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# Planetary Health Report Card (Medicine) 2026: *University of Galway*



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE  
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

2025-2026 Contributing Team:

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## Summary of Findings

<b>Overall Grade</b>	<b>C+</b>
<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>D+</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Summary:</b> The core curriculum of the University of Galway School of Medicine includes some aspects of planetary health, and clearly emphasises the relationship between Climate Change and health outcomes. Infectious disease, extreme heat, extreme weather, air pollution and their connection with Climate Change are covered, but the impacts of healthcare systems on the environment and provisions of care to a population are not covered.         </li> <li> <b>Recommendations:</b> We recommend that a designated staff member be nominated responsible specifically for the integration of planetary health into the University of Galway School of Medicine revised core curriculum in order to maximise accountability and monitor the School’s progress towards the Sustainable Developments Goals on a regular basis.            We also recommend a more equal dispersion of planetary health education between year groups, particularly as senior students are prepared for clinical practice. We identify the 4MB ‘General Practice’ Inclusion Health module as an optimal opportunity for this, with 4MB modules ‘Psychiatry’ and ‘Obstetrics and Gynaecology’ also representing opportunities to improve the planetary health curriculum as it relates to mental health and reproductive health respectively.         </li> </ul>	
<b>Interdisciplinary Research</b>	<b>B+</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Summary:</b> Planetary Health is a core component of several interdisciplinary research groups affiliated with the University of Galway, particularly the Centre for One Health in the Ryan Institute. There are limited research opportunities in the field of Planetary Health available for students, but undergraduate summer research is encouraged.         </li> <li> <b>Recommendations:</b> We recommend a process is created in which community members impacted by climate and environmental injustice have decision-making power in the university’s climate and environmental research agenda. We also recommend the generation of an easy-to-use, adequately comprehensive website that centralises various campus resources related to health and the environment including all of the following: upcoming events, leaders in planetary health at your institution, and relevant funding opportunities.         </li> </ul>	
<b>Community Outreach and Advocacy</b>	<b>D</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Summary:</b> The University of Galway engages with sustainability and climate action partners in the region, but the School of Medicine specifically has limited engagement with these groups. The School of Medicine does provide a biannual virtual course titled “Collaborating in Planetary Health”, and there are several post graduate opportunities for further study in the realm of Planetary Health.         </li> <li> <b>Recommendations:</b> We recommend that the institution and its affiliated hospitals develop clear, patient-friendly resources that explain environmental and climate-related health issues in an accessible way, helping to raise awareness within the wider community. Greater engagement between the School of Medicine and existing university-wide and local sustainability initiatives would support this aim, particularly if formal routes for collaboration were established. Medical students should be actively encouraged and supported to participate in these initiatives, with opportunities clearly advertised and easy to access. Taken together, these actions would help embed planetary health more visibly within community outreach and advocacy, strengthening its role within medical education.         </li> </ul>	
<b>Support for Student-Led Initiatives</b>	<b>B</b>

- **Summary:** The University of Galway has engaged significantly with the student body over the last few years regarding sustainability, including two Student Sustainability Leadership Award Scholarships, the Sustainability Engagement Fund for student-led projects, and some summer research opportunities in the field within the School of Medicine.
- **Recommendations:** Support for student-led initiatives mostly comes from the wider University rather than the Medical School. We recommend the medical school offers increased support to students interested in sustainable initiatives for example via creating a website that advertises mentors or opportunities for students relating to PH or ESH and prioritises grants for related research.

## Campus Sustainability

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- **Summary:** The University has a sustainability committee, a dedicated Office for Sustainability, and has invested in reducing the emissions of the University; through building retrofits, renewables and divestment from fossil fuels. The School of Medicine has cooperated with the university in these endeavours but can do more to show leadership in sustainability.
- **Recommendations:** Establish a medical school sustainability office with dedicated academy officers. While a sustainability office was established on Earth Day 2024 with four employees, there are no sustainability officers for the Medical Academies and sustainability does not appear to be a priority for the academies despite falling under CUSP. We would recommend prioritising renewable energy expansion at the main campus and at the academy sites in order to hit the sustainability target of net zero by 2030. Although, there has been significant progress, the university still relies on the national grid, so the proposed solar PV farm - which could generate 50% of the campus's electric load - must be prioritised, and given the success of the geothermal heat pump system in the University's Sport Centre, larger scale geothermal systems should be considered for high demand buildings like the Human Biology Building. At academy sites such as Sligo Medical Academy, which is built as a sustainable extension on the top floors of Sligo University Hospital, roof mounted Solar PV should be explored and implemented if feasible. We would recommend developing student accommodation for peripheral placements. Establishing dedicated, affordable placement accommodation within walking distance of peripheral hospitals would directly reduce high transport emissions from students commuting, alleviate financial burden on students and improve wellbeing. We would also recommend improving academy level sustainability infrastructure and culture. Creating an Academy Green Team, improving local waste segregation and recycling to match campus standards and improving availability of bicycle racks for students would allow all academies to contribute to the university's overall sustainability goals.

# Statement of Purpose

*Planetary health is human health.*

The Planetary Health Alliance describes planetary health as “a solutions-oriented, transdisciplinary field and social movement focused on analysing and addressing the impacts of human disruptions to Earth’s natural systems on human health and all life on Earth.” This definition is intentionally broad, intended to encompass the multitude of ways that the environment can affect health, including water scarcity, changing food systems, urbanisation, biodiversity shifts, natural disasters, climate change, changing land use and land cover, global pollution, and changing biogeochemical flows. The health of humanity is dependent on our environment, and our environment is changing rapidly and in disastrous ways. Although the World Health Organization has called climate change “the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century,” many health professional school’s institutional priorities do not reflect the urgency of this danger to human health.

As future health professionals, we must be prepared to address the impacts of human-caused environmental changes on our patients’ health. This preparation is in the hands of the institutions providing our health professional training. It is imperative that we hold our institutions accountable for educating health professional students about the health impacts of climate change and other anthropogenic environmental changes, generating research to better understand health impacts and solutions, supporting related student initiatives, embracing sustainable practices as much as possible, and engaging with surrounding communities that are most affected by environmental threats. Because climate change and environmental threats disproportionately affect vulnerable populations (for example, communities of colour, older adults sensitive to health threats, and individuals in low-resource settings), these issues are inherently ones of equity and justice.

With the purpose of increasing planetary health awareness and accountability among health professional schools, we have created a Planetary Health Report Card that students internationally can use to grade and compare their institutions on an annual basis. This student-driven initiative aims to compare health professional schools nationally and internationally on the basis of discrete metrics in five main category areas: 1) planetary health curriculum, 2) interdisciplinary research in health and environment, 3) university support for student planetary health initiatives, 4) community outreach centred on environmental health impacts, and 5) school campus sustainability.

# Definitions & Other Considerations

## Definitions:

- **Planetary Health:** is described by the Planetary Health Alliance as “the health of human civilisation and the state of the natural systems on which it depends.” For example, topics such as climate change, declining biodiversity, shortages of arable land and freshwater, and pollution would all fall under the realm of planetary health. Both planetary health and traditional ‘environmental health’ examine the relationship between human health and the external environment, including extreme temperatures, chemicals, vector-borne diseases, etc. Planetary health explicitly concerns itself with the potential health harms associated with human-caused perturbations of natural systems. Therefore, the human health focus of planetary health makes the field well-adapted for the context of health professional education. Throughout this report card, we use the term planetary health to refer to this broad swath of topics, but resources do not need to explicitly include the term “planetary health” to satisfy the metric.
- **Sustainable Healthcare:** As defined by the Academy of Royal Colleges, sustainable healthcare involves ensuring the ability to provide good quality care for future generations by balancing the economic, environmental, and social constraints and demands within health care settings. A sustainable healthcare system maintains population health, reduces disease burden and minimises use of healthcare services.
- **Education for Sustainable Healthcare (ESH):** is defined as the process of equipping current and future health professionals with the knowledge, attitudes, skills and capacity to provide environmentally sustainable services through health professional education, thus working to decrease the enormous environmental impact of the healthcare industry. Planetary Health Education is an integral part of this education rather than an end in itself. This is because knowledge on Planetary Health is required to be able to fully understand the necessity of sustainable healthcare as well as being part of the broader knowledge needed to fully protect and promote health. In summary, ESH is covered by the three Priority Learning Outcomes of the Centre of Sustainable Healthcare below, and Planetary Health Education is embraced in the first learning objective and is a fundamental requirement to achieve learning outcomes 2 and 3:
  1. Describe how the environment and human health interact at different levels.
  2. Demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to improve the environmental sustainability of health systems.
  3. Discuss how the duty of a doctor to protect and promote health is shaped by the dependence of human health on the local and global environment.
- **Medical School/Department vs. Institution:** When “Medical school” is specified in the report card, this only refers to curriculum and resources offered by the School/department of Medicine and does not include offerings from other parts of the university (e.g. undergraduate departments (USA), other related departments (e.g. Public Health, Population Health departments). In contrast, when “institution” is specified in the report card, we are referring to the university more broadly including all of its campuses. Any resource reasonably accessible by medical students, no matter where in the institution the resource comes from or if it is

specifically targeted for medical students, can meet this metric.

