



Developing Talent, Changing Lives

An Evaluation of Springboard+, 2011-16

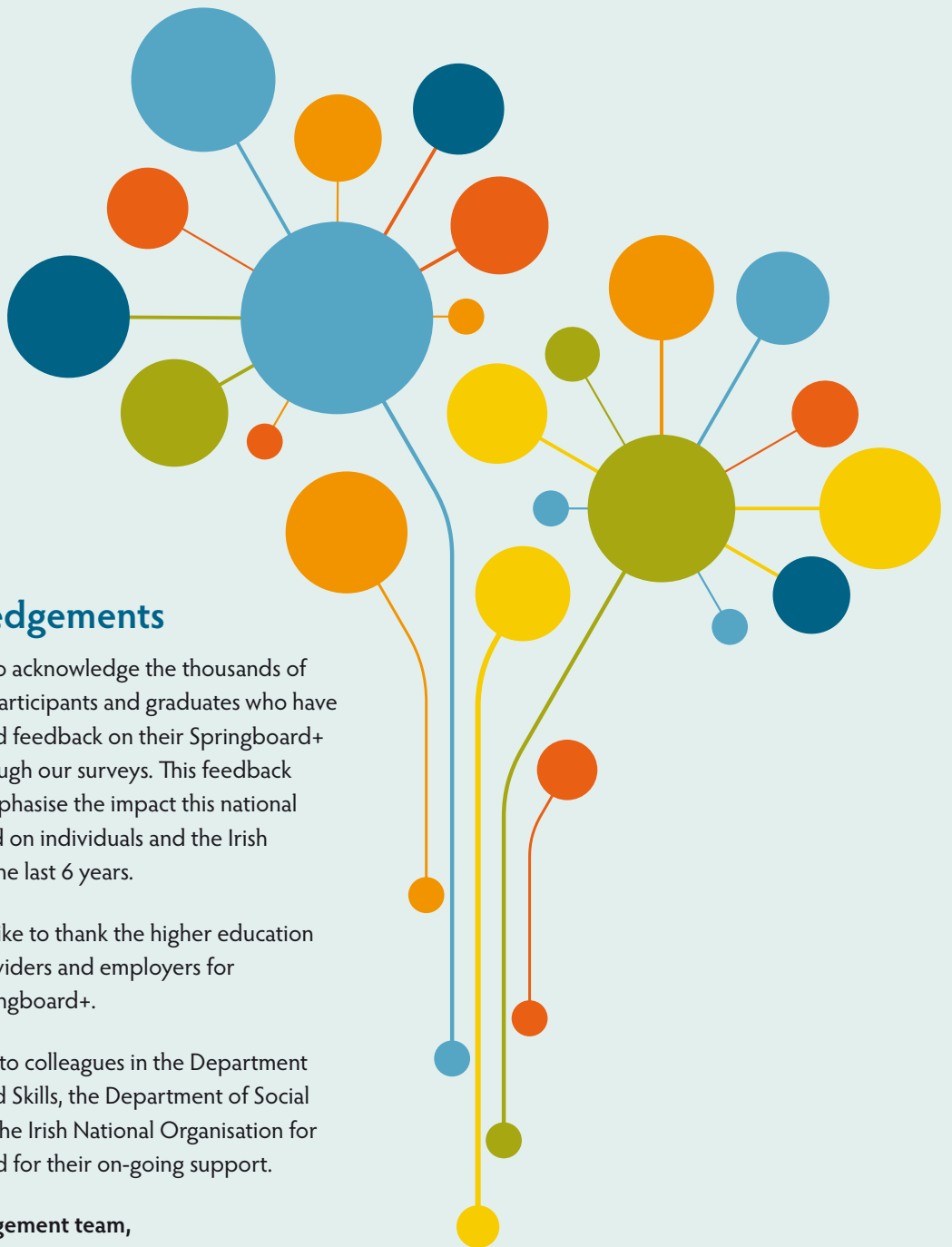
November 2016



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Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the thousands of Springboard+ participants and graduates who have given us detailed feedback on their Springboard+ experience through our surveys. This feedback continues to emphasise the impact this national initiative has had on individuals and the Irish economy over the last 6 years.

We would also like to thank the higher education institutions, providers and employers for supporting Springboard+.

Our thanks also to colleagues in the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Social Protection and the Irish National Organisation for the Unemployed for their on-going support.

Skills and Engagement team,

Higher Education Authority

November 2016

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1 INTRODUCTION

In May 2011, the then Minister for Education and Skills launched 'Springboard' as part of the Government's plans to tackle high levels of unemployment. Specifically Springboard was to provide free upskilling and reskilling opportunities for those who had lost their jobs in the recession. The primary objective of the Springboard initiative was 'to help unemployed people to remain as close as possible to the labour market by accessing part-time flexible higher education and training opportunities to up-skill or re-skill in areas where sustainable employment opportunities may arise as the economy recovers'. In addition, Springboard aimed to 'enhance collaboration and engagement between the enterprise sector and higher education providers in the design and delivery of higher education programmes, thereby meeting the ongoing and future demand for qualified employees; and increase the skills profile of the labour force in line with the targets and objectives of the National Skills Strategy'.¹

All of the courses offered lead to awards at certificate, degree and post-graduate level and the vast majority have been one-year or less in duration and part-time. All are aimed to reskill people in areas where there was evidence of job opportunities at that point in time and into the future. The skills areas broadly covered include information and communications technology (ICT); high level manufacturing (including bio-pharma and medical device technologies); international financial services; skills to trade internationally; cross-enterprise skills; entrepreneurship, food and agriculture and construction. While the ICT Skills Conversion courses began in 2012, they were only added to Springboard (to form Springboard+) in 2014. A particular feature of Springboard+ has been the mixture of provision from the public and private higher education sectors.

To date €113m has been invested by Government in Springboard+ and over 30,000 course places have been filled, with a further 5,825 places coming on stream in autumn 2016. This report builds on previous HEA reports on Springboard+² and presents an analysis of participants, and the academic output and employment outcomes data for Springboard+ participants over the course of four years.

Figure 1: Previous Springboard+ Reports



1 HEA, Springboard Call for Proposals, January 2011. Page 3

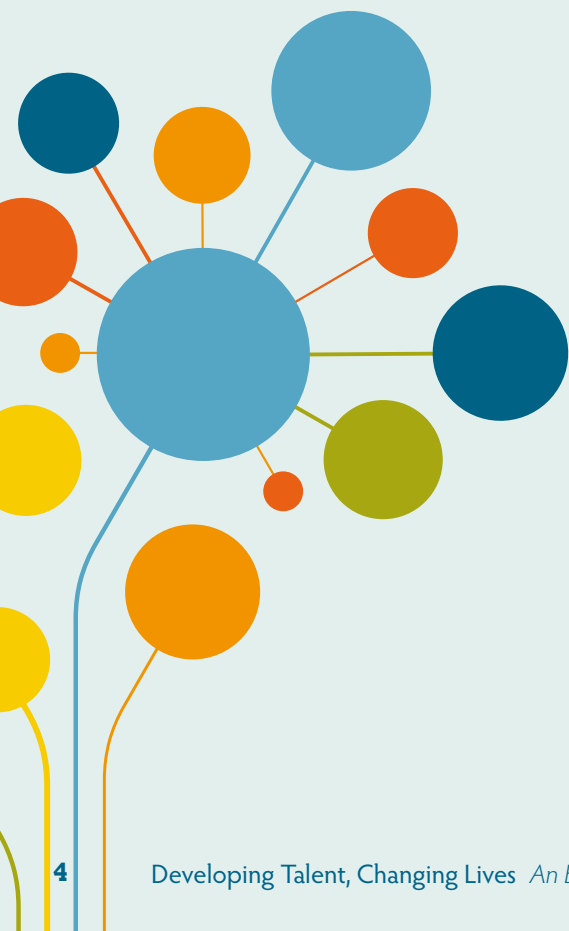
2 See www.springboardcourses.ie

2 METHODOLOGY

The data provided in this report is derived primarily from the Springboard+ Application Management System (AMS) and ongoing surveys of Springboard+ participants.

The AMS provides application data, including academic and employment outcomes, for the 22,531 participants between 2011/12 and 2014/15. At time of writing, 14,255 (63% of total) participants have graduated from initiatives spanning these academic years. The full set of data on the 2014/15 academic and employment outcomes was not available. The employment outcomes analysed in the Outcomes section of this report relate to the 10,381 graduates (73% of total graduates) for whom an outcome has been reported. Of the graduates for whom an outcome has been reported, 5,459 (53%) were reported to be in employment or self-employment, and a detailed analysis of this cohort can be found in the Outcomes section of this report.

Two surveys are conducted of Springboard+ participants and graduates. The first is a survey of recent participants (within the last academic year) and the second is a survey, at periodic times, of all part participants. The appendix provides a sample of both surveys.



Specifically, surveys were conducted on the following dates:

Surveyed Cohort	Survey Reference Number	Focus of Survey	Survey Launched
Springboard 2011	1.0	Gathering qualitative data on Springboard 2011 cohort	Oct 21st 2011
	1.1	Employment outcomes after 6 weeks	Aug 9th 2012
	1.2	Employment outcomes after 6 months	Jan 24th 2013
	1.3	Employment outcomes after 1 year	Oct 14th 2013
	1.4	Employment outcomes after 3 years	Jan 8th 2015
	1.5	Employment outcomes after 4 years	May 16th 2016
Springboard 2012	2.0	Gathering qualitative data on Springboard 2012 cohort	Nov 12th 2012
	2.1	Employment outcomes after 6 weeks	July 29th 2013
	2.2	Employment outcomes after 6 months	Feb 26th 2014
	2.3	Employment outcomes after 2 years	Jan 8th 2015
	2.4	Employment outcomes after 3 years	May 16th 2016
Springboard 2013	3.0	Gathering qualitative data on Springboard 2013 cohort	Dec 2nd 2013
	3.1	Employment outcomes after 6 weeks	June 3rd 2014
	3.2	Employment outcomes after 6 months	Jan 8th 2015
	3.3	Employment outcomes after 2 years	May 16th 2016
Springboard+ 2014	4.0	Gathering qualitative data on Springboard+ 2014 cohort	3rd November 2014
	4.1	Employment outcomes after 6 weeks	June 8th 2015
	4.2	Employment outcomes after 1 year	May 16th 2016
Springboard+ 2015	5.0	Gathering qualitative data on Springboard+ 2015 cohort	November 9th 2015

3 KEY POINTS: INPUTS, OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

Section 3 provides information on some key inputs, outputs and outcomes from Springboard and Springboard+ between 2011 and 2016. More detailed data on each of these is provided in Sections 4, 5 and 6.

