NCI
Coláiste Náisiúnta na hÉireann | National College of Ireland

UP TO 80% FUNDING AVAILABLE

NEW MICROCREDENTIALS

in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Digital Technologies

GET UP TO SPEED ON AI TECHNOLOGY, TRENDS AND STRATEGY THIS SEPTEMBER.

Short, sharp and online, running from Sept to Dec 2026.

Accredited programmes.

Less to Pay – Programmes are funded by the Microcredential Learner Fee Subsidy 2026, meaning fees subsidised up to 80% for all eligible learners.

- **Certificate in AI Strategy, Governance and Leadership**
- **Certificate in AI Technologies**
- **Certificate in Emerging Digital Technologies**
- **Certificate in Big Data and AI in Business: Strategy and Emerging Trends**

Subsidised places are limited and will be awarded on a first come first served basis.

HEA | An tÚdarás um Ard-Oideachas The Higher Education Authority

Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland

Certificate in **AI Strategy, Governance and Leadership**

Delivery: Fully Online: This is an online learning course that features Directed E-Learning activities such as live online classroom sessions and tutorials/ videos on the College's e-learning system. This allows for online class time to be interactive, practical, and focused, with theory based content being covered outside of class time with self-paced tutorials/videos, and practical content being covered in live online classes with support from lecturers.

Start Date: 22nd September 2026

Duration: 1 Semester from September to December 2026. Terminal examinations take place in January 2027

Indicative Schedule: Tuesday & Thursday 18.00 to 22.00

Award: The Certificate in AI Strategy, Governance and Leadership is a NFQ Level 9 Minor award (20 ECTS), accredited by QQI.

Fees and Funding: Funded by the Micro-credential Learner Fee Subsidy 2026. Programme fees are subsidised at 80% for all eligible learners.

A student contribution fee of €600 is applicable for this course. This must be paid no later than 13th November 2026. If a student withdraws before commencement the full amount is refundable. No refund will be processed once the student commences the course the week beginning 21st September. See https://www.ncirl.ie/NewStudents for details. This scheme does not cover any allowance for books and materials.

Note - These microcredential courses are a separate funding mechanism to Springboard+ funded programmes.

To Apply: Apply online HEA - Springboard+

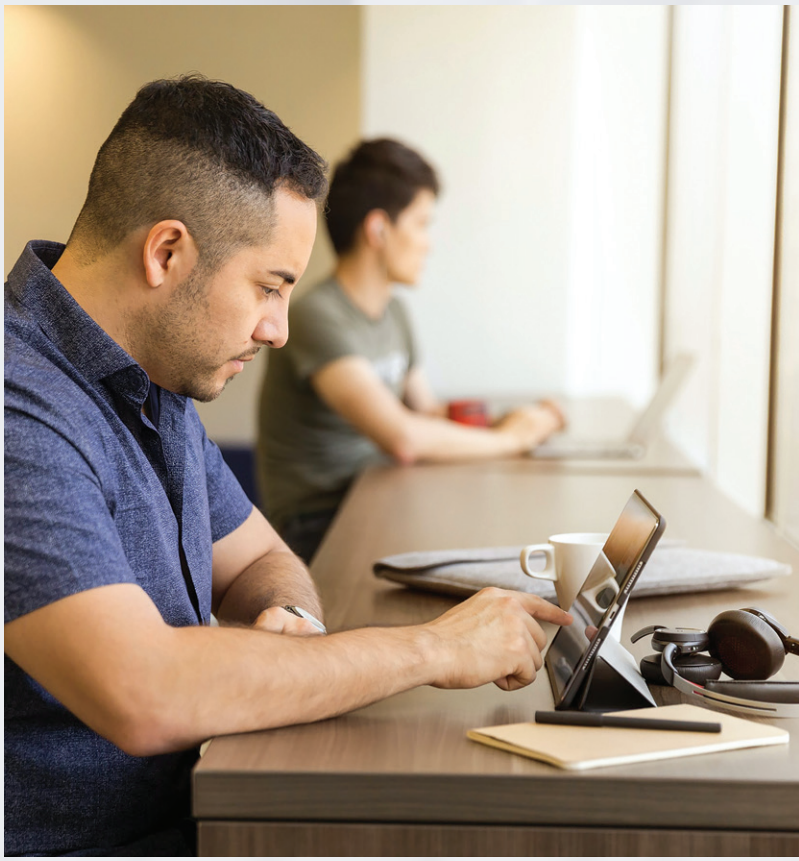
About the Course

This Microcredential programme is designed to give you the skills to support the strategic adoption, governance, and responsible implementation of artificial intelligence (AI) in your organisation.

This programme was developed with industry and AI practitioners. An industry panel of organisations such as Microsoft, BearingPoint, Slalom, and Laya Healthcare highlighted the need for professionals who can lead AI adoption, assess feasibility and return on investment, and ensure governance and compliance. Industry emphasised the importance of combining strategic insight with an understanding of ethical AI practices and the programme delivers this.

You will cover areas such as what AI is and what it is not, the latest developments, and the capabilities and limitations of AI. You will evaluate the principles of AI to recognise, model and solve problems. The course will consider how AI can shift the competitive dynamics. It will also look and help you to consider leadership in the age of AI and the move from directive to data empowered leadership. You will also consider issues like sustainability, policy and regulation and gain the capability to build an AI transformation roadmap.

Throughout all the modules you will benefit from the integration of governance, strategy, and foundational AI knowledge.



Who is the course for

The course is aimed at executives, senior managers, and professionals involved in strategy, governance, risk, compliance, and digital transformation. It is particularly suited to non-technical and semi-technical learners who require a strategic understanding of AI, supported by foundational knowledge and governance awareness. If you are involved in leading responsible and effective AI adoption within your organisation, or would like to be, then this programme is for you.