- **Environmental history (Curriculum Section):** This is a series of questions students are taught to ask during medical encounters that elicits patients' exposures and environmental risk factors. Historically, this has included consideration of exposures like pesticides, asbestos, and lead, though in the modern era shaped by climate change, it can be expanded to include things like wildfire smoke exposure, air pollution and mould after flooding. Key components include place of residence over the lifecourse, occupational history, food and water sources (e.g. meat from industrial feeding operations, regular fishing in contaminated water, access to clean drinking water), and exposure to air pollution. Please be as specific as possible when providing evidence for this metric.
- **Elective:** The word "elective" refers to an optional course or lecture series that a student can opt to take part in but is not a requirement in the core curriculum. Generally, these elective courses take place in the preclinical curriculum but vary by school.
- **Core Curriculum:** This refers to the taught material that is delivered to the entire cohort of students in one year.
- **Clerkship / Outreach:** This is a term used in the USA to refer to placements that medical students go on e.g. Pediatrics, General medicine, Psychiatry. In the UK these are referred to as rotations, outreach or placements. This is a relatively short (approximately 4-8 weeks) period of study and patient-centred clinical experience that takes place as part of the undergraduate programme.
- **Clinical rotation:** This is a term used to refer to placements that students go on (e.g., ophthalmology, surgery, cardiology).
- **Physiotherapy vs Physical Therapy:** For the purposes of this report card these terms are considered interchangeable. However, physiotherapy will be used primarily.
- **Community organisations:** For most institutions, there are existing groups that are not directly affiliated with the university and exist as a product of what the community the institution exists in cares about or needs. These specific community organisations relevant to this report include those that are focused around some aspect of climate and health preservation. These community organisations can include but are not limited to local mutual aid initiatives, underserved-resource distribution groups, clean-up and nature conservation groups, community gardeners, and other environmental-related organisations. If your institution does not have access to local volunteerships with community groups, please report any community organisations your institution or school has collaborated with.
- **Climate justice:** The idea that certain population groups and geographical locations which are disproportionately more impacted by climate change are already economically and socially disadvantaged. This double vulnerability sits alongside pre-existing social justice concerns and should therefore shift policy and practice to mitigate the inequitable effects of the climate crisis.
- **Extractivism:** The removal of natural resources typically in large quantities. Within anthropology this term is often used in the context of colonialism to refer to the

historic seizing of natural resources, a practice which has developed business models tied to ecological degradation and loss of biodiversity.

- **Global South:** Nations that often have less economic and industrial development and are typically in the southern hemisphere. These nations have been found to be disproportionately impacted by the climate crisis.
- **Low socioeconomic status (SES):** An individual or geographical area that across a variety of socioeconomic factors (e.g., income, education, race/ethnicity) is considered vulnerable. This vulnerability has been correlated to more adverse health outcomes often as a consequence of encountering more barriers in accessing and receiving healthcare.
- **Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMIC):** Countries that have lower degrees of economic affluence.
- **Anthropogenic:** Created through human activity
- **Marginalized communities:** Groups excluded from mainstream economic, educational, social, and/or cultural experiences due to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, language, and/or immigration status (Sevelius et al., 2020).

### Scoring Matrix

- Elective coursework (1 point): This score applies to material that is actively selected by the students such as a module choice, or additional lecture series. By implication, only a given proportion of the cohort will receive this taught material.
- Brief coverage in the core curriculum (2 points): This score applies where a topic is covered only briefly in a core curriculum session. This implies that the entire cohort receives the same material. At minimum brief inclusion would qualify as inclusion in a single lecture slide in a single year.
- In depth coverage in the core curriculum (3 points): This score applies where a topic is taught in significant detail or where a topic is repeatedly brought up in different years. This might look like several dedicated lecture slides, or inclusion of the same topic in different lectures and teaching formats.

### Other considerations:

- If there are more than one “tracks” at your institution with two different curricula (for example, Harvard Medical School has a Pathways and HST curriculum track), you can choose to fill out a report card for each track, or fill out just one report card and average the scores received by each track in cases where the scores are different (see the 2021 Harvard or Oxford report cards as examples). Where possible please indicate the proportion of students that are on each track.

Updated in 2025, a complete literature review by metric is available for the 2024/25 Medicine Report Card Template. This largely translates across disciplines although we are hoping to expand this process across all of our covered d

disciplines. A link to the 2025 literature review by metric is available [here](#).

# Planetary Health Curriculum

**Section Overview:** *This section evaluates the integration of relevant planetary health topics into the medical school curriculum. Today's health professional students will be on the frontlines of tackling the health effects of climate and other environmental changes. Therefore, it is critical that students are trained to understand the health effects of these changes, as well as planetary health issues and principles more broadly. Topics like the changing geography of vector-borne diseases, the health consequences of air pollution, environmental health inequities, and disaster response principles must be part of every medical school's core curriculum.*

## *Curriculum: General*

<b>1.1. Did your <u>medical school</u> offer elective courses (student selected modules) to engage students in Education for Sustainable Healthcare or Planetary Health in the last year?</b>	
Yes, the medical school has offered <b>more than one</b> elective whose primary focus is ESH/planetary health in the past year. (3 points)	
Yes, the medical school has offered <b>one</b> elective whose primary focus is ESH/planetary health in the past year. (2 points)	
The medical school does <b>not</b> have any electives whose primary focus is ESH/planetary health, but there are one or more electives that include a <b>lecture</b> on planetary health. (1 point)	
No, the medical school has <b>not</b> offered any electives on planetary health or electives that include ESH/planetary health topics in the past year. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  <i>The University of Galway School of Medicine made information available to students regarding ENLIGHT blended intensive modules (BIPs), “Environment, Health and Climate Change 2025” and “Climate Histories: Science and Art in the Public Space”. However, these modules were classified as an extra-curricular activity and not part of the core medical curriculum. As such, the 7.5 ECTS awardable to other participants on course completion were not available to the participating University of Galway medical students. Additionally, Erasmus+ funding limited availability to three students from the School of Medicine.</i></p>	

## *Curriculum: Health Effects of Climate Change*

<b>1.2. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the relationship between extreme heat, health risks, and climate change?</b>	
This topic was explored <b>in depth</b> by the <b>core</b> curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was <b>briefly</b> covered in the <b>core</b> curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in <b>elective</b> coursework. (1 point)	

This topic was <b>not</b> covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<i>Score explanation:</i> <i>The 3MB module “Global Health and Disease” lecture “Introduction to Climate Change and Health” describes mortality and morbidity associated with extreme heat brought on by climate change.</i>	

<b>1.3. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the impacts of extreme weather events on individual health and/or on healthcare systems?</b>	
This topic was explored <b>in depth</b> by the <b>core</b> curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was <b>briefly</b> covered in the <b>core</b> curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in <b>elective</b> coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was <b>not</b> covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<i>Score explanation:</i> <i>The relationship between extreme weather events and human health is taught in several parts of the 3MB curriculum. In the ‘Global Health and Development’ module, the lecture ‘Climate Change and Health’ explores the health risks of extreme weather events such as heat waves, drought, heavy rainfall, and flooding. The 3MB module ‘Health and Disease II’ contains a lecture titled ‘Environmental Health’, which addresses both the indirect and direct impacts of climate change on human health. The relationship between excessive rainfall/flooding and vector borne diseases such as malaria is also a recurring theme in both ‘Global Health and Development’ and ‘Health and Disease II’.</i>	

<b>1.4. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the impact of climate change on the changing patterns of infectious diseases?</b>	
This topic was explored <b>in depth</b> by the <b>core</b> curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was <b>briefly</b> covered in the <b>core</b> curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in <b>elective</b> coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was <b>not</b> covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<i>Score explanation:</i> <i>The impact of climate change on the changing patterns in infectious diseases is mentioned in multiple lectures in the 3MB modules “Global Health and Development” and “Health and Disease</i>	

*II'. Examples of this include the impact of climate change on the patterns of diseases such as malaria and dengue.*

**1.5. Does your medical school curriculum address the respiratory health effects of climate change and air pollution?**

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

3

*Score explanation:*

*In 3MB, the modules 'Global Health and Development' and 'Health and Disease II' both contain lecture content describing negative effects of air pollution. In "Global Health and Development", the lecture "Climate Change and Health" mentions the impact of extreme weather such as drought and forest fires, and air pollution on respiratory health. In "Health and Disease II", The 'Health and Disease II' lecture titled 'Environmental Health' described the respiratory health effects of both outdoor and indoor (i.e. household fuel) air pollution.*

**1.6. Does your medical school curriculum address the cardiovascular health effects of climate change, including increased heat?**

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

*Score explanation:*

*Heat-related cardiac arrests were very briefly mentioned on one slide in the 3MB module 'Global Health and Development' in the lecture titled 'Climate Change and Health'. This topic is not explored in depth in the core curriculum.*

**1.7. Does your medical school curriculum address the mental health and neuropsychological effects of environmental degradation and climate change?**

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in <b>elective</b> coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was <b>not</b> covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  The 3MB 'Global Health and Disease' lecture 'Climate Change and Health' briefly mentions the mental health impact and cultural consequences of extreme rainfall and flooding on one slide. The 4MB 'Psychiatry' lecture 'Psychosis' briefly mentions the aetiological link between environmental risk factors and schizophrenia.</p>	

<b>1.8. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the relationships between health, individual patient food and water security, ecosystem health, and climate change?</b>	
This topic was explored <b>in depth</b> by the <b>core</b> curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was <b>briefly</b> covered in the <b>core</b> curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in <b>elective</b> coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was <b>not</b> covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  The relationship between health, individual patient food and water security, ecosystem health, and climate change is mentioned in the 3MB "Global Health and Development" lecture "Climate Change and Health". It mentions that patient food and water security can be impacted by extreme weather events such as extreme rainfall, flooding and drought which can be caused by climate change.</p>	

