



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

Student Success Coaching

Empowering Students to Unlock Their Potential



University
ofGalway.ie

Student Success Coaching at University of Galway seeks to nurture talent by empowering students to explore and pursue their academic, personal and professional goals. Student Success Coaches empower students as they navigate and transition into and through university, enabling them make the most of the opportunities available to them.

Through one to one coaching and interactive workshops, students gain clarity, maximize their strengths, build confidence and develop the skills to thrive.

Unlocking Student Potential

Coaching enables students to drive their own learning and development, build resilience and foster skills, mind-sets and behaviours to reach their full potential. Coaching focuses on holistic development, equipping students with tools and strategies to navigate opportunities and challenges, both inside university and in life.



Student Success Coaching By Numbers 2021-2025



9,000+
students
participating in
workshops



900+
individual
coaching
sessions



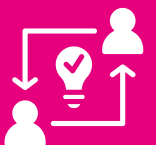
260+
interactive
workshops
delivered



200+
students
successfully
complete Design
Your Life module



21+
University
units engaged



2
self-coaching
digital resources

Key Outcomes



How We Engage Students

- ✓ Personalised one-to-one coaching
- ✓ Design Your Life workshops
- ✓ Curriculum-integrated sessions
- ✓ Self-coaching digital resources
- ✓ Tools & strategies

A 4-Year Story of Growth, Innovation & Collaboration

Our Milestones

- 2021**
- Launch of SSC at University of Galway
 - Dedicated coaches in College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies and College of Science and Engineering
 - Trained in Stanford Life Design Studio
 - First workshops with College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies

- 2022**
- Curriculum-integrated workshops
 - 5 ECTS Design Your Life module
 - Partnerships: Access Centre, CÉIM, Sports Scholars, Career Development Centre, Student Support Officers, Counselling, Societies, SU
 - Expanded reach College of Business, Public Policy and Law

- 2024**
- Digital badge: Design Your Future
 - Orientation programme for all incoming first years for the first time: Design Your University Journey
 - International conference recognition (HEAd'24 Best Paper Award winner)
 - 4 Student Ambassadors

- 2023**
- Launch of digital resources: Coach Yourself to Success, Design Your Life
 - First academic paper published (EURAM 2023)
 - Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science – workshop for all department staff

- 2025**
- Hosted Limitless – Turning Setbacks into Success Panel Event
 - HEAd'25 Best Paper Award Candidate
 - Presented at European First Year Experience Conference



The journey continues...

Highlights

- **6** national & international conference presentations
- **7** Published peer-reviewed outputs showcasing SSC's impact

Student Success in Their Own Words

Meret Stursberg,
Graduate BA Joint
Honours Degree

"After my personalised meeting with one of the student success coaches, I felt way more confident in my strengths and had a clearer idea of how I can use my talents to achieve my goals! This is a big advantage not only in my academic experience but also outside of university. The student success coaching service really enriched my college experience. There is something for everyone, and it helps you to understand your strengths and get an idea of what you can do in your future."



Dr Caroline Heary,
Vice-Dean (Undergraduate Studies),
Senior Lecturer in Psychology

"It is a fantastic opportunity for our students in the College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies to work with our Student Success Coaching team. We have received very positive feedback from our students. Our Coaches build on the strengths of each individual, enable students to reflect on their needs, and support them to identify meaningful goals. These are key ingredients in enabling our students to flourish and thrive."



Elbashir Yahya,
Graduate Bachelor of Science Degree

"I took part in one-on-one coaching sessions that were tailored specifically to my goals and challenges. These sessions helped me reflect, stay focused, and make clear, informed decisions about my academic path."

What made it so impactful was how personalised the support was, it wasn't a one-size-fits-all approach. The coaching gave me practical strategies that kept me motivated and empowered me with tools that I've already started to apply beyond university.

Now that I've graduated, I can confidently say the skills and insights I gained through coaching will continue to support me in my career and future opportunities."



Martin Hughes,
Programme Director, Bachelor
of Commerce J.E. Cairnes School
of Business & Economics

"I wanted to incorporate Student Success Coaching as part of the BComm 1st year experience as it empowers students to build confidence, cultivate key personal development skills, and take ownership of their personal university journey. Collaborating with the Student Success Coaching (SSC) team has been a highly positive experience. They were professional, accommodating, and responsive from the outset. Their engaging session at orientation and tailored workshop series added great value to our Skills for Success module. Enhanced by the 1-1 coaching session, our students are now provided with the support necessary to maximise their campus experience. I wholly believe SSC should be an integral part of the first-year experience."



Publications

Book chapter: "Designing Futures, IdeasLab, Transdisciplinary Learning, Life Design and Student Success Coaching: Entrepreneurial Career and Life Design (ECLD) in an Irish University Context" (2026).

Journal article: "Transforming Student Coaching to Support Students' Personal, Academic, and Professional Success: Insights from the Student Success Coaching Programme" (2025). Irish Journal of Academic Practice.

Designing Futures journal special issue: Information and Learning Sciences: "Design for Belonging and Engagement: Designing Inclusive Higher Education Futures" (2025).

Conference paper: "Designing the Curriculum for Proactive Resilience in Higher Education: Students' Experience of a University Student Success Coaching (SSC) Programme". Best Paper Award Candidate at HEAd'25: 11th International Conference on Higher Education Advances, Universitat Politècnica de València, Spain. In press.

Conference paper: "(Re-)Discovering the treasure within – The contribution of a Design Your Life Module to Undergraduate Education" Best Paper Award Winner at HEAd'24: 10th International Conference on Higher Education Advances, Universitat Politècnica de València, Spain.

Journal article: "Assessing the Impact of Career and Life Design through Innovative Hybrid Evaluation and Digital Storytelling: A Method Note from the Designing Futures Programme, University of Galway" (2024).

Book chapter: "Designing Futures at University of Galway: Promoting student success, engagement, and belonging" (2024).

Conference paper: "Assessing Life Design and evaluating its impact on the learning experience: A conceptual overview and emergent framework based on the Designing Futures Programme at University of Galway, Ireland" (2023). European Academy of Management (EURAM). Trinity College Dublin, Ireland.





Partner With Us

We're always growing.
If you're an academic,
unit lead, or student,
let's collaborate.

Contact

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Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



HEA | HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY
AN tÚDARÁS um ARD-OIDEACHAS

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