



**National Adult Literacy Agency**  
An Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearachta do Aosaigh

# Annual Report 2005



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National Adult Literacy Agency

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# Overview

Inez Bailey, Director  
National Adult Literacy Agency

At first glance, the year in review might seem rather ordinary due to a lack of headline developments compared with previous years. However, a number of very significant developments occurred during the year, which will form the basis of this account of NALA's work in 2005 against the backdrop of our strategic plan.

At policy and budget level, there was disappointment with the budget allocation to adult literacy overall, despite lobbying by NALA and its members. However, as our primary lobbying resource and in direct response to the *National Adult Literacy and Numeracy Implementation Plan* (NALNIP), the Department of Education and Science, through Minister de Valera, announced a €1 million fund to develop intensive basic education programmes within the Vocational Educational Committee (VEC) Adult Literacy Service. In addition, Minister Hanafin launched a family literacy initiative to involve the VEC Adult Literacy Service, Home School Community Liaison and NALA, as part of DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity In Schools), the Department's plan to promote educational inclusion for 3-18 year olds, which will be introduced in 2006. As a member of the Educational Disadvantage Committee, I was able to contribute to the Committee's final report to Minister Hanafin, recommending important areas of development in adult literacy.



◀ Minister Síle de Valera, TD, with NALA Director Inez Bailey at the opening of the 'Active Citizenship and Literacy' conference

Under our research work, we finalised Mapping the Learning Journey (MLJ), an assessment framework for adult literacy. This was formally adopted by the Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA) after we developed a plan with the Department of Education and Science and the IVEA to roll it out in VEC Adult Literacy Services. All VECs were invited to take part in the roll out and 23 have taken up this offer. Other research work included developing a homeless and literacy plan with the Homeless Agency and starting our project to develop a framework for those involved in adult basic education to develop a student-centred curriculum. This exciting project, funded by the Dormant Accounts Fund and supported by the Department of Education and Science, involves students, tutors and other stakeholders in adult literacy advising on how best to build a framework that will strengthen the student-centred ethos of adult literacy work. The research project is set to be completed by 2007.

Keeping and developing the ethos of adult literacy work is central to our Evolving Quality Framework, a self-evaluation system for adult literacy commonly used in the VEC Adult Literacy Service. An independent evaluation of the framework demonstrated the value of the system to those involved in adult literacy work as well as to VECs preparing their quality assurance processes as part of the FETAC requirements for providers wishing to offer accreditation. In 2006, the EQF will be further improved once recommendations in the evaluation report are adopted.

Training continued throughout 2005 for volunteer and paid tutors, Adult Literacy Organisers and others involved in adult literacy, education and training. The event with the most in attendance was MLJ tutor training which 450 people attended. In addition, students' subsidies were given out to 50 groups that applied to carry out specific activities geared towards student development. This work was also enhanced by a range of activities organised by students for students through NALA.

With the support of the EBS Building Society, family literacy work was advanced by providing dedicated funding and training to groups to develop Storysacks. A total of 30 groups received funding – ranging from VEC Adult Literacy Services to Family Resource Centres. Many of these attended a special seminar on family literacy research and developments in New Zealand given by John Benseman from the University of Auckland, New Zealand.

Dedicated work to develop numeracy awareness and materials began in earnest with the appointment of Terry Maguire to build up the numeracy expertise of NALA staff and include it in programmes. A very large attendance was seen at our numeracy conference in Dublin with international speakers sharing their experience of numeracy research and development and an impressive selection of resources on display.

Workplace basic education (WBE) had perhaps the greatest fortune in 2005. The Workplace Basic Education Fund was established by Minister Micheál Martin within FÁS. With some of this funding, four WBE regional co-ordinators were appointed by NALA to work with FÁS Services to Business personnel to develop WBE within their regions. A further WBE project with Co Monaghan VEC saw many private companies involved in delivering WBE programmes to their employees. WBE materials were also developed with Skillnets and with a grant from the Dormant Accounts Fund.



◀ Ted McGovern, EBS, President McAleese, Margaret Scott, award winner and Inez Baley at the ACE Awards

The development of materials for tutors and students was also significant in 2005. With funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs Communicating Europe Initiative, NALA published *Know Your EU*, a resource pack to introduce students to the European Union. A resource for tutors on how to write materials was launched at

International Literacy Day, while CDs of *Read Write Now* 1 and 2 were also made available. We also added to Literacytools, our interactive website, by increasing the number of games and expanding the range of worksheets.

The Agency continued to support an increasing range of providers involved in education and training who wish to build their expertise in integrating literacy and numeracy into programmes for course participants. FÁS Community Training Centres were among the most active group in this area throughout 2005. This activity has been achieved through training, network opportunities and developing dedicated resources.

National Adult Literacy Awareness Week (NALAW) had the theme of literacy and active citizenship and culminated in a half-day seminar chaired by Fintan O'Toole, journalist, and addressed by two international speakers. *Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work* was updated for a second time since 1985 and launched by Dr Katherine Zappone, a member of the Irish Human Rights Commission, early in NALAW. The plain English CD, *Simply Put*, was also launched by Minister Séamus Brennan during the week, following the launch of the NALA Plain English Mark earlier in the year.

The review of our existing strategic plan also began during the year with the appointment of organisational consultants Anne Connolly and her team. We started consulting our members and others with an interest in our work in autumn 2005. This provides the basis for initial work on developing a new strategic plan to be published in 2006.

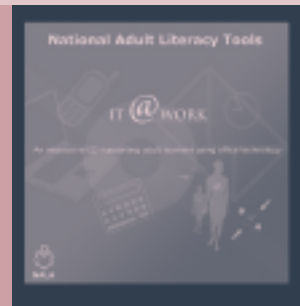
The year ended with a commitment from the EBS Building Society to support our work for a further year, including funding another awards night to celebrate adult literacy work. This was a welcome development in light of no increased resources for adult literacy being announced during Budget 2005, setting the tone for lobbying work in 2006 and beyond. All attention will now focus on securing the required resources to fully implement the NALNIP and build a high quality adult literacy service to meet the needs of those wishing to improve their literacy and numeracy.

“meeting the needs  
of those wishing to  
improve their literacy  
and numeracy”

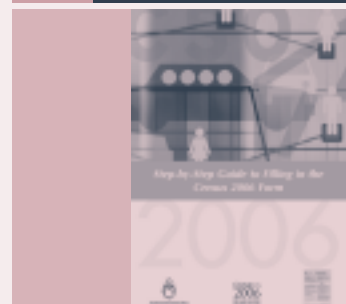


◀ President McAleese arrives  
for the Adults Continuing  
Education Awards

‘Technology@Work’ ▶  
CD-Rom



◀ Journalist and writer Fintan  
O'Toole (centre) addresses  
delegates with Carolyn Medel  
Anonuevo, UNESCO (right) and  
Elizabeth Meehan, Queen's  
University, at the 'Active  
Citizenship and Literacy'  
conference





# New NALA projects in 2005

## Active citizenship and literacy

In 2005, National Adult Literacy Awareness Week (NALAW) had the theme of active citizenship and literacy. The week, which ran from 26 to 30 September, was aimed at organisations and individuals that facilitate active citizenship, such as Government departments, statutory organisations, information providers and community and voluntary groups. NALAW included the launch of four valuable publications and culminated in an informative half-day conference illustrating literacy's contribution to active citizenship.

The week opened with the launch of *A Plain English Guide to Citizenship Terms*, defining over 400 commonly used terms related to citizenship in Ireland, and of an updated edition of *Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work*. It continued with the launches of *Know Your EU* (see page 7), a guide to the EU for adult literacy tutors and students, supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs, and *Simply Put* (see page 20), an interactive CD for information providers in public, private and voluntary organisations on how to use plain English, supported by the Comhairle Information Grants Scheme.

The finale of the week was a half-day conference on the role of literacy in active citizenship, attended by 150 people at the National College of Ireland in Dublin. Fintan O'Toole, one of Ireland's leading political and cultural commentators, chaired the day and key speakers were Carolyn Medel-Anonuevo (UNESCO Institute of Education), Professor Elizabeth Meehan (Queen's University, Belfast) and Síle de Valera, TD (Minister of State at the Department of Education and Science). Together, they inspired a lively question-and-answer session about the importance of literacy in achieving active citizenship. The final speaker was NALA Director Inez Bailey, who spoke about *Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work*. NALAW was supported by the '2005 European Year of Citizenship Through Education' project, which was co-ordinated through the Curriculum Development Unit, City of Dublin VEC, and funded by the Department of Education and Science and Development Co-operation Ireland.

For more information, contact Tommy Byrne, PRO, by e-mail at [tbyrne@nala.ie](mailto:tbyrne@nala.ie) or by phone on (01) 809 9195.

## Adults Continuing Education (ACE) Awards

In 2005, NALA organised the first Adults Continuing Education (ACE) Awards, in partnership with EBS Building Society. The awards were designed to highlight examples of excellence, personal success and high-quality tuition and support in adult literacy and were divided into the following five categories:

- **Business:** Outstanding commitment to staff or community training;
- **Non-Profit Organisation:** Creating opportunities for others;
- **Practitioner:** Outstanding dedication to learning;
- **Student:** Exceptional contribution to learning; and
- **Student:** Outstanding personal success.

We had received nominations from a wide range of individuals and organisations providing, or benefiting from, adult basic education (ABE) across Ireland. These showcased the high quality development of skills in literacy, numeracy, ICT and communications.

The ACE Awards gala ceremony was held at the Morrison Hotel in Dublin in November and was attended by President of Ireland and NALA patron President Mary McAleese, who presented awards to five eventual winners from a total of 70 nominees.

For more information, contact Emma Ramsey by e-mail at [eramsey@nala.ie](mailto:eramsey@nala.ie) or by phone on (01) 809 9180.

NALA received funding from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in 2005 to develop two publications, *A Step-by-Step Guide to filling in the Census 2006 Form* and *Census 2006: A Tutor's Guide*.

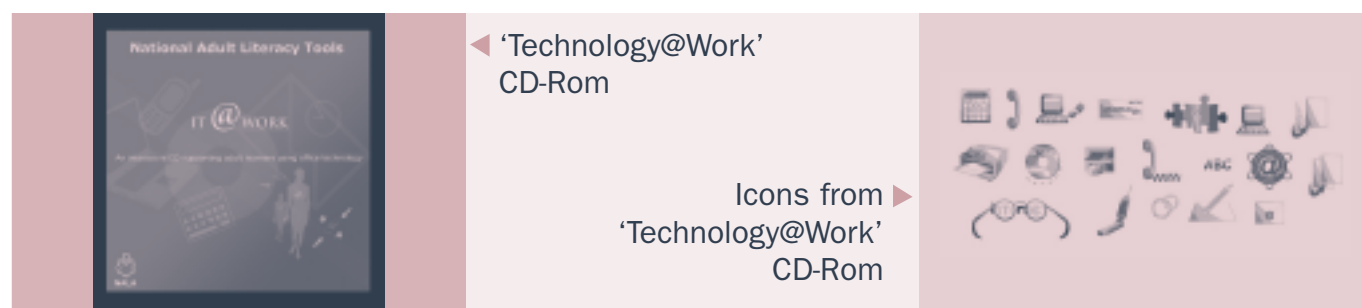
## Distance education position paper

## Workplace Basic Education (WBE) learning and tuition CD-ROM

- using a fax machine and photocopier;
- using a phone and mobile phone;
- using a computer;
- using a cash machine (ATM); and
- understanding a pay slip.

- Knowing the parts;
- How it works;
- Try it out;
- Crossword;
- Word search; and
- Shooter game.

For more information, contact Peter Kiernan, Regional Development Worker (midlands, west, northwest and northeast), by e-mail at [pkiernan@nala.ie](mailto:pkiernan@nala.ie) or by phone on (044) 40374.



In 2005 we produced a materials pack, *Know Your EU*, about the European Union (EU) as part of the Communicating Europe Initiative, funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs. The aim of the project was to develop and produce a basic education pack on the theme of the European Union, designed especially for young people and adults with literacy and numeracy needs and for use in literacy work in a range of settings.



The objectives of the project were to:

- extend knowledge and awareness of the European Union to a wider section of the Irish population by providing literacy-aware information and resource material; and
- integrate literacy and numeracy skills development into an educational programme related to the European Union.

*Know Your EU* is divided into seven sections:

- What is the EU?;
- The EU and Ireland;
- EU Institutions: What do they do?;
- What does the EU do for me?;
- The EU Constitution;
- Our EU partners; and
- EU Resources.



To help readers understand the EU, *Know Your EU* contains adult literacy worksheets with suggested activities in the areas of discussion, reading, writing, map work and numeracy. They also cover literacy learning points, computer work and dictionary work.

Since its launch during National Literacy Awareness Week, *Know Your EU* has been very well received, proving to be popular within the adult literacy and education and training sector and with local libraries around the country.

A reprint of *Know Your EU* is due for 2006. Also due is a new pack, *The A-Z guide to the European Union*, also under the Communicating Europe Initiative. This will be a pocket-sized adult literacy material and will help fill the materials gap for adult literacy students while giving information about the European Union.

“Support the development of new approaches to literacy.”



◀ Pete O'Mahony, CEO, Irish Refugee Council, launching the *The Big Picture* ESOL pack

*The Big Picture* ▶



◀ Minister Síle de Valera, TD, launching *At Home with Family Learning*

Neil Griffiths ▶  
demonstrating storybags  
at the family literacy  
conference



# NALA projects developed in 2005

## English for Speakers of Other Languages

Up to June 2005, 7,800 students were taking part in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes in the adult literacy service. This is about 23% of the total number of literacy students in VECs throughout Ireland. In 2005, NALA continued to support the VEC ESOL practitioners, community education and voluntary groups and prison education staff by providing ESOL materials and ESOL training. Specific activities involved:

- launching two ESOL tuition and learning packs;
- providing three accredited ESOL modules for ESOL tutors and co-ordinators through the NALA/Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) initiative;
- hosting an ESOL conference in June 2005; and
- developing ESOL materials for the Literacytools website.

### About *The Big Picture* ESOL material packs

*The Big Picture* (book 1) and *The Big Picture 2* were both launched in 2005. These packs are aimed at ESOL tutors and students in Ireland. The materials range in level from beginner through to higher-level ESOL students so that ESOL tutors may teach the same theme in a mixed-level class. Mixed literacy levels are also taken into account and a number of exercises require very little written ability. Tutors can also use the packs as a guide on how to develop their own materials.

The packs have the stories and photos of some ESOL students living in Ireland and cover different topics. Book 1 topics include a new baby, going to the chemist, doctor talk, education in Ireland, daily routines, family life and festivals and celebrations. Topics covered in *The Big Picture 2* include using the library, shopping in Ireland, getting a driver's licence, tenants' rights and the Irish political system.

### ESOL training for tutors

NALA offered a range of different one-day non-accredited ESOL workshops. These included:

- Teaching mixed-level groups;
- Teaching in a multi-cultural classroom;
- How to teach grammar;
- Language and literacy for beginner ESOL students;
- Updates on rights and entitlements of ESOL students; and
- Teaching the four skills.

### Accredited ESOL training

Waterford Institute of Technology has accredited three ESOL modules, TESOL 1, 2 and 3. These are currently available as single certificates or as part of the NALA/WIT Certificate or Diploma in Adult Literacy. A fourth module is currently being developed.

### NALA ESOL Conference 2005

The NALA ESOL conference of 2005 took place on 1 June and had 180 delegates, most of whom were ESOL tutors, co-ordinators and VEC Adult Literacy Organisers (ALOs). The conference was chaired by Peter O'Mahony, CEO of the Irish Refugee Council, and started with the launch of the new NALA resource pack *The Big Picture 2*. There were two keynote speakers at the conference: Mike Baynham, Professor of TESOL at the University of Leeds, and Gloria Gillette, Director of Northeast ABLE Resource Centre in Ohio, USA.

Mike Baynham spoke about the 'ESOL Effective Practice Project', the first large-scale project in the UK that is investigating what works in ESOL classrooms. An initial observation, mid-way

through the project, is that classes that showed progress tended to have a high degree of student involvement. Mike summed up by saying that ESOL is a diverse and dynamic field that needs research to continue to grow and serve its students. He outlined that taking part in research can be an enriching experience for all involved.

Gloria Gillette began by talking about acquiring and learning language. She outlined how language, by definition, is a system of communication that involves vocal and written forms, gestures, body language and intercultural communication. What this means for ESOL is that classes should not just teach reading. In conclusion, Gloria asked tutors to reflect on their practice, understand and know what worked and what didn't work and understand that what works today might not work tomorrow.

Everyone had the opportunity to attend two workshops during the day. There was a varied selection of workshops – 12 in total – and they ranged from 'Updates on the rights and entitlements of ESOL students' to 'Teaching mixed-level groups'.

For more information, contact Fergus Dolan, Training Officer, by e-mail at [fdolan@nala.ie](mailto:fdolan@nala.ie) or by phone on (01) 809 9191.



## Family Literacy

### Storysacks Project

Storysacks are a fun way for the family to get involved in reading. They include a fiction book and a range of props to bring the story to life and help families improve their numeracy and literacy. In 2005, NALA completed a national storysacks initiative to promote and expand family literacy work, which involved providing a grant to local family literacy projects to run storysacks courses and hosting a conference in May.

### Storysacks courses

We planned that courses would last six to ten weeks with groups of adult literacy students and parents to help them develop confidence and skills in reading with their children, build their own literacy and create storysacks either for their own families or for parents in the community.

Margaret Keating, a family literacy practitioner who developed the courses in Bray, Co. Wicklow, ran training sessions for tutors interested in delivering courses and NALA invited groups to apply for a grant to run a course in their local area. The following groups were successful:

- Ballincollig Adult Literacy Service, Co. Cork;
- Ballynacargy Family Resource Centre, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath;
- Barnardos Family Support Project, Mahon, Cork city;
- Bray Travellers' Community Development Group/Bray Adult Literacy Service, Co. Wicklow;
- Carlow Senior Travellers' Training Centre;
- Co. Clare Family Learning Project
- Co. Laois Adult Literacy Service;
- Co. Limerick Adult Literacy Service;
- Co. Waterford Adult Literacy Service;
- Co. Wicklow Adult Literacy Service (Wicklow Town);
- Dublin City South West Adult Literacy Service (Ballyfermot);
- Dundalk Employment Partnership;
- Dun Laoghaire VEC Community Education Service;
- G and K Community Training Centre, Churchfield, Cork city;
- Mallow Youthreach, Co. Cork;
- OAK Partnership, Edenderry, Co. Offaly;
- Kerryhead/Ballyheigue Family Resource Centre, North Kerry;
- Killarney Adult Literacy Service, Co. Kerry;

- Killarney Senior Travellers' Education and Training Centre;
- KLEAR Adult Literacy Service, CDVEC (Kilbarrack);
- Listowel Adult Literacy Service, North Kerry; and
- St. Munchin's Family Resource Centre, Ballynanty, Limerick city.

