

Society Leadership Report Results 2015/16

The Leadership Award

How does the awards work?

The Leadership programme is open to all society committee members.

There is a new Leadership section in the new dashboard.

There are 4 easy steps

Setting the Society Goals and individual goals (step 1)

Fulfilling the requirements to be a society (step 2)

Reflecting (step 3)

Receiving Recognition and accreditation (step 4)

See the link below of how to participate in the programme, please note it is an integral part of being a society and is mandatory to receive funding so be sure to complete step 1 before you budget will be approved. Budget deadline Oct 15th.

Leadership Certificate

Committee members can add 'Society Leadership Award' to their ALIVE Certificate.

Instruction for the Societies:

Step 1

Step 1: Setting your goals (do this now)

Hold a committee meeting

1. Identify any outstanding training needs,
2. All who attended training must fill in the training feedback survey.
3. Create your society mission statement
4. What are your societies goals and objectives for the year
5. Fill in the on line form
6. Each of you committee members identify one or more learning outcomes they hope to achieve this year. Fill in the individual committee members goals for the year.

Step 2

Step 2: Be a Society

Have a great productive year and complete the following:

Your society must:

- Complete the leadership programme
- Submit all events to the society calendar
- Receipt expenditure and balance account on an on-going basis
- Host at least 4 events each semester
- Have over 100 members
- Have an up to date constitution on your profile (appendix 4)
- Have a society safety statement on your profile
- Have at least 4 people on your committee
- Complete your ALIVE application

Use this opportunity to also

- Up-date your constitution as appropriate
- Prepare and submit your budget
- Complete your safety statement and up load a pdf version to your profile.

Step 3 Reflection

Society committee:

At the end of the year hold a final meeting before you AGM, reflect on your year, on what goals and objectives you achieved, what you are most proud of and what the major challenges were.

Complete your society end of year reports and hold an AGM to elect a new committee.

Individual Committee members:

Individuals complete your Alive Application portfolio

Take the short survey

Step 4: Recognition & Accreditation

Leadership Certificate

Your Society must complete all steps of the leadership programme by the ALIVE deadline.

You must attend at least one society training session.

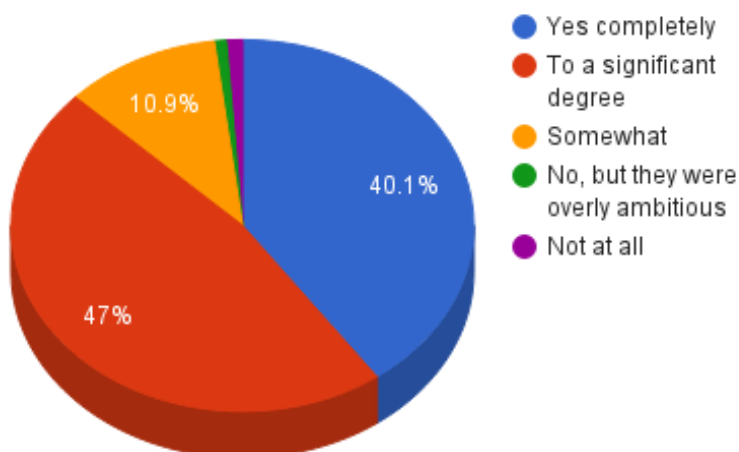
Fill in your Alive Application including completing the survey.

See full details at this link: [Leadership Programme](#)

What do our students learn through societies?

The Societies leadership programme is in its second year. 719 committee members participated an 11% increase on participants from last year. 87% stated that in their opinion their society had completely or to a significant degree achieved the goals they set at the beginning of the year.