<b>1.9. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the outsized impact of climate change on marginalised populations such as those with low SES, women, communities of colour, Indigenous communities, children, homeless populations, and older adults?</b>	
This topic was explored <b>in depth</b> by the <b>core</b> curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was <b>briefly</b> covered in the <b>core</b> curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in <b>elective</b> coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was <b>not</b> covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  The medical school curriculum briefly touches on the impact of climate change on marginalised populations. The 3MB module 'Health and Disease II' lecture "Environmental Health" discusses the factors that make those vulnerable to the effects of climate change such as those with low SES, women, children, elderly and those with chronic illnesses. In the 3MB module 'Global Health and</p>	

*Development' the lecture 'Climate Change and Health' briefly discusses that flooding and extreme rainfall caused by climate change leads to the isolation of vulnerable communities.*

**1.10. Does your medical school curriculum address the unequal regional health impacts of climate change globally?**

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

*Score explanation:*

*The 3MB module "Global Health and Disease" lecture "Climate Change and Health" briefly discusses the unequal burden of climate sensitive health outcomes such as malaria, dengue and malnutrition on two slides. This is also discussed briefly in the lecture "Environmental Health" in the 3MB module "Health and Disease II"*

***Curriculum: Environmental Health & the Effects of Anthropogenic Toxins on Human Health***

**1.11. Does your medical school curriculum address the reproductive health effects of industry-related environmental toxins (e.g. air pollution, pesticides, microplastics)?**

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

*Score explanation:*

*The current University of Galway medical curriculum does not address the reproductive health effects of industry-related environmental toxins including air pollution, pesticides, etc.*

**1.12. Does your medical school curriculum address important human-caused environmental threats that are relevant to the university's surrounding community?**

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was <b>not</b> covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<i>Score explanation:</i> <i>The current University of Galway medical curriculum does not address important human-caused environmental threats that are relevant to the university's surrounding community.</i>	

<b>1.13. To what extent does your <u>medical school</u> emphasise the importance of Indigenous knowledge and value systems as essential components of planetary health solutions?</b>	
This topic was explored <b>in depth</b> by the <b>core</b> curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was <b>briefly</b> covered in the <b>core</b> curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in <b>elective</b> coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was <b>not</b> covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<i>Score explanation:</i> <i>The current University of Galway's medical curriculum does not emphasise the importance of Indigenous knowledge and value systems as essential components of planetary health solutions.</i>	

<b>1.14. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the outsized impact of anthropogenic environmental toxins on marginalised populations such as those with low SES, women, communities of colour, children, homeless populations, Indigenous populations, and older adults?</b>	
This topic was explored <b>in depth</b> by the <b>core</b> curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was <b>briefly</b> covered in the <b>core</b> curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in <b>elective</b> coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was <b>not</b> covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<i>Score explanation:</i> <i>The current University of Galway's medical curriculum does not address the outsized impact of anthropogenic environmental toxins on marginalised populations.</i>	

***Curriculum: Sustainability***

<b>1.15. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the environmental and health co-benefits of a plant-based diet?</b>
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This topic was explored <b>in depth</b> by the <b>core</b> curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was <b>briefly</b> covered in the <b>core</b> curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in <b>elective</b> coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was <b>not</b> covered. (0 point)	
Score Assigned:	0
<i>Score explanation:</i> <i>The University of Galway acknowledges the physical benefits of a plant-based diet in the 5MB 'Advanced Clinical Management' lecture 'Prevention of CVD [Cardiovascular Disease]', however the environmental co-benefits are not mentioned.</i>	

<b>1.16. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the carbon footprint of healthcare systems?</b>	
This topic was explored <b>in depth</b> by the <b>core</b> curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was <b>briefly</b> covered in the <b>core</b> curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in <b>elective</b> coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was <b>not</b> covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<i>Score explanation:</i> <i>The current University of Galway curriculum does not address the carbon footprint of health care systems.</i>	

<b>1.17. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum cover these components of sustainable clinical practice in the <u>core</u> curriculum? (points for each)</b>	<b>Score</b>
The health <b>and</b> environmental <b>co-benefits</b> of <b>avoiding</b> over-medicalisation, over-investigation and/or over-treatment (2 points)	0
The environmental impact of <b>pharmaceuticals</b> and over-prescribing as a cause of climate health harm. Alternatively teaching on <b>deprescribing</b> where possible and its environmental and health co-benefits would fulfil this metric. (2 points) .	0
The health <b>and</b> environmental <b>co-benefits</b> of <b>non-pharmaceutical management</b> of conditions where appropriate such as exercise or yoga classes for type 2 diabetes; social group activities such as gardening for mental health conditions; active transport such as bicycle schemes. This is commonly known as social prescribing in the UK. (1 point)	1
Environmental impact of <b>surgical</b> healthcare on planetary health and the climate crisis, and how can it be mitigated. (1 point)	0

The impact of <b>anaesthetic</b> gases on the healthcare carbon footprint and ways to reduce anaesthesia's environmental impacts, such as total intravenous anaesthesia or choosing less environmentally harmful anaesthetic gas options with reduced greenhouse gas emissions. (1 point)	0
The impact of <b>inhalers</b> on the healthcare carbon footprint and the environmental benefit of dry powdered inhalers over metered dose inhalers. (1 point)	0
<b>Waste production</b> within healthcare <b>clinics</b> and strategies for reducing waste in clinical activities (e.g. single use items in the inpatient or outpatient setting) (1 point)	0
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  While the negative impact of over medicalisation on patient health and resource limited health care systems is covered, the environmental effects are only briefly covered in the core curriculum.</p> <p><i>In the 3MB module 'Health and Disease II' the Bacteriology section repeatedly emphasised the health benefits of antimicrobial stewardship, while the broader environmental impact of overprescribing was mostly implied.</i></p>	

**Curriculum: Clinical Applications**

<b>1.18. In training for patient encounters, does your <u>medical school's</u> curriculum introduce strategies to have conversations with patients about the health effects of climate change?</b>	
Yes, there are strategies introduced for having conversations with patients about climate change in the <b>core</b> curriculum. (2 points)	
Yes, there are strategies introduced for having conversations with patients about climate change in <b>elective</b> coursework. (1 point)	
No, there are <b>not</b> strategies introduced for having conversations with patients about climate change. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  The current University of Galway's medical curriculum does not introduce strategies to have conversations with patients about the health effects of climate change.</p>	

<b>1.19. In training for patient encounters, does your <u>medical school's</u> curriculum introduce strategies for taking an environmental history or exposure history?</b>	
Yes, the <b>core</b> curriculum includes strategies for taking an environmental history. (2 points)	
Only <b>elective</b> coursework includes strategies for taking an environmental history. (1 point)	
No, the curriculum does <b>not</b> include strategies for taking an environmental history. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p>	

*The University of Galway's core medical curriculum teaches history taking skills throughout all years. As part of the history, students are taught to take social history, which includes strategies for environmental and exposure history, such as asking about occupation, daily activities, and living situation. Structured environmental history frameworks are not part of the core curriculum.*

**Curriculum: Administrative Support for Planetary Health**

**1.20. Is your medical school currently in the process of implementing or improving Education for Sustainable Healthcare (ESH)/planetary health education?**

Yes, the medical school is currently in the process of making **major** improvements to ESH/planetary health education. (4 points)

Yes, the medical school is currently in the process of making **minor** improvements to ESH/planetary health education. (2 points)

No, there are **no** improvements to planetary health education in progress. (0 points)

Score Assigned: 2

*Score explanation:*  
*Score explanation: The University of Galway School of Medicine revised curriculum is being rolled out sequentially on a yearly basis, beginning Year 2026/2027. As such, there is no major change from Academic Year 2025/2026. There are efforts to integrate planetary health learning into the revised core curriculum, however it is unclear how these improvements will be implemented.*

**1.21. How well are the aforementioned planetary health/Education for Sustainable Healthcare topics integrated longitudinally into the core curriculum?**

Planetary health/ESH topics are **well integrated** into the core medical school curriculum. (6 points)

**Some** planetary health/ESH topics are appropriately integrated into the core medical student curriculum. (4 points)

Planetary health/ESH is not integrated and is primarily addressed in **(a) standalone lecture(s)**. (2 points)

There is **minimal/no** education for sustainable healthcare. (0 points)

Score Assigned: 4

*Score explanation:*  
*The University of Galway School of Medicine core curriculum has planetary health well integrated in the 3MB modules 'Global Health and Development' and 'Health and Disease II'. Education for Sustainable Development is partially covered in the core curriculum, but the effects of healthcare on the environment, for example, are not explicitly covered. These topics are also very concentrated within the 3MB year, and could be more equally dispersed into 1MB, 2MB, 4MB, and 5MB. We recommend the 4MB 'General Practice' module 'Inclusion Health Workshop', the 'Psychiatry' module, and the 5MB 'Choosing Antibiotics' lecture as key opportunities to integrate planetary health learning in the more senior academic years.*

<b>1.22. Does your <u>medical school</u> employ a member of faculty to specifically oversee and take responsibility for the incorporation of planetary health and sustainable healthcare as a theme throughout the course?</b>	
Yes, the <b>medical school</b> has a specific faculty/staff member responsible for overseeing curricular integration of planetary health and sustainable healthcare. (1 point)	
No, the <b>medical school</b> does <b>not</b> have a specific faculty/staff member responsible for overseeing curricular integration of planetary health and sustainable healthcare. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<i>Score explanation:</i> <i>The University of Galway School of Medicine does not employ a member of faculty to specifically oversee and take responsibility for the incorporation of planetary health and sustainable healthcare as a theme throughout the course.</i>	

<b>1.23. Does your health professional curriculum include teaching on civic engagement/advocacy to address the environmental and structural determinants of health?</b>	
This topic was explored <b>in depth</b> by the <b>core</b> curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was <b>briefly</b> covered in the <b>core</b> curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in <b>elective</b> coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was <b>not</b> covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<i>Score explanation:</i> <i>The environmental and social determinants of health are discussed in the lecture “Environmental Health” in the 3MB module “Health and Disease II”. This lecture explores the relationship between the environment, health, climate change and how socioeconomic issues affect health.</i>	

<b>Section Total (28 out of 75)</b>	<b>37.33%</b>
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# Interdisciplinary Research

***Section Overview:*** This section evaluates the quality and quantity of interdisciplinary planetary health research at the broader institution. Interactions between health and the environment are complex and multifactorial. While climate change has been extensively studied from an environmental science perspective, planetary health is an emerging field. As leading health institutions with talented researchers and research resources, institutions should fund research studying the health effects of climate change and anthropogenic environmental toxins. This obligation is particularly strong because the public and policymakers are more attentive to climate change when its implications for human health are emphasised.

