



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHÉ  
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

# *REPORT ON THE GENDER PAY GAP 2023*

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GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2023

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# 1 Executive Summary

This report sets out the gender pay gap (GPG) for Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway, analysing the key issues which drive the GPG and establishing existing initiatives and further plans to address the gap. Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway is committed to the progression of gender equality and recognises that the GPG is a central aspect of our efforts to address the gendered nature of inequality for staff at the University. Accordingly, the University's Strategic Plan 2020-2025 explicitly states that we are committed to significantly reducing the GPG and have embarked on a process of collecting this data since 2019.

Given our commitment to gender equality, as set out in Table 4, Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway has been calculating and publishing the gender pay gap since 2019, prior to the current legislative requirement to do so. The figures suggest that there has not been a substantive improvement in the gender pay gap in our university since then. This is a matter of profound disappointment and distress to our University Management Team and to our university community more generally.

Within the University it is acknowledged that reducing the GPG is a substantial challenge, as is evidenced by the data generated over the past four years. Our university has had a difficult history in gender equality, the legacy of which we still confront today. We therefore are determined to address the GPG and remain steadfast to this objective in our Strategic Plan 2020-2025 *Shared Vision, Shaped by Values*, while recognising that it may take longer than anticipated to achieve our objectives. More radical action is also required.

We are a learning institution and the data gathered and analysed to date has generated key insights and opportunities to respond in an effective manner in the wider context of a long-term commitment to gender equality. In recognition of the progress to date in addressing gender inequality, in 2021 we secured funding from the Higher Education Authority (HEA) for a three-year equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) programme of work. This funding is currently being used to support a programme to widen and deepen the scope of the work on gender equality, including a specific emphasis on enhancing the data infrastructure and management of same. We have also this year received funding from the HEA to lead a national initiative in the higher education sector to analyse and better understand the complexity of the GPG, with all its moving parts, with a view to proposing and implementing impactful, meaningful actions in this regard. As the lead partner in the implementation of this project, we are mindful of the opportunity that this brings for a sector wide analysis of the key drivers of the gender pay gap, differentiation within the sector and the potential to model effective interventions to ascertain what measures are most constructive and impactful in reducing the GPG.

This matters to us and to our university community and we are committed to doing better. Specifically, it is important to acknowledge the ongoing work that is being undertaken by staff to address gender inequality.

## *Legislative Context*

In accordance with the Gender Pay Gap Information Act (2021), and associated national regulations (2022), all organisations with over 250 employees are required to report the mean and median hourly wage gap, the former reflecting the entire pay range in an organisation, and the latter excluding the impact of unusually high earners. Reporting on the mean and median pay gaps for part-time employees and temporary employees is also mandated. In addition, the reporting requirements also include the proportions of male and female employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands. The GPG is the difference in the average hourly wage of males and females across a workforce, measured over the duration of a twelve-month period.

### *Dataset*

The University's GPG is calculated according to headcount rather than full-time equivalent (FTE), as is sometimes used by organisations. Although Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway has conducted annual audits and reported its GPG for 5 prior years (2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022), there are some notable differences between the methodology used to calculate the GPG in prior years (2018-2021) and the 2022 and 2023 audits. Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway GPG (2018-2021) is based on a snapshot of employees' pay on March 31<sup>st</sup> of each year, whereas the 2022 GPG under the new Irish regulations takes into account employees' remuneration for the 12-month period preceding the snapshot date of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022. Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway employs 2,631 staff: 951 academics, 681 researchers and 999 Professional, Managerial and Support (PMS) staff.

The data in this report is provided by PwC and was received by the University on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

### *Key Findings*

For the 2023 GPG, based on 2,631 staff across the organisation; the mean gender pay gap is 18.4% and the median pay gap is 17.4%. This infers that there is a difference of 18.4% in the average hourly pay of men and women expressed as a percentage of average hourly pay for men regardless of the nature of the work, role or seniority. Or, when we compare median hourly pay, a woman earns 83c for every €1 a man earns. The 2023 GPG data illustrates that the GPG mean has remained relatively consistent with a slight reduction since 2018.

As in previous years, Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway's mean 2023 GPG is most pronounced in the academic staff category (mean 21.2%) which largely reflects the representation of men and women in senior academic grades. In contrast, the median GPG is primarily driven by Professional, Managerial and Support (PMS) staff grades. The GPG data for PMS staff suggests that men are more likely to occupy higher grades, even though there are substantially more female staff in this staff category, with a mean gap of 14.6%. This points to the main issue being the lack of upward mobility for all PMS staff. For research staff, the mean pay gap is 5.7%, and the median is 3.2%. Since this cohort does not contribute greatly to the institution's GPG, it is not considered more deeply or discussed in detail in this report.

### *Responses*

The final section of the report details the institutional commitment to gender equality, documenting the range of initiatives and progress to date. In addition, the report identifies a number of progressive actions at institutional level to further interrogate the GPG data at a more granular level in order to generate deeper insights. This is required to inform targeted initiatives and interventions that can maximise impact in reducing the GPG. Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway is committed to a realistic and pragmatic approach which takes into account the variables and complexities across the staff profile. Accordingly, this also requires a willingness to contribute to establishing effective approaches within the higher education sector and Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway has been leading on a national initiative funded by the Higher Education Authority to analyse the GPG and model effective approaches during the year.

## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Overview

Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway's Report on the Gender Pay Gap (GPG) 2023 documents the profile of the University, establishes the legislative basis for reporting, and differentiates between the GPG and equal pay statutory provisions. *Section 3: Gender Pay Gap Data* provides a detailed breakdown of the 2023 data, disaggregated in accordance with the regulations. *Section 4: Commentary on Gender Pay Gap* analyses the data in the context of the key findings and insights generated, and *Section 5: Key Gender Equality Issues and Institutional Responses to Date*, documents existing and planned initiatives to reduce the GPG. Additionally, *Section 6: Proposed Actions* builds on existing initiatives to illustrate the necessity of an integrated and multifaceted approach to reducing the GPG. *Section 7: Other Relevant Information*, highlights Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway's commitment to enhancing awareness and effectiveness in responding to the GPG in the higher education sector, with reference to a national project led by the University.

#### 2.1.1 Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway Profile

Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway, established in 1845, is a globally focused research-led university with a commitment to top quality teaching across a range of key areas of expertise. According to *QS World University Rankings*, University of Galway is ranked 289<sup>th</sup> in the world and has been increasing its global reach and reputation over the past decade.

In the academic year 2022/23, Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway had over than 19,500 registered students across 70 undergraduate and over 200 postgraduate degree pathways across 4 Colleges and 20 Schools. Additionally, the Centre for Adult Learning and Professional Development (CALPD) offers part-time and evening courses.

Approximately 60% of all students are female (Table 1).

Student	Female	% Female	Male	% Male
Undergraduate	8,861	61%	5,647	39%
Postgraduate	2,828	60%	1,899	40%

Table 1: Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway Registered Students: Academic Year 2022/23

Category	Total	Female	% Female	Male	% Male
Academic	951	474	49.8%	477	49.9%
Research	681	348	51.1%	333	48.4%
Professional/ Administrative	999	705	70.6%	294	29.6%
<b>Total Staff</b>	<b>2,631</b>	<b>1,527</b>	<b>58.0%</b>	<b>1,104</b>	<b>49.9%</b>

Table 2: Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway Staff Profile: June 2023

#### 2.1.2 Reducing the GPG: A Strategic Imperative

In 2020, the University published its Strategic Plan 2020-25: *Shared Vision Shaped by Values*. This articulated a set of core values, developed through consultation with the wider university community, of openness, respect, excellence, and sustainability. The Strategic Plan explicitly articulates a commitment to significantly reducing the gender pay gap (GPG). As part of the commitment to reducing the GPG, the University has undertaken GPG data gathering and analysis on an annual basis since 2019 (using the 2018 baseline in the first instance of reporting). GPG reporting is one aspect of Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway's wider strategy to address gender equality and female participation rates across the full range of work-related activity. It enables a deeper understanding of the structural, cultural and policy causes of gender inequality,

and informs the development of our gender equality action plans. The University remains committed to a proactive and progressive approach to addressing gender inequality in a multifaceted manner, being cognisant of the myriad ways in which such inequalities are manifest. Accordingly, this report provides an overview of the primary data and analysis of the GPG in 2022, along with the measures introduced to date to address gender inequality, inclusive of responding to the pay gap. In addition, this report provides further contextual information which locates these measures in a longer-term institutional context, emanating from the Task Force on Gender Equality established by the University in 2015. The University Management Team consider that while there is evidence of progress in relation to academic promotion, gender balance in representation, governance and institutional infrastructure, alongside gender equality plans with targeted actions, there remains work to be done to achieve our objective of significantly reducing the GPG. Furthermore, reducing the gender pay gap is understood to be inextricably linked to achievement of gender equality at all levels as a matter of strategic importance in recruitment, retention and progression.

### 2.1.3 Career Structure and Salary Scale

Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway's academic career structure currently includes the following: Lecturer Below the Bar (LBB), Lecturer Above the Bar (LAB), Lecturer, Senior Lecturer (SL), Prof in<sup>1</sup>, and Established Professor (EP). Staff in these grades account for nearly 75% of all academic staff in the University; salaries<sup>2</sup> are summarised in Table 3 below. Staff at the LBB may apply for non-competitive progression to LAB after 12 months service. The LBB and LAB differentiation is being phased out, allowing for a simpler progression route, while not disadvantaging either existing staff or new entrants into the Lecturer grade. Prior to 2020, promotion to SL was competitive, and calls for promotion to SL were irregular. A new academic promotion scheme that is criterion-based with bi-annual calls was introduced in December 2019. While the promotion scheme is directly addressing the level of gender inequalities within the academic career trajectory, nonetheless, limited opportunities in the previous promotion scheme have resulted in institutional legacy issues which are still impacting the GPG at Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway, as will be discussed later.

