mental Health Project Officer for the Implementation of the Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework.

GMIT Healthy Campus, which has signed up to the Healthy Ireland Healthy Campus Framework, is a working group consisting of approx. 50 members made up of academic and professional staff, researchers, graduate mentors, Student Union representatives as well as students. Internally it collaborates with Student Services, EDI, Students Union, Buildings & Estates, Staff Development, Green Campus and other sections within GMIT to roll out initiatives and introduce positive changes to help embed health and wellbeing within our five campuses to make GMIT a happier and healthier place to study and work. Externally it has worked with lots of agencies and providers throughout the year such as WRDATF, HSE, Mind-Ed, Galway City Alcohol Forum, Active Consent, Galway Rape Crisis Centre, Samaritans, Smarter Travel Campus, NRG gym etc. Healthy Campus also collaborated with our CUA partners in IT Sligo and LYIT on a number of successful projects in 2021 including a "CUA Activity Day" and on two virtual choir projects. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, many of the Healthy Campus offerings were online in 2021, including online fitness classes, mental wellness, mindfulness, virtual choir, workshops, consent to mention but a few. GMIT Healthy Campus has established five working sub-groups (Substance Use, Sexual Health & Identity, Nutrition, Physical Health, Mental Health) to engage with students and staff, by developing and promoting healthy initiatives, providing and attending relevant training, giving advice using internal expertise and external resources, developing policies and supporting the roll-out of various tools, campaigns and Frameworks introduced by the Department of Higher Education such as #SpeakOut, #StartHere, #Unmute Consent "50808", Framework for Consent in Higher Education Institutions and the National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework. Healthy Campus is represented on the LGBT+ & Allies Staff Network, the Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence and Harassment working group and the Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy and Procedures review group.

10. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Progress in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) over the academic 2020-2021 spanned the following areas: achievement of Athena SWAN Bronze award, culture, training and development, policy, and CUA collaboration.

The Institute continued its work on gender equality and conducted the last of six focus groups in September 2020. This focus group explored equality and diversity in GMIT in relation to race, sexuality, disability, family status, neurodiversity and other aspects of identity. The Institute Athena SWAN application was submitted in December 2020. The application and action plan were the result of the collaborative work and efforts of the Self-Assessment Team (SAT) since December 2019 and bolstered by inputs from many other colleagues within the Institute. The submission involved an honest and rigorous self-assessment of equality and related issues in the Institute, and development of a four-year Action Plan to address these issues.

GMIT was successful in achieving the Athena SWAN Bronze award in March 2021, thus affirming the commitment of GMIT to gender equality and the strong foundation that is in place. The evidenced-based action plan will address issues raised in the survey and focus groups. Implementation of actions contained in the [GMIT Athena SWAN Gender Action Plan](#) commenced in April 2021. GMIT also began work towards merging of gender action plans from the three CUA institutes into one cohesive gender action plan for the new technological university.

The EDI function has an important role as an agent of culture change. This can be achieved by consistent messaging and behaviour on valuing all diversity and this was a key factor in all aspects of the Athena SWAN work in GMIT. As part of building awareness around the Athena SWAN work, ongoing, innovative communications, which were representative of staff, were developed by the Communications subgroup of the Self-Assessment Team (SAT) and issued to all staff across a range of platforms. These communications were successful in building awareness of the rationale and benefits for all staff and students of engaging with the Athena SWAN Charter, and the commitment to build an inclusive culture that celebrates diversity and treats all staff equally. This values-based approach was also evident in the conduct of meetings and the equitable allocation of work amongst SAT members.

The Equality Diversity & Inclusion office also led out on work to promote awareness of other initiatives contributing to an inclusive culture. GMIT participated in a national campaign to support Intersex awareness day in November 2020 by 'turning a building or monument purple'. This was the first all-island effort of its kind to raise awareness about intersex and to send a powerful message of support to the intersex community both here and abroad. GMIT buildings were illuminated, and all staff were advised of the meaning and import of the Intersex community. A series of events were held to mark International Men's Day in November 2020 and International Women's Day in March 2021 including a research seminar, art exhibition, guest speakers, poetry reading.

Awareness of and participation in two separate surveys from the HEA in relation to race equality and sexual violence and harassment was promoted to all staff with a view to informing national equality,

diversity and inclusion planning processes. An Institute survey to gauge staff experiences of working remotely as a result of COVID-19 was also conducted in October 2020. Findings were published and key actions were identified to address challenges.

The GMIT LGBTQI+ & Allies Staff Network was launched on June 14th 2021 at an event on campus and also livestreamed to all staff via MS Teams. The network promotes LGBT+ diversity and inclusion in the Institute, offers a safe and supportive space for LGBT+ staff, and brings an LGBT+ equality perspective to the organisational policies, systems, and culture of the Institute. The network is motivated by the values of Equality and Fairness, Voice and Visibility, Diversity and Inclusion. Its goal is to create a safe, accepting, welcoming and supportive space for LGBTQI+ staff within GMIT and to bring this perspective into organisational policy, systems, and culture within GMIT. The launch of this network affirmed that acceptance and inclusion are at the core of our institutional identity and that we are reflective of our student population and society at large.

Training and development initiatives are instrumental in educating staff and students on equality and related matters in any organisation. The EDI office, in conjunction with the Staff Development office, offered a wide variety of courses with almost 350 attendees. Additional diversity training seminars and related development opportunities were made available through the ongoing Institute membership of Advance HE and the Executive Institute. Topics included inclusive leadership and culture, fostering equitable practices, how to begin to develop anti-racist practice, breaking through the glass ceiling, women in technology, intersectionality in higher education. GMIT hosted a workshop in June 2021 on Menopause and the Workplace, an event which was made available to all CUA staff.

A priority of the GMIT Strategic Plan 2019-23 is to “embed diversity, equality and inclusion into the governance and management of GMIT” to ensure “equality of opportunity and transparency”. A robust governance infrastructure was established in the previous academic year including an EDI subcommittee of Governing Body, EDI Steering Group and Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team. The Institute’s Equality Policy (2012) focused primarily on equality in recruitment and selection processes. This policy was reviewed, and a revised EDI policy was approved following widespread consultation. The EDI policy is inclusive in its remit of all stakeholders and mainstreams an equality ethos through all institutional business.

CUA collaboration on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion has intensified over the 2020-21 academic year. In October 2020, the three institutes worked collaboratively on and agreed an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Principles and Values Framework, which demonstrates the commitment of partners to a common approach to EDI. This framework informed the development of EDI Policies, an action identified following the Athena SWAN Self-Assessment process. EDI managers input into a CUA Working Group (WG) to ensure that gender equality is built into the CUA merger process. All three

Institutes submitted Institutional Athena SWAN Bronze Award applications in the November 2020 application round. To promote collaboration and share learning, colleagues from partner institutions attended each other's Self-Assessment Team meetings and had regular progress updates and information-sharing meetings in advance of the submission date. There was further specific collaboration when applications were being drafted which included sharing benchmarking data on Senior Lecturer grades by gender. All three partners were delighted to achieve Bronze Awards on 31 March 2021. Following this, CUA partners engaged with Athena SWAN Ireland to prepare a submission for a legacy award post University designation. This process will include the merging of three Gender Action Plans into one cohesive plan for the technological university, a process that will be made easier by the high degree of alignment of the three plans.

11. Staff Expertise and Development

The Institute continued to encourage and support staff development. Some of the formal opportunities for CPD included:

- In 2021 GMIT Staff Development supported 33 staff undertaking PhDs and a further 7 undertaking level 9 studies (not including 1 GMIT PhD and 68 staff members pursuing Level 9 studies at GMIT).
- 56 workshops/training courses were provided through the Staff Development Office in response to identified needs.
- Staff upskilling in relation to pedagogy included the provision of over 130 workshops/seminars with monthly schedules communicated to staff. The Christmas Teaching and Learning Showcase included a CUA-ATU masterclass on Assessment and Feedback with Dr Edd Pitt from the University of Surrey whilst also showcasing the teaching and learning portfolios from graduates of postgraduate pedagogy modules and recipients of the President's Award in Teaching Excellence.
- A number of workshops were offered to staff, in conjunction with the THEA Staff Developers' Network.
- A GMIT Staff Handbook was developed, hard copies were printed, and an electronic copy was uploaded to the staff intranet.
- Staff Induction took place online. A new Staff Induction SharePoint site, including videos and information from various depts/functions supplements this. A separate Induction, from the Registrar's function, also took place online in 2021.
- There was continued and increased engagement with Postgraduate Teaching and Learning Courses with 107 candidates completing modules in 2020-2021:
 - 8 completed the Diploma in Teaching and Learning (60 ECTS)
 - 14 completed the Certificate in Teaching and Learning (30 ECTS)

- 20 completed the Certificate in Technology Enhanced Learning (15 ECTS)
- 20 completed Digital Teaching and Learning (10 ECTS)
- 10 completed Research: Cycle Foundation module (10 ECTS)
- 3 completed the Education Science Thesis module (MA T&L award stage 3)
- 8 completed the Certificate in Education for Sustainability module (10 ECTS)
- 14 completed the Postgraduate Supervisory Skills module (5 ECTS)
- 10 completed the Professional Development Framework Portfolio (5 ECTS)
- The Institute become involved with the Aurora Leadership Development Initiative for Women. 14 members of academic and PMSS staff were funded to take part in the programme which allowed them to develop and explore issues relating to leadership roles and responsibilities. Each participant had a mentor throughout the process. This first iteration led to learnings in relation to the better management of the induction process for both participants and mentors.

B. QA Framework Updates

A [Quality of Service Charter](#) was developed and approved. It sets out the nature and quality of service which our stakeholders can expect to receive from Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology. The term 'stakeholders' refers to all those we deal with including students, alumni, staff, career guidance teachers, industry, professional bodies, research funders, local community, the general public and government agencies and departments. The charter is based on the twelve Principles of Quality Customer Service for Customers and Clients of the Public Service. It was felt that the charter was not specific enough for our primary stakeholder - students. Therefore, a [Student Charter](#) was also developed in conjunction with the Students' Union which sets out in a student friendly manner a formal statement of what our students can expect from the Institute and in turn what GMIT expects from our students.

GMIT's Digital Learning Charter was launched in September 2020 in recognition that as members of a digital learning community, staff and students have obligations to each other. The Charter sets out responsibilities and provides a framework for managing communication and behaviours in a digital world. It is an outline of the values shared by staff and students and aims to support the learning community engage in a safe and responsible manner when engaging in digital learning.

A [Mitigation Policy](#) was approved for 2020-21 in recognition that the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures introduced by the Irish government have impacted each student at GMIT in various ways. As a student-centred organisation, GMIT is committed to ensuring no student is disadvantaged as a result of this crisis and that each student is given an opportunity to reach their true potential. GMIT's

academic codes provide for a range of measures outlined in the policy which will be utilised as appropriate to mitigate against student disadvantage as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Continuity Plan in response to COVID-19 was updated for 2020-21, and further clarity provided to staff through the development of an Examinations Protocol and Guidelines for Alternative Assessments and Terminal Examinations.