### **Storysacks conference**

On 4 May 2005 we held a one-day conference, titled 'Stories, Storysacks and Family Literacy' in Dublin. In the morning, Neil Griffiths, the creator of storysacks, gave his presentation. In the afternoon, four workshops took place on the theme of stories and storysacks. These covered:

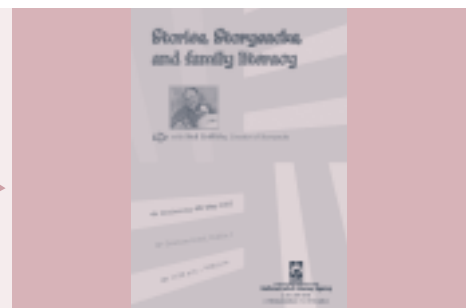
- story building;
- storysacks' family literacy courses;
- numeracy storysacks; and
- using picture books in family literacy.

The day was attended by 150 people involved in family literacy work in a wide range of settings. We plan to organise further support days on the storysacks approach to family literacy work during 2006. The EBS Building Society funded this work.



◀ Neil Griffiths demonstrating storysacks at the family literacy conference

'Stories, Storysacks and Family Literacy' conference programme ▶



### **Seminar on family literacy in New Zealand**

John Benseman is an internationally-recognised researcher in the field of adult and family literacy. In May 2005, he discussed a three-year evaluation of the Manukau Family Literacy Pilot Project in Auckland at a seminar hosted by NALA. This event allowed family literacy workers hear about and reflect on international work in family literacy and how it relates to practice in Ireland.

In the afternoon, John presented and discussed the findings of research he and his team carried out on effective tuition in adult literacy work. This provided a chance to start considering an important aspect of our work: how best to develop the highest quality teaching. This issue is vital to students, organisers and tutors and is likely to become increasingly important as adult literacy work develops.

### **At Home with Family Learning**

To support the development of family literacy, NALA produced *At Home with Family Learning* in 2005. This is a colourful, practical and entertaining family literacy guide and presents parents with an accessible and enjoyable way for children to start developing early literacy and numeracy skills at home with their family.

This 50-page guide includes 150 tips for parents to help develop their babies', toddlers', pre-schoolers' and young school children's literacy and numeracy skills through simple, fun activities around the house and garden. The guide includes the following sections:

- Sounds and rhymes;
- Stories and books;
- Lines, patterns and shapes;
- Maths; and
- Creative fun.





◀ Minister Síle de Valera TD  
launching *At Home with  
Family Learning*

*At Home with  
Family Learning* ▶



*At Home with Family Learning* was written by Margaret Keating with the support of a steering group made up of representatives of:

- Barnardos;
- Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education, Drumcondra;
- Clare Family Learning Project;
- Jenny Derbyshire, National Adult Literacy Agency;
- IPPA – the Early Childhood Organisation;
- Irish National Teachers' Organisation; and
- National Parents Council – Primary.

The publication was funded by the EBS Building Society Positive Impact programme and launched by Minister Síle de Valera in October at the Department of Education and Science.

For more information, contact NALA by e-mail at [literacy@nala.ie](mailto:literacy@nala.ie) or by phone on (01) 855 4332.



## Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work

Last year we finished updating one of our most significant publications, *Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work*. Adult basic education has changed a lot in Ireland since the guidelines were first published in 1985 and then revised in 1991. For example, much work has been done to raise awareness and understanding of and encourage appropriate responses to the adult literacy issue, and to develop good quality teaching and organisation.

These new guidelines have revised the basic statement of the philosophy, principles and approaches that have formed, and continue to form, the basis of adult literacy work in Ireland. This restatement of core values is vital at a time of reorganisation and expansion in ABE in this country. The guidelines also outline the facilities, tuition options and management styles necessary to develop adult literacy tuition and support effectively.

Irish Human Rights Commissioner Katherine Zappone launched the guidelines during National Adult Literacy Awareness Week, describing them as “revolutionary in character and potential”. She also commended their user-friendliness. She asserted that the guidelines can help bring about significant change by empowering those who have been excluded to discover their own knowledge and words and said that the principles and ideas could support significant positive changes in the broader education sector, including the university sector. The work was completed with substantial input from Jenny Derbyshire, NALA Family Literacy Policy Worker, and Rosamond Phillips, adult literacy practitioner.

For more information, contact Claire O’Riordan, Evolving Quality Framework Co-ordinator, by e-mail at [coriordan@nala.ie](mailto:coriordan@nala.ie) or by phone on (01) 809 9193.

## Health and literacy

Our health and literacy work continued in 2005 through a health and family literacy project and a health literacy pack for tuition and learning.

### Health/family literacy model

In the last 12 months, we continued a project that combines both health literacy and family literacy. With funding from the Department of Health and Children, the project involved developing a health literacy course based on a family literacy approach, meaning that it would enable participants to connect their health learning to their everyday lives and the lives of their families. The course model was developed and piloted with 15 participants at Cavan VEC Adult Literacy Service and at Dublin Adult Learning Centre.

The course that has emerged is one that can be used by other practitioners. With the course is a handbook that offers guidelines for developing courses for different students – both groups and individuals. The advice contained in this handbook is derived from practitioners' experiences and the observations of our health literacy steering committee. This is a welcome addition to our health literacy materials and will prove very useful to practitioners wishing to develop health literacy courses. An independent evaluation of the project was carried out and will be posted, along with the course handbook, on the Literacytools website in early 2006.

The health literacy/family literacy course was developed by Project Officer Helena Ennis with NALA staff member Jenny Derbyshire and a steering committee.

### Health and literacy pack

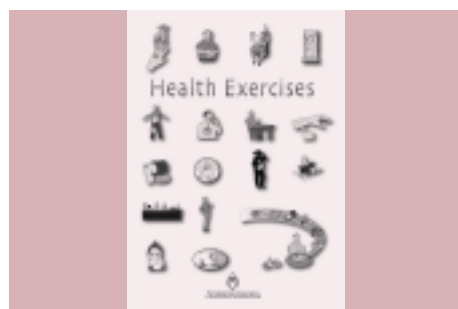
We developed an additional health and literacy pack for tutors during 2005. Developed by tutor Maureen Neville, the pack is designed for use in group settings and covers the following topics:

- minor ailments;
- preventing accidents; and
- positive mental health.

It also features exercises that test how well people understand the information they have read.

We piloted this pack among health and literacy practitioners during the summer and will make it available to practitioners in 2006 through our Literacytools website, [www.literacytools.ie](http://www.literacytools.ie).

For more information, contact Jennie Lynch, Project Co-ordinator, by e-mail at [jlynch@nala.ie](mailto:jlynch@nala.ie) or by phone on (021) 431 7012.



◀ 'Health Exercises' pack



## Information and communications technology and literacy

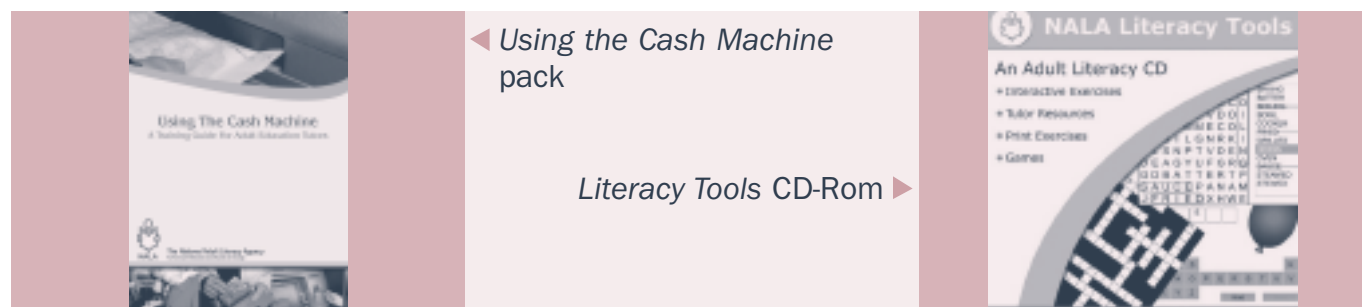
It was an exciting year in information and communications technology (ICT) for NALA as we continued to implement our ICT Plan for 2004 to 2006. We prioritised designing high quality online and interactive learning materials and produced three CD-ROMs aimed at literacy students.

## Literacytools website

Up to 1,300 people each month during 2005 used the Literacytools website, which uses our freephone number as support. During the year we commissioned additional exercises in areas such as spelling, numeracy and writing. From this work we developed NALA's first writing workbook, which we launched at International Literacy Day in November 2005.

## Literacytools CD

To accommodate people who cannot always access the Internet, we designed and developed a CD version of Literacytools.ie. After we consulted practitioners, we developed the CD to focus on popular spelling and word games and contain extra features. Dr Paul Walsh and Tomas Leveil of Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) designed and developed this CD, which was distributed in June 2005.



## Read Write Now 1 and 2 CDs

The CIT team also developed two interactive CDs based on the popular Read Write Now TV series. They both contain clips from the first two series, including interviews with adult students, and include literacy exercises and games based on the clips. The CDs can be used with the TV programme but were designed mainly to be used on their own.

## Training guide on using a cash machine

We also produced a tutors' training guide, *Using the Cash Machine*. The idea for this guide was suggested by literacy tutors who wanted teaching material on everyday forms of ICT. Written by Mary Flanagan, this guide was distributed to NALA corporate members in 2005. We hope to produce additional teaching materials in this area in 2006.

For more information, contact Jennie Lynch, Project Co-ordinator, by e-mail at [jlynch@nala.ie](mailto:jlynch@nala.ie) or by phone on (021) 431 7012.



## Integrating literacy into further education and vocational training

Integrating literacy into further education and vocational training progressed in 2005 through training, events and developing materials.

### Training for vocational trainers and subject tutors

In 2005, the NUI Maynooth (NUIM) Certificate Course in Integrating Literacy was offered at three locations – Lucan, Cork and Athlone – with a total of 63 participants. Most participants were vocational trainers from FÁS Community Training Centres (CTCs) and supervisors and tutors working in FÁS Local Training Initiatives. The groups also included staff from VEC Youthreach Centres and Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform training programmes.

The course participants carried out practical projects in their workplaces, which involved developing methods and materials to integrate literacy and numeracy into a diverse range

of course subjects and vocational areas. These included childcare, computers, woodwork, catering, hairdressing, art and crafts, job-seeking skills and preparation for employment, life skills and personal care programmes and research into genealogy and local history.

A number of centre co-ordinators and supervisors also took part in the training and used what they learned to integrate literacy into whole-centre policies and practices. Some examples of their whole-centre approaches were:

- re-vamping an induction programme for students to make it more literacy friendly;
- revising a centre's documentation according to plain English guidelines; and
- building literacy-focused meetings and teamwork for all staff into a centre's timetable.

### Training for literacy tutors

Ten literacy tutors from vocational education and training centres took part in the module 'Extending Literacy' in 2005. This was offered as part of the NALA/WIT National Certificate in Literacy Development. The module focuses on equipping literacy tutors with the knowledge and skills to lead a cross-curricular approach to literacy and numeracy.

The last 12 months also saw an increase in the number of literacy tutors based in CTCs and in other education and training settings taking part in courses from the NALA training calendar and modules from the NALA/WIT National Certificate and Diploma in Literacy Development.

### National forum for literacy tutors working in CTCs

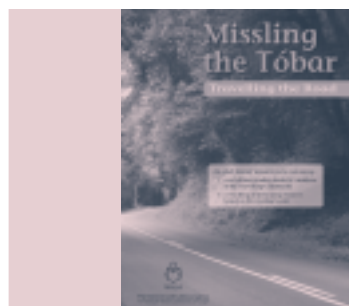
The fifth annual forum for literacy tutors working in FÁS CTCs was held in November. Twenty-five tutors took part. The day focused on FETAC Level 3 mathematics, in particular the methods and materials related to the specific learning outcomes of that module, and building a portfolio. The day also included a briefing for literacy tutors on Mapping the Learning Journey, the assessment framework, as the framework is being introduced into CTCs from January 2006.

### Literacy in Community Employment

As part of our work to support literacy development in Community Employment (CE), we delivered a one-day training programme on literacy as part of the FÁS/National College of Ireland CE Supervisor Development Programme. At the request of FÁS Community Services, NALA drafted Good Practice Guidelines for CE Supervisors: Literacy Support and Development on Community Employment (Part 1). The guidelines focus on how CE Supervisors can identify and respond to literacy strengths and needs of CE participants, within the CE workplace and programme.

### Materials development

Staff and trainees from FÁS Community Training Centres, FÁS Local Training Initiatives and Senior Traveller Training Centres (STTCs) helped contribute to a materials pack, titled *Missling the Tóbar* (Travelling the Road), intended mainly for literacy work with the Traveller community. The pack contains a set of four short reading books written by members of the Traveller community, using the language experience approach, and includes a set of suggested teaching and learning activities and sample worksheets, based on the books.



◀ *Missling the Tobar* pack

Anthony McCarthy ▶  
putting integrating literacy  
into practice at Thurles  
Youth Development Centre



## Presentation to Falkirk Literacies Partnership

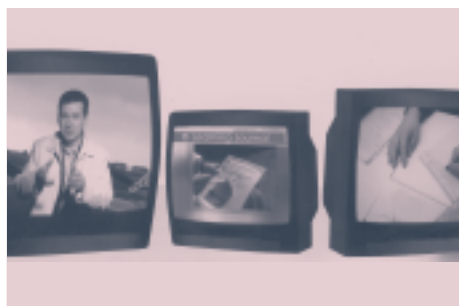
In March, NALA provided the keynote speaker to, and facilitated a workshop at, the annual conference of Falkirk Literacies Partnership, Scotland, which focused on the theme of integrating literacy. Literacy co-ordinators and tutors joined with Jobs Clubs co-ordinators to discuss the experience of the NALA/FÁS integrating literacy project, and consider how they might apply it in their own areas.

For further information, contact Bláthnaid Ní Chinnéide, Integrating Literacy Co-ordinator by e-mail at [bnichinneide@nala.ie](mailto:bnichinneide@nala.ie) or by phone on (01) 809 9190.



## Literacy through the media

Delivering literacy through the media has been one of the most successful projects NALA has ever initiated. This worked continued apace in 2005 with a number of developments, most notable being the new multimedia project.



◀ Literacy through the media in action

### Really Useful Guide to Words and Numbers

In 2005 we began work on a new multi-media proposal that would build on the success of our previous media initiatives. We consulted the Media Advisory Group and Electric Paper (which includes AV-Edge, the company behind the Read Write Now series) on this new proposal and submitted it to the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland (BCI) for consideration under its new funding scheme, Sound & Vision.

### Read Write Now 5

The fifth series of Read Write Now (RWN) was repeated in spring 2005 on RTÉ1. The series focused on the theme of information communications technology (ICT) and received an average of 69,000 viewers each week. We evaluated Read Write Now 5 during the year and published the evaluation report on our website.

### Freephone service 1800 20 20 65

The freephone service continues to be available through our administrative staff in the Dublin office. In 2005 we replied to over 1,700 calls requesting television and radio packs and also referred callers, where appropriate, to their local VEC Adult Literacy Service.

### Media Advisory Group

The Media Advisory Group continued to meet regularly in 2005 to guide the work of the literacy through the media project. As well as featuring a literacy student, the Group consists of representatives from:

- The Department of Education and Science;
- RTÉ;
- Chief Executive Officers' Association (CEOA);
- Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA);
- Adult Education Organisers' Association (AEOA);
- Adult Literacy Organisers' Association (ALOA); and
- NALA.



For further information, contact Helen Ryan, Project Co-ordinator, by e-mail at [hryan@nala.ie](mailto:hryan@nala.ie) or by phone on (01) 809 9197.



## Materials Editorial Board

The NALA Materials Editorial Board consists of NALA staff, members of NALA's Executive Committee and Pauline Hensey, Adult Literacy Practitioner. The Board met a number of times in 2005 and discussed:

- developing materials (on sports and spelling as well as for Travellers and ESOL students);
- producing guidelines for tutors on how to develop materials;
- hosting a seminar on materials; and
- developing a panel of materials writers.

For further information, contact Blathnaid Ni Chinnéide, Integrating Literacy Co-ordinator, by e-mail at [bnichinneide@nala.ie](mailto:bnichinneide@nala.ie) or by phone on (01) 809 9197.



## Numeracy

Over the last 12 months, NALA has continued to implement the recommendations of the Agency's numeracy strategy, Meeting the Numeracy Challenge (December 2004). The numeracy activities carried out in 2005 included:

- carrying out a numeracy audit within NALA;
- developing adult numeracy resources; and
- organising a numeracy conference.

### Numeracy audit

The audit aimed to:

- measure the level of adult numeracy work currently carried out by NALA; and
- identify opportunities for building an adult numeracy element into current NALA work.

The numeracy audit report was completed in June 2005 and identified a number of areas that could integrate numeracy, including:

- research projects, including financial and family literacy and curriculum development;
- Mapping the Learning Journey (MLJ); and
- our ICT resources, such as Technology@Work and Read Write Now CDs.

The report also highlighted a number of issues that NALA needs to address, such as the need to:

- have a shared understanding of the concept of numeracy;
- develop and implement a numeracy awareness policy within the organisation; and
- establish a process for co-ordinating how we develop and integrate numeracy into relevant areas of work across the organisation.

A development programme has already started to meet the identified training needs of staff. We have also put procedures in place to address the numeracy development issues raised within the organisation.

### Developing adult numeracy materials

Our work to develop numeracy materials in 2005 concentrated on identifying the range of numeracy resources that are currently available nationally and internationally. Our research finished with an exhibition of a wide range of resources at the numeracy conference in May. A number of these resources are now available through an extended numeracy section in the NALA resource room.

Distinct numeracy elements have been integrated into materials such as the second ESOL resource pack, *The Big Picture 2*, and *Know your EU*. Numeracy will also be integrated into *Get Moving with Literacy* (due in 2006) and the pack for Travellers, *Missling the Tóbar* (also due later this year).

### Numeracy conference

NALA held a very successful numeracy conference in May 2005, attended by 140 people. The conference highlighted the need to develop high quality ways of teaching numeracy in Ireland.

Two international speakers addressed the conference, Lene Østergaard Johansen (Associate Professor of Mathematics, Aalborg University Denmark) and Eigil Peter Hansen (VUC Syd, Copenhagen, Denmark).

Lene described changes in adult basic education in Denmark that have led to a new programme for adults and contrasted the views of policy makers and numeracy practitioners in implementing the numeracy strategy in Denmark. It was clear that there were many similarities between the situation in Denmark and in Ireland.

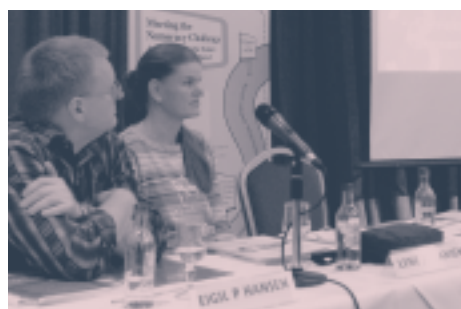
Eigil described a model of flexible learning that he developed for his own teaching in Denmark. The 'flexible ring' approach lets him manage his classroom and meet the needs of students who have different levels of numeracy skills. Eigil's approach highlighted the need to have a range of numeracy materials available to tutors at different levels and using a variety of media.

