



## **Academic Unit Review**

**Galway International Hotel School**

**15<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

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## Introduction to Academic Unit Review

GMIT's Quality Assurance Framework requires a review of each academic unit prior to the review of programmes within that unit. The review of academic units focuses on the performance of the academic unit since the last review and involves an environmental review, 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, will feed into the programmatic review process. The period covered by this academic unit review is 2013/14 to 2019/20. The programmes in the Galway International Hotel School (GIHS) will undergo Programmatic Review in 2021/22.

## Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for the review process are outlined below. The review process considered the following:

- Organisation and management of the Academic Unit: Resources, roles and reporting structures shall be evaluated to determine whether they are fit for purpose, viable and support the activities and role of the Academic Unit. Standard operating procedures shall be reviewed and evaluated with any gaps identified and addressed. Staff development shall also be evaluated and the importance of quality, quality assurance and enhancement in the Academic Unit culture shall be evaluated.
- Academic Units and services supporting internal and external stakeholders: Each Academic Unit will describe the aims and objectives of the Academic Unit and determine and detail the user experience of the Academic Unit, both internal and external.
- Programmes: Each Academic Units programme portfolio will be considered, in addition to issues surrounding programme development, programme design, programme management (to include programme retirement) and programme information.
- Student Lifecycle: The role of the Academic Unit will be considered in relation to the management of the student throughout the student lifecycle including transition in and out, and student engagement and retention.
- Evidence based decision making: The decision-making process utilised by the Academic Unit shall be evaluated, information gathered and stored shall be reviewed, the information used to make decisions shall be identified and the quality and source of information shall be reviewed.
- Institute wide engagement: The Academic Unit's contribution to the Institute's function shall be reviewed to include items such as participation in GMIT committees, reviews etc. Each Academic Unit shall also detail how it engages with relevant external agencies and its contribution to external bodies.
- Integration of all Academic Unit users: Each Academic Unit shall review how it works with centralised functions e.g. Lifelong Learning, Research Office etc.
- Communication and information systems: Internal communication systems within each Academic Unit and between the Academic Unit and other academic units, departments,

management structures and other Functional Unit's shall be reviewed. Information management systems and communication tools shall be reviewed to determine whether they are fit for purpose. Each Academic Unit shall ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant data.

- Quality assurance: Compliance with GMIT's Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) and institute policies shall be determined.
- Strategic plan for the Academic Unit: Each Academic Unit shall develop and detail their strategic plan and evaluate its alignment with the GMIT Strategic Plan 2018-2023 and its implementation targets.

## Overview of Galway International Hotel School

The Galway International Hotel school (GIHS) is one of four schools based on the main Galway campus. The school was one of the original academic units when Galway Regional Technical College, as it was then called, opened in 1972.

The school offers a range of courses from Level 6 to 8 across six pillars of study, namely Heritage Studies, International Tourism Studies and Management, International Hotel Management, Hospitality Studies, Culinary & Gastronomic Sciences, Event Management & Public Relations and Retail Management. The school vision is to remain a fundamental entity in GMIT as it moves towards becoming a Technological University. The school continues to support the needs of a diverse student community through innovative programme design and continued engagements with Irish and International partners.

The last decade has been a challenging period for the school. The school merged with the School of Humanities in 2012. The rationale for joining these two schools at the time was to look for synergies and opportunities for better collaboration by bringing disciplines together however, for many reasons, including organisation structure, this objective was never fully achieved. Following the appointment of a new president in late 2015 the structure of the College of Tourism and Arts began to unwind, and in 2017 the Hotel School returned to being an independent school. Following consultation with staff and other stakeholders' the school was renamed as the Galway International Hotel School (GIHS). This reflects the long tradition in working with international partners and many of the courses have international features including accredited international work placement, curriculum informed by international faculty experiences, embedded European education visits and international alumni who have now become industry partners and friends of the school.

Culinary and Gastronomic Sciences, Heritage Studies and Event Management & Public Relations are unique offerings in the school; no other higher education institute offers the same courses with these specialisms. Languages and Humanities are intertwined across the school and organisation. Having this expertise in the school ensures GIHS can support discipline development and work collaboratively with schools who may include language offerings in their courses.