<b>2.1. Are there researchers engaged in planetary health research and healthcare sustainability research at your <u>institution</u>?</b>	
Yes, there are faculty members at the <b>institution</b> who have a <b>primary</b> research focus in planetary health <b>or</b> sustainable healthcare/vetcare. (3 points)	
Yes, there are individual faculty members at the <b>institution</b> who are conducting research <b>related</b> to planetary health or healthcare sustainability, <b>OR</b> are part of a national/international sustainability working group, but it is not their primary research focus. (2 points)	
There are sustainability researchers at the <b>institution</b> , but not specifically associated with healthcare/vetcare. (1 point)	
No, there are <b>no</b> planetary health and/or sustainability researchers at the <b>institution</b> at this time. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>            Researchers at the <a href="#"><u>Centre for Climate Change and Air Pollution Studies</u></a> in the Ryan Institute in University of Galway have a primary focus in investigating changing atmospheric composition and how it influences local to global pollution impacting human and planetary health. Another project being heralded by the faculty members is the <a href="#"><u>EPIC-AIR</u></a> project. This project aims to explore the link between air pollution and climate change in order to improve air quality, mitigate climate change and protect public health.</p> <p><i>In addition to this, there are faculty members in the School of Medicine who carry out research with a focus on planetary health, environmental exposure, and environmental microbiology.</i></p>	

<b>2.2. Is there a dedicated department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research at your <u>institution</u>?</b>	
There is <b>at least one</b> dedicated department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research. (3 points)	
There is <b>not currently</b> a department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research, but there are <b>plans</b> to open one in the next 3 years. (2 points)	

There is an <b>Occupational and Environmental Health department</b> , but no interdisciplinary department or institute for planetary health research. (1 point)	
There is <b>no</b> dedicated department or institute. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  The <b>Centre for One Health</b> in University of Galway is a transdisciplinary research centre which brings together experts in each aspect of the One Health concept. The research takes place across four thematic areas: infectious disease, antimicrobial resistance, emerging pollutants and people, nature and the environment. All research shares a common interest in promoting the health of humans, animals, and the environment.</p>	

<b>2.3. Is there a process by which communities disproportionately impacted by climate change and environmental injustice give input or make decisions about the research agenda at your institution?</b>	
Yes, there is a process in which community members impacted by climate and environmental injustice have <b>decision-making power</b> in the climate + environmental research agenda. (3 points)	
Yes, there is a process in which community members impacted by climate and environmental injustice <b>advise</b> the climate + environmental research agenda. (2 points)	
<b>No</b> , but there are <b>current efforts</b> to establish a process for community members to advise or make decisions on the research agenda. (1 point)	
There is <b>no</b> process, and <b>no</b> efforts to create such a process. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  Currently in University of Galway there are no processes and no efforts to create a process by which communities disproportionately impacted by climate change and environmental injustice give input or make decisions about the research agenda.</p>	

<b>2.4. Does your institution have a planetary health website that centralises ongoing and past research related to health and the environment?</b>	
There is an <b>easy-to-use, adequately comprehensive</b> website that <b>centralises</b> various campus resources related to health and the environment including all of the following: upcoming events, leaders in planetary health at your institution, and relevant funding opportunities. (3 points)	
There is a website that <b>attempts to centralise</b> various campus resources related to health and the environment, but it is hard-to-use, not updated, or not adequately comprehensive. (2 points)	
The <b>institution</b> has an <b>Office of Sustainability website</b> that includes <b>some</b> resources related to health and the environment. (1 point)	

There is <b>no</b> website. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  The University of Galway has a <a href="#">website</a> that <b>attempts to centralise</b> various campus resources related to health and the environment, but it is not adequately comprehensive.</p> <p>The Centre for One Health <a href="#">website</a> is similarly not adequately comprehensive, and does not include information on upcoming events and funding opportunities.</p>	

<b>2.5. Has your <u>institution</u> recently hosted a conference or symposium on topics related to planetary health?</b>	
Yes, the <b>institution</b> has hosted at least one conference or symposium on topics related to planetary health in the past year. (4 points)	
Yes, the <b>institution</b> has hosted at least one conference or symposium on topics related to sustainable healthcare/vetcare in the past year. (3 points)	
Yes, the <b>institution</b> has hosted a conference on topics related to planetary health / sustainable healthcare/vetcare in the past three years. (2 points)	
The <b>institution</b> has not hosted any conferences directly, but they have provided financial support for a local planetary health event. (1 point)	
No, the <b>institution</b> has not hosted a conference on topics related to planetary health in the past three years. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	4
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  In May 2025, the university co-hosted the <a href="#">Mary Robinson Climate and Nature Conference</a>, a major interdisciplinary event focused on climate justice, biodiversity loss and human wellbeing, bringing together researchers, policymakers, civil society organisations and community stakeholders to address interconnected climate and health challenges.</p> <p>In September 2025, The University of Galway hosted the <a href="#">Community Climate Assembly</a>, a multi-stakeholder event bringing together community organisations, researchers, students, local authorities and partners to share evidence, lived experience and solutions across themes such as water, nature, food systems, mobility and wellbeing. Also the University of Galway has recently hosted conferences, public lectures and research events on topics related to planetary health through its <a href="#">Ryan Institute</a>.</p>	

<b>2.6. Is your <u>institution</u> a member of a national or international planetary health or ESH/ESV organisation?</b>
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Yes, the institution is a member of a national or international planetary health <b>or</b> ESH/ESV organisation. (1 point)	
No, the institution is <b>not</b> a member of such an organisation. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  The University of Galway participates in <a href="#">national and international sustainability and environmental stewardship networks</a>, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>SDG Champions Programme (Ireland)</i></li> <li>● <i>Coalition 2030</i></li> <li>● <i>SDSN Ireland</i></li> <li>● <i>ENLIGHT (European University Alliance)</i></li> <li>● <i>AASHE (Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education)</i></li> <li>● <i>Global Challenges University Alliance (GCUA)</i></li> <li>● <i>UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)</i></li> </ul> <p>And also through its role as a <a href="#">UN Sustainable Development Goals Ambassador</a>.</p> <p>The Centre for One Health is a member of the <a href="#">European One Health Association</a> which brings together partners in human health, veterinary health and environmental health with a focus on zoonoses, antimicrobial resistance. We are also working with partners across Europe on <a href="#">EUJAMRAI 2</a> focused on antimicrobial resistance.</p>	
<b>Section Total (13 out of 17)</b>	<b>76.47%</b>

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## Community Outreach and Advocacy

***Section Overview:*** This section evaluates a school's engagement in community outreach and advocacy efforts associated with planetary health. Researching and teaching planetary health is necessary but not sufficient. It is critical that institutions also directly engage with communities most affected by environmental health harms. Although climate change is a problem largely created by those with power and resources, its impacts fall disproportionately on under-resourced populations and communities of colour. Institutions should partner with local communities affected by climate change and pollution to share information about environmental health threats, advocate together for change, and provide opportunities for students to be a part of this work.