Afternoon workshops focused on a range of topics to address different tutor interests and needs. These included:

- visual numeracy;
- numeracy and specific learning difficulties;
- numeracy issues for ESOL tutors;
- teaching, learning and assessing FETAC Foundation Level Mathematics; and
- an exhibition and demonstration of numeracy resources.

You can view and download contributions to the conference from our website in the 'Publications' section under the heading 'Conference Papers'.

For further information on numeracy, contact Terry Maguire, Numeracy Development Co-ordinator, by e-mail at [terrymag@iol.ie](mailto:terrymag@iol.ie) or by phone on (0404) 44023.



◀ The panel at the 'Meeting the Numeracy Challenge' conference

Eigil Peter Hansen, Lene Østergaard Johansen and Terry Maguire, NALA ▶



## Plain English

In 2005, our plain English activities focused on increasing awareness of the need for clear information and on developing resources for the service. We promoted plain English at a range of events, discussed plain English support with various organisations and launched both our Plain English Mark and *Simply Put*, our interactive CD for information providers, while continuing to support the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

### Launch of stamp of approval for clear documents

In June, Emily O'Reilly, Ombudsman and Information Commissioner, helped us launch the NALA Plain English Mark, a logo for each document that meets plain English standards. The mark is an important tool for raising awareness of plain English and organisations that receive the mark make a strong statement that they are committed to clear communication. Indeed, the mark was developed in response to requests from clients for some credit for their efforts to make their materials as clear as possible.

To grant the mark, we review documents using a checklist that considers up to 20 document features, covering language, punctuation, grammar, structure and design. We must be able to answer 'yes' to each relevant question before confirming a document is ready for the mark. Already, documents from the EBS Building Society, the Equality Tribunal, the Ombudsman for Children's Office and a number of Health Service Executive Areas have earned the mark. We hope to grant it to documents from many other organisations in 2006.



◀ Emily O'Reilly, Ombudsman & Information Commissioner, and Inez Bailey, NALA Director, at the launch of the NALA Plain English Mark

▶ Minister for Social and Family Affairs, Séamus Brennan, TD, at the launch of the *Simply Put* CD



### *Simply Put*, how to help information providers

Last year, with a grant from the Comhairle Information Grants Scheme, we developed an interactive CD, *Simply Put*, to teach plain English skills to information providers. Our work on the CD was guided by a steering group comprising Columba O'Connor, Dublin Adult Learning Centre; Angela King, Health Promotion, HSE Eastern Area; Michael Culloty, Money Advice and Budgeting Service; Pat Lawlor, Information Services, Department of Social and Family Affairs and Mary Meaney, National Disability Authority.

As the end result of agreements between NALA, the steering group and the software developer, Multimedia Instructional Design, *Simply Put* is divided into five parts and includes easy-to-follow tips, exercises, before-and-after examples, glossaries of plain English alternatives to legal, medical and financial terms (among others) and sample documents illustrating the plain English guidelines in practice. Users can dip in and out of the CD while writing documents at work and may print certain pages for reference.

The CD was launched in September by Séamus Brennan, TD, Minister for Social and Family Affairs, during National Adult Literacy Awareness Week (NALAW), appropriately because the aim of the CD was to help information providers increase access to information on civil and social services and the week had the theme of active citizenship. The launch was well attended by a range of statutory organisations, Government departments and voluntary bodies.

By the end of October, we had distributed more than 400 copies for free to libraries, VECs, other education settings and Citizens Information Centres (CIC), among others. It is now available for sale for €15 (plus postage and packing) from our Resource Room.

### Media and meetings to raise awareness of plain English

Our other awareness-raising activities included writing an opinion piece on plain English for the November newsletter of Impact, the public service trade union, and meeting organisations such as the Communications Regulator (the organisation responsible for monitoring phone, postal and Internet services), Kildare County Council and the Ombudsman for Children's Office to outline the importance of plain English for their written information. We also began working with

the National Association for Deaf People and the National Council for the Blind of Ireland to put together a summary of common guidelines on making written information accessible.

### **More organisations take up plain English training**

Throughout the year we gave training courses to diverse groups in the public, private and voluntary sectors. In the private sector, our training groups included AIB Global Treasury Services, Allianz Insurance plc and Irish Life. Voluntary sector training groups included ABLE, Blanchardstown, whose new literacy tutors took part in a workshop on simplifying materials for literacy students, and the National Association for Deaf People. A sub-group of the Irish Nutrition and Dietetics Institute also got to grips with plain English techniques at a workshop. In the public sector, staff in various departments of the Equality Authority received training in April. In October, Comhairle organised training for a number of Citizens Information Centre staff in the southeast of Ireland.

### **Plain language around the world**

In November 2005, the Plain English Co-ordinator attended an international conference on plain language in Washington DC. Speakers from the United States, Canada, Australia, Mexico, the UK, Sweden, Spain and other countries shared their experiences of working in this area, whether as independent consultants, government employees or researchers. The Plain English Co-ordinator made a short contribution to an international session on the work of NALA in plain English. A number of excellent workshops helped delegates explore particular issues, such as health literacy, forms design, selling plain language through audiovisual aids, managing a plain language consultancy and measuring how using plain language affects the quality of information and levels of productivity in organisations.

### **Continued work with the Department of Social and Family Affairs**

Our working relationship with the Department of Social and Family Affairs continued in 2005. We reviewed a number of their social welfare booklets and application forms for the Plain English Mark and edited a number of other publications. These included *Options and Opportunities*, a magazine for parents receiving One-Parent Family Payment, a guide to the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005, which brings together in one law all the changes made to the rules of social welfare payments since 1993, and a guide to EU Regulations on social welfare payments.

For more information on plain English, contact Clodagh McCarthy, Plain English Co-ordinator, by e-mail at [cmccarthy@nala.ie](mailto:cmccarthy@nala.ie) or by phone on (01) 809 9194.



## **Specific Learning Difficulties**

Our work in specific learning difficulties (SLD) in 2005 built on our work in previous years and focused on delivering SLD and dyslexia training to literacy practitioners and helping employers and the public understand SLD.

### **Specific learning difficulties training**

Dyslexia was a topic at three NALA events in 2005. The NALA training calendar included 'Dyslexia: Teaching Strategies' and 'Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD): Teaching Strategies and Awareness', both of which were very well received by 57 participants in Dublin and Cork. We also facilitated a workshop at the NALA numeracy conference, which focused on SLD and numeracy.

Aside from providing SLD training at NALA events, we gave training to staff at the Community Training Centre in Athy and at City of Dublin VEC Youthreach centres.

## Raising awareness

In August, NALA took part in a radio programme on dyslexia on the Dublin-based radio station, Spin 103.8. The Specific Learning Difficulties Policy Worker contributed to the programme on the work of NALA and the issues of dyslexia for young people and adults.

Other organisations and agencies were in contact with NALA about the area of specific learning difficulties and how it affects the adults they work with. We replied to queries from the Irish Army and various disability organisations, among others.

For more information on SLD, contact Peter Kiernan, Regional Development Worker, by e-mail at [pkiernan@nala.ie](mailto:pkiernan@nala.ie) or by phone on (044) 40374.



## Sports and Literacy

In 2005, we started developing a sport and literacy tuition pack, called *Moving with Literacy*, with the Fingal Sports Partnership, based in Swords, north county Dublin. The pack, which will be launched in February 2006, has three sections. These include:

- activity cards developed by the Fingal Sports Partnership, to be used in various adult literacy settings to get students moving and give them an opportunity to explore physical activity;
- literacy activity sheets on the sports of boxing, horse racing, rugby, soccer, hurling and Gaelic football; and
- information sheets on physical activities of dancing, walking and jogging, aimed at the adult literacy student who wants to start becoming physically active to improve their health and well-being.

Tutors will be able to use the information with students to explore the community centres and sports clubs they can join in their local area.

For more information on sports and literacy, contact Peter Kiernan, Regional Development Worker, by e-mail [pkiernan@nala.ie](mailto:pkiernan@nala.ie) or by phone on (044) 40374.



## Student Development

Last year was a busy one for student events. We hosted Regional Student Forums between February and May, a one-day seminar, 'Who makes decisions and where in Ireland', also in May, and the beginners' writing weekend in June. Finally, in November, our International Literacy Day celebrations had a student focus.

NALA's Student Development Sub-Committee played an important role in planning student events during this time. During the year information about student events was sent to centres where literacy tuition takes place and was also included in the student section of NALA's website, [www.nala.ie/students](http://www.nala.ie/students).

### Regional Student Forums in 2005

Between February and May, five Regional Student Forums were held around the country and were attended by a total of 157 students. The two NALA Regional Development Workers, who



facilitated the forums, used the opportunity to show people Literacytools and the student section of NALA's website <http://www.nala.ie/students/> and find out how people heard about NALA events and discuss whether people preferred the word 'student' or 'learner'.

Students came up with many suggestions for improving contact, including having more regional meetings (which literacy centres can organise with money from the NALA Student Development Fund). In future we will improve our contact with them by writing to student committees more often and sending information directly to our student members. Other comments at the forums related to communication in local literacy centres, which will be of interest to Adult Literacy Organisers and Centre Managers in particular.

It became clear from discussions that 'student' is the preferred term for those receiving adult literacy tuition. Almost 60% of people at the forums preferred this term, compared with 20% who preferred 'learner' and 20% who did not mind either term. Following the forums, the Students' Development Sub-Committee recommended to NALA's Executive Committee that we use the word 'student' more. This was accepted in autumn 2005, while recognising that some people prefer the term 'learner', with its links to lifelong learning. In light of this change, the sub-committee changed its name to the NALA Student Development Sub-Committee in November 2005.

For a full account of feedback received by NALA from the Regional Student Forums, and a list of ten recommendations for NALA for the future, see the Report on the Regional Students' Forums in the 'Publications' section of our website <http://www.nala.ie/students/>

### **Who makes decisions and where in Ireland**

Over 110 students attended this one-day course, which was one of the activities listed on the NALA Students' Development Plan 2005 – 2006. Held on 28 May in Dublin, the day started with guest speaker Charlie Bird, RTÉ Chief News Correspondent, and continued with afternoon workshops on different topics.

Charlie Bird spoke enthusiastically about the topic and took questions from the floor afterwards. The four workshops in the afternoon looked at:

- citizens' information;
- plain English;
- money advice and budgeting; and
- who makes decisions about literacy in Ireland.

Feedback from students at the event was very positive. NALA wishes to thank all those who encouraged students to attend, Charlie Bird, the Dublin city centre Citizens Information Centre on O'Connell Street, Finglas Money Advice and Budgeting Service and Rhonda Smith, Adult Literacy Practitioner.



◀ Participants at the 'Find the Writer in You' seminar

Charlie Bird, RTÉ News, addressing the 'Who makes decisions and where in Ireland' seminar ▶



### **‘Find the Writer in You’ Beginners’ Writing Weekend**

NALA was pleasantly surprised by the amount of interest in the beginners’ writing weekend, titled ‘Find the Writer in You’. The writing weekend was held in Dublin on 10, 11 and 12 June and was attended by 49 people.

After introductions on Friday evening, some students read out their own writings to the group. On Saturday morning, Phil Nolan, a shiatsu practitioner, eased people into the day with a relaxation exercise. Poet Paula Meehan was the guest speaker and explained the writing process and where inspiration can come from. Writer and dramatist Ré O’Laighleis then held an engaging workshop about how to write a short story. On Sunday morning, Ré gave a second workshop about developing characters in your story. Students commented that the weekend was very enjoyable and constructive.

### **NALA Student Development Sub-Committee**

The role of NALA’s Student Development Sub-Committee is to guide and support student development within NALA. The sub-committee is made up of students, NALA staff members and other interested people and grew to 10 members in 2005. These are:

- Pat Ayton, Adult Literacy Organisers' Association (ALOA);
- Bridie Daly, Westmeath student;
- Mary Evans, KLEAR student, Dublin;
- Alison Hickey, Westmeath student;
- Breda Kavanagh, south inner city student, Dublin;
- Peter Kiernan, Midlands Regional Development Worker, NALA;
- Peggy Murphy, KLEAR student, Dublin;
- Margaret Murray, Southern Regional Development Worker, NALA;
- Kevin O’Duffy, NALA Executive; and
- Michael Power, NALA Executive.

The sub-committee discussed ideas on how NALA will carry out events and activities of interest to students and played an active role in organising the International Literacy Day celebrations in November 2005. NALA would like to thank members of the sub-committee for their ideas and time.

If you would like to raise an issue of interest to the sub-committee, you can contact Kevin O’Duffy, member of the NALA Executive Committee by email at [literacy@nala.ie](mailto:literacy@nala.ie)

### **NALA Student Development Fund**

The NALA Student Development Fund is available to all centres where literacy work takes place to enable them to carry out additional, confidence-building, activities with students. Literacy centres may apply for up to €650 each year for these activities. In 2005 we had 50 successful applications for activities such as:

- doing courses on active citizenship;
- making day trips to the Dáil;
- visiting the theatre;
- producing newsletters and student writing publications;
- setting up student committees; and
- visiting other student groups and centres.

Thirteen VEC and training centres also used money from the Student Development Fund to carry out programmes to develop the personal, social and leadership skills and confidence of students.



◀ Poet Paula Meehan speaks at the 'Find the Writer in You' seminar

Participants at the Cork Student Fora ▶



Displays at the International Literacy Day celebrations in Cork in November showed some of the work done with help from the fund (for more information go to page 36). For more information on the displays and the list of successful applications in 2005, see [www.nala.ie/students/aroundthecountry](http://www.nala.ie/students/aroundthecountry)

For more information on NALA student development activity, contact Margaret Murray, Regional Development Worker, Southern Region, by e-mail at [mmurray@nala.ie](mailto:mmurray@nala.ie) or by phone on (021) 431 7011.



## Workplace Basic Education

### Workplace Basic Education Fund (WBEF)

We were delighted that after many years of lobbying, with our members, the Government announced the setting up of a Workplace Basic Education Fund (WBEF), supported by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. The aim of the fund is to develop initiatives to let employees improve their literacy and numeracy skills with the aid of a grant. The fund is being managed by FÁS Services to Business and guided by a National Steering Group consisting of representatives of relevant, including:

- FÁS;
- Department of Education and Science;
- Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA);
- NALA;
- Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU);
- Small Firms Association (SFA);
- Irish Small and Medium Enterprises Association (ISME); and
- Construction Industry Federation (CIF).

Many organisations, including NALA, ICTU and individual VECs, applied for funding through the WBEF in 2005. An external evaluator, WRC Social and Economic Consultants, will evaluate all projects financed through the fund in the next few months.

### Developing literacy support models for FÁS Services to Business

In 2005, the Services to Business section of FÁS, with NALA, began to implement a partnership project that had been developed since 2004. This link was set up to develop and pilot a literacy support model to address basic education needs in the workplace as part of FÁS's response to companies in particular regions. This pilot project, called Skills for Work, is funded under the WBEF.

The project aim is to develop a model to identify needs and training for employees with literacy and numeracy difficulties. The project will involve piloting an awareness, identification and solution (AIS) model, which will include:

- raising awareness of the literacy and numeracy issue with employers, employees and FÁS staff, among others;

- identifying literacy and numeracy needs in the workplace; and
- customising or co-ordinating training.

What has really helped move this model along was the employment in 2005 of the following Skills for Work Co-ordinators, who work with the four pilot FÁS regions:

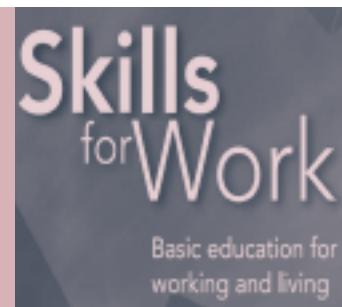
- Fiona Fay (phone 086 811 6913 or e-mail ffay@nala.ie), co-ordinator for Midlands region (Kildare, Laois, Longford, Offaly, Westmeath);
- Ester Mackey (phone 086 811 6901 or e-mail emackey@nala.ie), co-ordinator for Mid-West region (Clare, Limerick, Tipperary North);
- Clare Cody (phone 086 824 7858 or e-mail clare@nala.ie), co-ordinator for South East region (Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary South, Waterford, Wexford and Wicklow); and
- Eugene Higgins (phone 086 8247983 or e-mail eugene@nala.ie), co-ordinator for South West region (Cork and Kerry).

The WBEF is provided by the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment, with a budget of €2 million for 2005 and a further €2million for 2006. For further information, visit the Workplace Literacy section of the NALA website.



◀ Helen Ryan, NALA (second left), at the launch of the NALA/Skillnets publication *Everybody's Business*

Skills for work  
promotional material ▶



### Small Medium Enterprises WBE project

Work continued on the In-company Training project (funded by the European Social Fund through the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment). Called SMART (skills management and relevant training), this project aimed to devise a WBE model for Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The project took place with Monaghan VEC and ended in December 2005. Over the two-year period, 21 groups of employees took part in training. This consisted of 17 groups of students within companies and four groups of students from specific industry sectors.

During the project, consultant Liz McSkeane worked on guidelines for employers to deal with literacy and numeracy in the workplace. These were written in consultation with employers and practitioners in 2005 and will be published next year. Also last year, we appointed Meitheal, a consulting group, to evaluate the project. Its evaluation report will be published in 2006.

### Skillnets

NALA continued to work with Skillnets on its low basic skills initiatives, which ended in March 2005. Some of the activities that took place under the initiative included:

- training trainers (internal and external) and HR staff;
- promotion and building awareness;
- identifying and developing case studies in the workplace;
- carrying out surveys; and
- making videos.

NALA worked with three Skillnets: CATNET (construction industry), South Leinster and Munster Skillnet (SLM) and TEEU (engineering) to write a handbook for employers to deal with literacy and numeracy in the workplace. The handbook, titled *Everybody's Business*, was published in September 2005.

### **Return to Learning Project in local authorities**

The Return to Learning (R2L) project in local authorities continued in 2005. The 34 local authorities and VECs continue to work together to develop these programmes. The Local Authority National Partnership Advisory Group (LANPAG) published an evaluation of the project, which included three key points:

- Participation levels have been high. Some 1,239 people took part in the initiative since its launch in late 2000. However, with only 8% of the outdoor workforce engaged in the process, many more local authority staff could take part.
- The partnership approach between trade unions and management at national and local level has significantly contributed to the success of the programme. In addition there is a very high degree of goodwill amongst management, staff and unions as a result of this initiative.
- The issues of mainstreaming and progression now need to be addressed. There is no formal process for participating in the R2L training to be included in normal training activities once basic levels have been achieved. Induction training does not address basic levels of education within the local authorities and without this there will always be a need for the Return to Learning initiative in its current guise. A consistent and agreed approach for supporting the longer term development of participants is essential at this stage of the initiative.

For further information, contact Helen Ryan, Project Co-ordinator, by e-mail at [hryan@nala.ie](mailto:hryan@nala.ie) or by phone on (01) 809 9197.