Grade	No of Points on Scale	Salary Range
Lecturer Below the Bar	11	€48,139 - €67,212
Lecturer Above the Bar	5	€73,350 - €95,401
Lecturer	11	€59,801 - €95,401
Senior Lecturer	8	€78,043 - €110,596
Proferssor In	6	€97,260 - €130,000
Personal Professor	1	€157,258
Established Professor	6	€134,287 - €169,770

*Table 3: Academic Grades/Salary Range*

There are three Research Staff grades: Research Assistant (RA), Research Fellow (RF) and Senior Research Fellow (SRF). Progression from RF to SRF is possible where an individual researcher meets certain criteria, but the number of researchers who progress is low as contracts tend relatively short term, predominantly less than two years. The SRF category made up 25% of the overall research staff population in 2020.

The remaining cohorts of staff comprise administrative and technical, commonly known as Professional, Managerial and Support Staff (PMS). In 2022, the Human Resources department introduced a job-sizing scheme which has provided opportunities for re-grading of positions up to and including Grade 5. Furthermore, while there hasn't been an institution-wide campaign targeting PMS staff promotion, there have been considerable opportunities via competitive internal vacancies up to Administrative Officer grade and external competition for grades above.

<sup>1</sup> This grade relates to a specific discipline and sits between SNLEC and Est Prof.

<sup>2</sup> Salary Grades are based of the Post 95 Salary scale

## 2.2 The Legislation

The Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021 has introduced a legislative basis for gender pay gap reporting in Ireland, with new regulations under the Act published in June 2022. Organisations with over 250 employees were asked to report on their Gender Pay Gap for the first time in 2022. The legislative basis for the GPG is therefore at the level of a reporting requirement.

The gender pay gap (GPG) is designed to capture the extent to which women are represented evenly across an organisation in salary terms. It is usually reported in terms of mean and median pay gaps. The mean (average) GPG is most commonly reported nationally and internationally. It is the difference between the mean (average) hourly pay of men, and the mean (average) hourly pay of women expressed as a percentage of average hourly pay for men in an organisation regardless of the nature of the work, role or seniority. The mean represents the 'typical' salary of all employees and is of particular interest since it summarises salary differences for the entire cohort and its calculation includes every individual member of staff. As such, it is sensitive to any outliers. Therefore, in an organisation with a large mean GPG, typically most highly paid staff are men, while women are overrepresented among the lower paid. The median GPG represents the earnings of the typical member of staff; if all staff are listed by their earnings from highest to lowest, the median pay is that of the person in the middle of the lists of male and female employees. The median pay gap is not influenced by any outliers, and so reflects data for 'typical' individuals. Together, both metrics highlight the impact of an organisation's employment and pay practices and help explain the drivers of pay differentials.

The GPG should not be confused with the concept of equal pay for equal work or pay parity – which is a separate legal requirement enshrined in equality legislation. As outlined above, the measurement of the GPG is based on a comparison analysis of the pay of all male and female employees; not just those in similar jobs, with similar working patterns or with similar competencies, qualifications or experience. This is a fundamental differentiation in relation to the measurement of equal pay which is based on the calculation of remuneration for 'like/equivalent' work. The right to equal pay is protected by national legislation under the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 and is applicable to a person who is performing work that is the same or similar, or of equal value to that of another person employed by the same or associated employer. The statutory provision on equal pay specifically refers to *all* employees prescribed under one or more of the protected grounds, whereby individuals have a right to be paid the same as that of another and that person must not be paid less on any of the nine prohibited grounds. Therefore, another important distinction is that the GPG only relates to gender as opposed to the wider scope within the equality legislation. The GPG does not indicate discrimination or an absence of equal pay for equal value work - it reports a gender representation gap. If women hold more of the lower paid jobs in an organisation than men, the gender pay gap is usually wider. In anticipation of the legislative requirements under the Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021, Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway initiated the Gender Pay Gap project in 2019 and working with external consultants, have conducted annual audits and reported the GPG for 4 years (2018, 2019, 2020, 2021) prior to the legislative requirement in 2022.

The University's GPG is calculated according to headcount rather than full-time equivalent (FTE), as is sometimes used by organisations. There are notable differences between the methodology used to calculate the GPG in prior years (2018-2021) and the 2022 and 2023 audits. Both the 2022 and 2023 GPG analysis include a number of additional categories of staff including part-time and temporary workers, and the percentage of employees receiving benefit-in-kind. Furthermore, Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway's GPG (2018-2021) is based on a snapshot of employees' pay on March 31<sup>st</sup> of each year, whereas the 2022 and 2023 GPG under the new Irish regulations, takes into account employees' remuneration for the 12-month period preceding the snapshot date of 30<sup>th</sup> June annually.

## 2.3 Specific Legislative Reporting Requirements

In accordance with the new regulations under the Act published in June 2022 ([Regulations for GPG reporting](#)), this report sets out the following information:

- Difference between the **mean** hourly pay of male and female employees
- Difference between the **median** hourly pay of male and female employees

- Difference between the **mean** hourly pay of male and female **part-time** employees;
- Difference between the **median** hourly pay of male and female **part-time** employees;
- Difference between the **mean** hourly pay of male and female employees **on temporary contracts**;
- Difference between the **median** hourly pay of male and female employees **on temporary contracts**;
- The percentages of male and female employees who fall into quartile pay bands.

In addition to the presentation of the data, the report also considers the following as part of the overall analysis of the data:

- Reasons for any gaps identified in pay between men and women
- Actions that will be taken to address the gaps
- Any other relevant information.

### 3 Gender Pay Gap Data

For the 2023 GPG report, based on 2,631 staff across the organisation; the mean gender pay gap is 18.4% and the median pay gap is 17.4%. This infers that there is a difference of 18.4% in the average hourly pay of men and women expressed as a percentage of average hourly pay for men regardless of the nature of the work, role or seniority. Or, when we compare median hourly pay, a woman earns 83c for every €1 a man earns.

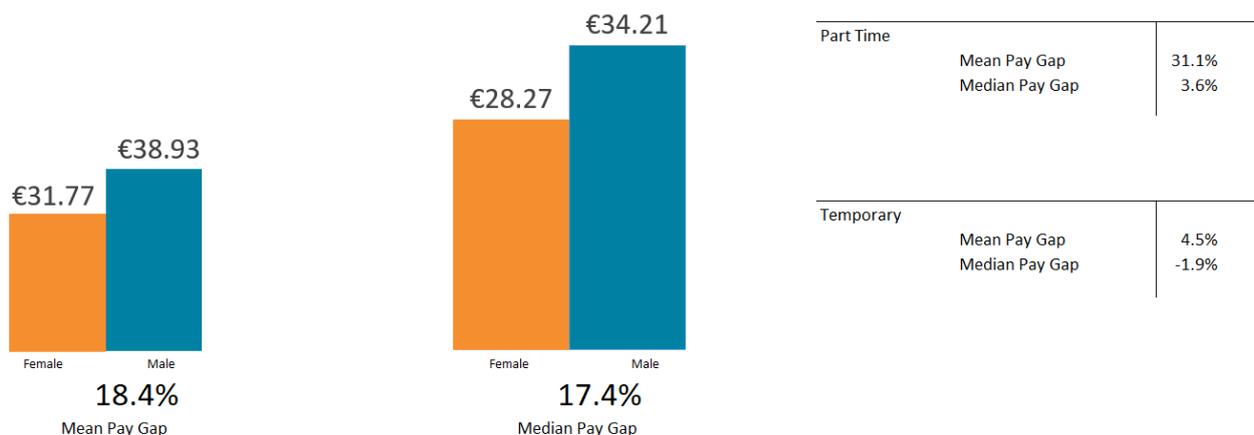


Figure 1: The Overall Gender Pay Gap (30 June 2023)

The table below details the overall gender pay gap data, disaggregated in accordance with academic, PMS and research staff data.

Institutional/Category level data	Mean GPG	Median GPG	Headcount
Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway	18.4%	17.4%	2,631
Academic	21.2%	7.1.1%	951
PMS	14.6%	17.3%	999
Research	5.7%	3.2%	681

Table 4: The Gender Pay Gap (30 June 2023)

Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway’s GPG report 2022 is based on the following categories and contracted hours:

- Academic: 37 hours for part-time teaching assistants (PTTA) and 40 hours for all others (staff in this group do not have a specific number of contracted hours, so a notional working week of 40 hours was used to complete hourly pay rates).
- Professional, Managerial and Support Staff: 39 hours for technicians, and 36 for all other staff in this category.
- Research: 39 hours.

Pay elements included basic pay, and related duties payments, allowances (Head of School Allowance, Mobility Allowance, Pay Allowance), (non-pensionable) piecework (corrections, etc.).<sup>3</sup> Excluded pay elements comprised - pay in lieu of holidays, part-time work – academic/miscellaneous, and pay arrears. The University does not pay bonuses or benefit in kind to staff, so these were not included in payroll data.

Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway GPG reports provide mean and median pay gaps, the most typical reported. The mean (average) GPG is the difference between the mean hourly pay of men, and the mean hourly pay of women.

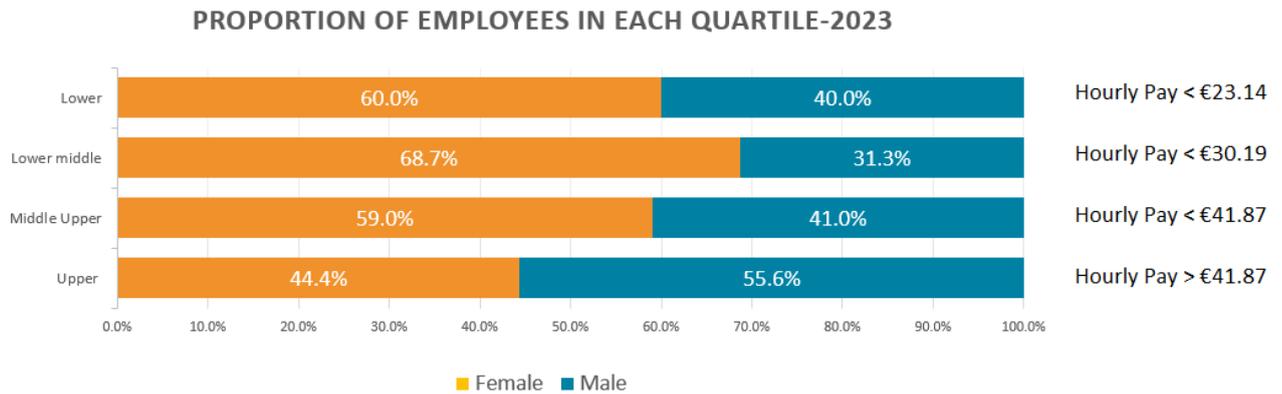


Figure 2: The percentages of male and female employees who fall into quartile pay bands (2023)

The data on male and female employees who are represented in each of the four quartile bands illustrates the higher proportion of female staff from lower to middle lower and middle upper. This is relatively similar when compared to the data for 2022 (see the historic comparisons in Figures 7-10 below).