The school has always included accredited work placement and work integrated learning into courses and this school was one of the first in Ireland to offer Block degrees in Hotel Management in the 1980's. As industry partnerships matured demand for this type of activity grew and a decision

was taken at the 2008/9 programmatic review to include work placement in all courses. In 2008 GIHS opened the LINKS office to serve as a direct interface with industry partners and alumni while also supporting school promotional activities including school's liaison activities and other marketing tasks.

GIHS replicates, in part, a 'back of house' hotel operation with food and equipment stores, uniform provision, food requisitioning, HACCP and Health and Safety processes. In addition, the school is home to specialist facilities including training restaurants, bars and labs which require specialist equipment and maintenance.

One of the challenges facing the school has been decreasing student numbers, which may be further exacerbated due the challenges the tourism industry has faced because of COVID-19. As of 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020, the school had 515 students. During programmatic review the school intend to phase out existing awards and will bring forward a new suite of programmes based on extensive stakeholder engagement that will significantly support an industry negatively impacted by the global pandemic.

## Review Process

All staff were invited to participate in the review of the school and were afforded opportunities to contribute to the writing, revision, and conclusion of the document. The School Executive Team had final editorial and writing privileges informed by all stakeholders. This task began long before the current policy Strategic Review of Academic Units was agreed. In 2015 the school management team began working with the VP Finance and Corporate Services when student numbers started to decline. Decisions taken by Fáilte Ireland in 2015 to cease funding certain courses began to negatively impact across the school and many mature and part time learners could no longer continue their students, due to financial constraints. Despite interventions taken by the school management team unit costs were rising, student numbers were decreasing, and this was not a sustainable position for the school.

Despite many complex decisions taken between 2015-2018 student numbers continued to drop and it was agreed in 2019 that the school would develop a new strategic plan and ongoing reviews of all functions would take place parallel to this development. To ensure all staff could engage in the development of the new strategic plan, invitations were issued to staff to join the newly formed school strategy team. During the strategic development process the Head of School connected with other education partners through various networks including the Swiss Hotel Association, Association of European Hotel and Tourism Schools (AEHT) and the Maltese Hotel and Restaurant Association (MHRA). GIHS considered how other international schools were managing changes in tourism education and some of these findings informed the work of the school strategy team.

Much of the data collated and analysed was sourced from the Office of Academic Affairs. In addition, the school administrators were critically important is collating data for review.

All data considered was for the five-year period 2014 to 2019 and was gathered between January 2020 and April 2021.

The Self-Evaluation Report was prepared and submitted to a Peer Review Panel who met online on 15<sup>th</sup> June. The panel members were:

- **Mr Damien Courtney**, Fellow Emeritus, Cork Institute of Technology (Chair)
- **Ms Mary Rose Stafford**, Executive Head of School, Munster Technological University – Kerry Campus
- **Ms Tina O’Dwyer**, Managing Director, The Tourism Space (Industry Representative)
- **Mr Donnacha McNamara**, Vice President of International, Limerick Institute of Technology
- **Mr Sean Worker**, Managing Director and Principal, T5 Strategies (Student Representative)
- **Ms Carmel Brennan**, Assistant Registrar (Quality), GMIT, (Co- Secretary)
- **Ms Aedin O’hEocha**, Assistant Registrar (Systems, GMIT, (Co-Secretary)

The agenda for the panel visit is outlined in Appendix A.

The panel met with the following individuals/groups:

- President of GMIT
- Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar
- Galway International Hotel School Management Team
- Galway International Hotel School Staff
- Galway International Hotel School Students

Further details of the staff and students who met with the review panel are available in Appendices B and C.

## Findings of the External Peer Panel

The panel recognised that programmes in this discipline have been in difficulty in Ireland and globally, with declining interest by potential applicants notwithstanding the industry demand for graduates. There was cognisance of the potential changes for GMIT should its application to become a Technological University be successful and a discussion took place around where within the proposed structure the Galway International Hotel School might be based. The school managers view it as being aligned well with the creative industries and emphasised their desire to maintain visibility with a new larger entity. The proposed merger with IT Sligo and Letterkenny Institute of Technology provide opportunities for collaboration which will benefit the region.

