Appendix One

Demographic trends in the West of Ireland and their impact on the student population

NUI Galway's traditional catchment area is the BMW region, from Donegal down to parts of Kerry, stretching from the West coast to the Athlone region, with the five counties of Connacht as the prime catchment zone.

Over the last 10 years, data from the 2006, 2011 and 2016 Census all reveal a common pattern - a sharp downward trend in demographics for the Western region, relative to growth trends on the East coast. Recent demographic projections to 2031 from the Central Statistics Office indicate a continuation of this trend into the future, with marked differences in the population trends for the East and West coast.

Census data 2011- 2016: Large variations in population change by county

Analysis of the 2011 and 2016 census data by the Central Statistics Office shows that population change varied widely across the country in that 5 year period, ranging from a high of over 8% in Fingal to a low of -1.5% in Donegal. Among the fastest growing counties were the four administrative areas of Dublin, along with the commuter belt counties of Meath, Kildare and Laois, and the cities of Cork and Galway.

While most counties experienced some level of population growth three counties witnessed population decline over the five years, namely:

- **Donegal (-1.5%)**
- **Mayo (-0.2%)**
- **Sligo (-0.1%)**

Three other counties grew by less than 1 per cent, namely:

- South Tipperary which increased by 0.72%
- **Roscommon by 0.58%**
- **Leitrim which grew by just 0.55%.**

Five of the six counties experiencing population decline or minimal growth form part of NUI Galway's core catchment area.

Census data 2006 – 2016: 13-18 years population

Census 2011 shows the population of the secondary school age group (13-18 years) of 344,931, an increase of only 2,897 persons, or 0.8% since 2006, a consequence of low births in the mid-1990s feeding into today's numbers.

An analysis of the secondary school population by county since 2006 shows the greatest increase in this age group was in counties Laois and Kildare at 10.3%, followed by Meath (9.5%) and Cavan (8.8%).

The secondary school age group **decreased** in almost half of all administrative counties. This was most pronounced in city areas with the cities of Limerick (-16.3%), Cork (-11.7%), Waterford (-6.4%) and **Galway (-5.4%)** experiencing the greatest declines. **Other declines in general were concentrated in the West** and in South Dublin and Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown.

Census data 2011- 2016: Variations between cities and counties

The five cities of Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford have all grown faster than their surrounding counties. After falling during the previous inter-censal period of 2006 to 2011 by -0.2%, Cork City has grown by 5.4% compared with 4.2% for the county; Galway City has increased by 5.3%, far stronger than the county which is showing an increase of 2.2%, while Waterford City has seen growth of 3.5% compared with only 1.4% for the county.

Map 1 below shows the population change by county. **With the exception of Cork, the contrast in population change between the east and west is clearly illustrated.**

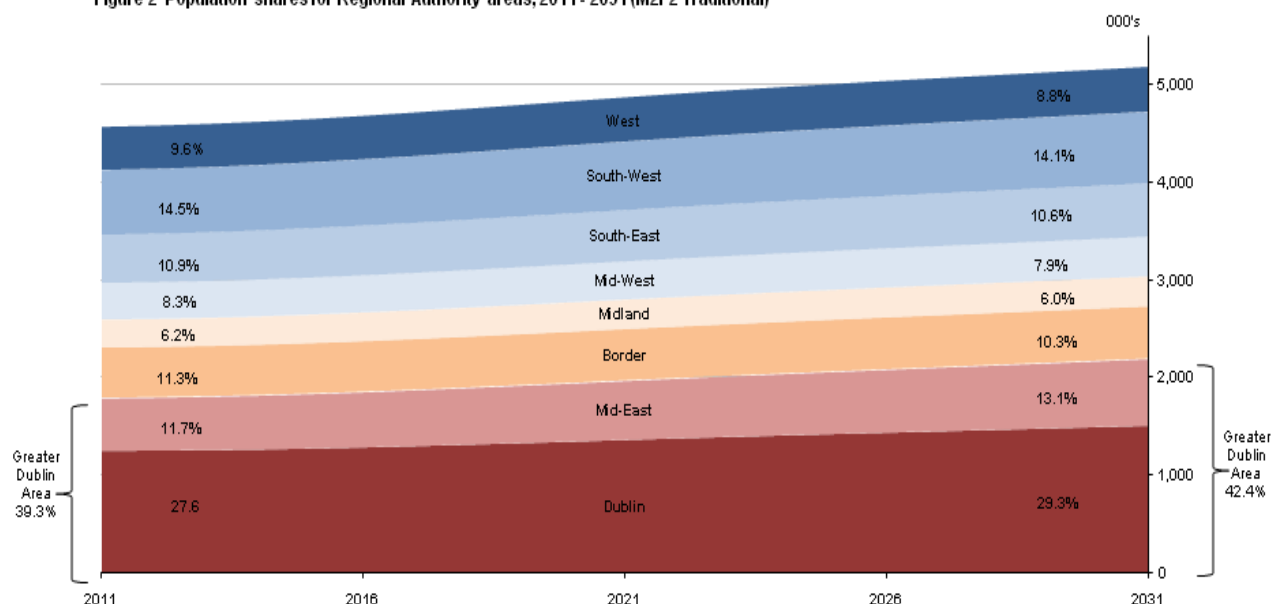## Map 1 – Percentage population change by county, 2011–16

