



An Chomhairle Náisiúnta  
um Oideachas Speisialta  
National Council  
for Special Education

National Council for Special Education

# ICT/Cloud Strategy 2025 to 2028



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# Foreword

It brings me great pleasure to welcome the publication of the NCSE ICT/Cloud Strategy 2025-2028. This strategy very much complements and builds on the 2025-2028 Data Strategy which was published earlier this year. The NCSE is committed to building a world class inclusive education system for Ireland and the successful delivery of this strategy will go a long way to achieving this goal. In the modern world of cloud computing and artificial intelligence it is important that NCSE staff have access to such technology to allow them to deliver high quality services.

NCSE has gone through significant change in recent years, where staffing has almost doubled. This trend is expected to continue in future years as we grow further to include the National Therapy Service. The opportunities of expansion and scalability with cloud computing allow NCSE to look to the future with confidence.

The NCSE Senior Management Team and our stakeholders, have long recognised the need to improve our systems and move to a more digital and automated approach for parents and children who use our services and to aid our staff in the delivery. As such the Senior Management Team are fully behind this strategy and recognise it will take all pillars of the NCSE working together to ensure an optimal implementation.

The strategy sets out the direction we need to take, prior to procuring and deploying a new system. The strategy also sets out the attention that needs to be devoted to ensuring effective transformation management by considering the people, the process and the technology.

I am confident that the strategy dovetails well with the NCSE's recently published Data Strategy and together they will provide us with the required guidance to develop a child-centred system that will deliver for a fast-developing service.



**John Kearney CEO**  
**11 December 2025**

# Executive Summary

## Purpose and Context

The NCSE ICT/Cloud Strategy 2025-2028 sets out a transformative roadmap to modernise ICT services and enable secure, scalable, and user-centric digital solutions that support inclusive education for children with special educational needs. This strategy builds on the NCSE Data Strategy and aligns with national digital policies, including the Digital Ireland Framework and Connecting Government 2030.

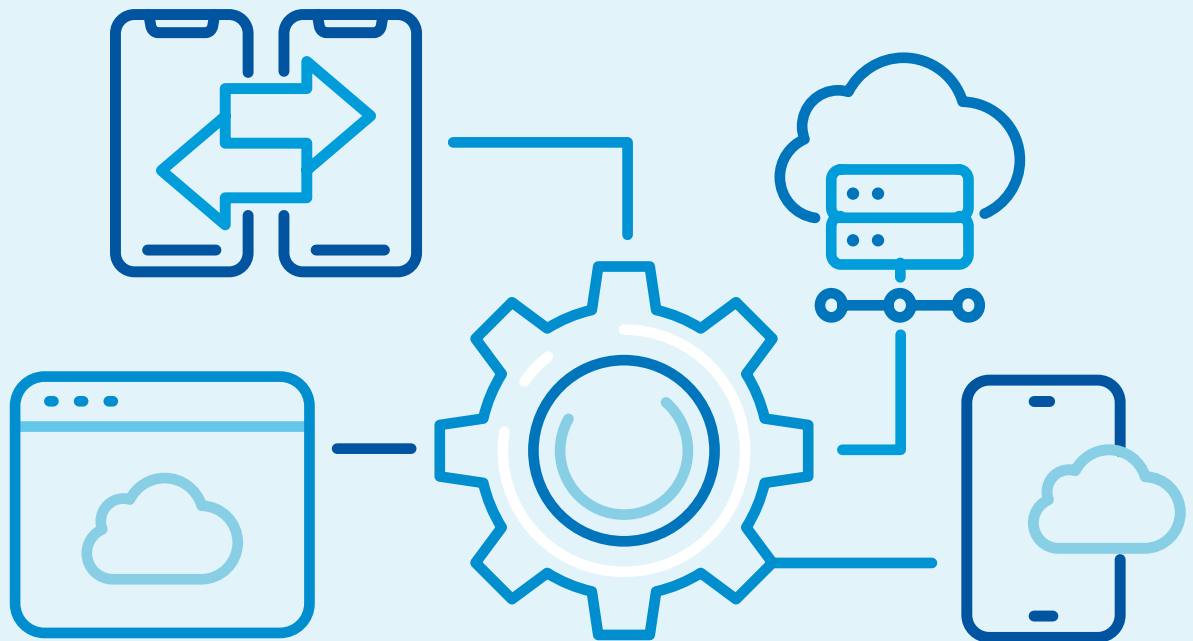
## Vision and Mission

**Vision:** Deliver high-quality ICT services that optimise user experience, ensure transparency, and provide reliable data for informed decision-making.

**Mission:** Provide stable, secure, and scalable digital and data solutions through best-in-class ICT practices, enhancing services for children with special educational needs.

## Strategic Objectives

- **Digital Transformation:** Centralise systems and digitise service applications; Launch a unified online portal for parents, schools, and NCSE staff.
- **Cloud Infrastructure:** Transition to a hybrid cloud environment for flexibility and resilience; Integrate the database, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Case Management System (CMS), and Document Management System (DMS) into a single platform.
- **Cybersecurity and Compliance:** Implement ISO 27001 standards and GDPR-compliant frameworks; recruit a dedicated cybersecurity specialist.
- **Data Governance and Analytics:** Establish a secure, unified data platform for reporting and policy planning; implement a data quality framework and governance model.
- **Accessibility and Inclusion:** Ensure WCAG 2.1 compliance and multilingual support; provide assistive technology features across all platforms.
- **Capacity Building:** Upskill staff in digital, data, and AI literacy
- **Implementation Approach**



- Phased Delivery: Prioritise security, scalability, and stakeholder engagement.
- Governance: Establish a Systems Steering Group chaired by the Technology and Innovation Principal Officer.
- Cost Control: Dedicated Cloud Cost Controller role and strong financial oversight.
- Procurement: Leverage HEAnet and OGP frameworks for compliant and value-for-money solutions.

### Key Deliverables

- Unified cloud system (CRM, CMS, DMS) with a single database.
- Public-facing portals for parents and schools.
- Comprehensive data migration strategy.
- Cybersecurity framework and permanent security expert.
- Digital-first processes to replace manual workflows.