GMIT recognises that there are many reasons why students may wish to record lectures and other classes to assist with their learning and therefore developed a Recording Lectures Policy outlining the Institute's policy in relation to recording classes and making those recordings available for students. It also outlines staff and student responsibilities to ensure that the Institute is meeting its obligations under equality, copyright, and data protection legislation. GMIT already had a policy for recording of lectures for students who are registered with the Access and Disability Service. However, increasingly students see the benefits of lecture recordings as revision aids, and technology allows lecturers to capture lectures to assist their students' learning. Playback of lecture recordings by students allows them to determine their own pace of learning as well as the location and timing of same. The aim is to complement traditional and/or synchronous classes by providing students with further opportunities to engage with the class material. Students taking part-time continuing professional development programmes often expect that recordings will be available to them as part of the flexible delivery of their programme of study. The policy also recognises that there are instances when it may not be appropriate to record lectures or other formal teaching sessions. For example, this may be the case with discursive classes where recording might hinder participation and ultimately learning. In these scenarios it may be appropriate to record part of the class, to prerecord the lecture element, or to consider provision of other resources to minimise student disadvantage by unavoidable non-attendance.

A Fitness to Practice Policy was approved for Nursing, Health Sciences and Wellbeing programmes. The policy was developed in recognition of the Institute's duty of care to the public as well as to support students in fulfilling programme requirements and helping to prepare students for future professional practise in the discipline areas of nursing, health sciences and wellbeing. The policy and associated procedures are to be followed in instances where student fitness to practise concerns have been formally raised, and it describes the roles and responsibilities of relevant parties in the process.

It is recognised that the circumstances of programme applicants and students may change causing them to be unable to take up a place on a programme or to have to leave a programme temporarily or permanently. GMIT is committed to assisting applicants and students to make informed decisions related to commencing, continuing, or leaving their course of study. This year the Institute developed a stand-alone Programme Deferral and Withdrawal Policy building on previous elements of policy.

A number of existing policies were updated. Code of Practice No 4: Access, Transfer and Progression was updated to include an internal restructuring of the document, inclusion of entry requirements for Higher Diplomas, Structured Research Masters, Minor Awards and SPAs. It included provision for transferring from ACCM to full-time mode of delivery and revised English language entry requirements. In addition, it refers to the HEAR, DARE and Enabling Maths non-standard entry routes. It also outlines the Institute's policy in providing access to learning provision outside the framework of an award. Code of Practice No 5: Research was updated to include detail of Annual Progression and Annual Review Procedures, as well as updating English language entry requirements and GMT's Designated Awarding Body status.

New programmes were added to the list requiring vetting in the Garda Vetting (Student) Policy for E-Vetting. The Student Fee Policy and Code of Student Conduct 2021/22 were reviewed as they are annually with minor amendments.

Academic Council recommended the formation of a new subcommittee to consider matters pertaining to Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA). Its main role is to advise Academic Council on all aspects of quality assurance and institutional development in relation to Learning, Teaching and Assessment.

1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR

No.	Planned objectives (Previous AQR)	Update on Status
1	Continue to evolve QA in response to challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic	<p>Completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of LTA framework, Mitigation Policy and assessment guidelines (VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar/Academic Council) Support staff in relation to online/blended teaching and assessments (BOLT/TLO) Support student transition to and engagement with online/blended learning (BOLT/Student Services, Computing Services) Enhance online student supports, particularly those most vulnerable, considering COVID (Student Services)

		<p>Approve a work placement alternative framework. (VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar/Academic Council)</p> <p>Develop and approve a Recording of Lectures policy.</p> <p>Update:</p> <p>Resources/training made available for staff and students in relation to digital delivery and assessment.</p> <p>Policies and guidelines approved to support assessment QA, alternative delivery of work placements and online delivery modes.</p>
2	Complete planning for Programmatic Review considering learnings from COVID-19 pandemic	<p>Completed:</p> <p>Identify priorities for Programmatic Review (Registrar/Academic Council)</p> <p>Continue preparatory work for SER (Programme Boards).</p> <p>Update:</p> <p>Assessment, Employability and Sustainability identified as three priorities for Programmatic Review by Academic Council. Online resources developed and information session provided on same for Programme Chairs with further roll-out of training planned.</p>
3	Submit Athena SWAN application and achieve Bronze Award.	<p>Completed:</p> <p>Develop and submit Athena SWAN Application and Action plan for review. (EDI Manager/EDI Self-assessment Team)</p> <p>Update:</p> <p>Athena SWAN awarded to GMIT in March 2021.</p>
4	Further academic alignment of Connacht Ulster Alliance.	Completed:

		<p>Facilitate further discussion of CUA at Academic Council. (President)</p> <p>Develop Exam Regulations as the basis for a common Marks and Standards for CUA. (VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar)</p> <p>Form Governing Body sub-committee for CUA. (President/ VP for Finance and Corporate Services)</p> <p>Form Academic Council sub-committee for CUA. (President/ VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar)</p> <p>Develop and approve common CUA online/blended policy framework. (VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar/Academic Council)</p> <p>Develop CUA common Student Success Strategy. (VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar/Academic Council)</p> <p>Develop CUA common Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy. (VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar/Academic Council/TLO)</p> <p>Develop a draft Research Code of Practice for the CUA (VP for Research and Innovation)</p> <p>Update: International panel visit took place in July 2021. Subsequent announcement that CUA members will merge and will become Atlantic Technological University on 1st April 2022.</p>
5	Publish a quality of service charter outlining the nature and quality of service which students and stakeholders can expect.	<p>Completed:</p> <p>Develop, approve and publish a quality of service charter. (VP for Finance and Corporate Services/VP for Academic Affairs & Registrar)</p> <p>Develop, approve and publish a student charter. (VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar/Academic Council)</p> <p>Update:</p>

		Both approved and published. Student Charter developed in conjunction with Students' Union.
6	Review policies in the Quality Assurance Framework.	<p>Partially Completed: Review and amend as necessary the following codes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CoP2 Validation and Monitoring • CoP4 Access, Transfer and Progression • CoP3 Marks and Standards • Code of Student Conduct <p>(VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar/Academic Council)</p> <p>Update: CoP4 and Code of Student updated. Work completed on CUA Examination Regulations rather than focus on GMIT Marks and Standards. All policies in QAF are reviewed over the lifecycle of the Academic Council. A common QAF is planned for the Technological University.</p>
7	Engage in academic planning in response to environmental demands.	<p>Partially Completed:</p> <p>Develop a range of programmes in response to Springboard and HCI (Heads of Academic Unit/Programme Boards)</p> <p>Develop a policy on microcredentials. (VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar/Academic Council)</p> <p>Update: Programmes developed for Springboard and HCI. Discussion paper on microcredentials brought before Academic Council but deferred to new academic year.</p>
8	Redevelop the student intranet populating with relevant and accessible resources.	<p>Completed:</p> <p>Develop and launch the Student HUB. (VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar)</p>

		<p>Update:</p> <p>Student HUB launched providing a centralised information point for student information and forms. Analytics show strong usage by students.</p>
9	<p>Enhance the protections and supports available to students.</p>	<p>Completed:</p> <p>Provide additional mental health supports for students.</p> <p>Develop plans to further support students with a disability.</p> <p>Expand activities to promote access and participation.</p> <p>(Student Services)</p> <p>Develop a Consent Framework Action Plan. (EDI, Student Services, Steering Committee)</p> <p>Update:</p> <p>Recruitment completed for additional staff to support student mental health and those with disability. Two additional sensory cubbies acquired.</p> <p>Grade VII assigned to promote Access and Participation and support high risk and vulnerable students during COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Consent Framework Action Plan submitted to HEA and work began on implementation.</p>

1.3 Governance and Management

1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

Body	Meeting dates
Governing Body	<p>24th September 2020</p> <p>29th October 2020</p> <p>26th November 2020</p> <p>10th December 2020</p> <p>28th January 2021</p> <p>25th February 2021</p>

	<p>25th March 2021</p> <p>29th April 2021</p> <p>27th May 2021</p> <p>24th June 2021</p> <p>26th August 2021</p>
Academic Council	<p>17th June 2020</p> <p>18th September 2020</p> <p>23rd October 2020</p> <p>30th October 2020</p> <p>11th December 2020</p> <p>29th January 2021</p> <p>12th February 2021</p> <p>16th April 2021</p> <p>14th May 2021</p> <p>18th June 2021</p>
Academic Council Standing Committee	<p>2nd September 2020</p> <p>25th September 2020</p> <p>2nd October 2020</p> <p>16th October 2020</p> <p>19th March 2021</p> <p>16th June 2021</p>
Academic Standards	<p>6th November 2020</p> <p>1st February 2021</p> <p>26th March 26th 2021</p>
Programme Amendments Committee	<p>9th December 2020</p> <p>20th May 2021</p>
Research Committee	<p>14th September 2020</p> <p>22nd October 2020</p> <p>21st January 2021</p> <p>25 March 2021</p> <p>6th May 2021</p> <p>17th June 2021</p> <p>9th September 2021</p> <p>25th November 2021</p>
Collaborations Committee	<p>Collaborations concentrated on preparation for applying for TU designation and establishment of a number of workgroups negated the need for the Collaborations Committee.</p>
Access & Transfer Committee	<p>22nd September 2020</p> <p>Meetings re Policy Revision and Development:</p> <p>16 March</p>

	23 March 6 April 13 April 20 April 27 April 28 May 4 June
Retention Committee	22 nd February 2021 9 th March 2021
Disciplinary Committee	11 th September 2020 12 th October 2020 16 th December 2020 19 th January 2021 14 th April 2021 28 th April 2021 30 th June 2021 16 th July 2021 30 th July 2021 17 th September 2021 6 th October 2021 12 th October 2021
Exam Appeals Board	15 th October 2020 13 th October 2021 14 th October 2021 (Reconvened) 16 th July 2021

1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

New Appointments and/or Roles

Posts recruited from 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021 at SLII, SLII , CSM or higher grade:

- Head of School of Engineering
- Head of Graduate Studies & Professional Development
- Education & Outreach Manager- Irish Wood & Furniture Manufacturing Network
- Head of School of Health Science, Wellbeing & Society, VP Mayo Campus
- SLII Head of Department - Engineering Apprenticeships
- Education Outreach Manager - Digital Health Industries Cluster
- Head of Department - Mechanical & Industrial Engineering
- HR Manager

- Head of Research
- Manager of Academic Affairs
- Head of Department - School of Science
- TRANSCEND Automation and Robotics Lead
- NWN Higher Education Cluster - Half Time post

Changes to Organisational Structure

There were a few structural changes made to the organisation for strategic and/or operational reasons. These included:

- Separation of Academic Affairs and Student Services into two individual functions.
- Creation of Institute wide Department of Graduate Studies and Professional Development
- Formation of School of Health Science, Wellbeing and Society on the Mayo Campus
- Creation of Department of Engineering Apprenticeships given expansion in numbers and strategic focus.
- School of Science and Computing split into four departments (previously three) due to increased student numbers.