% Change
- < 0
- 0 – 2
- 2 – 4
- 4 – 6
- > 6
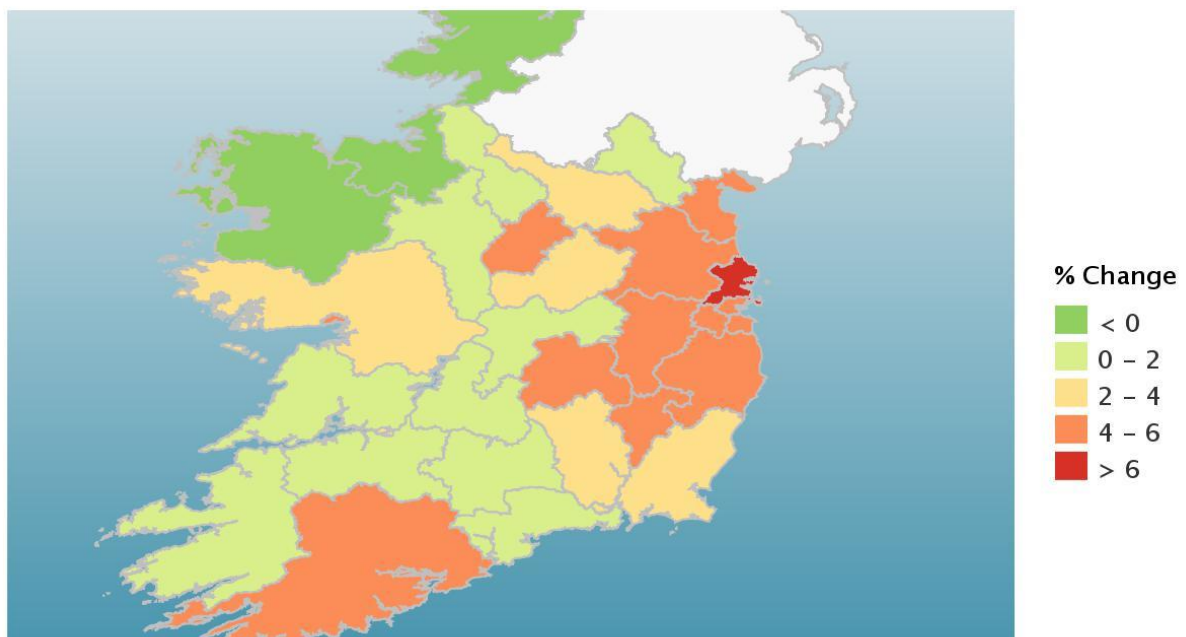
Source: CSO Ireland

CSO Projections: Regional Population Projections to 2031

Using Census 2016 data as a baseline, the CSO have recently provided regional population projections to 2031. The main findings of the regional population projections are as follows:

- The population of Dublin is projected to increase by between 96,000 and 286,000, depending on the internal migration pattern used, while the population of the Mid-East is set to increase by between 78,000 and 144,000.
- **The West's population is projected to decline** regardless of the internal migration pattern applied, while the Border is also set to decline in all scenarios. The only other region projected to show a fall in population is the Mid-West.