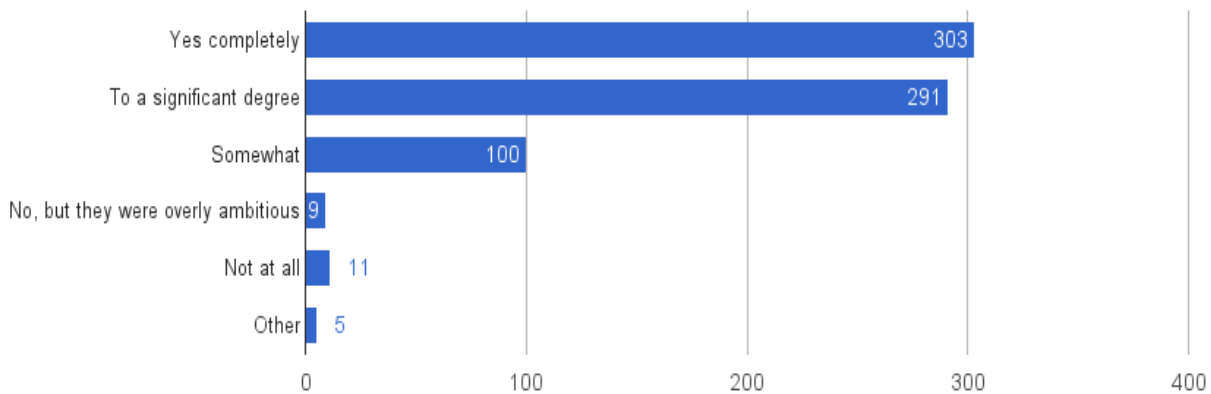
1. In your opinion, did your society achieve the goals you all set at the start of the year?



	Yes completely	To a significant degree	Somewhat	No, but they were overly ambitious	Not at all	Other
In your opinion, did your society achieve the goals you all set at the start of the year?	287 (39.92%)	336 (46.73%)	78 (10.85%)	6 (0.83%)	8 (1.11%)	4 (0.56%)

The committee members were also asked to set themselves personal goals as part of the society committee and to reflect on these at the end of the end of the year. 82.5% stated that in their opinion they had completely or to a significant degree achieved the goals they set at the beginning of the year.

2. Did you achieve your personal goals and objectives?



	Yes, completely	To a significant degree	Somewhat	No, but they were overly ambitious	Not at all	Other
Did you achieve your personal goals and objectives?	303 (42.14%)	291 (40.47%)	100 (13.91%)	9 (1.25%)	11 (1.53%)	5 (0.7%)