Career Benefits

This programme brings significant career benefits. The IBEC Skills Survey (2026) reports 82% of Irish businesses experiencing significant gaps in digital and AI-related capabilities. The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs 2025, highlights demand for professionals who can support AI adoption and implementation There is a need for professionals with strategic and governance-focused AI capabilities rather than purely technical expertise, so this programme will give you an important career advantage.

Course Entry Requirements

Applicants required to hold a minimum of a Level 8 honours degree (2.2 or higher) or equivalent. Applicants from a broad range of backgrounds, including both computing and non-computing fields, will be considered.

Applicants with prior learning in business, information systems, engineering, data analytics are particularly suited. However, the programme is designed to be accessible to learners without extensive technical expertise, provided they can demonstrate an aptitude for analytical thinking and problem-solving. Candidates who do not meet the formal academic requirements may be considered through Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), based on relevant work experience.

Applicants whose first language is not English must attach a certified qualification of proficiency in English.

Assessment

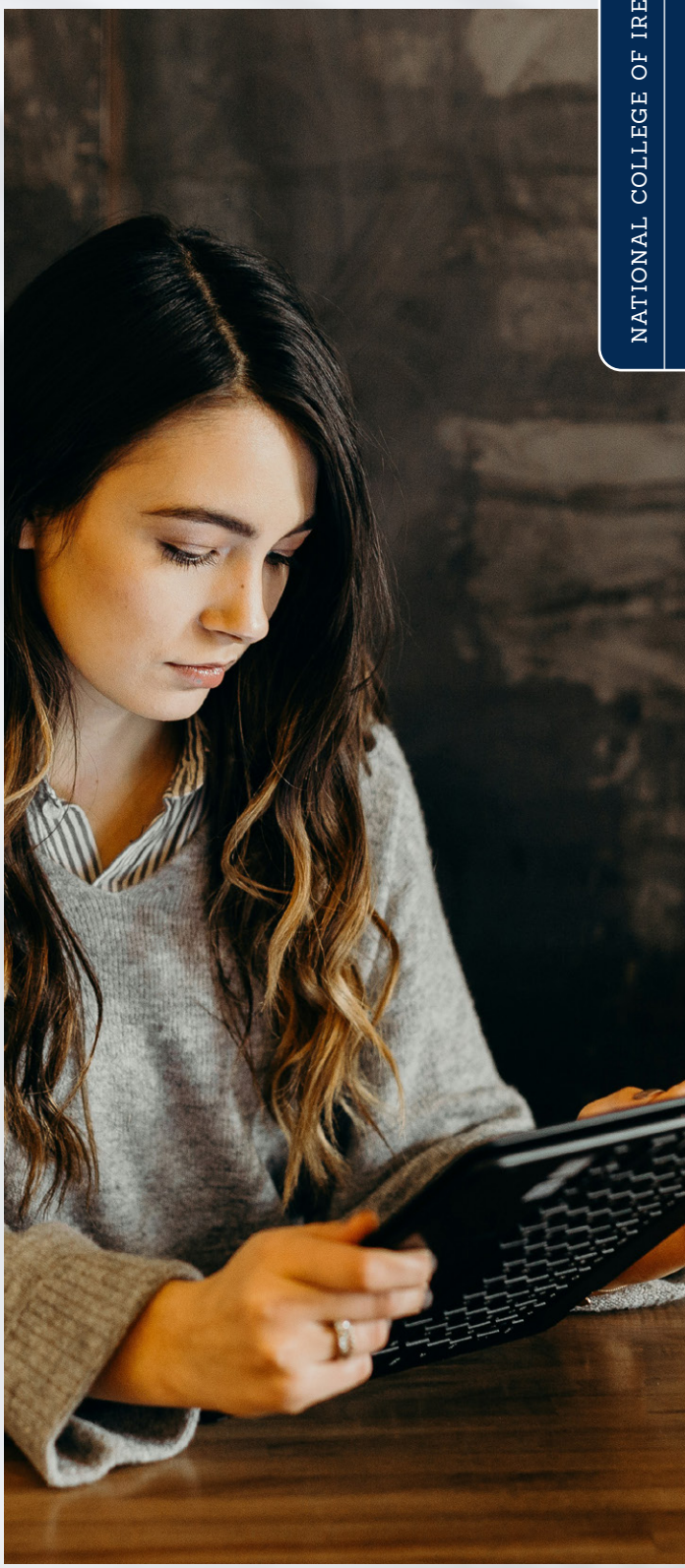
The course will be assessed with a blend of continuous assessments and/or project work and exams. Please note that in some instances exams may take place in the daytime, evenings and at weekends.

Progression

Students who successfully complete this course may be eligible to progress to a major award at postgraduate level on the NFQ . Learners who subsequently enrol in the Postgraduate Diploma in AI for Business or the MSc in AI for Business at NCI may receive recognition for the academic credits and learning achievements attained through this certificate programme.

Laptop Requirements

A suitable minimum specification is 16GB RAM (32GB recommended), a modern Intel i7 /AMD Ryzen 7/ Apple Silicon equivalent processor, at least 256GB SSD storage (512GB recommended), reliable Wi-Fi, and a recent version of Ubuntu, macOS, or Windows. Students must have full administrator rights on their device to install and configure required software and development tools. Access to a webcam, microphone, and power supply for extended lab sessions is also expected. For online examinations, students will require access to both a webcam and a smartphone for online proctoring.