Figure 2 Population shares for Regional Authority areas, 2011 - 2031 (M2F2 Traditional)

Region	2011	2031
West	9.6%	8.8%
South-West	14.5%	14.1%
South-East	10.9%	10.6%
Mid-West	8.3%	7.9%
Midland	6.2%	6.0%
Border	11.3%	10.3%
Mid-East	11.7%	13.1%
Dublin	27.6	29.3%

Greater Dublin Area 2011: 39.3%
Greater Dublin Area 2031: 42.4%

CSO Projections: Age structure to 2031

The age structure of the projected population is shown in Table 1, Appendix One. Between 2011 and 2031 the number of young persons (i.e. those aged 0-14 years) is projected to increase steadily up to 2021 before falling again from 2026 and showing an overall decrease of 9.0% over the twenty year period. However, the projected change will vary considerably across the regions. The Mid-East will be the only region to show an increase over the period of 4.7%, while all other regions will experience a decrease in the population in this age group by 2031. **The West will show the largest decrease at 23.9%.**

Projected gains from external migration, as well as earlier birth cohorts joining the age groups, will exert an influence on the 15 to 24 age group. For those aged 15 to 24 years the Mid-East will see an increase of just under 52% by 2031 while Dublin will see a 40.2%

increase in this age group. **The Border and the West will experience smaller gains (+9.6% and +12.7%, respectively).**

The above scenarios outline the significant demographic challenges for NUI Galway – and all HEIs in the West of Ireland region, and highlight the importance of a co-ordinated approach to academic planning within the West North West Regional Cluster, as well as the need to avoid duplication of provision.

Impact of declining demographics on NUI Galway's Market Share

The impact of declining demographics on NUI Galway's share of the undergraduate market is clear in the 5 year figures for CAO applications, which show a downward trend on market share overall from 12.3% in 2012 to 11.2% this year:

Rank	HEI	2012	HEI	2013	HEI	2014	HEI	2015	HEI	2016
1	UCD	21.0%	UCD	21.5%	UCD	22.3%	UCD	20.6%	UCD	20.0%
2	TCD	19.8%	TCD	19.3%	TCD	17.9%	TCD	18.2%	TCD	18.2%
3	UCC	14.2%	UCC	14.5%	UCC	15.0%	UCC	15.3%	UCC	15.3%
4	DCU	14.1%	DCU	13.6%	DCU	13.9%	DCU	14.0%	DCU	14.4%
5	NUIG	12.3%	NUIG	12.3%	NUIG	11.4%	UL	12.2%	UL	12.4%
6	UL	10.4%	UL	10.5%	UL	11.0%	NUIG	11.4%	NUIG	11.2%
7	NUIM	8.3%	NUIM	8.3%	NUIM	8.5%	NUIM	8.3%	NUIM	8.5%

Table 2: NUI Galway's market share of UG applications over 5 years

Declining demographics in the catchment area have made it increasingly difficult for NUI Galway to achieve its student number targets, without compromising quality, over the last five years. Significant efforts have been made to widen the catchment area by drawing in students from outside of NUI Galway's traditional market, through a dedicated student recruitment strategy in the East and North, and through the provision of specialised degree programmes linked to NUI Galway's priority research areas. These efforts have met with some success but their effectiveness has been compromised by an intensification of the trend to study locally during the recession.

Appendix Two

Transitions agenda: NUI Galway Entry Routes

Under cycle 3 HEIs are also requested to report on:
- Implementation of the Transitions agenda - HEIs are requested to report on the vision underpinning the portfolio of undergraduate programmes, how planned provision is aligned to institutional mission, reducing the number of entrance points into higher education.