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
Galway International Hotel School	15 th June 2021	Click HERE
School of Science and Computing	Delayed until Q1 2022 due to additional workload caused by COVID-19	
School of Design and Creative Arts	Delayed until Q4 2021 due to additional workload caused by COVID-19	
Mayo Campus	Delayed until Q2 2022 due to additional workload caused by COVID-19	
Function Reviews	Delayed until Q1 2022 due to additional workload caused by COVID-19	
Programmatic Review	Delayed until Q1 and 2, 2022 due to additional workload caused by COVID-19	

1.4.2 Expert Review Teams/Panels² involved in IQA

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

	Total	Academic Schools/ Department	Professional Services/Support Unit	Approval/Review of Linked Provider	Programme Approval	Programme Review	Other
Number of review/ evaluation processes		1	-	-	27	-	-
<i>of those:</i>							
On-site processes		-	-	-	-	-	-
Desk reviews		-	-	-	-	-	-
Virtual processes		1	-	-	27	-	-
Average panel size for each process type*		7	-	-	5	-	-

* excluding secretary if not a full panel member

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

(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
Chair		22	5		7	19	1			19	8
Secretary		1	26		27					27	
Academic/Discipline Specific		27	26		19	28	4		2	41	12
Student Representative											
QA		1	26		27					27	
Teaching & Learning											
External Industry /Third Mission		19	10			22	1	2	4		29

2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

Programmes of Education and Training

27 programmes went through a validation process during 2020-21 as shown in Table 3.

Type of Validation	Level 9	Level 8	Level 7	Level 6
Major Award	11	4	1	
Minor Award				
Special Purpose Award		3	1	
Differential Validation		6	1	

Table 3 New Programme Approvals 2020-21

The programmes validated are as follows:

- Certificate in Digital Mapping & Geographical Information Systems
- Certificate in Peer Support Practice
- Certificate in Computerised Systems and Data Quality for Medtech
- Diploma in School Age Childcare
- Alternative Work Placement Programme (DV)
- Alternative Work Placement - Construction Dept Programmes (DV)
- BSc (Hons) in Education (Design, Graphics & Construction) (DV)
- BSc (Hons) in Medical Science (DV)
- BA (Hons) in Applied Social Care (DV)
- BA in Religious Studies (DV)
- Higher Diploma in Building Information Modelling - (DV)
- Bachelor of Science in Network Cybersecurity (Add-on)
- Higher Diploma in Business Analytics
- Higher Diploma in Science in Medical Technology Regulatory Affairs
- Higher Diploma in Science in Advanced Analytical Chemistry
- Higher Diploma in Science in Cybersecurity Risk and Compliance
- Postgraduate Diploma in Advanced Biopharmaceutical Science
- MSc in Applied Leadership and Management
- MSc in Cybersecurity Operations
- MSc in Applied Cardiac Catheterisation Laboratory Practice
- MSc in Nutrition and Sensory Science
- MSc in International Medical Technology, Innovation and Development

- MSc in Biopharmaceutical Manufacturing
- MSc in Circular Economy Leadership for a Sustainable Built Environment
- MSc in Built Environment Regulations
- MSc in Medical Science
- MSc in Sport and Clinical Biomechanics

All reports are published on the GMIT public website and are available [HERE](#).

The most frequent commendations related to:

- Responsiveness to industry needs.
- Engagement with external bodies - industry, professional bodies etc.
- Learner centred content and/or approach to delivery
- Innovation in programme design
- Well thought out programme articulated well in documentation
- Engagement with panel

Other commendations related to impact on region, cross disciplinary approach and response to COVID-19.

Common themes in the conditions were:

- Wording of programme learning outcomes
- Stipulation of entry requirements
- Recording of various delivery modes in APS and teaching and learning strategy
- Wording of module learning outcomes
- Title of programme needing to adequately reflect the content
- Issues relating to management of professional practice/placement

Other conditions related to the need for a transition plan, completeness of module descriptor, assessment, facilities and module specific points.

Some of these issues are perennial and are regularly the topic of training. Work will continue in this regard, particularly as they pertain to Programmatic Review. Over-assessment and by implication the development and articulation of programme assessment strategies has been identified as a priority topic for Programmatic Review. Given the increase in programmes with work placements and programmes at postgraduate level further support is required for the management and assessment of same. Work has also been undertaken to improve the standard of learning outcomes.

Ongoing Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

Quality Assurance Evaluation Groups were established to review LTA Continuity Plans for 2020-21 considering the likely ongoing requirement for social distancing because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Programme Boards (PB) were provided with an LTA Continuity Framework to guide their plans for delivery and assessment in the forthcoming year. The objective was to facilitate as many students as possible to progress, complete and where relevant graduate within the normal cycle, whilst ensuring GMIT's QA standards. Each Programme Board submitted a plan outlining their proposed delivery and assessment in light of the ongoing pandemic and these were reviewed by the QA Evaluation Groups with their reports presented to Academic Council.

A range of reports prepared by the QQI, the National Forum for Teaching and Learning, USI, GMIT's iNOTE/DigitalEd HEA project report, and a special GMIT Student Opinion Campaign allow reflection on overall HEI responses to COVID-19 challenges. In September 2020 GMIT undertook an OpinionX survey to gather feedback from staff on remote learning during the COVID-19 shutdown and their sentiment towards the upcoming semester. OpinionX is an 'open-survey' which means that participants submit their opinions as written statements, vote on others' opinions and see a real-time report of all results. The survey found that while staff found the transition to remote learning and assessment challenging that there was an overall positive sentiment among GMIT staff regarding the Institute's ability to continue online learning and assessment as required. Staff appreciated the training resources provided, but some found it difficult to source the information they required quickly. Staff noted the additional workload created by online assessment. They also stressed that online learning and assessment should not be treated as a long-term solution. Lecturers felt that students have adapted relatively well to online learning, although there was concern that 'vulnerable' students may be at risk and maintaining contact with students without face-to-face lecturers can be difficult. Other issues of concern were poor broadband among students and a lack of 'group dynamic'. The point that academic standards should not be neglected for the purpose of retention was made, and it was suggested that the Institution's decision-making processes may benefit from the wider consultation of staff members. Overall, staff morale remained high.

In February 2021 a similar survey was undertaken with students with a response rate of 18%. Students strongly indicated that they prefer undertaking continuous assessment than completing examinations. Some of the key findings were:

- 52% of students feel like they have adapted well to learning online.
- 62% of participants said that they would like a mix of communication methods from the college.
- 43% agreed that their online mentor provides good support and helps answer their questions.

- 62% agreed they are struggling with online learning.
- 67% said it would be helpful to access a monthly online webinar schedule with an online mentor on different topics or demonstrations on student supports available.
- Just 40% of students agreed that they feel overwhelmed by the amount of communication they are receiving from GMIT and the Students' Union.
- 46% of students had looked at the supports on the Student HUB.

This year there were two additional questions in the national Student Survey in relation to COVID-19. The first asked students how GMIT could improve its support for them in the current circumstances. The issue of communication was a common theme, with a desire for more regular communication and clarity. The general preference seemed to be for synchronous classes with interactive elements such as live feedback or breakout rooms. However, students also expressed a desire for classes to be recorded. Some suggested increased tutorials and more practical work. Many students wished to be back on campus and the issue of lack of socialisation was raised, as was anxiety. The second question referred to the positive elements of online/blended which students would like to see retained when onsite classes resumed. Some students strongly expressed their opinion that there were no positives and they wanted to be back onsite. Others benefitted from the lack of commute and liked the freedom that online classes gave to manage their own time. The recording of lectures was again a strong theme with students suggesting that being able to go back over lectures allowed them to revise and/or work at their own pace. Students find the online communication tools useful and enjoyed interactive elements some lecturers used rather than solely listening to a lecture. They also appreciated the added connection with lecturers with lecturers checking in on them as they were concerned about the challenging learning environment that students faced.

As staff had found the format of the previous staff survey difficult to navigate a further survey in a more traditional format was undertaken with staff in February 2021 to gain an insight into the remote learning, teaching and assessment experience. The staff experience survey was designed to capture the views and experiences of online assessment and learning, use of remote learning technology, personal well-being, feelings of connectedness to GMIT and any other issues that staff experienced during the academic year.

101 staff, representing approximately 20% of lecturers completed the survey.

- 72% of staff felt that they had adapted well to teaching online.
- 60% would be open to using a combination of onsite and online methodologies post COVID-19.
- 65% felt they had done a good job in engaging students online using a variety of methodologies.
- 46% felt their students had engaged well with online teaching and learning.

- 71% of respondents had engaged with the online supports provided with 63% stating that their confidence had increased, and 44% still requiring assistance.
- 53% felt that their remote work set-up was adequate to their needs.
- Only 35% felt connected to their manager or colleagues during the pandemic.

An analysis of qualitative answers showed challenges in relation to knowledge of use of technology in teaching, alternative assessment formats, technical challenges, engagement with students, anxiety and work-life balance issues.

While COVID-19 has changed the way we work, an increase in online communication has allowed easier access to international experts to inform our staff and our activities. One of the positive outcomes of COVID-19 is the increase in the number and the ease of access to webinars. These webinars are provided from organisations and agencies locally, nationally and internationally. Online platforms also allow access to people of international repute for CPD purposes more readily. For example, as we continue to upskill staff in digitalisation, we regularly engage international experts for workshops and lectures. We have taken an approach that for all new programmes, at level 8 and higher, to appoint international panel members on our validation panels with a view to ensuring the international comparability of our programmes and learning from international best practice.

Education Awards

GMIT were successful at the Education Awards. The library received the award for Best Library Team 2021 for their strategic and quality driven operational approach and the warmth of the staff and the high regard they are held in. The Teaching and Learning Office team were awarded 2nd place for Best Use of Educational Technology / ICT Initiative of the Year for the Building Digital Teaching & Learning Capabilities project.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Table 4 describes the performance of students over the eight-year period from 2013-14 to the 2020-21 cohort who graduated in November 2021. There was a further increase in the proportion of students graduating with the top award classification in 2020-21. The increases in H1s corresponds with the Covid-19 pandemic and may be driven by a number of changes arising from this, including inter alia students having more time to concentrate on their studies, revised assessment strategies and the implementation of the Mitigation policy. As we exit from the pandemic student performance will continue to be monitored and reported to Academic Council.