### 3.1 Comparative Insights

Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway’s GPG as of the 30th June 2023 is summarised in Table 4. As shown, the mean GPG is 18.4%, higher than Ireland’s National mean GPG of 9.6% (CSO, 2023),<sup>4</sup> which is roughly in line with the overall EU Gender Pay Gap of 12.7% (Eurostat, 2021). It is notable that Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway has a higher mean GPG than the UK third level sector average, which is 14.8% (Advance HE, THE paper, 2022); however, it is closer to the values recorded for universities of similar size, history and mission, which include a medical school such as Newcastle University (17.8%) and Imperial College London (17.4%).

<sup>3</sup> These include: Correction of scripts, correction of essays, correction of orals, correction of practicals, essay correctors, undergrad invigilator, lab demonstration, payments for major thesis, standard invigilator, teaching evening arts.

<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that there is some variation on Ireland’s reported GPG with statistics from as low as 8.3% (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD), and 11.3% (European Commission) to over 14% (Central Statistics Office). Most sources indicate that the GPG in Ireland is around 14% and CIPD Ireland 2019 seems to be one of the most reliable sources.

## 4 Commentary on Gender Pay Gap (GPG)

GPG data is examined in the context of academic, research, and professional, managerial and support staff (PMS), and comparative overview of the proportion of employees in each quartile over the longer-term period of analysis of the GPG since 2018 is provided.

### 4.1 Academic Staff

As in previous years, Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway’s mean 2023 GPG is most pronounced in the academic staff category which comprises of 474 women and 477 men. The mean for academic staff is 21.2%, a figure which largely reflects the representation of men and women in senior academic grades (Table 4). The GPG is driven by two factors: the majority of the highest paid staff (i.e., the professoriate and joint professor/consultant posts) are men, and the majority of the lowest paid are women (i.e., hourly contract staff, PTTA, LBB, LAB etc.), with the median or “middle” academic man and woman being in the LAB grade. In detail, men account for 71.5% of upper quartile of earners, but only 38.7% of the lowest quartile.

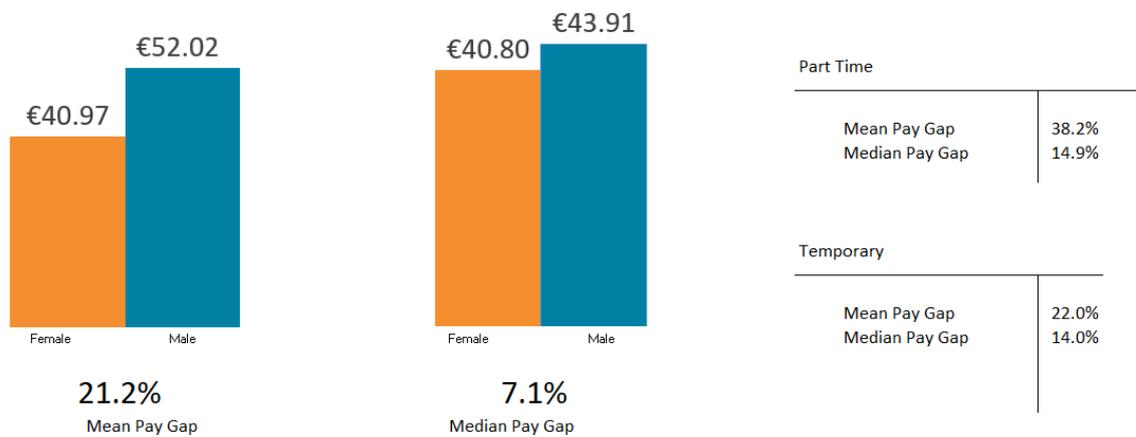


Figure 3: The Academic Pay Gap 2023

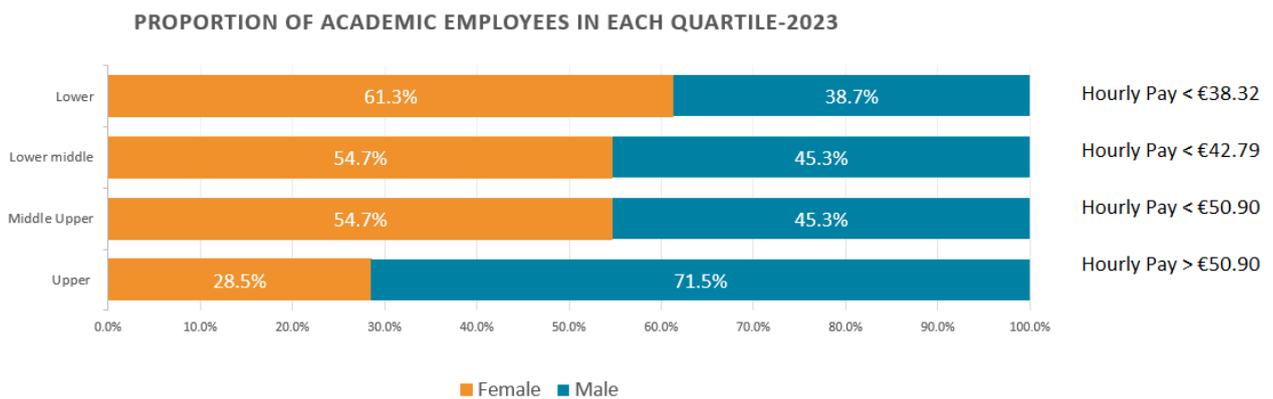
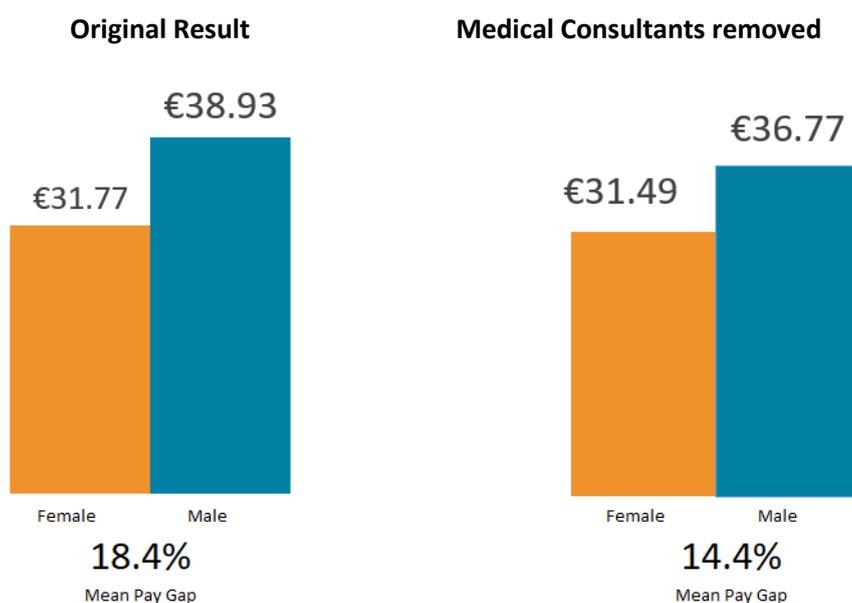


Figure 4: Proportion of Academic Staff in each quartile 2023

This situation is compounded by the higher percentage of men employed in joint appointments with the HSE on academic and consultant contracts. These contracts are among the highest paid at Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway. In 2023, there were just 5 women in such posts at the University, compared to 28 men, which creates a significant impact on the GPG. Figure 4 reveals that this category of academic staff alone is increasing the University’s overall GPG by 4%, a finding consistent with previous analyses of the gender pay

gap calculations. This example illustrates the importance of addressing this outlier in particular. The College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences were successful in achieving funding for a post for a female staff member at the Professoriate under the Senior Academic Leadership Initiative. This appointment has been made and while this is one concrete measure to tackle the impact, further consideration is required in order to redress the significant impact on the GPG as a result of this imbalance. Phase two of the process for analysing of the gender pay gap data, which was initiated early in 2023, included a comprehensive examination of the GPG disaggregated at College level. In addition a working group with senior representation focusing on the GPG was established under the auspices of UMT in September 2023. The purpose of the GPG working group is to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions.

### Academic Impact



*Figure 5: Comparative data – Overall GPG and GPG with medical consultants removed*

Additionally, a disproportionate number of women are employed on part-time teaching contracts. In 2023, for example, Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway employed 56 female staff on part-time teaching assistant (PTTA) contracts, compared to 34 male staff. Given that this group is among the lowest paid of the academic cohort, it would be reasonable to conclude that this group contributes adversely to the overall GPG. Figure 5 illustrates how this category increases the mean GPG of the academic staff category by 1.2%. Therefore, one can conclude that reducing the reliance on such contracts would improve that measure. However, excluding PTTA staff from the institutional data resulted in an almost negligible increase in the overall GPG, adding just 0.1% to the overall GPG bringing it to 18.5%.