The school has commenced reviewing its existing programmes and are identifying ideas for new offerings. The panel emphasised new proposals, particularly those aimed at the CAO, should be based on what potential students want rather than solely on the type of graduates that employers need. More part-time programmes may be required to cater for industry requirements as it is difficult to attract school leavers due to the attitudes of some career guidance teachers and parents towards the tourism sector. The school is aiming to be more agile and streamlined in their offerings and have been engaging in a module mapping exercise to identify potential commonality. The

school is striving to be innovative in its response, for example by holding an Instagram live session with career guidance teachers to show exactly what goes on in the classroom. There is also scope for GIHS to work with industry to educate about tourism careers and shape the narrative.

GIHS recognise that in some quarters the school brand is weak particularly in relation to school leavers. However, the brand is viewed positively by industry who seek graduates due to their practical skills. The changes in the name of the school has led to some brand confusion which needs to be addressed. There was concern that facilities need upgrading to support a positive brand image.

The school has sufficient facilities, but some are dated. The school recognises that it should be educating students in modern kitchens using up to date equipment and is working with central management in relation to advancing this further. The school is also looking at designing multi-purpose spaces to optimise room usage.

While some benchmarking was undertaken as part of the preparation of the self-evaluation report, there is scope for more. The school needs to be clear as to the problem they are trying to address through their strategic plan and focus on the underlying causes of the symptoms they have identified.

The school has undertaken a training needs analysis, but it was not clear whether this reflected the needs identified in the industry research undertaken. Generally, the school needs and plans to examine stakeholder feedback and identify where it might be embedded in programmes.

The pandemic has seen the school adopt a more flexible use of technology in programme delivery, and creative approaches to teaching and assessment, some of which they hope to retain in the future. Issues being considered are the past reliance on terminal examinations, the inclusion of more integrated assessments, the creation of larger modules, the number of electives, how students in the workplace can be accommodated and the development of minor and special purpose awards. In addition to considering assessment, staff are actively considering how to embed Programmatic Review's two other main themes - employability and sustainability – into the review of programmes.

Affordability of college has been an issue for some students since the cessation of Fáilte Ireland funding. Springboard and July stimulus are assisting to some extent. The school is cognisant of the need to support students, and believes the Institute does a good job including for those students who are entitled to reasonable accommodation. Staff believe there is further potential to widen access using technology enhanced learning and recognition of prior learning. Flexibility should be a key facet of future programme development and delivery with block delivery and blended learning considered as appropriate.

There was considerable evidence in individual programmes of engagement with industry and applied learning through field trips, master classes and guest lectures. Internationalisation is challenging. Incoming international students give Irish students exposure to the international dimension, but there is room for improvement in respect of the number of students availing of Erasmus out. Language lecturers extol the benefits of studying or working abroad from first year onwards. Some staff also work abroad in their own time to bring new learning back to GIHS.

It is recognised that as the Institute moves towards becoming a Technological University that research is gaining even more significance. The Heritage discipline is very active in research and has brought numerous students through research masters and PhD programmes. A new master's programme in this discipline is in development. Research is less evident in other areas.

The panel met with a selection of students, who spoke candidly and positively about their experience in the Galway International Hotel School. They mentioned a wide range of opportunities for involvement. While there was some views that that the name of the school did not represent all disciplines, it was not viewed as a big issue, and generally students liked shared modules as it gave different perspectives. Job prospects were an issue for some students. For example, heritage students suggested that it might be a good idea to include more business content, and that the ability to take work experience during the academic year would allow them to work during the summer to gain funds for college. Employment was not an issue in the hotel industry, but students recognised that the shortage of staff is being driven by the volume and pattern of hours required.

The students were agreed on the need to create better awareness of tourism with leaving certificate students. When courses start with small numbers and some students leave it is discouraging for those who remain, so numbers need to increase. They encouraged Galway International Hotel School to involve students in promoting courses e.g. visiting second level, inviting Leaving Certificate students to their conference, disseminating vlogs on field trips.

The panel asked staff and students why students should choose GMIT, why they should stay in GMIT and what they will gain through their four years of study. The answers of both cohorts were strongly aligned. In relation to why students should choose GMIT, staff emphasised the small size of groups, the relationship between staff and students, the personal touch, and the practical nature of programmes. Students also emphasised personal touch and interaction with lecturers which in their opinion is not comparable with elsewhere, that lecturers go above and beyond what is required, and that the content of programmes is well designed providing well defined career paths.

When asked why students should remain in GMIT once they are on a programme staff replied that it is due to the positive experience on the programme, exposure to industry and the 'Galway factor'. Students emphasised the opportunities to explore and try new things, and the fact that the programmes build confidence in their readiness to go out into industry.