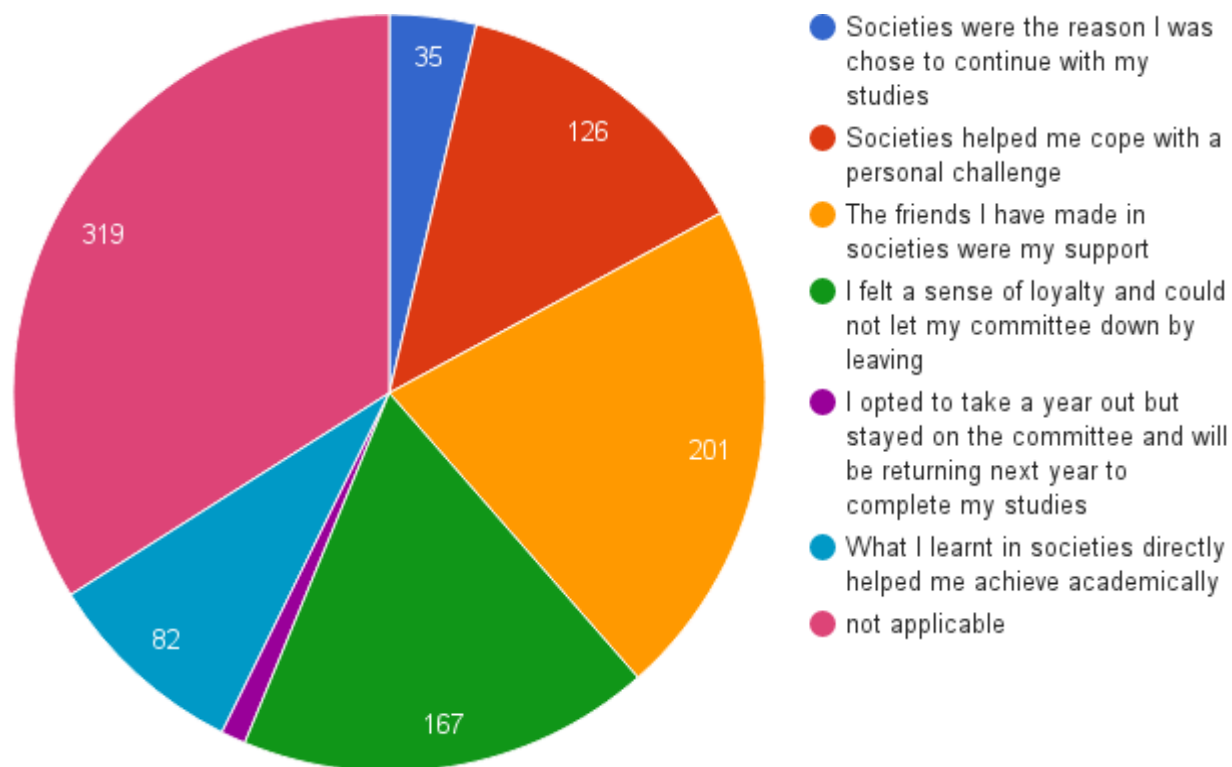
Retention and Academic Success

The third question shows the significant role societies play in retention and supporting students in difficulty. Of the 683 who answered this question 364 (57%) chose one or more reasons that societies helped them cope. Of these 55% stated that the friends they made in societies were their support when they felt themselves under pressure and contemplating leaving. 46% who responded in the affirmative cited their sense of loyalty to their committee was a factor in remaining. 36% of them stated that societies helped them cope with a personal challenge. 35 (almost 10%) stated that societies were the reason they chose to continue with their studies.

Societies not only helped to keep the committee members in college but 12% of the total respondents believed that societies directly helped them achieve academically this is 22% of the respondents who had considered dropping out. Of the total respondents 10 (1.47%) dropped out for a year but stayed on with the society and were going to continue with their studies. Societies are only open to staff and students but they have a provision to allow students, who for whatever reason decide to opt out for a year during the academic term, to remain on committees for this very reason so that they maintain connections and are able to continue the following year.

The figures below show the % of the total respondents.

3. If at any stage during the year you contemplated leaving the college, or felt yourself under significant pressure personally or academically, to what degree did your involvement in societies help you cope?



If at any stage during the year you contemplated leaving the college, or felt yourself under significant pressure personally or academically, to what degree did your involvement in societies help you cope?	The friends I have made in societies were my support	I felt a sense of loyalty and could not let my committee down by leaving	Societies helped me cope with a personal challenge
	201 (29.47%)	167 (24.49%)	126 (18.48%)
	What I learnt in societies directly helped me achieve academically	Societies were the reason I was chose to continue with my studies	I opted to take a year out but stayed on the committee and will be returning next year to complete my studies
	82 (12.02%)	35 (5.13%)	10 (1.47%)

Employability, Student Experience, Campus Loyalty and Learning.

The next question explored the contribution that societies made to the committee members college experience. A significant number saw the value of societies for providing them with life skills and improving their employability. Of the total number of respondents 56% learnt a new skill, 48% believed it would help them get a job and 52 (7.62%) chose a new career path.

Societies again were seen as a vital component an overall contentment with the college experience, 31% made their best friends, 13% identified themselves as members of a minority group who found a sense of belonging. 48% found societies kept them busy with lots of things to do and this busyness kept 27% of them focused and helped in all aspects of their life.