## Expected Outcomes

- Improved Service Delivery: Streamlined interactions for parents, schools, and professionals.
- Enhanced Organisational Agility: Scalable systems responsive to policy and demand changes.
- Data-Driven Decision Making: Reliable analytics for resource allocation and policy development.
- Inclusive Digital Ecosystem: Accessible, secure, and user-friendly platforms.

## Strategic Alignment

This strategy supports NCSE's Statement of Strategy 2023-2026, particularly Goal 1: Service Delivery and Goal 4: Organisational Support and Development. The strategy also aligns with broader government policies on cloud, AI and delivery of digital government services to the public.

## Key Actions

- Finalise the new website deployment and explore the use of web-portals
- Draft a Business Case and engage with DGOU/OGCIO.
- Finalise approach to procurement.
- Establish governance structures and recruit key roles.
- Develop a Data Migration Plan
- Develop a Transformation Plan
- Put in place cost management structures and a Cost Management Plan
- Develop a Project Management Plan

# 1.0 Vision Statement

This strategy is built around the principle of effective change being reliant on; people, processes and technology. It is vitally important as we embark on this strategic journey that we understand how people, processes and technology rely on each other and that systems are built that effectively balance and co-ordinate this.

## Guiding Principles

- Alignment with our strategic goals (NCSE Statements of Strategy 2023-2026)
- Inclusivity (child centred and accessible to all)
- User centric design – capture once use many (parents, schools and NCSE staff)
- Stakeholder engagement
- Security and data protection
- Scalability (responsive to changing policies and demands)
- Data integrity through effective data management and governance to produce a single source of truth

This strategy is committed to enabling efficient, secure, and data-driven business processes through the intelligent use of technology and digital tools, the strategic management and safeguarding of data. By embracing Digital Transformation, we aim to streamline operations, enhance decision-making, and deliver value across all functions. This approach ensures that technology not only supports but actively drives innovation, compliance, and continuous improvement in service delivery.

The end result will aid NCSE in developing and building upon, a data literate, cloud focused culture that delivers an excellent quality of service to the child and our stakeholders. Ongoing learning and development will be supported as our people upskill to thrive in the new digital environment.

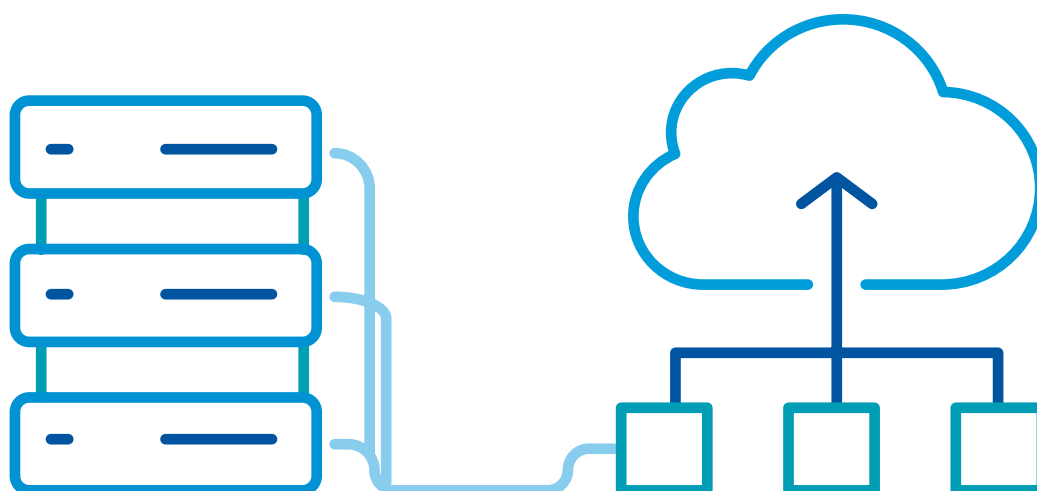
The NCSE plays a critical role in coordinating and supporting the delivery of special education services across Ireland. To meet increasing demand, improve service responsiveness, and address systemic challenges, the NCSE is embracing a forward-looking digital strategy. This includes investing in modern IT systems, accessible service platforms, and secure data environments.

This strategy outlines the strategic direction for the use of Information Technology within the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) over the period 2025-2028. The strategy aims to modernise service delivery, enhance data-informed decision-making, ensure accessibility, and safeguard sensitive data. Grounded in the principles of inclusion, equity, and transparency, this strategy aligns with national education policies and the digital government agenda.

This strategy sets out a clear set of actions that will bring a coherent focus to our efforts to improve the organisation’s capacity to harness innovative, accessible, and secure technology solutions to support inclusive education in order to ensure that all children with special educational needs receive timely and effective services.

The strategy will also further support and reinforce the NCSE Statement of Strategy 2023-2026 by strengthening NCSE’s values and functions. Furthermore, it will directly support the Service Delivery (Goal 1), and in particular Objective 4 of Organisational Support and Development (Goal 4).

Develop an ICT and Data Management Strategy to inform effective planning and reporting requirements for the needs of the NCSE and external stakeholders



## 2.0 Approach to Strategy Creation

The development of this ICT Strategy is firmly aligned with the NCSE Statement of Strategy and the NCSE Data Strategy, ensuring that our technological direction supports our core mission of delivering inclusive, high-quality services in special education. We have engaged proactively with the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) to ensure compliance with national digital and cybersecurity standards and collaborated with key public sector partners – including the Courts Service, TUSLA, and education bodies – to ensure consistency, shared learning, and adherence to best practise. Our approach also included engagement with the market, allowing us to assess emerging technologies and best practices that can enhance our service delivery. The strategy was shaped through a structured process of needs analysis, stakeholder consultation, and review of existing systems and data flows. The final write-up synthesises these insights into a clear, actionable roadmap that supports secure, data-informed, and digitally enabled business processes across the NCSE.

Stakeholder engagement will continue and accelerate throughout the implementation of this strategy.

