



# Our year and our work

Summary Annual Report

# 2017



## NALA

National Adult Literacy Agency  
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

# Our mission

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Our mission is to advocate for literacy as a right and to collaborate with our partners to influence policy and practice to support the development of literacy, numeracy and digital skills.

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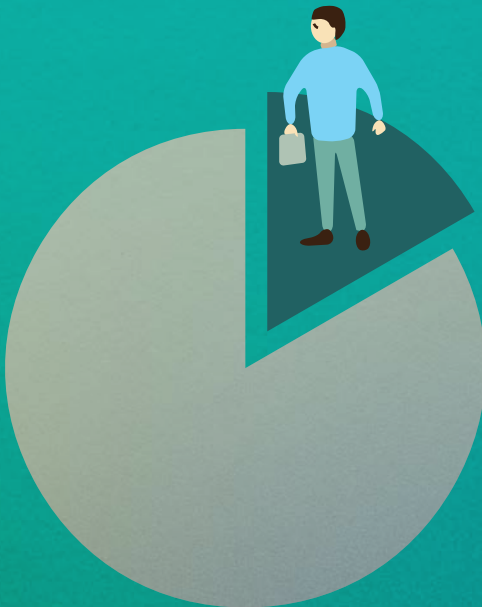


**481,000**

adults have less than a Leaving Certificate (Level 4) qualification



**1** in **4** adults struggle with everyday maths such as working out a 20% discount or dividing up a bill



**1** in **6** adults find everyday text, such as a bus timetable or medical instructions, hard to read and understand



In a recent study<sup>1</sup>, Ireland came

**17th** out of **24** countries in an adult literacy survey

1. OECD Survey of Adult Skills (2012) also known as the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies



## About NALA

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NALA stands for the National Adult Literacy Agency. We are a charity and we are a membership organisation. NALA membership is open to all people and organisations interested and involved in adult literacy.

We exist to support people with literacy and numeracy difficulties so that they can play their full part in society and have access to the learning opportunities they need to do that. We are committed to making access to literacy and numeracy a human right.

**We want to ensure that no adult is left behind. To do this we:**

- lobby for further investment to raise adult literacy levels;
- help people to develop the literacy, numeracy and digital skills they need to play their full part in society;
- engage with and respond to the needs of our members;
- work with education providers, particularly the Education and Training Boards (ETBs), to identify and share best practice in how we teach adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills;
- help to make learning and courses more accessible to people with literacy and numeracy needs;
- support organisations and services to be aware of literacy and to communicate clearly; and
- conduct research into literacy needs and best practice teaching and learning.

## About this summary annual report

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This summary annual report tells you about the work we did during 2017. The sections follow the same order as our strategic plan 2017-2019. They explain how we have worked to achieve our three main objectives under the themes of access, practice and policy. Each objective has a number of actions.

You can read and download information about our strategic plan, accounts and publications at [www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie). To help you, on page 88 some acronyms and specialist terms are explained.

# Our achievements in 2017



## Individuals

We raised awareness of adult education services and helped people improve their literacy and numeracy.



Our information helpline staff referred 800 callers to ETB adult education services



**2 in 3**

An evaluation of our awareness campaign showed that two in three people who have literacy or numeracy difficulties saw or heard our campaign

**870**

We sent out 870 information packs about adult education services to members of the public



**900**

people got QQI accreditation through our distance learning service

**3,080 Level 2 minor awards**

**570 Level 3 minor awards**

30,000 promotional leaflets and 2,400 posters



were distributed through ETBs and at awareness raising events nationwide



We did interviews and raised awareness about literacy on **17** national and regional radio shows, **one** TV show and in **80** national and regional newspapers

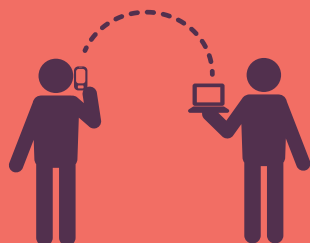


Our social media followers liked, reacted, commented on or shared our stories about literacy **483,000** times



## Further Education and Training (FET) tutors

We helped to improve the quality of teaching.



**215**

learners received 2,200 learning sessions with our distance learning tutors



**93**

tutors from 30 adult education centres received training on how to use WriteOn.ie



**530**

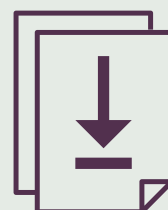
people attended our professional development events



New online learning content for WriteOn.ie was

developed to help students move from QQI Level 2 to Level 3

We produced 10 distance learning worksheets and they were downloaded 1,500 times



**128**

FET practitioners took part in our integrating literacy workshops

We carried out research to show why literacy matters to Irish society



Our professional development event videos were watched 452 times





## Students

We represented the views of adult literacy students and supported their learning.

**1,400**

students took part in learning activities funded by our Student Development Fund



**66**

adult education centres received €35,000 in grants from our Student Development Fund

**174**

people attended our student days in Dublin and Kilkenny

**7**

### NALA student subcommittee

meetings were held – this is a national committee of adult literacy students

**15**

students carried out awareness raising events as part of our learner ambassador programme



**60**

students and tutors attended a reception hosted by President Michael D Higgins in Áras an Uachtaráin



## Parents

We helped parents support their children's literacy and numeracy development.