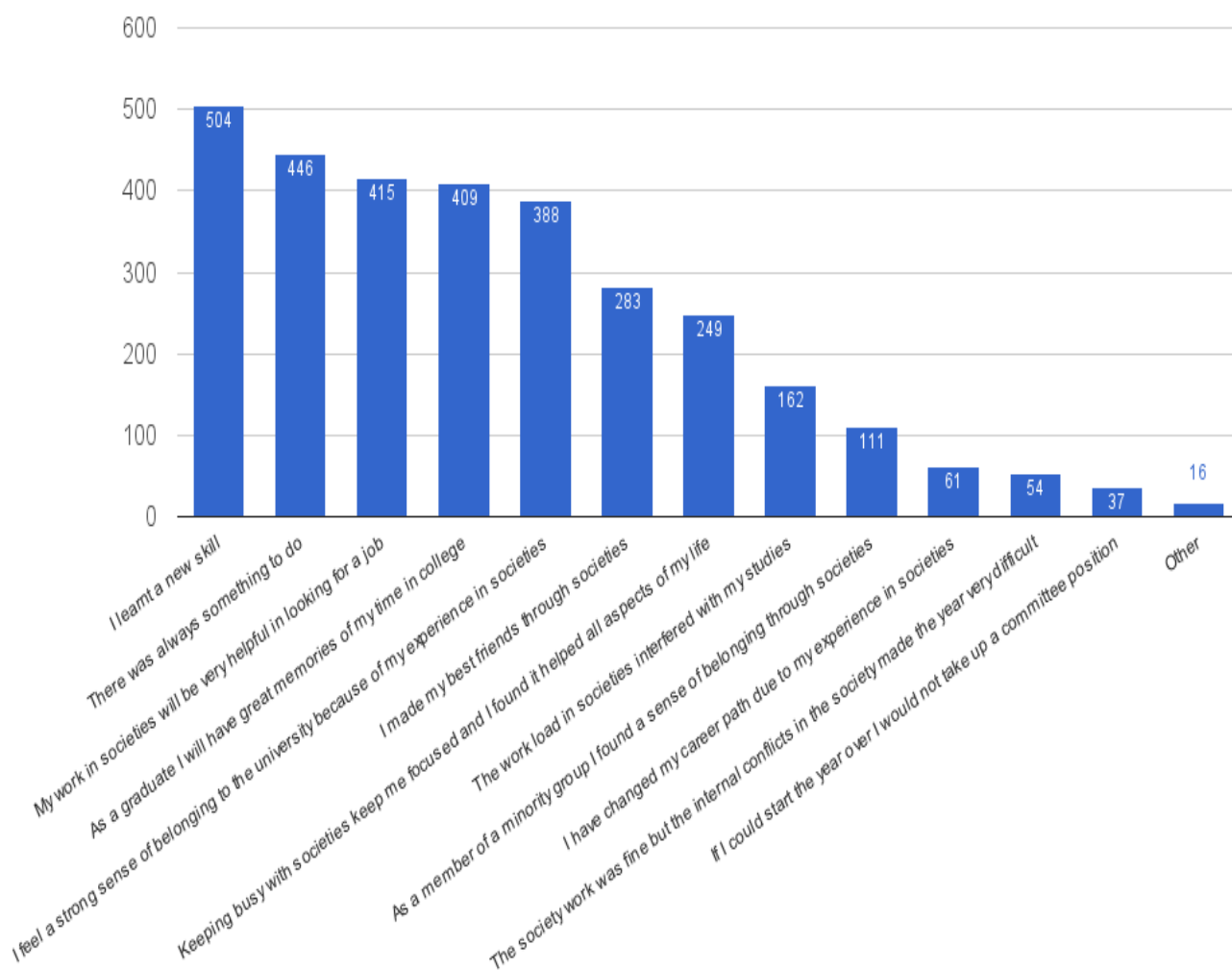
As far as institutional loyalty and positive fond memories as alumni societies also play a significant role. 46% believe they will have great memories of their time in college and 43% feel a strong sense of belonging to the University because of societies.