Course Content

The course is divided into three modules:

1. Principles of Artificial Intelligence
2. Strategic AI for Business and Leadership
3. Data Governance, Ethics and Sustainability

Certificate in **AI Technologies**

Delivery: Fully Online: This is an online learning course that features Directed E-Learning activities such as live online classroom sessions and tutorials/ videos on the College's e-learning system. This allows for online class time to be interactive, practical, and focused, with theory based content being covered outside of class time with self-paced tutorials/videos, and practical content being covered in live online classes with support from lecturers.

Start Date: 22nd September 2026

Duration: 1 Semester from September to December 2026. Terminal examinations take place in January 2027

Indicative Schedule: Tuesday 18.00 to 22.00

Award: The Certificate in AI Technologies is a NFQ Level 9 Minor award (10 ECTS), accredited by QQI.

Fees and Funding: Funded by the Micro-credential Learner Fee Subsidy 2026. Programme fees are subsidised at 80% for all eligible learners.

A student contribution fee of €300 is applicable for this course. This must be paid no later than 13th November 2026. If a student withdraws before commencement the full amount is refundable. No refund will be processed once the student commences the course the week beginning 21st September. See https://www.ncirl.ie/NewStudents for details. This scheme does not cover any allowance for books and materials.

Note - These microcredential courses are a separate funding mechanism to Springboard+ funded programmes.

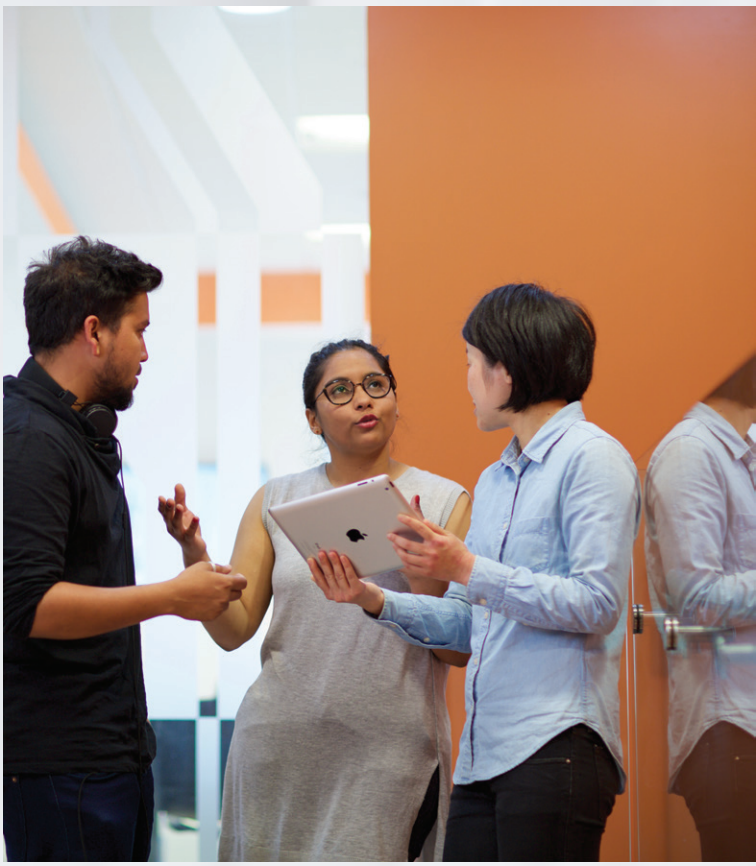
To Apply: Apply online HEA - Springboard+

About the Course

This certificate programme is designed to support professionals from non-computing and computing backgrounds in developing an informed understanding of digital and AI technologies and their application in organisational contexts.

It will quickly develop your competencies in understanding AI technologies, evaluating their applications, and supporting data-driven decision-making. The course is a practical one and you will get insight into current AI tools and their role in enhancing operational efficiency, customer experience, and strategic planning. You will get an insight into the latest technologies but also how they may practically be implemented across a wide range of organisations.

In developing this Microcredential we worked with employers, graduates and AI practitioners. We reviewed the content with an industry expert panel with representatives from Microsoft, BearingPoint, Slalom, and Laya Healthcare. All stakeholders emphasised the importance of applied, practice-based learning, and the need for those with a technical overview alongside competencies in AI governance, ethics, and responsible AI adoption. This engagement helped to make this short course as practical as possible for you and will allow you to apply what you learn directly across any type of organisation.



Who is the course for

The course is suitable for those from any type of background who want to gain a very solid understanding of the different types of AI technologies and how they might be applied. The programme is suitable for those from a technical and non-technical background, provided you are willing to engage in the analytical and problem solving thinking approach of the course.

Career Benefits

As with all these Microcredentials this programme is focused in an area of significant skills need. The IBEC Skills Survey (2026) reports 82% of Irish businesses experiencing significant skills gaps in these areas. AI-related roles in Ireland have grown significantly in recent years, with increasing demand across sectors such as financial services, technology, healthcare, retail, and the public sector. International evidence reinforces this trend, highlighting rapid growth in AI-exposed occupations and a rising need for professionals who combine technical AI knowledge with business and strategic skills. For professionals across all sectors this programme gives an increasingly important career skill.

Course Entry Requirements

Applicants required to hold a minimum of a Level 8 honours degree (2.2 or higher) or equivalent. Applicants from a broad range of backgrounds, including both computing and non-computing fields, will be considered.

Applicants with prior learning in business, information systems, engineering, data analytics are particularly suited. However, the programme is designed to be accessible to learners without extensive technical expertise, provided they can demonstrate an aptitude for analytical thinking and problem-solving.

Candidates who do not meet the formal academic requirements may be considered through Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), based on relevant work experience.

Applicants whose first language is not English must attach a certified qualification of proficiency in English.