**178,000**

people used our website [helpmykidlearn.ie](http://helpmykidlearn.ie)

**1,700**

people received our monthly helpmykidlearn e-zine



We got **16,000** clicks, reactions, comments or shares on our Facebook page for [helpmykidlearn.ie](http://helpmykidlearn.ie)



## Organisations

We worked with organisations to help make their services more accessible to people with literacy needs.



**1,000**

people took our plain English training and improved their communications skills



**68**

pharmacies and 5 general practices now have the Crystal Clear mark certifying that their written communications are as clear as they can be

We delivered 4 health literacy workshops to healthcare professionals and spoke at 2 conferences about health literacy



We helped 4 local authorities to improve their communications



**50**

companies and organisations entered our Plain English Awards which were sponsored by Mason Hayes & Curran. The awards were covered in 3 national newspapers and on 3 national radio shows

We produced a new publication called **Plain English and the law** that highlighted how unclear communication resulted in costly court cases



**118**

organisations used our Plain English Editing and Training Service

**1,000**

members received our updated A-Z Plain English Guide to Political Terms



## Policy makers

We worked to make sure the views of adults with literacy and numeracy needs are heard by policy makers.



3

We made 3 written submissions to the Government in 2017

We published a numeracy briefing paper to inform the steps that need to be taken to increase adult numeracy teaching and learning.

We also developed a scoping paper – [Ireland can do better](#) – to create a vision for improving lives through better adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills over the next 10 years. This drew from other research we carried out to show why literacy matters to Irish society.

We also made [three](#) written submissions to the Government in 2017. In our submissions we recommended:

- increased investment in the Skills for Work programme and workplace basic education
- a targeted paid learning leave programme for employees in work with less than a Level 4 qualification to develop their basic literacy and numeracy skills
- a national professional development programme to integrate literacy and numeracy support into further education and training
- a family literacy, numeracy and language strategy with a focus on disadvantaged communities

## Working with stakeholders

In 2017 we worked with many stakeholders, detailed below, to put in place national policies that support adults who want to improve their literacy and numeracy. We did this through:

- meetings,
- briefing papers,
- consultations with the public,
- presentations and
- workshops.

National strategy	Stakeholder
Further Education and Training Strategy 2014–2019 and National Adult Literacy and Numeracy Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SOLAS</li> <li>• Department of Education and Skills</li> <li>• Education and Training Boards and their staff</li> <li>• Education and Training Boards Ireland</li> <li>• QQI – Quality and Qualifications Ireland</li> <li>• Adult Literacy Organisers Association, Tutors, Adult Education Officers</li> <li>• Students</li> <li>• People with literacy or numeracy needs</li> <li>• AONTAS</li> </ul>

National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy for Children and Young People 2011–2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools and teachers</li> <li>Home School Liaison Co-ordinators and Tusla</li> <li>Department of Education and Skills</li> <li>National Parents Council</li> <li>Parents</li> </ul>
Pathways to Work 2016–2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection</li> </ul>
Healthy Ireland: A framework for improved health and wellbeing 2013–2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Health</li> <li>HSE – Health Service Executive</li> <li>Hospitals</li> <li>ICGP – Irish College of General Practitioners</li> <li>Pharmacies</li> <li>Irish Pharmacy Union</li> <li>HIQA – Health Information and Quality Authority</li> <li>South Dublin County Council</li> </ul>
Putting People First: Action programme for effective local government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local authorities</li> <li>Local Community Development Committees</li> <li>Local Development Companies</li> <li>Libraries</li> </ul>

European policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● EPALE – European Platform for Adult Learning in Europe</li><li>● EAAL – European Agenda for Adult Learning</li><li>● EBSN – European Basic Skills Network</li></ul>
Community and voluntary groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Community Platform</li><li>● Disability organisations</li><li>● EAPN – European Anti-Poverty Network</li><li>● Focus Ireland, Dublin Simon and Merchants Quay</li><li>● Irish Cancer Society</li><li>● The Wheel</li><li>● An Cosán</li></ul>



## A message from our chairperson

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The year 2017 was a busy and productive time for NALA. We did a lot of work in line with our strategic plan 2017-2019. This summary annual report tells you about some of that work.

The Board of NALA met regularly during the year. We all tried to ensure that the organisation operates to the highest standards of corporate governance.

A number of subcommittees met and dedicated their time to specific areas.

- The audit and finance subcommittee monitored risk management and financial controls.
- The student subcommittee reported on student affairs and initiatives.
- The staff and policy subcommittee reviewed policy and oversaw staffing matters.

These subcommittees fed into the main Board. NALA members can be confident that this structure ensures the organisation is in compliance with all governance obligations.