6% found that while the society work was fine conflict within the committee made life difficult. As part of training we provide workshops on dealing with conflict and provide meditation and support throughout the year. Dealing with conflict and understanding team dynamics and the leadership skills necessary to motivate people, keep a team focused and productive, while being nurturing and supportive of its members is a core part of the training. For many committee members this will be the first time they have leadership roles and societies provide a vital learning environment to hone these vital skills. That only 6% referred to conflict as a problem given the level of the workload coming up to major events, the inexperience of many of the committee members and the vast array of personalities involved is a treatment of the calibre of our students and the supports we have in place for the societies. The leadership programme expressly asks societies and their committee members to think about and plan their aims and goals at the start of the year which may be a contributing factor in the general level of satisfaction with the experience. Happily only 4.4% if they could start the year over would not take up a committee position again and by looking at the particular circumstances and personalities involved for this particular cohort much can be learnt about team dynamics and leadership skills and what does and does not work.

18% felt the workload interfered with their studies compared with 24% last year. We asked the students at this year's training to think about why this was the perception of almost a quarter of respondents the previous year, A number of committee members, who had said this last year were able to shed some light. One reason was the timing of the survey close to exams where anything extraneous at that particular time was seen as a distraction. To counteract this we encouraged members to complete the survey earlier this year. Part of the leadership programme training is also to encourage time management, delegation and

the importance of balance and 42 less committee members this year felt that their studies were interfered with. It is to be noted in the last question 12% felt it had helped them. There is also the question to be asked of the institution, in how we define learning because as we can see from the next question learning opportunities are not only confined to the classroom and it would be a pity that students who are having life changing and enhancing experiences are not perceiving them as valuable but are rather feeling guilty about the time spent away from what they perceive as the real learning. Our next research will need to be looking at how students engaged in positive extracurricular activities with real tangible learning outcomes perform academically and how successful they are in their exams.

4. Because of your involvement in Societies, how many of the following statements apply to you?



Because of your involvement in Societies, how many of the following statements apply to you?	I learnt a new skill	There was always something to do	My work in societies will be very helpful in looking for a job	As a graduate I will have great memories of my time in college	I feel a strong sense of belonging to the university because of my experience in societies
	385 (56.45%)	329 (48.24%)	324 (47.51%)	311 (45.6%)	293 (42.96%)
	I made my best friends through societies	Keeping busy with societies keep me focused and I found it helped all aspects of my life	The work load in societies interfered with my studies	As a member of a minority group I found a sense of belonging through societies	I have changed my career path due to my experience in societies
	211 (30.94%)	186 (27.27%)	122 (17.89%)	86 (12.61%)	52 (7.62%)
	The society work was fine but the internal conflicts in the society made the year very difficult		If I could start the year over I would not take up a committee position		Other
	42 (6.16%)		30 (4.4%)		16 (2.35%)

What Committee members learn

Societies provide important learning opportunities for their committee members. Most identified Team Work and Communication as a skill they learnt. With the next five top skill being: Organisation, event management, leadership, time management, setting and achieving goals. Over 50% learnt interpersonal skills, self-motivation, Over 40% identified understanding and appreciating difference, public speaking, problem solving, open-mindedness and creativity as skills gained and 42% honed an existing skill. Almost 30% learnt conflict resolution, over 20% learnt financial management. Managing their own learning and an awareness of global issues. One of the themed weeks in the societies' calendar is Global Week. Only .73% felt they had learnt none of the above and one student identified IT skills where was not on the list.

According to Gradireland

‘Employers will always say that they want the best graduates for their organisation, although what that means in practice can vary. We surveyed top graduate recruiters for the gradireland *Graduate Salary & Graduate Recruitment Trends Survey 2013* and one of the questions we asked was about their selection criteria. It’s still true that employers expect high academic achievements, with many specifying either a 2.1 or a 2.2 as a minimum. But equally important was the ability to demonstrate key ‘competencies’: the skills that are needed for working – rather than academic – life.

What employers say

Graduates today are entering a highly competitive jobs market; as a result it is more important than ever to truly own your own career. Think about the qualifications, skills and attributes you believe are your greatest asset and consider these when researching your career options. At interview, it is essential that you sell your skills and experiences. Don't hold back on showing the interviewer your enthusiasm for pursuing your chosen career path. Rose Mary Hogan, Resourcing Manager, Deloitte.