Entry Routes at NUI Galway

	2011	2015 (published CAO handbook, November 2014)	2016 (published CAO handbook, November 2015)	2017
NUI Galway: total number of programmes	59 (includes 6 in nursing and 1 medicine)	56 (includes 6 in nursing and 1 medicine)	60 (includes 6 nursing, 1 medicine, 2 from Shannon College)	55 (includes 3 nursing, 1 medicine, and 2 from Shannon College
Denominated Programmes	55	52	56	51

Since 2011, NUI Galway will have reduced its number of entry pathways to 55 by 2017. This is a reduction of 6 programmes from the 2011 baseline, when the integration of Shannon College of Hotel Management, which holds two programmes, is taken into account.

Regarding the application of the five TGRUSE principles for offering an entry route, NUI Galway has applied these principles across our programme portfolio and rationalised routes where practicable, including for instance the amalgamation of its Mature Nursing pathways into the standard Nursing pathways.

By 2017 NUI Galway will be fourth of the seven universities in terms of the number of entry routes offered, with TCD, UCC and DCU all offering more programmes. It should be noted that TCD listed below excludes the Two Subject Moderatorship (TSM) which Trinity will continue to run in 2017, adding 172 additional individual options. For purposes of comparison, we have excluded these programmes from the list below.

HEIs	2017
TCD*	64
DCU	64
UCC	57
NUIG	55
UL	43
UCD	41
NUIM	35

*excludes 172 two-subject moderator offered by TCD

NUI Galway is fully supportive of the transitions agenda and is working to rationalise its entry routes further. However, the University considers it important to note that demographic challenges in the West of Ireland provide a very different context for student recruitment to that experienced on the East coast. An ability to promote denominated entry routes in priority areas of expertise where the University has particular strengths is critical to NUI Galway's ability to meet its student intake targets and to recruit from outside its narrow catchment area.

It should also be noted that since 2011 the number of Level 8 programmes available to students has grown by 100, from 1,011 to 1,104 in spite of the rationalisation of entry routes in the Universities, with the growth taking place primarily in the Institutes of Technology. In that time period, the Universities have reduced their Level 8 entry routes from 425 in 2011 to 412 in 2016, with more than half of the Level 8 programmes now available being offered by Institutes of Technology and other Colleges. NUI Galway considers the lack of engagement of the Institutes of Technology with this issue as threatening to undermine any meaningful progress on transitions reform.

In addition to looking at numbers of available programmes, NUI Galway considers it useful to look at the proportion of students entering on denominated versus undenominated programmes when considering progress on transitions reform.
See below an analysis of NUI Galway's intake on denominated and undenominated programmes:

Students on Denominated vs. Un-denominated Programmes at NUI Galway

Overall (all NUI Galway Colleges)

Pathway	Registered	%age
Denominated	1,366	45%
Un-denominated	1,687	55%
Grand Total	**3,053**	**100%**

Overall (ex-Medicine)

The College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences does not offer an undenominated pathway and therefore should be excluded from the analysis.

Pathway	Registered	%age
Denominated	1,049	38%
Un-denominated	1,687	62%
Grand Total	**2,736**	**100%**

By-College (Arts)

Pathway	Registered	%age
Denominated	349	29%
Un-denominated	840	71%
Grand Total	**1,189**	**100%**

By-College (Commerce & Law)

Pathway	Registered	%age
Denominated	286	46%
Un-denominated	342	54%
Grand Total	**628**	**100%**

By-College (Science)

Pathway	Registered	%age
Denominated	263	43%
Un-denominated	344	57%
Grand Total	**607**	**100%**

By-College (Engineering & Informatics)

Pathway	Registered	%age
Denominated	151	48%
Un-denominated	161	52%
Grand Total	**312**	**100%**

Caroline Loughnane
September 2016

Progress on TGRUSE at the other Universities

The table below provides an overview of the evolution of entry routes in the university sector since 2011.