New members joined the Board in 2017 providing fresh ideas and relevant expertise. For others, their term as a Board member came to an end, in line with our constitution. One such person is our esteemed treasurer Thomas McManus. Thomas has worked tirelessly for NALA in his role as chairperson of the audit and finance subcommittee. He has left structures and systems in place which provide a suitable legacy. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Thomas and all my colleagues on the Board for their time, dedication and effort over the course of this last year.

Five students stepped down from the student subcommittee this year and I would like to thank them for their work over the last five years. These

students are Michael Power, Tony Moloney, Kevin O'Duffy, Olive Phelan and Andrew Barry.

I will also be stepping down as chairperson of NALA's Board in April. During my six years on the Board, I have served, variously, as chairperson, secretary and ordinary member. It has been an honour to serve on the NALA Board over those years, particularly as its chairperson. It is worth noting that I have received nothing but support over this time from fellow Board members, NALA staff and the organisation's membership. This high level of co-operation has made discharging the duties of chairperson so much easier.

I wish you, the members, the Board and staff of NALA continued success into the future. It has been a great pleasure for me to be involved with such a wonderful organisation.

I hope you enjoy this annual report summary of NALA's work, and I thank you for your loyal support.



**Trevor Moore**

Chairperson  
National Adult Literacy Agency

## An overview from our CEO

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NALA's achievements in 2017 need to be understood against the backdrop of the three objectives of our strategic plan 2017-2019.

### Objective 1

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Building awareness of the importance of literacy for a more inclusive Ireland is the first of these objectives. To help us achieve this, we published a review of policy, research and practice on adult numeracy. This shows there is consensus that numeracy is a critical skill for thriving societies. However, actions and investment to support adults so they can achieve higher levels of adult numeracy remain underdeveloped. Our review provides recommendations for discussion that aim to alter this position in line with national policy aspirations.

We also reviewed the literature showing the link between literacy and thriving societies. We will publish this review in early 2018.

For the second year in a row, we co-ordinated the national adult literacy awareness campaign. This campaign aims to raise the public's awareness of adult literacy and the supports available to people who want to return to learning. This year we added more regional activity and worked with each ETB and local learner ambassadors.

We continued to work with healthcare practitioners on health literacy awareness and developed a new health literacy course, Well Now! Our Plain English service also provided us with an opportunity to raise awareness about adult literacy with new and different audiences who wish to improve how they communicate with the public.

## Objective 2

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Our second objective is to lead innovation in the teaching and learning of adult literacy, numeracy and basic digital skills. During 2017, we developed a technology-enhanced learning strategy. This strategy is based on [WriteOn.ie](#) – our distance learning service – and it provides a blueprint for our future work in this area. Additional numeracy and communications content was added to [WriteOn.ie](#). This bridged the gap many learners identified in existing programmes leading to awards at Level 2 and Level 3 on the national framework of qualifications.

We also supported ETBs and SOLAS in implementing the adult literacy and numeracy strategy with a particular emphasis on assessment, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and working with people with intellectual disability.

During the year, we provided supports to practitioners through events, webinars and a range of free resources and worksheets available through the Tutors' Corner on [www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie).

## Objective 3

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Our final objective is to seek further investment in raising adult literacy levels in Ireland. We spent the year researching and designing a new approach to our lobbying work. After presenting the approach to our Board, we set about identifying experts and stakeholders who we believe can play a role in securing more resources for adult literacy learning opportunities. We will set up a task force with these experts and stakeholders early in 2018.

As well as meeting Minister Bruton to discuss the need to increase resources for more adult literacy learning opportunities, we also made a submission to the consultation on the Action Plan for Education 2018. We hope to see a greater emphasis on adult learning in the 2018 plan.

During the year, we also submitted work on a proposal to meet the requirements of the Upskilling Pathways initiative from Europe to the Department of Education and Skills to consider when devising the Irish Upskilling Pathways plan.

Within NALA, we started work to help us comply with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which comes into effect in May 2018. Our work builds on our existing compliance arrangements to ensure NALA continues to follow the Code of Governance for the community and voluntary sector.

Our achievements during the year were made possible thanks to the ongoing support of our funders and collaborations with learners, practitioners and providers in and beyond the FET sector. I am grateful to them all, as well as the NALA team, for their committed service.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Inez Bailey', written over a horizontal line.

Dr Inez Bailey

CEO  
National Adult Literacy Agency

## NALA Strategic Plan:

# Objective 1

Build awareness of the importance of literacy for a more inclusive Ireland.





## Why it matters

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The OECD Adult Skills Survey shows that one in six Irish adults are at or below Level 1 on a five-level literacy scale. One in four Irish adults score at or below Level 1 for numeracy, and two in five score at or below Level 1 on using technology to accomplish tasks.

Individuals with the lowest skills levels are more likely to be unemployed and to report poor health. They often risk being trapped in a situation in which they rarely benefit from adult learning, and their skills remain weak or deteriorate over time. They are also less likely to trust other people or participate in social and civic life.

A more inclusive Ireland means a place where everyone is given the opportunity to develop and improve their literacy and numeracy skills. As well as reading, writing and working with numbers, these skills also include listening, speaking and using technology to connect with others.