Assessment

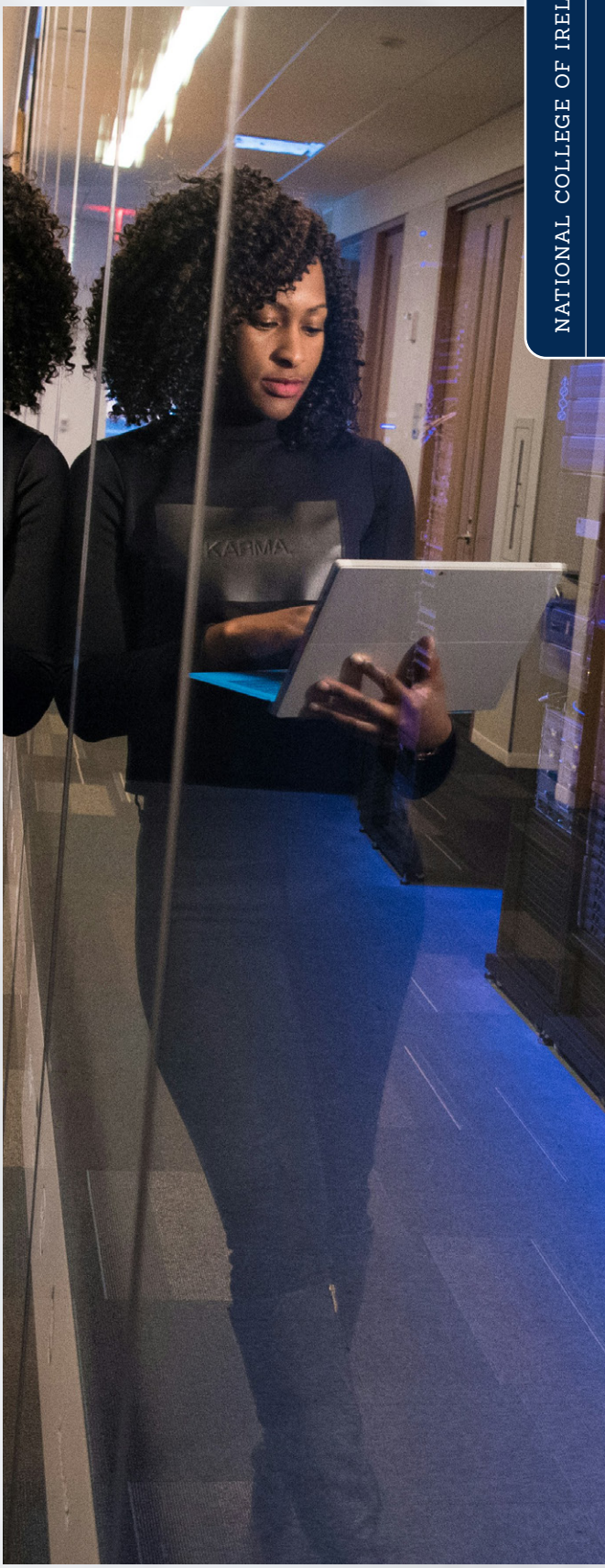
The course will be assessed with continuous assessments / project work. Please note that in some instances exams may take place in the daytime, evenings and at weekends.

Progression

Students who successfully complete this course may be eligible to progress to a major award at postgraduate level on the NFQ . Learners who subsequently enrol in the Postgraduate Diploma in AI for Business or the MSc in AI for Business at NCI may receive recognition for the academic credits and learning achievements attained through this certificate programme.

Laptop Requirements

A suitable minimum specification is 16GB RAM (32GB recommended), a modern Intel i7 /AMD Ryzen 7/ Apple Silicon equivalent processor, at least 256GB SSD storage (512GB recommended), reliable Wi-Fi, and a recent version of Ubuntu, macOS, or Windows. Students must have full administrator rights on their device to install and configure required software and development tools. Access to a webcam, microphone, and power supply for extended lab sessions is also expected. For online examinations, students will require access to both a webcam and a smartphone for online proctoring.require access to both a webcam and a smartphone for online proctoring.



Course Content

The course is a 10 ECTS programme consisting of one module.

- Artificial Intelligence Technologies

Certificate in
Emerging Digital Technologies

Delivery: Fully Online: This is an online learning course that features Directed E-Learning activities such as live online classroom sessions and tutorials/ videos on the College's e-learning system. This allows for online class time to be interactive, practical, and focused, with theory based content being covered outside of class time with self-paced tutorials/videos, and practical content being covered in live online classes with support from lecturers.

Start Date: 22nd September 2026

Duration: 1 Semester from September to December 2026. Terminal examinations take place in January 2027.

Indicative Schedule: Tuesday & Thursday 18.00 to 20.00

Award: The Certificate in Emerging Digital Technologies is a NFQ Level 7 Special Purpose award (20 ECTS), accredited by QQI.

Fees and Funding: Funded by the Micro-credential Learner Fee Subsidy 2026. Programme fees are subsidised at 80% for all eligible learners.

A student contribution fee of €340 is applicable for this course. This must be paid no later than 13th November 2026. If a student withdraws before commencement the full amount is refundable. No refund will be processed once the student commences the course the week beginning 21st September. See https://www.ncirl.ie/NewStudents for details. This scheme does not cover any allowance for books and materials.