	2011	2015 (published CAO handbook, November 2014)	2016 (published CAO handbook, November 2015)	2017 (info to TGRUSE, March 2016)
DCU	60 includes 8 nursing	68 includes 7 from merged teacher training colleges and 8 nursing	67 includes 7 from merged teacher training colleges and 8 nursing.	64 (of which 20 still under review). Includes 4 nursing and 7 from merged teacher training colleges.
NUIG	59 includes 6 in nursing and 1 med	56 includes 6 in nursing and 1 med	60 includes 6 nursing, 1 med, and 2 from Shannon College, and 1 late addition	55 includes 3 nursing, 1 med, and 2 from Shannon College
NUIM	42	44	34	35 (of which 2 still under review)
TCD	69 includes 12 nursing, 1 med. Excludes 178 TSM	69 includes 12 nursing, 1 med, 3 dental L7. Excludes 178 TSM	68 includes 12 nursing, 1 med, 3 dental L7. Excludes 172 TSM	64 (of which 1 may not be ready in 2017), includes 1 med, 6 nursing and 3 dental L7). Excludes 172 TSM.
UL	74 includes 8 nursing and 1 med	72 includes 8 nursing, 1 med and 1 L6	72 includes 8 nursing, 1 med and 1 L6	43 includes 4 nursing and 1 med
UCC	59 includes 11 nursing, 2 med	62 includes 10 nursing and 2 med	62 includes 10 nursing and 2 med	57 (of which 13 under review), includes 5 nursing and 2 med
UCD	62 includes 8 nursing, 2 med	50 includes 8 nursing and 2 med	49 includes 8 nursing and 2 med	41 8 still under review, includes 4 nursing and 2 med
Total universities	*425 includes 60 nursing/med, and 4 L7/L6. Excludes 178 TSM. Total: 603*	*421 includes 59 nursing/med, and 4 L7/L6. Excludes 178 TSM. Total: 599*	*412 includes 59 nursing/med, and 4 L7/L6. Excludes 172 TSM. Total: 584*	*359 (of which 43 still under review), includes 26 nursing, 7 med. Excludes 172 TSM. Total: 531*
TOTAL CAO L8	*1011*	*1107*	*1104*	
TOTAL CAO L7	*303*	*343*	*342*	
TOTAL CAO L6	*127*	*148*	*137*	
TOTAL CAO	*1442*	*1598*	*1583*	

Sources: 2011, 2015 and 2016 data from CAO; March 2016 data provided by each university.

Appendix Three

2015 Postgraduate Research Student Survey

The Graduate Studies office issued a student feedback survey to postgraduate research students in the summer of 2015. 614 students completed the survey – a response rate of 49%, making this the largest ever survey of postgraduate research students at NUI Galway.

Methodology: 1,257 registered research students (PhD, Research Masters, DPsych, MD) were emailed via Blackboard on 29 June inviting them to complete the survey. Email reminders were issued on 16, 23, 30 July and 6 August. The survey was made available online via SurveyMonkey and students were requested to complete the Survey for their College. Students were also invited to enter a draw for an iPad. 178, 68, 108, 83 and 177 responses were received from the Colleges of Arts Social Sciences & Celtic Studies (ASSCS); Business, Public Policy & Law (BPPL); Engineering & Informatics (E&I); Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences (MNHS) and Science respectively by the closing date of 14 August.

Respondent profile
94% of the respondents are registered for a PhD and 85% of respondents are full-time students. Responses were collected from students in years 1-6 and later with the majority (89%) of responses from students in years 1-4. Almost half (48%) of the respondents are 30 years old or older, with 39% between 25 and 29 years old and 13% 24 years old or younger. 81% of the respondents are in receipt of financial support with a third on NUI Galway scholarships (either College or Hardiman) and 22% on Irish Research Council scholarships. 17% of full-time students are in paid employment with a significant number (36 responses) working more than 30 hours per week.

Supervision
Over 80% of respondents agree that their supervisor(s) have the skills and subject knowledge to support their research, that they have regular contact with their supervisor appropriate for their needs and that their supervisor provides helpful feedback. (57% of respondents have a primary supervisor only with 40% indicating that they also have co-supervisors.)