### 2.1 Towards a Digitally Enabled NCSE

Data in the NCSE plays a key role in both the support and delivery of critical NCSE services and informing wider Government policy. In recent years in NCSE, without a centralised ICT policy in force, diverse systems came into service within the organisation to address business needs from disparate teams. As a result, ad-hoc systems housing siloed, non-complementary organisational data have become the normal business model. This has been problematic in terms of manual overheads for staff and sub-optimal data quality.

This strategy aims to build on and implement recommendations in the NCSE Data Strategy, to resolve these issues as part of a holistic approach towards combining functions within a unified system and enabling streamlined means of eliciting data from various sources. Data will be stored in a centralised, cloud database thereby providing one overall data source from which various reports can be compiled with the security that they are consistent, reliable and function as a single source of truth.

## 2.2 Strategic and Legislative Alignment

Development of this strategy was within the context of:

- NCSE Data Strategy 2025-2028
- Connecting Ireland 2030
- The Digital Ireland Framework
- The National Disability Inclusion Strategy
- Data Protection and GDPR policy and legislation
- Education Act 1998 – [Education Act, 1998](#)
- Disability Act 2005 – [Disability Act 2005](#)
- Education, Admission to Schools Act 2018 – [Education \(Admission to Schools\) Act 2018](#)
- Education (Provision in Respect of Children with Special Educational Needs) Act 2022 – [Education \(Provision in Respect of Children with Special Needs\) Act 2022](#)
- Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 – [Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004](#)

## 2.3 ICT Deliverables

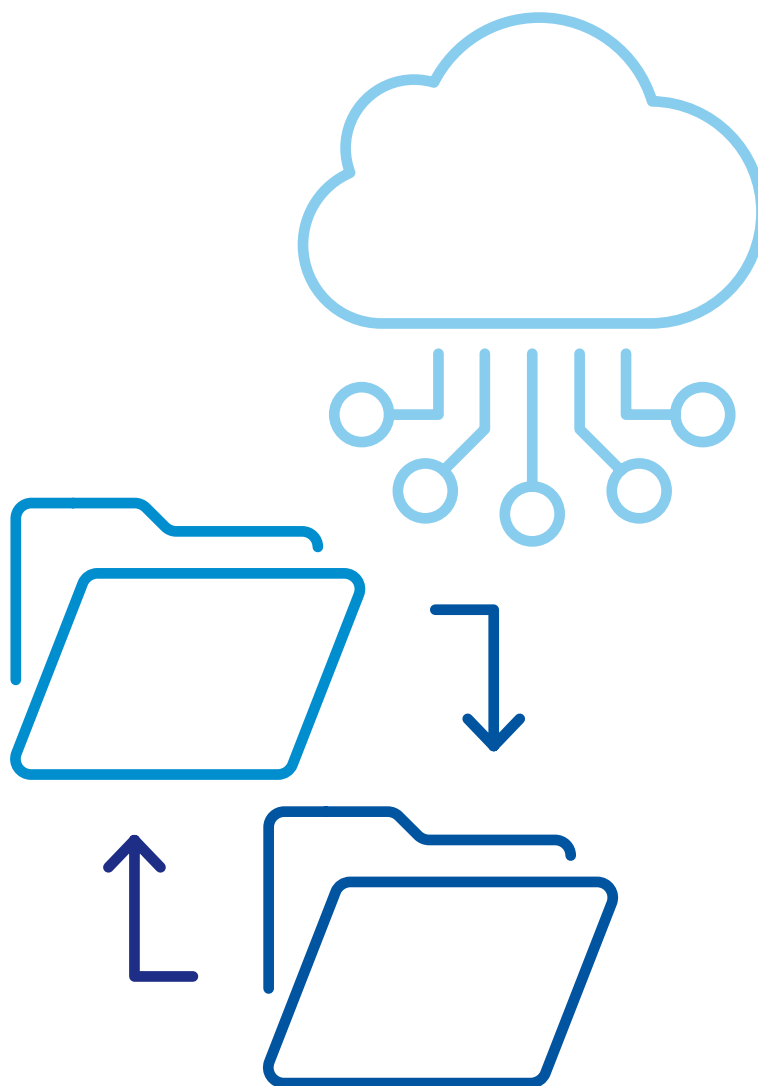
The new system is expected to deliver:

- Move from fragmented (on-premises) systems to a fully integrated cloud service with a **single Database (DB)** at the heart of the NCSE cloud infrastructure, including:
  - **Customer Relationship Management System (CRM)** – for engaging with parents and schools and recording interactions of the same.
  - **Case Management System (CMS)** – for storage of pupil and school records.
  - **Document Management System (DMS)** – for storage, management and tracking of all document types (Word, Excel, Powerpoint, etc.).
- The build of the new system will be fully informed by, and built on the range of optimised business processes within NCSE (mapping below).
- Flexibility, scalability and capacity to expand and embrace new technological developments – hand in hand with continuous process improvement.
- Flexibility to adapt to changing business requirements
- Public-facing website and secure portals providing a route for easy interaction with parents, schools, public, Department of Education and Youth. Ultimately the new system will be seen a singular and seamless rather than a collection of different systems.

## 2.4 Business Process Mapping

As part of our cloud transformation journey, the NCSE has undertaken a comprehensive programme of business process mapping to ensure that our new cloud environment is built around the real-world needs of our services. This work involves analysing and documenting key workflows across the organisation, identifying inefficiencies, dependencies, and opportunities for automation and integration. By aligning these processes with our strategic goals and ICT capabilities, we are creating a cloud architecture that is not only technically robust but also operationally meaningful. This mapping exercise informs system design, data flows, and user experience, ensuring that the cloud solution supports secure, efficient, and responsive service delivery across all NCSE functions.

Continuation of the business process mapping exercise will be accelerated as a key priority in the early stages of implementing this strategy. Full engagement of all stakeholders, particularly at service delivery and support, will be critical for the success of this initiative.