## “Implement a development strategy for high quality adult literacy provision”



◀ Prof Joyce O'Connor, addressing the Adult Literacy Tutors Forum, and Ernie Sweeney

Evolving Quality Framework ▶  
Evaluation summary



◀ A workshop at the Adult Literacy Tutors' Forum

Ted McGovern, EBS, ▶  
President McAleese,  
Margaret Scott and Inez  
Baley at the ACE Awards



# Ongoing NALA activities

## National literacy developments

### National development of the VEC Adult Literacy Service

In 2005, over 33,873 students used the VEC Adult Literacy Service, an increase of 7.26% on the previous year. However, for the first time since figures were recorded, the number of paid and volunteer tutors has fallen. The increase in the number of students remains higher than the rate of increase of the adult literacy budget, meaning that for every increase in funding, there is a corresponding larger increase in VEC literacy students (see Figure 1 below). It also highlights that the VEC Adult Literacy Service continues to display commendable flexibility and value for money.

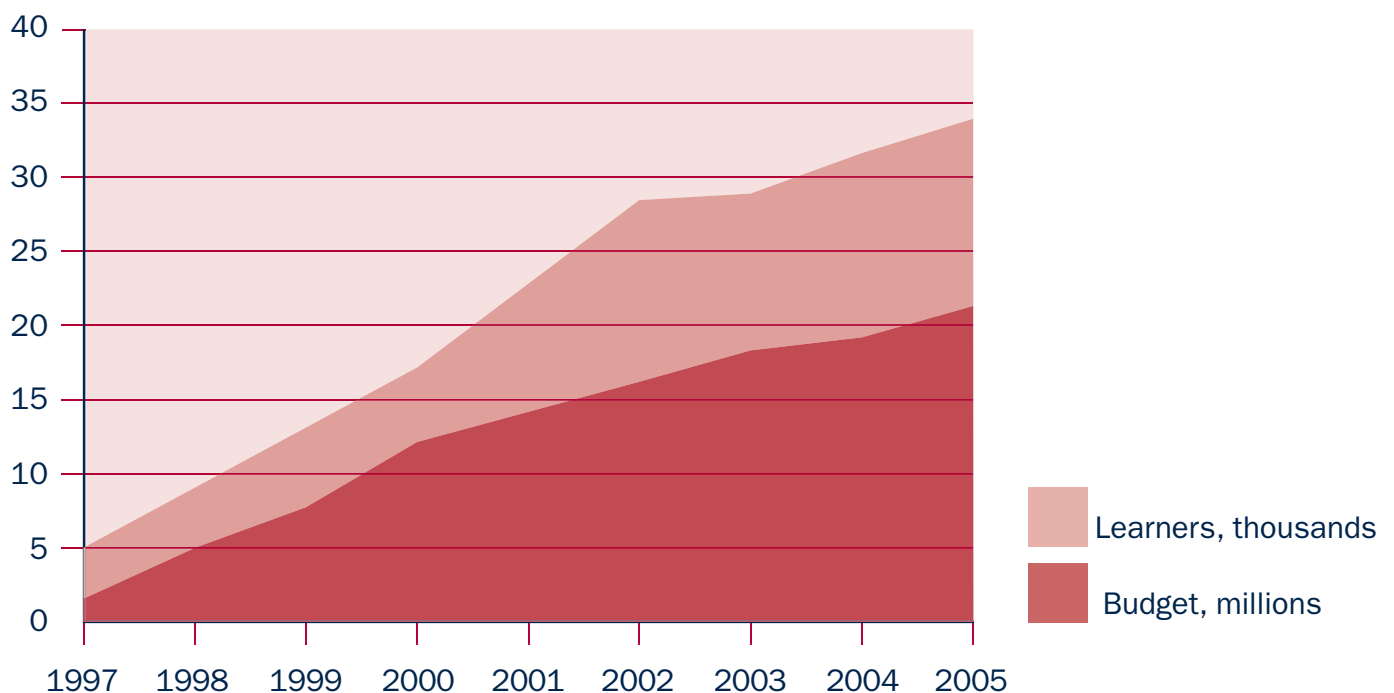


Figure 1: Comparison of numbers of students and annual budgets for adult literacy, 1997 – 2005

### Further Education and Training Awards Council accreditation system

In 2005, NALA took part in consultations with the Further Education Training and Awards Council (FETAC) to help FETAC develop a national system of crediting literacy learning on the National Framework of Qualifications. The consultations took place through NALA's membership of FETAC's Standards Forum, Expert Working Group on Levels 1 and 2 and Assessment Group. By the end of 2005, FETAC had approved awards in Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking and in Non-verbal Communication at Levels 1 and 2. Further accreditation for students will be developed in 2006.

NALA was also invited by the Department of Education and Science (DES) to comment on further education supports. We submitted our comments in March 2005, and are waiting for feedback from the DES.

### NALA/WIT Accreditation Project

It was another busy year for the NALA/WIT Accreditation Project, which appointed a new project manager, Helen Murphy. Helen replaces Geraldine Mernagh, whose skills and experience are not lost to the project, as she has taken up the position of part-time lecturer in literacy. A review of all courses and modules was completed in 2005 and an honours degree has been validated with an

expected start date in October 2006. Congratulations are due to 12 students who graduated from the Higher Certificate in Literacy Development and 15 students who graduated from the BA (Ord) in Adult Education in October 2005 at Waterford Institute of Technology.

At the moment, two BA (Ord) Programmes are running (one each in Tullow and Dublin) as are three Higher Certificate in Literacy Development programmes – two in Cork and one in Dublin. County Dublin VEC is starting a Higher Certificate course in January 2006. A programme of single certificate modules is also available to adult literacy practitioners.

Also in 2005, the project developed and piloted modules through a blended learning approach – which uses a mix of e-learning and direct contact – and prepared for national professional accreditation for three modules covering Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages. This latter development involves incorporating supervised teaching practice into the existing modules to meet accreditation requirements.

The validation by WIT of initial training courses in adult literacy services allows tutors' training to be accredited from the very first day of training they receive. A process for revalidating existing courses is currently being sent out to the relevant services involved in this process.

### **Adult Literacy Organisers' Association communications**

In mid-2005, NALA and the Adult Literacy Organiser's Association (ALOA) agreed a communications strategy between both organisations. This strategy sets out a number of recommendations for building an effective relationship.

- Inviting NALA regional workers to attend two to three ALOA regional meetings throughout the year and discuss important issues for both the ALOA and NALA;
- Having NALA regional workers provide updates on the range of NALA activities and receiving feedback on these; and
- Updating the regional workers on issues raised by the ALOA membership regional committees. Important issues raised may inform the agenda for the NALA/ALOA Executive meetings.

For more information, contact John Stewart, National Adult Literacy Co-ordinator, by e-mail at [jstewart@nala.ie](mailto:jstewart@nala.ie) or by phone on (01) 809 9195.



## **Evolving Quality Framework for Adult Basic Education (ABE) 2005**

The Evolving Quality Framework (EQF) for ABE has become increasingly important in light of the continued search for efficiency and effectiveness within and outside the adult literacy sector. Last year was the fourth year in which the EQF was incorporated into the activities of VECs. To date, 31 of the 33 VECs have used the EQF at some point.

In 2005, the main developments were:

- issuing the 2005 EQF implementation plan, application forms and grants;
- delivering essential training;
- carrying out an external evaluation of the EQF; and
- publishing and launching the revised *Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work*.

### **Issuing the 2005 EQF implementation plan, application form and grants**

The 2005 EQF implementation plan was issued to VEC Adult Literacy Services in March. The plan contained an application form for involvement in the EQF in 2005, which listed a number of criteria for involvement and conditions that the EQF budget be spent on implementing the

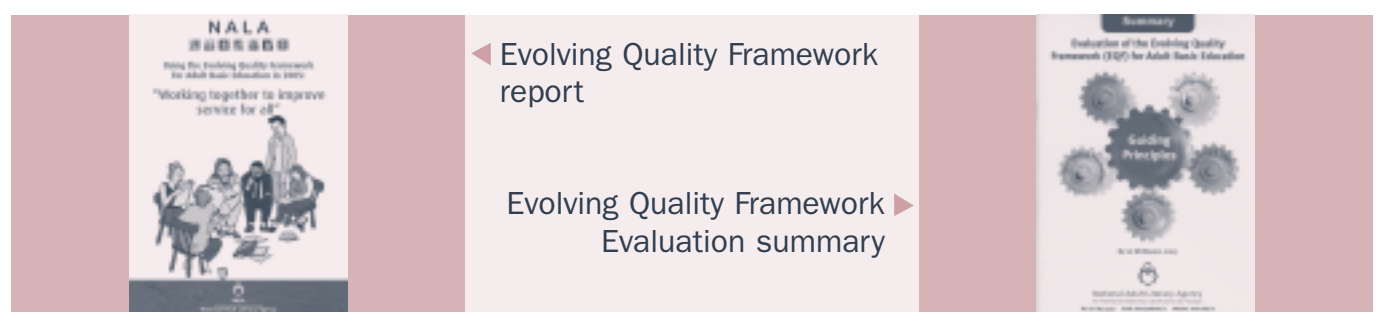
EQF only and that user sites use a NALA-trained EQF facilitator. We also sent out an updated evaluation sheet, which had more open and streamlined questions on the EQF in response to users' requests. Last year 25 VEC Adult Literacy Services were involved in implementing the EQF.

### Training and support work

Last year the EQF facilitator training was held in May and was facilitated by Rhonda Smith, an experienced EQF facilitator, and Claire O'Riordan, Evolving Quality Framework Co-ordinator. Only three people took part, compared with 16 trainees in 2004. Last year's small number is likely due to the existence already of about 43 EQF trained.

Over 2005, the EQF Co-ordinator also gave one-to-one training to facilitators who wanted to train as EQF facilitators and to individuals who wished to be briefed on the role of the EQF anchorperson.

The main supports to EQF users as they used it in their centres were their EQF facilitators and the question-and-answer section in the Evolving Quality Framework section of the NALA website.



### External evaluation of the EQF

An external evaluation of the EQF (begun in 2004) continued up to June 2005. The evaluation, conducted by Liz McSkeane, involved:

- an analysis of previous years' application forms and evaluation sheets and samples of self-evaluation evidence supplied by some centres;
- interviews or workshops with the Department of Education and Science, the IVEA, Youthreach, Teagasc and Fáilte Ireland, among others;
- a one-day workshop with four trained EQF facilitators and four EQF anchor persons;
- case studies of two centres where the EQF has been implemented for some time;
- research on key emerging issues; and
- discussions with the EQF team comprising 16 members (VEC managers, tutors, students and ALOs) from participating EQF centres around the country.

The external evaluation process and findings yielded a full and summary evaluation report. Below was a key conclusion of this evaluation:

*Although the VEC quality assurance procedures are still emerging, according to the information currently available, it seems likely that the Evolving Quality Framework for ABE would be an effective resource in assuring the quality of the adult literacy sector within the VEC. The EQF would meet both the FETAC self-evaluation requirement and would also generate evidence relevant to the nine policy areas in FETAC's quality assurance descriptor.*

The report also produced the following findings and recommendations.

- The EQF is a useful self-evaluation tool that allows teams to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the work of the service in a structured way, which produces specific observable benefits both for team members and for the Adult Literacy Service.
- NALA should share information about the EQF among all providers or potential providers of ABE as a method of assuring the quality of their work with adult basic education students.
- It would be help practitioners, funders and future evaluators greatly if the indicators of quality agreed for quality assurance purposes (FETAC) and the indicators designated by the National Reporting System (Department of Education and Science) could be harmonised.
- NALA should continue to be responsible for co-ordinating, supporting, monitoring and running the EQF. The monitoring and evaluation function at local level should be carried out by designated representatives of the different services that the VEC provides as part of the VEC-wide quality assurance system.
- The user guide should be reviewed in line with plain English guidelines and some of the signs of quality for the different statements should be defined centrally.
- NALA should review the role of the anchor person to clarify the nature and extent of their work.
- EQF teams should develop strategies to ensure that action plans arising from the nine-step evaluation process are integrated into the work of the local Adult Literacy Service and the Education and Service Plans of the local VEC.

Full recommendations from this report are available to download from the Publications section of the NALA website. NALA has already met with FETAC and the DES to discuss the external evaluation of the Evolving Quality Framework and is looking forward to implementing the most important recommendations from that evaluation.

### **Attendance at conferences**

In addition to the work outlined above, the EQF Co-ordinator attended a series of conferences and seminars related to her work. These included:

- presenting to the CEDEFOP group on the EQF at the Department of Education and Science (April);
- attending a conference on Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (October); and
- attending a presentation by Dr. William Glasser on 'The Glasser Quality School' (June).

The EQF Co-ordinator also did some initial groundwork on appropriate quality assurance arrangements for NALA. This work will continue into 2006 and will contribute to the next strategic plan of the Agency.

For more information on the EQF, contact Claire O'Riordan, Evolving Quality Framework Co-ordinator, by e-mail at [coriordan@nala.ie](mailto:coriordan@nala.ie) or by phone on (01) 809 9193.



## **Mapping the Learning Journey**

Mapping the Learning Journey (MLJ) is an assessment framework developed by NALA with adult literacy services, practitioners and students to support the teaching and learning process in adult basic education. In 2005, the MLJ Mainstreaming Steering Committee oversaw the introduction of this framework (also known as mainstreaming) in 23 VEC Adult Literacy Literacy Services. The main purpose of the mainstreaming plan was to help staff in local VEC Adult



Literacy Services develop the knowledge and skills to develop local capacity among VEC adult literacy services that wish to implement MLJ. The mainstreaming process involved:

- briefing Adult Literacy Organisers and VEC managers, and
- training a panel of trainers as well as local support workers (those assigned temporary additional duties for MLJ by their VECs) and tutors.

In total, NALA held 26 training courses and trained 451 practitioners. Initial evaluation by participants indicated that:

- over 70% felt equipped and ready to use MLJ with their students;
- 25% said they wished for need more reading time or other supports; and
- 5% reported they did not feel ready to use MLJ with their students.

Participants gave very positive comments on the panel of trainers used for the MLJ training, commenting on their high standard of facilitation.

Local supports are currently being provided by experienced literacy practitioners assigned temporary additional duties by their VEC, with extra resources provided by the Department of Education and Science.

FÁS agreed to mainstream MLJ in its Community Training Centres in 2006. The Mainstreaming Committee approved a process to allow for the remaining VEC Adult Literacy Services to get involved in early 2006, as well as for expanding MLJ among participating VECs.



◀ 'Mapping the Learning Journey' support pack



## NALA In-Service Training 2005

NALA organised a wide range of training events for adult literacy tutors and ALOs once again in 2005. As part of the training calendar, we offered a range of in-service training courses, courses on the NALA/WIT accreditation project and Mapping the Learning Journey (MLJ) training to help meet the training needs of adult literacy tutors and ALOs.

As you can see from Table 1 below, we held a wide range of training events throughout the country. Nearly 1,500 people attended NALA in-service training events – almost the same as the 2004 figure. In response to the evaluations of our 2004 training programmes and the increasing availability of accredited training through the NALA/WIT accreditation programme, we concentrated our resources on providing a reduced number of courses and introduced some new courses and events. About 40% of those who have attended NALA training events from September to December 2005 were from the VEC Adult Literacy Service. Other participants were from a variety of centres such as Senior Traveller Training Centres, Youthreach and Community Training Centres.

**Table 1: NALA Training and Development 2005**

Event	No. courses	Delivered	Locations	Participants
NALA in-service (including MLJ training)	16	39	24	659
National Tutors' Forum	1	1	1	240
Regional Tutors' Fora	5	5	5	153
ALO Forum	1	1	1	80
<b>Total NALA in-service</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1132</b>
NALA/WIT	16	23	9	320
<b>Total events</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>1452</b>

New courses included 'Facilitating Active Learning', 'Engaging Students', and 'Delivering FETAC Foundation Level Mathematics'.

The feedback on the facilitators was very positive, with a large number of participants describing workshops as 'excellent' or 'very good'. Participants were mostly very positive about the locations we used for our events and were also happy with how events were organised. Comments on that area included 'well organised', 'relaxed learning environment' and 'great networking event'. Facilitators were also happy with the support they received from NALA. Finally, course participants were happy with course outlines and could say with certainty that course objectives were met.

The Training Advisory Group (TAG) met four times in 2005. The group includes tutors, trainers and members of representative bodies in the adult literacy area and works to give:

- advice on the training we are providing;
- new training ideas;
- an objective perspective on the training; and
- an overall evaluation of the whole training field.

They offered the NALA training department plenty of good suggestions and feedback on all our training and advised with ideas on themes and speakers for different NALA events.

### **Adult Literacy Organisers Forum 2005**

The Adult Literacy Organisers Forum was held in February 2005 in Galway. The Forum was developed by NALA and the ALOA Western Region with the theme 'Can you capture success? – Identifying progress in adult literacy for non-technical literacy outcomes'. It focused on the issue of progress in adult literacy in terms of confidence and self esteem. 71 delegates attended the forum from 29 VECs and 2 other organisations. The evaluations praised the quality of the speakers including Patrick Werquin (OECD), Peter Kerins (IVEA), and Juliet Merrifield (UK). The ALOA Western Region agreed to write an article on the outcomes of the Forum for publication by NALA on what was a very interesting two days exploration of identifying student progress.

### **National Forum for Adult Literacy Tutors 2006**

The National Forum for Adult Literacy Tutors 2006 took place on Saturday 28 January in Dublin. Almost 230 tutors attended and the result was a very positive and energetic day. The subject was the new accreditation awards in adult literacy. John Stewart, National Adult Literacy Co-ordinator, chaired the morning session and started off by talking about the importance of the

new accreditation awards. He then went on to give an update on adult literacy developments in Ireland. The keynote speaker was Professor Joyce O'Connor, President of the National College of Ireland and Chairperson of FETAC. She spoke about the value of accreditation and learning in a modern age. Jenny Derbyshire, development worker with NALA, gave an outline of the new awards. Finally, Ernie Sweeney, a life long student, gave a very inspiring and uplifting presentation on his experiences as an adult literacy student and how much the different accreditation awards meant to him over the years. Also, FÁS agreed to mainstream MLJ in its Community Training Centres in 2006.

In the afternoon there was a range of workshops on the subject of the new FETAC accreditation awards in adult literacy.



◀ From left to right: keynote speaker Juliette Merrifield; Treasa Gilligan and Neasa de Bhailis, event organisers; John Stewart, NALA National Adult Literacy Co-ordinator at the Adult Literacy Organisers' Forum 2005.

### **Regional Tutors' Forums 2005**

There were five regional tutors forums in May and June 2005. The locations were Tralee, Monaghan, Athlone, Cork and Dublin. Over 150 tutors in total attended the five events and the theme at the forums was 'assessment for learning and progress'. There was a presentation on the theme, an update on developments in adult literacy and a workshop on 'assessment for learning' at each forum. The feedback from all of the forums was very positive and the consensus was that the tutors found the subject area very interesting and enjoyed the opportunity to network and share ideas on what they do.