Resources
75% of respondents are satisfied with their working space and with the library facilities and expertise. 63% are satisfied with their computing facilities and 59% are satisfied with their specialised research facilities.

Research Environment

81% of respondents attended University Orientation, whereas 60% attended additional Orientation/Induction. 89% are aware of the University Guidelines for Research Degree Programmes. 87% are aware of the Graduate Studies Blackboard site and 34% use the training materials provided there.

Graduate Research Committee, Annual Progress Review and Completion

Most of the respondents interact with their GRC or GRC members annually with 78% rating this interaction as Good, Very Good or Excellent. 77% of respondents find the annual progress review to be of benefit. 82% of full-time PhD students expect to complete their PhD on time (in four years).

Overall Experience

80% of respondents agree that 'Overall, I am satisfied with the experience of my research degree.'

Comparison of responses between Colleges

There are some differences in the profile of respondents in the Colleges:

- The highest proportion of part-time students is to be found in the Colleges of ASSCS (18%) and MNHS (19%) with the lowest in Science (2%).
- The majority of respondents are 30 years old or older in the Colleges of ASSCS (62%) and BPPL (74%) whereas the majority of respondents are under 30 years old in E&I (67%), MNHS (56%) and Science (67%).
- Over 70% of students in the Colleges of ASSCS and BPPL are in receipt of financial support for their research programme, whereas over 80% of respondents in E&I, MNHS and Science are.

There are some notable differences in responses too:

- The level of satisfaction with supervision is highest from respondents in the College of MNHS, with decreasing levels of satisfaction in ASSCS, Science, E&I and BPPL in that order.
- Less than half of the respondents in the Colleges of ASSCS (49%) and BPPL (45%) are satisfied with computing resources.
- Interaction with their Graduate Research Committee is rated most positively by respondents in the College of ASSCS (86% good, very good or excellent) and least positively by respondents from E&I and Science (71%).
- More respondents in E&I (20%) and Science (18%) found no benefit to them of the annual progress review. 10% of MNHS and 5% of ASSCS and BPPL respondents also found no benefit.
- Only 74% of full-time PhD respondents in ASSCS expect to complete their research programme in time, in comparison with over 80% of respondents in the other four Colleges (87% in MNHS is the highest).

Overall, more of the respondents from MNHS were satisfied with the experience of their research degree at 90% with 84%, 78%, 75% and 73% satisfied in ASSCS, E&I, Science and BPPL respectively.

Each section of the survey gave respondents an opportunity to provide comments. These qualitative descriptions of students' experiences identify particular issues individual students are facing and provide some very positive feedback.

Benchmarking

In the UK, the postgraduate research experience survey (PRES) is a biennial survey run by the Higher Education Academy which is designed to collect feedback from postgraduate researchers about their experiences of their programme and their development as researchers. In PRES 2013 the response rate was 42%, which is noted to be high for an online survey. The NUI Galway 2015 response rate was higher at 49%. 82% of respondents to PRES 2013 were satisfied overall. In comparison, 80% of NUI Galway respondents are satisfied. (The same question was used in both surveys). The quality of supervision was rated highly in PRES 2013 with 84% of respondents satisfied. The NUI Galway survey responses indicated a similar satisfaction rating with supervision.

Action plan

Each College will be presented with the detailed responses from students in their College, which will be discussed at the annual review of research programmes by Colleges and Graduate Studies. This report will also be discussed at the Graduate Studies Board and presented to Academic Council. An action plan will be drawn up by Graduate Studies and Colleges. Both the survey results and the planned actions will be communicated to the students.

2015 Postgraduate Research Student Survey

614	responses
49%	response rate

Supervision

1. What arrangements are in place for your supervision?

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Primary Supervisor	348	57%
Primary Supervisor and co-supervisor(s)	246	40%
Other (please specify)	20	3%

2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about supervision?