1,349
courses

51
providers

40,500
funded
places

88%
average
participation
rate

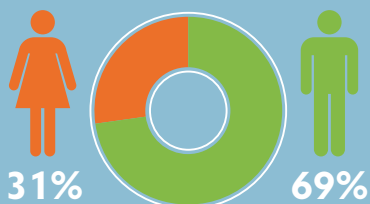
2011

INPUTS

2016

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

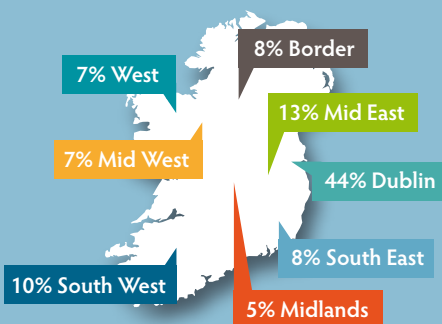
SPRINGBOARD COURSES



ICT SKILLS CONVERSION COURSES



WHERE THEY COME FROM



AGE GROUP



81%

of participants had a
level 6-10 award prior to
commencing the course.

OUTPUTS

2011/12

2014/15

72%

ACADEMIC OUTPUTS

Of those who participated on a Springboard+ course between 2011-2014, 72% graduated or are awaiting an academic outcome and 28% did not successfully complete their course.

NON-COMPLETION % OF SPRINGBOARD+ COURSES

35% 2011

13%* 2014



ACADEMIC OUTPUTS BY SKILLS SECTOR

The highest levels of graduation are from courses in the Management/Business/Entrepreneurship and Financial Services sectors (70%), with the highest levels of non-completion in 'Other' and Construction.

A number of non-completers do so as they gain employment during their studies.

* Not all outcomes were reported at time of writing

OUTCOMES

2011/12

2014/15

EMPLOYMENT RATES BY INITIATIVE 3-6 MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION



76%

Reported Outcomes
10,381



53%

In employment
5,459



19%

Further Study
2,009



28%

Looking for Work
2,913



73%

ICT Skills Conversion
Employment

SPRINGBOARD+ EMPLOYMENT HAS RISEN YEAR-ON-YEAR

Outcomes were reported for 76% of the graduates. Employment rates vary between Springboard and the Level 8 ICT Skills Conversion courses with higher levels reported for ICT Skills Conversion courses.



37% 2011



61% 2014

80%*

of Springboard+ participants (2011-2015) are **NO LONGER ON THE LIVE REGISTER**

* As of 16th July 2016

SPRINGBOARD+ EMPLOYMENT

OUTCOMES [CONTINUED]

EMPLOYMENT RATES BY SKILLS SECTOR 3-6 MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION



Construction/
Green Economy

39%



ICT

53%



Manufacturing/
Biopharmachem

55%



Financial Services

45%



Management/Business/
Entrepreneurship

54%



Other Skills Areas

46%

SENTIMENT



90% of respondents strongly agree or agree that Springboard+ has had a positive impact on their life. [9,400 respondents]

96% of respondents said they would recommend a Springboard+ courses to their friends or family. [13,063 respondents]

69% of all participants strongly agree or agree that their career has developed or grown since completing Springboard+. [4,399 respondents]

For ICT Skills Conversion participants 77% strongly agree with the statement. [539 respondents]

71% of overall respondents either strongly agree or agree that since finishing the courses their overall outlook and optimism about their career prospects improved. [2,195 respondents]

For ICT Skills Conversion courses only the rate is 78%. [278 respondents]

4 INPUTS 2011-2016

This section provides a range of Springboard+ inputs data, for the years 2011 to 2016. Specifically, data is provided on the number of courses and providers each year, including associated participant rates. Data is also provided on places per National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) level and participants by region.

Table 4.1: Overview of number of courses, providers, places and participants 2011-2016

Springboard+ Cohort	Courses	Providers	Places	Participants	Participation Rate
2011	210	35	5,883	4,907	83%
2012	236	38	6,842	6,266	92%
2013	216	37	6,831	6,184	91%
2014	212	38	6,104	5,102	84%
2015	295	42	9,109	8,184	90%
2016	180	36	5,825	–	–

6,129
participants



Table 4.1 provides data on the number of courses, higher education providers, places, participants and participation rates for the years 2011 to 2016.

There has been an average of 6,129 participants per year, with an average participation rate of 88% based on all places available. Higher education providers are both public and private.

88%

AVERAGE PARTICIPATION RATE BASED ON ALL PLACES AVAILABLE

Table 4.2: Number of places provided by NFQ level, 2011-2016

NFQ Level	SB2011	SB2012	SB2013	SB2014	SB2015	SB2016
Level 6	1,265 (22%)	1,554 (23%)	1,065 (16%)	839 (14%)	1,548 (17%)	915 (16%)
Level 7	1,527 (26%)	1,451 (21%)	1,463 (21%)	1,334 (22%)	2,014 (22%)	1,120 (19%)
Level 8	1,921 (33%)	3,036 (44%)	2,995 (44%)	2,737 (45%)	3,769 (41%)	2,838 (49%)
Level 9	1,170 (20%)	801 (12%)	1,308 (19%)	1,194 (20%)	1,778 (20%)	952 (16%)
Total	5,883 (100%)	6,842 (100%)	6,831 (100%)	6,104 (100%)	9,109 (100%)	5,825 (100%)

Table 4.2 provides a breakdown of the number and proportion of places approved from 2011-2016 by NFQ level. More courses were provided at level 8 in each of the years, but it should be noted that this includes ICT conversion courses which are all level 8.

Table 4.3: Percentage of places by region (including online only courses)

Region	SB2011	SB2012	SB2013	SB2014	SB2015	SB2016
Online	10%	8%	10%	8%	11%	15%
Border	5%	5%	6%	4%	7%	6%
Dublin	63%	57%	56%	65%	58%	54%
Midlands	0%	3%	2%	2%	3%	1%
Mid-East	0%	2%	0%	2%	0%	2%
Mid-West	4%	6%	7%	4%	5%	5%
South-East	4%	4%	6%	5%	7%	7%
South-West	10%	10%	11%	9%	6%	5%
West	4%	5%	2%	2%	4%	3%
Total	5,883	6,842	6,831	6,104	9,109	5,825

15%



The provision of online only courses increased from 10% of places in 2011 to 15% in 2016.

Given the number of HEIs, public and private, concentrated in the greater Dublin area it is not surprising that Dublin accounts for a significant portion of participants. The rest of the participants are generally spread out around the border counties, the mid-west, the south-west, the south-east and the west.

TABLE 4.4: AVERAGE COST PER PLACE BY SECTOR, 2011-2016 (€)



Construction/
Green Economy

€3,282



ICT Part-time

€4,105



Manufacturing/
Biopharmachem

€4,378



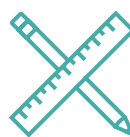
Financial Services

€4,041



Management/Business/
Entrepreneurship

€3,602



Other Skills Areas

€3,502



ICT Conversion

€6,297



THE AVERAGE COST ACROSS ALL
SECTORS OVER SIX YEARS IS

€4,264

Table 4.4 provides information on the average cost per Springboard+ place over the 6-year period. The average cost across all sectors over six years is €4,264. While there is a fluctuation in average costs per sector this is not unanticipated as different types of courses, at different NQF levels, are approved each year after a competitive call. The table shows that ICT Skills Conversion courses full-time have the highest cost per place.

Participant profiles, 2011/12 to 2014/15

This section examines the overall profile of a Springboard+ participant.

Table 4.5: Participants by Age

Age	Total Participants	ICT Skills 2012	ICT Skills 2013	ICT Skills 2014	SB2011	SB2012	SB2013	SB2014
Under 20	34 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	9 (0%)	10 (0%)	7 (0%)	8 (0%)
20 to 29	5,560 (25%)	265 (38%)	265 (39%)	278 (36%)	1,188 (24%)	1,342 (24%)	1,264 (23%)	958 (22%)
30 to 39	8,423 (37%)	259 (37%)	247 (36%)	300 (38%)	2,003 (40%)	2,104 (38%)	2,013 (37%)	1,497 (35%)
40 to 49	5,948 (26%)	138 (20%)	110 (16%)	146 (19%)	1,300 (26%)	1,483 (27%)	1,467 (27%)	1,304 (30%)
50 to 59	2,136 (9%)	36 (5%)	26 (4%)	48 (6%)	414 (8%)	560 (10%)	598 (11%)	454 (11%)
60 to 65	175 (1%)	2 (0%)	4 (1%)	4 (1%)	32 (1%)	41 (1%)	58 (1%)	34 (1%)
Null	253 (1%)	4 (1%)	26 (4%)	5 (1%)	34 (1%)	21 (0%)	99 (2%)	64 (1%)
Total	22,529*	704	678	781	4,980	5,561	5,506	4,319

* Some 'nulls' removed

As can be seen from the data, almost two thirds (63%) of participants were between the ages of 30 and 49 years, although 175 people aged 60-65 enrolled between 2011 and 2015.