Employability skills defined

- Soft skills: personal qualities, eg problem solving, communication skills.
- Hard skills: skills that can be taught, eg writing, numeracy.
- Knowledge-based skills: specialist knowledge in areas such as business or science.
- Transferable skills: a skill you have learnt in one context, eg university, that can be used in another, eg work. Particularly important at graduate level where you may not have experience of the job that you are applying for.'

(<https://gradireland.com/careers-advice/cvs-and-applications/what-recruiters-want>)

According to Gradireland the key competencies recruiters look for are an ability to implement a plan, communication, team player, team working, coping and adaptability, lifelong learning, exploring opportunities, initiative, interpersonal, leadership potential, negotiation, decision making, political awareness, problem-solving, self-awareness, self-confidence, an awareness of own strengths, self-reliant and an ability to transfer these skills to new contexts. These are all skills committee members learn in abundance organising events, motivating teams, promoting their societies, attracting members, operating in an honest transparent manner and ensuring continuity of their society.

This year societies organised 2835 events and posted them to the society calendar. They had a total membership of 48685, over 8000 individual students as members, 1063 people on committees they had an income of almost one million euro and raised over €200,000 for charity.

5. What skills did you develop as part of societies?

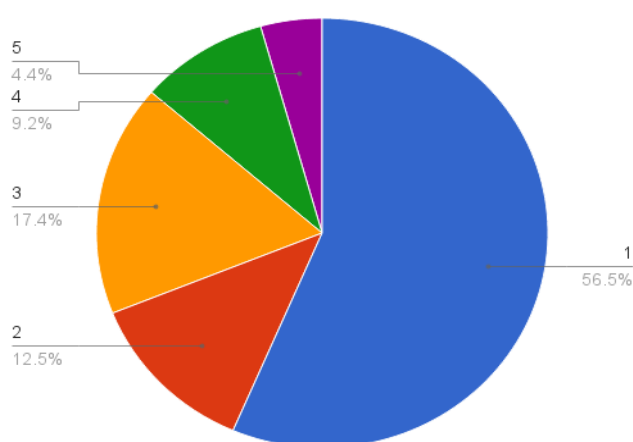


What skills did you develop as part of societies?	Team work	Communication	Organisational skills	Event management	Leadership skills	Time management	Setting and achieving goals
	608 (89.15%)	607 (89%)	542 (79.47%)	438 (64.22%)	415 (60.85%)	385 (56.45%)	378 (55.43%)
	Interpersonal skills	Self-motivation	Understanding and appreciating difference	Public speaking	Problem solving	Open-mindedness	Creativity
	371 (54.4%)	335 (49.12%)	317 (46.48%)	312 (45.75%)	304 (44.57%)	300 (43.99%)	296 (43.4%)
	Honing an existing skill	Conflict Resolution	Financial management	Managing your own learning	An awareness of global Issues	None of the above	Other (IT Skills)
	286 (41.94%)	204 (29.91%)	176 (25.81%)	150 (21.99%)	149 (21.85%)	5 (0.73%)	1 (0.15%)

Do students choose NUI Galway because of Societies?

We know that societies add to campus life and also contribute to the local community and the wider world. They also arrange many outreach programmes and engage with students in second level. For example the Muisical society attend all the second level musicals and hold an award ceremony on campus at the end of the year and was attended by 400 students and hosted in the Bailey Allen Hall. So it is very heartening to discover that for 30 committee members it was the deciding factor in their choice of University, and for 29% it was an influencing factor.