## **Promoting understanding, support and action**

### **NALA website**

In 2005 an average of 6,100 visitors searched the NALA website ([www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie)) each month for information directly related to the Agency and its work. May was the busiest month, peaking at nearly 15,000 visitors. An exciting new addition to the website this year was the online nomination form for the Adults Continuing Education (ACE) Awards.

Other changes to the website have included:

- an individual section dedicated to the ACE Awards;
- a section on the NALA's Strategic Review and Development; and
- a new dyslexia FAQs section.

Other regular activity included:

- adding new publications, from one-page flyers to support packs containing over 100 pages;
- writing and editing a wide range of updates for the whole site; and
- preparing and inserting press releases and other items for the 'Dates for your Diary' section of the site.

### **Spreading the word through print**

In 2005, we published a bumper edition of a 'new look' NALA Newsletter, incorporating the Tutors' Update. This expanded 24-page version contained over 35 articles divided between 12 sections, detailing our work and providing news on adult literacy in general. We sent the newsletter to nearly 6,000 literacy practitioners, politicians and civil servants and to representatives of the media, national educational and voluntary sector organisations and community groups.

We published the NALA Journal once in 2005. This provides insights into our major projects and comments on some wider adult literacy issues. We focused on getting views from contributors from outside the Agency, which resulted in half the contributions coming from external writers. We issued this to our mailing list members, which number 2,500 and include policy makers, researchers, politicians and academics.

In addition, we produced promotional programmes for nearly 10 major NALA events and numerous posters and flyers for other events and projects. A range of material was also produced to support NALAW and the ACE Awards, including application forms, post cards and posters, thousands of which were distributed widely.

### Organising awareness-raising events

Following on from 2004's successful NALAW theme of 'literacy and your money', last year saw the publication of the financial literacy research report *Financial Literacy: Improving understanding, creating opportunity* (for more details see page 37).

In October, NALA, in partnership with EBS Building Society, launched *At Home with Family Learning* (for more information see page 11).

Our International Literacy Day (ILD) celebrations in November took place in Cork and focused on students, with displays of their work showcased in the main area for all delegates to see. Frances Ward (NALA Chairperson) chaired the day, which included the launch of two publications: NALA's new writing support pack *Putting Pen to Paper*, by Sinéad Hawkins, and *Treasury of Feelings*, a book of students' writings from Mallow, Co. Cork. Speakers in the morning included Sinéad Hawkins, Nora Meade (Chairperson of the student committee, North Cork Adult Literacy Scheme) and Ted Owens (CEO, County Cork VEC). In the afternoon, eight workshops gave people a chance to learn more about alternative ways through which literacy skills can be taught and developed. These included poetry, gardening, photography and cookery.

### Coverage in the media

In 2005, we continued to supply the media with a wide range of information. Altogether we issued 14 press releases promoting our plans, events and invitations to photo opportunities. These went to an average of 100 local and national contacts in print and broadcast media, resulting in a high level of coverage locally and nationally throughout the year. In particular, NALAW got extensive coverage on TV and radio and in newspapers. This included coverage in the Irish Times, the Irish Independent and The Sunday Business Post and daily slots on 'The Afternoon Show' on RTÉ 1.



◀ Katherine Zappone Irish Human Rights Commission and Aidan Clifford CDU at the launch of National Adult Literacy Awareness Week

Minister Síle de Valera TD launching *At Home with Family Learning* ▶



Other activity that gained media coverage included:

- our Submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Science;
- the publication of *A Plain English Guide to Citizenship Terms* and *At Home with Family Learning*;
- the launch of the NALA Plain English Mark; and
- the launch of our financial literacy research, *Financial Literacy: Improving understanding, creating opportunity*.

Probably 2005's most significant promotional campaign was National Adult Literacy Awareness Week (NALAW), which ran from 26 to 30 September. Another exciting new event in 2005 was the Adults Continuing Education (ACE) Awards, the first national literacy awards in Ireland. These are covered in detail under the heading 'New NALA projects in 2005' at the beginning of this annual report.



## Regional development

The Regional Development Workers were in contact with VEC Adult Literacy Services during 2005 to get their comments and suggestions on the range of programmes jointly implemented by them and NALA. Literacy services fed back informally to NALA regional workers, who took notes to help share this information with relevant NALA staff. Literacy services also had the opportunity to inform regional workers of other literacy developments in their area.



## Research

Last year was another busy year for research in NALA. The main aim of our research work in 2005 was to influence Government policy and maintain a flow of relevant and timely information about the Agency's work. In 2005 we also expanded our research networks, both nationally and internationally, and strengthened our existing links. Below is an outline of the various research activities with which we have been involved over the past year.

### Literacy and Equality in Irish Society

In 2005, we continued to contribute to the Literacy and Equality in Irish Society (LEIS) project as members of the project's steering committee. The project covers the island of Ireland and will finish in spring 2006. The goal of the project is to produce a handbook of innovative materials and approaches to teaching adults using text-free and ICT methods.

A total of six text-free methods were developed and piloted with tutors and tutor trainers. The particular emphasis of this project is on equality, so as the materials and methods were being tested, students and tutors were asked what issues of equality were related to the experience of conflict and to identify how these experiences inform the practice of how literacy skills are taught and learnt. The responses of these tutors and students were taken into account when developing the text-free teaching methods and materials.

The partners involved in this project were:

- Equality Studies Centre, University College Dublin;
- Institute of Lifelong Learning, Queens University Belfast;
- Educational Guidance Service for Adults (EGSA), Northern Ireland;
- National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA), Ireland; and
- Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT).

The LEIS project is funded by the European Union's Peace II initiative for cross-border projects.

### Development of a student-centred curriculum framework

In 2005, we began working on a project to consult (adult literacy services, practitioners and students) over two years on a student-centred curriculum framework for adult literacy work in Ireland. The purpose of the project is to further improve the quality of adult literacy teaching and learning. It also aims for greater access, participation and outcomes for adults with literacy difficulties.



The first stage of the project, which runs until September 2006, involves:

- exploring with students, tutors, managers and policy makers what we mean by curriculum in adult basic education (ABE) and how best to support it;
- researching what works well nationally and internationally, and
- looking at theories of curriculum in ABE.

The second stage will run from September 2006 to autumn 2007 and will involve testing and validating with students, tutors, managers and policy makers, a draft framework to support student-centred curriculum development.

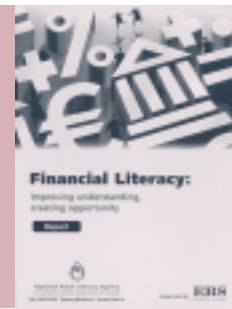
The following people and organisations will be involved in developing this framework:

- students, tutors, managers and policy makers representing the broad range of settings in which ABE is taking place in Ireland today;
- an advisory group representing a wide range of groups involved in ABE; and
- a research team comprising the National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy (NRDC) in the Institute of Education, University of London.

This research is funded by the Dormant Accounts Fund and supported by the Department of Education and Science.



◀ Ted McGovern, CEO EBS, and Helen O'Leary, Ralaheen Ltd., at the launch of *Financial Literacy: Improving understanding, creating opportunity* research report



### **Financial Literacy: Improving understanding, creating opportunity**

Ireland's first ever national independent research into the issue of financial literacy was commissioned by NALA in 2005 with the support of the EBS Building Society Positive Impact Programme. Titled *Financial Literacy: Improving understanding, creating opportunity*, it revealed that the problem of low financial literacy is not confined to those with literacy and numeracy difficulties, but exists for people at all income levels. It also highlighted that financial literacy difficulties prevent people from fully accessing services from the financial services industry.

The research produced the following findings.

- Over a third of adults from a sample population in Ireland (1000+), could not recognise the correct definition for the financial term APR.
- Over half of middle-income level respondents selected the incorrect explanation of APR.
- The biggest challenge for financial institutions is addressing the issue of consumer trust.
- People are confused about charges and Government levies and misunderstand how loan rates are calculated.
- Consumers they are often too intimidated to ask for help or clarification.
- Many literacy students prefer the simplicity and familiarity of dealing with money lenders who deal in 'amounts per hundred' rather than interest rates and APR.
- Ireland falls behind other countries when it comes to financial literacy awareness and initiatives.

To remedy the situation, the report proposed that:

- a national strategy should be implemented, which would involve engaging key Government departments;
- the financial services industry, policy makers and the educational sector should all take responsibility for the growing issue of financial literacy difficulties; and
- financial institutions, the educational sector and policy makers should adopt ten strategic recommendations to help raise awareness of financial literacy difficulties among the public and come up with ways to overcome them.

The research was conducted by Ralaheen Ltd., with support from Red C. The steering group that oversaw the research had representatives of the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS), the Traveller community, the Basic Education Tutors' Association, NALA and EBS.

### **Research Association for Adult and Community Education**

The Research Association for Adult and Community Education (RAACE) provides a network for those engaged in or interested in research in the adult and community education fields in Ireland. The work of RAACE is being led at the moment by a development committee, which includes:

- Gemma Lynch, Research Officer, National Adult Literacy Agency;
- Finola McDonnell, Policy Officer, AONTAS;
- Rhonda Wynne, Adult Education Centre, UCD;
- Bernie Gildea, NUI, Maynooth;
- Kay Lynch, NUI, Maynooth; and
- Bríd Connolly, Department of Adult and Community Education, NUI, Maynooth.

In 2005, NALA and AONTAS jointly funded a short feasibility study into developing the RAACE network. Aside from looking at whether setting up a formal research association is feasible, the study aims to make recommendations on how best to set up and run the association. It will also outline the adult and community education research community in Ireland and the type of research currently underway.

The study has involved a lot of consultation with the main groups in the adult and community education research fields and is due to be completed in early 2006. The outcomes of the study will allow the development committee to devise a plan for establishing RAACE on a permanent and sustainable basis.

### **NALA library and information service**

Our library services continued to be available to the general public in 2005. Our research library stocks over 1,000 books and reports and is a valuable resource to both staff and the public alike. We offer a reference service only, which means that books cannot be borrowed and taken out of the building. Most users over the past year accessed the information remotely by phoning in or e-mailing with a specific query, that could be answered by the Research Officer, in the same way. However, a small number of people came in for a more detailed browse through our library collection, having made an appointment with the Research Officer.

### **Promoting research**

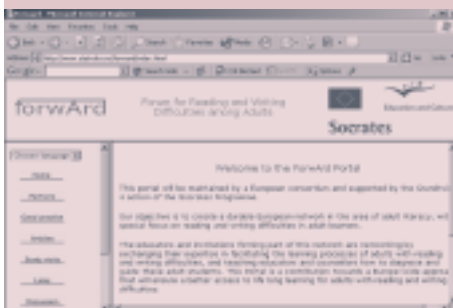
We gave time in 2005 to further developing our work to promote research. This involved:

- making sure that members who do not have access to the internet receive regular updates through the NALA Journal and NALA News and Tutors' Bulletin;
- attending meetings with an increased range of organisations and individuals that share an interest in adult literacy research;

- sharing the research work we do with a large number of national and international researchers, policy makers and academics;
- supporting external researchers to complete assignments on adult literacy including third level students (most of whom continue to be VEC tutors completing the NALA/WIT module); and
- drawing together key statistics on adult literacy in Ireland, which will be available on our website in spring 2006.

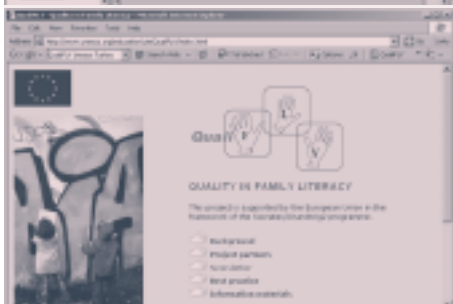
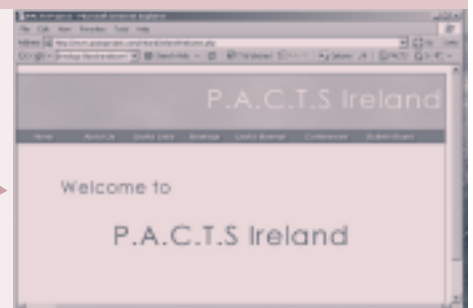
For more information, contact Gemma Lynch, Research Officer, by e-mail at [gemma@nala.ie](mailto:gemma@nala.ie) or by phone on (01) 809 9192.

“Implement a training strategy for high quality adult literacy provision and deliver an adult literacy promotion campaign to develop awareness and understanding at national level.”



◀ Forward Trainer website  
[www.statvoks.no/forward/trainer](http://www.statvoks.no/forward/trainer)

PACTS website home page ▶  
[www.pactsproject.com/ireland/irelandWelcome.php](http://www.pactsproject.com/ireland/irelandWelcome.php)



◀ QualiFLY website home page  
[www.unesco.org/education/uie/QualiFLY/index.html](http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/QualiFLY/index.html)

# International projects

## Forward Trainer

Forward Trainer is a step on from the success of the Grundtvig 4 action of the Socrates Programme FORWARD (Forum for Reading and Writing Difficulties among Adults). The purpose of Forward Trainer is to create and test a training course for union representatives, teachers and trainers of adults, social workers and others who, in their work, are likely to meet adults who have reading and writing difficulties. The course will try to provide the participants with specific information, teaching skills and approaches to supporting these adults.

The project's specific objectives are:

- to gather experience from educators who are already offering support for adults with reading and writing difficulties;
- to compile, on the basis of this experience, a manual on how to use different teaching approaches that help adults with reading and writing difficulties; and
- to use the final outcome manual as a basis for a series of international courses and national courses in the local languages.

NALA is a core partner with four other countries (Malta, UK, Norway and Romania) in writing and piloting the training course and manual, which will be presented in eight languages on the Forward Trainer webpage, [www.statvoks.no/forward/trainer](http://www.statvoks.no/forward/trainer). Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Slovenia and Switzerland are network members of the Forward Trainer project.

The Forward Trainer project began in January 2005 with a meeting in Oslo, Norway, of all members to discuss the manual content and pilot training course. The pilot training courses are being run as a Grundtvig 3 course with funding from national agencies for participants. The course took place in Malta in November 2005 and the project will end with a network meeting in Dublin in September 2006. For further information on Forward Trainer, please visit [www.statvoks.no/forward/trainer](http://www.statvoks.no/forward/trainer).



◀ Forward Trainer website  
[www.statvoks.no/forward/trainer](http://www.statvoks.no/forward/trainer)



## Family Learning Conference (FALCON)

NALA was involved in planning and organising this family learning conference in Oslo, Norway, from 31 August to 4 September 2005, which was funded under the Grundtvig 3 and 4 initiatives. The planning group was led by Vox in Oslo and included partners from Ireland, the UK, Sweden, The Netherlands, France, Romania and Italy. In addition to four participants from the planning group, County Clare Family Learning project and NALA, nine other tutors and organisers attended from Ireland. The conference provided an interesting and useful opportunity



to develop ideas and establish networks with family literacy workers throughout Europe. It was an important feature of our work this year in building expertise, which will help family literacy developments at both local and national levels.

The FALCON website ([www.statvoks.no/falcon](http://www.statvoks.no/falcon)) continues to operate to support networking in this field.



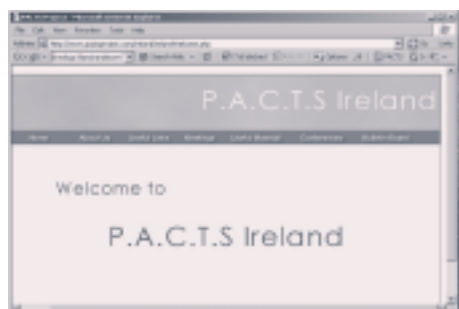
## PACTS project

NALA was a partner in the PACTS (Partners Collaborating in Training for Individuals with Specific Learning Disabilities) in 2005. This was supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) INTERREG IIIA initiative between Ireland and Wales. The project focused on developing links between Wales and Ireland to build expertise and encourage the transfer of knowledge and skills between them. In Ireland, the project covered the areas of Dublin, Meath and Kildare. In Wales, the project covered the areas of Carmarthen, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion.

The lead partners of PACTS were Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown, the National Learning Network and The Dyscovery Trust of Wales. Local partners took part in both countries.

Examples of Irish partners were:

- Dyslexia Association of Ireland;
- Dyspraxia Association of Ireland;
- HADD Family Support Group;
- City of Dublin VEC Psychological Services;
- FÁS;
- CDVEC Killester College; and
- Northside Partnership.



◀ PACTS website home page  
[www.pactsproject.com/ireland/irelandWelcome.php](http://www.pactsproject.com/ireland/irelandWelcome.php)

The goal of the project was to help people who find it difficult to manage tasks in an increasingly numerate and literate society. The specific aims were to:

- raise awareness of SLD and the supports in place;
- develop and distribute training and information materials to diverse populations, including parents, teachers and employers within the designated area in Ireland and Wales;
- host residential training and joint conferences to raise awareness;
- positively promote SLD in among employers; and
- provide training for trainers in SLD.

This training will pass through the networks involved in the project activities, and will spread more quickly through CD-ROM and online information.

During the meetings, participants from Wales and Ireland were able to discuss various topics such as:

- definitions of specific learning difficulties;
- characteristics of specific learning difficulties;
- assessment;
- experiences of adults experiencing with specific learning difficulties in Ireland and Wales;
- workplace and employment issues; and

In December, a PACTS showcase, launched by Minister Brian Lenihan, was held at the Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown. For more information, see the PACTS website, [www.pactsproject.com](http://www.pactsproject.com)



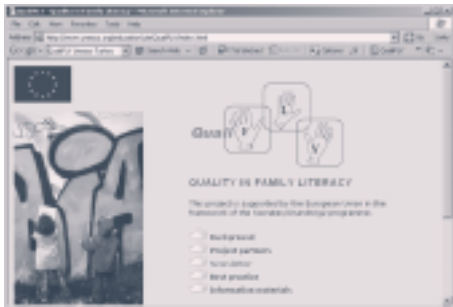
## QualiFLY

NALA has begun to take part in a two-year study, funded by the EU under Grundtvig 2 initiative, to promote quality in family learning programmes. In 2005 Celia Rafferty from the NALA Executive Committee represented us at the planning meeting in Germany and the first study visit was held in Turkey in October. UNESCO, based in Hamburg, is the lead partner in this project. The other partners are in Bulgaria, Italy, Ireland, Malta and Turkey.

The QualiFLY project aims especially to promote good quality in family literacy programmes by:

- observing and monitoring best practice in a range of settings;
- sharing best practice through a dedicated website;
- reviewing methods to identify quality indicators; and
- promoting new approaches for effective programmes.

It also plans to create a core group of expertise in each partner country through the active involvement of tutors in the project and promote and raise awareness of the family literacy approach.