### Under Objective 1 we have five actions:

1. Use research to show why literacy matters to Irish society.
2. Work with our colleagues in the ETBs to make sure that learning experiences are accessible and enjoyable for all learners.
3. Support the ETBs to promote their service as the primary access point for adults.
4. Involve 'champions of learning' to encourage greater engagement in and enjoyment of lifelong learning.
5. Support organisations such as education and training services, health services, local authorities, libraries, private services, utilities, public bodies and charities to provide literacy-friendly services.

# Research

We did research to show why literacy matters to Irish society and to ensure that learning experiences are accessible to everyone.



Tina Byrne, NALA research officer and Helen Ryan, NALA policy officer.

## Objective 1

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### Action 1

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Use research to show why literacy matters to Irish society.

NALA aims to contribute to policies and practices that will improve the lives of adults with literacy and numeracy needs. One of the ways we will achieve this is by carrying out research to show how literacy and numeracy services have a positive impact on Irish society.

NALA's strategic plan 2017-2019 emphasises the importance of evidence-based research. Evidence-based research will help NALA to show the clear benefits of literacy and numeracy programmes to Irish society. It also shows us how to design programmes around the things that literacy and numeracy learners need.

During 2017, NALA carried out a lot of research with learners engaged in lifelong learning, particularly in adult literacy and numeracy. This research explored the benefits of taking these courses and it clearly showed how the courses improved participants' job prospects, improved their self-confidence and boosted their health and wellbeing.

As part of our research, we used online surveys, face-to-face interviews and focus groups to gather the views and experiences of adult learners involved in:

- NALA's distance learning service;
- Education programmes delivered by a homeless agency; and
- NALA's student subcommittee.

The adult learners described how returning to education and re-engagement with learning had improved their:

- family life
- ongoing education prospects
- health

- work, and
- personal development

This research contributes to our growing understanding of the positive ways in which literacy and numeracy services impact upon Irish society. In April 2018, NALA will produce a report on these benefits and we will publish a set of discussion papers outlining the specific benefits to the individual and to society.

This research will help NALA to raise awareness about the importance of literacy and numeracy to the general public, employers, policy makers and the economy.

## Sharing our findings

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To reach as many people as possible with our research, we shared our work in publications and at events in 2017. We presented the findings from our work at the international RaPAL conference in Liverpool and published a blogpost on the EPALE adult educator network. We shared our research findings with organisations at home and abroad, including SOLAS, the ETBI, RaPAL and the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research.

We also shared our research online through our e-zine, Facebook, Twitter and our YouTube channel.

This research also informs continuing professional development (CPD) workshops and seminars organised by NALA and other organisations. In 2018 we plan to build on this by fully aligning upcoming research publications with NALA CPD events. This will ensure that the training NALA provides for our partners in the ETBs is grounded in up to date research.

In 2018 and beyond NALA will produce research that informs both policy and practice. To do this we will continue to place the adult literacy learner at the centre of all our work.

## Objective 1

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### Action 2

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Work with our colleagues in the ETBs to make sure that learning experiences are accessible and enjoyable for all learners.

NALA works closely with both staff in the ETBs and their learners to carry out research to make sure courses are accessible and an enjoyable learning experiences for adults.

In 2017, NALA reviewed existing research reports and policy initiatives on adult numeracy in Ireland and internationally. Knowing and understanding what is going on in this area is essential if we want to develop worthwhile policies and plans for the future and to lobby effectively so that we can put these into practice.

This review helped us to define the areas of strategic importance. It supports the Further Education and Training Strategy's commitment to prioritise numeracy and increase the number of numeracy courses offered to learners.

It also enabled NALA to produce more targeted and contextualised research and publications for the ETBI, DES and SOLAS as next steps to increase numeracy provision are decided.

## Results

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The findings of this numeracy review contribute to the debate about the importance of numeracy skills to the social, personal and economic wellbeing of Irish adults and the key role numeracy plays in our emerging digital world.

The review highlights the need to:

- target priority groups,
- develop numeracy provision, and
- continue research.

## Targeting priority groups

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Reducing the number of Irish adults with numeracy needs poses a major challenge for policy makers. It can only be achieved if we can secure more investment so as to be able to introduce and implement policies that will significantly increase access and participation in adult numeracy tuition and continue to develop successful learning opportunities.

## Developing numeracy provision

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This review shows the critical importance of increasing basic skills, especially numeracy, for the individual, society and the economy. It shows how increasingly important numeracy is for getting people into work and improving their life chances by preparing them for new and emerging job opportunities.

## Continuing research

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The Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) results for Ireland show policy makers and practitioners how Irish adults fare across the three domains of literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology rich environments. A more in-depth analysis of these results helps us to understand who is likely to have low proficiency skills in numeracy and what we can do to help.

Based on these findings, in 2018 NALA will identify strategic sectoral partners, numeracy experts and other relevant stakeholders who



can support the future development of adult numeracy provision in Ireland. This will add to our growing body of work on the potential future directions of adult basic education (ABE) and will contribute to the formation of NALA's Vision 2020. This vision will outline a set of progressive and contemporary approaches to the development of adult literacy, numeracy and basic digital skills in the coming years.

