

What is the criteria for funding for Springboard + and ICT Skills courses?

Springboard + and ICT Skills funding is open to any [suitably qualified applicant](#) regardless of employment status. If you are unemployed or a returner the course is 100% free, if you are employed it is 90% funded. Like most funding schemes, there are terms and conditions and exclusions do apply. Candidates should check the eligibility requirements and carefully read the [FAQ section](#) on the Springboard+ website to make sure that they qualify for funding.

Will I need to do an interview or a test?

Depending on your background you may be required to submit additional documentation and/or participate in an interview or logic test, e.g. if you are applying through the RPEL route or if your degree is in a non-cognate area. The Course Director may also request to meet you in person for an informal interview to assess your suitability for the course. We will advise you in due course if any of the above applies to you.

I don't have a degree. Is there any point in me applying for one of your courses?

Definitely. Many candidates without a formal third-level qualification or who have done some third-level study but not up to level 8 are successful in their applications to our courses. Such candidates are admitted through NCI's [RPEL \(Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning\)](#) policy. This takes into account previous work/life experience (usually an absolute minimum of 4 years' relevant experience). It is also an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate their commitment to fully engage with the course. In order to be admitted through the RPEL route candidates must first make their application on the [Springboard Courses website](#) and also complete an RPEL form which the

Springboard Team at NCI will send to them after initial assessment of their application.

What do you mean by suitably qualified?

The standard entry requirements for these courses is at least a pass in a level 8 honours degree. Candidates applying to a course with non-numerate level 8s e.g. BA (Hons) History, will be required to do a logic test. Candidates with a level 9 or higher (postgraduate diploma or masters) can also be considered for these courses as long as the qualification is not in the same subject area. It is just as important not to have over-qualified candidates in the class as it is not to have under-qualified candidates in the class.

I understand my course has a BYOD policy. What exactly does this mean?

BYOD means Bring Your Own Device policy which means that you are expected to successfully participate in lectures, laboratories and projects using a laptop computer with a substantial hardware configuration from day 1 of your course. Unfortunately NCI Student IT support cannot provide support to personal devices.

The course I am interested in studying is described as an online course. What does this entail?

This means that your course will be delivered 100% online over the internet and that you do not at any stage need to come into the college to attend lectures or tutorials. It also means that you will be required to ensure that you have sufficient broadband speed and a reliable connectivity to the internet from your chosen place of study.

You are expected to successfully participate in lectures, laboratories and projects using a laptop computer with a substantial hardware configuration from day 1 of your course. A suitable configuration is 6GB of RAM (8GB or more is recommended); a 64-bit x 86 processor (Intel i5 or superior); 250+GB of hard disk; and a recent installed release of Mac OS or Windows operating system. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure their laptop is

functioning correctly and that they have full administrator rights to the machine. Unfortunately NCI Student IT support cannot provide support to personal devices.

When should I apply and when will I know if my application is successful?

We recommend that any interested candidate should apply as soon as the courses open. Decisions are made daily. Places at NCI courses are offered on a first come first served basis to eligible applicants from the date the applications are open until either all funded places are allocated or until the application closing date, whichever comes first. Demand for these courses has always exceeded the number of places available therefore courses regularly fill long before the advertised closing date. Decisions are communicated through www.springboardcourses.ie.

How do I apply for one of these courses?

All Springboard and ICT Skills applications must be made online through www.springboardcourses.ie. Please do not apply directly to NCI either online, by email or in person, as we are not permitted to accept applications directly from candidates.

What are the laptop requirements for my course?

A suitable configuration is 6GB of RAM (8GB or more is recommended); a 64-bit x 86 processor (Intel i5 or superior); 250+GB of hard disk; and a recent installed release of Linux, Mac OS or Windows operating system. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure their laptop is functioning correctly and that they have full administrator rights to the machine.

I have been living and working in Ireland for almost 10 years. Do I need to do an English language test?

Candidates whose first language is not English may also be required to sit NCI's English language test. Regardless of how long you have lived or worked in Ireland, if you haven't already successfully completed an academic course

through English lasting at least one year and if you can't provide a suitable IELTS or TOEFL test result, you may need to do NCI's English language test. We will advise you if this applies to you.

Do I need to provide any paperwork with my online application?

Yes you do. In order for us to assess your online application you will need to upload electronic copies of the following documentation along with your application. You should try to do this within 1 to 2 weeks of submitting your online application.