Staff view the programme as good preparation for employment in respect of both discipline knowledge and transferable skills with the qualifications allowing students access to many opportunities in Ireland and abroad. In addition, students generally have great memories of their time in GMIT. Students felt they gained new ways of thinking, multi-disciplinary experience, the ability to develop and express ideas confidently and access to connections. In summary year one is about a small nurturing environment, years 2 and 3 is about engaging with a positive student experience and on leaving students will have great memories and a passport to the world. The three questions specified are mission critical to GIHS and its brand promise, and the responses should help frame the development of marketing and student recruitment campaigns.



Based on the documentation provided and the online meetings with GIHS staff and students, the panel has made commendations (2), conditions (1) and recommendations (15) as outlined below.

## Commendations

1. The feedback from students was very positive and aligned with that of staff. Whilst there is a unified vision among staff and students it needs to be articulated widely to support the continued development of the school.
2. The preparation and work of the staff in reviewing the school and developing the documentation for the panel was evident. Equally the enthusiasm and openness of staff to change was obvious to the panel throughout the meeting sessions.

## Conditions

1. The school needs to develop a comprehensive plan to implement the strategy with clear metrics, targets and timelines. This should include an outline of the proposed programme portfolio.

## Recommendations

1. The challenging environment that the school faces is well articulated in the documentation provided but the underlying causes need to be clearly identified for an appropriate strategy to be devised.
2. Conduct research with potential CAO students to establish the programmes they want considering disciplines, structure, content and delivery. This research should also focus on the messaging that appeals to this cohort and the optimal channels for promotion.
3. Consider making budget available to the Head of School to bring in an independent facilitator to run a workshop to help support the further development of the strategy for the school prior to Programmatic Review.
4. Further marketing of programmes is required to attract and retain students. The school needs to clearly distinguish between brand campaigns and marketing tactics. Promotion needs to take control of the message that is conveyed. The message should be one that resonates with prospective students. For example, students mentioned that the key advantage of GIHS was lecturer interaction. Marketing messages should be written from a prospective student perspective, rather than using a college-centric approach. The following marketing approaches may be useful:
  - Co-opt and extend the school's current digital content to target 16 to 18-year-old second level students to inform them about GIHS as a career path on the CAO and/ or other avenues to third level learning.

- Utilise the GHS student body to speak to prospective students both digitally and in-person. Consider utilising student events, student vlogs and student visits to second level schools as part of the marketing effort.
  - Seek/relocate specific marketing resources for GHS dedicated student recruitment to work in conjunction with the GMIT Marketing strategy.
5. Review the branding of the school ensuring that all disciplines feel encompassed. In the longer term the school should consider its name considering the establishment of a Technological University.
  6. The school should work with industry in relation to the impact work practices have on the attractiveness of the industry to potential students.
  7. GHS should leverage alumni and industry partners to assist in the future development of the school particularly in relation to student support and provision of equipment.
  8. Prepare a plan for staff development, staff upskilling and reskilling, ensuring that it includes the topics identified in stakeholder engagement.
  9. When mapping modules as part of Programmatic Review ensure that programmes don't lose their identity by taking measures to ensure that classes remain distinct cohorts strongly connected to their disciplines, whilst availing of the synergies that the programme mapping exercise can provide.
  10. Determine what the core foci of programmes should be rather than trying to extensively embed a wide range of themes i.e. SDGs, Digitalisation, Entrepreneurship, Employability.
  11. During Programmatic Review consider flexibility of delivery to facilitate students in the workplace.
  12. Develop practical guidelines for staff around the delivery of online lectures to aid engagement of students and consistency of experience e.g. cameras on.
  13. Ensure students receive appropriate levels of credit to acknowledge work-based learning being undertaken as part of their programmes. Consider using a Learning Digital Wallet/Passport making it easy to track learning credits for work experience and course learning for students. This would aggregate their qualifications to share with prospective employers and other institutions.
  14. Ensure that the changes in industry, for example the fundamental shift in the accommodation sector, are reflected in programmes when being updated through programmatic review.
  15. The introduction of a common year 1 as appropriate, with its simplified message and potential appeal to prospective students is welcome and should be considered for use as widely as possible.
  16. Develop flexible programme offerings specifically targeted at industry and ensure that these are communicated widely in the sector.
  17. Consider incorporating grading into the work placement modules to reflect true engagement with industry partners and the perception of the value of these modules.
  18. Introduce the idea of Erasmus exchange early in the programme for example by sharing a workshop with international partners to whet the appetite of first years. Build on this annually to encourage students to consider availing of international opportunities.