Level 8 Undergraduate Honours Degree Awards								
	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
First Class Honours	23%	19%	22%	22%	22%	22%	29%	31%
Second Class Honours Grade 1	41%	42%	45%	39%	45%	46%	45%	43%
Second Class Honours Grade 2	26%	30%	24%	28%	24%	25%	21%	21%
PASS	9%	10%	9%	11%	10%	7%	5%	4%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Level 7 Undergraduate Ordinary Degree Awards								
	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Distinction	17%	20%	22%	25%	20%	24%	24%	35%
Merit 1	34%	33%	32%	35%	35%	29%	38%	33%
Merit 2	28%	26%	28%	23%	26%	28%	21%	23%
PASS	21%	21%	18%	17%	19%	19%	17%	9%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Level 6 Undergraduate Higher Certificate Awards								
	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Distinction	18%	26%	16%	27%	24%	31%	25%	49%
Merit 1	26%	21%	28%	28%	23%	32%	36%	21%
Merit 2	31%	24%	29%	16%	21%	26%	23%	10%
PASS	26%	29%	28%	28%	32%	12%	16%	19%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 4 Student Performance 2013-14 to 2020-21

Graduate Destination

Each year a Graduate Outcomes survey is undertaken. Of the 2020 graduate cohort surveyed there was a 62% response rate. The survey found that 92% of graduates were either in employment or further study. When compared with the 2018 results (see Table 5) there is a slight increase in those in employment and a slight decrease in those pursuing further studies.

	2018	2020
Employed (Full-Time Employment + Part Time Employment and due to start a job in 3 months)	81%	83%
Further Study	8%	7%
Seeking Employment	7%	7%
Other	4%	3%
Total	100%	100%
*Including Other/Unknowns		

Table 5: Comparison of 2018 and 2020 Graduate Outcomes

The majority of employed graduates (62%) are working in the region, with 23% employed in Leinster, 11% in Munster, 4% in Ulster and 4% overseas. The largest category of employment is described as professional occupations followed by associate professional and technical occupations (Table 6) suggesting that graduates are gaining employment in areas related to the discipline studied.

Administrative and secretarial occupations	42
Associate professional and technical occupations	165
Caring, leisure and other service occupations	32
Elementary occupations	24
I dont know/unknown	17
Managers, directors and senior officials	26
Process, plant and machine operatives	23
Professional occupations	277
Sales and customer service occupations	81
Skilled trades occupations	28
Not Specified	1
Grand Total	716

Table 6: Types of Employment - Graduates 2020

75% of graduates stated that they were likely or very likely to study the same qualification again if given the opportunity.

Retention

In GMIT, at institute level, first year retention is measured as the presence of students on March 1st, excluding those who re-entered via CAO, who were registered, full-time, new first time, in year 1 on the March 1st census date in the previous year. This is aligned to the non-progression rate included by the HEA in its sectoral and institutional profiles.

Year	L6 GMIT	L7 GMIT	L8 GMIT	Total GMIT	Average National
2017-18 into 2018-19	26%	32%	15%	21%	13%
2018-19 into 2019-20	31%	33%	16%	21%	12%
2019-20 into 2020-21	24%	19%	12%	14%	9%

Table 7 GMIT, National and Institute of Technology Non-Progression 2016-17 to 19-20

Table 7 shows a considerable improvement in non-progression for students progressing into the 2020-21 academic year. This coincides with the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, and reflects the changes made in that light to assessment and progression regulations. The Institute also introduced a student-centred Mitigation Policy considering difficulties students were experiencing. This included a more flexible approach to carrying credits which increased progression. In addition, many students no longer were working part-time and thus has less incentive to drop out of their programme of study. Nevertheless, the gap between GMIT and the national average remains significant. It is important to note that the national average includes traditional university and specialist colleges which offer exclusively level 8 programmes, generally have higher entry points and fewer students from socio-economic disadvantaged backgrounds.

StudentSurvey.ie

GMIT takes part in the annual national student survey - studentsurvey.ie. In the 2021 survey GMIT had a response for undergraduate students of 30%, compared to 28.4% nationally. This was lower than the GMIT response the previous year of 40% which is due to the increased challenge encountered in reaching students during a period they are primarily being taught remotely.

GMIT's index scores in 2021 have diminished since the 2020 survey in all categories (See Tables 8 and 9). It is perhaps not unexpected that Collaborative Learning, Staff -Faculty Interactions, Quality of Interactions and Supportive Environment have lower scores given the extent of remote learning experienced by students. However, GMIT still scores higher than the Student Survey average in Quantitative Reasoning, Student Faculty Interactions, Effective Teaching Practices and Quality of Interactions although not in Supportive Environment as it did in 2020. It also scored higher than the THEI scores in Higher Order Learning, Quantitative Reasoning, Student Faculty Interactions, Effective Teaching Practices and Quality of Interactions which is broadly in line with 2020. GMIT's score is less

than the THEI average for Collaborative Learning which examines students working with each other inside and out of the classroom.

It remains the case that GMIT has undertaken considerable work into increasing the number of respondents so that the data will be useful at School as well as Institute level and in developing useful visualisations of the outcome of the survey. However, there remains limited use of the data in the Institute to identify strengths and weakness, and to inform direction. Further consideration of how this can be altered is required.

	Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology 2021	Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology 2020	All SS.IE	Universities	Technological Higher Education Institutions	Other Institutions
Higher-Order Learning	33.8	34.8	34.7	35.7	33.4	36.3
Reflective and Integrative Learning	28.5	29.0	30.2	30.8	29.1	32.1
Quantitative Reasoning	21.2	22.9	19.2	19.3	19.3	18.1
Learning Strategies	30.7	30.8	31.3	31.5	30.7	33.2
Collaborative Learning	25.0	30.7	25.4	24.1	26.8	25.8
Student-Faculty Interaction	12.6	17.0	10.2	9.0	11.4	10.8
Effective Teaching Practices	34.7	36.7	32.5	31.1	33.8	33.8
Quality of Interactions	31.7	40.0	30.2	28.7	31.3	32.9
Supportive Environment	24.1	28.2	24.1	23.6	24.4	25.0

Table 8 StudentSurvey.ie Indicator Scores for 2021

	Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology 2020	Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology 2019	All SS.IE	Universities	Technological Higher Education Institutions	Other Institutions
Higher-Order Learning	34.8	33.9	36.4	37.7	34.9	36.7
Reflective and Integrative Learning	29.0	28.0	31.5	32.7	30.0	32.8
Quantitative Reasoning	22.9	20.7	21.1	21.6	20.6	20.1
Learning Strategies	30.8	29.1	31.7	32.6	30.6	32.1
Collaborative Learning	30.7	31.4	31.3	30.5	32.1	31.8
Student-Faculty Interaction	17.0	16.8	13.9	12.6	15.3	14.3
Effective Teaching Practices	36.7	34.7	34.9	34.5	35.6	33.9
Quality of Interactions	40.0	40.0	38.5	38.1	38.9	39.1
Supportive Environment	28.2	28.6	28.0	29.0	27.1	26.9

Table 9 StudentSurvey.ie Indicator Scores for 2020

External Examiner Reports

GURU, the system used for engagement with External Examiners provides the statistics outlined in Figures 1 and 2 below. The majority of external examiners are based in Ireland and emanate from a wide variety of Institutions, but the use of external examiners from other countries continues to grow.

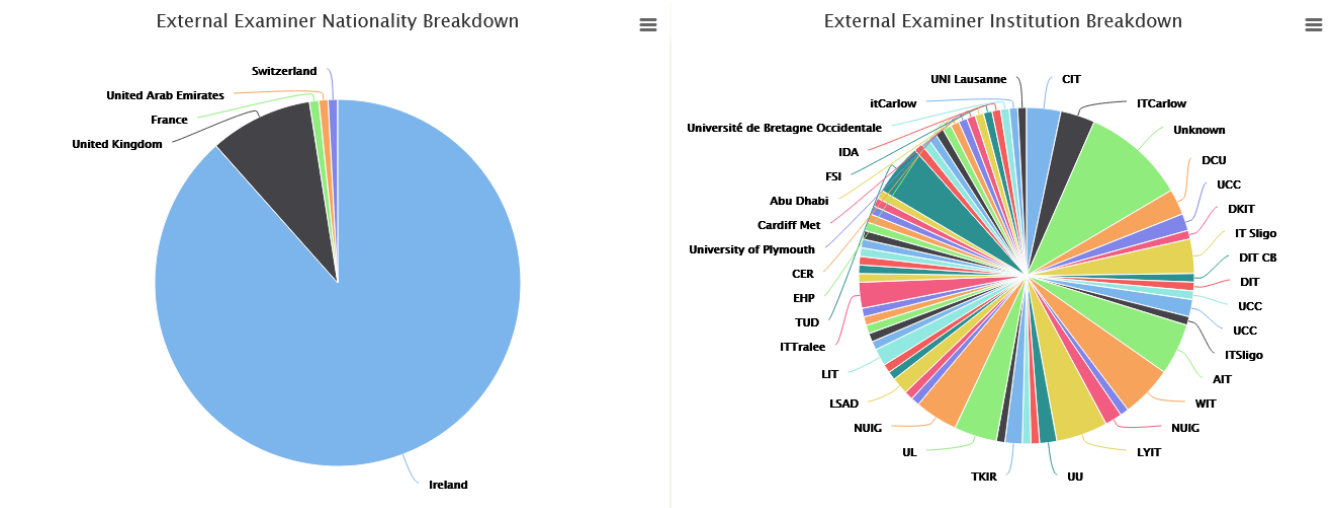


Figure 1 External Examiners by Nationality and Institute

547 examination papers were submitted and reviewed by External Examiners, 37 were not submitted for review, and 9 were submitted but not reviewed by an External Examiner. There were 1465 papers reviewed in 2018-19, the drop in papers reviewed this year is reflective of the move to alternative assessment types due to the COVID-19 pandemic. 25% of papers received were accepted as presented by the External Examiner, with 69% of papers requiring minor amendments, both figures broadly in line with pre-Covid statistics.