◀ QualiFLY website home page  
[www.unesco.org/education/uie/QualiFLY/index.html](http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/QualiFLY/index.html)



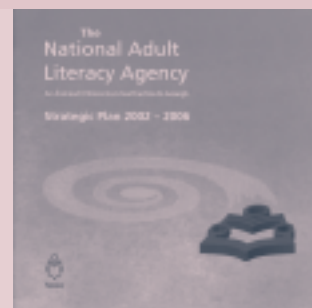
## WriTe Skills

In February 2005, NALA made a submission with Ballymun IT Forum to be part of a new project, called WriTe Skills, to run for two years and funded by the EU's Socrates programme. This project aims to develop ICT software that will be used for literacy products and will help create blended learning materials – curricula, courseware and interactive content. The application was successful and from September we have worked as a partner in this project to evaluate this software. For more information on ICT and literacy, contact Jennie Lynch, Project Co-ordinator, by e-mail at [jlynch@nala.ie](mailto:jlynch@nala.ie) or by phone on (021) 431 7012.



◀ NALA Resource Room

NALA Strategic Plan ▶  
2001 to 2006



◀ NALA Resource Room

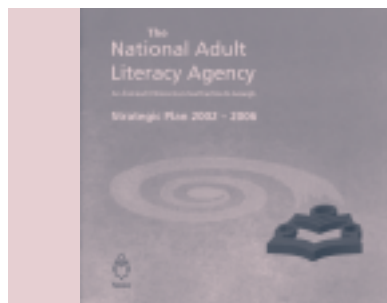
# NALA internal administration and activities

## NALA strategy review and development

In 2005 we started reviewing our current strategic plan and our progress on it. The current plan runs to the end of 2006, so the information we have gathered will help us develop a new plan, taking effect from 2007. Management consultants Anne Connolly Consultancy have assisted us in reviewing the plan, a process that ran until December 2005 and included:

- a review of relevant evaluation data;
- a survey of members' views;
- a workshop with NALA staff;
- one-to-one interviews with NALA staff;
- a workshop with the NALA Executive;
- focus groups with students, paid and voluntary tutors and VEC Adult Literacy Organisers;
- consultation with academics and literacy experts from around the world;
- interviews with stakeholders such as the Department of Education and Science, the Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA) and Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC); and
- a specially-formed Strategic Development Team to review feedback data.

The working deadline for finishing and endorsing the new strategic plan is the NALA 2006 annual general meeting. For more information, contact Claire O'Riordan, Quality Framework Co-ordinator by e-mail at [coriordan@nala.ie](mailto:coriordan@nala.ie) or by phone on (01) 809 9193.



◀ NALA Strategic Plan 2001 to 2006



## Administration: supporting staff

In 2005, the NALA administration team was extremely busy and, as ever, provided vital support to all parts of the Agency. The team supported the development, training and awareness work of the Agency and co-ordinated the many mailings that occurred during the year. Over 6,465 telephone queries were answered and over 500 people visited the NALA Dublin office.

The administration staff played an active role in helping other NALA staff organise major events and campaigns, such as National Adult Literacy Awareness Week, International Literacy Day, the NALA Annual General Meeting, the Adult Literacy Organisers' Forum, the National Forum for Literacy Tutors and many other seminars and conferences.

## National referral service

Members of the public use our main NALA number to look for:

- information on how to make contact with local schemes – 1,126 calls;
- support in improving literacy skills – 3,624 calls; and
- free packs and videos that accompany the TV and radio series – 1,715 calls.

We dealt with an average of 27 such calls each day, representing around 6,400 for the whole year. We also dealt every day with enquiries by telephone and e-mail from people wishing to become volunteer tutors. We received about 1,200 enquiries last year.

We updated and reprinted the information leaflet VEC Adult Literacy and Basic Education Services in Ireland, which has the contact name and telephone numbers of all VEC Adult Literacy Services and has proven very useful for those wishing to put adults in touch with literacy tuition. If you would like a copy, contact us by e-mail at [literacy@nala.ie](mailto:literacy@nala.ie) or by phone on (01) 855 4332.



## NALA Resource Room

The NALA Resource Room in Dublin continued to be widely used by all those involved in tutoring adults in various settings. These include the VEC Adult Literacy Services, Senior Traveller Training Centres (STTCs), Prison Education Services, FÁS Community Training Centres (CTCs), National Learning Network, tutors of ESOL and many others. Aside from these users, we met over 485 personal visitors and also dealt with 1,150 orders by post, fax, e-mail and telephone over the year. Materials from the NALA Resource Room were displayed at various conferences such as the NALA Annual General Meeting, Senior Traveller Training Centre conference and the celebration of International Literacy Day.

If you would like to receive the NALA Resource Guide or a current order form, contact the NALA Resource Room by e-mail at [resources@nala.ie](mailto:resources@nala.ie) or by phone on (01) 855 4332. Our Mullingar and Cork offices also stock a sample of literacy materials, which can be viewed by appointment.



◀ NALA Resource Room ▶



## Customer care

The NALA Customer Care team met twice in 2005 to discuss our commitment to our customers. In May we submitted a progress report to the Director and staff on our achievements in relation to the customer action plan. We surpassed some of our targets, for example we planned to have a quarter to a third of events outside Dublin, but actually held almost 40% of our events and training sessions outside the capital. We are still working on other actions, such as ensuring all our information is in plain English and developing our



communications with customers. We have found the Customer Charter and its action plan to be invaluable in guiding our work and keeping us accountable and are even more convinced of its importance into 2006 and beyond.



## **Health and safety**

Following on from a very busy 2004 on this front, work on health and safety in 2005 was less intense but as important. We updated our health and safety statement and the health and safety officer Claire O’Riordan met with health and safety representatives Clodagh McCarthy and Sandra Peel twice over the year. A health and safety report was sent to the Director outlining our progress in removing hazards and any further issues to be addressed. Probably the biggest advance on health and safety in NALA related to upgrading work done on the kitchenette area, which is now more hygienic and modern.



## **Staff training: Make your work easier with ICT**

Making your work easier with information and communication technology (ICT) was the theme for a staff training day in May. The day was held in The Digital Hub for all staff and the need for this training was identified through the performance appraisal system. The day was facilitated by Tom Dukes of Technofutures (the ICT support provider to NALA) and finished with staff evaluating the day and suggesting actions to help us get the most from ICT. The training day was highly successful in raising our awareness about the importance of ICT in our work and how it can, if used appropriately, make our work much more effective. We recognise that, in the future, a more substantial ICT review will be required for NALA. We compiled a report with the comments and suggestions and have begun to implement the latter.



◀ Stan McHugh, Chief Executive, FETAC, addresses the NALA AGM

NALA Executive Committee ▶



◀ Celia Rafferty listens intently at the NALA AGM

# NALA Annual General Meeting

The 24th Annual General Meeting of NALA was held in the Gresham Hotel, Dublin on the 9 April 2005. The Chairperson, Frances Ward, welcomed the members to the AGM and outlined the proceedings for the morning. In her address she highlighted the growth in the numbers of students returning to avail of adult literacy, acknowledging the increase in funding from the DES as well as funding NALA has received from the EBS Building Society, allowing more people to engage in lifelong learning.

The Chairperson also paid tribute to Madge Dolan, ALO in Dunshaughlin and former member of the NALA Executive Committee, who passed away during the year. Her energy and her enthusiasm for her work were acknowledged and condolences were extended to her family.

## **Minutes from 2004**

Joyce Burns, Honorary Secretary, presented the minutes of the 23rd AGM held in Donegal Town on 3 April 2004. The minutes were proposed by Michael Power and seconded by Veronica Burke.

## **Honorary Treasurer's statement**

The Honorary Treasurer, John Lynch, presented the financial report for 2004, acknowledging the 11.8% increase in Government funding, the contribution of the EBS through its corporate social responsibility programme and funding through the Dormant Accounts Fund. The amount generated by the membership fees was boosted through reminding members when their subscriptions were due. NALA's present surplus stands at €21,683. The Treasurer referred members to pages 78 – 84 of the 2005 annual report for greater detail, reminding them that the financial situation gives a good overview of the work. The financial report was proposed by Patrick Hallinan and seconded by Tony Houlihan.

## **Review of 2004**

Under the headings of the Strategic Plan, Inez Bailey, Director of NALA, outlined the highlights and key priorities of 2004. These included:

- publishing the implementation plan for the VEC Adult Literacy Service, so realising the aspirations of the White Paper of 2000;
- successfully lobbying on workplace basic education, resulting in a dedicated fund managed through FÁS;
- contributing to the Education Disadvantage Committee;
- presenting to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Science, to be followed by a submission to the committee by 15 April 2005 for inclusion in its report;
- finishing MLJ research and introducing it in VECs under the guidance of the MLJ Mainstreaming Committee;
- finishing the REPRISE project, from which NALA developed an action plan on homelessness and adult literacy, and was continuing to work with key stakeholders;
- organising an external evaluation of the EQF tool, now well embedded into practice in most VECs (the report will be published shortly);
- providing 58 training courses, with 1,585 participants, as well as holding forums for students, tutors and Adult Literacy Organisers;
- developing a students' policy to encourage students to become more involved locally and nationally;

- developing projects in new areas, such as literacy and sport (culminating in a major conference in December 2004) and literacy and Travellers (for which a pack will be available), the latter relating to the resolution taken at the AGM in 2004;
- publishing materials such as *The Big Picture* for ESOL students, *The Health Pack*, SLD policy and guidelines and family literacy policy and guidelines;
- developing and broadcasting the fifth Read Write Now series, which had 165,000 viewers and 7,000 independent students (the repeat is still attracting a large amount of phone calls), to be followed by a new style media programme that will be planned in the future;
- developing work on Literacytools, plain English and numeracy, with a new worker being appointed with responsibility for numeracy;
- continuing to raise awareness of literacy issues, with the topic for ILD and NALAW being financial literacy, supported by the EBS (during NALAW, NALA received 4,800 student calls and 1,200 volunteer calls, which were directed to the relevant schemes); and
- organising refurbishments for the NALA offices.

### **Stan McHugh, CEO FETAC**

Stan McHugh, CEO of the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC), presented on the developments in the sector, including the National Qualifications Framework, the developments of the awards at Level 1 and 2 and the schedule for developments up to summer 2006. The presentation was followed by a questions and answers session, after which the Chairperson thanked Mr McHugh for his informative presentation, a copy of which was available to those at the AGM.



◀ Celia Rafferty listens intently at the NALA AGM

The NALA Executive at the NALA AGM ▶



## Presentation of candidates for the Executive Committee

Following an expression of thanks to the outgoing Committee members, and with the Standing Orders Committee in place, the following new members were introduced to the meeting.

Position	Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Chairperson	Frances Ward Dublin City SW Scheme	Pat Ayton Coolock/Darndale ALS	Rose Browne KLEAR Adult Reading and Writing Scheme
Vice Chairperson	Celia Rafferty Finglas Reading and Writing Scheme	Frances Ward Dublin City SW Scheme	Nuala Byrne Larkin Reading and Writing Scheme
Ordinary members	Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
1.	Mary Corrigan Tara Workshop Dundalk	Frances Ward Dublin City SW Scheme	Mary Connolly Tara Workshop Dundalk
2.	Kevin O'Duffy Co. Offaly VEC Adult Learning Centre	Mary McLaughlin Co. Offaly VEC Adult Learning Centre	Margaret Keeley Co. Offaly VEC Adult Learning Centre
3.	Andrew Duffy Co. Offaly VEC Adult Learning Centre	Mary McLaughlin Co. Offaly VEC Adult Learning Centre	Margaret Keeley Co. Offaly VEC Adult Learning Centre
4.	Helen Walsh KLEAR Adult Reading and Writing Scheme	Mary Power KLEAR Adult Reading and Writing Scheme	Peggy Murphy KLEAR Adult Reading and Writing Scheme
5.	Marian O'Reilly Co. Laois Adult Learning Scheme	Esther Phelan Co. Laois Adult Learning Scheme	Anne Scanlon Co. Laois Adult Learning Scheme

There was no ballot, as the number of people going forward did not exceed the number of places.

As there was no business under any other business (AOB), the Chairperson thanked the members for coming, invited them to lunch and closed the AGM at 1.00pm.





# NALA Executive Committee Members and Staff

## Officers

Chairperson Frances Ward  
Vice-Chair Celia Rafferty  
Hon. Treasurer John Lynch  
Hon. Secretary Joyce Burns

## Ordinary

Kevin O'Duffy  
Andrew Duffy  
Mary Corrigan  
Michael Power  
Joan Butler  
Helen Walsh  
Marian O'Reilly  
Anne Gannon

## NALA staff

Inez Bailey, Director, e-mail [ibailey@nala.ie](mailto:ibailey@nala.ie),  
phone (01) 855 4332

Blathnaid Ní Chinnéide, Integration  
Co-ordinator, e-mail [bnichinneide@nala.ie](mailto:bnichinneide@nala.ie),  
phone (01) 809 9190

Claire O'Riordan, Evolving Quality Framework  
Co-ordinator, e-mail [coriordan@nala.ie](mailto:coriordan@nala.ie),  
phone (01) 809 9193

Clare Cody, South East Skills for Work  
Co-ordinator, e-mail [clare@nala.ie](mailto:clare@nala.ie),  
phone 086 824 7858;

Clodagh McCarthy, Plain English Co-ordinator,  
e-mail [cmccarthy@nala.ie](mailto:cmccarthy@nala.ie),  
phone (01) 809 9194

Emma Ramsey, e-mail [eramsey@nala.ie](mailto:eramsey@nala.ie),  
phone (01) 809 9180

Ester Mackey, Mid-West Skills for Work  
Co-ordinator, e-mail [emackey@nala.ie](mailto:emackey@nala.ie),  
phone 086 811 6901

Eugene Higgins, South West Skills for Work  
Co-ordinator, e-mail [eugene@nala.ie](mailto:eugene@nala.ie),  
phone 086 824 7983

Fawzia McGlone, Financial Administrator,  
e-mail [fmcglone@nala.ie](mailto:fmcglone@nala.ie), phone (01) 855 4332

Fergus Dolan, Training Officer,  
e-mail [fdolan@nala.ie](mailto:fdolan@nala.ie), phone (01) 809 9191

Fiona Fay, Midlands Skills for Work  
Co-ordinator, e-mail [ffay@nala.ie](mailto:ffay@nala.ie),  
phone 086 811 6913

Gemma Lynch, Research Officer,  
e-mail [gemma@nala.ie](mailto:gemma@nala.ie), phone (01) 809 9192

Helen Ryan, Project Co-ordinator,  
e-mail [hryan@nala.ie](mailto:hryan@nala.ie), phone (01) 809 9197

Jennie Lynch, Project Co-ordinator,  
e-mail [jlynch@nala.ie](mailto:jlynch@nala.ie), phone (021) 431 7012

Jenny Derbyshire, Family Literacy Policy  
Worker, e-mail [valleylodge4@eircom.net](mailto:valleylodge4@eircom.net)

John Stewart, National Adult Literacy  
Co-ordinator, e-mail [jstewart@nala.ie](mailto:jstewart@nala.ie),  
phone (01) 809 9195

Mairin Kelly, Administrator Officer,  
e-mail [literacy@nala.ie](mailto:literacy@nala.ie), phone (01) 855 4332;

Margaret Maher, Training Administrator,  
e-mail [mmaher@nala.ie](mailto:mmaher@nala.ie), phone  
(01) 809 9199 (10am–1pm)

Margaret Murray, Southern Regional  
Development Worker, e-mail [mmurray@nala.ie](mailto:mmurray@nala.ie)  
(021) 431 7011;

Peter Kiernan, Regional Development Worker,  
Mullingar, e-mail [pkiernan@nala.ie](mailto:pkiernan@nala.ie),  
phone (044) 40374

Sandra Peel, Administrator,  
e-mail [literacy@nala.ie](mailto:literacy@nala.ie), phone (01) 855 4332

Tanya Murphy, Office Manager,  
e-mail [literacy@nala.ie](mailto:literacy@nala.ie), phone (01) 855 4332

Terry Maguire, Numeracy Development  
Co-ordinator, e-mail [terrymag@iol.ie](mailto:terrymag@iol.ie), phone  
(0404) 44023

Tommy Byrne, Public Relations Officer,  
e-mail [tbyrne@nala.ie](mailto:tbyrne@nala.ie), phone (01) 809 9195



# NALA Corporate Membership

## Adult Literacy Services

- ABLE, Blanchardstown
- ABLES, Cork
- Altrusa/VEC Adult Literacy Scheme, Cork
- Arklow Adult Literacy Scheme
- Athlone Reading & Writing Group
- Ballaghaderreen Adult Literacy Scheme
- Ballina Adult Literacy Scheme
- Ballymun Adult Literacy Scheme
- Basic Education Service Tallaght (BEST)
- Belmullet Adult Literacy Scheme
- Bishopstown Adult Literacy Scheme
- Blessington Literacy Scheme
- Bray Adult Literacy Learning Programme
- Cabra Adult Literacy Scheme
- Carnew Literacy Scheme
- Castlebar Adult Literacy Scheme
- Choices, Shankill
- Clondalkin Basic Education Centre
- Cork Traveller Literacy Scheme
- Co. Carlow Adult Literacy Scheme
- Co. Cavan Adult Learning Centre
- Co. Clare Reading & Writing Scheme
- Co. Cork – East
  - Carrigaline
  - Carrigtwohill
  - Cobh
  - Fermoy
  - Middleton
  - Mitchelstown
  - Youghal
- Co. Cork – North
  - Ballingcollig
  - Charleville
  - Duhallow
  - Kanturk
  - Mallow
- Co. Cork – North West
  - Bantry
  - Beara
  - Dunmanway
  - Macroom
- Co. Cork – South West
  - Bandon
  - Clonakilty
  - Kinsale
  - Schull
  - Skibbereen
  - Upton
- Co. Donegal Adult Literacy Service
  - Ballyshannon
  - Donegal Town
  - Gaeltacht
  - Inishowen
  - Letterkenny
  - Raphoe
- Co. Kerry Education Service – Literacy & Life Skills Programme:
  - Cahirciveen
  - Dingle Adult
  - Kenmare
  - Killarney
  - Killorglin
  - Listowel
  - Tralee
- Co. Laois Adult Literacy Scheme
- Co. Limerick Adult Literacy Scheme
- Co. Longford Adult Literacy Scheme
- Co. Meath Adult Literacy Scheme
  - Ashbourne/Ratoath
  - Dunboyne/Dunshaughlin
  - Kells
  - Laytown
  - Navan
  - Trim
- Co. Monaghan Adult Literacy Service
- Co. Offaly Reading & Writing Scheme
- Co. Sligo Adult Literacy Scheme
- Co. Tipperary (NR) Adult Literacy Scheme
- Co. Tipperary (SR) Adult Literacy Scheme
- Co. Waterford Adult Education Centre
- Co. Wexford Adult Literacy Scheme
- Drogheda Adult Learning Centre
- Dublin Adult Learning Centre (DALC)
- Dublin City South West Adult Reading & Writing Scheme
- Dundalk Adult Literacy Service
- Dundrum Adult Literacy Scheme
- Dun Laoghaire Adult Learning Centre
- Dunshaughlin Adult Literacy Scheme
- East Cork Adult Literacy Service
- East Galway Adult Literacy Scheme
- Farranree Adult Literacy Scheme
- Fingal Adult Literacy Scheme
- Fingal (North) Adult Education Centre
- Finglas Adult Literacy Scheme
- Galway Adult Literacy Group
- Inchicore Adult Literacy Scheme
- JAEN – Jobstown Adult Education Network
- Kildare/Athy Adult Learning Centre
- Kilmallock Literacy Group

- KLEAR – Kilbarrack
- Larkin Community College Adult Literacy Scheme
- LEAP – Leitrim Education for Adults Programme
- Leixlip Adult English Scheme
- Liberties Adult Literacy Scheme
- Limerick Adult Learner Support Services
- Loughrea Adult Literacy Scheme
- Lucan Adult Basic Education Centre
- Mahon Adult Literacy Scheme
- Mallow Adult Literacy Scheme
- Midleton Adult Literacy Scheme
- Moycullen/Cliften Adult Literacy Scheme
- Mullingar Literacy & Employment Centre
- Naas Adult English Centre
- Newcastlewest Literacy Group
- Northside Reading & Writing Centre
- Read Write Now/Ballyphehane
- Ringsend Literacy Scheme
- Roscommon Adult Literacy Scheme
- Scéim Foghlana na Gaillimhe
- SIPTU Basic Education Service
- Swinford Adult Literacy Scheme
- TARGET – Donaghmede
- Tuam Adult Literacy Centre
- Waterford City Adult Literacy Scheme
- Wicklow Town Adult Learning Centre
- Wordaid – Kilkenny
- Write On – Mayfield
- Write Together Group – Churchfield
- Youghal Adult Literacy Scheme

### **Community Training Centres**

- Arklow
- Athlone
- Ballark
- Ballymun
- Ballina
- Blackpool/Glen/Faranree
- Charleville
- Clonmel
- Crosscare
- Darndale
- Drogheda
- Dundalk
- Dun Laoghaire
- Finglas
- Galway City
- Kylesmore
- Lourdes Youth & Community Services
- Mayfield
- Moneenageisha, Galway
- Newbridge
- North Wall, Dublin
- Ogra Dún Dealgan
- PACE, Training for Employment, Dublin
- Ringsend
- Sligo
- Stoneybatter
- St. Vincents Trust
- Training Workshop in Horticulture
- Tallaght
- Tralee
- Tuam
- Waterford Youth Industries Ltd.