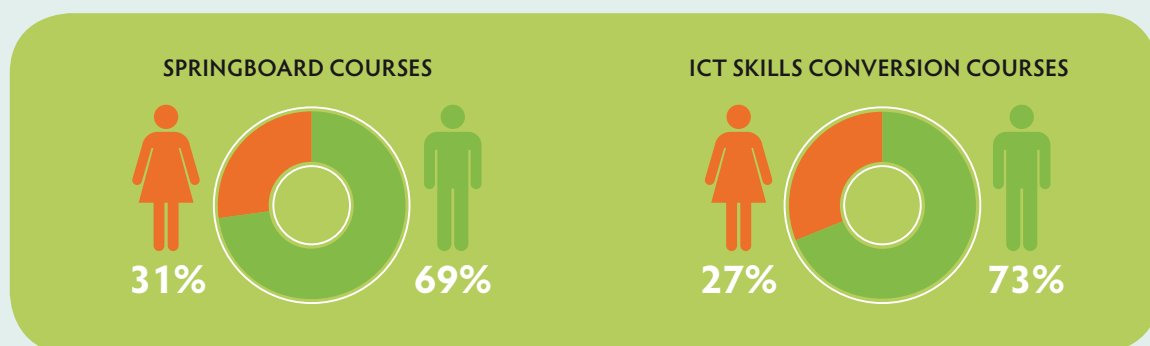


Table 4.6: Participants by Gender

Gender	Total Participants	ICT Skills 2012	ICT Skills 2013	ICT Skills 2014	SB2011	SB2012	SB2013	SB2014
Male	15,572 (69%)	526 (75%)	496 (73%)	561 (72%)	3,681 (74%)	3,920 (70%)	3,651 (66%)	2,737 (63%)
Female	6,949 (31%)	176 (25%)	180 (27%)	220 (28%)	1,295 (26%)	1,641 (30%)	1,855 (34%)	1,582 (37%)
Total	22,521*	702	676	781	4,976	5,561	5,506	4,319

* Some 'nulls' removed

Over two thirds (69%) of participants have been male, and this may be reflective of the significant downturn in the construction sector which is predominantly male.



It is interesting to note that the proportion of females participating on Springboard+ ICT courses is 27% which is almost double that entering through the CAO system to mainstream ICT courses at 15%.



Table 4.7: Participants by Prior Education

Prior Education	Total Participants	ICT Skills 2012	ICT Skills 2013	ICT Skills 2014	SB2011	SB2012	SB2013	SB2014
Master's Degree or PhD	3,719 (17%)	169 (24%)	160 (24%)	171 (22%)	857 (17%)	961 (17%)	732 (13%)	669 (15%)
Level 8	7,962 (35%)	391 (56%)	434 (64%)	442 (57%)	1,416 (28%)	1,657 (30%)	2,026 (37%)	1,596 (37%)
Level 7	2,750 (12%)	46 (7%)	45 (7%)	103 (13%)	572 (11%)	725 (13%)	633 (11%)	626 (14%)
Level 6	3,812 (17%)	4 (1%)	12 (2%)	34 (4%)	496 (10%)	1,393 (25%)	1,323 (24%)	550 (13%)
Professional Qualification**	349 (2%)	3 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	346 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Secondary Level	3,550 (16%)	14 (2%)	4 (1%)	31 (4%)	1,128 (23%)	792 (14%)	703 (13%)	878 (20%)
Null	387 (2%)	77 (11%)	23 (3%)	0 (0%)	165 (3%)	33 (1%)	89 (2%)	0 (0%)
Total	22,529*	704	678	781	4,980	5,561	5,506	4,319

* Some 'nulls' removed

** This class was removed from the Applications Management System after the SB2011 and ICT Skills Conversion 2012 initiatives



Participants of Springboard+ have had a prior education qualification spanning the second level through to Masters and PhDs.

Table 4.8: Participants by Skills Sector

Skills Sector	Total Participants	ICT Skills 2012	ICT Skills 2013	ICT Skills 2014	SB2011	SB2012	SB2013	SB2014
Construction/ Green Economy	1,084 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	535 (11%)	467 (8%)	0 (0%)	82 (2%)
Financial Services	1,419 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	349 (7%)	446 (8%)	291 (5%)	333 (8%)
ICT	9,463 (42%)	704 (100%)	678 (100%)	781 (100%)	1,892 (38%)	2,064 (37%)	1,937 (35%)	1,407 (33%)
Management/ Business/ Entrepreneurship	5,511 (24%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1,339 (27%)	1,176 (21%)	1,913 (35%)	1,083 (25%)
Manufacturing/ Biopharmachem	4,471 (20%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	840 (17%)	1,148 (21%)	1,134 (21%)	1,349 (31%)
Other Skills Sectors	581 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	25 (1%)	260 (5%)	231 (4%)	65 (2%)
Total	22,529*	704	678	781	4,980	5,561	5,506	4,319

* Some 'nulls' removed

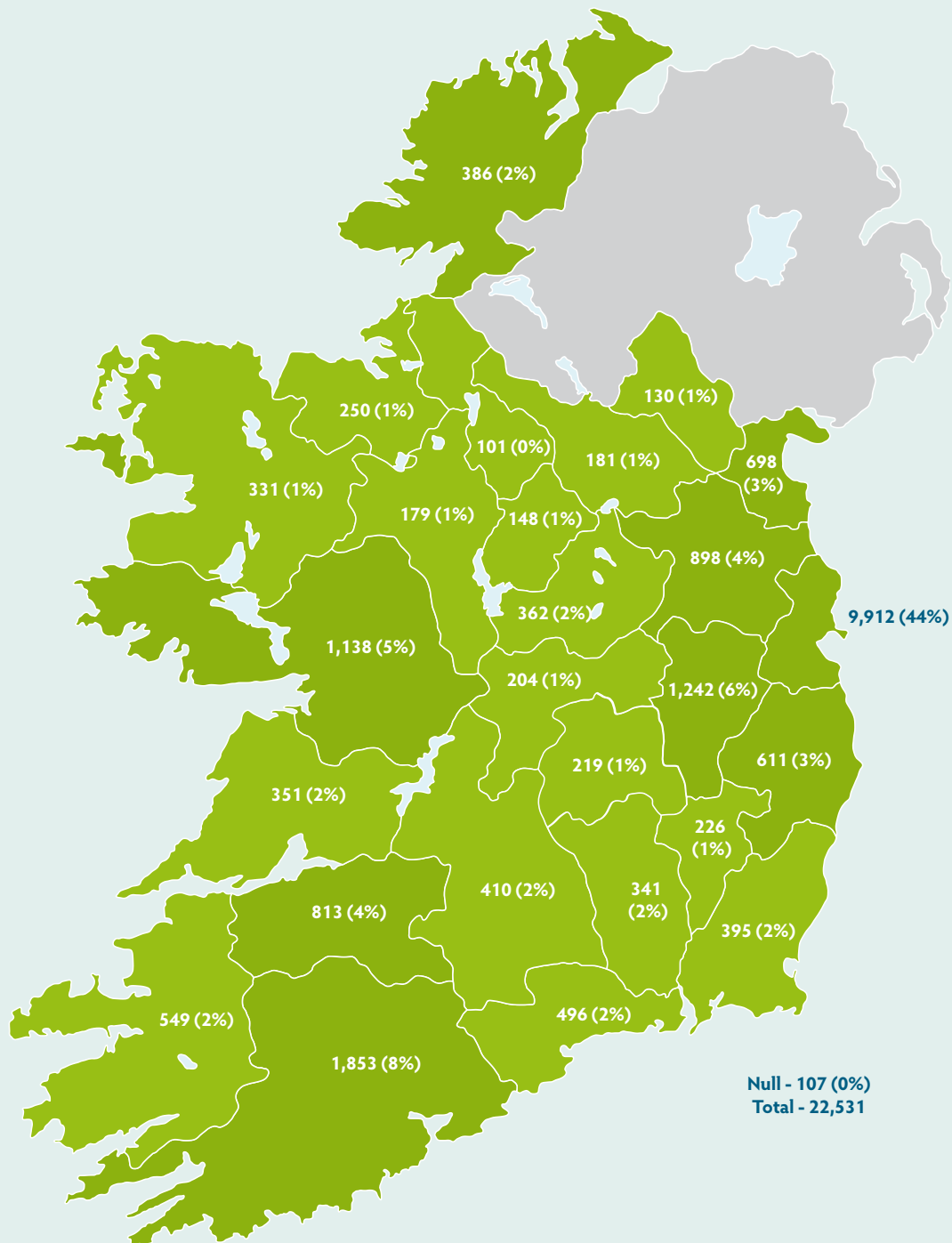
42% of the overall participants, including ICT Skills Conversion courses, were on ICT courses. Another 44% participated on management/business/entrepreneurship or a manufacturing/bio-pharma course.

42%

of participants were on ICT courses

44% participated on management/business/entrepreneurship or a manufacturing/bio-pharma course.

Table 4.9: Participants by County



The majority of participants are from the Dublin region at 44%, but this is consistent with the level of provision in Dublin, the size of the population in the city and the concentration of higher education institutions in and around the capital. This is followed by 13% in the Mid-East, 10% in South West, 8% in the South East, 7% in the Midlands, 7% in the West and Mid-West 7%, and 5% in the Border counties.

5 ACADEMIC OUTPUTS 2011-2014

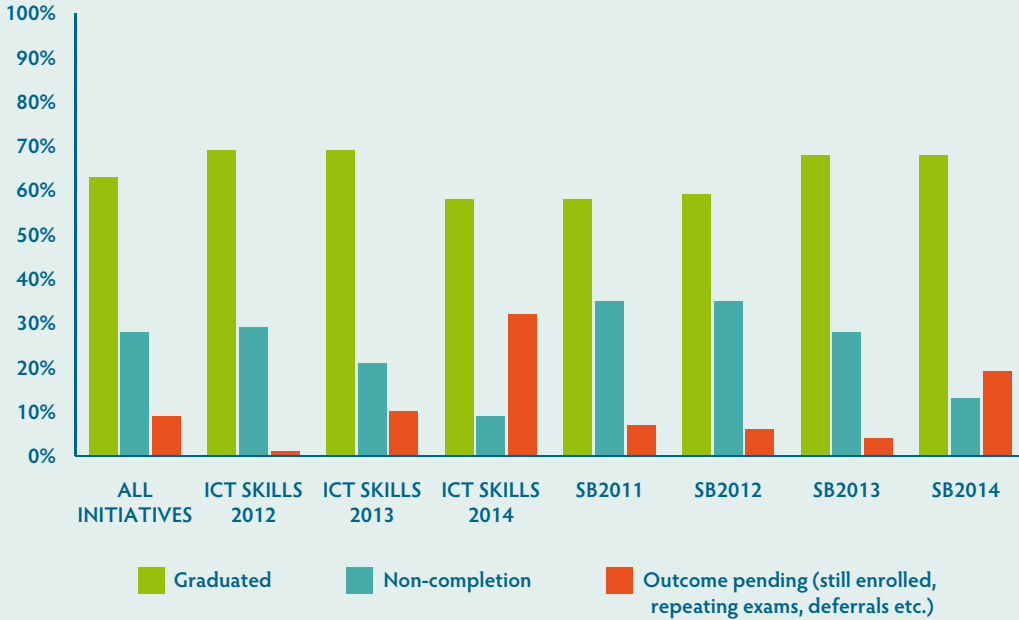
This section provides data on the academic outputs of Springboard+, including ICT Skills Conversion courses, between 2011 and 2014. The data is collected on the HEA's Application Management System (AMS). The data provided below includes academic data by year, skills sector and by level of course.