## Academic Impact

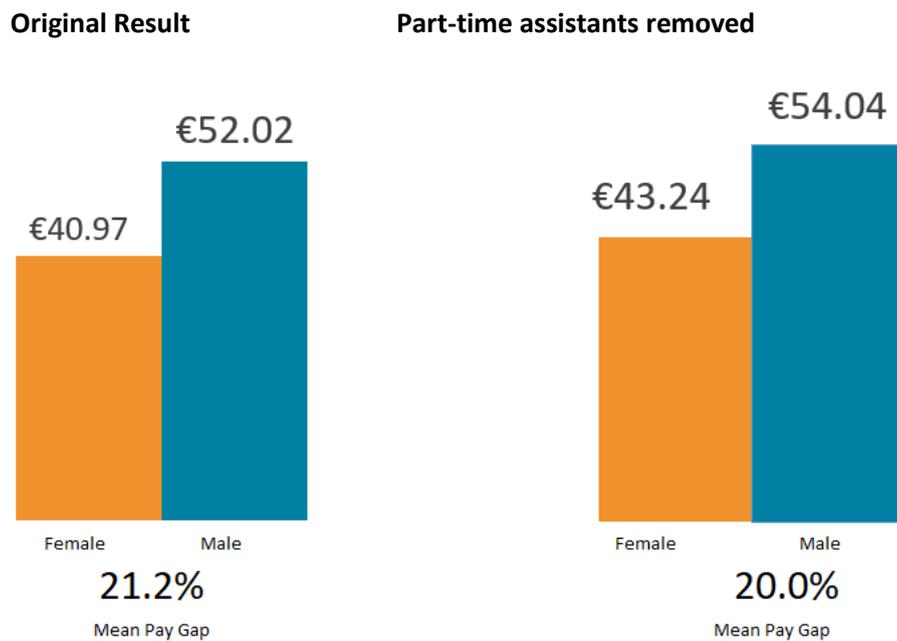


Figure 6: Comparative data – Academic Staff GPG and GPG with part-time teaching assistants removed

One of the most salient discoveries during the analysis of the GPG in the previous report in 2022, illustrated that although the mean GPG at Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway is predominantly driven by academic staff grades, and, as this report illustrates, the median GPG is driven by PMS staff grades again in 2023. Prior to 2023, the University has been focusing on the promotions process for academic staff as a key action in addressing the GPG and while continuing to progress this objective attention also needs to be given to the PMS staff category. The gendered composition of the highest PMS earners needs to be examined in deeper detail, and initial findings suggest that interventions for female staff in this cohort are necessary to reduce the overall pay gap. The impact of key interventions in relation to academic staff on the GPG has been very slow to materialise to date, however, it is also acknowledged that it is likely that the gap would be more pronounced were it not for these actions.

## 4.2 Research Staff

For research staff, the mean pay gap is 5.7% and the median is 3.2%

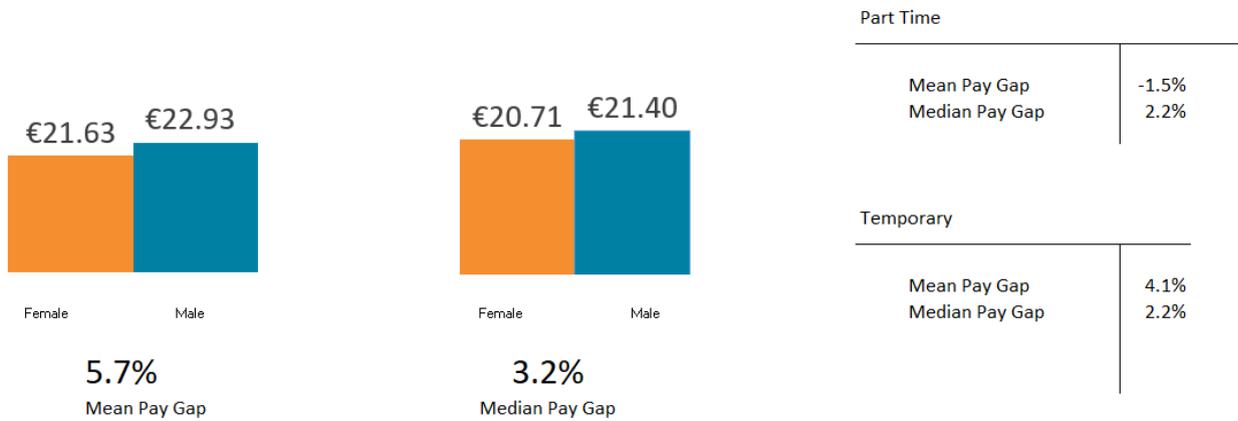


Figure 7: The Research Staff Pay Gap 2023

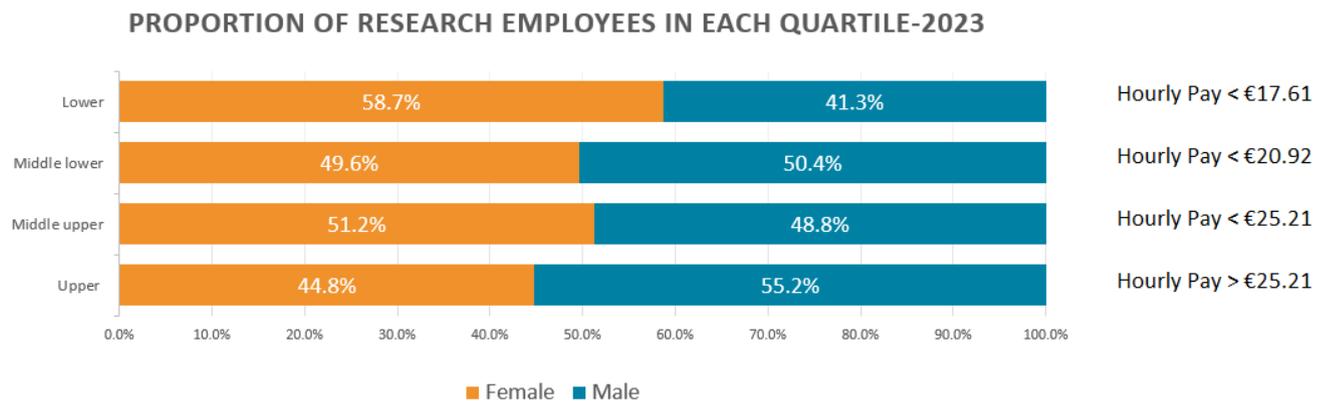


Figure 8: The Research Staff Quartiles 2023

Since this cohort does not contribute greatly to the institution's GPG, it is not considered more deeply or discussed in detail in this report. Nonetheless, in accordance with the wider consideration of the equality profile of research staff, further analysis of the precarious nature and career trajectory of research staff is an important aspect of the University's commitment to equality in a whole of institution context.

### 4.3 Professional, Managerial and Support (PMS) Staff PMS

Professional, administrative and technical posts are treated as a single cohort in this report, denoted as Professional, Managerial and Support (PMS) staff. The 2023 report indicates that there is a 14.6% mean gender pay gap in the PMS staff category, which is considerably lower than the mean GPG for academic staff (21.2%), and yet still higher than the national average of 9.6% in 2022 (CS0, 2023).<sup>[1]</sup>

Women outnumber men in all pay quartiles of this staff category, with the overall composition being 705 women and 294 men. However, the pay gap is largely due to the fact that women account for 76.5% of lower paid staff and just 53.3% of the upper quartile. This is despite the fact that men account for just 29.4% of the PMS staff category overall. As women represent just 53.3% of those in the upper quartile this indicates that although women are still in the majority of PMS senior positions at Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway, there is a substantial disparity in terms of the overall gendered composition of the PMS staff category.

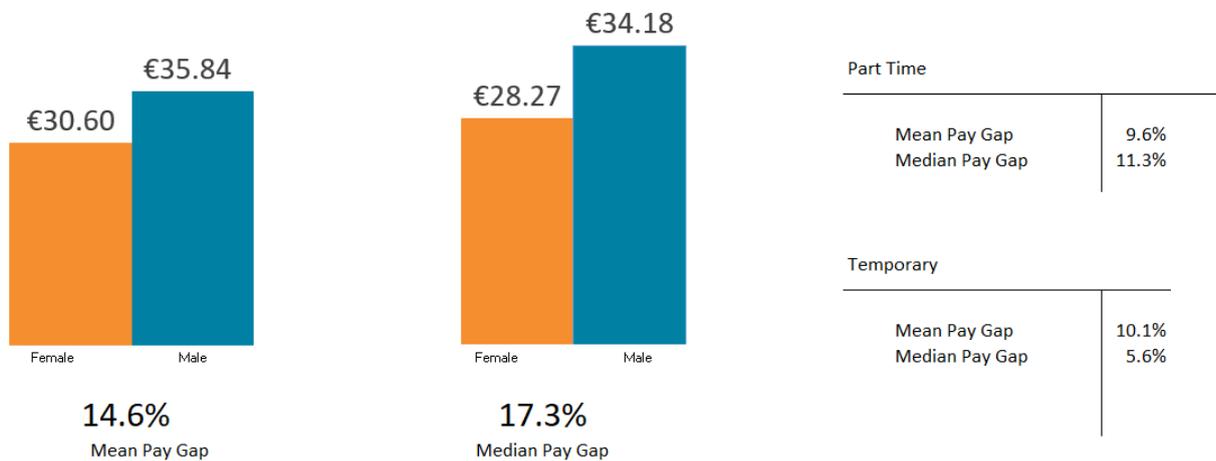


Figure 9: The Professional, Managerial and Support (PMS) Staff PMS2023 Pay Gap

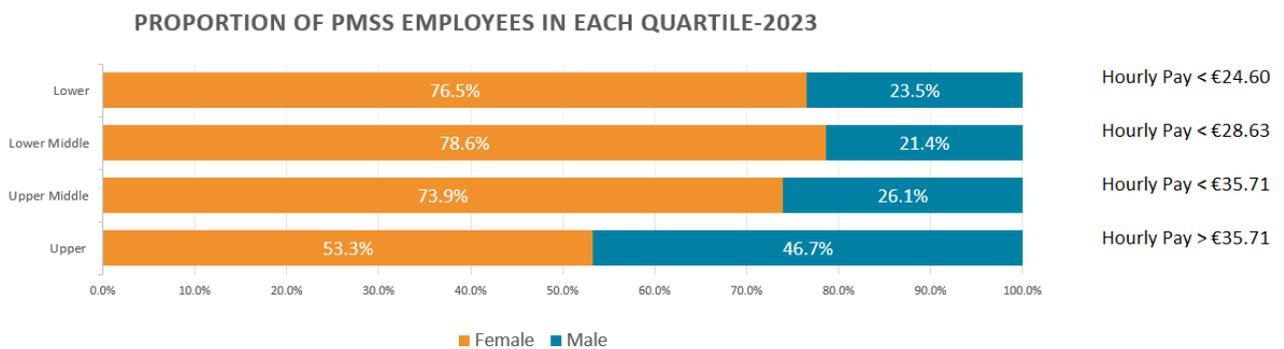


Figure 10: The Professional, Managerial and Support (PMS) Staff PMS2023 Quartiles

Further analysis reveals that the median or “middle” male, at Assistant Librarian, is in fact at a higher pay grade than the median “middle” female, at Administrative Assistant Grade 3. This suggests that men are more likely to occupy higher grades, despite the fact that women are the majority group in this staff category. The median hourly rate for women and men (in the professional support and technical staff

category) are, respectively, €28.27 and €34.18, with a median GPG of 17.3%. The median pay rates are, approximately, 30% lower than the corresponding values for academic staff, viz €40.80 for women and €43.91 for men. Since there are far more women than men in PMS posts, these values contribute significantly to the institutional median GPG. More precisely, the overall institutional median hourly pay rates for women are almost the same as that for PMS, whereas it is higher for men. However, the distributions of salaries of men and women are quite similar (the mean exceeding the median by a small percentage).