### **Centres for the Unemployed**

- Belfast
- Castlebar
- Dundalk
- Enniscorthy
- Finglas
- Kilkenny
- Tallaght



## General

- Access 2000
- Action Inishowen
- AEOA – Adult Education Organisers’ Association
- Age and Opportunity
- ALOA – Adult Literacy Organisers’ Association
- AONTAS
- ARIS – Australia
- Aspire Volunteers
- Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
- Ballinasloe Community Information Centre
- Ballymun Education Support Team (BEST)
- Brainwave
- Bridge Project
- Casadh
- Centre for Literacy, Canada
- CLASP – Community of Lough Arrow Social Project
- Clondalkin Partnership
- Collectif Alpha, Belgium
- Co-Action, Skibberreen
- Combat Poverty Agency
- Comhairle
- Community Action Network
- CORI – Conference of Religious in Ireland
- Co. Monaghan Area Partnership
- Dochas don Oige
- Doras Luimni
- Dyslexia Association of Ireland
- Dyslexia Awareness
- Duagh Family Resource Centre
- Education Research Centre, Drumcondra, Dublin
- EGSA, Belfast
- Enable Ireland, Cork
- EOLAS
- Exchange House Travellers’ Service
- FÁS – National Training and Employment Agency
- FETAC – Further Education Training and Awards Council
- Finglas/Cabra Partnership
- Focus Point Centre
- Foundation/Homeless Project, Parnell Square
- Francis Street Community Education Centre
- Harmony Community Development Project
- HETAC – Higher Education Training and Awards Council
- Henrietta Adult & Community Education (HACE)
- Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland
- INOU – Irish National Organisation for the Unemployment
- INTO
- IVEA – Irish Vocational Education Association
- LARA – Loreto Convent
- Leargas
- Link-Up
- Longford Acorn
- Meitheal
- Mercy Family Centre
- Moorehaven Centre, Tipperary Town
- National Association for the Deaf
- National Centre for Guidance in Education
- National Office for Victims of Abuse
- National Social Services Board
- NCCCAP
- Nickol, Dublin
- NUI Maynooth – Department of Adult & Community Education
- Parental Equality – Operation Seahorse
- Pavee Point
- People’s College
- Pobal (formerly ADM)
- Prison Education Service
- Project for Adult Guidance in Education
- Raheen Community Development Project
- Rehab Ballyfermot
- Rehab Donboyne
- Rehab Dun Laoghaire
- Roscrea 2000 Ltd
- Sliabh Luachra
- St. Fergal’s Resource Centre
- St. Brigid’s College
- Tallaght Unemployment Centre
- Teagasc
- Teachers’ Union of Ireland
- Association of Remedial Teachers of Ireland
- The Phoenix Centre of Learning
- The Shanty Education Project
- Thurles Action
- Treoir
- Vincentian Partnership for Justice
- Warrenmount Community Education & Development Centre
- Windmill Therapeutic Training
- Waterford Institute of Technology

## **Libraries**

- An Chomhairle Leabharlanna
- Blackrock Branch Library
- Blanchardstown Public Library
- Bray Public Library
- Cabinteely Public Library
- Deansgrange Public Library
- Dublin City Council Public Libraries
- Dundrum Public Library
- Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown Public Library Service
- Carlow County Library
- Clare County Library
- Cork County Library
- Cork City Public Libraries
- Cork Public Libraries
- Donegal County Library
- Galway County Library
- Fingal County Libraries
- Kerry County Library
- Kildare County Library
- Kilkenny County Library
- Laois County Library
- Leitrim County Library
- Limerick City Library
- Limerick County Library
- Longford County Library
- Louth County Library
- Mayo County Library
- Meath County Library
- Monaghan County Library
- Offaly County Library
- Roscommon County Library
- Sallynoggin Public Library
- Shankhill Public Library
- Sligo County Library
- South Dublin Library Service
- Stillorgan Public Library
- Tipperary Joint County Libraries
- Waterford City Library
- Waterford County Libraries
- Westmeath County Library
- Wexford County Library
- Wicklow County Library

## **National Learning Network (formerly NTDI)**

Carlow  
Castlebar  
Cavan  
Kilkenny  
Limerick  
Portlaoise  
Swords  
Tallaght  
Waterford  
Wexford

## **Prison Education Service**

Castlereagh  
Cork  
Curragh  
Limerick  
Mountjoy  
Loughan House  
Wheatfield

## **Senior Traveller Training Centres**

- Athy Traveller Club
- Bray Traveller Community Development Group
- Fealeside, Abbeyfeale
- Navan Traveller Centre
- Our Lady's Traveller Training and Education Centre, Mallow
- Pavee Point
- SHS Training Centre, Bray
- St. Benin's, Tuam
- St. Canice's, Portlaoise
- St. Francis, Cork
- St. Mel's, Longford
- St. Oliver's, Clondalkin
- Tara Workshop
- Traveller Training, Mullingar

## **Youthreach Centres**

- Arklow
- Ashbourne
- Athlone
- Athy
- Ballina
- Ballinacollig
- Ballinrobe
- Ballyfermot
- Ballymahon
- Ballymun
- Basin Lane
- Blanchardstown
- Bonnybrook
- Bray
- Cavan
- Clondalkin
- Delvin
- Drogheda
- Dundalk
- Dungarvan
- Ennis
- Enniscorthy
- Fermoy
- Hospital
- Harmonstown
- Galway
- Kilkenny
- Kiltimagh
- Kilrush
- Kingscourt
- Knocknaheeney
- Letterfrack
- Letterkenny
- Lettermore
- Listowel
- Lucan
- Mallow
- Miltown
- Monaghan
- Mountmellick
- New Ross
- Rathfarnham
- Roscrea
- Sligo
- Swords
- Tralee
- Tuam
- Waterford
- Wexford
- Youghal

## **Vocational Education Committees (VEC)**

- City of Cork VEC
- City of Dublin VEC
- City of Galway VEC
- City of Limerick VEC
- City of Waterford VEC
- Co. Carlow VEC
- Co. Cavan VEC
- Co. Clare VEC
- Co. Cork VEC
- Co. Donegal VEC
- Co. Dublin VEC
- Co. Galway VEC
- Co. Kerry VEC
- Co. Kildare VEC
- Co. Kilkenny VEC
- Co. Laois VEC
- Co. Leitrim VEC
- Co. Limerick VEC
- Co. Longford VEC
- Co. Louth VEC
- Co. Meath VEC
- Co. Mayo VEC
- Co. Monaghan VEC
- Co. Offaly VEC
- Co. Roscommon VEC
- Co. Sligo VEC
- Co. Tipperary (NR) VEC
- Co. Tipperary (SR) VEC
- Co. Waterford VEC
- Co. Westmeath VEC
- Co. Wexford VEC
- Co. Wicklow VEC
- Dun Laoaghaire VEC



# Company Details and Financial Information

## Company Information

### Company Secretary

Joyce Burns

### Directors

Frances Ward

Helen Walsh

Andrew Duffy

Celia Rafferty

Kevin O'Duffy

Michael Power

Marian O'Reilly

John Lynch

Joan Butler

Mary Corrigan

Anne Gannon

### Registered Office

76 Lower Gardiner Street

Dublin 1

### Registered No.

342807

### Banker

Allied Irish Bank

37 Upper O'Connell Street

Dublin 1

### Auditors

Registered Auditors

St. Paul's Church

North King Street

Dublin 7



## Report of the Directors

The directors submit their report together with the audited financial statements for the companies year of operation ended 31 December 2005.

## Principal Activities and Review of the Business

The company (NALA) continues the work of the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA). The agency was established in 1980 and from that time has campaigned for recognition and response to the adult literacy problem in Ireland. The agency continues that work through:

- aiding the implementation of central Government policy in adult literacy;
- its research on adult literacy issues;
- the implementation of the evolving quality framework for adult basic education in a variety of settings;
- the implementation of a training strategy for high quality adult literacy provision;
- the implementation of a development strategy for high quality adult literacy provision;
- its support for the development of new approaches to literacy;
- its delivery of an adult literacy promotion campaign to develop awareness and understanding at national level.

NALA is funded by the Department of Education and Science through the National Development Plan 2000-2006 and the EU Structural Fund.

Note 2 lists the other Government grants received.

## Results

The directors report for 2005 a surplus of €21,598 with accumulated reserves at 31 December 2005 of €43,281.

No dividend is allowed because the company is limited by guarantee.

## Statement of Directors' Responsibilities

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the surplus or deficit of the company for that year. In preparing these financial statements the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on the "going concern" basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping proper books of account which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Acts 1963 to 2003.

## Accounting Records

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities under Section 202 of the Companies Act 1990 to keep proper books and records for the company and to this end have a bookkeeper employed. The books and records are kept at the registered office.

## Health and Safety

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, imposes certain requirements on employers and the company has taken the necessary action to ensure compliance with the Act, including the adoption of a safety statement.

## Auditors

The auditors, Sean Conlon & Co., will be reappointed in accordance with section 160 (2) of the Companies Act, 1963.

Approved on behalf of the Board By: Frances Ward

Dated: 31st January 2006 2006

## **Independent Auditor's Report**

### **To the Members of National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**

We have audited the financial statements of National Adult Literacy Agency Limited on pages 66 to 74 which have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out on page 68.

This report is made solely to the company's members as a body in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Acts, 1963 to 2003. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters that we are required to state to them in the audit report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company or the company's members as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

### **Respective Responsibility of Directors and Auditors**

The directors' responsibilities for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and Irish accounting standards are set out in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities.

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and the auditing standards promulgated by the Auditing Practices Board in Ireland and the United Kingdom.

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Acts. We also report whether in our opinion:

- proper books of account have been kept by the company;
- there exists a financial situation at the balance sheet date requiring the convening of an extraordinary general meeting of the company; and,
- the information given in the Directors' Report is consistent with the financial statements.

In addition, we state whether we have obtained all the information and explanations necessary for the purposes of our audit and whether the company's Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Account are in agreement with the books of account.

We report to the shareholders if, in our opinion, any information specified by law regarding directors' remuneration and directors' transactions is not given and, where practicable, include such information in our report.

We read other information contained in the annual report and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. This other information comprises only the directors' report. We consider only the implications for our report if we become aware of any misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements. Our responsibilities do not extend to other information.

## Basis of opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. Our audit includes an examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgments made by the directors in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the company's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free of material misstatement or error. In forming our opinion, we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

## Opinion

In our opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company at 31 December 2005, and of its surplus for the year then ended, and give, in the requisite manner, the information required by the Companies Acts, 1963 to 2003.

We have obtained all the information and explanations which we considered necessary for the purposes of our audit. In our opinion, proper books of account have been kept by the company. The financial statements are in agreement with the books of account.

In our opinion the information given in the Directors' Report on pages 62 and 63 is consistent with the financial statements.



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### **Sean Conlon & Co.**

Registered Auditors  
St. Paul's Church  
North King Street  
Dublin 7

31 January 2006

# Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 December 2005

	Notes	2005 €	2004 €
<b>Income</b> continuing operations			
Government grants	2	<b>2,007,517</b>	1,991,260
Other income	3	<b>371,561</b>	153,282
Resource Room	4	<b>8,490</b>	2,594
<b>Total income</b>		<b>2,387,568</b>	2,147,136
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Administration		<b>339,013</b>	306,521
Premises		<b>59,903</b>	62,900
Development and research		<b>1,967,054</b>	1,901,750
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>2,365,970</b>	2,271,171
<b>Surplus</b> (Deficit) for the year		<b>21,598</b>	- 124,035

There are no other recognised gains or losses.

Approved on behalf of the Board By:

*Frances Ward*

*2006*



# Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2005

	Notes	2005 €	2004 €
<b>Fixed assets</b>	5	<b>38,770</b>	25,385
<b>Current assets</b>			
Stocks: Resource Room		<b>23,285</b>	27,932
Stationery		<b>2,576</b>	981
Debtors	8	<b>138,120</b>	69,129
Bank balance and cash on hand		<b>542,915</b>	482,624
		<b>706,896</b>	580,666
<b>Creditors</b> (falling due within one year)	9	<b>- 702,385</b>	- 584,369
<b>Net current assets</b>		<b>4,511</b>	- 3,702
<b>Total assets less liabilities</b>		<b>43,281</b>	21,683
<b>Represented by:</b>			
Surplus		<b>43,281</b>	21,683
		<b>43,281</b>	21,683

Approved on behalf of the Board By:

*Frances Ward*

*[Signature]*

# Notes on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2005

## 1. Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

### Tangible Fixed Assets

Fixed Assets are stated at cost less depreciation.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less residual value of each asset over its expected useful life on a straight line basis, as follows:

All Fixed Assets 25%

Where grants are received in the year and the related expenditure is to be incurred in a later year, the grants are shown as deferred income, under creditors and accruals, in the balance sheet.

## 2. Government Grants

	Notes	2005 €	2004 €
Department of Education - Core grant		<b>298,000</b>	289,000
and Science - Special allocation		<b>1,368,000</b>	1,420,000
- Deferred grant to 2005	9	<b>40,000</b>	213,000
- Deferred grant to 2005	9	<b>- 126,000</b>	- 40,000
Other Government grants			
Department of Social & Family Affairs		<b>38,259</b>	54,260
Deferred	9	<b>-</b>	-
Department of Health & Children		<b>79,427</b>	59,000
Deferred	9	<b>-</b>	- 59,000
FÁS – Integrating Literacy		<b>60,000</b>	55,000
FÁS – Safe & Well		<b>250,172</b>	-
FÁS – Services to Business		<b>368,064</b>	51,120
FÁS – Other		<b>22,433</b>	
Deferred		<b>- 430,838</b>	- 51,120
Department of Foreign Affairs (CEI)		<b>97,500</b>	-
Deferred		<b>- 57,500</b>	-
		<b>2,007,517</b>	1,991,260

# Notes on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2005

<b>3. Other Income</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>
	€	€
Membership fees	<b>19,073</b>	20,400
ILD conference fees	<b>1,540</b>	1,880
Conference fees	<b>4,270</b>	9,542
Miscellaneous	<b>2,557</b>	6,113
Training fees	<b>3,480</b>	12,290
POBAL (ICT) Dormant Accounts	<b>50,794</b>	–
Defer POBAL (ICT) Dormant Accounts	<b>- 16,672</b>	
POBAL (CDR) Dormant Accounts	<b>24,609</b>	
VOX	<b>747</b>	853
Plain English income	<b>45,785</b>	31,466
Bank interest received	<b>8,707</b>	5,053
Fingal Sports Partnership	<b>8,260</b>	–
Comhairle	<b>–</b>	16,000
EBS	<b>131,517</b>	45,000
Reprise	<b>2,641</b>	4,685
Workplace	<b>4,722</b>	–
FÁS (LAT)	<b>10,000</b>	
Leargas	<b>1,790</b>	–
CDVEC (Citizenship Booklet)	<b>3,000</b>	
Gill & MacMillan Distribution	<b>500</b>	
Donations/Raffle	<b>2,316</b>	
Enterprise Ireland (In-company Training Measure)	<b>61,925</b>	
	<b>371,561</b>	153,282
<b>4. Resource Room</b>		
Opening stocks of books	<b>27,932</b>	33,139
Purchases for the year	<b>77,564</b>	99,143
	<b>105,496</b>	132,282
Closing stocks of books	<b>- 23,285</b>	- 27,932
	<b>82,211</b>	104,350
Cost of books sold	<b>90,701</b>	106,944
Sales for the year		
Surplus (Deficit)	<b>8,490</b>	2,594

In the opinion of the directors there are no material differences between the replacement cost of stock and the balance sheet amounts.

# Notes on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2005

## 5. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Total	Office equipment €	Fixtures and fittings €
<b>Cost</b>			
At 31.12.2004	45,822	43,348	2,474
Additions	33,121	29,646	3,475
At 31.12.2005	<b>78,943</b>	<b>72,994</b>	<b>5,949</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 31.12.2004	20,437	18,903	1,534
Charge for Year	19,736	18,249	1,487
At 31.12.2005	<b>40,173</b>	<b>37,152</b>	<b>3,021</b>
<b>Net book value</b>			
At 31.12.2005	<b>38,770</b>	<b>35,842</b>	<b>2,928</b>
At 31.12.2004	25,385	24,445	940

## 6. Staff numbers and costs

	2005	2004
The average number of persons employed by the company during the year was as follows:	<b>23</b>	22
The aggregate payroll costs of these persons were as follows:	€	€
Salaries	<b>874,398</b>	731,145
Social welfare	<b>88,980</b>	79,854
	<b>963,378</b>	810,999

## 7. Pension information

	2005	2004
	€	€
Employer contribution to pension scheme	<b>47,619</b>	45,160

The company operates a defined contribution scheme. The company contributes 10% of employees' salary.