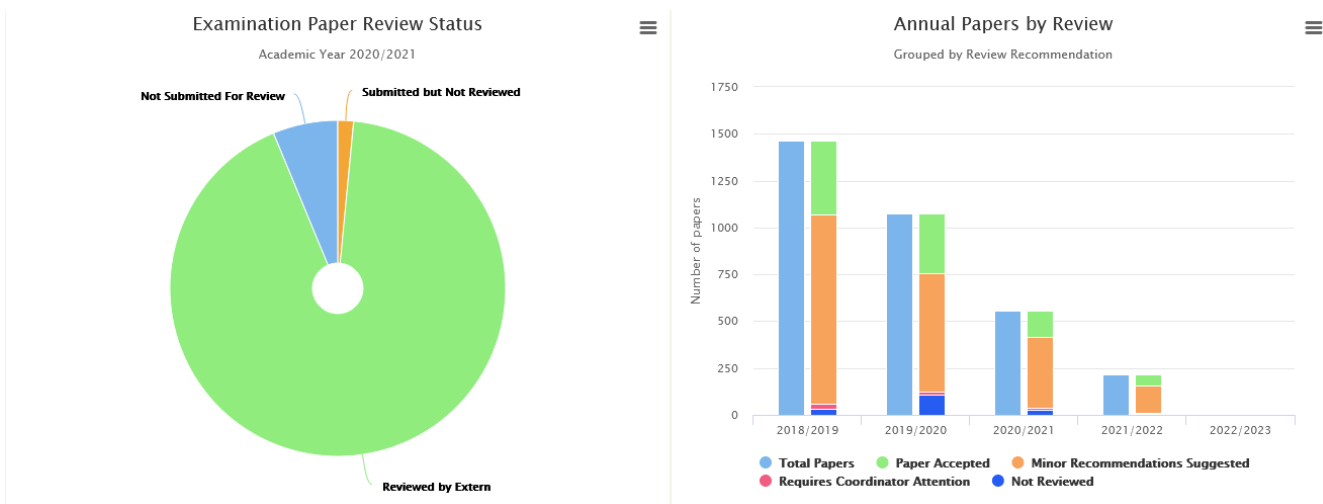


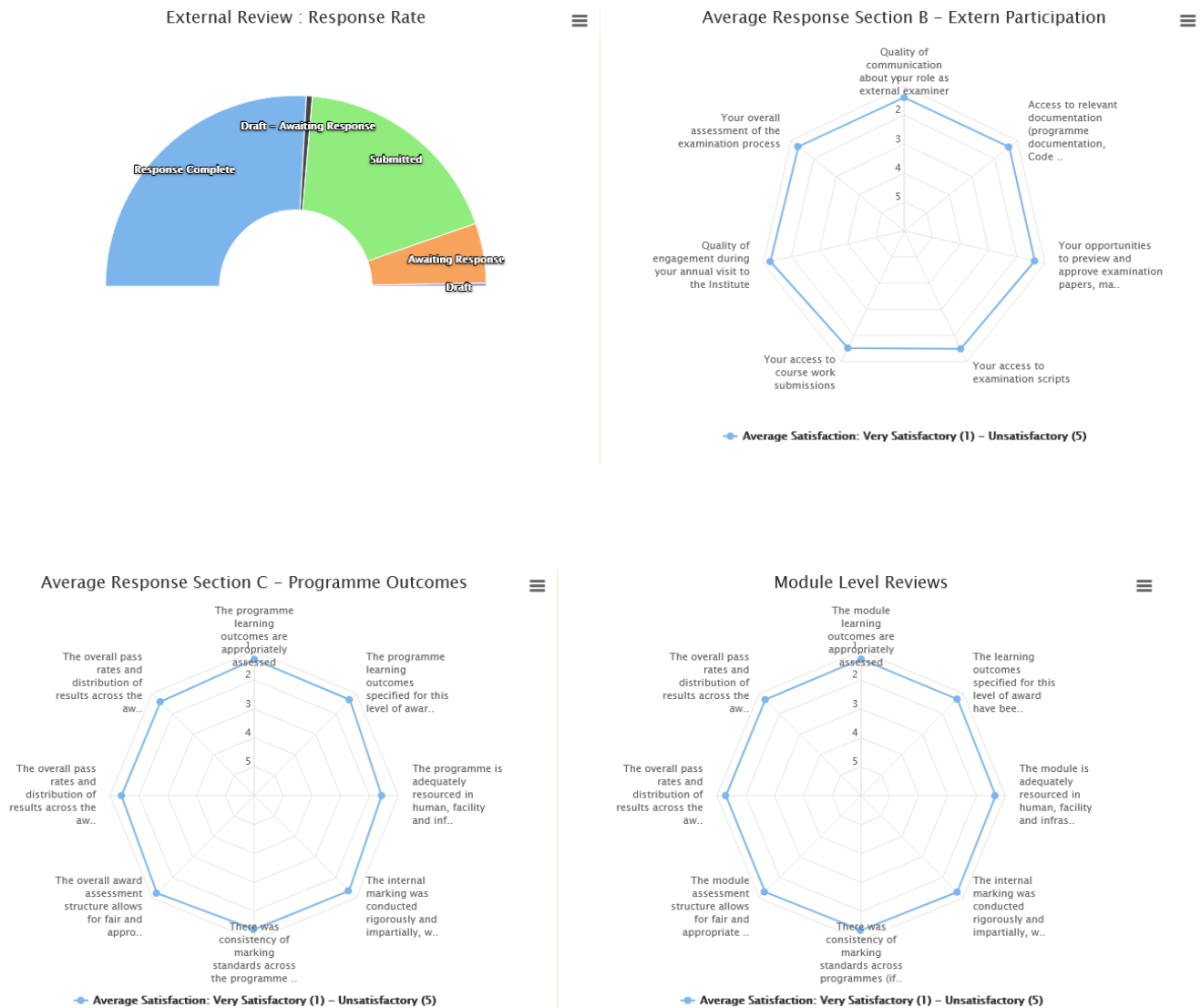
Figure 2 Examination Paper Review Status 2020-21³

Figure 3 Overview of External Examiner Reports and Responses from GMIT

³ **Draft:** External examiner has started the process of writing a report and has saved it as a draft in Guru but has not yet submitted it.

Submitted: External examiner has submitted a final report and the relevant parties in the institution (typically HOD or staff member with triage role) have been informed of its submission. This report is currently at pre-triage stage and is only visible to the relevant parties or individuals with the role 'Primary Final Report Manager'.

Awaiting Response: The triage and nomination of responder have taken place, but the response has not yet been submitted. For example, the report might stay at this status pending discussion of an appropriate response at a programme board.

Draft - Awaiting Response: The responder has started formulating a response to the report but has not yet submitted this response.

Response Complete: This is the final stage which means that the report has been submitted, triaged, a responder nominated and a response submitted to the report/external examiner.

In approximately half of cases the process of feedback to External Examiners was fully completed, but as Figure 3 shows in the other half of cases the loop has not been closed. These figures do not show any improvement from the previous year. The importance of engaging in a two-way dialogue with External Examiners will be re-emphasised at School level. The overall ratings by External Examiners of engagement, programmes and modules is between very satisfactory and satisfactory lending assurance as to the quality of our assessment process.

A review of the qualitative responses included in External Examiner reports reveals the following positive themes across many reports.

- Commendations on how lecturers and the Institute generally have responded to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Positive interactions with External Examiners.
- Support provided to students, particularly in the online environment.
- Applied nature of programmes including linkages with industry and guest speakers.
- Appropriate and varied assessment methodologies.
- Use of innovative assessments.

It was noted that generally results were appropriate although a few Externs did note grade inflation which they attributed to solutions put in place due to the pandemic. One of the most frequent topics in the reports related to communication and interaction with Externs. Whilst acknowledging the challenges posed by the current environment, some Externs found it difficult to discharge their duties effectively in the absence of site visits, although others commended Guru and the process of engagement with Externs noting an improvement since the early days of the pandemic. There is evidence of some difference in practices between Schools. The desire for a consistent approach is evident. To assist in the execution of their role Externs would like an analysis of results, rather than simply a list of marks. Others requested evidence of the linkage between assessments and module learning outcomes when provided with assessment briefs.

There are also some common themes relating to general suggestions for improvement including the following:

- The use of rubrics would be helpful for consistency of marking and feedback for students.
- Need for a conversation on grading, for example to establish a common understanding of H1.1
- Ensure that feedback is available to students on assessments.

There is evidence in most cases that suggestions previously made have been taken on board by staff. Comments relating to overassessment are much fewer than last year. It is noteworthy the extent that External Examiners are engaged with the programmes/modules they review, offering specific advice

for further improvements. Some externs have asked lecturers to consider whether elements of the new approach to assessment or delivery could or should be retained post-pandemic.

Library

GMIT Libraries continue to be well utilised as illustrated in Figure 4.

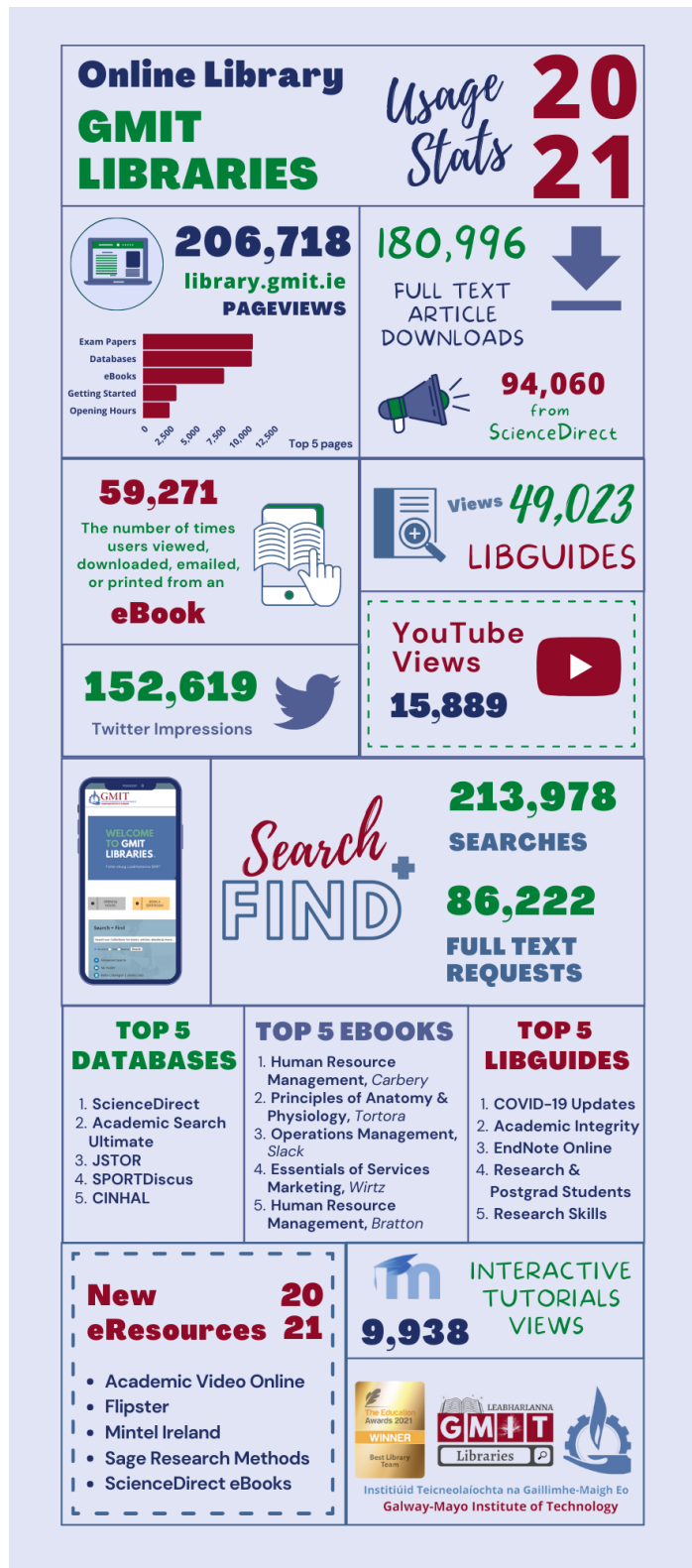


Figure 4 Library Usage Statistics

Programmatic Review

Preparation for Programmatic Review continues. Academic Council considered the topics that Programme Boards should prioritise in their review and the following were agreed: Assessment, Employability and Sustainability (Figure 5).