## 3.0 Strategic Objectives

This strategy is designed to strengthen the NCSE's ability to deliver exceptional services to students, parents, and schools through efficient and effective practices. It seeks to embed systems design, creative thinking, and an innovative culture to enhance service quality while leveraging the full potential of digital, cloud, and artificial intelligence. A key priority is ensuring that staff are equipped with the skills, knowledge, tools, and resources necessary to succeed. By improving strategic planning capabilities and establishing robust mechanisms for monitoring performance, learning, and continuous improvement, the NCSE will create a dynamic, responsive, and future-ready ICT environment that supports inclusive education for all.

NCSE strategic objectives are listed as below:

### 1. Digital Transformation of Services

- Streamline and digitise service applications, case management, and tracking systems
- Launch a centralised online portal for parents, schools, and professionals
- Modernise management and delivery of NCSE services

### 2. IT Infrastructure and Cloud Strategy

- Modernise IT systems with secure cloud-based solutions to support remote work, collaboration, and scalability
- Develop a hybrid cloud environment<sup>1</sup> (OGCIO and public cloud) for flexibility and resilience

### 3. Cybersecurity and Data Protection

- Adopt strong security frameworks (e.g. ISO 27001) and protocols (e.g. 2-factor authentication) for protecting personal and sensitive data
- Ensure compliance with GDPR and national data protection regulations

<sup>1</sup> The hybrid environment will be managed in two distinct parts. The Cloud environment by NCSE and the Desktop and Build to Share functionality by OGCIO. The full extent of the nature of the hybrid nature of the new system will be more clearly identified at the procurement outcome stage.



#### 4. Enhanced Data and Analytics

- Implement a secure, scalable data platform to collect, analyse, and report on special education needs and services
- Use data to inform policy, identify trends, and support resource allocation
- This is referenced in the NCSE Data Strategy and detailed under the headings Strategic Response, Vision, and Benefits where reliable data and powerful analytic tools are an integral part of NCSE’s vision

#### 5. Accessibility and Inclusion

- Ensure all digital platforms meet WCAG 2.1 accessibility standards
- Provide multilingual and assistive technology support on all public-facing systems
- Digital content will be designed to support assistive technologies, ensure usability for all users

#### 6. Stakeholder Communication and Engagement

- Create digital channels (email, mobile app, portal messaging) for real-time updates to parents, schools, and SENO teams
- Provide training and guidance through webinars, e-learning modules, and knowledge bases

**7. Digital Skills and Capacity Building**

- Provide ongoing digital training for NCSE staff, SENOs, and support teams
- Embed IT support in regional teams to assist with local technology needs

**8. Cost Control**

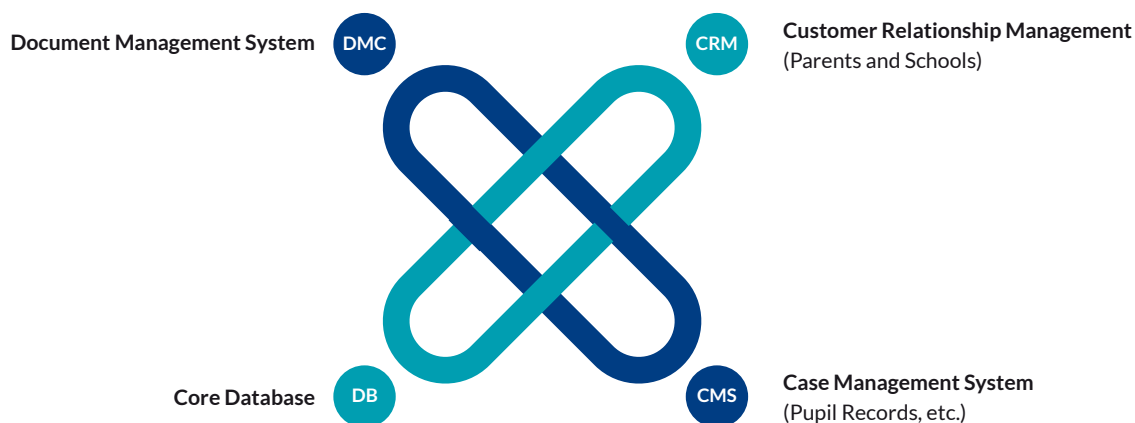
- Cost management plan
- Strong cost control governance processes
- Dedicated role for Cloud Cost Controller

**9. Project Governance**

- Clear project roles and responsibilities
- Regular projects progress reports to SMT and Council



### 3.1 Cloud Environment



The cloud environment will support the; core Database, CRM, DMS and CMS. This will enable the generation, storage and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. The cloud environment will support improved delivery of services through an integrated system enabling streamlined processes and will provide a single source data for comprehensive and unified reporting.

The new and improved NCSE website will continue to provide information and guidance to the public and is fully updated with improved accessibility features. It will also be cloud integrated, which allows NCSE the possibility to integrate front-facing portals providing a route for easy interaction with the public and with schools, who will be able to apply directly for NCSE services through these portals.

- NCSE will be responsible for the entirety of the cloud environment including data and system, cyber security, management and maintenance, upgrades and system patches
- Technology and Innovation Team will manage access to the cloud services across all five NCSE pillars

### 3.2 Security

This strategy is strengthened through our membership of HEAnet, Ireland’s national education and research network, and our adoption of the OCRE (Open Clouds for Research Environments) framework, which provides secure, scalable, and cost-effective access to trusted cloud services.

HEAnet membership enables us to accelerate cloud adoption while ensuring full compliance with public sector procurement and cybersecurity standards, data protection, and interoperability across systems.

In addition to access to easy-to-use ICT procurement solutions, ICT Systems and Data security are central to this approach, OCRE-approved providers meet rigorous EU data protection requirements, giving us confidence that sensitive data, particularly relating to students and families, is handled with the highest level of integrity and protection. Comprehensive and effective security is critical for the protection of our systems from a wide range and ever evolving range of attacks including but not limited to:

- Ransomware
- Data breaches
- Account hijacking
- Denial of service
- Cloud resource hijacking

This approach enables us to build a resilient and secure cloud environment, supporting the NCSE's commitment to digital transformation, enabling flexible infrastructure that enhances data management, and strengthens service delivery and collaboration across the organisation.