Also in 2018, NALA will continue our research partnership with Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT). This will see us move into the second phase of investigation into the motivations behind learners' decisions to return to learning. Based on research with practitioners in 2017, NALA research staff will continue to work with WIT so as to better understand:

- how to persuade adults to see learning as a lifelong endeavour,
- the ways in which literacy matters to them, and
- how this translates to greater benefits to Irish society.

What we discover will be published and will provide a basis for WIT curricular materials.

All of NALA's research reports are available to download free on [www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie)

# Awareness campaigns

We raised awareness of ETB adult education services and other learning opportunities.



Tutor Maire Dempsey and learner Ann Nicholas from Limerick and Clare ETB with President Michael D Higgins.

## Objective 1

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### Action 3

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Support the ETBs to promote their service as the primary access point for adults.

In 2017, we worked hard and smart to promote free learning opportunities for people who want to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. We ran awareness campaigns and implemented a new digital marketing strategy to reach target audiences and to highlight the benefits of adult education.

We focused on sharing the personal experiences and success stories of students who had returned to education through our Learner Ambassador programme and media work. During this time, we referred over 800 people to ETB adult literacy and numeracy services and provided information to thousands more on our website [takethefirststep.ie](http://takethefirststep.ie).

## 'Take the first step' campaign

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In January and September we ran phase two of an awareness campaign called 'Take the first step'. Phase one happened in 2016.

The 'Take the first step' campaign used national radio, video and digital advertising and public relations (PR) activity to promote four ETB students who had improved their literacy skills. The content and message of each individual student's story focused on the benefits of returning to education and emphasised that the service was free.

All of the advertising and PR activity encouraged people interested in improving their basic skills to 'Take the first step' and call or text our freephone or log onto [takethefirststep.ie](http://takethefirststep.ie). Once they called or texted, NALA put them in contact with their local ETB adult education centre or told them about other free services that would help them.

The 'Take the first step' campaign is funded by SOLAS, the Further Education and Training Authority of Ireland, and is supported by a range of stakeholders through a national steering committee. The campaign is a

key action in Ireland's Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2014-2019 which is designed to meet the training needs of Ireland's labour market and society.

## New regional focus

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One of the recommendations from the evaluation of the 2016 campaign was to emphasise the availability of local ETB adult education services. To achieve this NALA produced six regional radio advertisements and offered ETBs posters and PR to promote local services.

The six radio advertisements were 40-second interview style vox-pops with students from each ETB talking about how they had benefited from going back to education. This gave us a good opportunity to use local voices and accents to promote local ETB services.

Each radio advert ended with details of the local ETB phone number to contact for further information on courses.

The ETBs that were promoted, along with the radio stations, were:

- City of Dublin ETB on FM104;
- Cork ETB on 96FM;
- Limerick ETB on 95FM;
- Louth and Meath ETB on LMFM;
- Galway and Roscommon ETB on Galway Bay FM; and
- Waterford and Wexford ETB on WLRFM.

## Posters and PR for adult literacy centres

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NALA offered all ETBs and adult literacy centres or services bespoke posters with local contact phone numbers, websites and corresponding ETB logos. We were delighted that 70 centres ordered posters with local contact details, while another 70 centres ordered posters with national contact details.

NALA also offered all ETBs and adult literacy centres PR support to promote local services. This included providing nominated ETB students with training through a 'Learner Ambassador programme' on how to tell their story and encourage others to return to education. We also set up media interviews and talks.

## Raising awareness of services among younger people

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Another recommendation from the evaluation of the 2016 campaign was that we should improve the way we raised awareness of services among younger people.

While there was no additional budget to create new advertisements, NALA arranged a new video showing students talking about the benefits of returning to education. The video was syndicated on several radio station websites. This was accompanied by digital display advertising, learner interviews and facts about literacy shared on all radio stations' social media. City of Dublin ETB student Donna Murray, who is in her 30s, featured strongly in this video and digital campaign.

NALA also invested in a paid Facebook campaign to support the promotion of services among younger people.

## The campaign in numbers

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In January and September, NALA provided information to 450 people about their local ETB adult education service. This is a 25% increase in calls from the first phase of the campaign in 2016.

- Another 95 people called the ETBs that participated in the regional radio advertising campaign.
- There was a significant increase in traffic to the main campaign website [takethefirststep.ie](http://takethefirststep.ie), with a 50% increase in sessions and new users.
- An independent evaluation showed that 37% of the total population remember the campaign, which is up from 34% in 2016.
- The biggest increases in awareness since last year are among people under 35 and those experiencing literacy or numeracy difficulties.
- Two in three people who experience difficulties reported seeing the campaign.
- Of those who recall the campaign, 90% of people consider it effective in encouraging people to consider seeking help.
- Almost half of the total population (47%) claim to be aware that courses are available locally and free of charge, rising to over 3 in 5 (67%) amongst those who had been exposed to the 'Take the First Step' campaign.
- 2,400 promotional posters were sent to literacy services around the country.
- 30,000 campaign leaflets were sent to literacy centres and given out at events.