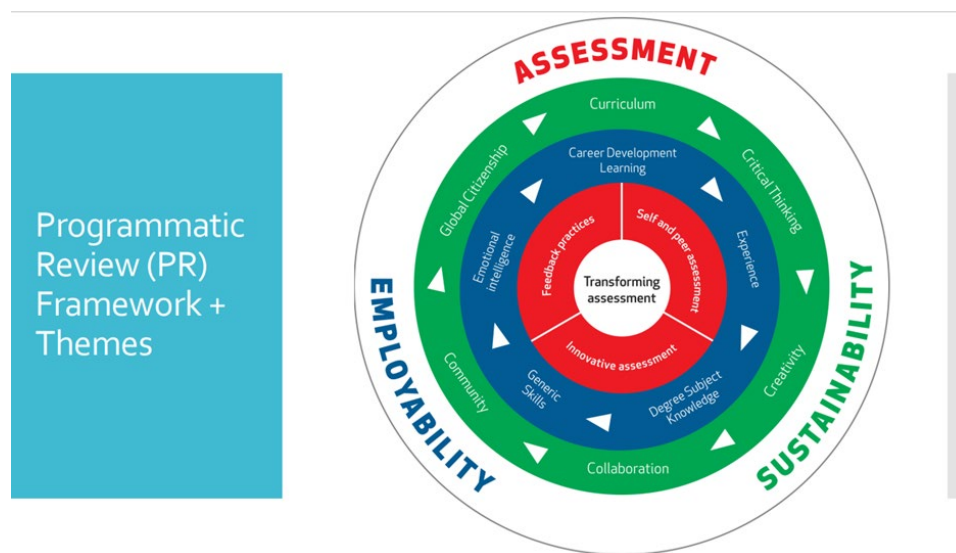


Figure 5 Programmatic Review Framework and Themes

A range of online resources were developed relating to these topics for use by the Programme Boards, with an information session held for all Programme Board Chairs. It is planned to hold a wider information session in the new year. The delay in Programmatic Review due to COVID-19 meant that previously compiled statistics were dated, so the Reporting section provided all Programme Boards with more recent statistics.

Progress towards HEA Compact Targets

GMIT has made significant progress towards its interim Compact targets notwithstanding COVID-19 interruption. The strategic review of Academic Units as part of Programmatic Review is progressing and involves feedback from industry, providing an employer perspective on our activities.

Programmatic Review has been interrupted by COVID-19, with plans to resume in train. Programme Boards have been provided with a resource to aid consultation with industry to inform programme amendments and development. GMIT is engaged in a comprehensive new programme development phase which involves extensive consultation with industry.

While there has been no opportunity to engage with a consortium to develop a new apprenticeship, the Institute has been focused on developing a work-based mode of delivery through the eWil project at the Letterfrack Campus. In addition, the Letterfrack Campus is engaging with the HEA to offer new craft apprenticeship blocks in the discipline of Wood Manufacturing and Finishing to help address the

national backlog while the School of Engineering is addressing HEA requirements for additional Electrical apprenticeships.

GMIT worked with a regional industry consortium on the development of a series of new programmes (L6, L7, L8) in Automation and Robotics with Manufacturing Applications. The programmes address the acute shortage of automation skills by upgrading employees, providing entry to the programme for post-1st year students and retraining senior technicians and engineers.

A cross Institute group has been established to share best practice in relation to Professional Development. The group have developed a range of resources for use by those involved in the management of placements and have worked on alternative modes for achievement of professional practice outcomes.

A series of online resources have been developed to support The Next Step: Transitioning to the Workplace, GMIT's employment preparedness module. These resources have allowed the module to be delivered in a blended mode whilst extending its reach and impact.

Building on GMIT's Institute level Employability Statement, the Connacht Ulster Alliance has developed an Employability Statement placing employability at the core of the future Technological University.

GMIT's Graduate and Professional Development Directorate has been re-constituted as the new Department of Graduate Studies and Professional Development to lead the development and delivery of the Institute's lifelong learning offerings, including postgraduate and accredited Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programmes. Immediate responsibilities include supporting Programme Boards to expedite their development of structured Masters programmes to meet the TU research criteria. The SRS return for 2019/20 shows an increase in flexible learning students which is largely driven by the development and delivery of online and blended programmes.

GMIT's approved Policy on Online and Blended Learning and the Institute's participation in the iNote project with our CUA partners is driving both the development of online/blended programmes and building capacity for their delivery, as is the support provided by our recently recruited Instructional Designer. This is evidenced through the twelve blended and five online programmes being delivered.

The HEA iNOTE project is building digital capabilities for flexible learning delivery in the West/North West region (2019-2022). This project is delivered by the Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA) and is having an impact across the higher education system by implementing new methods of delivering digitally enhanced learning through shared approaches. In the 12 months to the end of June 2020, the iNOTE

project management teams have made significant progress on the tasks relating to first four work packages (1-4). The development of digital supports including the CUA Digital Education Platform (see <https://DigitalEd.ie>) is a key example of integrating the outcomes from the iNOTE project into the mainstream operations of each Institute for the benefit of all. The iNOTE project aligns with national priority objectives for higher education. Each of the CUA members strategic plans contain specific objectives which support this project. In turn, these strategic objectives are reflected in detail in the individual Institute compacts, which address national higher education objectives. The main goal of this project is to provide a stimulus for meaningful collaborative activity responding to the needs of the regions the CUA serves as progress is made towards the establishment of a Technological University with a priority focus on flexible delivery. Given that digitalisation was a strategic priority for the Institute and substantial progress had been made in this regard, the Institute was well placed to pivot to online learning in response to COVID.

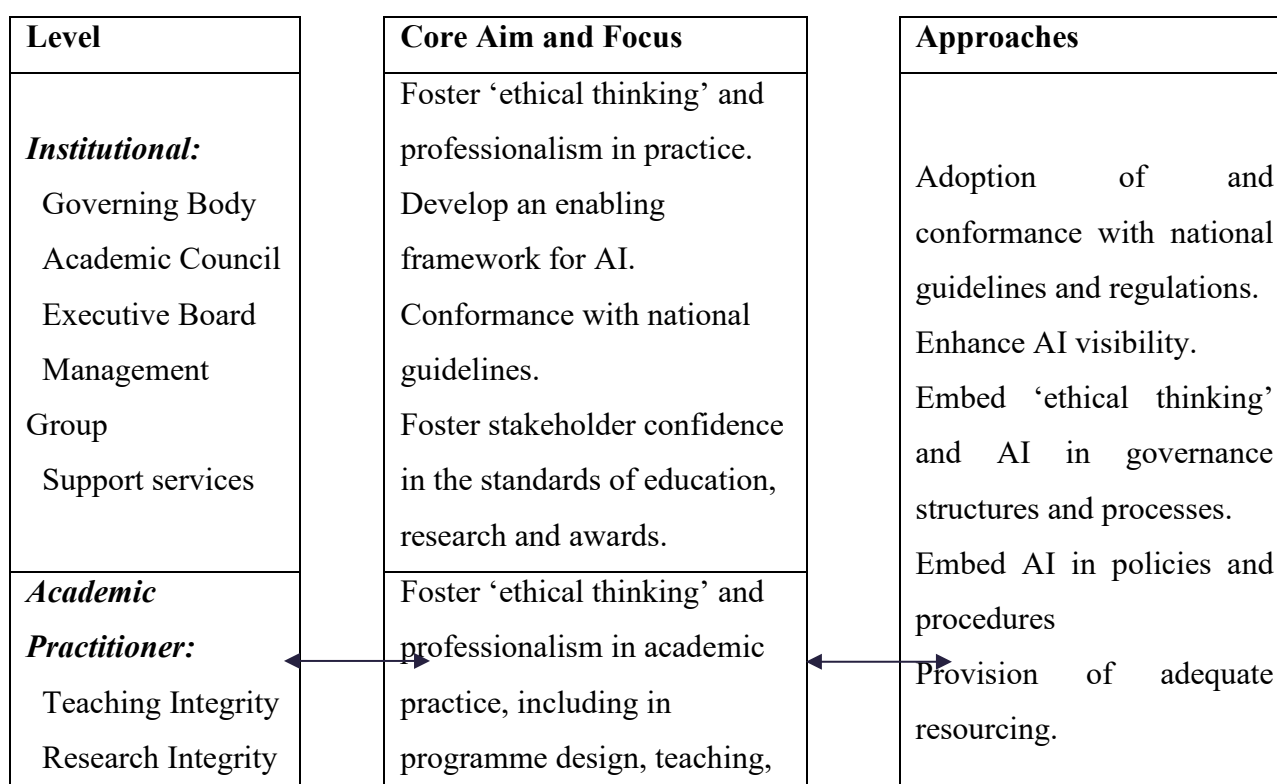
2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

GMIT has a range of policies and regulations to support academic integrity as outlined in Section A of this report.

The National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) was established in November 2019 by higher education providers in Ireland and is facilitated by QQI. NAIN is aligned with the National Research Integrity Forum (NRIF). In October 2020, GMIT's Academic Council established an Academic Integrity (AI) Working Group to consider how NAIN's aims, advice, guidance and policies can be advanced by the Institute, and in particular, to consider the extent to which AI is embedded in our culture, in our academic quality assurance framework and in our academic practices, and to make recommendations for enhancement.

In general, two broad approaches are possible: a 'rules based' approach or a 'principles based' approach. The former is grounded in conformity/compliance ('inspecting in' and sanctioning divergence); the latter in guidance, shared ownership and responsibility, active agency and the cultivation of the internalisation of academic values and ethical norms ('designing in', encouraging initiative and experiment, seeking continuous incremental improvement, CPD). The working group favour the latter approach.

The working group suggests a '3 Level Framework' for approaching AI enhancement; institutional, academic practitioner and student. This approach as outlined in Figure 6 below was presented to and adopted by Academic Council in June 2021.



	assessing, research, administration and community engagement.	Embed AI in internal and external communications. Education and training including in ethics, professionalism and specific AI related issues. Monitoring and review. Critical and constructive self-evaluation.
Student: Personal Development Academic Development	Foster moral awareness, self-confidence and virtue. Foster awareness and understanding of AI, and the nature and consequences of academic misconduct. Develop mechanism for the prevention, detection, management and sanctioning of academic misconduct	

Figure 6: 3-Level Academic Integrity Framework

In addition, the group proposed a wide range of actions to enhance academic integrity in the Institute. The group's discussion paper was presented to Academic Council, and it was agreed to further the topic through a staff seminar series to consider and discuss AI issues, and that a presentation to Governing Body on the issue would also be useful.

