



## Governing Authority Election 2026: Candidate Profile – Professional Support Staff



Grainne Carey  
Student Services

### Candidate Biographical Details / Sonraí Beathaisnéise an Iarrthóra

I am the Global Employability Manager at the University of Galway, Career Development Centre, where I lead the development of strategic initiatives to support both international and domestic students in accessing global career opportunities. I have worked at the University for almost five years, previously as a Placement Officer, building strong partnerships with employers and supporting students' transition into the workplace.

I hold an MSc in Strategy, Innovation and People Management (First Class Honours), a Diploma in Human Resource Management (CIPD) and a BA in Marketing Management. My professional background spans higher education, recruitment, and over a decade in the pharmaceutical industry, where I worked in business development, stakeholder engagement, and team leadership roles.

Alongside my professional role, I contribute actively to my community. I am Chair of the AHECS International Student Community of Practice, a member of Scoil Éinde Parents' Association, and a committee member of Knocknacarra FC. I am also involved in coaching soccer, GAA, and hockey.

My career reflects a strong commitment to people, collaboration, and creating supportive environments where individuals can thrive and reach their full potential.

### Candidate Statement / Ráiteas an Iarrthóra

I am seeking election to Governing Authority because I care deeply about ensuring that the University's values are genuinely reflected in the lived experiences of our staff and students. Through my work at the University of Galway, I have developed a strong understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing our community. I engage daily with students, academic colleagues, and external partners, and I see firsthand the importance of creating an inclusive, supportive, and positive working and learning environment.

Our people are the University's greatest asset. We must continue to strengthen a culture where staff feel valued, supported, and empowered to contribute fully, and where students feel respected, heard, and prepared for their futures. This is particularly important in the context of



an increasingly diverse university community, including our growing international student population, whose perspectives enrich our campus.

I bring a collaborative, solutions-focused approach, informed by my experience within the University and my background in industry. I am committed to enhancing communication, supporting inclusive practices, and promoting timely decision-making that reflects diverse voices and enables staff to carry out their roles effectively.

I believe strong governance should be grounded in listening, transparency, and accountability. If elected, I will work to ensure that both staff and student perspectives are represented in decision-making and that the University continues to evolve as a place where everyone can thrive, alongside the delivery of our strategic priorities.

### **Candidate Outline of Relevant Competencies / Cur síos an Iarrthóra ar Inniúlachtaí Ábhartha**

My background aligns strongly with the competencies required, combining strategic, operational, and stakeholder-focused experience.

#### **Governance & Strategy:**

In my current leadership role at University of Galway, I contribute to strategic planning and implementation aligned with the Global Galway strategy. I design and deliver initiatives with clear KPIs, monitor performance, and support evidence-based decision-making. I work closely with internal and external stakeholders, including employers, alumni, and national bodies (IUA, ICOS, IBEC), demonstrating strong stakeholder engagement and strategic insight.

#### **Executive & Organisational Experience:**

I bring significant leadership and people management experience, currently leading a team and previously managing teams in industry. My experience includes performance management, project delivery, and business development in fast-paced environments. I take a collaborative, solutions-focused approach, supporting effective communication and timely decision-making that enables staff to carry out their roles. I hold a Postgraduate Diploma in Human Resource Management, am a member of CIPD, and have completed training in board-level interviewing, unconscious bias, equality, diversity and inclusion, and coaching as a leadership style.

#### **Sectoral & International Experience:**

My career spans higher education, public sector recruitment, and the pharmaceutical industry. I have extensive experience working with international students, global employers, and overseas partners, and I chair a national Community of Practice.

#### **Financial & Operational Awareness:**

I have experience in budget management, data analysis, and performance reporting to inform decision-making.

#### **Teaching, Learning & Student Experience:**

I work closely with academic staff and deliver employability programmes and workshops. Through my student-facing role within Student Services, I engage daily with students and have strong insight into their experiences, needs, and challenges.

#### **Desirable Requirements:**



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I hold an MSc in Strategy, Innovation and People Management and have led complex cross-functional projects. My background in marketing and business development strengthens my communication, stakeholder engagement, and understanding of public policy, particularly in employability and workforce development.