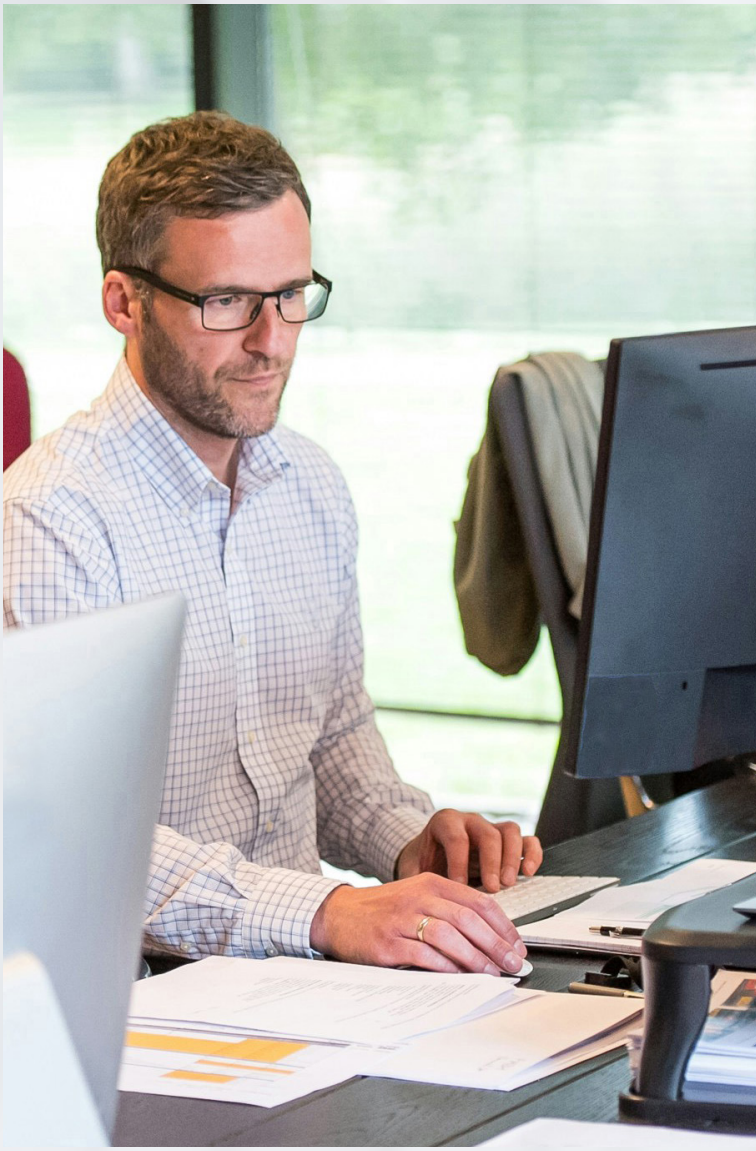
Note - These microcredential courses are a separate funding mechanism to Springboard+ funded programmes.

To Apply: Apply online HEA - Springboard+

About the Course

This short programme is specifically designed to support professionals from non-computing and computing backgrounds to develop an informed understanding of modern digital technologies and how they may benefit or address the challenges faced by all types of organisations.

It will give you a solid grounding in technologies such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, internet of things, blockchain and digital transformation, and more, and will allow you to think about how these technologies can be used in any organisation. The programme focuses on applied knowledge rather than advanced technical development, equipping learners to contribute to digital initiatives, innovation projects and technology-informed decision-making within their organisations.



Who is the course for

This programme is designed for professionals from both computing and non-computing backgrounds who wish to develop an understanding of emerging digital technologies and their application in organisational and business contexts. It is suitable for individuals involved in digital initiatives, transformation projects, or technology-informed decision-making, as well as those seeking to upskill or progress to further study in computing or digital business disciplines.

Career Benefits

Industry has a growing demand for digital upskilling, particularly in areas such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, internet of things, blockchain and digital transformation. This course responds to priorities identified by SOLAS, OECD and industry stakeholders, which highlight persistent shortages in digital competencies.

An analysis of current recruitment platforms (e.g., LinkedIn Jobs, IrishJobs.ie and Indeed.ie, reviewed Q2 2025) indicates sustained advertisement of roles requiring competencies in cloud computing, AI applications, data analytics, cybersecurity awareness and digital transformation capability across all sectors. This programme will give you practical knowledge and applied skills in these domains which can help your career progression within existing roles as well as enabling transition into digital-focused positions.

Course Entry Requirements

Applicants are required to hold a minimum Level 6 qualification on the National Framework of Qualifications or equivalent. Applicants from both computing and non-computing backgrounds are eligible.

Candidates who do not meet the formal academic requirements may be considered through Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), based on relevant work experience.

Applicants whose first language is not English must attach a certified qualification of proficiency in English.