## Digital marketing

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In 2017 we started a new digital marketing strategy to make people more aware of, and encourage them to participate in, adult literacy and numeracy courses.

We began by working to increase the number of people in our Facebook community as this is an effective way to cut the amount we spend on advertising. This online presence helped us to grow and reach more people. It also provides us with new audiences to target as part of our conversion campaigns.

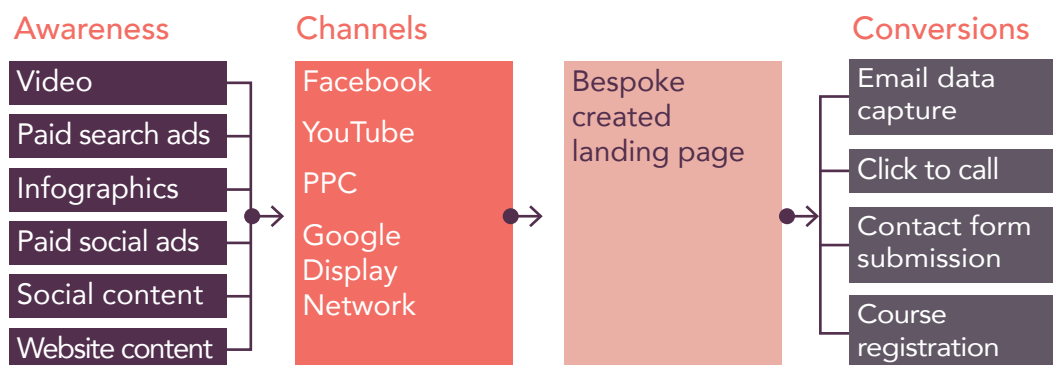
We also focused on growing our online community – driving traffic to the [takethefirststep.ie](http://takethefirststep.ie) website and encouraging contact. We did this through boosted content, paid ads and remarketing that focused on two areas:

1. selling the benefits of the service – free ETB group or one-on-one tuition and our distance learning service; and
2. success stories and social proof, that is student testimonials.

To drive website traffic, we ran a mixture of geo-targeted adverts (specific to chosen ETB locations), display and remarketing ads (to users who had already visited the site) and lookalike ads (targeting users who have similar characteristics to those in our main target audiences).

Some of the online tactics that we have used include:

- video testimonials
- #MondayMotivation – encouraging students to share stories
- geo-targeted course sign up ads
- promoting unique selling points
- course locator tool
- International Students Day
- mobile click to call ads
- symbology (emoji language created in NALA style iconography)



This chart explains our digital marketing strategy for 2017.

## Results

There was a significant increase in the number of people going to the [takethefirststep.ie](http://takethefirststep.ie) website. In 2017 NALA recorded over 18,700 individuals (users) and 22,300 sessions on [takethefirststep.ie](http://takethefirststep.ie) – this is a 152% increase on 2016. These individuals visited 31,500 pages on the website, which is an 88% increase on 2016.

## Learner Ambassador Programme

In 2017, NALA put out a call for people who were interested in joining a Learner Ambassador programme. The programme is run by NALA with the aim of supporting students who are willing to promote the services provided by their local ETB.

A Learner Ambassador is a student who shares their story about the benefits of returning to education with people in their community. By doing this they often motivate others to take up a learning opportunity.

We had a great response and, in June, **35 students** came together for an information and training session in Dublin. They came from adult education centres all over the country to learn how to tell their own inspirational stories and encourage other people to return to education.

During the rest of 2017, 15 of the new Learner Ambassadors shared their stories and raised awareness of ETB services with over a thousand members of the general public. Some highlights include:

- **Stephen McGaughran, Michelle Johnston and Michael Duffy** from Cavan and Monaghan ETB, along with **Olive Phelan** from Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB, spoke to people who visited NALA's stand at the Virginia Agricultural Show in Cavan.
- **Michelle Johnston** also gave a literacy awareness talk at a training event for tutors in Cavan and she shared her inspirational story with an audience of **150 people** who came to a graduation event for Cavan learners.
- **Gerard Maher**, from Tipperary ETB, shared his story with **120 people** who attended an event about adult education and training opportunities. The event was organised by Tipperary ETB and the local office of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.
- Many Learner Ambassadors, including **Thomas Campbell and Jude Holt** from Laois and Offaly ETB, helped out at NALA's stand at the **National Ploughing Championships** in September.
- **Joe McDonagh**, from Limerick and Clare ETB, spoke at a literacy awareness event in Shannon Library.
- **Michael Power**, from Laois and Offaly ETB, gave an inspirational talk to prisoners in Cloverhill Prison.
- **Tony Moloney**, from Cork ETB, was the guest speaker at an event for Pepsico staff in Cork.

Many of the Learner Ambassadors were involved in the SOLAS funded adult literacy and numeracy awareness campaign in September.