<b>3.1. Does your <u>institution</u> partner with community organisations to promote planetary and environmental health?</b>	
Yes, the <b>institution</b> meaningfully partners with <b>multiple</b> community organisations to promote planetary and environmental health. (3 points)	
Yes, the <b>institution</b> meaningfully partners with <b>one</b> community organisation to promote planetary and environmental health. (2 points)	
The <b>institution</b> does not partner with community organisations, but participates in community focused events relating to planetary health. (1 point)	
No, there is <b>no</b> such meaningful community partnership. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  The University of Galway engages with many partners related to sustainability and climate action including An Taisce, Galway National Park City initiative, Green Labs Initiative, Terryland Forest Park Project, etc. Student run organisations like the Environmental Society collaborate with Irish organisations that address themes of sustainability, development, climate change agriculture, and food security. However, there are no direct, non-research, planetary health-related partnerships between the School of Medicine and institutions. While medical students are free to participate in these projects and partnerships, the School of Medicine is not directly affiliated with these institutions, nor are these partnerships particularly well advertised to students. We recommend the School of Medicine directly partner with existing institutional relationships of the University. Better advertisement of community organisation partnership opportunities to students may be an important first step.</p>	

<b>3.2. Does your <u>institution</u> offer community-facing courses or events regarding planetary health?</b>	
The <b>institution</b> offers community-facing courses or events at least once every year. (3 points)	
The <b>institution</b> offers courses or events open to the community at least once per year, but they are not primarily created for a community audience. (2 points)	

The **institution** has promoted community-facing courses or events, but was not involved in planning those courses or events. (1 point)

The **institution** has not offered such community-facing courses or events. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

*Score explanation:*

*The University and several organisations within the University hosted many planetary health events this year. These community-facing events include the Sustainable Development Goals week in September, the Community Climate Assembly in September, and the ReelLIFE Science program. Further events include guest speakers which were at least in part community-facing. However, the School of Medicine was not directly involved in these events, though the medical students are able to participate in them. The School of Medicine's integration within these existing events would elevate this score.*

**3.3. Does your institution have regular coverage of issues related to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare in university update communications?**

Yes, all students **regularly** receive communication updates dedicated to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare. (2 points)

Yes, planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare topics are regularly included in communication updates to **some courses**. (1 point)

Students **do not** receive communications about planetary health or sustainable healthcare. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

*Score explanation:*

*Using the Canvas (Galway's online learning platform) notification system, the School of Medicine advertised an essay competition on "The Climate Crisis and its Impact on Healthy Aging". Penn State's Global Health Exchange Program was similarly advertised. In addition, the Student's Union Newsletter and the School of Medicine's news page continue to communicate planetary health related tips, events, and research findings. However, these are sporadic and have variable affiliation with the School of Medicine itself. This is a modest improvement from last year though Canvas-communicated events/programs should continue in future years. Notifications and communications should become more regular to improve.*

**3.4. Does the institution or main affiliated hospital trust engage in professional education activities targeting individuals post-graduation with the aim of ensuring their knowledge and skills in planetary health and sustainable healthcare remain up to date during their professional career?**

Yes, the **institution** or **main affiliated hospital trust** offers multiple in-person or online courses relating to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare for post-graduate providers, including at least one with a primary focus of planetary health. (2 points)

Yes, the **institution** or **main affiliated hospital trust** offers one course relating to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare for post-graduate providers. (1 point)

There are **no** such accessible courses for post-graduate providers. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

*Score explanation:*

*The University of Galway School of Medicine offers a virtual course twice a year through the European University alliance “ENLIGHT” which is entitled: “Collaborating in Planetary Health”. This course can be undertaken by both undergraduate and postgraduate students. It is also hosted by numerous research-oriented European universities with a primary focus on planetary health issues.*

*Post-graduate opportunities for clinicians in Ireland are done through continuing professional development (CPD) throughout their careers - CPD frameworks enable healthcare professionals to stay up-to-date with relevant aspects of practice, including emerging topics such as sustainable healthcare where possible.*

*While not explicitly branded as “planetary health” there are short modules and micro-credentials linked to health promotion available through certain post-graduate programmes offered in the University of Galway and through CPD opportunities. Additionally, some Masters level programmes are also offered in this area, such as “Sustainability Leadership”, “Evidence-Based Future Healthcare” and “Clinical Education”.*

*Although the presence of these programmes is highly valuable in regard to the promotion of planetary health, they can be viewed as an add on rather than a core feature of clinician training. They are not widely promoted or well established within the network of the University of Galway or its hospital trusts. This could be improved by developing accredited CPD modules on climate and health or integrating sustainability topics into existing medical CPD streams, all whilst focusing on implementing education around planetary health and sustainable healthcare into post-graduate curricula.*

**3.5. Does your institution or its affiliated teaching hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients about environmental health exposures?**

Yes, the **institution** or **all affiliated hospitals** have accessible educational materials for patients. (2 points)

**Some** affiliated hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients. (1 point)

**No** affiliated medical centres have accessible educational materials for patients. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

*Score explanation:*

*The HSE has contactable environmental health offices for all of the University of Galway’s affiliated teaching hospitals. Although these offices may offer professional support, they do not hand out easily navigable materials for patients or community members. There are no patient-oriented educational resources on environmental exposures that are currently accessible.*

*The HSE does offer a variety of health-related resources that are based on health promotion initiatives and its ongoing health campaigns. These publications are mainly focused on enabling healthier lifestyles to prevent chronic disease - although environmental health is not explicitly addressed, this initiative has the potential to encompass environmental health into its existing programs.*

*Sligo University Hospital, an affiliated teaching hospital, has a health promotion department focused on providing patients with multiple services to help implement health promotion programmes into their patient care. Similarly to the HSE resources, a lot of these programmes are focused on promoting healthy living in patients in order to prevent disease, such as smoking cessation programmes. The programme could work on incorporating environmental health considerations into current health promotion materials, for example by expanding smoking cessation initiatives to include discussion of impacts on air quality and the environmental risks posed by cigarette waste to wildlife and water systems.*

*Additionally, the HSE does have a Green Healthcare programme in place implemented by their Sustainable Infrastructure Office, however, many of their initiatives are focused on reducing the environmental impact of the hospitals (e.g. waste reduction, energy efficiency) in order to contribute to a healthier, more sustainable environment.*

*All of these programs have the potential to incorporate environmental health topics, and addressing this gap represents a clear opportunity for future development. The HSE could consider including environmental health information into their existing Health Promotion campaigns, by creating leaflets, or providing patients with online resources about common exposures (eg. air quality, chemical risks). In addition, education on environmental health exposures could be incorporated into existing public seminars, thereby enhancing awareness and understanding of this important issue.*

**3.6. Does your institution or its affiliated teaching hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients about the health impacts of climate change?**

Yes, the **institution** or **all affiliated hospitals** have accessible educational materials for patients. (2 points)

**Some** affiliated hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients. (1 point)

**No** affiliated hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

*Score explanation:*

*To our knowledge, there are no clearly accessible, patient-focused resources available on this topic that are provided by the University of Galway or its affiliated teaching hospitals.*

*At a broader level, there are resources within the HSE that provide general information about climate change and health risks. For example: the HSE Climate and Health “Things You Can Do” page offers advice on climate-related health and sustainability actions; the HSE Climate Action and Sustainability Office has awareness materials and calendars that include climate-related themes relevant to health and wellbeing; lastly, some independent organisations such as Irish Doctors for the Environment (IDE) exist, which provide public education on the health effects of climate change through blogs, newsletters and community talks. Despite this, none of these*

*resources are systematically integrated into hospital patient education, and are not provided locally by the University of Galway or its affiliated hospitals - there remains a clear absence of institution-specific and easily navigable materials aimed directly at patients presenting to these hospitals.*

*As clearly represented above, there are publicly available resources on climate change and its health impacts, but none directed at patients. The central issue is not a lack of information but a lack of local promotion and integration of these resources. We recommend adapting existing national climate and health resources into patient-friendly materials for distribution within local hospital and outpatient settings.. This could be implemented by developing dedicated patient leaflets or websites that explain climate change health impacts (e.g. heat-related illness, air quality and respiratory health), and assimilating these into outpatient information platforms or hospital waiting rooms. Having dedicated public health or sustainability teams work on co-creating patient-centred climate and health materials could help improve community health literacy in this important area.*

**Section Total (4 out of 14)**

**28.57%**

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# Support for Student-Led Planetary Health Initiatives

**Section Overview:** *This section evaluates institutional support for student-led planetary health initiatives, such as funding, fellowships, programming, and student groups. Planetary health is a young field and, as young people facing a future deeply shaped by climate change, students are often some of the first at an institution to engage with it. Institutions should provide support for students to engage in sustainability quality improvement (QI) initiatives, discover mentors in their area of interest, and receive funding for planetary health projects.*

## 4.1. Does your **institution** offer support for students interested in enacting a sustainability initiative/QI project?

Yes, the **institution** *either* offers grants for students to enact sustainability initiatives/QI projects *or* sustainability QI projects are part of the core curriculum. (2 points)

The **institution** encourages sustainability QI projects (to fulfil clerkship or longitudinal requirements) and offers resources to help students succeed in these projects, **but** there is no student funding available and there is no requirement to participate. (1 point)

No, the institution does not offer opportunities or support for sustainability initiatives or QI projects. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

### *Score explanation:*

*The University of Galway Student Sustainability Leadership Award is an annual opportunity for students interested in advancing sustainability on campus. The award supports two students in both Semester 1 and Semester 2 (September 2025 to April 2026) with a 12-week scholarship to work with the University of Galway Community and University Sustainability Partnership (CUSP) team. The initiative focuses on promoting campus engagement with the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and fostering leadership skills in sustainability. Each recipient receives a €3,552 prize. In 2025, neither of the selected awardees was studying medicine.*

*Additionally, there is a Sustainability Engagement Fund which supports student-led projects that promote engagement with sustainability at the University of Galway, in line with the University's Sustainability Strategy and its commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This year, the fund is a partnership among the Sustainability Office, the Office of the Vice President of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, and the Green Labs initiative. The fund provides grants of €1,000–€2,000 under two streams: Green Labs (SDG 12), supporting more sustainable laboratory practices, and Peace (SDG 16), supporting inclusive activities related to peace, justice, and strong institutions. Students are eligible to apply individually or as part of a group, with projects delivered in collaboration with the Sustainability Office and partner units. In 2025/2026, none of the selected awardees were studying medicine.*

*Recommendation: While the University of Galway offers sustainability funding and leadership opportunities, engagement from medical students is limited. We recommend the medical school actively promote these opportunities to medical students and develop medicine-specific funding or leadership initiatives focused on planetary health and environmentally sustainable healthcare.*