Assessment

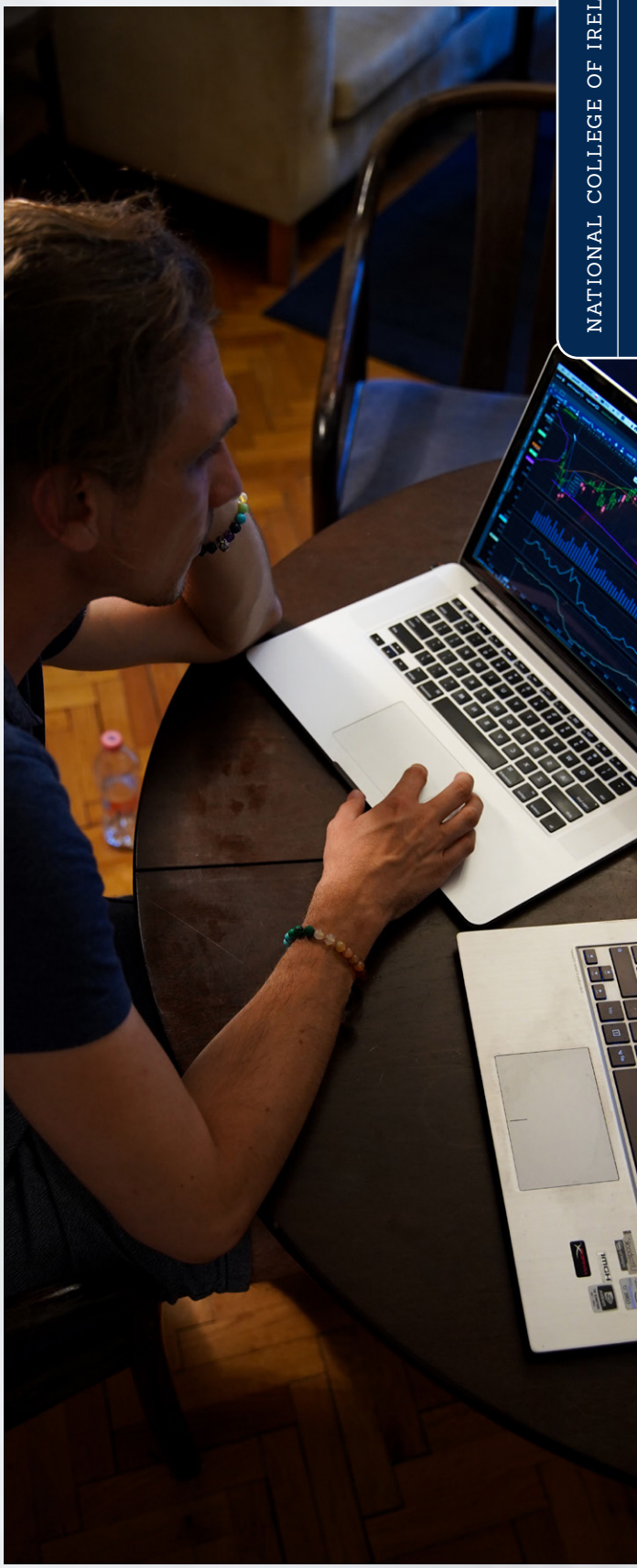
Assessment is 100% project-based (there are no exams), incorporating case studies and reflective components. This ensures alignment with real-world professional contexts and supports authentic learning.

Progression

Students who successfully complete this course may wish to further their study on the Level 8 Certificate in Computing which would then allow them to progress to the level 8 Higher Diploma in Computing.

Laptop Requirements

A suitable minimum specification is 16GB RAM (32GB recommended), a modern Intel i7 /AMD Ryzen 7/ Apple Silicon equivalent processor, at least 256GB SSD storage (512GB recommended), reliable Wi-Fi, and a recent version of Ubuntu, macOS, or Windows. Students must have full administrator rights on their device to install and configure required software and development tools. Access to a webcam, microphone, and power supply for extended lab sessions is also expected.



Course Content

The course is a 20 ECTS programme consisting of two modules.

1. Emerging Digital Technologies
2. Digital Business Transformation

Certificate in
Big Data and AI in Business: Strategy and Emerging Trends

Blended: Online with just one face to face session.

Start Date: 14th of September

Duration: 1 Semester from September to December 2026

Indicative Schedule: Delivered Thursdays from 6 - 9pm with a live online class. There is ust one face to face class at NCI on Saturday October 19th from 10am -3pm (1 hour break)

Award: The Certificate in Big Data and AI in Business: Strategy and Emerging Trends is a NFQ Level 9 Minor award (10 ECTS), accredited by QQI.

Fees and Funding: Funded by the Micro-credential Learner Fee Subsidy 2026. Programme fees are subsidised at 80% for all eligible learners.

A student contribution fee of €260 is applicable for this course. This must be paid no later than 13th November 2026. If a student withdraws before commencement the full amount is refundable. No refund will be processed once the student commences the course the week beginning 21st September. See https://www.ncirl.ie/NewStudents for details. This scheme does not cover any allowance for books and materials.

Note - These microcredential courses are a separate funding mechanism to Springboard+ funded programmes.