7. Prior to enrolling in NUI Galway, did your knowledge of societies in NUI Galway influence your choice of college in any way? 1 - Not at all, 5 - It was the deciding factor

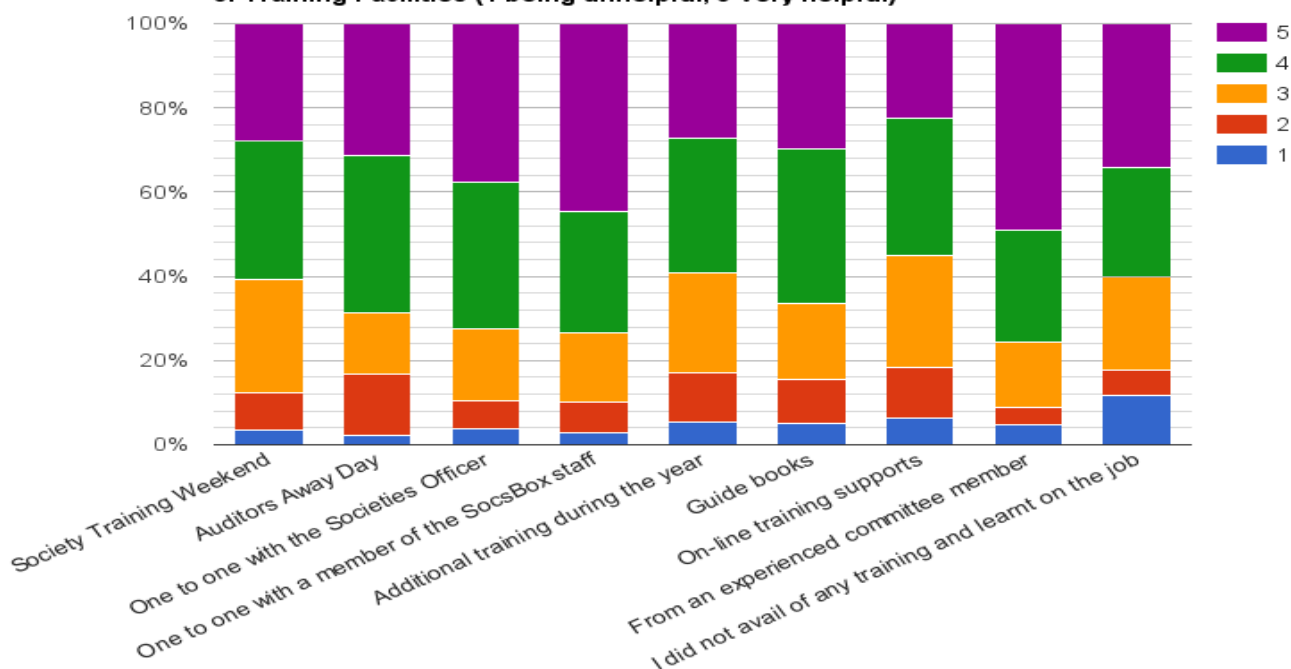


	1	2	3	4	5
Prior to enrolling in NUI Galway, did your knowledge of societies in NUI Galway influence your choice of college in any way?	385 (53.55%)	85 (11.82%)	119 (16.55%)	63 (8.76%)	30 (4.17%)

Society Training

We run a weekend of training in September including a day away for Auditors and follow on with on-going training workshops throughout the year plus on going one-to-one training and support. It is encouraging to see that the unhelpful scores are very low it is interesting to note that the highest 'unhelpful' experience was for people who did not avail of any training. The majority of attendees scored 4 and 5 with on-line supports getting the least 4 and 5s. The most successful training identifies were one-to-one with the SocsBox and Societies Officer and an experienced committee member. The feedback is very helpful for reviewing our training and we are launching a new website with new on line training this year and will continue to encourage as many committee members as possible to avail of the training available to maximise their learning potential.