Digitise key services and develop user-friendly, efficient platforms for engagement with schools, parents, and stakeholders. A central portal will serve as a one-stop location for applications, support tracking, and communication.

A robust cybersecurity framework to be implemented in order to safeguard systems and data in line with best practice (e.g. ISO 27001). Staff will be coached in cybersecurity awareness and data governance. It is also planned to appoint a permanent security expert to oversee ongoing management of and upgrades to the NCSE cloud environment.

In upskilling and developing staff for the new system and its data-driven capabilities, there will be the need to further enhance staff's security literacy, vigilance and mindfulness. NCSE will recruit a dedicated security expert to oversee the implementation and management of suitable processes and systems in this area.

### **3.3 IT Infrastructure and Cloud-Based Systems**

Transition to a modern, cloud-based, modular IT system to enable flexibility, system resilience, and future scalability. The IT infrastructure will support hybrid working environments and inter-agency data collaboration where appropriate. The unified system will leverage cloud-based technologies to integrate student, school, and administrative portals, digitise data capture, support improved business processes, and ensure smooth system interoperability via full API integration. This will enable applications, systems, and services to work together as a cohesive whole by enabling communication between the NCSE cloud-based system and NCSE-contracted systems outside of the NCSE cloud structure.

The system will also house a secure and flexible record storage and management system, allow categorisation and indexing of documents, improve searchability and easy interactions to support business processes.

The functionality delivered by the new system, in terms of supporting hybrid working environments, integration of portals, digitised data capture and improved business processes, will be supported by the Technology and Innovation team through relevant hardware to all NCSE staff and roles. Staff will be able to interact with processes, generate data, upload and download, create reports, etc. regardless of geographical location or the need for a fixed desk or office. This will be achieved by deploying hardware, i.e. laptop, mobile tablet, etc. to best suit their role and day-to-day needs. This will be managed by the IT Support team within Technology and Innovation Team and will entail extensive engagement with the full range of staff and teams to best integrate with their work practices.

Having a dynamic and robust system will also allow NCSE to move towards a paperless office model where data can be collected at source by online forms and portals feeding into the central system. As this would then be online, paper files could then be removed from NCSE offices.

### 3.4 Enhance Data Governance and Analytics

This strategy supports a number of actions identified in the NCSE Data Strategy. The actions are defined within the workstreams and of the Data strategy. The workstreams and their Key Priority areas are listed below:

- **Resource** – Initiatives to support the requirements of the Data Unit
- **Consolidate** – Consolidation of processes and systems
- **Report** – Define the Data Reporting requirements
- **Share** – Deliver on the EU Open Data directive
- **Core** – Define business processing mapping and the Data Model
- **Quality** – Implementation of a data quality framework
- **Governance** – Implement robust data governance and data management practices

The strategic direction outlined in this document aligns closely with the NCSE Data Strategy, ensuring both strategies complement each other in delivering the actions, workstreams, and the goals and benefits defined within this ICT Strategy.

## 4.0 Governance and Implementation

The system replacement project and the broader ICT strategy implementation will be formally sponsored by John Kearney (CEO), ensuring executive-level commitment and visibility. To provide strategic oversight and direction, a Systems Steering Group will be established, chaired by the Technology and Innovation Principal Officer, as Programme Owner. This group will include senior representatives from all Pillars, creating a cross-functional governance structure that promotes collaboration and alignment with organisational priorities.

The Steering Group will be responsible for setting strategic objectives, monitoring progress, managing risks and costs, and ensuring that decisions are made in line with the overall ICT roadmap. It will also act as the escalation point for critical issues and resource constraints. Reporting on the activities and decisions of the Steering Group will be a standing agenda item at Senior Management Team (SMT) meetings, ensuring transparency and accountability at the highest level. Furthermore, the Steering Group will provide formal progress updates at each Council meeting, reinforcing governance and enabling informed decision-making by stakeholders.

A comprehensive business plan will be prepared and shared with the Digital Governance Oversight Unit within the Department of Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation, in line with the requirements of Circular 14/21 – Arrangements for Oversight of Digital and ICT Related Initiatives in the Civil and Public Service. As expenditure on the systems on the transformation to a cloud-based infrastructure this project will be subject to peer review, as identified in Part 2 of Circular 14/21.

To strengthen accountability, clear reporting lines, defined roles and responsibilities, and performance metrics will be established. Regular reviews will ensure that the implementation remains on track, risks are mitigated promptly, and benefits are realised as planned. This governance model will foster strong leadership, stakeholder engagement, and continuous improvement throughout the lifecycle of the ICT strategy and system replacement project.

# 5.0 Staff Resourcing and Capability

Successful implementation of this Strategy depends on building internal capability and ensuring adequate resourcing. In this regard the current IT will need significant bolstering both in terms of numbers and expertise, which will be in line with similar sized organisations.

This will entail building expertise within Technology and Innovation Team, through coaching, training and upskilling opportunities across the NCSE, in addition to recruitment in key roles, to empower staff to maximise the capabilities of the new technology.

Developing these resources and strengthening capability will be a key step, both at the outset to ensure NCSE has recourse to the relevant expertise to begin the transformation and then on an on-going basis, supported by the roll-out of coaching and training to ensure NCSE can retain that expertise in a sustainable manner.

In the absence of permanent resources, which may take time, NCSE will appoint contractors for key roles until their eventual replacement with full-time NCSE staff.