**4.2. Does your institution offer opportunities for students to do research related to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare/vetcare?**

The **institution** has a **specific** research program or fellowship for students interested in doing planetary health/sustainable healthcare/vetcare research. (2 points)

There are research opportunities for students to perform research related to planetary health/sustainable healthcare, but these **require student initiative** to seek them out and carry them out in their spare time. (1 point)

There are **no opportunities** for students to engage in planetary health/sustainable healthcare research. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

*Score explanation:*

*The Undergraduate Summer Research Programme is available from the University of Galway School of Medicine. This gives the opportunity to medical students to conduct funded research in a variety of potential fields. Completed projects are presented at the Annual Research Day. Although there are currently no options specifically dedicated to the areas of planetary health or sustainable health, the option to undertake research in relation to these areas is possible. This would require a student to actively seek out potential projects to research, although faculty members can guide students, offer advice and connect them with resources.*

**4.3. Does the institution have a webpage where students can find specific information related to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare/vetcare activities and mentors within the institution? For example, projects achieved, current initiatives underway at the medical school and/or contact of information of potential mentors.**

The institution has a webpage with specific information related to planetary health or sustainable healthcare/vetcare that includes up-to-date information on relevant initiatives and contact information of potential mentors. (2 points)

There is an institution webpage that features some information on projects and mentors within planetary health and sustainable healthcare within the institution, but it lacks key information. (1 point)

There is **no institution** specific webpage for locating planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare projects or mentors. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

*Score explanation:*

*The University of Galway features a central sustainability webpage that provides students with accessible information on institutional sustainability efforts, including student resources, projects and initiatives, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), opportunities to engage with sustainability-related activities across the University, and the Sustainability Strategy. The Sustainability Strategy 2021–2025 states: “Engage with, mentor and support sustainability-themed student societies. Integrate sustainability into student events to normalise it as a cultural practice.” Societies currently exemplifying this commitment include the Environmental Society, the Climate*

*Action Society, and the Irish Global Health Network Society; however, these initiatives remain largely student-driven, with little to no faculty support.*

*Recommendation: We recommend increased faculty engagement through designated mentors and a medical school specific webpage outlining projects and clear pathways for student participation.*

**4.4. Does your institution have registered student groups dedicated towards fostering a culture of planetary health engagement, scholarship, and advocacy on campus, supported by faculty advisors?**

Yes, there is a student organisation **with faculty support** at my institution dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare. (2 points)

Yes, there is a student organisation at my institution dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare but it **lacks faculty support**. (1 point)

No, there is **not** a student organisation at my institution dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

*Score explanation:*

*The University of Galway Sustainability Strategy 2021-2025 states “Engage with, mentor and support sustainability themed student societies. Integrate sustainability into student events to normalise it as a cultural practise”. For the academic year 2025-26, there are 3 societies intrinsically linked with Sustainability. ‘The Environmental Society’, ‘The Climate Action Society’ and the ‘Irish Global Health Network Society’. These societies are organised and driven by University of Galway students, some from the School of Medicine. However there is a lack of faculty support.*

**4.5. Is there a student liaison representing sustainability interests who serves on a department or institutional decision-making council to advocate for curriculum reform and/or sustainability best practices?**

Yes, there is a student representative who serves on a department or institutional decision-making council/committee. (1 point)

No, there is no such student representative. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

*Score explanation:*

*The School of Medicine Curriculum Review Steering Group was established in November 2021. A group of students, faculty, and administration representatives reviews and renews the medical curricula at the University of Galway. In previous years there have been 2 medical students on the board, however this year no such contact has been made with students who have signed up.*

4.6. In the past year, has the <u>institution</u> had one or more co-curricular planetary health programs or initiatives in the following categories? (1 point each)	Score
Projects where students are able to gain experience in organic agriculture and sustainable food systems, such as gardens, farms, community supported agriculture (CSA), fishery programs, or urban agriculture projects.	1
Panels, speaker series, or similar events related to planetary health that have students as an intended audience.	1
Events in which students learn directly from members of a local environmental justice community about the climate and environmental challenges they face, and how health professionals can partner with their community to address these exposures and impacts.	0
Cultural arts events, installations or performances related to planetary health that have students as an intended audience.	1
Local volunteer opportunities related to building community resilience to anthropogenic environmental impacts.	1
Wilderness or outdoors programs (e.g., that organise hiking, backpacking, kayaking, or other outings for students)	1
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>The student union's student pantry now has a permanent location on campus - Speir, where in-date, non-perishable food items are available to students. The climate crew also created the eco cafe - a space for students to discuss the environment and sustainability.</i></li> <li>2. <i>The National Climate Demonstration took place in Dublin in November, where University of Galway students were encouraged to hear over 50 Irish groups and civil society organisations speak about the climate crisis. The Centre for One Health in the Ryan Institute hosts an annual One Health Conference that students are encouraged to attend.</i></li> <li>4. <i>The environmental society has held a 'Recycled Runway' competition for two years in a row in March 2024 and 2025 to showcase students' upcycled designs which are then displayed at a fashion show in the Student Union building.</i></li> <li>5. <i>The environmental society and the environmental officer for the students' union hold regular clean-up operations in the local Galway community.</i></li> <li>6. <i>The Mountaineering Club at the University of Galway is affiliated with Mountaineering Ireland, which upholds the Leave-No-Trace principle to prevent littering and environmental pollution. Other clubs, such as Kayaking and Scouts Clubs also adhere to similar environmental values.</i></li> </ol>	
<b>Section Total (10 out of 15)</b>	<b>66.67%</b>

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# Campus Sustainability

**Section Overview:** *This section evaluates the support and engagement in sustainability initiatives by the institution. The healthcare industry is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions as well as pollution that harms local, regional, and global ecosystems. While healthcare is, by nature, a resource-intensive endeavour, the healthcare sector is well poised to lead the world to a more sustainable future. This will involve scrutinising every aspect of how our systems operate, from where we source our energy, to how we build our infrastructure, to what companies we invest in. Our institutions, clinics, and hospitals must set the standard for sustainable practices, and show other sectors what is possible when it comes to minimising environmental impact.*

<b>5.1. Does your <u>institution</u> have an Office of Sustainability?</b>	
Yes, there is an Office of Sustainability with multiple full-time staff dedicated to campus sustainability. If the Office of Sustainability serves the entire campus, there is <b>at least one designated staff member</b> for sustainability at the hospital. (3 points)	
There is an Office of Sustainability with one or more full-time staff dedicated to campus sustainability, but <b>no specific staff member</b> in charge of hospital sustainability. (2 points)	
There are <b>no salaried sustainability staff</b> , but there is a sustainability task force or committee. (1 point)	
There are <b>no</b> staff members <b>or</b> task force responsible for overseeing campus sustainability. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  <i>The University of Galway has a sustainability committee, the <a href="#">Community and University Sustainability Partnership (CUSP)</a>, which is a multidisciplinary voluntary team of students and staff, with the objective of establishing the university as a leading institutional model of sustainability. On Earth Day 2024, a new sustainability Office was established, with four employees focused on promoting sustainability and delivering the Sustainable Development goals. There are full time staff on the CUSP general board, one representative for promoting sustainability from the School of Medicine.</i></p> <p><i>In 2025 the University launched the Sustainability Champion Digital Badge as part of the University Skills Passport (USP) initiative. It empowers students and staff to lead sustainable change by awarding a credential to those who have completed programmes which involve sustainability learning, action and advocacy.</i></p> <p><i>There are no sustainability officers for the Medical Academies, although they fall under the jurisdiction of the CUSP of the University of Galway. However, this does not seem to be a priority for the academies.</i></p>	

<b>5.2. How ambitious is your <u>institution's</u> plan to reduce its own carbon footprint?</b>
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The institution has a <b>written and approved plan</b> to achieve carbon neutrality by <b>2030</b> (5 points)	
The institution has a <b>written and approved plan</b> to achieve carbon neutrality by <b>2040</b> (3 points)	
The institution has a stated goal of carbon neutrality by <b>2040</b> but has <b>not created a plan</b> to reach that goal or the <b>plan is inadequate</b> (1 point)	
The institution does <b>not</b> meet any of the requirements listed above (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	5
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  The University of Galway has established itself as the leading university in Ireland in terms of green energy achieving a 38% reduction in fossil fuel CO2 emissions from 2017 to 2023 and cutting total carbon emissions by 50% within the same time period.</p> <p>There is currently almost 700kWp of solar PV installed across campus rooftops with systems on the Human Biology Building, Arts/Science building, Aras de Brun, and Aras na Mac Leinn. The Human Biology Building which is the primary teaching facility for pre-clinical medical students generates 10% of its energy from on-site solar PV.</p> <p>A geothermal heat pump system is installed in the University's Sport Centre as part of the H2020 EU GEOFIT project which heats the 25m swimming pool using 18boreholes (150m deep) and a closed loop vertical ground source heat exchanger. Halogen light fittings in the University's Athletic Track have been replaced with LED fixtures.</p> <p>There is biomass heating with 1MW wood pellet boilers in the Alice Perry Engineering Building and the Quadrangle, providing renewable thermal energy.</p> <p>A 200kW air to heat pump was installed in Aras De Brun as part of the SEAI/HEA pathfinder pilot programme along with LED lighting upgrades and 35kW PV panels which has improved the buildings BER rating from D1 to A3.</p> <p>The University uses electric vehicles for campus services and has installed 22 EV charging points across campus, with a 35kW solar PV system installed on the roof of a building on campus to power two electric vehicle chargers. Energy saving campaigns are promoted through the Student Union including SEAI's "One good idea", "Battle of the Dorms" and sustainability fairs.</p> <p>The University is undertaking a 15million retrofit of Corrib Village Student accommodation, with three blocks completed in the Summer of 2024 with works including insulation, ventilation, heating, windows/doors and solar PV installation with the aim to completely retrofit the student accommodation over the next few years.</p> <p>The University has plans to further reduce their carbon footprint with a Solar PV farm which could generate 50% of the campus's total electric load and a district heating scheme for the North Campus.</p> <p>The <a href="#">'University of Galway Sustainability Strategy 2021-2025'</a> commit to carbon neutrality by 2030, with the Climate Action Roadmap 2030 outline specific decarbonisation pathways. By 2050, the University is mandated under 'Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill to become a net zero, climate resistant, biodiversity rich institution. As of the latest update published in 2024, the university is not only on track but has already surpassed its 2030 emission reduction target. The Energy Performance Indicator (EnPI) reached 42.8 in 2024, representing a 57.2% improvement in energy efficiency, exceeding the 2030 target of 50%.</p>	