## Appendix A Agenda for Panel Visit



### Panel Visit Agenda

#### Galway International Hotel School (GIHS) Review

**Tuesday 15th June 2021**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Indicative Topics</b>	<b>Venue</b>
9am	Private Panel Meeting	Panel Members	Planning session inc. Briefing from the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar	Online
10am	Strategic Review	Panel Members Head of School of GIHS Head of Department of Culinary Arts & Service Industries Head of Department of Heritage & Tourism, Languages & Humanities	GMIT Strategy External and Internal Environment GIHS Strategy – Management Team to make short presentation.	Online
10.45am	Break			
11am	Strategic Review - GIHS	Panel Members Head of School of GIHS Head of Department of Culinary Arts & Service Industries Head of Department of Heritage & Tourism, Languages & Humanities Programme Chairs.	Structure Staffing and Staff Development Facilities Programme Development GIHS Strategy	Online
12.15pm	Break			
12.30pm	Private Panel Meeting	Panel Members	Review of morning session and planning for afternoon session	Online
1pm	Break			
1.45pm	Parallel Session 1A	Damien Courtney, Tina O’Dwyer, Sean Worker, Aedin O’hEocha Staff Representatives	Programme Management Quality Assurance	Online
1.45pm	Parallel Session 1B	Mary Rose Stafford and Donnacha McNamara, Carmel Brennan	Programme Design Assessment Employability	Online

		Staff Representatives	Sustainability	
2.30	Break			
2.45pm	Parallel Session 2A	Damien Courtney, Tina O'Dwyer, Donnacha McNamara, Aedin O hEocha Staff Representatives	External Engagement Internationalisation Research, Development, Innovation	Online
2.45pm	Parallel Session 2B	Mary Rose Stafford, Sean Worker, Carmel Brennan Staff Representatives	Teaching, Learning, Assessment Student Lifecycle	Online
3.30pm	Break			
3.45pm	Meeting with Students	Panel Members Representatives from GIHS Student Cohort	Student Experience	Online
4.15pm	Private Meeting	Academic Unit Review Panel	Drafting of key findings	Online
5pm	Preliminary Feedback	Panel Members President Vice President for Academic Affairs/Registrar Head of School of GIHS Head of Department of Culinary Arts & Service Industries Head of Department of Heritage & Tourism, Languages & Humanities	Oral feedback of panel's findings, with further detail being provided in follow-up report	Online

## Appendix B GIHS Staff Who Met with External Panel

Staff Name	Department
Ms Cáit Noone	Head of Galway International Hotel School and Vice President for International Engagement
Ms Jacinta Dalton	Head of Dept. of Culinary Arts; Service Industries
Mr Diarmuid O’Conghaile	Head of Dept. of Heritage and Tourism; Humanities, Applied Languages and Communications

Session	Staff Members
Strategic Review	Brian Morrissey Sally Reidy Dr Francesco Noci Dr Mark McCarthy Dr John Tunney Paul V Dunne Deirdre Fahy Maria Conboy
Programme Management and Quality Assurance	Dr Mark McCarthy Dr Clare Gilsean George Finnegan Ann Flanagan
Programme Design and Programmatic Review Themes	Dr Martin Ruffley Cormac Handy Orla ODoherty John Carty Carmel Brennan
External Engagement Internationalisation Research, Development, Innovation	Dr Suzanne O’Shea Dr John Tunney Colin Gilligan Dympna Griffin Ulrich Hoeche. Bernie Merry
Teaching, Learning, Assessment Student Lifecycle	Cian Marnell Sally Reidy Brian Morrissey Mary Reid Sadie Davoren Helen Delargy

## Appendix C GIHS Students Who Met with External Panel

<b>Student Name</b>	<b>Programme</b>	<b>Stage</b>
Megan Flanagan	Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Heritage Studies	4
Brian Collopy	Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Heritage Studies	4
Roisin Corrigan	Bachelor of Business (Hons) in International Tourism Management	4
Ellen Ryder	BA (Hons) in Culinary and Gastronomic Sciences	3
Conor Moore	BA (Hons) in Culinary and Gastronomic Sciences	4