1. Your current curriculum vitae – The information on your CV should match the Application Form and it should be completely accurate with no unsupported additions. The Employer Name and Location needs be outlined for each job. If you were unemployed or travelling for a period of time this too needs to be included on your CV including the location(s) of where you resided during that time.
2. Career Statement: Please include a 300 word career statement detailing what has motivated you to undertake the specific course in question and how the course fits in with your career objectives.
3. Copies of educational transcripts for any relevant qualifications listed in your application form and the final certificates/diplomas for any qualifications listed in your application form. Alternatively a Diploma Supplement will suffice if it contains a breakdown of all subjects taken for the duration of the course and you final grade.
4. Please ensure all documentation is provided in its original language and where it is not in English you must have it officially translated into English by a third party company. Translations done by the applicant are not acceptable.
5. Non-EU applicants will need to provide a copy of their Stamp 4 EUFAM GNIB card
6. 1 passport sized photograph in JPEG format to be used on your student card
7. Verification of Status Required: If in Employment - please provide a recently dated letter from your current employer on headed paper, signed and dated confirming your position and the date you commenced employment. If applying as a Returner - please provide a letter/statement signed by the Commissioner for Oaths confirming your current status. A form to complete the process is available here: [Returner Form](#)
Department of Social Protection - please provide a recently dated letter confirming that you are on the live register detailing which payment you are in receipt of (alternatively your most recent post office receipt will suffice) or a letter confirming that you are signing for social insurance

contribution credits. Previously Self Employed - A letter from your accountant or revenue confirming that your business is no longer trading.

I applied for one of these courses last year but didn't take it up. Do I need to reapply or can you just use my old application?

You will need to submit a new application for the 2018 courses however you should continue to use your old login details for the Springboard+ website. You should simply log in and update your application and CV with any new skills, qualifications, work experience you have gained since last year and reapply submitting the required supporting documentation.

Will it be possible to meet with academic staff prior to making a decision?

Unless a face-to-face interview is requested by the course director there is usually no requirement to meet with the academic staff. However for any candidate wishing to discuss one or more of the courses in detail with the academic staff, NCI holds a number of open evenings when you can come and meet the staff and chat with them about your course of interest. Please see our [website for details](#).

What if I can't/don't submit all of the documentation?

Incomplete applications will not normally be assessed so please try and submit everything as quickly as possible. We do understand that there can be valid reasons for not having all of the required paperwork, e.g. you are waiting on a final result or you have an exam or a project to do in the summer and won't have a result until September. If you are waiting for an item of paperwork or a final result please submit everything you have and let us know the situation regarding the outstanding documentation so we can see if we can progress your application without it.

I am having difficulty making my online application/uploading documentation/accepting my offer. Who do I contact for assistance?

For technical assistance with your Springboard+/ICT Skills application please call Springboard Technical Support **on (076) 6151247** or send an email to support@springboardcourses.ie with your query. As this is not an NCI website we are unable to provide any technical assistance for candidates having difficulties with their online applications.

I am employed, do I have to do the work placement?

1. **Relevant employment** - Students in relevant work do not need to participate in the Career Bridge module or the Work Placement element as they will be exempt from both.
2. **Employed and in irrelevant employment** - Students who are in irrelevant employment are reviewed on a one to one basis, however the College will not ask anyone to leave a job, maybe change within the role for a period of 3 to 6 months, they could be asked to do a project and they will be requested to complete the assignments associated with the Career Bridge module.
3. **Unemployed** - Students who are unemployed must complete both the Career Bridge module and Work placement. They are also advised to liaise with their Social Welfare Office before they commence work placement.

In order for our Career's team to determine which of the above 3 categories you fall into you will need to register for the Career Bridge module on Moodle in September when you start.

You will be asked a few questions when registering and a member of the Career's team will liaise with you then shortly after that.

In regards to attendance for the Career Bridge module, we understand that not every student will be able to make a 5pm class but when you register for the Career Bridge module on Moodle you will have the capability to catch up on missed lectures then.

Coding Tutorials for Non -Technical Candidates

For candidates who have never studied anything in relation to computing before or worked in a technical area before we have provided some free tutorials that you might find useful. Please note that these are not part of your course and we provide them only as a guide to assist you in the decision making process.

<https://www.codecademy.com/en/skills/make-a-website>

Done that? Try a more in-depth look (7 hours):

<https://www.codecademy.com/en/tracks/web>

“Hour of Code” - Drag and drop intro to basic coding concepts (designed for 7-70 yr olds, don't be put off by the apparent simplicity of it)

<https://studio.code.org/hoc/1>

Done that? Try the full 20 Hours - again this may seem fairly simple to you but if you follow through all 20 lessons you will have absorbed a good solid understanding of the main coding concepts

<https://studio.code.org/s/20-hour>

Plus the two Code Academy web tutorials, see above.

Specifically for Higher Diploma in Computing Candidates

If you have never coded before do the 1 hour of code and the 20 hours of code tutorials, see above.

If you have never used HTML/CSS before, do the two Code Academy tutorials, see above.

If you have coded before, but not in Java, try this free online course:

<https://www.udemy.com/java-tutorial/#/>

If you want to practice your Java: <http://codingbat.com/>

Specifically for Higher Diploma in Web Technologies Candidates

Codecademy (www.codecademy.com) provide some excellent tutorials for the novice web developer. These tutorials cover topics such as introductory HTML & CSS. This is a great head start for applicants to our programme. Server Side Technologies are also covered such as an introduction to Ruby on Rails.

W3 Schools (<http://www.w3schools.com/>) provide the gold standard in introductory HTML, CSS, and JavaScript tutorials.