All of this points to the challenges regarding the upward mobility of PMS staff. Since there are far more women than men in this cohort, the combined impact is greater on women. Over the recent three year period 2021-2023 there have been a total of 696 staff recruited in competitions in the areas of Admin, Tech, and Library appointments. The identified gender profile based on the available data illustrates 454 of 696 appointments were female (65%).

Since there are far more women than men in this cohort, the combined impact is greater on women. Nonetheless, since 2019 there have been 609 competitions in the areas of Admin, Tech, and Library appointments. The identified gender profile based on the available data, illustrates 391 of 507 appointments were female. The University has also introduced a [Job Sizing Scheme](#) in 2022, with the objective of reviewing posts to decide if the role has changed over time and should be regraded, from Grade 2 up to and including Grade 5. To date three rounds of the job sizing scheme have been completed with 46 positions graded at a higher level. This scheme should go some way to increasing the number of opportunities for career progression for PMS staff, but further measures will likely be required.

#### 4.4 Historic Comparisons

Trends emerging in gender pay gap data for Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway show a marginal improvement in the mean gap over the past 5 years from 20% in 2018 to 18.4% in 2023, with a slight disimprovement between 2021, 2022 and 2023, as evidenced in Table 5 below.

Mean Pay Gap	Median Pay Gap
2023 = 18.4%	2023 = 17.4%
2022 = 18.6%	2022 = 15.5%
2021 = 18.0%	2021 = 10.9%
2020 = 17.9%	2020 = 12.0%
2019 = 17.9%	2019 = 12.0%
2018 = 20.0%	2018 = 18.4%

Table 5: Ollscoil na Gaillimhe – University of Galway’s: Gender Pay Gap Data 2018-2023

Although slight changes are discernible in the 2023 data, comparisons with Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway’s previous GPG reports indicate that there has been little change in terms of the percentages of male and female employees overall who fall into quartile pay bands, as is illustrated in Figures 11-15 below. The consistent trend evidenced in this comparative data demonstrates that the imbalances within the quartiles are relatively static, averaging at 40% female in the upper quartile; 59-60% female in the middle upper quartile; increasing from 55% - 60% female at the lower quartile and slightly reducing in the lower middle quartile ranging from 73.4% down to 68.7% in the most recent 2023 data. This overall picture is critical in illustrating the disparities and persistent gaps in terms of the range of hourly pay across the institution. It remains disappointing and deeply concerning that despite the wide range of measures that have been introduced to support gender equality over the past number of years, at worst this has made little or no impact, and at best it has not increased the pay gap further. Nonetheless, the trajectory is moving in the right direction, particularly in terms of the academic career pipeline for women, leading to increased numbers of female staff at Senior Lecturer and Professor level within the University. Clearly, this positive development has not yet resulted in a significant impact on the GPG.

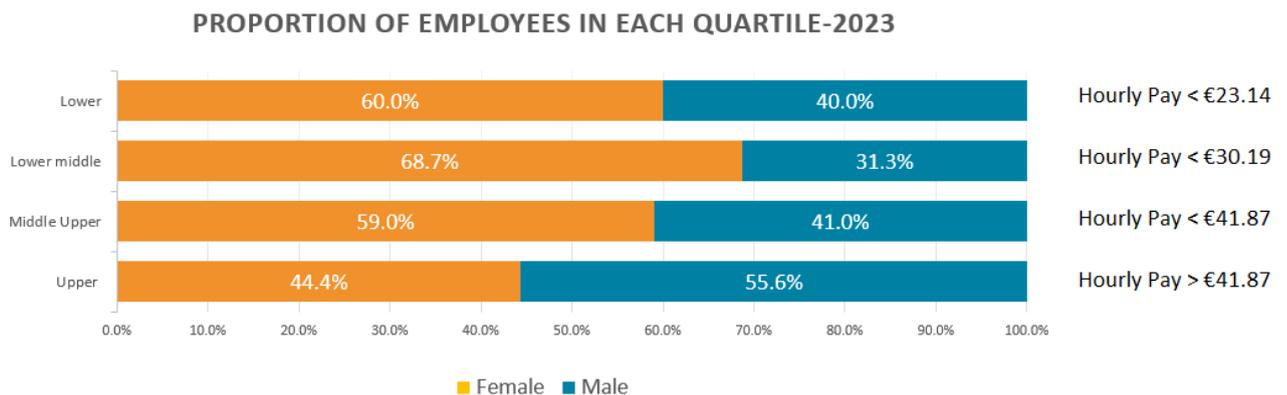


Figure 11: The percentages of female and male employees who fall into quartile pay bands (2023)

### PROPORTION OF EMPLOYEES IN EACH QUARTILE-2022

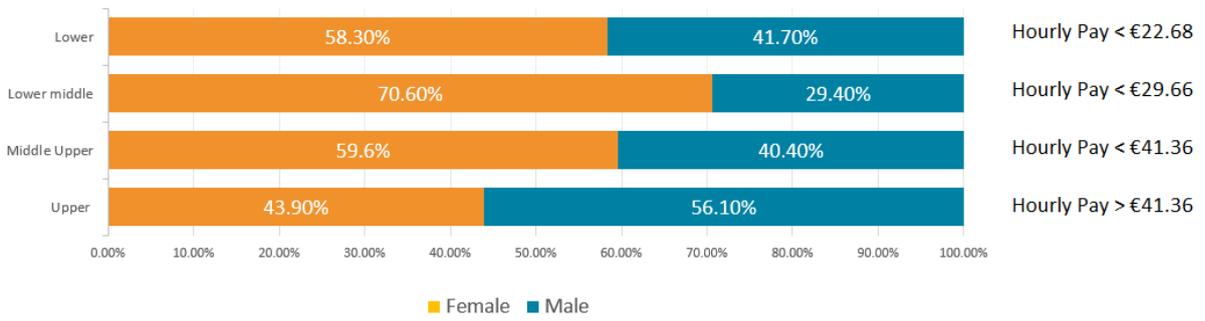


Figure 12: The percentages of female and male employees who fall into quartile pay bands (2022)

### PROPORTION OF EMPLOYEES IN EACH QUARTILE-2021

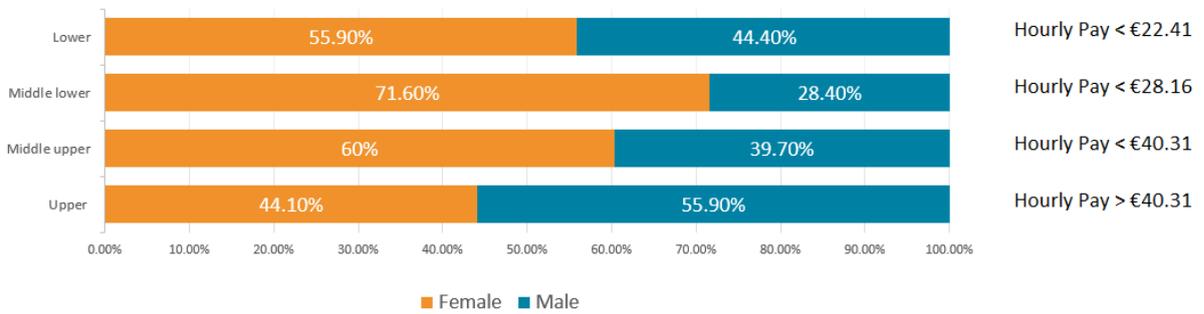


Figure 13: The percentages of female and male employees who fall into quartile pay bands (2021)

### QUARTILES: 2020

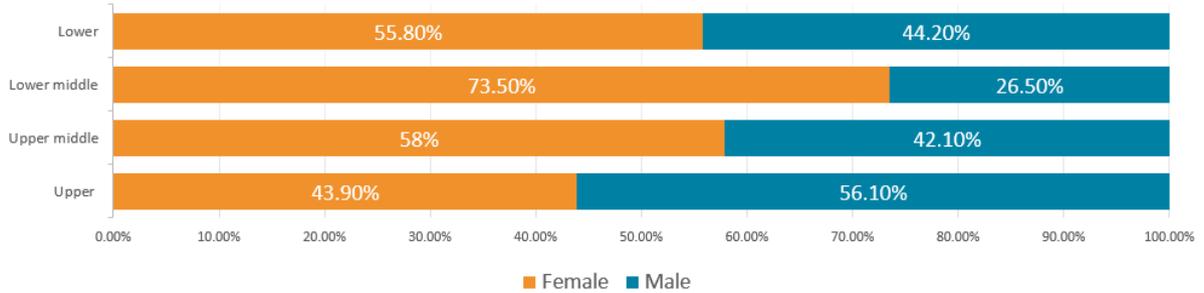


Figure 14: The percentages of female and male employees who fall into quartile pay bands (2020)

### QUARTILES: 2019

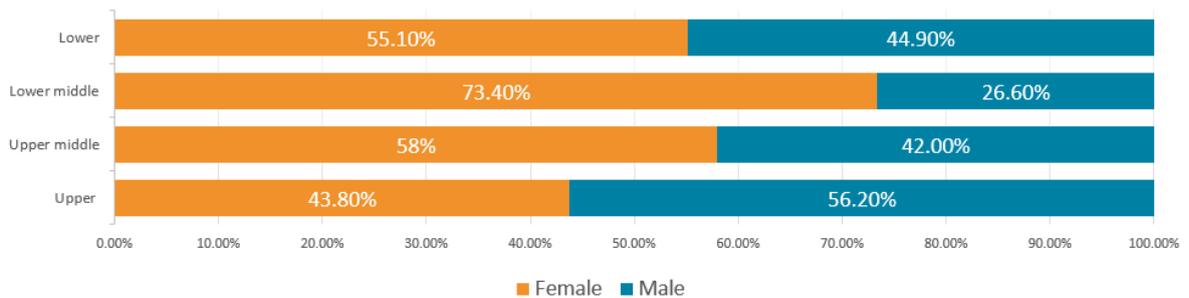


Figure 15: The percentages of female and male employees who fall into quartile pay bands (2019)

### 4.4.1 Historic Academic Quartiles

Deeper engagement with the data profile within the *academic* quartiles, specifically, Figures 16-18 indicate that the upper, lower and upper middle quartiles have remained relatively static. However, there are some changes evident in the lower middle quartile which has seen an increase in the percentage of female academic staff move from 52.6% female in 2019 to 58.5% female in 2023, as a result of targeted interventions detailed in Section 5 below that will be built on going forward. This strengthening of the pipeline at the lower levels will ensure more sustained, long-term progress as these female staff move through the pipeline and progress to higher grades. The increase in the number of female staff in lower pay bands also goes some way to explaining why the academic GPG has not reduced significantly over the past few years, despite interventions introduced to support this particular staff category.