Table 5.1: Academic Outputs by Initiative

Academic Outcome	All Initiatives	ICT Skills 2012	ICT Skills 2013	ICT Skills 2014	SB2011	SB2012	SB2013	SB2014
Graduated	14,255 (63%)	487 (69%)	468 (69%)	455 (58%)	2,902 (58%)	3,290 (59%)	3,725 (68%)	2,928 (68%)
Non-completion	6,225 (28%)	207 (29%)	144 (21%)	72 (9%)	1,755 (35%)	1,928 (35%)	1,547 (28%)	572 (13%)
Outcome Pending*	2,051 (9%)	10 (1%)	66 (10%)	254 (32%)	323 (7%)	343 (6%)	234 (4%)	821 (19%)
Total	22,531 (100%)	704 (100%)	678 (100%)	781 (100%)	4,980 (100%)	5,561 (100%)	5,506 (100%)	4,321 (100%)

* (Still enrolled, repeating exams, deferrals etc.)

ACADEMIC OUTPUT BY INITIATIVE 2011-2014



As can be seen in Table 5.1, of the 22,531 (72%) participants for which full data is available between 2011 and 2014, 63% graduated and 9% are awaiting an academic outcome. 28% of participants between 2011 and 2014 did not successfully complete their course. However, the number of those that did not successfully complete a Springboard+ course has steadily improved with successive years, decreasing from 35% in 2011 to 13% in 2014 at time of writing. A number of non-completers do so as they gain employment during their studies.

32% of the participants on ICT Skills Conversion courses in 2014 are currently awaiting an academic outcome and/or are still enrolled. It should be noted that ICT Skills Conversion courses are one full calendar year in length and also include mandatory work placements which can last from three to six months. Some of the 2014 ICT Skills Conversion courses started in Spring 2015, therefore the 32% figure is not unexpected at this point. It is expected that the ICT Skills Conversion 2014 graduation rate will improve to a rate similar to 2012 and 2013 when all outcomes are available.

OF THE

22,531

PARTICIPANTS FOR WHICH DATA IS AVAILABLE BETWEEN 2011 AND 2014

63%
graduated

9%
awaiting an academic outcome

28%
did not complete

2011

35%



2014

13%*

* at time of writing

HOWEVER, THE NUMBER OF THOSE THAT DID NOT SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE A SPRINGBOARD+ COURSE HAS STEADILY IMPROVED WITH SUCCESSIVE YEARS, DECREASING FROM 35% IN 2011 TO 13% IN 2014

Table 5.2: Academic Outputs by Skills Sector, Overall 2011 to 2014

Skills Sector	Total Participants (% of all disciplines)	Graduated (% of participants in that discipline)	Non-completion (% of participants in that discipline)	Outcome Pending*
Construction/Green Economy	1,084 (5%)	560 (52%)	346 (32%)	178 (17%)
Financial Services	1,419 (6%)	944 (67%)	358 (25%)	117 (7%)
ICT	9,463 (42%)	5,641 (60%)	2,888 (31%)	934 (10%)
Management/ Business/ Entrepreneurship	5,512 (24%)	3,858 (70%)	1,307 (24%)	347 (6%)
Manufacturing/ Biopharmachem	4,472 (20%)	2,901 (65%)	1,130 (25%)	441 (10%)
Other Skills Areas	581 (3%)	351 (60%)	196 (34%)	34 (6%)
Total	22,531 (100%)	14,255 (63%)	6,225 (28%)	2,051 (9%)

* (Still enrolled, repeating exams, deferrals etc.)

The highest levels of graduation are from courses in the Management/Business/Entrepreneurship and Financial Services sectors, with the highest levels of non-completion in 'Other' and Construction. As noted above, the graduation rate for the longer ICT Skills Conversion courses is expected to improve when all 2014 academic outcomes are available.

Table 5.3: Academic Outputs by NFQ Level, 2011 to 2014

NFQ Level	Total Participants (% of all Levels)	Graduated (% of participants at that level)	Non-completion (% of participants at that level)	Outcome Pending*
Level 6	4,746 (21%)	2,709 (57%)	1,724 (36%)	313 (6%)
Level 7	4,947 (22%)	3,131 (63%)	1,417 (29%)	399 (8%)
Level 8	9,474 (42%)	6,156 (65%)	2,419 (26%)	899 (9%)
Level 9	3,364 (15%)	2,259 (67%)	665 (20%)	440 (13%)
Total	22,531 (100%)	14,255 (63%)	6,225 (28%)	2,051 (9%)

* (Still enrolled, repeating exams, deferrals etc.)

The data shows that the higher the level of qualification the higher the graduation rate. As mentioned above the level 8 graduation rate is expected to further improve when the outcomes for all 2014 ICT Skills Conversion courses are available.

6 OUTCOMES 2011-2014

This section provides data on the employment outcomes for Springboard+ participants, including ICT Skills Conversion courses, between 2011 and 2014. The data is collected on the Application Management System. A range of data is provided in the tables below and includes employment data by year; academic outcome; qualification level; skills sector; prior education; gender; age; and county of residence.

Table 6.1: Reported Employment Rates by Initiative for Graduates, 3-6 months following graduation

Initiative	Reported Outcomes	In employment	Further Study	Looking for Work
Springboard 2011	1,941 (69%)	721 (37%)	519 (27%)	701 (36%)
Springboard 2012	2,344 (75%)	1,096 (47%)	581 (25%)	667 (28%)
Springboard 2013	2,323 (68%)	1,206 (52%)	430 (19%)	687 (30%)
Springboard 2014	2,531 (86%)	1,532 (61%)	393 (16%)	606 (24%)
ICT Skills 2012	479 (92%)	329 (69%)	33 (7%)	117 (24%)
ICT Skills 2013	366 (92%)	286 (78%)	16 (4%)	64 (17%)
ICT Skills 2014	397 (87%)	289 (73%)	37 (9%)	71 (18%)
Total	10,381 (76%)	5,459 (53%)	2,009 (19%)	2,913 (28%)

80%*

of Springboard+ participants (2011-2015) are **NO LONGER ON THE LIVE REGISTER**

* As of 16th July 2016

Table 6.1 provides employment outcomes per year, three to six months after graduation, for graduates only. Outcomes are reported for 76% of the graduates. The overall employment rate 3-6 months after graduation is 53%. The overall level of employment has risen year-on-year, with the number seeking work decreasing. As can be seen in the table the level of employment for ICT Skills Conversion graduates are higher, 78% and 73% for 2013 and 2014 graduates respectively.

Table 6.2: Reported Employment Rates by Academic Outcome for all Participants, 3-6 months following graduation

Academic Outcome	All Initiatives	ICT Skills 2012	ICT Skills 2013	ICT Skills 2014	SB 2011	SB 2012	SB 2013	SB 2014
Graduated	5,459 (53%)	329 (69%)	286 (78%)	289 (73%)	721 (37%)	1,096 (47%)	1,206 (52%)	1,532 (61%)
Non-Completion Outcome Pending*	1,237 (36%)	32 (22%)	25 (30%)	8 (44%)	257 (28%)	371 (32%)	324 (42%)	220 (58%)
Enrolled	509 (51%)	18 (58%)	9 (53%)	35 (48%)	43 (36%)	85 (48%)	149 (53%)	170 (55%)
Total	148 (26%)	–	1 (50%)	12 (20%)	17 (11%)	17 (9%)	15 (33%)	86 (74%)
Total	7,353 (48%)	379 (58%)	321 (69%)	344 (63%)	1,038 (33%)	1,569 (41%)	1,694 (50%)	2,008 (60%)

* (Still enrolled, repeating exams, deferrals etc.)

Table 6.2 shows the academic outcome for 7,353 participants and their employment rate by academic outcome. It shows that 5,459 graduated and are in employment which is 53% of the total graduates with a reported employment outcome (10,381 as per table 6.1).

A 58% employment rate was reported for those participants who did not complete their 2014 course. It is a feature of Springboard+ since its inception that participants who gain employment whilst studying are facilitated to finish their course. This also reflects the overall positive trends in employment in the economy as the participants mostly finished in 2015.

58%

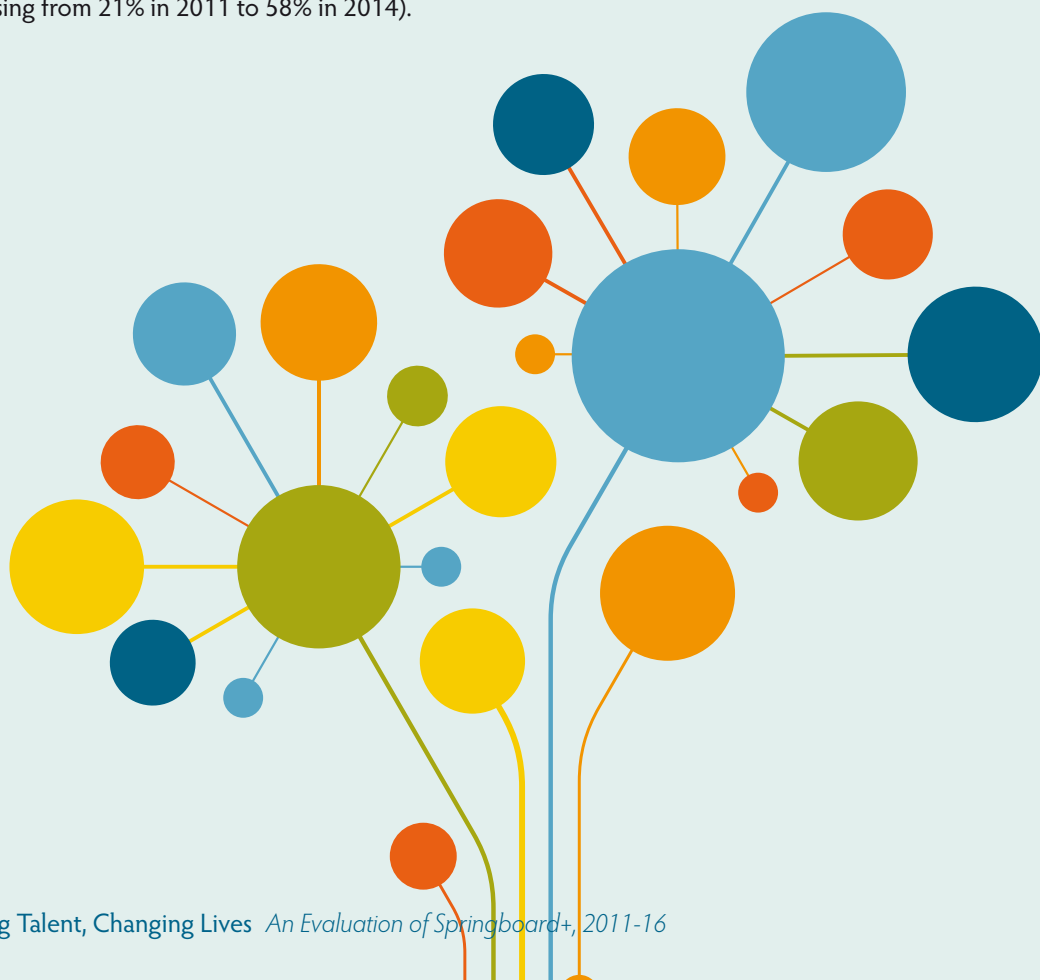
of those that did not complete their Springboard 2014 course are nonetheless employed.