In 2018-19 there were 64 reported instances of breaches of academic integrity. The majority (59) of these related to examination infringements, and of these 46 related to the confiscation of mobile phones in exam halls. Table 10 shows a marked decrease in exam infringements in 2019-20 which can be explained by the absence of traditional examinations in summer and autumn 2020. The increase in exam infringements in 2020-21 is driven primarily by breaches of regulations relating to proctored examinations.

2020-21	REPORTED INCIDENTS	PANELS HELD	INVESTIGATIONS CONDUCTED	SANCTIONS IMPOSED
Examination Infringement	35	6	0	35
Plagiarism	3	2	0	3
Contract Cheating	0	0	0	0
Infringements of Work-Based Placement	0	0	0	0
Research Misconduct	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	38	8	0	38

2019-2020	<i>REPORTED INCIDENTS</i>	<i>PANELS HELD</i>	<i>INVESTIGATIONS CONDUCTED</i>	<i>SANCTIONS IMPOSED</i>
Examination Infringement	9	2	2	2
Plagiarism	3	0	0	3
Contract Cheating	0	0	0	0
Infringements of Work-Based Placement	0	0	0	0
Research Misconduct	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	5	2	3	3
2018-2019	<i>REPORTED INCIDENTS</i>	<i>PANELS HELD</i>	<i>INVESTIGATIONS CONDUCTED</i>	<i>SANCTIONS IMPOSED</i>
Examination Infringement	59 *	5	13	59
Plagiarism	5*	2	5	5
Contract Cheating	0	0	0	0
Infringements of Work-Based Placement	0	0	0	0
Research Misconduct	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	64	7	18	64

Examination Infringement: Possession of book(s), notes, or electronic storage and retrieval devices; possession of writing on his/her person upon entering the examination hall; use or attempted use of books, memorandum, notes or paper; aiding or attempting to aid another candidate; obtaining or attempting to obtain aid from another candidate; communication, or attempted communication, in any way, with another candidate; removal of answer books from the examination hall whether used or unused (1).

Plagiarism: the practice of taking another person's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own (2)... the inclusion of another person's writings or ideas in any formally presented work (including essays, theses, projects, laboratory reports, examinations, oral, poster or slide presentations) which form part of the assessment requirements for a module or programme of study, without due acknowledgement, either wholly or in part, of the original author or source of the material through appropriate citation. Plagiarism occurs where ideas are presented falsely, either implicitly or explicitly, as being the original thought of the author's(3).

Contract Cheating: Usage of an essay mill; submission of an assessment that is not the original work of the student; when a person uses a third party service(s) to help them produce academic work where such input is not permitted and whether or not payment or favour is involved (4)

Research Misconduct: Unacceptable or improper behaviour in any part of research. (4)

Table 10 Academic Integrity Reported Incidents in GMIT 2018-19 and 2020-21

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>
1	Progress work on preparing for the TU	Enhance communication about the progress towards the TU (President). Commence projects aimed at policy and systems upgrade (Finance, HR, Computing, Academic Affairs, Student Services, Research) Recruit Governing Body and President for new TU (GB and Minister). Propose structure of new AC (VPAARs and AC x 3)
2	Establish Centre for Sustainability	Establish Centre for Sustainability and begin process of embedding sustainability and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as core guiding principles across all activities in GMIT with a particular focus on curriculum, campus management and operations, community engagement, collaborative research, and culture.

3	Continue to respond as required to the COVID-19 Pandemic	Extend implementation of Mitigation Policy. (AC) Review use of proctored exams with view to further roll-out as required. (OAA) Take action to ensure safety of staff, student and facilities. (Covid Officer)
4	Continue to develop new programmes in response to industry requirements.	Springboard HCI Microcredentials policy
5	Evaluate effectiveness of Academic Council	Conduct survey with Academic Council Members as Council ends, reflecting on learnings that will be useful for ATU.
6	Embed DAB status.	Approve Joint Sectoral Section 55 protocol between DABs and QQI.
7	Further enhance academic integrity measures within the Institute.	Adopt NAIN Academic Integrity Guidelines and National Principles and Lexicon of Common Terms. Progress implementation of Academic Integrity Report
8	Review Research Code of Practice	Review and amend to allow exit from doctorate programme with level 9 masters award in specified circumstances.
9	Engage with and support the implementation of the National and Regional RPL projects.	Participate in RPL survey. Appoint RPL coordinator to participate in both projects. Start the process of RPL policy alignment.

3.2 Reviews planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods

Unit to be reviewed	Date of planned review	Date of last review
School of Science	Q1 2022	2014
School of Design & Creative Arts	Q4 2021	2014
Mayo Campus	Q2 2022	2014

3.2.1 Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period

Unit to be reviewed	Date of planned review	Date of last review
None, due to establishment of Atlantic Technological University		

3.2.2 **Reviews planned beyond Next Reporting Period**

Unit to be reviewed	Date of planned review	Date of last review
None, due to establishment of Atlantic Technological University		

4.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies

Case 1

Ask Me Anything: Answering the call of Academic Staff transitioning to the world of Online Teaching and Beyond

Prior to the pandemic, the Teaching and Learning Office in Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) were busy devising new ways of providing technical teaching and learning support services to academic staff within the institute. One such offering was to deliver more structured and regular assistance through bookable online one-to-one sessions with a Learning Technologist.

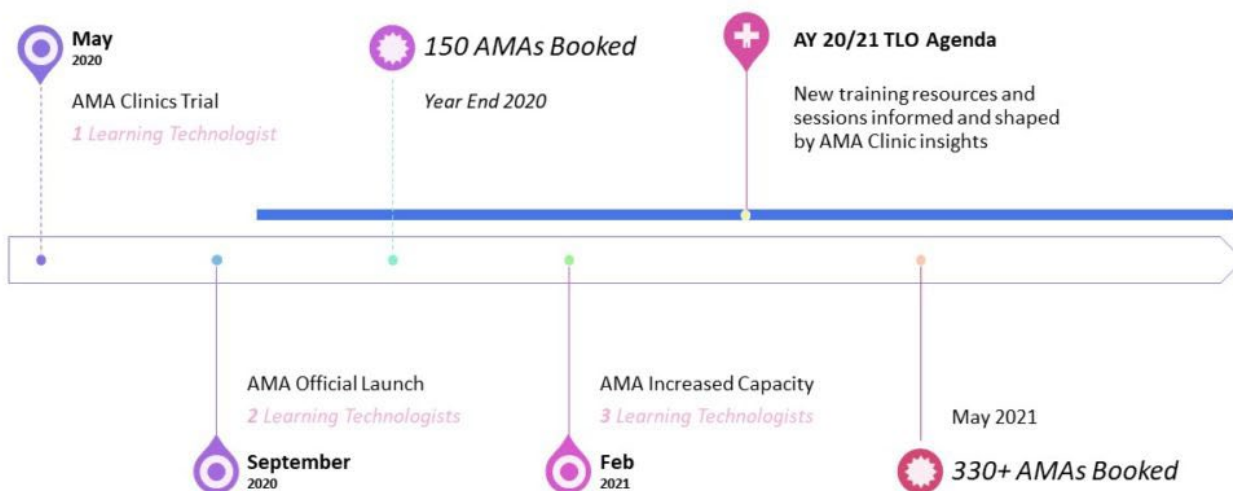


Figure 1 Timeline of setup and scaling of the AMA clinics over one year

The pandemic brought with it the introduction of this new service called 'Ask Me Anything' (AMA) - offered initially to a small cohort in June 2020 before being rolled out to all staff in September for the start of the new academic year.

The AMA clinics are simply a 15-minute online one to one session with a Learning Technologist from the Teaching and Learning Office where staff can ask just about anything they like! Teaching

before or *'I have had no experience with this'*. The AMA clinics created a space to simply 'ask anything' especially in a pandemic where there's no such thing as a stupid question.

Apart from just providing a singular immediate benefit for the AMA participant, these AMA interactions helped to shape and guide our institute wide training as we, the Learning Technologists, heard first-hand the issues, frustrations, and needs of staff. Armed with this insight the delivery of timely and appropriate training materials became simpler and more effective.

The AMA clinics are open for booking all year round and have become a permanent fixture within the GMIT Teaching and Learning resources and support suite.

Case 2

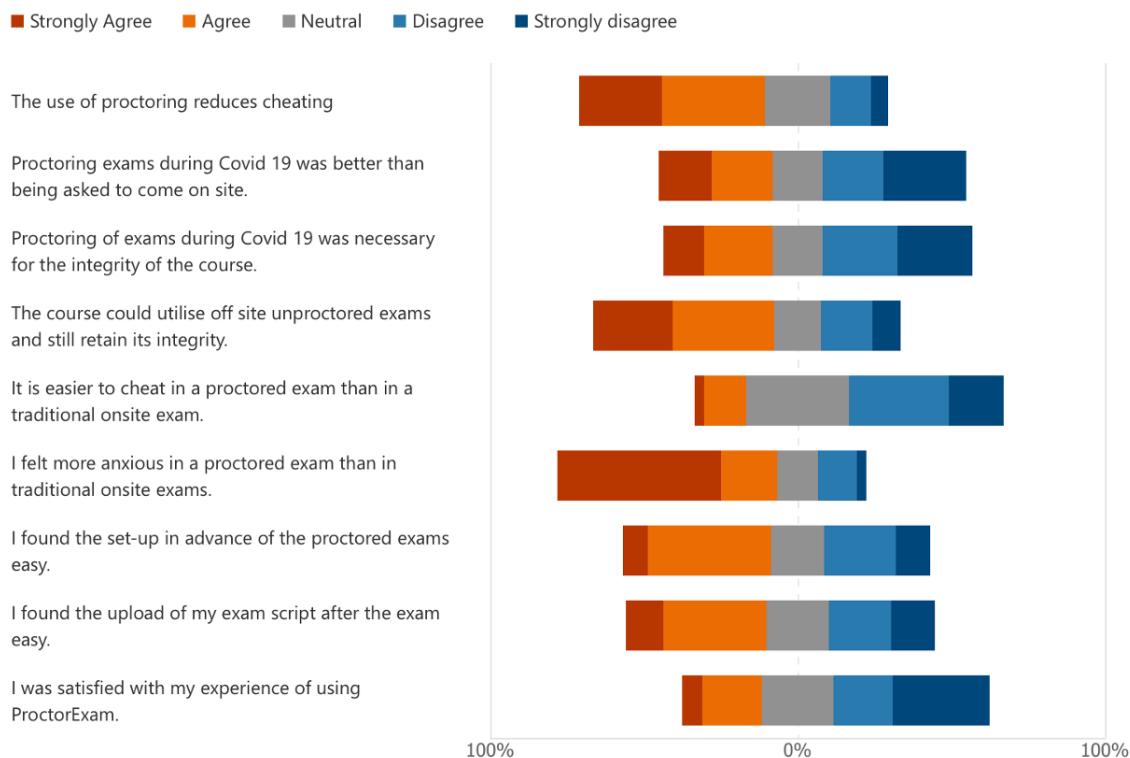
Pivoting from Onsite to Online Exams - Online Proctoring Experience

