**To Boards of Management and Principals of Post-Primary Schools
and Chief Executive Officers of Education and Training Boards**

Date   07/11/2017   Circular Letter 0067/2017

Leaving Certificate Computer Science

Dear Principal,

You will be aware of the announcement by Minister for Education and Skills, Richard Bruton T.D. regarding the introduction of Computer Science as a Leaving Certificate subject in September 2018. Phase 1 of the implementation process will involve a small cohort of schools who have the capacity to introduce Computer Science as a Leaving Certificate subject. Phase 2 of the implementation process will see the subject being made available as an option to all schools from September 2020.

Schools will be selected to participate in Phase 1 of the implementation on the basis of the following criteria:

- There is support from the Board of Management and senior leadership within the school, in consultation with the school community, for this initiative;
- The school is willing to offer Computer Science as a Leaving Certificate subject on the time-table from September 2018;
- The school can identify a teacher (or teachers) with relevant experience and/or qualifications who are willing to teach Computer Science and participate in the required professional development within school time;
- Teachers are willing to participate in some professional development in their own time if and when the need arises;
- The school has a viable number of students interested in studying Computer Science as a Leaving Certificate subject.

It will be important to consult with the teacher/s identified as being suitable for teaching Computer Science. To help with the identification of teachers, the latest draft specification for Computer Science is available on the NCCA website at www.ncca.ie and the following guidelines should be noted.

Typically, teachers will have:

- Expressed a genuine interest in teaching Computer Science, having familiarised themselves with the draft specification;
- A willingness to undertake CPD to prepare for the introduction of the specification and to develop/refresh skills such as computational thinking or research methodologies. Some CPD is likely to take place outside school time;
- Studied computer science, computing, computer or electronics engineering, information technology, software development (or related areas) as part of their primary degree or post-graduate studies;
- Relevant experience in related areas such as a short course in coding, a TY programming module, participation in recognised coding clubs and competitions e.g. coderdojos, coding Olympiad etc, engaged in professional learning related to computing technology and/or have carried out research in a relevant area.

If your school is interested in applying to become one of the Phase 1 schools involved in offering this subject from September 2018, please complete the questionnaire at this link https://surveymonkey.com/r/CSPhase1 The questionnaire is designed to be completed jointly by the school principal and the relevant teacher. The closing date for submitting your application through the online questionnaire is Friday 24 November, 2017.

Further information is available at www.education.ie

Yours sincerely