**5.3. Do buildings/infrastructure used by the institution for teaching (not including the hospital) utilize renewable energy?**

Yes, institution buildings are **100%** powered by renewable energy. (3 points)

Institution buildings source **>80%** of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (2 points)

Institution buildings source **>20%** of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (1 point)

Institution buildings source **<20%** of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

*Score explanation:*

*The Human Biology Building receives 10% of its energy from Solar PV panels. The building, which is used by pre-clinical medical students for teaching and houses research laboratories, was designed in 2017 to generate a minimum of 5% of its electrical energy from on-site renewables.*

*The Arts/Science Building has been undergoing progressive installation of solar PV panels with current capacity of 180kWp with an additional capacity of 200kWp scheduled for installation.*

*Aras De Brun has 50kWp Solar PV panels, a 200kw air to water heat pump and LED lighting installed as part of the SEAI/HEA Pathfinders Retrofit Project.*

*Aras na Mac Leinn, the students union building, has solar PV panels installed with a capacity of 99.19kWp.*

*The Alice Perry Engineering Building achieved a Near Zero Carbon design certificate in 2010. While some of the teaching buildings have incorporated renewable energy they are not exclusively renewable powered. They currently fall short of the >20% threshold but the university has a clear roadmap to reach 20% renewable electricity by 2025.*

*The Medical academies do not have independent renewable energy infrastructure, relying solely on host hospital facilities.*

**5.4. Are sustainable building practices utilised for new and old buildings on the institution's campus, with design and construction of new buildings and remodelling of old buildings conforming to a published sustainability rating system or building code/guideline?**

Yes, sustainable building practices are utilised for new buildings on the institution's campus and the **majority** of old buildings **have been retrofitted** to be more sustainable. (3 points)

Sustainable building practices are utilised for new buildings on the institution's campus, but most old buildings have **not been retrofitted**. (2 points)

Sustainable building practices are <b>inadequately or incompletely</b> implemented for new buildings. (1 point)	
Sustainability is <b>not considered</b> in the construction of new buildings. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation:</i></p> <p><i>The primary teaching facility for pre-clinical medical students, the Human Biology Building (HBB), built in 2017, achieved Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM excellent rating for its sustainable design. The building incorporates Solar PV panels which supply 10% of its energy and have combined heat and power units (CHP) to provide the building heating.</i></p> <p><i>Dunlin Village Student Residence which was built in 2023 achieved BREEAM International Very Good Certification in July 2025. It has a BERA3 rating, heat pump generator, solar panels, protected biodiversity, energy efficiency lifts and water conservation measures.</i></p> <p><i>In 2024, the Alice Perry Engineering Building became the first building in University of Galway to be 100% Green Lab Certified.</i></p> <p><i>The Mayo Medical academy is a reconfigured 1901 church which requires extensive heating given it was not built for the purpose of teaching and has no retrofit plan in place.</i></p> <p><i>The Sligo Medical Academy was built as a sustainable extension to the top two floors of Sligo University Hospital.</i></p> <p><i>The Donegal Medical Academy is a retrofitted hospital section which is exclusively for students on placement at Letterkenny University Hospital. There is currently no sustainable building practice in place.</i></p> <p><i>There is limited information regarding sustainable building practices at the Ballinasloe Medical Academy. While a recently expanded Orchard Ward has been reported to have been built with “modernised standards” there has been unsuccessful attempts in verifying this.</i></p>	

<b>5.5. Has the <u>institution</u> implemented strategies to encourage and provide environmentally-friendly transportation options for students and reduce the environmental impact of commuting?</b>	
Yes, the institution has implemented strategies to encourage and provide <b>environmentally-friendly transportation options</b> such as safe active transport, public transport, or carpooling and these options are well-utilised by students. Alternatively, the campus location is not amenable to unsustainable forms of transportation by default. (2 points)	
The institution has implemented <b>some</b> strategies to provide environmentally-friendly transportation options, but the options are <b>unsatisfactorily</b> accessible or advertised. (1 point)	
The institution has <b>not</b> implemented strategies to encourage and provide environmentally-friendly transportation options. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1

*Score explanation:*

*In 2025, the University of Galway achieved the Smarter Travel Mark from the National Transport Authority, recognising the University's progress in encouraging sustainable travel across campus. The University of Galway actively encourages walking, public transport and cycling. Campus facilities include bike racks, covered bicycle shelters, dedicated bike paths and a secure bicycle compound. Additionally, the University participates in Galway City bike sharing scheme (TFI bikes) with three on campus stations, has a cycle to work scheme, offers GoCar shared vehicle access, provides 22 EV charging stations and operates a campus shuttle bus. For those commuting, a Park and Ride facility is available on the North Campus.*

*On site student accommodation has well maintained pavements and night time lighting to encourage walking. There is a dedicated shuttle bus service between UGH and Merlin Park available to both students and staff, encouraging sustainable inter-hospital travel.*

*According to the 2024 Travel Survey the main mode of transport (1,717 responses) by staff is a car (66%) while for students it is public transport (39%). 34% of students and 24% of staff cycle or walk to campus. 27% of students use a car to commute to campus and 9% of staff use public transport. This a change from the previous Travel surveys which had shown that students' main mode of travelling to campus was by walking.*

*Regarding clinical placement in peripheral hospitals undertaken by students, the university does provide subsidies for transport costs for both public transport and cars. However, GP placement locations can be extremely remote with limited or no public transport available - reflecting broader regional infrastructure issues and unsustainable government policies. For students in Medical Academies, while public transport has improved, there is a heavy reliance on cars given the sparse population density and lack of frequent buses.*

*Mayo and Donegal Academies do not currently encourage or provide environmentally friendly transport options, likely due to limited accessible public transport in these regions.*

*Students who attend the Ballinasloe Medical Academy have the option to commute from Galway city using a train service complemented by a local shuttle bus to and from the station. For those residing in Ballinasloe town, walking is encouraged.*

*Students attending Sligo Medical Academy are provided with free hospital parking, however, given the central location of the hospital many students can walk to placement, additionally the academy will coordinate with students to ensure those without a car can access placements via public transport or carpooling.*

*A significant barrier across all academies is poor access to bike parking facilities.*

*The school of Medicine could reduce transport emissions by providing affordable university owned or partner accommodation within walking distance of peripheral hospital placements. Ireland's housing crisis and high rental costs currently force many medical students into long daily commutes. Other Irish Medical schools have successfully mitigated this by offering accommodation within walking distance of clinical placement to their students, significantly reducing both transportation emissions, financial burden and improving student wellbeing. Implementing a similar strategy at the University of Galway would directly address the sustainability gap in peripheral placements and align with the HSE's Sustainable Mobility Framework, which prioritises eliminating unnecessary journeys and supporting low carbon alternatives.*

**5.6. Does your institution have an organics recycling program (compost) and a conventional recycling program (aluminium/paper/plastic/glass)?**

Yes, the institution has **both** compost **and** recycling programs accessible to students and faculty. (2 points)

The institution has **either** recycling **or** compost programs accessible to students and faculty, but not both. (1 point)

There is **no** compost or recycling program at the institution. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

*Score explanation:*

*The University of Galway retained its position in 2024 as the number one [University in Ireland for Sustainable Development and Responsible Waste Consumption](#) and maintains a Top 10 position globally for responsible waste consumption.*

*The Main Campus in the University of Galway has implemented extensive waste segregation and recycling programs across the campus. There are hundreds of dual-bin recycling/general waste stations across campus with clear signs illustrating what should be placed in each bin. There are glass and aluminum recycling stations installed across campus. There are organic/food waste bins in all campus canteens. There are Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment collections across campus. There is a Re-turn bottle vending machine in the on site student residence.*

*In addition to standard recycling bins throughout the HBB, it also provides bins for hospital waste such as gloves, recognising specialised waste which is generated during laboratory based teaching for pre-clinical medical students.*

*The University of Galway adopted a circular waste management approach to organic waste from 2022. All organic waste is collected and transported to Barna recycling where it is composted and then returned to campus to be used as fertiliser with the remainder being given to local farmers.*

*Since 2019 the University has been accredited with “Zero Waste to Landfill” certification as no waste generated on campus is disposed of in a landfill, but any waste which cannot be recycled is incinerated for refuse-derived fuel.*