Table 6.3: Reported Employment Rates by NFQ Level for Graduates 3-6 months following graduation

NFQ Level	All Initiatives	ICT Skills 2012	ICT Skills 2013	ICT Skills 2014	SB 2011	SB 2012	SB 2013	SB 2014
Level 6	725 (39%)	–	–	–	107 (21%)	149 (33%)	218 (45%)	251 (58%)
Level 7	1,091 (50%)	–	–	–	186 (35%)	247 (47%)	308 (56%)	350 (60%)
Level 8	2,705 (58%)	329 (69%)	286 (78%)	289 (73%)	358 (49%)	522 (49%)	363 (49%)	558 (62%)
Level 9	938 (58%)	–	–	–	70 (39%)	178 (60%)	317 (58%)	373 (61%)
Total	5,459 (53%)	329 (69%)	286 (78%)	289 (73%)	721 (37%)	1,096 (47%)	1,206 (52%)	1,532 (61%)

Table 6.3 provides data on employment rates for graduates by qualification, or NFQ, level. Overall level 6 participants have lower rates of employment to the subsequent qualification levels. However, there is a sharp increase between the 2011 and 2014 cohorts in employment rates for L6 graduates (i.e. increasing from 21% in 2011 to 58% in 2014).



21%

57%

2011

**EMPLOYMENT
RATES FOR L6
GRADUATES**

2014

As can be seen in Table 6.4, a higher percentage of the L6 participants have progressed to further study and this would impact negatively, at least in the short term, on employment rates also.

Table 6.4: Progression to Further study by NFQ level for Graduates 3-6 months following graduation

NFQ Levels	All Initiatives	ICT Skills 2012	ICT Skills 2013	ICT Skills 2014	SB 2011	SB 2012	SB 2013	SB 2014
Level 6	616 (33%)	–	–	–	220 (44%)	167 (37%)	129 (27%)	100 (23%)
Level 7	522 (24%)	–	–	–	155 (29%)	148 (28%)	111 (20%)	108 (18%)
Level 8	649 (14%)	33 (7%)	16 (4%)	37 (9%)	91 (13%)	216 (20%)	141 (19%)	115 (13%)
Level 9	222 (14%)	–	–	–	53 (29%)	50 (17%)	49 (9%)	70 (11%)
Total	2,009 (19%)	33 (7%)	16 (4%)	37 (9%)	519 (27%)	581 (25%)	430 (19%)	393 (16%)

Table 6.5: Reported Employment Rates by Skills Sector for Graduates 3-6 months following graduation

Skills Sector	All Initiatives	ICT Skills 2012	ICT Skills 2013	ICT Skills 2014	SB 2011	SB 2012	SB 2013	SB 2014
Construction/ Green Economy	129 (39%)	–	–	–	59 (32%)	44 (47%)	–	26 (49%)
Financial Services	308 (45%)	–	–	–	74 (36%)	74 (43%)	70 (54%)	90 (49%)
ICT	2,173 (53%)	329 (69%)	286 (78%)	289 (73%)	161 (29%)	333 (39%)	305 (46%)	470 (62%)
Management/ Business/ Entrepreneurship	1,504 (54%)	–	–	–	274 (46%)	352 (56%)	476 (55%)	402 (57%)
Manufacturing/ Biopharmachem	1,250 (55%)	–	–	–	150 (38%)	256 (51%)	324 (55%)	520 (65%)
Other Skills Areas	95 (46%)	–	–	–	3 (60%)	37 (39%)	31 (44%)	24 (65%)
Total	5,459 (53%)	329 (69%)	286 (78%)	289 (73%)	721 (37%)	1,096 (47%)	1,206 (52%)	1,532 (61%)

The manufacturing, entrepreneurship and ICT skills sectors show similarly strong rates of employment for graduates. The employment rates for ICT Skills Conversion graduates are particularly strong.



53%

employment rate for graduates across all skill sectors and initiatives

Table 6.6: Reported Employment Rates by Prior Education for Graduates 3-6 months following graduation

Prior Education	All Initiatives	ICT Skills 2012	ICT Skills 2013	ICT Skills 2014	SB 2011	SB 2012	SB 2013	SB 2014
Master's Degree or PhD	1,101 (58%)	87 (67%)	66 (74%)	70 (77%)	188 (48%)	250 (54%)	197 (60%)	243 (61%)
Level 8	1,998 (55%)	186 (71%)	182 (80%)	165 (72%)	241 (40%)	373 (48%)	452 (52%)	575 (63%)
Level 7	670 (52%)	20 (71%)	23 (85%)	28 (65%)	88 (34%)	150 (48%)	143 (52%)	218 (62%)
Level 6	927 (48%)	1 (33%)	6 (67%)	14 (74%)	51 (23%)	216 (39%)	254 (47%)	209 (60%)
Professional Qualification*	40 (39%)	2 (67%)	-	-	38 (38%)	-	-	-
Second Level	611 (46%)	6 (67%)	3 (100%)	12 (75%)	88 (29%)	102 (45%)	114 (45%)	286 (56%)
Null	111 (55%)	27 (61%)	6 (55%)	-	27 (40%)	5 (33%)	46 (73%)	-
Total	5,458 (53%)	329 (69%)	286 (78%)	289 (73%)	721 (37%)	1,096 (47%)	1,206 (52%)	1,531 (60%)

* This class was removed from the Applications Management System after the SB2011 and ICT Skills Conversion 2012 initiatives

Focusing on those graduates who retain NFQ Level 6 or higher award prior to participating on Springboard+, a clear trend shows that employment prospects are higher for those graduates entering the programme with higher qualifications on the National Framework of Qualifications. It is important to note, however, that differences in employment rate are minimised for the 2014 cohort, with just a seven point differential between the 56% employment rate for second-level award holders and the 63% rate for graduates who held a Level 8 award prior to enrolment on Springboard+.



Three-quarters of employees in the ICT sector are new to the sector.



One-third of employed respondents have a previous employment history in their current sector.

Table 6.7: Reported Employment Rates by Gender for Graduates 3-6 months following graduation

Gender	All Initiatives	ICT Skills 2012	ICT Skills 2013	ICT Skills 2014	SB 2011	SB 2012	SB 2013	SB 2014
Male	3,649 (53%)	255 (70%)	208 (78%)	207 (74%)	502 (36%)	721 (46%)	773 (52%)	983 (62%)
Female	1,807 (53%)	73 (64%)	77 (79%)	82 (71%)	219 (41%)	375 (49%)	433 (51%)	548 (58%)
Total	5,456 (53%)	328 (69%)	285 (78%)	289 (73%)	721 (37%)	1,096 (47%)	1,206 (52%)	1,531 (61%)

The table above provides data on employment rates for graduates by gender. Overall the trend is one of parity, with females and males having similar rates of employment. Earlier years of ICT Skills Conversion show males had comparatively higher employment rates but this has been more or less eliminated based on the 2014 employment outcome data.

Table 6.8: Reported Employment Rates by Age for Graduates 3-6 months following graduation

Age Band	All Initiatives	ICT Skills 2012	ICT Skills 2013	ICT Skills 2014	SB 2011	SB 2012	SB 2013	SB 2014
Under 20*	30%	–	–	–	100%	0%	50%	25%
20 to 29	58%	79%	81%	79%	36%	49%	54%	68%
30 to 39	53%	68%	83%	76%	39%	49%	53%	60%
40 to 49	9%	59%	71%	59%	39%	45%	50%	57%
50 to 59	46%	38%	60%	65%	30%	42%	47%	58%
60 to 65	36%	50%	67%	0%	24%	45%	42%	25%
Null	61%	0%	46%	60%	20%	25%	72%	63%
Total	5,459 (53%)	329 (69%)	286 (78%)	289 (73%)	721 (37%)	1,096 (47%)	1,206 (52%)	1,532 (61%)

* These percentages are based on a very a small cohort of students

Table 6.8 outlines data on employment rates by age for graduates by initiative and year. The table shows that there are higher levels of employment in the younger age groups.



Table 6.9: Reported Employment Rates by Skills Sector and NFQ Level for Graduates 3-6 months following graduation [Excludes ICT Skills Conversion]

Skills Sector	All Participants	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Level 9
Construction/Green Economy	129 (39%)	32 (33%)	41 (37%)	22 (46%)	34 (44%)
Financial Services	308 (45%)	-	180 (40%)	48 (47%)	80 (57%)
ICT	1,269 (45%)	224 (31%)	282 (51%)	653 (48%)	110 (59%)
Management/Business/Entrepreneurship	1,504 (54%)	77 (38%)	214 (53%)	627 (52%)	586 (59%)
Manufacturing/Biopharmachem	1,250 (55%)	366 (46%)	345 (56%)	438 (64%)	101 (55%)
Other Skills Areas	95 (46%)	26 (42%)	29 (51%)	13 (33%)	27 (55%)
Total	4,555 (50%)	725 (39%)	1,091 (50%)	1,801 (52%)	938 (58%)

Table 6.9 relates to employment rates by skill sector by qualification level. It can be noted that the 'Manufacturing/Biopharmachem', and 'Management/Business/Entrepreneurship' skills category employment rates are, overall, higher than those of the other sectors.