## Learners at the Áras

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On Tuesday 12 September, we organised for 50 ETB learners and tutors to attend a very special reception in Áras an Uachtaráin to celebrate National Adult Literacy Awareness Week. The excitement was palpable as everyone gathered in the State Rooms and waited for the arrival of President Michael D Higgins. And when he did arrive, he didn't disappoint, shaking hands and welcoming each learner and tutor individually, and congratulating them all for their tireless work in raising awareness of literacy in Ireland.

"Each of you serves as a great inspiration to the many others whose lives have been shadowed by literacy difficulties, and I thank and commend you for your courage and the determination that has brought you to where you are today. You all have so much of which to be proud," said President Higgins.

It was a wonderful event and it also helped us to raise awareness through the media. Brian Lally from RTE's Drivetime programme interviewed several students for a special broadcast that evening and photos of learners with President Higgins appeared in 17 local newspapers in the following weeks.

## Students in the media

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**Eamon Delaney** from Kilkenny ETB appeared on Newstalk's Drive show to talk about how returning to education enabled him to help his children with their homework.

**Ann Nicholas**, a learner from Clare Adult Basic Education Service, shared her inspirational story about returning to education to achieve a Level 5 qualification in healthcare on Clare FM in February.

Our CEO Inez Bailey was interviewed on the Pat Kenny radio show about how parents can help their kids avoid the 'Summer Slide'.

The 'Take the first step' awareness campaign received great media coverage in September. The campaign was featured in the Irish Examiner, The Irish Sun and the Daily Mail as well as several fantastic interviews with students and tutors on RTE's Drivetime show and many local radio stations.

Kevin O'Duffy, a member of our student subcommittee and Catriona Whelan, NALA technology enhanced learning (TEL) officer, were interviewed for Newstalk's Pat Kenny Show in October.

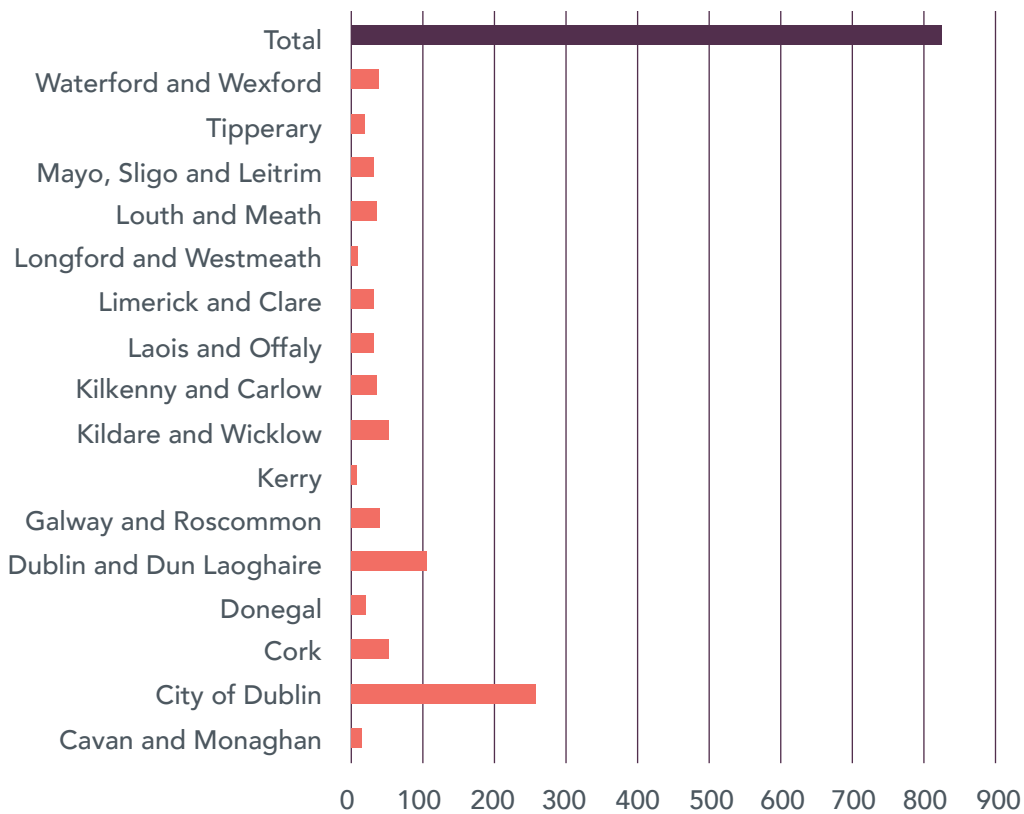
Also in October, Waterford adult learner **Maurice Sammon** appeared on RTE's Today Show alongside author and literacy ambassador **Sheila O'Flanagan**.