*According to the [University of Galway Waste Management Report 2025](#), there was a drop in overall recycling from 51% to 47% .*

*In Medical academies there are recycling bins available however, there are no compost or organic waste bins other than in the hospital canteens. There are no dedicated glass or aluminum recycling bins available in the Medical Academies. The limited access in academies to proper waste segregations represents a significant gap in sustainability.*

**5.7. Does the institution apply sustainability criteria when making decisions about the campus food and beverage selections (e.g. local sourcing, reduced meat, decreased plastic packaging)?**

Yes, the institution has **adequate** sustainability requirements for food and beverages, including meat-free days or no red-meat, and **is engaged** in efforts to increase food and beverage sustainability. (3 points)

There are sustainability guidelines for food and beverages, but they are **insufficient or optional**. The institution **is engaged** in efforts to increase food and beverage sustainability. (2 points)

There are sustainability guidelines for food and beverages, but they are **insufficient or optional**. The institution is **not** engaged in efforts to increase food and beverage sustainability. (1 point)

There are **no** sustainability guidelines for food and beverages. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

3

*Score explanation:*

*In 2025, the University of Galway established a formal "[Food Philosophy](#)" which outlines the attributes which inform the selection process in appointing catering companies at university restaurants. It outlines that options must be nutritious, affordable and have menu labelling showing nutritional contents. The University implemented that all campus catering companies must align with the [Green Public Procurement Strategy and Action Plan 2024 -2027](#), ensuring foods are sourced ethically and sustainably. The University of Galway states that all caterers must complete sustainability tracking, assessment and rating system reporting and meet sustainability criteria.*

*The Food Philosophy requires caterers to include a diverse range of vegan and vegetarian options in their menus to support sustainable diets. The University actively promotes plant based diets through Meat Free Fridays, Veganuary, guest pop up counters in campus, a dedicated vegan salad bar and vegan hot food options across multiple campus catering outlets. Vegan and vegetarian meals represent 20% of meals purchased based on November 2024 statistics.*

*The university promotes sustainable consumption, by providing free tap water, ceasing disposable cups, plates, cutlery, eliminating single use items for events. In September 2024 the University of Galway implemented a campus wide ban on disposable coffee cups with all incoming first years receiving a free reusable cup. However, this has not been implemented in the medical academy attached to the University of Galway. The University recognises the importance of available dining spaces and states students who bring packed lunches are to be facilitated in campus restaurant areas.*

*In Mayo Medical Academy there is a kitchen offering tea/coffee with reusable mugs and glasses but there is no food services provided.*

*In Ballinasloe Medical Academy students can access discounted meals from the hospital canteen with reportedly locally sourced food. On site dishware is encouraged and compostable takeaway containers are available.*

*In Sligo Medical Academy students have a kitchen with reusable mugs and can access discounted meals from the hospital canteen. The canteen has phased out disposable coffee mugs.*

*In Donegal Medical Academy there is a community fridge and pantry available.*

*While the main campus has a comprehensive sustainability criteria which is mandatory for caterers this is not consistent with Medical Academies where hospital canteens are not bound by the same procurement policies.*

**5.8. Does the institution apply sustainability criteria when making decisions about supply procurement?**

Yes, the institution has **adequate** sustainability requirements for supply procurement **and is engaged** in efforts to increase sustainability of procurement. (3 points)

There are sustainability guidelines for supply procurement, but they are **insufficient or optional**. The institution is **engaged** in efforts to increase sustainability of procurement. (2 points)

There are sustainability guidelines for supply procurement, but they are **insufficient or optional**. The institution is **not engaged** in efforts to increase sustainability of procurement. (1 point)

There are **no** sustainability guidelines for supply procurement. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

3

*Score explanation:*

*The University of Galway has a robust, mandatory sustainable procurement framework integrating environmental, social and economic criteria into all purchasing decisions. The framework is based on several key policy documents which align with national climate action mandates.*

*The University's [Procurement Policy 2023](#) includes Clause 15: Sustainable Procurement which mandates all procurement processes must incorporate green procurement processes, with the aim to reduce the University's environmental impact.*

*The University published a sustainable [Public Procurement Handbook](#) in 2023 providing guidance across the entire procurement cycle.*

*The University's framework aligns with the Government's [Green Public Procurement Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2027](#), which mandates all public procurement using public funds must include green criteria when possible. The University commits to "implement best practice nationally for sustainable procurement and develop a sustainable procurement charter and green code of conduct for all suppliers" in their [Sustainability Strategy 2021-2025](#).*

*While the University of Galway has mandatory, comprehensive sustainability criteria in procurement policies, the Medical Academies rely on host hospital procurement systems, which do not have specific sustainability criteria aligned with university policies. The [HSE Green Procurement Strategic Framework \(2025-2027\)](#) applying to hospital procurement in which the medical academies are located is still in early stages of implementation.*

**5.9. Are there sustainability requirements or guidelines for events hosted at the institution?**

Every event hosted at the institution **must** abide by sustainability criteria. (2 points)

The institution **strongly recommends or incentivizes** sustainability measures, but they are **not required**. (1 point)

There are **no** sustainability guidelines for institution events. (0 points)

Score Assigned:	1
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  The University of Galway has a comprehensive <a href="#">Sustainable Event Checklist</a> aids event planners in organising sustainable events within the university. The checklist is available but its use is not regulated or made mandatory.  The form is to be completed by the event organisers and is to be submitted for review by the sustainability office.</p> <p><i>The Medical Academies do not have specific sustainability guidelines or requirements.</i></p>	

<b>5.10. Does your <u>institution</u> have programs and initiatives to assist with making lab spaces more environmentally sustainable?</b>	
Yes, the institution has <b>programs</b> and <b>initiatives</b> to assist with making lab spaces more environmentally sustainable. (2 points)	
There are <b>guidelines</b> on how to make lab spaces more environmentally sustainable, but not programs or initiatives. (1 point)	
There are <b>no</b> efforts at the institution to make lab spaces more sustainable. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  In 2024, the Alice Perry Engineering Building became the first building in University of Galway to be 100% Green Lab Certified. This achievement recognises the university commitment to sustainable building practices.</p> <p><i>The University had a goal of certification of laboratories on campus as ‘green’ by 2025 as part of their Sustainable Strategy, however, it is unclear whether this target has been met.</i></p> <p><i>The Medical Academies do not have equivalent programs.</i></p>	

<b>5.11. Does your <u>institution’s</u> endowment portfolio investments include fossil-fuel companies?</b>	
The institution is <b>entirely divested</b> from fossil fuels <b>and</b> has made a <b>commitment to reinvest divested funds</b> into renewable energy companies or renewable energy campus initiatives. (4 points)	
The institution is <b>entirely divested</b> from fossil fuels. (3 points)	
The institution has <b>partially divested</b> from fossil fuel companies <b>or</b> has made a <b>commitment to fully divest</b> , but <b>currently</b> still has fossil fuel investments. (2 points)	
The institution has <b>not divested</b> from fossil-fuel companies, but faculty and/or students are <b>conducting organised advocacy</b> for divestment. (1 point)	

Yes, the institution has investments with fossil-fuel companies and there have been <b>no efforts</b> to change that. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	4
<p><i>Score explanation:</i>  <i>The University of Galway committed to divest from fossil fuels by the end of 2017 and is now recognised as being fully divested. The <a href="#">Sustainability Strategy 2021-2025</a> outlines the University of Galway's commitment to investing in renewable energy sources, reinvesting energy cost savings into new sustainability technologies, and engaging with building occupants to help maximise energy efficiency. The University has reinvested divested funds and resources into renewable energy research and campus initiatives include <a href="#">Marine Renewable Energy Ireland</a>, and Campus Renewable Energy projects.</i></p> <p><i>The Medical Academies do not make any such investments.</i></p>	

<b>Section Total (26 out of 32)</b>	<b>81.25%</b>
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# Grading

## Section Overview

This section focuses on the grading of the report card. The institution received a grade for each of the individual sections as well as an overall institutional grade. Section point totals were tallied, divided by the total points available for the section, and converted to a percentage. The overall institutional grade is a weighted average of the section grades, with curriculum receiving a higher weight owing to its larger number of metrics. Letter grades for each section and the institution overall were then assigned according to the table below.

Letter Grade*	Percentage
A	80% - 100%
B	60% - 79%
C	40% - 59%
D	20% - 39%
F	0% - 19%

*\*Within each grade bracket, a score in the top 5% (\_5 to \_9%), receives a “+”, and a score in the bottom 5% (\_0- \_4%) receives a “--”. For example, a percentage score of 78% would be a B+.*

## Planetary Health Grades for the University of Galway School of Medicine.

The following table presents the individual section grades and overall institutional grade for the University of Galway School of Medicine on this Planetary Health Report Card.

Section	Raw Score %	Letter Grade
<b>Planetary Health Curriculum (30%)</b>	37.33%	D+
<b>Interdisciplinary Research (17.5%)</b>	76.47%	B+
<b>Community Outreach and Advocacy (17.5%)</b>	28.57%	D
<b>Support for Student-led Planetary Health Initiatives (17.5%)</b>	66.67%	B
<b>Campus Sustainability (17.5%)</b>	81.25%	A-
<b>Institutional Grade</b>	<b>55.47%</b>	<b>C+</b>

# Report Card Trends

## Section Overview

This graph demonstrates trends in overall and section grades for the years in which the **University of Galway School of Medicine** has participated in the Planetary Health Report Card initiative.

### Planetary Health Report Card Trends for University of Galway School of Medicine

