

LINC programme FAQ



Q) What is the LINC programme?

A) The Leadership for INclusion in the Early Years programme, LINC, is a Level 6 Special Purpose Award (Higher Education). The programme is designed to promote the inclusion of all children, especially children with additional needs across Early Learning and Care settings in Ireland. After completing the programme, graduates will carry out the role of INclusion COordinator (INCO).

Q) What is the cost to participate?

A) The programme is free for employees who are working in Early Learning and Care settings in Ireland.

Q) The programme is completely online for 2021/2022, what does this mean?

A) The programme is based on an online learning model. Students will be required to engage weekly with a range of reflective activities, videos and discussion forums. Each module will have one live online session with a student's assigned tutor, and these will be available in PDF format should a student not be available to attend. An online mentoring visit is provided to support student's professional learning.

Q) What Locations will the LINC classroom sessions take place in 2021/2022?

A) Physical classroom sessions will be replaced by virtual online sessions for 2021/2022.

Q) What does an INclusion COordinator do?

A) See the INCO job description on the inside of the 2021 brochure. It can also be found on the website homepage www.lincprogramme.ie.

Q) Who can apply for LINC?

A) Any Early Learning and Care setting with a pre-school room that is contracted for any DCEDIY Early Years Programme (ECCE/CCSP/TEC) can nominate someone for LINC. To be eligible for the programme candidates must hold a level 5 major award in childcare, at minimum. The setting manager can nominate themselves or any member of the setting's staff.

Q) What is the entry requirement?

A) The minimum entry requirement is a level 5 major award in Early Childhood Care and Education or related qualification in accordance with the DCEDIY's Early Years Recognised Qualification Listing.

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Q) When is the deadline for applications?

A) The deadline for receipt of applications for 2021/2022 is 4pm Friday, 14 May 2021.

Q) How do I apply?

A) All applications must be completed online at the Apply Now section of the LINC Programme website www.lincprogramme.ie. Settings must first login with their relevant DCEDIY Number and create a password, passwords from previous years are not carried forward. Follow the steps outlined and complete the application form. Applications can only be made using a PC or desktop, applicants will not be able to complete their application using a phone or tablet. Please note: all mandatory fields, denoted by an *, must be completed and a copy of the nominee's relevant qualification must be included in the application.

Q) If a setting applied in year one, two, three etc. and didn't accept a place, or were not offered a place, can they apply again?

A) Yes, they can.

Q) There is already an INclusion COordinator/graduate of the course in my setting, can I apply for the programme?

A) Yes, for the 2021/2022 programme priority for places will be given to settings with no INclusion COordinator or LINC graduate. If there are still places available, they will then be offered to applicants from settings that have applied with more than 22 ECCE children in a pre-school room. Should there still be places available after this round then they will be offered to applicants that have applied from all other settings. Should the programme be oversubscribed random selection of eligible applications will apply based on the criteria outlined above.

Q) Will there be extra capitation for settings that employ an INclusion COordinator?

A) An Early Learning and Care setting that employs an Inclusion Coordinator (INCO) who has graduated from LINC will receive an extra €2 per week in capitation per ECCE-eligible child in a pre-school room, where the child is on an ECCE/CCSP/TEC programme. Subject to detailed operational guidelines, the increase applies from:

a) graduation of the Inclusion Coordinator from the LINC programme and

b) completion of a signed agreement by the Inclusion Coordinator that they will take on the role and responsibilities associated with the post. INCO Capitation (once a qualified INCO is appointed) is paid to settings for all children in their pre-school room (i.e. for all ECCE-eligible children) regardless of which programme they are funded through.

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Q) Is there financial support available to participants?

A) Each participating student will receive a once-off payment of €200 to assist with covering expenses arising from participation on the programme.

Q) When will this bursary/grant be paid?

A) No decision has yet been made on when the payment will be made to the student, but it will be after the programme has commenced.

Q) Does LINC qualify you to be a room leader?

A) Yes, as well as taking on the role of INclusion COordinator graduates also meet room leader requirements.

Q) How much study is involved?

A) It is estimated that participants will spend 8-10 hours per week undertaking self-directed study and participating in online discussion fora. Additionally, there is one live online sessions per module.

Q) Can students apply for any exemptions?

A) Applicants with qualifications at level 6 and higher may seek exemptions from the Child Development and Curriculum for Inclusion modules, only. Students will be advised on how to apply for exemptions once the programme commences.

Q) There are two people in my setting that want to apply can they both make an application?

A) No, only one candidate per setting can make an application.

Q) There are two LINC graduates in my setting, can both of us perform the role of INCO?

A) No, only one LINC graduate can take on the Role of INclusion COordinator in your Early Learning and Care setting.

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Q) There are two LINC graduates in my setting, can we claim the capitation payment associated with the role of INCO for both?

A) No there can be only one INclusion COordinator appointed in a setting and settings can only claim capitation for one INclusion COordinator.

Q) I see you are running an early bird competition this year, what is the prize and what do you have to do to be included in the draw?

A) This year LINC will have one €250 One4all voucher to give away for eligible applicants that make an application between 9am Monday, April 19, and 12pm midnight on Friday April 30. In order to claim the prize the winner must have accepted a place on the programme for more see:

<https://lincprogramme.ie/early-bird-offer>

Q) Will Orientation be provided?

A) A detailed Online Introduction to the LINC Programme will be delivered to incoming students in early September. Students will receive information on how to access the Online Introduction to the LINC Programme by email and will be supported by their Tutor in this process.

Q) I've never completed an online course, is it difficult to access the lessons?

A) All participants on the programme need to have access to a computer/laptop and a good internet connection. Recorded lessons are released for each module on a weekly basis. Once lessons are released, they remain available to students to engage with as often as they wish. Clear instructions are provided on how to do this once the programme commences.

Q) I applied previously and did not receive a place; do I need to re-apply or are previous applications kept on file?

A) You will need to re-apply as applications are not kept on file.

Q) How long are the online sessions?

A) There are three lessons each week of approximately 30-40 minutes duration per lesson.

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Q) Are there IT supports available?

A) Students will be fully supported to complete the LINC Programme by their Tutor and will be encouraged to report any IT difficulties directly to them.

Q) I am a setting manager, who should I nominate to complete the programme?

A) 5 questions to consider when nominating an employee to participate in LINC:

1) Commitment: Is the staff member committed to their setting and are they willing to be appointed as an INclusion COordinator (INCO) and carry out the tasks relevant to the role? Are they committed to undertaking this course of study.

2) Qualification: Does the employee hold at least a Level 5 Major Award in Childcare?

3) Flexibility: Where does the individual work – they can be based in any part of the setting and not necessarily in the ECCE Room.

4) IT Skills: Are they comfortable sending an email, uploading and downloading attachments and accessing online lessons.

5) Availability: Is the person available for all the dates outlined in the LINC 2021/2022 academic calendar. Available here: https://lincprogramme.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/LINC-Academic-Calendar-2021_22.pdf