Prior to the pandemic, GMIT first introduced online proctoring in the School of Business on one programme of study, as a small-scale project. As we pivoted to online learning and remote teaching, online assessment solutions became a requirement across all disciplines. Public health restrictions meant that onsite exams had to be cancelled. Whilst the majority of lecturers moved to alternative assessment formats, the accounting programme on the Galway Campus moved to proctored examinations in summer 2020 and subsequently to maintain the integrity of the students' exemptions from professional accounting bodies. The pivot was speedy, and there were learnings from each examination session. In February 2021, the GMIT Teaching and Learning Office assigned an Instructional Design team to work with the Exams Office to improve the Proctor Exam experience and documentation for students. The team initiated a three-point project plan:

- 1. Review the existing documentation and research on student proctoring experiences*
- 2. Undertake and document Proctor Exam trials*
- 3. Create and test new instructional materials*

Research conducted with GMIT students (see Figure 1) showed that some students found proctor exams stressful and can cause additional anxiety. In order to try and reduce or eliminate this additional anxiety, the team decided that the main goal was to provide clear concrete instructions. The existing exam guide was a 13-page MS Word document with two appendices. Feedback indicated it was too long and intimidating, encouraging a sense of perceived complexity among students. Using a single document to instruct users on different procedures that take place days apart, was also problematic. This issue was exacerbated by the thematic structure of the documentation - based on topics rather than tasks - with the order of instructions moving backwards and forwards in time through different sections. The team agreed that short screen-capture videos would be a more effective way to demonstrate how the GUI looks and operates - 'letting the GUI do the work' - providing a more authentic and accessible solution.

Figure 1: GMIT Accountancy Student Experience Of Online Proctoring



The design team undertook a task analysis and identified three distinct sets of task-oriented instructions that would give users task-specific information in chronological order: giving students necessary information only when needed it. Each set of instructions would have an accompanying video demonstrating the steps and showing the GUI.

Following the review of the guiding resources, the Exams Office set up two sets of mock proctor exams for the team. In the first set the team followed the GUI instructions and took notes on the steps and their experiences. In the second set the review team took screen recordings for the videos and undertook some testing and troubleshooting.

The review and evaluation stage resulted in the development of enhanced instructional user guidance materials. The T&L instructional designers developed three short sets of instructions for specific tasks:

[Step 1: Preparing for your Proctor Exam](#)

[Step 2: Your Proctor Exam Systems Check](#)

[Step 3: On the Day of your Proctor Exam](#)

The instructions were designed as webpages and presented as a three-step process with some FAQs on [the Student HUB](#), in collaboration with computing services. This enhanced online exams guide suite, was the most popular page visited on the Student HUB in 2021.

Each set of instructions contains a link to [an accompanying video](#). The videos are 4-6 mins long and demonstrate 6-7 steps with a voiceover and textual cues. The tone and style of the videos is informal and relaxed, putting students at ease.

The new instructions and video guides were tested by a sample group of students who were re-taking exams in April 2021 and feedback was gathered to make some final improvements. The feedback generated was very positive, and the resulting instructional videos are also noted as the most watched learning resources on the Teaching and Learning Office MS Stream Channel in 2021.

As GMIT transitioned to the 4th round of online proctoring in December 2021 to January 2022, including 100 exams and 3,000 online exam seats, the Exams Office team was well positioned to manage the increase. So much was learned from the challenges encountered in the earlier rounds of proctoring implementation in 2020-21 and this has led to the enhancement of the student and educator experience. The team recognises, that online proctoring requires an on-going cycle of review and that further improvements will be needed in the future.

Case 3

Employability Enabler in GMIT - Online Careers Module

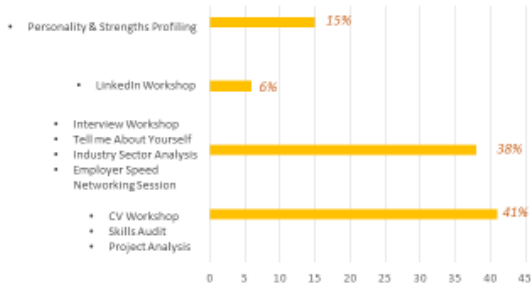
The GMIT Careers Office and Registrar led the development of an Employability Statement and Employability Framework for GMIT in 2019, which outlines the Institutes overall approach to employability and the supports available to both students and graduates. Student employability is central to GMIT’s strategic plan. The GMIT Mission Statement states that GMIT will “Develop confident, professional, knowledgeable and skilled graduates who are equipped to contribute as global citizens” (GMIT, 2019). Embedding employability will prepare students to succeed both professionally and personally and to contribute meaningfully to their community and society. Building on the framework, the Careers Office collaborated with the Teaching and Learning Office on the development of an online accredited career education module. This module was launched during the pandemic and become a critical learning experience for senior level students, to engage with as an alternative to work placement.

The Careers module has provided GMIT students an opportunity to enhance their knowledge, skills, and competencies in relation to personal career development plans, creating their online profiles, understanding their industry sector, and preparing to engage with employers (see Figure 1). This is a first step in embedding careers education and employability into the curriculum as a specific module. The module is ideal to be used as part of an alternative to placement or even more broadly as an elective.

Figure 1: Key Elements of the Online Careers Module that appeals to Students

Key Elements of the Online Career Module (OLC) that appeal to Students

Which elements of the module did you find most useful ?

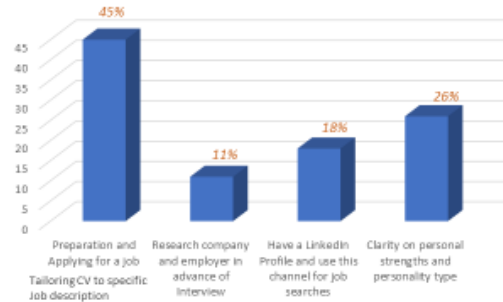


Overall the workshops were rated highly with 79% of Students finding Interview and CV Workshops very useful.

The elements of the module that were rated most highly were the practical elements that the students could use in the recruitment process, for example, a professional CV, Covering Letter and Interview.

The elements that rated less, for example, Personality and Strength Profiling were more relevant for working in teams in the workplace. LinkedIn, which is normally more popular - rated lower due to the online forum which was previously delivered in the classroom.

Do you think having completed the module that you are now better placed for the following?



71% of Students reported that having completed the module they felt more confident in preparing and applying for a job, are more conscious in the need to tailor their CV to individual job descriptions. This was supported in having more clarity in their own personal strengths and personality types, allowing them to bring an individual perspective to their CVs when submitting job applications.

A further 11% realised the importance of researching the company in advance and 18% utilises LinkedIn for job search.

Case 4









Enhancing the Student Experience During a Pandemic - The Student HUB

As with many other aspects of the college's activities COVID-19 was a major driver in moving things online to facilitate students who were studying partially or fully online throughout the year. The development of the student site *Student HUB* (see Figure 1, site directory), was a major project undertaken during the period. Whilst a previous student portal did exist, it was relatively basic and primarily a repository of documents and often difficult to navigate to find what you were looking for. With no central ownership of the site there was no helicopter view to see whether all information students needed was present, so in some instances there was material missing and it contained out of date material. Generally, the site was not considered a 'go to' site for students. Therefore, the development of the new site was undertaken.

The objectives which guided the site development were that it should be student focussed, give parity of experience for onsite and online students, provide the information students required, and be easy to navigate and scan pages. Research on the modes by which students accessed the previous site highlighted the importance of a mobile friendly site. The site had to be easy to populate so that it would be kept current. The structure and language of the site were to be student friendly so that students could access and understand information easily.

Figure 1 Student HUB Home Page



<p>QUICK LINKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Calendar Class Timetables Exam Timetables LearnOnline/Moodle Register/Pay Library 	<p>NEW STUDENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Induction LearnOnline / Moodle Your IT Register/Pay (Quick link) Students ID Cards Fees & Grants Access & Disability Services 	<p>MOST POPULAR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous Exam 2022 Info A to Z for Students Useful Forms Students Financial Supports Internal Applications Students Code of Conduct
<p>YOUR STUDIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timetable Library Examinations Academic Integrity Study Skills and Supports Studying Online Your School/Campus 	<p>YOUR IT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your IT Multi Factor Authentication LearnOnline / Moodle Office 365 Digital Learning Charter 	
<p>YOUR CAMPUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location, Maps and Parking Campus Catering Facilities Green Campus WiFi Student ID Card A-Z for Students 	<p>YOUR HEALTH & WELLBEING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Health Services Student Counselling Services Health and Well Being Supports Chaplaincy Access & Disability Services Healthy Campus 	
<p>YOUR STUDENT LIFE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study Abroad Graduate Students Mentors Students' Union Clubs & Societies Volunteering Accommodation 	<p>YOUR FINANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fees & Grants Register & Pay Student Financial Supports Scholarships Money Advice & Budgeting 	
<p>YOUR FUTURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing or Leaving Your Course Apply for a Course Careers Graduation Your Academic Record 	<p>YOUR RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies & Regulations Complaints & Grievances Disciplinary Procedure Data Protection Health & Safety Student Voice 	

Given that GMIT had previously rolled out MS Office 365 and there was internal knowledge of this platform it was decided to build the site using SharePoint to enhance the site's aesthetics. Figure 1 represents a screen shot image of the homepage.

The site was populated over the summer and ready for a soft launch in September 2020. The site was heavily promoted through the online student induction. Mid-year the site was gaining over 60,000 visits in a 30-day period, with almost 4,500 unique viewers. The most popular pages tend to depend on the time of the year and where we are in the academic calendar. Student and staff feedback has been positive in relation to accessing information required and the move away from paper-based forms which the site has facilitated.

The key learning from the process was to structure the site with the student in mind and not necessarily in the way that we are structured as an organisation. For example, students did not know that fees and grants is situated within the registration function, so it was important that it was given visibility on the site. By including information for new students on how to register on the landing page of the site, the students were directed to the site from day one. Usage is continuing to expand as staff are directing students to relevant sections as the first point of assistance. To ensure that the site remains accurate and up-to-date, relevant functions in the organisation have responsibility for their own sections, whilst overall control for the structure and aesthetic of the site remains in the Office of the Registrar supported by Computing Services.

Case 5

Communicating Athena Swan - Promoting Awareness and Maximising Engagement

Click [HERE](#) to view the interactive poster outlining the inclusive communication methodology used to promote awareness and maximise engagement of Athena Swan in GMIT.