6. Training Facilities (1 being unhelpful, 5 very helpful)



Training	Not applicable	Applicable	1	2	3	4	5	3-5
<i>Society Training Weekend</i>	372 (54.55%)	310 (45.45%)	11 (3.55%)	27 (8.71%)	84 (27.1%)	102 (32.9%)	86 (27.74%)	272 (87.74%)
<i>Auditors Away Day</i>	634 (92.96%)	48 (7.04%)	1 (2.08%)	7 (14.58%)	7 (14.58%)	18 (37.5%)	15 (31.25%)	40 (83.33%)
<i>One to one with the Societies Officer</i>	453 (66.42%)	229 (33.58%)	9 (3.93%)	15 (6.55%)	39 (17.03%)	80 (34.93%)	86 (37.55%)	205 (89.52%)
<i>One to one with a member of the SocsBox staff</i>	339 (49.71%)	343 (50.29%)	10 (2.92%)	25 (7.29%)	56 (16.33%)	99 (28.86%)	153 (44.61%)	308 (89.8%)
<i>Additional training during the year</i>	461 (67.6%)	221 (32.4%)	12 (5.43%)	26 (11.76%)	52 (23.53%)	71 (32.13%)	60 (27.15%)	183 (82.81%)
<i>Guide books</i>	354 (51.91%)	328 (48.09%)	17 (5.18%)	34 (10.37%)	59 (17.99%)	120 (36.59%)	98 (29.88%)	277 (84.45%)
<i>On-line training supports</i>	433 (63.49%)	249 (36.51%)	16 (6.43%)	30 (12.05%)	66 (26.51%)	81 (32.53%)	56 (22.49%)	203 (81.53%)
<i>From an experienced committee member</i>	217 (31.82%)	465 (68.18%)	22 (4.73%)	19 (4.09%)	73 (15.7%)	123 (26.45%)	228 (49.03%)	424 (91.18%)
<i>I did not avail of any training and learnt on the job</i>	451 (66.13%)	231 (33.87%)	27 (11.69%)	14 (6.06%)	51 (22.08%)	60 (25.97%)	79 (34.2%)	190 (82.25%)

What they had to say about their society experience

My own interpersonal skills have improved and I'm finding that I am able to express myself and my opinions to others better as a result of being a part of this committee.

I became more organised and my communication with new people became better, I can now talk to complete strangers without as much worry.

I felt that my time on the committee helped me become a more caring and honest person, and I was able to help the society grow over the year.

Maintaining a level head, compromising and keeping everyone happy is a balancing act and I felt I have achieved that to the highest level I could this year.

I have improved my management and leadership skill set, all while assisting my fellow students by improving their educational experience . I have made fantastic friends and thoroughly enjoyed myself.

The thing I have learned that stands out for me personally is the importance of voicing ideas and opinions in a group environment. When everyone can contribute equally to the group, it is a clear success. I have learned the equal importance of being both a leader and a follower - both are essential to harmonious group work. This creates a team that capitalises on the strengths and minimises the weaknesses of each individual member.

Overall, I can honestly say that taking on a leadership role in the society was honestly one of the best decisions I have made during my college years here in NUIG.

I feel as though I have improved my time management skills and organisational skills by having to make time for college work as well as time for the Society. I also feel that my time with the Society will benefit me not just in my everyday life but also in my career when I leave NUIG.

I have develop patience and learn to work as a team. It gave me opportunities to unlock my potential and help me to grow as an all rounded person.

It has been both an enlightening and character building experience. It has taught me to become self-sufficient and to take action on my own initiative rather than to wait for instruction. The Society had a large impact on my life this year and has only made me more determined to continue with my studies.

Since the beginning of the year I have seen a vast improvement in my own confidence speaking and how I conduct myself around others. I believe that my management skills have also vastly improved, dealing with other students it can be hard to motivate them as there can be little incentive to do so. If you don't believe in the event or cause then the team behind you won't.

One of the highlights has been getting to know the people on the committee. I believe that I have learned a lot about myself this year, as well as about being part of running a fairly significantly sized organisation. I have developed my social skills, my time management skills and have learned more about what the types of things I would like to be involved with in the future. I have made some really great friends who I would not have been able to make if it had not been for societies!

Through my involvement in this society I have gained some extremely valuable experiences. I have learned the true value of team work and how important it is to help one another in order to achieve goals. If we had not been able to work as well together as we did, we would never have achieved so much. Whilst working as a committee member I also gained some great friendships that I will have forever and memories that will last me a lifetime. After my experience on the committee I would encourage anyone who goes to college to get involved in a society as it is such an incredible rewarding experience.