## 5.1 Technology and Innovation Division

The type of activities to be conducted by the ICT Team will include:

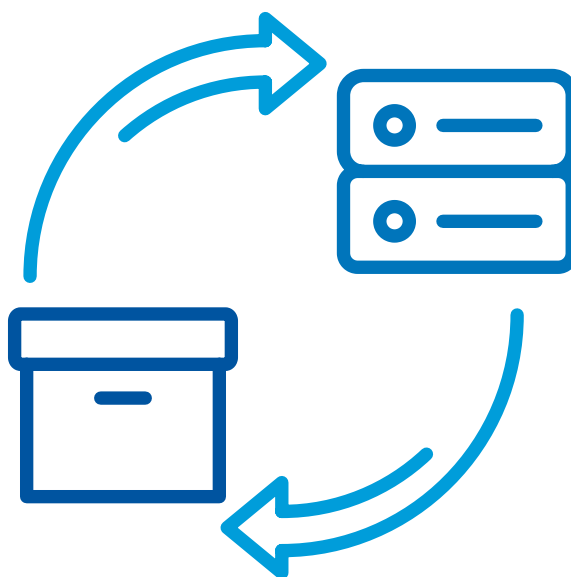
- Develop a Business Case including estimated costings.
- Establishing a dedicated IT Operation Excellence function within Technology and Innovation Team with responsibility for strategy execution, research, systems management, I.T. procurement, cybersecurity, system development and user advice and support.
- Recruiting key roles (further details in Appendix 2), including:
  - IT Strategy and Programme Manager
  - Data Governance Lead
  - Cybersecurity Specialist
  - Webmaster
  - Database Administrator
  - Accessibility and UX Specialist
  - IT Support and Training Coordinator
  - ArcGIS expert

- Utilise the ICT Apprenticeship panels, as a recruitment source for expertise in various areas of IT.
- A procurement strategy will be created and implemented and will govern Technology and Innovation Team’s overall approach selecting a Cloud System. This procurement strategy will also be informed by research and market analysis carried out by the team. Engagement as members of HEAnet will be a priority and will inform strategy in this area. The OGCIO and DGOU will also be engaged with on an on-going basis.
- Ongoing research in the realm of ICT developments across the range of technical possibilities.
- Ongoing engagement with ICT specialist advisors and suppliers, other public bodies and OGCIO, as well as membership to the Public Sector ICT Manager’s forum to keep updated with ICT developments and opportunities.

## 5.2 Across NCSE

- Enhance data, digital and AI literacy through new ways of working, tailored training for all staff, with targeted support for SENOs and public-facing staff
- Increase security literacy among all staff (and testing)
- One Learning, OGCIO tutorials and external I.T. trainers will be engaged to deliver an all-encompassing understanding in the area of I.T., dictated by staff needs
- Develop partnerships with the Department of Education’s IT unit, external vendors, and public sector digital transformation teams

A workforce planning framework will ensure alignment between IT initiatives and staffing capacity throughout the strategic cycle.



# 6.0 Transformation and Change Management

The new system will be part of a significant transformation from existing business practices, in terms of processes and the technological landscape. Good quality change management is critical to the success of the new system, in terms of specifying, deploying and implementing. It will be critical for change management exercises to commence well ahead of the procurement of the new system.

The transformation will affect all areas of NCSE business as well as external stakeholders. Developing communication channels with key stakeholders (e.g. schools) ahead of system purchase/deployment to manage significant change management will be crucial to achieving a successful roll-out.

The cloud-based system will allow for far smoother internal operations. Interactions with stakeholders will be more streamlined and straightforward. Parents will be able to apply for NCSE services directly through a portal on our website. Schools will be able to communicate with NCSE directly, through the system, for updates such as, resource allocations, SET review, SNA reviews, etc.

The system alone will not deliver the change, for the change to be effective it must be business driven with unity across the entire organisation. The new system will represent a significant transformation that will need to be managed carefully. As mentioned in the NCSE Data Strategy (2025-2028), NCSE will become a data driven organisation and to fully reach this goal organisational wide data literacy is critical.

A transformation plan, led by a transformation manager, will be developed and implemented.

## 6.1 Build Organisational Data and Digital Literacy

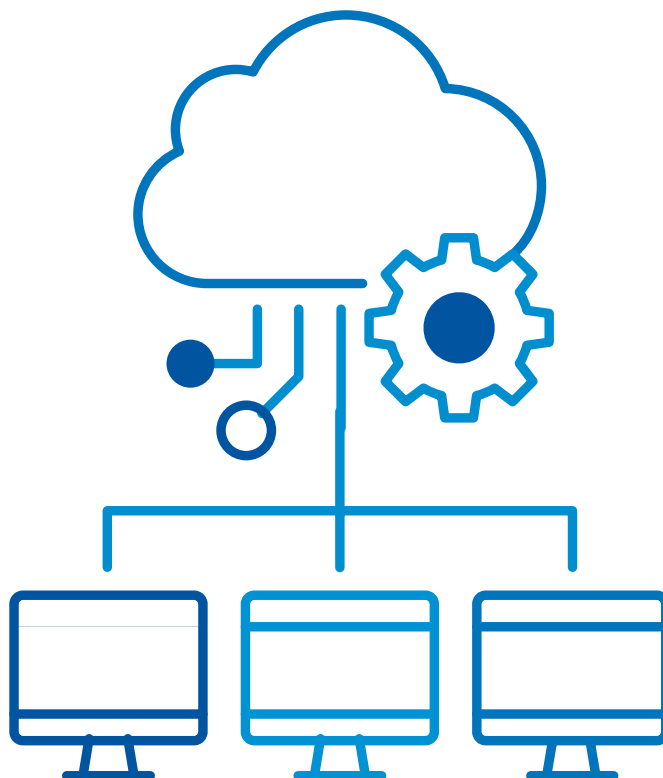
Critical to successful change is building and development of digital and data literacy throughout the organisation. Technology and Innovation Team will lead on enhancing internal IT literacy through targeted training for all staff. Special focus will be given to SENOs and support staff to ensure equitable access and effective use of new technologies in the field.

A capable, skilled and engaged staff is critical to unlocking business and policy value from data. Operations throughout the organisation will be increasingly digitally enabled. This will require investment in the development of our staff's capability to take advantage of data related opportunities. Staff will be supported through any required changes to ensure they are appropriately skilled to take advantage of the opportunities offered by data and related technology to aid them in their roles. This will include security literacy, as referenced in 3.3 and AI literacy, to be proficient in its use and aware of best practice, in order to maximise the benefits and ensure compliance with Government Policy and the EU AI act.

Develop communications and training plans tailored to the needs of the different business and technical users throughout the organisation.