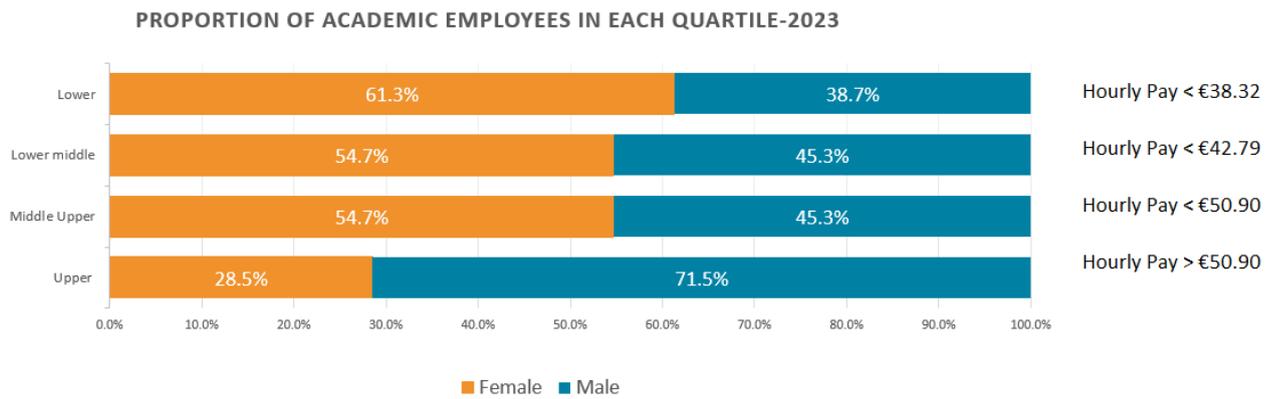


Figure 16: The percentages of female and male academic employees who fall into quartile pay bands (2023)

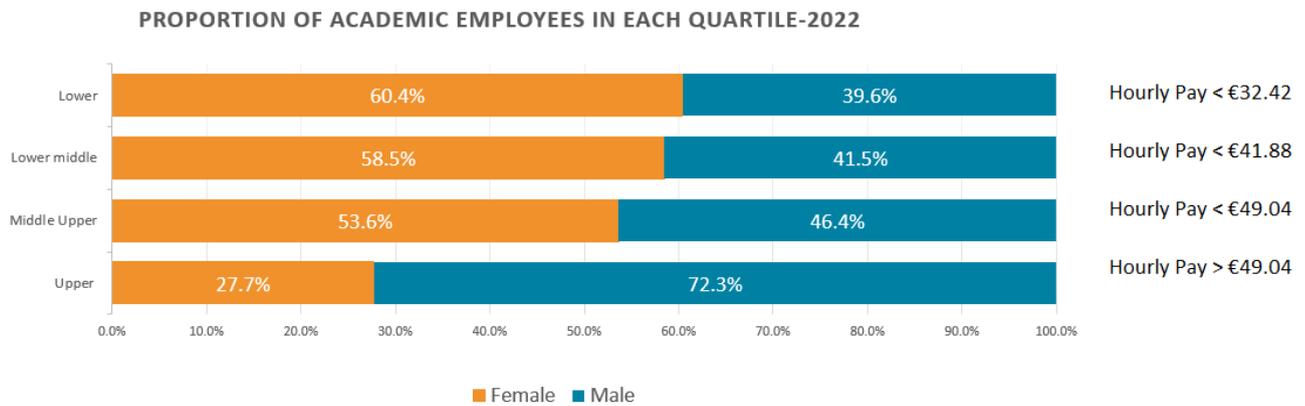


Figure 17: The percentages of female and male academic employees who fall into quartile pay bands (2022)

### QUARTILES -ACDADEMIC 2019

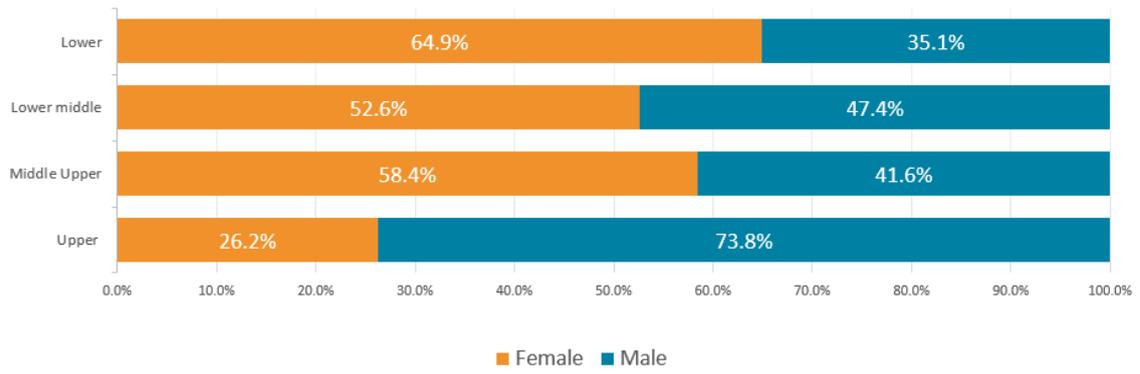


Figure 18: The percentages of female and male academic employees who fall into quartile pay bands (2019)

## 5 Key Gender Equality Issues and Institutional Responses to Date

As noted at the outset of this report, the gathering and analysis of GPG data has been an integral aspect of the institutional commitment to addressing systemic gender inequality in the University. Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway has had a challenging history on gender equality matters in relation to a landmark case of gender discrimination in academic career progression in 2014. While we continue to have gender inequality issues, particularly in terms of a sustainable population of women in senior academic and academic leadership positions in the University, our University Management Team sought to tackle our gender equality matters head-on. This was initially achieved through the establishment of a Gender Equality Task Force, in February 2015, chaired by Prof Jane Grimson, former Vice-Provost, Trinity College Dublin. The remit of this Task Force was to examine Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway's policies and practices and make recommendations to advance gender equality across the institution. The establishment of the Gender Equality Task Force differentiates Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway from other higher education institutions, demonstrating a serious engagement and willingness to lead in addressing the gendered nature of inequality. This Task Force was a precursor to the national emphasis on gender equality in higher education in Ireland, whereby an Expert Group on Gender Equality was created in 2016 and a National Gender Equality Task Force was established to address the entire higher education sector in 2017.

Members of Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway 2016's Gender Equality Task Force, under the leadership of Prof Grimson, carried out an in-depth literature review, and engaged in extensive staff consultation, in order to develop an evidence-based set of recommendations to enable the achievement of gender equality in the institution. The Report is available to review in full [here](#). The impact of implementing the recommendations from the Report of the Task Force (May 2016), and subsequent gender equality action plans (GEAP 2 and GEAP 3) has had a demonstrable impact on progressing gender equality in our university community.

During the period 2016-2023 we have seen a lot of reactive responses in light of the multiplicity of challenges, but also significant progress and real systemic change in tandem with a proactive approach which includes establishment of our equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) infrastructure, programme of work, and the embedding of EDI governance structures across the University.

Demonstrable impact is apparent across the University in a multiplicity of measures as evidenced in relation to representation and institutional governance for EDI; increase in senior female academic staff; GEAP and Athena Swan actions and interventions; and leadership initiatives.

## 5.1 Governance Structure

We have introduced a clear governance structure for EDI across the University, from our schools and units, through our college and support services directorate structure, to UMT, the Governing Authority and its sub-committees (Figure 19).