Table 6.10: Reported Employment Rates by County of Residence at Time of Application for Graduates 3-6 months following graduation

County	Reported Outcomes	% of Reported Outcomes	Employment Rate
Carlow	91	1%	52%
Cavan	68	1%	56%
Clare	187	2%	60%
Cork	757	7%	54%
Donegal	139	1%	49%
Dublin	4,605	45%	52%
Galway	591	6%	59%
Kerry	234	2%	44%
Kildare	593	6%	50%
Kilkenny	155	2%	56%
Laois	102	1%	58%
Leitrim	50	0%	44%
Limerick	421	4%	48%
Longford	70	1%	31%
Louth	272	3%	53%
Mayo	161	2%	55%
Meath	374	4%	50%
Monaghan	58	1%	64%
Offaly	97	1%	57%
Roscommon	97	1%	53%
Sligo	117	1%	50%
Tipperary	168	2%	52%
Waterford	228	2%	56%
Westmeath	185	2%	52%
Wexford	184	2%	61%
Wicklow	310	3%	56%
State	10,314*	10,314*	52%

* Some 'nulls' removed

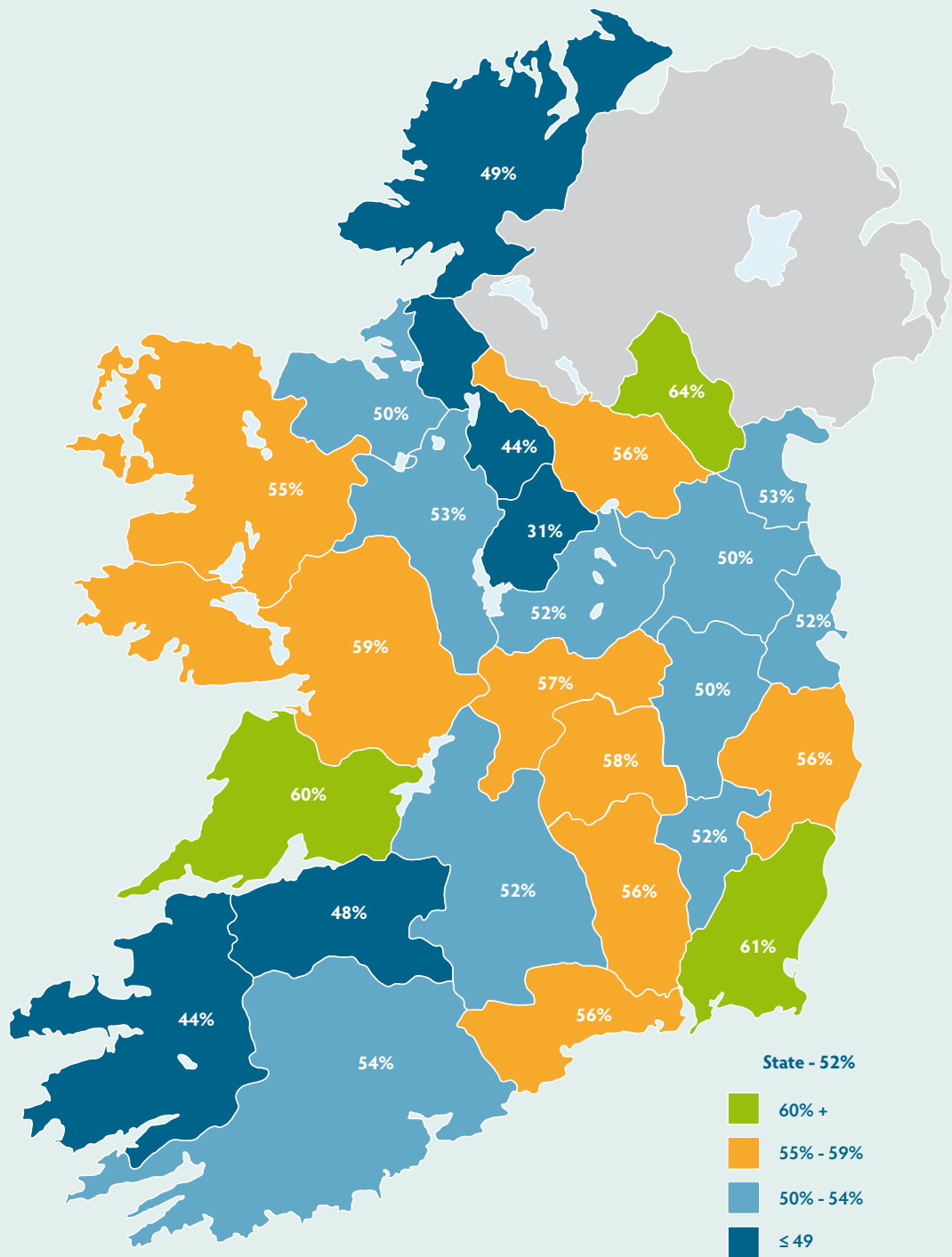


Table 6.10 provides data on employment rates by county of residence at the time of application to Springboard+.

7 THE SPRINGBOARD+ EXPERIENCE: PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

Since the inception of the Springboard+ initiative the HEA has conducted surveys of participants to gather profile information and also to garner information on their Springboard+ experience and the impact of their course on their future career. A range of surveys to this effect have been issued to past participants as outlined in Section 2.

As the HEA's Application Management System (AMS) does not record certain types of employment outcomes or provide information on the experience of Springboard+ courses, the surveys provide very useful information for comparison purposes but also information that feeds into the further enhancement of the initiative on a year to year basis. Specifically, surveys look at the following:

New Participant Surveys

- Reasons for applying to Springboard+
- Experience applying to Springboard+
- Experience with the course to date
- Best/worst features of the course

Progression Outcome Surveys

- Current status
- Highest qualification prior to Springboard+
- Field of previous third-level qualification
- Time since formal education
- Employment sector, job title, role
- Location of job
- Salary
- Relevance of the Springboard+ qualification to the job
- Sentiment towards Springboard+
- Recommendations for Springboard+ going forward

The data in this section is based solely on responses received from previous Springboard+ participants between the period October 2011 and May 2016.

Surveys conducted of past participants from October 2011 to May 2016

The data presented thus far in the report has come from the Application Management System (AMS). A number of surveys of past participants were carried out between October 2011 and May 2016. These surveys include a range of questions and the data below represents some of the responses received. Please see the appendix for a copy of the full survey questions.

Table 7.1: Survey of Participants on SB2011 to SB2014 (inc ICT Skills), Field of Previous Third-Level Qualification

Field	Total Responses	ICT Skills Conversion	Springboard
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	30 (1%)	3 (1%)	27 (1%)
Arts and humanities	364 (17%)	62 (21%)	302 (16%)
Business, administration and law	481 (22%)	60 (20%)	421 (23%)
Education	69 (3%)	9 (3%)	60 (3%)
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	502 (23%)	65 (22%)	437 (24%)
Health and welfare	66 (3%)	8 (3%)	58 (3%)
Information and communication technologies (ICTs)	340 (16%)	55 (19%)	285 (15%)
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	249 (12%)	30 (10%)	219 (12%)
Services	50 (2%)	5 (2%)	45 (2%)
Total	2,151	297	1,854

In relation to a previous third level qualification it is interesting to note that approximately 50% of ICT Skills Conversion respondents have come from outside the typical fields of Engineering, Maths/ Statistics, and ICT. This speaks to the desire to upskill in this expanding sector and the capacity for graduates to take intensive ICT courses. In relation to the Springboard programmes there is a wide spectrum of academic backgrounds availing of the upskilling or reskilling opportunities, with 47% coming from a business/administration/law or engineering/manufacturing/construction background.

Table 7.2: Survey of Participants on SB2011 to SB2014 (inc ICT Skills), Sector of Current Employment by Initiative

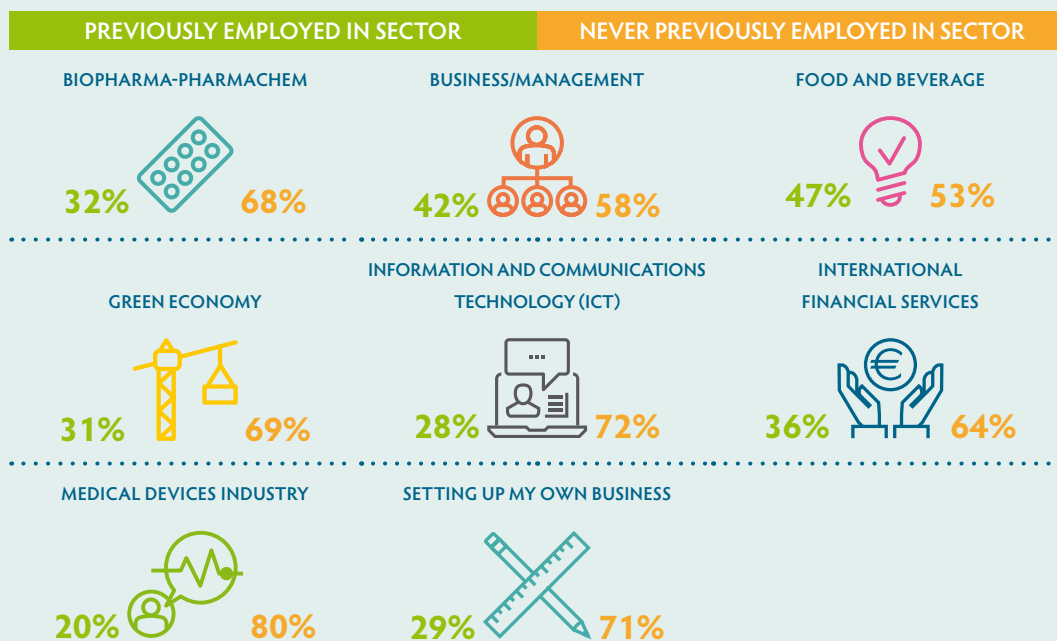
Sector	ICT Skills Conversion	Springboard	Total Responses
Information and communications technology (ICT)	178 (85%)	370 (38%)	548 (46%)
Business/management	6 (3%)	156 (16%)	162 (14%)
Biopharma-pharmachem	7 (3%)	120 (12%)	127 (11%)
Food and beverage	4 (2%)	86 (9%)	90 (8%)
Setting up my own business	4 (2%)	79 (8%)	83 (7%)
Medical devices industry	1 (0%)	80 (8%)	81 (7%)
International financial services	9 (4%)	60 (6%)	69 (6%)
Green economy	0 (0%)	28 (3%)	28 (2%)
Total	209	979	1,188

In comparison with the previous table, Table 7.2 outlines the sector in which participants are now employed. It shows that there is a high concentration of employment in the ICT, Business/ Management and the Biopharma (i.e. manufacturing) sectors. This demonstrates that the Springboard+ initiative is addressing the skill shortages in specific sectors of the economy that continued to expand even during the recession, and that people are being reskilled in these areas and subsequently finding employment.