# Notes on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2005

<b>8. Debtors</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>
	€	€
Debtors for books	<b>16,834</b>	17,749
Prepayments	<b>91,286</b>	9,435
FÁS	–	41,120
Enterprise Ireland (In-company Training Measure)	<b>30,000</b>	–
Employee Loan	–	825
	<b>138,120</b>	69,129

<b>9. Creditors (due within one year)</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>
Creditors & Accruals	<b>43,998</b>	253,128
Tax and social welfare	<b>27,377</b>	41,121
Deferred Dept. of Education & Science	<b>126,000</b>	40,000
Deferred Dept. of Social & Family Affairs	–	–
Deferred Dept. of Health & Children	–	59,000
Deferred FÁS	<b>430,838</b>	51,120
Deferred Dormant Accounts	<b>16,672</b>	
Deferred EBS grant	–	100,000
Dept. of Foreign Affairs – CEI grant	<b>57,500</b>	40,000
	<b>702,385</b>	584,369

Grants are deferred in respect of estimated but specific expenditure, to be expended during the following year.

The bank holds no security from the directors or members of the company.

# Notes on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2005

<b>10. Other expenses (€115,750)</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>
	€	€
Leargas	<b>1,790</b>	—
Workplace	<b>1,526</b>	—
FÁS Services to Business	<b>32,426</b>	—
FÁS Safe & Well	<b>80,008</b>	—
	<b>115,750</b>	—
Miscellaneous (€5,905)		
Donation: Shades of Praise	<b>3,012</b>	—
Miscellaneous	<b>2,893</b>	—
	<b>5,905</b>	—

## 11. Corporation tax

None arises because no trading activity takes place.

## 12. Related party transactions

None arise.

## 13. Borrowings and leases

There are no borrowings or leases.

## 14. Directors' interests

Directors have no interests in the company.

## 15. Share capital

The company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital.

## 16. The financial statements were approved by the directors on 31 January 2006.



# Detailed expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2005

		2005	2004
	Notes	€	€
<b>Administration</b>			
Salaries		<b>172,093</b>	164,198
Pensions		<b>9,889</b>	9,215
Telephone		<b>29,242</b>	18,872
Stationery & photocopying		<b>16,770</b>	15,988
Postage		<b>53,069</b>	58,435
Bank charges		<b>1,060</b>	1,124
Subscriptions & advertising		<b>795</b>	1,775
Executive Committee Expenses		<b>9,089</b>	5,840
Audit & accountancy		<b>7,074</b>	6,720
Miscellaneous	10	<b>5,905</b>	926
Office equipment maintenance		<b>14,291</b>	11,983
Depreciation	5	<b>19,736</b>	11,445
Total administration		<b>339,013</b>	306,521
<b>Premises</b>			
Rent & cleaning		<b>43,557</b>	52,638
Insurance		<b>5,356</b>	4,679
Heat & light		<b>3,450</b>	3,338
Repairs & maintenance		<b>7,540</b>	430
Professional fees		–	1,815
Total premises		<b>59,903</b>	62,900

# Detailed expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2005

	Notes	2005 €	2004 €
<b>Development &amp; research</b>			
Salaries		<b>791,285</b>	646,801
Pension		<b>37,730</b>	35,945
Other expenses	10	<b>115,750</b>	- 136
Travel & subsistence		<b>26,887</b>	36,457
Assessment/research		<b>28,113</b>	39,519
Quality Framework		<b>127,101</b>	160,947
Practitioner training		<b>141,388</b>	82,731
Family Literacy		<b>25,285</b>	94,057
Distance Learning		<b>68,907</b>	300,836
Materials Development		<b>- 39,726</b>	76,720
Specific Learning Difficulties		<b>-</b>	28,700
Health Strategy		<b>21,765</b>	28,960
ICT Learning		<b>77,547</b>	47,905
Numeracy Strategy		<b>6,761</b>	59,047
ESOL Training		<b>41,638</b>	30,484
Printing & publishing		<b>76,628</b>	49,866
Meetings/seminars		<b>32,382</b>	4,684
Website update		<b>3,631</b>	24,433
Advertising/promotion		<b>20,506</b>	7,631
Staff Training/development		<b>5,670</b>	12,284
Student Development		<b>36,155</b>	22,650
Plain English		<b>46,701</b>	3,915
POBAL (ICT) Dormant Accounts		<b>50,796</b>	7,472
POBAL (CDR) Dormant Accounts		<b>24,562</b>	-
EBS Building Society		<b>89,577</b>	41,016
In-company Training Measure		<b>45,161</b>	28,826
Literacy Implementation		<b>7,029</b>	-
CEI		<b>40,935</b>	-
Strategic Planning		<b>16,890</b>	-
Total development & research		<b>1,967,054</b>	1,901,750
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>2,365,970</b>	2,271,171





# Links with other organisations in 2005

Since our establishment, we have developed links with a wide variety of organisations nationally and internationally. In addition we have developed partnerships with organisations for particular projects and work programmes. The aim of this activity is to place adult literacy on the agenda of policy makers and other organisations and to raise awareness of the literacy issue as widely as possible.

## **Aontas**

We work with Aontas on an ongoing basis to develop adult education and literacy in Ireland.

## **Comhairle**

We remained on the board of Comhairle until September 2005 and received funding from the organisation to develop our plain English CD, *Simply put*.

## **Community Platform**

We are a member of the Community Platform and attend Platform meetings every month. In 2005, we also worked closely with member organisations in the Platform on adult literacy issues.

## **Cork Institute of Technology (CIT)**

We work with CIT on technical support for literacy tools and to develop a number of interactive CDs.

## **Curriculum Development Unit, City of Dublin VEC**

The Unit co-ordinated the Irish element of the 2005 European Year of Citizenship through Education project and did an initial edit of *A Plain English Guide to Citizenship Terms*.

## **Department of Social and Family Affairs**

The Department is the main funder of our plain English work and a representative was a member of the steering group for the project to develop *Simply put*, our plain English CD.

## **Department of Education and Science**

This Department provides the core funding for NALA's work.

## **Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment**

This Department funds our work in workplace basic education (WBE).

## **Department of Foreign Affairs**

This Department has supported through the Communicating Europe Initiative under which we produced *Know Your EU*.

## **Dyslexia Association of Ireland**

NALA worked with the DAI on the PACTS project on specific learning difficulties (SLD).

## **EBS Building Society**

The EBS funds our financial literacy project and funded our ACE Awards.

## **Education Disadvantage Committee**

NALA was a member of this Government committee to devise solutions to tackle educational disadvantage and contributed to the committee's final report to the Minister for Education in 2005.

## **Education Equality Initiative Working Group**

NALA is represented on this group, which was set up to monitor projects that address gaps in education for adults, including those wishing to improve their literacy and numeracy.

## **FÁS**

We work with FÁS on workplace basic education initiatives delivering adult literacy support to FÁS clients.

## **Fingal Sports Partnership**

We worked with this Partnership to develop *Moving with Literacy*, the latest step in our sports literacy integration project.

## **Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC)**

NALA contributes to the FETAC Quality Assurance Consultation Network and has also assisted the FETAC Technical Advisory Group to the NQAI.

### **Integrate Ireland**

NALA works with this organisation on working groups on developing ESOL support.

### **Irish Deaf Society (IDS)**

Irish Deaf Society Linkup is a literacy project for and led by the deaf community. It trains tutors and delivers literacy services in several counties with the intended aim of being a nationwide service by 2006.

### **Irish Social Policy Association (ISPA)**

NALA is a member of the national organising committee of ISPA. This allows us to make sure that adult literacy is high on the social policy research agenda.

### **Irish Trade Union Trust (ITUT)**

NALA sits on board of the ITUT, which is the social solidarity arm of Services Industrial Professional Technical Union (SIPTU), with one of its services being the SIPTU Basic English Scheme.

### **Irish Vocational Education Association**

We continuously work in partnership with the IVEA to address the adult literacy issue in Ireland. It is represented on a number NALA working groups, including the MLJ Mainstreaming Committee, the Evolving Quality Framework and the Training Advisory Group.

### **Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS)**

MABS was a member of steering groups for our financial literacy project and for developing the plain English CD.

### **National Adult Literacy Advisory Group**

NALA took a full part in the work of NALAG, particularly in developing the National Adult Literacy and Numeracy Implementation Plan.

### **National Consumer Agency**

NALA was appointed to the board of the new Agency in summer 2005 and works with other board members to promote the rights and interests of consumers.

### **National Disability Authority (NDA)**

The NDA was represented on the steering group to develop *Simply Put*.

### **National Learning Network (formerly National Training and Development Institute (NTDI))**

We support the work of National Learning Network through training, materials, seminars and, in particular, our integrating literacy work.

### **National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy (NRDC)**

The NRDC, a UK group of specialists in literacy, numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), is providing research support to our project to develop a student-centred curriculum.

### **National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI)**

As the Minister's nomination to the Authority for the community and voluntary sector, NALA works to help the Authority oversee a national qualifications framework.

### **Senior Traveller Training Centres (STTCs)**

NALA supports the work of STTCs through training, resources, seminars and, in particular, our integrating literacy work.

### **Skillnets**

NALA is working with Skillnets to boost awareness of and training in workplace basic education.

### **Women's Health Council (WHC)**

NALA is represented on the board of the WHC, which works to influence health policy for women in Ireland.

### **Youthreach**

We support the work of Youthreach through training, resources, seminars and, in particular, our integrating literacy work.



**Other organisations with which NALA was involved in 2005 include:**

- Pobal (formerly ADM) Partnerships Education Co-ordinators
- Adult Education Guidance Initiative
- Adult Education Officers Association (AEOA)
- Adult Literacy Organisers Association (ALOA)
- Basic Education Tutors Association (BETA)
- Chief Executive and Education Officers Association (CEEEOA)
- City of Dublin VEC
- Community Radio Forum (CRF)
- Community Workers Co-operative (CWC)
- County Dublin VEC
- Dublin Adult Learning Centre (DALC) Board of Directors
- EU Committee on Basic Skills
- IILT Working Group on Material Development
- Institute of Bankers in Ireland
- Inter-Departmental Group on Literacy and Unemployment
- Insurance Institute of Ireland
- Irish Insurance Federation
- Irish National Organisation for the Unemployed (INOU)
- Irish Prison Service
- Learn Direct
- Library Council
- Local Development and Training Institute (LDTI)
- National BUA Centre Advisory Committee
- National Centre for Guidance in Education
- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
- National University of Ireland (NUI), Maynooth – Integrating Literacy Management Group
- SPIRASI
- The Wheel
- Vocational Education Committees (VECs)
- Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) – NALA/WIT Accreditation Project Management Committee

# Glossary

## Accreditation

A process that allows a person to get credits from a particular institution, such as a college or university, for a course that they have completed

## Active citizenship

Having the ability to and opportunity to take part in all aspects of society, including social, cultural, political and community activities

## Ad hoc

Something that is not regular or planned and happens only when necessary

## Analyse

A process of studying the details of something to understand or explain it

## Asperger's Syndrome

A complex brain disorder within the range of autism, where a person may be very intelligent, but have difficulty mixing and communicating with other people

## Assessment framework

A guide to knowing what stage a student is at when they start tuition and how well they are progressing

## Attribute

A quality or characteristic that someone or something has

## Benchmark

A point of reference or standard against which things are measured

## Best practice

A term to describe good quality work or good working habits

## Blended learning

A type of learning that involves e-learning (taking courses over the internet or on a CD-ROM) and face-to-face tuition

## Brainstorming

A method of giving suggestions and opinions freely within a group of people to generate new ideas about a problem

## Collate

A way to analyse and compare information to identify points of agreement and differences

## Consensus

Agreement between all members of a group on a topic

## Consistent

Something that happens or behaves in a similar way each time it occurs

## Curriculum

A set of topics that make up an educational course

## Distance education

A form of learning that takes place in a person's home without supervision

## Dormant Accounts Fund

Government fund, using money from unclaimed accounts and life assurance policies, for projects that benefit disabled people and help those who are economically, educationally or socially disadvantaged

## Empowerment

A process of giving people the skills and awareness to take control of their lives; can refer to transferring power from influential people to poor communities and individuals who have been traditionally excluded from decision making

## Ethos

An idea or belief of a particular person or group that guides their actions

## Evaluation

A process of studying something carefully to see how good or bad it is

## Facilitator

A person who helps a group to develop and work together effectively towards their common goal

### Flexible ring

A classroom management approach that encourages students to choose the way they want to learn a particular topic. Options available might include the use of informational and communications technology (ICT), audio visual or papers resources.

### Focus group

A group of people brought together to discuss what they think about something

### Framework

A basic structure that gives something its shape

### Generic

General, not specific

### Guiding principles

Values or rules that guide an action or decision

### Holistic

A way of describing something that deals with the whole of something or someone, not just the parts

### Implement

A system or plan to make something happen

### Jobs Clubs

Groups based in FÁS Local Employment Service areas designed to build the confidence of and give job-hunting skills to people who are ready to return to work

### Library Council (An Chomhairle Leabharlanna)

An organisation set up to advise local authorities and the Government on libraries

### Local government

Local and regional bodies, including county councils, city councils, urban district councils and town councils, that provide services to local communities

### Mentor

An experienced person who gives help and advice to a less experienced person

### Mission statement

A statement that explains a person's, group's organisation's main aim

### Monitor

A process of watching something carefully and recording your results

### Money Advice and Budgeting Service

A free and confidential service, based in dedicated offices around Ireland, for people with debt and money management problems

### National Development Plan

The Government's plan to use EU and other funds to develop the economy and help spread resources more equally between different groups in society

### National Literacy Expert Advisory Group

A group made up of all those with an interest and input in adult literacy that oversees how the adult literacy sections of the Government White Paper are implemented

### Networking

A process of using social events to meet people who might be useful to you

### Partnership

A process of two or more people or organisations working together to achieve something

### Performance indicator

A way to measure whether a person or an organisation is meeting their objectives

### Plain English

A way of writing and designing material that makes it easier for the intended reader to read and understand it

### Process

A series of actions to achieve a result

### Qualitative

A way of describing something that refers to how good it is

### Quality

A way of saying how good or bad something is

### Quantitative

A way of describing something that refers to its how much (or how many) of it there is

### Return to Education

A nine-hour-a-week basic education programme for people on Community Employment schemes

### Social cohesion

A process of bringing together economic, social, health and educational policies to help people take part in society

### Social exclusion

A process of preventing certain groups from accessing power and decision-making bodies or building up social and community networks because they are poor or they do not have enough education or life skills

### Social inclusion

A process of making sure that people who are poor or marginalised can take part in decision-making so that they can improve their quality of life

### Social interaction

A process of talking to or doing things with other people

### Social partnership

A way of reaching agreement between the Irish Government and various social partners – employers, trade unions, farmers and community and voluntary groups – on pay, tax, working conditions, social welfare and other economic and social issues

### Social partnership agreement

A document outlining a range of steps agreed by the Government and the social partners on economic and social issues

### Stakeholder

A person who has an interest in an organisation, a project or an issue

### Statutory

Something that is set up, decided or controlled by law

### Strategic intent

A statement of what a person, group or organisation intends to do in the future

### Students' Development Fund

A fund given by NALA to literacy providers on application for activities to build students' self-confidence

### Tender

An application by a person or group to do a piece of work, describing how and when they plan to do the work and how much they will charge

### White Paper

A document produced by the Government that outlines its future plans on a particular topic

### Youthreach centre

A local training unit that provides work and basic skills to early school leavers under 18 years of age

# List of acronyms and abbreviations

## ABE

Adult basic education – developing adult skills, such as literacy, numeracy and communications, that people need to take part fully in society

## AEOA

Adult Education Organisers' Association

## AGM

Annual General Meeting

## ALO

Adult Literacy Organiser

## ALOA

Adult Literacy Organisers' Association

## ALS

Adult Literacy Service

## BETA

Basic Education Tutors' Association – an organisation representing paid adult literacy tutors

## BSA

Basic Skills Agency – an organisation that supports and develops ABE in England and Wales

## CDP

Community Development Project

## CDU

Curriculum Development Unit in County Dublin VEC

## CE

Community Employment – a FÁS employment training programme

## CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

## CEEEOA

Chief Executive and Education Officers' Association

## CEO

Chief Executive Officer – the most senior management position in a VEC or other organisation

## CIF

Construction Industry Federation – a body representing employers in the building sector

## CIT

Cork Institute of Technology

## CSO

Central Statistics Office – the Government body responsible for compiling figures on employment, population and standards of living in Ireland

## CTC

Community Training Centre – a training unit, in different centres around Ireland, that provides vocational and adult basic education skills to early school leavers over 18 years of age

## CWC

Community Workers Co-operative

## DEIS

Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Irish Schools – a Government programme for 3-18 year olds, set up by the Department of Education and Science

## DES

Department of Education and Science

## DETE

Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment

## ERDF

European Regional Development Fund

## ESOL

English for Speakers of Other Languages

## EU

European Union

## FÁS

Foras Áiseanna Saothair – the national training and employment authority

**FSAI**

Food Safety Authority of Ireland – a body established by the Department of Health and Children to oversee food safety improvements

**FETAC**

Further Education Training Awards Council

**IBEC**

Irish Business Employers' Confederation – the organisation representing all employer bodies and associations

**ICT**

Information and Communications Technology

**ICTU**

Irish Congress of Trade Unions

**ITUT**

Irish Trade Union Trust

**IVEA**

Irish Vocational Education Association – an organisation representing Vocational Education Committees

**LEIS**

Literacy and Equality in Irish Society – a cross-border project to develop ICT and non-text materials to improve literacy learning and teaching

**NAPS**

National Anti-Poverty Strategy – a Government plan to tackle poverty

**NDP**

National Development Plan

**NQAI**

National Qualifications Authority of Ireland – a Government-funded body that manages qualifications at national level

**NLN**

National Learning Network – formerly the National Training and Development Institute – an independent education organisation that provides courses in different centres around Ireland for disabled people

**SIPTU**

Services, Industrial, Professional and Technical Union

**SLD**

Specific learning difficulties

**SMART**

Skills management and relevant training – a project to develop a workplace basic education model for Small Medium Enterprises, funded through the DETE

**Teagasc**

Irish Agricultural and Food Development Authority

**TESOL**

Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages

**UNESCO**

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

**VEC**

Vocational Education Committee – a committee that manages adult and further education at county (and sometimes city) level

**VTOS**

Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme

**VTSU**

Vocational Training Support Unit

**WBEF**

Workplace Basic Education Fund – a fund set up under the DETE and managed by FÁS Services to Business

**WIT**

Waterford Institute of Technology







## National Adult Literacy Agency

An Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearachta do Aosaigh

### What is NALA?

The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) is a non-profit membership organisation concerned with national co-ordination, training and policy development in adult literacy work in Ireland. We were established in 1980 and have campaigned since then for the recognition of, and responses to, the adult literacy issue in Ireland. We are a registered charity funded mainly by the Department of Education and Science. For more information about our work, log on to [www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie).

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Literacy learning and tuition website **[www.literacytools.ie](http://www.literacytools.ie)**

Read Write Now TV literacy series 5 website **[www.readwritenow.ie](http://www.readwritenow.ie)**

Freephone support line **1800 20 20 65**



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