## Appendix D GIHS Strategic Plan extracted from SER

**Strategic Plan 2019-2024**

**EDUCATION**

**Top 10 Hospitality Management Institutes 2020**

GMIT Galway International Hotel School

**Galway International Hotel School**

**Ireland's leading International Hotel School.**

Accredited work placements on all CAO courses

hosco. The hospitality network

AEHT

## Executive Summary

The Galway International Hotel school (GIHS) is one of four schools based on the main Galway campus. The school was one of the original academic units when Galway Regional Technical College, as it was then called, opened in 1972. In the early days most Regional Technical Colleges (RTC) had traditional school structures with Science, Business and Engineering however Galway was also home to the Hotel School. The rationale for such a decision was based on a government decision stemming from the Mulcahy Report commissioned by the then Minister for Education Dr Patrick Hillery. This report designated Galway as the centre for education and training for the Hotel industry outside of Dublin. GMIT (Galway Mayo Institute of Technology) was the first higher education Institute in Ireland to award degrees in Hotel Management in 1977.

The school has evolved from being a part HE provider part Faillte Ireland funded centre to a full academic unit with courses in International Hotel Management, Culinary and Gastronomic Sciences, Heritage Studies, Event Management & Public Relations and International Tourism Management.

Over a period of almost fifty years the school has worked diligently with internal and external stakeholders. Work placement is featured across all courses and many of these accredited learning experiences are based overseas. The GIHS team are acutely aware of the role we play in supporting and innovating in the region and the school is proactively engaged with stakeholders across the island of Ireland.

As GMIT move forward working to become a Technological University the Galway International Hotel School expect to remain an important and relevant entity in the new organisation working with new education partners and broadening our regional remit.

## Setting the Scene

- The last decade has been a challenging period for the school and this new plan comes at a time when the school is addressing many challenges while also planning for an exciting future.
- Nationally, funding for Tourism courses has not been a priority. Pre COVID-19 Tourism was Ireland's largest industry and has played key role in the economic growth and development following the 2008 recession. Ireland's tourism industry has proven resilient in the past, and undoubtedly will remain so. No other industry has the potential to create jobs quickly and to provide regional economic balance; GIHS has a role to play in this development.
- Funding across higher education has been in decline for a decade and a lack of investment in physical infrastructure has left many higher education institutes funding infrastructure developments and repairs from reserves rather than state supports.
- In GMIT students' numbers have grown in STEM courses with recent advancements in Business and the Creative Industries. The Institute has invested in facilities to support these disciplines and the time is now here to address GIHS facilities. Plans have been developed to address school infrastructure however long term if GMIT are to proactively engage in a new Technological University in the West/North West of Ireland we must address all student learning spaces ensuring they are appropriate and engaging.
- This strategic plan was developed by the School Strategic Team. Stakeholder engagement took place over a period of time with industry partners, students, staff, alumni and other groups. Feedback was also provided by the Governing Body.
- This strategy will be supported by a school implementation plan. It will guide the team as we move through challenging and opportunistic times ensuring we continue to serve this region and drive forward becoming national leaders in Tourism education and research.