Table 7.3: Survey of Participants on SB2011 to SB2014, Sector of Current Employment by Previous Employment

Sector	Total Responses	Previously Employed in Sector	Never Previously Employed in Sector
Biopharma-pharmachem	126 (11%)	40 (32%)	86 (68%)
Business/management	165 (14%)	69 (42%)	96 (58%)
Food and beverage	89 (7%)	42 (47%)	47 (53%)
Green economy	29 (2%)	9 (31%)	20 (69%)
Information and communications technology (ICT)	555 (46%)	158 (28%)	397 (72%)
International financial services	67 (6%)	24 (36%)	43 (64%)
Medical devices industry	80 (7%)	16 (20%)	64 (80%)
Setting up my own business	80 (7%)	23 (29%)	57 (71%)
Total	1,191	381 (32%)	810 (68%)

Further to Table 7.2, participants were asked were they previously employed in that sector prior to taking their Springboard+ course. Table 7.3 shows that just one-third of employed respondents have a previous employment history in their current sector, which speaks to the level of reskilling that occurred in Springboard as people moved into the growth sectors of the economy. In addition, almost three-quarters of employees in the ICT sector are new to the sector, and 68% are new to the Biopharma-pharmachem sector.



The surveys of past participants include a number of 'sentiment' questions on the impact of Springboard+ on their career and outlook. The following tables provide the question which was asked and the number and type of responses received in each case.

Table 7.4: Springboard+ has had a positive impact on my life so far (eg. financially, experience of returning to higher education, work placement, contact with employers, managing study and home life and responsibilities)

Response	Total Responses	ICT Skills 2014	ICT Skills 2015	SB2011	SB2012	SB2013
Strongly agree	3,808 (41%)	85 (39%)	62 (42%)	811 (31%)	1,057 (45%)	1,012 (46%)
Agree	4,618 (49%)	118 (55%)	73 (50%)	1,390 (53%)	1,119 (47%)	1,018 (46%)
Disagree	769 (8%)	11 (5%)	9 (6%)	332 (13%)	162 (7%)	147 (7%)
Strongly disagree	205 (2%)	2 (1%)	2 (1%)	106 (4%)	34 (1%)	29 (1%)
Total	9,400	216	146	2,639	2,372	2,206

Table 7.4 shows that consistently across each year the vast majority of participants (90% of 9,400 responses) strongly agree or agree that Springboard+ has had a positive impact on their life.

Table 7.5: Would you recommend Springboard+ to a friend or family member?

Response	Total Responses	ICT Skills Conversion	Springboard
Yes, definitely	9,766 (75%)	706 (72%)	9,060 (75%)
On balance, yes	2,801 (21%)	238 (24%)	2,563 (21%)
Probably not	348 (3%)	30 (3%)	318 (3%)
No	148 (1%)	12 (1%)	136 (1%)
Total	13,063	986	12,077

When asked would they recommend Springboard+ to friends or family 96% say they would. Only 1% would not.

Table 7.6: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement: 'My career has developed and grown since completing Springboard+'

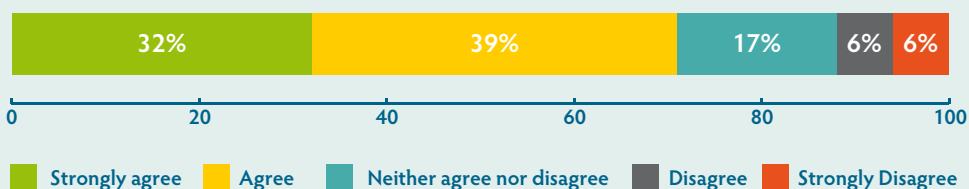
Response	Total Responses	ICT Skills Conversion	Springboard
Strongly agree	1,211 (28%)	229 (42%)	982 (25%)
Agree	1,800 (41%)	191 (35%)	1,609 (42%)
Neither agree nor disagree	307 (7%)	30 (6%)	277 (7%)
Disagree	731 (17%)	57 (11%)	674 (17%)
Strongly disagree	350 (8%)	32 (6%)	318 (8%)
Total	4,399	539	3,860

69% of all participants strongly agree or agree with this statement. For ICT Skills Conversion participants 77% strongly agree with the statement. 8% overall strongly disagree.

Table 7.7: Would you agree that since finishing your course, your overall outlook and optimism about your career prospects have improved?

Response	Total Responses	ICT Skills Conversion	Springboard
Strongly agree	697 (32%)	130 (47%)	567 (30%)
Agree	862 (39%)	86 (31%)	776 (40%)
Neither agree nor disagree	378 (17%)	43 (15%)	335 (17%)
Disagree	136 (6%)	8 (3%)	128 (7%)
Strongly disagree	122 (6%)	11 (4%)	111 (6%)
Total	2,195	278	1,917

Overall 71% of respondents either strongly agree or agree with this question. For ICT Skills Conversion only the rate is 78%.



Additional questions added to the survey of 2015 participants

In 2016 additional questions were added to the survey of 2015/16 participants. These are provided below along with the type and number of responses received.

Table 7.8: Please rate the relevance of the NFQ level of your Springboard+ course to your job

Response	Total Responses
Very relevant	439 (29%)
Relevant	424 (28%)
Somewhat relevant	367 (24%)
Irrelevant	191 (13%)
Very irrelevant	102 (7%)
Total	1,523

When asked to rate the relevance of the qualification (NFQ) level of their course, 57% of respondents said that the level of qualification was relevant or very relevant. 20% said it was irrelevant or very irrelevant.

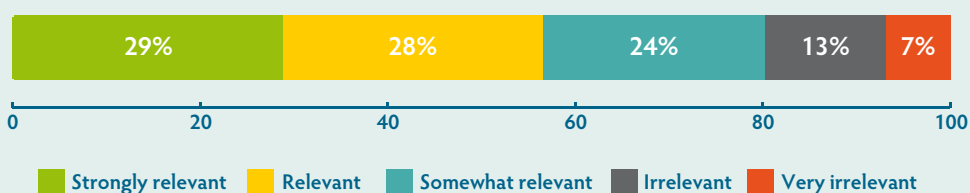


Table 7.9: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement: 'My Springboard+ course helped me to get a job'

Response	Responses from the employed
Strongly agree	590 (38%)
Agree	485 (31%)
Neither agree nor disagree	265 (17%)
Disagree	114 (7%)
Strongly Disagree	112 (7%)
Total	1,566

When asked the extent to which the Springboard+ course helped participants get a job, 69% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed.

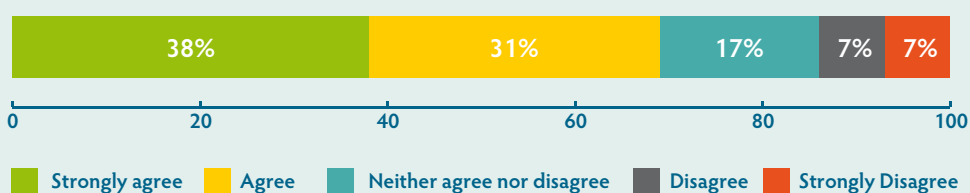


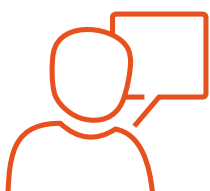
Table 7.10: Did you need the Springboard+ qualification you obtained to get the job?

Response	Total Responses	ICT Skills	Springboard
Both the level of qualification and the subjects I studied were a formal requirement	117 (8%)	29 (13%)	88 (7%)
The subjects I studied as part of qualification were a formal requirement	121 (8%)	46 (21%)	75 (6%)
The level of qualification was a formal requirement	164 (11%)	39 (18%)	125 (10%)
While the qualification was not a formal requirement, it gave me an advantage	483 (32%)	59 (27%)	424 (33%)
No, but completing the course gave me the confidence to apply for the job	116 (8%)	8 (4%)	108 (8%)
I was already in the job when I received the qualification	71 (5%)	8 (4%)	63 (5%)
My original qualification and job experience got me the job	169 (11%)	12 (5%)	157 (12%)
The qualification was not required	254 (17%)	21 (9%)	233 (18%)
Total	1,495	222	1,273

2015 participants were asked if the qualification they received was needed to get the job they are now in. Just over half (51%) of employed ICT Skills Conversion respondents stated that the level of their qualification and or/the subjects they studied were a formal requirement of their employment, which indicates that the courses provided are specifically tailored to industry needs. 32% of the respondents to this question indicated that their qualification gave them an advantage in the job search.

Testimonials

The website www.springboardcourses.ie allows participants to provide a testimonial on their Springboard+ experience. Below is a selection of the testimonials received by HEA from participants across a range of Springboard+ providers. The testimonials have been anonymised for the purposes of publication.



Possibilities like this would not have been open to me had I not completed the Springboard course. I will always be extremely grateful for the opportunities it provided, the confidence it has given me completing both courses and the benefits to my career. I would highly recommend Springboard courses.

The Springboard course has been a life changing experience for me. The recession created some challenging times and I had to close down my business. As a result I had lost some of my self-confidence and needed a major boost. Now with a renewed appetite for learning and self-confidence, I have started my own digital marketing business in two locations. I would highly recommend a Springboard course to anyone looking to get their life back on track.