Provide for knowledge sharing events to showcase successful initiatives from across the NCSE (using external speakers as appropriate)

- Create education forums and communication plans at NCSE
- Enhance data management training and support



# 7.0 Legacy Data Migration Strategy

As part of the transition to modernised systems, the organisation recognises the importance of assessing and potentially migrating historical data from existing legacy systems. This data, accumulated over many years, may provide valuable insights for statistical analysis, service evaluation, and forward business planning.

The Technology and Innovation Team will implement a comprehensive Data Migration Plan, providing clear governance and direction for all activities within the migration project.

A structured evaluation process will be undertaken for each legacy system and its associated dataset to determine the most appropriate approach to data migration.

Legacy systems include:

- Freshdesk
- SEAS (Database)
- ArcGis
- Adobe Connect

This evaluation will be based on two key criteria:

## 1. Value to Future Operations and Planning

The relevance and usefulness of the data in supporting strategic decision-making, service development, performance tracking, and compliance requirements will be assessed. Priority will be given to datasets that provide measurable benefits for future service delivery and organisational intelligence.

## 2. Complexity and Risk of Migration

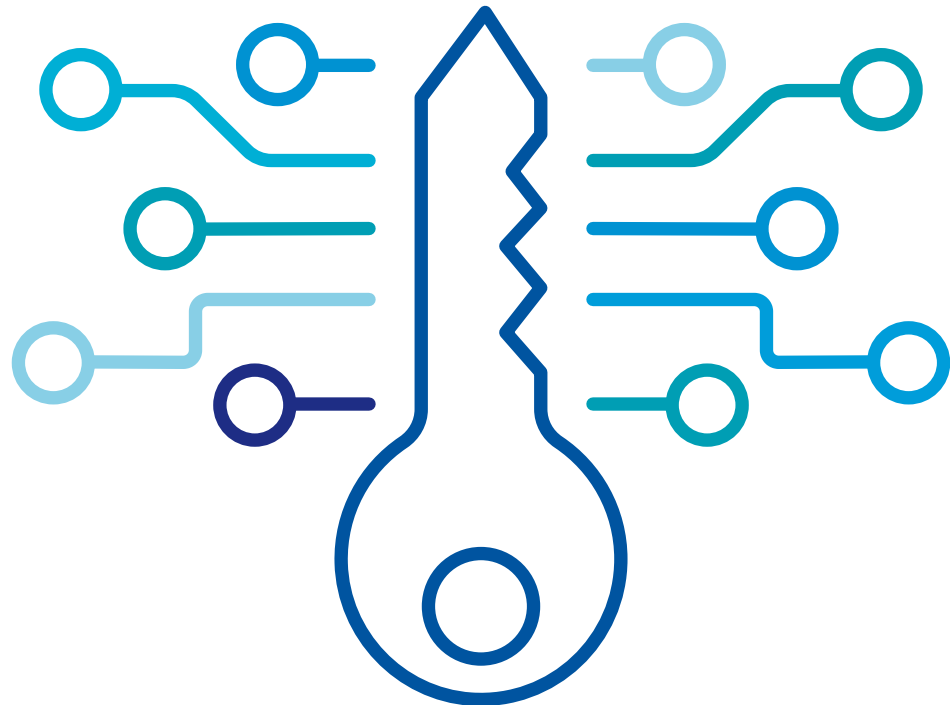
The technical difficulty, resource implications, and risks associated with extracting, transforming, and importing the data into the new system will also be considered. Datasets requiring disproportionate effort or posing significant risks to data integrity or system performance may be deprioritised.

This selective approach ensures that legacy data migration supports the overarching objectives of modernisation, efficiency, and data-driven planning, without compromising resources or system performance.

## 8.0 Procurement Approach

A procurement strategy will be developed to inform our approach to the market. The strategy will be built around the following principles and outcome expectations:

- Maximise procurement resources of HEAnet and OGP
- Ensure value for money (on a whole of life basis)
- Single unified cloud-based system (including Database, CRM, DMS, CMS)
- Website portals for school/parent engagement
- Combination of bespoke build and customised off the shelf
- Ownership of the final system will lie with NCSE
- Adherence to and compliance with broader Government procurement policies (legislation, circulars and guidelines)
- Futureproofing and scalability



# 9.0 Roadmap – Key Projects and Milestones

<b>Data Management</b>	Implement recommendations in the NCSE Data Strategy 2025 – 2028	<b>2025-2028</b>
<b>Website</b>	Deploy new website into the cloud	<b>Q4 2025</b>
<b>Pilot AI</b>	Pilot Co-Pilot Chat (available through OGCIO)	<b>Q4 2025</b>
<b>Draft Business Case</b>	For Council approval and peer review through DGOU	<b>Q1 2026</b>
<b>Optimise Data ahead of deployment of new system</b>	Data Governance and Management to improve data integrity, implement process automations where possible (utilise DBA)	<b>2025-2026</b>
<b>Business Process Mapping and Improvement</b>	Automate and streamline administrative tasks and workflows for efficiency and transparency	<b>2025-2026</b>
<b>Establish Project Implementation Group</b>	All Pillars	<b>Q1 2026</b>
<b>Website Portals</b>	Commence development, testing and deployment of portals for applications and communications	<b>2026</b>
<b>Data Warehousing</b>	Implement a cloud-based data warehouse to aggregate and store educational and administrative data for reporting and analysis. In advance of data-migration to new system	<b>2026</b>
<b>Data Lake</b>	Implement a Data Lake for un-structured data	<b>2026</b>
<b>Replicate SEAS Data in the Cloud</b>	A cloud-based database that mirrors on-site SEAS (interim measure ahead of new system)	<b>2026</b>

<b>Cybersecurity</b>	Ensure adequate training/recruitment/contracting to ensure adequate measures are in place for our cloud-based system	<b>2026-2028</b>
<b>Develop Data Migration plan</b>	A detailed managed plan to support and guide the actions within the migration project	<b>2026</b>
<b>Transformation plan</b>	A transformation strategy, led by a transformation manager, will be developed and implemented	<b>2026</b>
<b>Procurement Strategy</b>	A procurement strategy to inform our approach to the market	<b>2026</b>
<b>Cost Management Plan</b>	Approach to cost controls, monitoring and tracking in the cloud environment	<b>2026</b>
<b>Digital-First Data Capture</b>	Replace paper/manual-based data capture processes with digital data entry methods to ensure real-time updates and higher accuracy	<b>2027</b>
<b>Cloud-Based System Implementation</b>	Transition from existing system to replacement system	<b>2028</b>