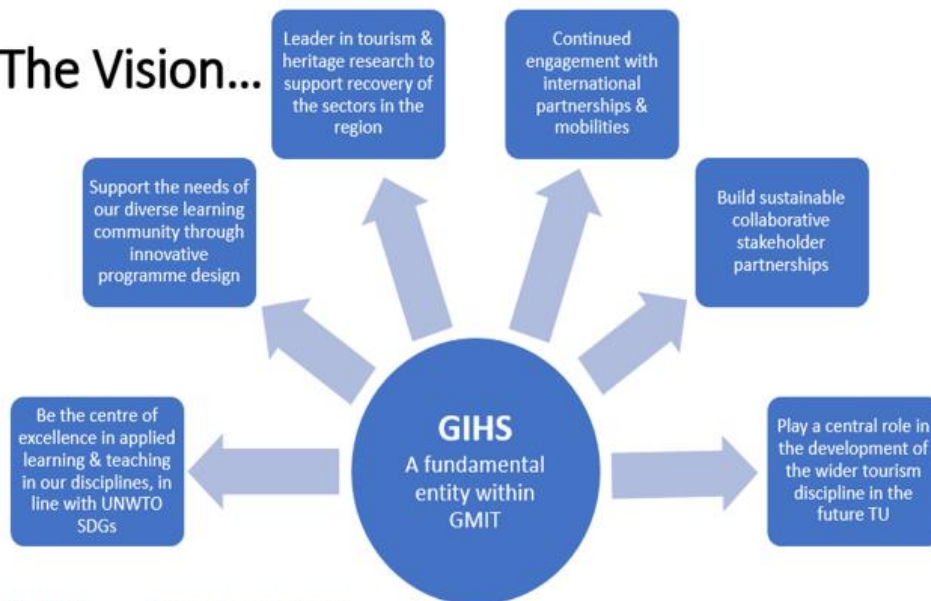


Ability West fundraising Dinner with Michel Roux Jr and GIHS Staff & Students



Tourism students International Education Visit to Lisbon.

## The Vision...



Galway International  
Hotel School



## GIHS Four Key Strategic Priorities



1 Consolidate position of GIHS with new programme offerings at both undergraduate and postgraduate level building on existing and new partnerships.



2 Develop contemporary suite of Industry CPD offerings serving the region and beyond.



3 Streamline academic delivery – develop and implement a sustainable model with study life balance.



4 Build pathways to readily engage with income generation opportunities e.g. Springboard, Human Capital Initiative calls and Jobs Stimulus alerts.

Sustainable Development Goals will be embedded in the curriculum and daily working practices.



## GIHS Key Strategic Priority 1



Consolidate position of GIHS with new programme offerings at both undergraduate and postgraduate level building on existing and new partnerships

- Complete a cross school curriculum mapping exercise ensuring enhanced collaborations occur across courses.
- Continue collaborations with CUA partners regarding postgraduate developments
- Develop a suite of courses that are sustainable and relevant to a global evolving industry.
- Consider international designations to build profile and aid recruitment.
- Through innovative course design ensure student study-work-life balanced in implemented across all courses.
- Continue building internationalisation into curriculum across courses.

## GIHS Key Strategic Priority 2



Develop contemporary suite of Industry CPD offerings serving the region and beyond

- During curriculum development develop suite of Special Purpose Awards (SPA's) and Minor Awards as identified by industry partners.
- Continue contributing to the national Careers Oversight Group supporting careers in Tourism.
- Enhance existing relationships with industry partners to consider other education opportunities e.g. engaging with RPL, short training courses
- Host industry awareness days ensuring industry partners understand course offering and new developments

## GIHS Key Strategic Priority 3



Streamline academic delivery – develop and implement a sustainable model with study life balance.

- Through innovative course design provide courses for CAO learners that offer a blended learning experience – on campus and online.
- Re-design the elective suite ensuring commonality across stages for all learners and providing new learning opportunities for GIHS students.
- Design a new Orientation programme ensuring students are ready to engage with the transition from school and the transition to a new mode of learning.
- Develop tools and resources to recognise part time employment and the contribution this can make to work placement modules.

## GIHS Key Strategic Priority 4



Build pathways to readily engage with income generation opportunities e.g., Springboard, Human Capital Initiative calls and Jobs Stimulus alerts

- Continue to participate in the National Consortium team for Springboard applications.
- Design and approve appropriate short courses ready for Institute government calls.
- Collaborate with CUA partners to build capacity to engage in the above calls.
- Consider new Erasmus + programme with enhanced opportunities to work globally with partners.

## Summary

The lifetime of this strategic plan will see significant changes across the Galway International Hotel School.

Curriculum redesign and planning will bring a new, innovative style of engagement offering learners an enhanced study-work-life balance. We expect this new development will assist learners as they navigate the world of higher education, studies, work and family life.

The development of a suite of industry focused awards, offered in blended delivery modes will ensure CPD opportunities exist for all industry employees, managers and leaders as GIHS continues to support the ever-evolving Tourism industry.

The ongoing development with international partners is another important strategic step. This plan not only provides degree completion opportunities for students but also ensures the school can provide exchange opportunities for students and faculty.

Another important action taking place, parallel to this plan is enhanced engaged with the FET sector. GMIT has always reached out to FET partners in the region to provide entry routes for FET learners, GIHS is currently doing likewise in several

This strategic plan now provides a pathway for the school team to move forward, designing and developing, collaborating and learning, ensuring we lead out on Tourism Education initiatives for the next decade across the island of Ireland.