When I got the call to take a place on the course in 2013, I jumped at it because I knew I would need to upskill if I wanted to move forward and differentiate myself from the rest. It's 2016 and I am writing this review as an international sales executive for a successful software company in the corporate finance space.



Gained employment a few weeks after completing course. Course was literally a springboard for upskilling & getting back into the workforce.

Like many working women, I took time out of my career to raise a family. The break from my career increased my desire to return to the manufacturing and/or pharmaceutical industry in a full time capacity. By upskilling I have dramatically increased my confidence as well as my qualifications. I have been very fortunate to have recently secured an operation technician role with a multinational biopharmaceutical company. I would highly recommend Springboard to anyone in my situation who has been out of the industry for a period of time to do these courses. They have contributed to my new found confidence in my existing and new qualifications, my improved interview skills and my new job!

The course offered students with both relevant and non-relevant backgrounds the opportunity to gain both an in-depth and broad insight into many areas of Business and IT. The spectrum of learning was varied, interesting and highly relevant. There was a mix of practical skills that are in demand in many types of careers as well as a focus on theory and knowledge. The placement aspect of the course allowed me to apply many of the practical IT skills that I developed during my time on the course and practice what we had learned in a real life setting. I would highly recommend this course as it has given me the opportunity to get into an accounting career that would not have been possible without it.

I found this helpful because at my age (I'm now in my 50s), the chances of even being called for an interview were remote. On completion of the course I was placed with a financial company for three months and this in turn allowed me to apply for a permanent position internally, which I secured.



If it were not for the conversion course I did and the springboard initiative, I would likely still be unemployed or working a low paid job with little or no future prospects.



After four months on the course I had a choice between two job offers. I currently work as a laboratory technician. I believe all aspects of the course helped me in securing my current role.

There was a great diversity of people in the course but each person was there for the same reason and all willing to help each other out and good friendships were formed. I love my job now and am delighted I found out about this course as it has turned my life around for the better.

APPENDIX:

SPRINGBOARD SURVEYS

Survey 1.5/2.4/3.3/4.2 – Progression Outcomes Survey (May 2016)

1. Please tick which of the following most accurately describes your current connection with Springboard+:
 - I completed my Springboard+ course and have got a job
 - I completed my Springboard+ course and am self-employed
 - I completed my Springboard+ course and am seeking work
 - I left my Springboard+ course before it was complete and have got a job
 - I left my Springboard+ course before it was complete and am self-employed
 - I left my Springboard+ course before it was complete and am seeking work
 - I have got a job and am also continuing with my Springboard+ course in order to gain my qualification
 - I am enrolled on another Springboard+ course
 - I am enrolled on another higher education course, outside of Springboard+
 - I am enrolled on a further education course
 - I am currently completing a work placement/internship as part of a Springboard+ course
 - I am currently completing a work placement/internship, outside of Springboard+
2. Are you currently studying at a higher level on the National Framework Qualifications (NFQ) than your Springboard+ course?
 - Yes
 - No

3. If you left your Springboard+ course early for personal/academic reasons, please tick which of the following options are most relevant to you:

- Financial constraints
- Travel time
- Course content was too broad
- Course content was too niche-focused
- Course content did not match expectations
- Course content was too intense/advanced
- Personal reasons
- Other (please specify)

4. What was your previous qualification prior to taking your Springboard+ course?

- Group Certificate (Level 2)
- Junior (Intermediate) Certificate (Level 3)
- FETAC Certificate (Level 5)
- Leaving Certificate (Level 5)
- Post Leaving Certificate (Level 5)
- Advanced Craft Certificate (Level 6)
- FETAC Advanced Certificate (Level 6)
- Undergraduate Certificate (Level 6)
- Undergraduate Diploma (Level 7)
- Undergraduate General Degree (Level 7)
- Higher Diploma (Level 8)
- Postgraduate Certificate (Level 8)
- Undergraduate Honours Degree (Level 8)
- Masters Research (Level 9)
- Masters Taught (Level 9)
- Postgraduate Diploma (Level 9)
- PhD (Level 10)

5. If applicable, in which field of study was your previous third-level qualification?

- Education
- Services
- Arts and humanities
- Business, administration and law
- Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics
- Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)
- Engineering, manufacturing and construction
- Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary
- Health and welfare
- Non-applicable

6. Which of the following were the most useful aspects of your Springboard+ course to help your job search?

- Access to internet and library
- College career services
- Content of course
- Work placement
- Networking
- The qualification
- Other (please specify)

7. Is your job:

- Full-time permanent
- Part-time permanent
- Full-time temporary
- Part-time temporary
- Self-employed
- Work placement/internship

8. If you are in self-employment, how many people do you employ (excluding yourself)?

Full-time Employees

Part-time Employees

9. Have you taken up employment with the company which provided your Springboard+ work placement?

Yes

No

Non-applicable

10. Were you paid during your work placement?

Yes

No

Received JobBridge payment

11. In which sector are you currently employed?

Information and communications technology (ICT)

Medical devices industry

Green economy

Biopharma-pharmachem

International financial services

Food and beverage

Setting up my own business

Business/management

12. Were you previously employed in this sector prior to taking your Springboard+ course?

Yes

No

13. What is your job title?

.....

14. What is the name of the company or organisation that you are working for?

.....

15. What is your occupation? Please select an option from the list below.

- Manager, director or senior official
- Professional occupation
- Associate professional and technical occupation
- Administrative and secretarial occupation
- Skilled trades occupation
- Caring, leisure and other service occupation
- Sales and customer service occupation
- Transport and mobile machine drivers and operative
- Elementary trade

16. Where is your job located?

- Ireland (including Northern Ireland)
- Overseas

17. In which county is your job located?

.....

18. In which country is your job located?

.....

19. What is your annual salary to the nearest Euro, before tax? This figure should be the salary you receive per year before tax.

- Up to €14,999
- €15,000 - €19,999
- €20,000 - €24,999
- €25,000 - €29,999
- €30,000 - €34,999
- €35,000 - €39,999
- €40,000 - €44,999
- €45,000 - €49,999
- €50,000 - €59,999
- €60,000 - €69,999
- €70,000 - €79,999
- €80,000 +
- I am in an unpaid position
- I'd prefer not to say

20. Please rate the relevance of the NFQ level of your Springboard+ course to your job:

- Very relevant
- Relevant
- Somewhat relevant
- Irrelevant
- Very irrelevant
- I don't know

21. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement:

'my Springboard+ course helped me to get a job'.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

22. Did you need the Springboard qualification you obtained to get the job?

- The level of qualification was a formal requirement
- The subjects I studied as part of qualification were a formal requirement
- Both the level of qualification and the subjects I studied were a formal requirement
- While the qualification was not a formal requirement, it gave me an advantage
- The qualification was not required
- I was already in the job when I received the qualification
- My original qualification and job experience got me the job
- No, but completing the course gave me the confidence to apply for the job
- I don't know

23. How did you first find out about the job?

- My Springboard+ institution's careers service
- The careers service of the higher education institution where I gained my qualification prior to Springboard+
- Media (e.g. newspaper/magazine advertisement)
- Personal contacts, including family and friends
- Social media
- Professional network
- Intreo office (Department of Social Protection)
- I already worked there (including on an internship/placement)
- Employer website
- Recruitment site (e.g. IrishJobs.ie or the Public Appointments Service)
- Speculative application
- Other

24. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement:

'My career has developed and grown since completing Springboard!'

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Comment, if any

25. Would you agree that since finishing your course, your overall outlook and optimism about your career prospects have improved?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

26. If you were able to choose today whether to participate on Springboard+ once again, how likely is it that you would study...

- The same qualification
- The same area of study
- A different qualification
- A different area of study

27. Looking back, what were the best aspects of your course?

.....

28. Looking back, what aspects of your course were most in need of improvement?

.....

Survey 5.0 New Participants Survey (March 2016)

1. How did you hear about Springboard+?

- Online/internet
- Radio ad
- Radio interview
- Newspaper
- Social Protection Office/Intreo
- Adult Guidance
- Springboard+ College
- Word of mouth (friends/family)
- Other (please specify)

2. How long has it been since you were last enrolled in formal education?

- 12 months or less
- 1-2 years
- 2-3 years
- 3-4 years
- 4-5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-20 years
- 20+ years

3. Please rate the following items in terms of how strongly they prompted you to apply for a place on this particular course:

- Interest in the area of study
- Enhance career prospects in my current field
- To change career
- Personal development
- I think I will get a job after this course
- Family/friend(s) suggested the course
- Other (please specify)

4. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with this statement:

The online application system for Springboard+ was user-friendly:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

5. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with this statement:

The quality of the information on the Springboard+ website was excellent.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

6. How would you rate the speed and efficiency of the response you got from the college(s) you applied to?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

7. Please tick which of the following services provided you with guidance on your Springboard+ application:

- Springboard+ Freephone Helpline
- Social Protection Office/Intreo
- Adult Education Guidance Service
- Higher Education College
- No Guidance
- Other (please specify)

8. Please rate your experience of Social Protection Office/Intreo in relation to guidance/information about Springboard+.

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Poor
- Comment (optional)

9. Please select any of the categories below which apply to you: (Data collection for EU monitoring reports)

- None of the adults in my household are in employment
- None of the adults in my household are in employment and I have a dependent child/children
- I live in a single adult household and I have a dependent child/children
- I belong to a minority group (Irish Travelling Community, Roma, Other Foreign Background)
- I have a disability
- I was homeless when I applied to my Springboard+ course
- I lived in a rural area when I applied to my Springboard+ course

10. Will your Springboard+ course give you a more advanced qualification than the qualification(s) you currently hold?

- Yes
- No

11. So far, how well is your Springboard+ course measuring up to your expectations?

- Very well
- Good
- Not good
- Dissatisfied
- Comment (optional)

12. Now that your course is underway, how would you rate the level of support you have received from your college?

- Excellent
- Quite good
- Not great
- Dissatisfied
- Comment (optional)

13. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with this statement:

Springboard+ has had a positive impact on my life so far (eg. experience of returning to higher education, work placement, contact with employers)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Comment (optional)

14. What, in your view, is the best feature(s) of your Springboard+ course?

.....

15. What, in your view, is the worst feature(s) of your Springboard+ course?

.....

16. Would you recommend Springboard+ to others who are unemployed?

- Yes, definitely
- On balance, yes
- Probably not
- No