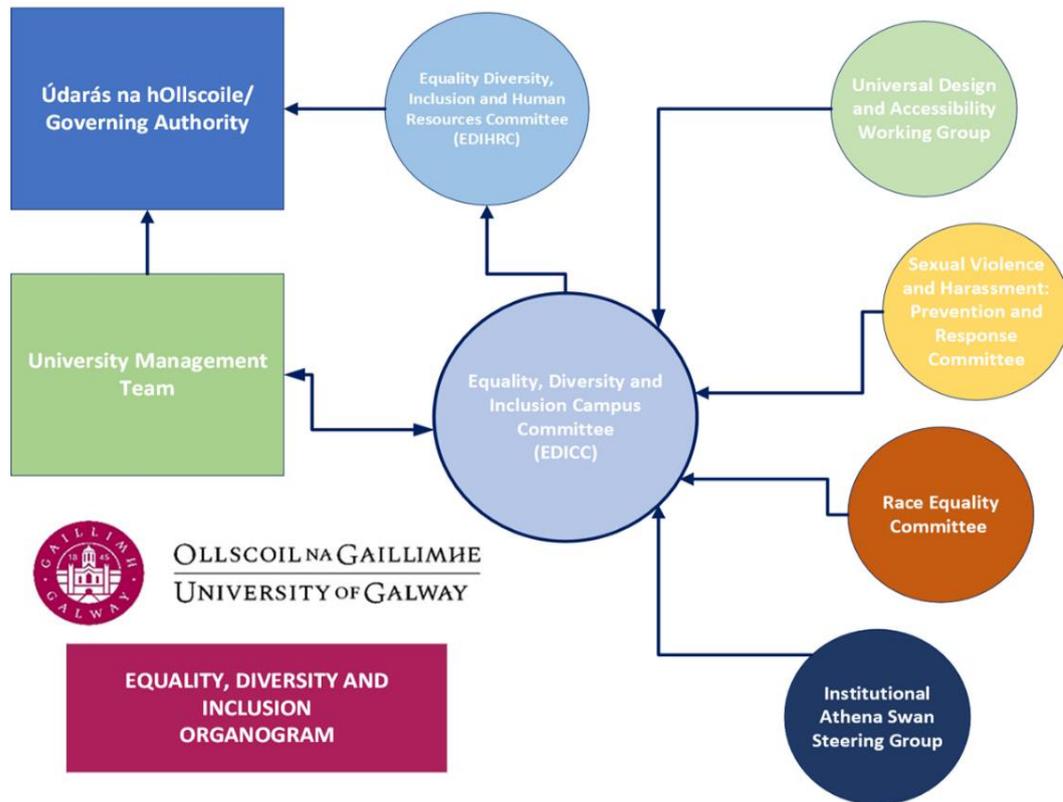


Figure 19: Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway EDI Governance Structure

We now have processes, practices and mechanisms to ensure frequent monitoring and awareness of gender equality in our key decision-making processes. For example;

- EIA (Equality Impact Assessment) of all new and revised policies
- Recruitment monitoring
- Complete reform of academic promotions processes at both Senior Lecturer and Professorial levels

It is established policy that all key decision-making committees across the University comprise a minimum of 40% men and women. The gender profile of committees is audited on an annual basis. Our most recent audit (AY 2021/2022) indicated that 86% of 21 central committees including Governing Authority and 4 sub committees, University Management Team and Academic Council have at least 40% male and female membership. At a college/school level, membership is expected to reflect the gender profile of the college/unit at a minimum.

We are now seeing the visible impact of these measures in the gender composition of our management teams, committees and working groups across Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway, including an increasing number of women in senior leadership roles such as Head of School and Units, Executive Deans roles and UMT itself.

## 5.2 Progress Achieved: Increase in Senior Female Academic Staff

All of our Gender Equality Action Plans (GEAPs) have included focused measures to increase the number of female academic staff at every level in the University. Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway has completed five annual gender pay gap (GPG) reviews since 2018. The University is the first Irish HEI to complete GPG reports systematically on an annual basis (Table 5 above). Our GPG reports have consistently found the lack of women in senior academic positions to be one of the major drivers of our GPG. In response, Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway has put concrete measures in place to address this gap including a promotions project to support promotion of women to Senior Lecturer and Personal Professor, careful monitoring of applicant pools and shortlists for all posts, and a new academic promotions scheme providing bi-annual opportunities to apply for promotions to Senior Lecturer (SL) and Professor grades, as was committed to in our 2017 Athena Swan Action Plan, which has resulted in a significant increase in applications from women. Promotions and recruitment campaigns since 2016 have improved the proportion of women at SL grade from 33% to 45% and at the Personal Professor grade from 16% to 33% (2023). Overall, women currently represent 29% of the full Professoriate. This is in line with our 2020/21 GEAP 2 targets for SL and the professoriate. The overall data for the promotions rounds to date demonstrates that this is impactful in enabling career progression for female academic staff. Since the implementation of the revised promotions process in 2019, there has been a 50% success rate for female applicants at Professoriate level and 70% success rate for female applicants at Senior Lecturer grade, up to 2022. It is understood from the analysis of the GPG that this is one area which will make a material difference to the current pay gap, however while the number of females in the category is improving, it will take time for individuals to progress along the incremental scales in order to reduce the GPG.

We note the positive impact of progression and promotion since 2017 on career progression for women in STEM in particular, resulting in increases in the number of female staff from Lecturer Below the Bar (LBB) to Established Professor (EP) with the number of female staff at EP increasing from 9% in 2017 to 21% in 2023 and the number of PP increasing from 14% to 33% in the same period. The percentage female increase at SL from 34% to 45% is particularly encouraging and will expand the pool of women eligible for promotion in the future. This progress has been made as a result of efforts both at an institutional and School level with schools having implemented actions to increase the number of academic women via the GEAP and Athena SWAN activity.

As a result of our focus on gender equality we have recognised the need to develop and implement a suite of new policies to enable equality and inclusiveness. Section 5.3 below outlines some of the most relevant initiatives to date.

## 5.3 Progress Achieved: Initiatives Introduced Through GEAP Actions

- **Meetings During Core Hours policy** was introduced in September 2016 to ensure that the maximum number of people can attend these meetings, particularly those with parental responsibilities, ensuring widespread dissemination of critical information and avoiding unintended exclusion of some staff. This policy was updated to include seminars and workshops and encourages a practice of varying times of meetings and events in order to avoid sustained exclusion.
- **Returner Grants for Research Active Academic Staff** of up to €10,000 were introduced to support all academic grades to re-engage with their research upon returning from long-term leave. This non-competitive grant is available on an ongoing basis all year round – 39 grants were awarded to date.
- **Athena Swan Mid-Career Capacity Building grants** of up to €5,000 are available for academic staff who took an extended period of leave connected with caring to help mitigate the impact of extended leave on research activities. In 2020/21, eligibility was extended to Postdoctoral Researchers and Research Fellows. This is a competitive grant and 49 grants have been awarded to date (42 funded by the Office of the Vice-President for EDI, 7 by Colleges). In 2023, this grant has a slightly expanded

criteria to allow for staff members that have experienced critical illness or other forms of long-term leave to apply.

- **A Research Consolidation grant** was developed as phase 2 of a Promotions Project (the first phase being career development sessions with SL academics). This grant of €3,000 is for female SLs to consolidate research development and assist them in making a strong application for promotion to Professor. 21 grants have been awarded to date.
- Access to **Parental Leave** savings at school/unit level – September 2016.
- **Improved Maternity Leave cover** was introduced in September 2016. The EDI office has worked in collaboration with the HR Director to propose a strengthening of the current model with increased cover for academic staff maternity leave which will be considered in 2024.
- **Paternity Leave policy** introduced in October 2017.
- **Academic Workload Allocation Guidelines initially** introduced in September 2018. The policy was revised and approved in 2023. **Performance for Growth** was approved in 2023. This is an institutionally approved process for employee review and development to be implemented for all employees commencing in the 2023/2024 academic year.

#### 5.4 Progress Achieved: Training Provided Through GEAP Actions

- **Unconscious Bias Training:** Unconscious Bias and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training is provided to all interview panels; Unit, School and College and University executive teams; available to all staff including postdoctoral staff; and all postgraduate research students and teacher education students.
- **Aurora Women’s Leadership Development Programme:** 155 women supported on this programme – across academic, professional services and research staff categories.
- **Academic Career Development Workshop:** two workshops offered annually with 40 participants per workshop. Tailored career support is then offered to up to 15 women per year as a support towards academic promotion. Commenced in May 2019, to date over 100 academics have participated in these workshops, with a number successfully applying for promotion.

#### 5.5 Progress Achieved: Positive Impact of Specific GEAP Actions

Our 2021 Athena Swan application gave the University the opportunity to evaluate the progress that has been made in the University in terms of gender equality since the implementation of our first and second GEAPs.

##### 5.5.1 Actions to Support Those on Maternity Leave:

Since 2017, mothers returning from maternity leave are invited to attend a dedicated **‘Maternity Matters: Return to Work’ workshop**, offered bi-annually. 13 such workshops have run to date. There has been an average of 7 participants per workshop, with 100% positive feedback on their value. As noted in 5.3 above, the Office of the Vice-President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (OVPEDI) has established 2 grants to support academic staff re-engage with their research upon returning from long-term carer’s leave.

### 5.5.2 Actions: Improving Culture Around Family and Maternity Leave:

Responses from our 2023 culture survey indicated that staff were largely **positive about the culture around family and maternity leave**. Overall, the majority of respondents to the 2023 culture survey were satisfied with the process in recent years with 84% responding positively. However, there is also room for improvement as among the responses to overall family leave, 41% stated that family leave impacted on their career progression and 58% noted that supports were not put in place to facilitate re-engagement. Actions to Support Aurora Programme/Female Leadership:

Feedback from the **Aurora Programme** has also been positive with 72.5% of participants agreeing that the programme successfully responded to their leadership challenges.

### 5.5.3 Athena Swan

Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway’s engagement with the Athena Swan Charter framework has resulted in the implementation of focused action plans informed by extensive consultation with staff and students, and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data.

<b>Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway’s Athena Swan Awards</b>	
April 2018	Institution achieves Bronze Athena Swan Award School of Medicine Achieve Bronze Athena Swan Award
April 2020	2 Schools achieve Bronze Athena Swan Awards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cairnes School of Business and Economics</li> <li>• School of Physics</li> </ul>
April 2021	Institution successfully renews Bronze Athena Swan Award
April 2021	6 Schools achieve Bronze Athena Swan Awards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School of Medicine Renew Bronze Award</li> <li>• School of Nursing and Midwifery</li> <li>• School of Psychology</li> <li>• School of Mathematics, Statistics, and Applied Mathematics</li> <li>• School of Natural Sciences</li> <li>• School of Chemistry</li> </ul>
November 2020	School of Health Sciences achieve Bronze Athena Swan Award
April 2022	School of Engineering achieve Silver Athena Swan Award
November 2022	School of Law achieve Bronze Athena Swan Award School of Computer Science and Data Science Institute achieve Bronze Athena Swan Award
February 2023	Application for Transfer of Award for Restructured School of Natural Science Approved Application for Transfer of Award for Restructured School of Biological and Chemical Sciences Approved
April 2023	Shannon College of Hotel Management achieve Bronze Athena Swan Award

Table 6: Ollscoil na Gaillimhe – University of Galway’s Athena Swan Awards

#### 5.5.4 Gender Equality Action Plans (GEAP 1, 2 and 3)

Demonstrable impact has been achieved through implementation of our GEAPs. This is evidenced by the year-on-year increase in the number of female staff in senior academic grades. Consistently positive feedback in relation to targeted training opportunities and supports for female staff across all categories also indicates progress. We have developed processes and practices to monitor and increase awareness of gender and other equality considerations in our key decision-making processes including recruitment, promotions, policy development and implementation.