To Apply: Apply online HEA - Springboard+

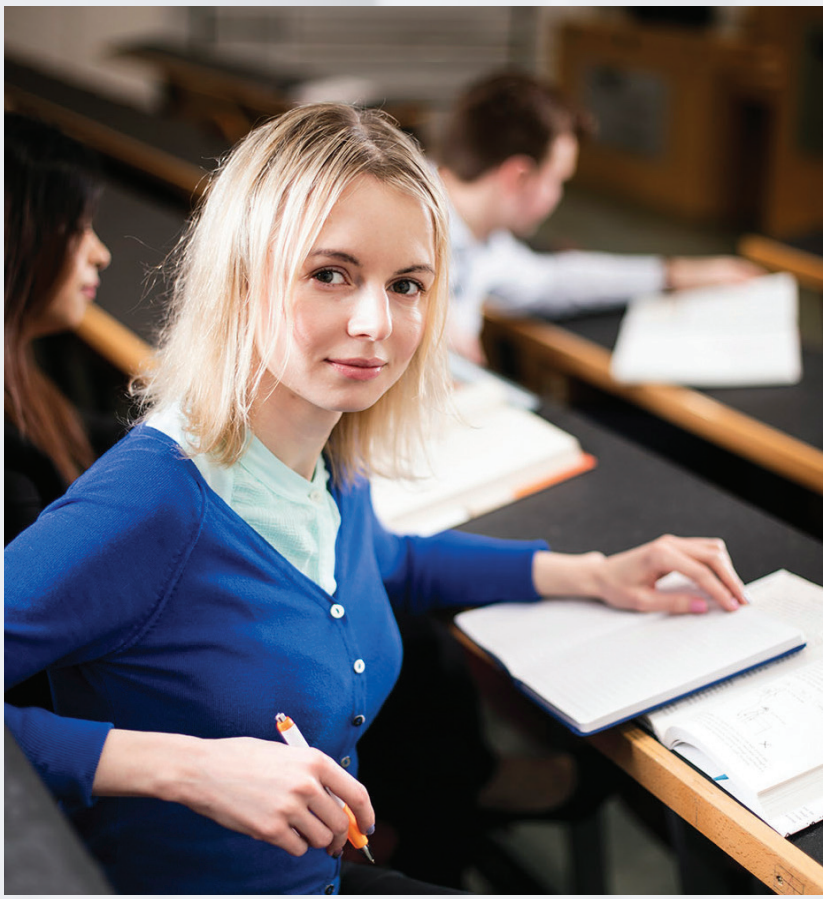
About the Course

This Microcredential equips you to lead at the intersection of big data and artificial intelligence, with no prior technical background required. You will build practical competence in interpreting large datasets using tools like SQL and Python (Pandas, Matplotlib, Seaborn), taught step by step and supported by AI tools, alongside applying analytical frameworks to business problems and critically evaluating AI-driven outputs for decision-making.

Throughout, you will gain an understanding of the technologies but there is emphasis on the human capabilities, where professional judgement remains essential, such as problem framing, critical evaluation of model assumptions, ethical governance (including the EU Artificial Intelligence Act), persuasive communication, and systems thinking.

The module will include discussion on topics including:

- Introduction to business analytics
- Foundations of underlying technologies
- Use cases of big data
- Business implications and strategy
- Effective communication of analytics



Who is the course for

This course will be particularly relevant for new entrants or management seeking strategic competence in data analytics and AI. It would be a very suitable programme for those in operational, project, or general management roles requiring data informed decision making. The ability to understand and apply big data is also highly useful for professionals in areas like marketing, HR, and finance, and a smaller group of entrepreneurs and public sector staff responding to AI governance obligations.

Career Benefits

There is a strong demand for people with big data, artificial intelligence skills and the ability to apply these in business and other contexts. Deloitte's State of AI in the Enterprise (2026) identifies the AI skills shortage, and Skillnet Ireland's Talent Landscape (2025) highlights rising demand for human centred capabilities such as critical thinking, and ethical awareness.

This demand spans almost every sector including financial services, ICT, healthcare, manufacturing, professional services, and the public sector. The combination of technical skills and applied knowledge will be of significant benefit across a wide span of careers.

Course Entry Requirements

Applicants are required to hold a minimum of a 2.2 honours degree in either a cognate or non-cognate area at level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications. Applicants. Applicants from both computing and non-computing backgrounds are eligible.

Candidates who do not meet the formal academic requirements may be considered through Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), based on relevant work experience.

Applicants whose first language is not English must attach a certified qualification of proficiency in English.

Assessment

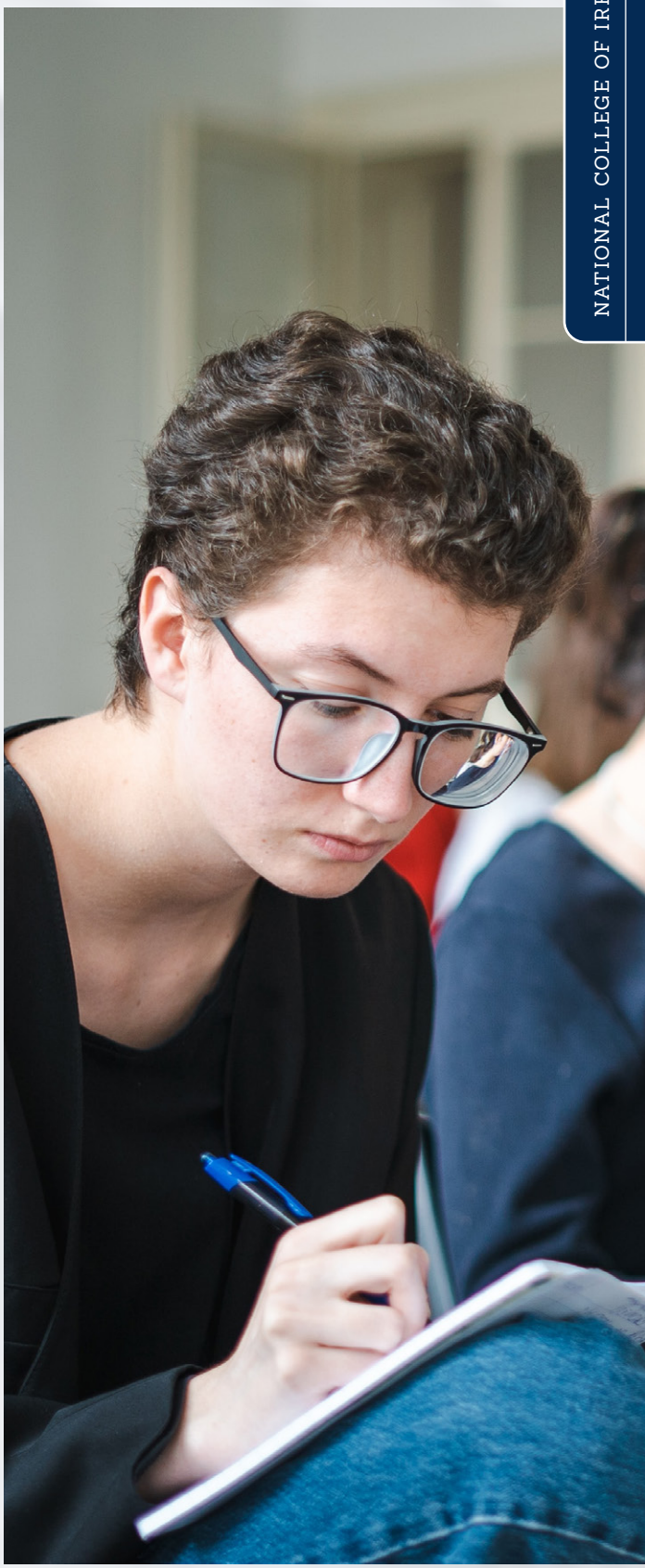
Assessment is fully through continuous assessment (no exams) and integrates analytical, strategic, and communication skills through case studies and a project requiring learners to translate a real world dataset into a evidence based narrative for senior stakeholders.