Answer Options	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Agree Percent
a. My supervisor(s) have the skills and subject knowledge to support my research.	23	28	32	176	355	86%
b. I have regular contact with my supervisor(s), appropriate for my needs.	22	45	41	156	350	82%
c. My supervisor(s) provide feedback that helps me direct my research activities.	30	33	41	169	341	83%

Resources

4. How do you rate your level of satisfaction with the following resources?

Answer Options	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Satisfied Percent
a. Suitable working space (laboratory and/or desk)	16	53	79	240	215	75%
b. Appropriate computing facilities	33	80	110	208	172	63%
c. Library facilities and expertise	4	31	115	275	178	75%
d. Specialised research facilities (such as equipment and consumables) adequate to conduct your research	19	64	162	224	134	59%

Research Environment

6. Did you attend University Orientation for new research students at the start of your research degree programme?

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Yes	487	81%
No	114	19%

7. Did you attend any additional School, Discipline or Research Institute/Centre Orientation/Induction sessions?

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Yes	358	60%
No	243	40%

8. Are you aware of the University Guidelines for Research Degree Programmes?

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Yes	535	89%
No	66	11%

9. Are you aware of the Graduate Studies Blackboard site (1GST1)?

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Yes	525	87%
No	76	13%

10. If yes, do you use the training material available on 1GST1 (e.g. online Epigeum resources)?

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Yes	192	**34%**
No	378	66%

Graduate Research Committee, Annual Progress Review and Completion

12. How often do you interact with your Graduate Research Committee (GRC) or individual members of your GRC?

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Daily	3	1%
Weekly	22	4%
Monthly	68	12%
Annually	468	**79%**
Other	29	5%

13. How would you rate the value of your interaction with your GRC?

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Poor	43	7%
Fair	87	15%
Good	222	38%
Very Good	151	26%
Excellent	87	15%

78% Good, Very Good or Excellent

14. Did you find the annual progress review of benefit to you?

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Yes	457	**77%**
No	75	13%
Other (please specify)	58	10%

15. Do you expect to complete your research programme on time?				
Answer Options	Yes	No	Response Count	Yes Percent
Full-time PhD programme is 4 years	415	91	506	82%
Part-time PhD programme is 6 years	42	7	49	86%
Full-time Research Masters programme is 2 years	25	1	26	96%
Part-time Research Masters programme is 3 years	2	1	3	67%

Overall Experience

17. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement about your experience as a research student at NUI Galway?

Answer Options	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Response Count
Overall, I am satisfied with the experience of my research degree.	18	35	65	296	170	584
	3%	6%	11%	51%	29%	

80% Agree

Student Profile

19. What research degree are you registered for?

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
PhD	537	94%
Research Masters	25	4%
Other (please specify)	10	2%

20. Are you currently registered as studying:

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Full-time	484	85%
Part-time	54	9%
Write-Up mode	34	6%

21. In what academic year did you start your research degree programme? (Academic year starts on 1st Sept and ends on 31st August)

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
14/15	185	32%
13/14	142	25%
12/13	90	16%
11/12	94	16%
10/11	36	6%
09/10	17	3%
Prior to 09/10	8	1%

22. What age category are you in?

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
24 years old or younger	75	13%
25-29 years old	225	39%
30 years old or older	272	48%

23. Are you currently in receipt of any financial support for your research degree?

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Yes	461	81%
No	111	19%

24. If you are in receipt of funding please indicate which type

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Irish Research Council Scholarship	106	22%
NUI Galway College Scholarship (incl. Galway Scholarships)	123	26%
Hardiman or Ryan Scholarship	40	8%
International Scholarship	11	2%
Research Grant (held by supervisor)	65	14%
SUSI	6	1%
Other (please specify)	124	26%

25. If you are a full-time student, are you currently in paid employment?

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Yes	91	17%
No	434	83%

26. If yes, on average how many hours of paid employment do you undertake per week?

Answer Options		Response Count	Response Percent
1-10 hours	1-10 hours	43	40%
11-20 hours	11-20 hours	23	21%
21-30 hours	21-30 hours	5	5%
More than 30 hours		36	34%

Appendix 4 – Gender Equality Action Plan July 2017 – see separate attached document

Appendix 5 – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2016-17 – see separate attached document