## 6 Proposed Actions

In line with Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway's Strategy 2020-2025, EDI Strategy 2020-2025 and Gender Equality Action Plan 3 2021-2024 ([GEAP3 Progress 2022](#)), which commit to substantially reducing the GPG, concrete measures have been put in place to address the pay gap. Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway will continue to implement the GEAP 3 which identifies actions, timelines and responsibilities pertaining to organisational culture and work-life balance; gender balance in leadership; equal opportunities recruitment and career progression; gender in research and teaching; measures against gender-based violence; gender equality and intersectionality. In terms of positive action measures, our assessment is that a range of activities and interventions are required to address the GPG given the complexity of causality and profile of the gap. Workforce planning should identify where posts will arise due to retirement and growth, and recruitment plans should include explicit actions to reduce the GPG. More emphasis is required to increase opportunities and career development for Professional, Managerial and Support staff, as this will have the greatest potential to improve the median gender pay gap. Targeted interventions in terms of job sizing are also important and consideration should be given to including higher level grades in this process. Positive action in relation to recruitment, promotion and career progression is also under consideration to address areas of underrepresentation within the University.

### 6.1 Action: Women's Leadership

The University provides ongoing support for women from all staff categories who aspire to leadership roles in higher education via participation on the Aurora women's leadership programme, an Institutional Mentoring Scheme launched in 2021, and a coaching scheme launched in 2022. The GEAP 3 includes several measures to encourage women's leadership, including actions: 1.2 to increase female leadership role models; 2.2 to develop a number of new leadership training offerings aimed at both mid and advanced career staff across the University; 2.3 to increase the percentage of women in leadership roles in research centres and clusters. While Action 2.4 focuses on implementing an Executive Leadership programme for women in senior academic grades/Heads of School to increase the number of women in academic leadership roles, it was decided that developing a leadership programme for both men and women would increase awareness and responsibility in terms of inclusive leadership and attentiveness to career development for all staff and is therefore of benefit to a wider cohort of female staff. This programme has now been envisaged in the context of an overarching Management and Leadership Development Framework. All supports will be advertised on the OVPEDI website to ensure visibility and awareness, and female PMS, academic and research staff will be actively encouraged to avail of these initiatives at Unit and School level. The first phase of these actions, the leadership programme, will be implemented by Q2 2024.

### 6.2 Action: Academic Career Progression

Increasing the proportion of women in senior academic grades is one of the University's core objectives, and several measures have already been introduced to increase the number of academic women in these positions. Though the initiatives below have not resulted in a significant reduction on the University's GPG thus far, we anticipate that they will have a long-term impact.

Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway introduced a new criterion-referenced academic promotions scheme in 2019, which provides bi-annual opportunities to apply for promotions to senior academic grades. The scheme takes 'time out' for caring purposes or non-academic circumstances into consideration in the assessment of applications, by applying a 'discount' for outputs relative to opportunity (a practice in place since 2016/17). Additionally, a new Associate Professor grade has been introduced in 2022 to create more promotion opportunities to Professor and align grades with the rest of the Irish Education Sector. Application quotas have not been required to date, but application, shortlisting and success rates are carefully monitored for gender representation, with a minimum of 30% of men and women at shortlist stage for all senior posts.

In 2019, the University instigated a three year 'Promotions Project', based on the University of Tromsø model ([Rice, 2011](#)). The project aimed to support 15 women at LAB and SL grade who were preparing to apply for promotion to SL or the Professoriate within 12 months. Support included career development workshops and individualised CV analysis by a suitable senior academic. Protected time to write grants/papers, and travel for consultation were provided where required. A Research Grant of €3,000 was also offered to female SLs to consolidate research development. 10 women received the grant in 2020, 6 in 2021 and 5 in 2022. As referenced in Section 5, a number of additional grants have also been established to support academic women returning from extended periods of caring leave. Research grants of €10,000 are available for women on their immediate return from leave, in addition to grants of €5,000 for academic/research staff who had an extended period of leave connected with caring at any point during their academic career.

### 6.3 Action: Professional, Managerial and Support Staff Career Progression

A new Job Sizing/Evaluation Framework was rolled out in May 2022 to facilitate the career progression of PMS staff and we would expect to see a positive impact on the median GPG in response to this within a relatively short timeframe. The cohort of staff whose positions are successfully regraded will be closely monitored for gender and grade implications. In addition, attention to modelling with regard to the required interventions to reduce the GPG for PMS staff will be a factor considered in the more detailed analysis undertaken in 2023.

### 6.4 Action: Conditions and opportunities for Research Staff

A University Report of the Working Group on Research Staff presented to Academic Council in 2022, noted the significant contributions of research staff to the national and international profile of Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway and acknowledged some excellent supports and resources for research staff through the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation (OVPRI), the Researcher Development Centre, the Research Office, the OVPEI and HR. However, a number of significant challenges have been identified in the three broad areas of:

1. Precarity of employment and career progression for research staff;
2. Equality, diversity and inclusion; and
3. Pensions

The identified actions include attention to career progression measures that have the capacity to improve opportunities and outcomes for research staff.

### 6.5 Action: Workload Allocation Model

The Deputy President and Registrar established a Workload Allocation Model (WAM) group in 2022, tasked with reviewing existing *Principles and Guidelines* document and related practices at School level. The revised WAM Guidelines were approved by Academic Council in 2023. The effectiveness of WAMs is part of the wider institutional context which supports academic career progression and accordingly can be understood to be one element of the overall complexity which contributes to the GPG.

### 6.6 Action: Performance for Growth

The Director of Human Resources introduced a new performance management development system, titled Performance for Growth in 2023. The aim of Performance for Growth is to provide a tool for managers and staff that will assist them to manage and improve performance, including the identification of supports and developmental needs that can contribute to career progression.

### 6.7 Action: Inclusive Recruitment

The commitment to inclusive recruitment is specified in GEAP 3 and, in 2024, further work will be undertaken to review and maximise the effectiveness of recruitment in the context of gender equality.

## 6.8 Action: Positive Action Measures and the Mitigation of Gender Pay Gap Risks

Attention will be given to some of the primary policy issues that determine pay such as incremental salary scales, (gender proofed) starting pay policy comprising minimum point on the scale or criteria, and controls for appointment above the minimum, in addition to pay on promotion policy. It is noted that there are funding constraints which limit some of the potential actions and this is a structural issue within higher education. The university President is also leading on a process to seek advice on the capacity to introduce positive action measures.

## 6.9 Action: Establishment of GPG working group as a sub-group of UMT

To date, university staff in Finance, HR, EDI and academic experts have comprised a GPG working group with the objective of analysing the data on the GPG which was computed by external consultants. The annual GPG report compiled by the EDI office between 2019-2022 was presented to the University Management Team for response and action annually. Key actions that were implemented in 2023 included further analysis of the GPG data, disaggregated at College level and an appropriate College level response to reduce the gap. Staff members from the EDI Office met with individual College representatives, Executive Deans and Vice-Deans EDI to identify and discuss actions at College level.

However, it was deemed important to establish a formalised working group as a sub-group of the University Management Team. The Terms of Reference for the UMT GPG Working Group were approved in September 2023. One of the key tasks for this working group is to refine the proposed actions to reduce the GPG, to develop a comprehensive timeline for implementation and to develop a process for communicating and engaging with staff throughout the University.

## 7 Other relevant information

In recognition of the strategic imperative of reducing the GPG within the higher education sector, in 2022 the Office of the VP for EDI were successfully awarded funding for a collaborative initiative with four other higher education institutions, led by Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway ([GEEF 2022](#)). In 2023, the project partners shared their institutional approach and methodologies to address the GPG as part of the first phase of the project. A post-doc researcher worked with the Head of EDI to produce a comprehensive analysis of core drivers and interventions in relation to gender pay gaps in higher education. As the lead partner in the implementation of this project, we are mindful of the opportunity that this brings for a sector wide analysis of the key drivers of the gender pay gap, differentiation within the sector and the potential to model effective interventions to ascertain what measures are most constructive and impactful in reducing the GPG. The findings of this project will be widely disseminated through an interactive seminar documenting the key findings of the project and describing the application of intervention modelling, planned for Q2 2024.

## 8 Conclusion

As we progress to 2024, the persistence of the high gender pay gap at 18.4% is a key concern and remains to the fore of the activities to address gender inequality. The positive impact of existing measures is evident in the increase of the proportion of women in senior academic grades. The proportion of women at SL grade improved from 33% to 45% between 2016 and 2023 and the proportion of women at Personal Professor grade has improved from 25% in 2019 to 33% in 2022. Overall, women currently represent 29% of the full Professoriate. Although this has not yet led to a reduction in the GPG, it is expected that this will have a direct impact alongside actions related to recruitment, retention, and career development in time. The effect of Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway's first four years of introducing initiatives to reduce the GPG indicates clearly that this is a long-term process, and that the pipeline overall must be strengthened before an improvement in the GPG will occur.

Accordingly, while it is recognised that the reduction of the GPG is frustratingly slow, the strategic objective of significantly reducing the pay gap remains a constant focus. In that respect, the adoption of targeted measures to achieve the desired outcome will continue to be explored and implemented.

Recent research on the gender pay gap in the UK higher education sector recognises that the 'causes of gender pay disparities are complex and multi-layered, but analysis of them in the higher education sector, and more generally, is theoretically and empirically incomplete' (Woodhams, Trojanowski and Wilkinson, 2022:544). Notwithstanding both the complexity and limitations of theoretical and empirical causality, the research to date at Ollscoil na Gaillimhe - University of Galway illustrates there are many factors that contribute to the gender pay gap. Notably, the concentration of female staff within the two lower quartiles provides specific cause for concern. Additionally, the disproportionate impact of the pay of particular staff cohorts within the academic staff category, and the imbalance in representation across the quartiles, requires further deliberation and a strategic response.