Progression

Students who successfully complete this course may be eligible to progress to a major award at postgraduate level on the NFQ. Learners who subsequently enrol in the Master of Science in Business Analytics for Decision Makers at NCI may receive recognition for the academic credits and learning achievements attained through this certificate programme.

Laptop Requirements

A suitable minimum specification is 16GB RAM (32GB recommended), a modern Intel i7 /AMD Ryzen 7/ Apple Silicon equivalent processor, at least 256GB SSD storage (512GB recommended), reliable Wi-Fi, and a recent version of Ubuntu, macOS, or Windows. Students must have full administrator rights on their device to install and configure required software and development tools. Access to a webcam, microphone, and power supply for extended lab sessions is also expected.



Course Content

The course is a 10 ECTS programme consisting of one module.

- Certificate in Big Data and AI in Business: Strategy and Emerging Trends

APPLICATION AND ELIGIBILITY

Why Choose NCI

NCI has over 75 years' experience working with part-time students. All programmes under Micro-credential Learner Fee Subsidy 2026 are accredited by QQI, so they are recognised nationally and internationally.

The College provides a supportive environment and tailored facilities for students returning to education after a number of years. In particular for Micro-credential courses a dedicated programme leader will look after the organisation of your course and make sure all your needs are met.

All our programmes are practical and are delivered by industry experts.
We benefit from a convenient location with the LUAS just outside the door and we are minutes from Connolly Station.

Laptop and Internet Access Requirements

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they have a computer device of sufficient specification to complete their course and adequate internet connectivity where appropriate.

Eligibility for Funding

The eligibility criteria for Micro-credential Learner Fee Subsidy funded courses are the same as the published eligibility criteria for Springboard+ funded courses.

As a general guide eligible candidate for a funded place can be employed, unemployed, a returner to the workforce, or a recent graduate. All applicants must have a valid PPS number, be living full-time in the Republic of Ireland, be an EU, EEA, UK or Swiss national and to have been resident in the EU/ EEA/ UK/ Switzerland for 3 full years out of previous 5 years.

Unemployed applicants must be Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) customers and in receipt of an eligible DEASP payment, signing for social insurance contribution credits or be previously self-employed to be eligible for a funded place under Micro-credential Learner Fee Subsidy 2026 programme

This is a general guide only. For full eligibility criteria please see:
'Am I Eligible'? Eligibility for a Micro-credential Learner Fee Subsidy 2026 programme can be checked at www.springboardcourses.ie/eligibility.

Application

Please feel free to contact us on 1800 221 721 (Option 4) to enquire about an application. Alternatively, you can email springboard@ncirl.ie. We are not permitted to accept applications directly from candidates as all Micro-credential Learner Fee Subsidy 2026 programme applications must be made online through https://springboardcourses.ie/. Please note that all applicants must meet NCI's academic admission criteria for any courses and as per previous years all courses run subject to numbers. Eligibility for funding does not infer eligibility for this course.

Places Available:

Demand for these courses is expected to exceed the number of available places and places are limited. Decisions are communicated through www. springboardcourses.ie. If you do not meet the normal academic entry requirements, please do not delay in applying as you may be required to submit additional documentation and/ or participate in an interview. A cut-off date for applications will also apply and this will be posted on the https://springboardcourses.ie/ website when you make an application to NCI. This date is subject to change based on programme demand and programmes may close at any time without warning when capacity is reached.

Note: Programmes are available for study within Republic of Ireland only.

Department of Social Protection

Unemployed applicants should consult their DSP Employment Personal Advisor / relevant DSP section before applying for an approved course.

We advise that all payment queries should be addressed to your local Intreo, Social Welfare Office to confirm continuation of a Social Protection payment.

More information can be found at 'Social Protection FAQs' https://springboardcourses.ie/faq.

Course Funding in the Event of Obtaining a Job

Should you obtain a job during your course of study the funding will remain in place for the duration of your course. The timing of the classes is aimed to allow people to work and study at the same time. If you do gain employment during the course, please contact us to see how we can best facilitate you completing your course. If you do not qualify under Micro-credential Learner Fee Subsidy 2026 you may apply directly to National College of Ireland for our fee-paying courses at admissions@ ncirl.ie.

For Further Information Contact

Tel: 1800 221 721 (Option 4)
Web: www.ncirl.ie
Email: springboard@ncirl.ie

INFORMATION EVENINGS

Speak to the lecturers at one of our Online or On Campus Open Evenings

Thursday 16th July, 5-7pm – **ONLINE**

Saturday 22nd August, 11am-1pm – **CAMPUS**

Wednesday 2nd September, 5-7pm – **ONLINE**

Contact Info

National College of Ireland
Mayor Street, IFSC, Dublin 1

Tel: *Reception (01) 4498500*
Course/College Info: *1800 221 721 (Option 4)*
Email: *springboard@ncirl.ie*
Web: *www.ncirl.ie*

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