# Appendix 1: Strategic, Policy and Legal Considerations

The ICT strategy aligns with and is supported by the following strategies and directives;

**Public Service Data Strategy 2019-23** <https://assets.gov.ie/7107/7ac4ae109cd944dc99c9e178962fa095.pdf>

**Better Public Services – Public Service Transformation 2030 Strategy** – <https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/better-public-services-public-service-transformation-2030-strategy.pdf>

**Government guidelines on Cloud Computing Resources** – <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-public-expenditure-infrastructure-public-service-reform-and-digitalisation/publications/cloud-computing-resources/>

**Cloud Computing advice note** – <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-public-expenditure-infrastructure-public-service-reform-and-digitalisation/publications/cloud-computing-advice-note-2025/>

**Cloud Services Procurement Guidance Note 2025** – <https://www.gov.ie/en/office-of-government-procurement/publications/cloud-services-procurement-guidance-note-2025-update/>

**Civil Service Renewal 2030** – <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/efd7f-civil-service-renewal-2030/>

**Connecting Government 2030** – <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/136b9-connecting-government-2030-a-digital-and-ict-strategy-for-irelands-public-service/>

**Harnessing Digital – The Digital Ireland Framework** – <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-the-taoiseach/publications/harnessing-digital-the-digital-ireland-framework/>

**National Artificial Intelligence Strategy for Ireland** – <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/publications/publication-files/national-ai-strategy.pdf>

**Open Data Directive (2019)** – <https://data.gov.ie/pages/open-data-directive>

**Open Data Strategy 2023-27** – <https://assets.gov.ie/277517/45722fb7-1e1c-414a-830b-fa831388aecf.pdf>

**Data Protection Act 2018** – <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2018/act/7/enacted/en/html>

**General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018** – <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/ebc33-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr-may-2018/>

**Freedom of Information Act 2014** – <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/30/enacted/en/>

# Appendix 2: Cloud Roles – Development Through to Post Deployment

The table below outlines the new roles that need to be introduced/developed for NCSE to move to and operate in a cloud environment. Some of the roles can be drawn from existing staff others from recruitment or via external contractors.

	Role	Activity	Indicative Grade	Internal/ External Resource	Number	Estimated Requirement
<b>Core Roles (project linked)</b>						
1	Solution Architect	Design an optimal, secure and robust solution.	APO/PO	External	1	Temporary role (12 months) – Role is dependent on system procurement outcome – will be part of the winning tenderers team
2	Procurement Expertise	Spec – price approach, etc.	HEO	Internal or External	1	Temporary role (6 months). Expected to be needed in Q1 2026
3	Project Manager	Manages overall development.	APO	External	1	Temporary role (24 months). Expected to be required in Q2 2027 onwards
4	Change Manager	Manages the roll out of the project – managed by NCSE staff	APO	External	1	Temporary role (9 Months). Required in late 2027
5	Developer	Implement the solution designed by the Solution Architect.	APO	External	2	Temporary role (12 – 18 Months). Role is dependent on system procurement outcome – will be part of the winning tenderers team

Role	Activity	Indicative Grade	Internal/ External Resource	Number	Estimated Requirement	
6	ICT Security Expert	Building, managing and maintaining essential cloud security.	APO	Internal	1	Permanent role. Required in 2026
7	Cloud Administrator/ Sys Ops	Deploys the solution and keeps it running (including, maintenance, monitoring, security, optimisation and system troubleshooting).	APO/HEO	Internal	2	Permanent role. Required in late 2027
8	Senior Business Analyst	Understanding NCSE, mapping out processes, conducting risk assessments, maximise resources, connecting teams. Essential at strategy/solution development stage.	APO/HEO	External	2	Temporary role (6 months). More time may be required as we sort through the complexity and there will be elements of an ongoing requirement for this role from an internal member of staff. Required in Q3/ Q4 2025
<b>Specialist Roles</b>						
9	ICT Ops	ICT Operations	APO	Internal	1	2027 – role will require a support team (existing staff plus)
10	ICT Infrastructure	Cloud infrastructure maintenance.	APO	Internal	1	2027 – role will require a support team (existing staff plus)
11	Data Governance and Management	Leading on data governance and management – policy development, data integrity, etc.	APO	Internal	1	2025 – role will require a support team (existing staff plus)
12	Network Technician	Maintenance of network and integrity of data.	HEO	Internal	2	Permanent role. Required in 2027

Role	Activity	Indicative Grade	Internal/ External Resource	Number	Estimated Requirement
13 Database Specialist/ Administrator	Ongoing management and optimisation of database.	HEO/EO	Internal	2	Initially temporary (12 months) but ultimately permanent role. Required in Q3 2025 (working on existing systems)
14 Dev Ops Engineer	Specialist working in a combination of development and operations. Writes code for system developments.	APO/HEO	Internal	2	Permanent role. Required in Q3 2025 (working on existing systems)
15 Data Migration/ETL Experts	Working with the Database Administrator to transfer the data to new system.	APO	Internal	1	Required 2025/2026
16 Data Analyst	Statistical data analysis with the object of identifying trends to help respond to business needs.	HEO/EO	Internal	2	Maybe located in other Pillars. Permanent roles. Required in Q3/ Q4 2025
<b>IT/Cloud Administrators</b>					
17 Administrators	Access Control, account management, cost monitoring and support and change communications.	EO/CO	Internal	4	It is envisaged that existing staff will be able fulfil these roles. Will require training/ upskilling of team members. Required in 2027

Phase	Numbers	Permanent	Temporary
Development	8	19	8
Post Deployment	19		

In addition, a permanent CIO will be required at some point in the future (possibly 2028). This will be a senior position expected to be at Director or A.Sec. level, particularly given the anticipated growth trajectory of NCSE.









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