## Impact of our awareness work

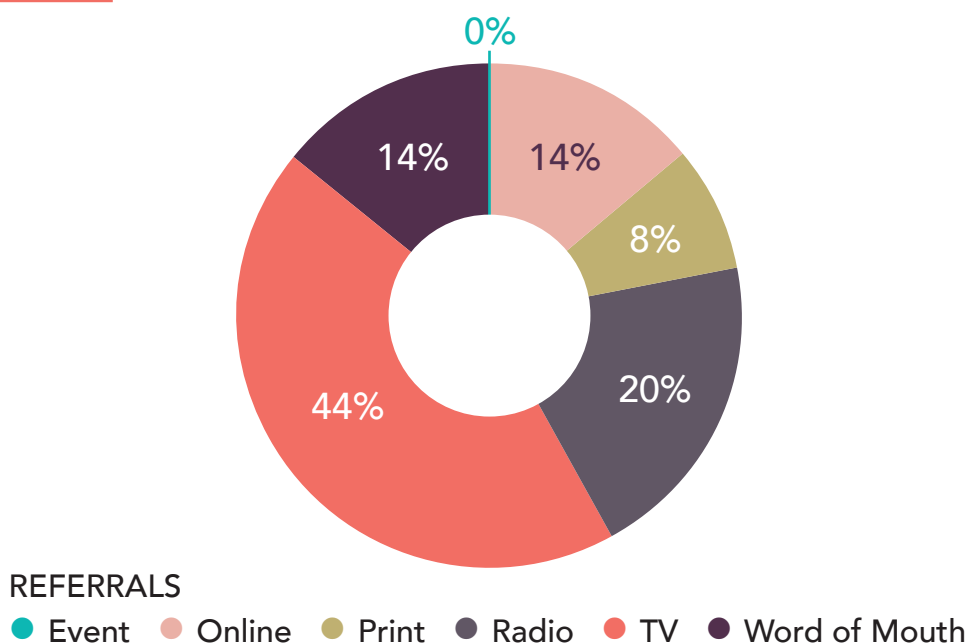
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In 2017, NALA referred over 800 people to ETB adult education services around Ireland.

## Referrals to ETBs



## Where people heard about us?



# Student work

We represented the views of adult literacy students and supported their learning.



Learner Ambassadors Stephen McGaughran, Michelle Johnston, Rosaleen O'Neill, Olive Phelan and Maurice Sammon.



## Objective 1

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### Action 4

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Involve 'champions of learning' to encourage more people to engage with and enjoy, lifelong learning.

At NALA, we believe that adult learners are the best people to act as champions of learning and to inform the sector and our work. Through our student development work we hear the views and opinions of literacy students and share it with educators, policy makers and government. This year our work included two student days and a Student Development Fund, steered by the members of our student subcommittee.

## NALA student days

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Our student days are a great platform for learners to meet each other, learn something new and discuss issues that are important to them.

Our student days in 2017 were very popular, with **174** students attending two events in Tipperary and Dublin. Students from 40 ETB adult literacy centres across 11 different counties came to the events. The demand was so great that several centres even organised buses!

The theme of the student days was 'Using technology that suits me' and at each event there was a variety of workshops for students. These included workshops on using smartphones and also workshops on how to deal with dyslexia.

The topics for the workshops were chosen following suggestions and feedback from students themselves. NALA was also delighted to have Fionuala McGeever, Chief Executive of Tipperary Education and Training Board, as guest speaker at the student day in Thurles.

The student days are a great forum for learners to share their thoughts and give feedback on a variety of topics. At this year's student days, learners spoke about the positive impact literacy has had on their lives. They said

that improving their literacy skills had resulted in increased confidence, better family relationships, improved skills and a better social life.

## In their own words

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Here's what some of the students said about our student days:

"It was a great day. I learned a lot and really enjoyed talking in groups."

"Overall everyone was very helpful. The day was fantastic and the workshop on creative writing was just super."

"They are great for helping build people's confidence."

"I enjoyed it so much I'm already looking forward to next year."

The student days also enable NALA to find out about issues that affect students. At the student days in 2017, learners said they:

- did not know enough about the adult guidance service;
- would like more guidance when trying to move from Level 2 to Level 3 in maths;
- would like the option of more tuition hours and classes during the summer; and
- would like to get a student card.

NALA published a short report on the student days in 2017. This report is available on NALA's website.

NALA appreciates the work adult literacy organisers, resource staff and tutors do in encouraging students to attend the student days. We are very grateful to all learners who come along and contribute to the events. Thanks to the NALA student subcommittee for the work they do in organising and facilitating the student days.

## NALA's Student Subcommittee

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NALA's student subcommittee gather to discuss adult literacy student issues and provide feedback on those issues to NALA's board.

Six new students joined NALA's student subcommittee in 2017. Five students stepped down from the committee at the end of their term and NALA would like to say a big thank you for their tireless work over the last five years.

These students are **Michael Power, Tony Moloney, Kevin O'Duffy, Olive Phelan** and **Andrew Barry**.

Olive says that going back to education and serving on NALA's student subcommittee led to lots of new opportunities:

"Going on the committee I met lots of people and I made some great friends. I travelled and I ran storytelling workshops. It's all been a great experience."

## Over 1,400 students take part in events funded by NALA

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In 2017, **66** ETB centres were paid small grants from our Student Development Fund. The grants enabled **1,418** students to take part in new learning development activities outside the classroom. The money was spent on community and team building activities as well as excursions to areas of historical and educational importance.

Organisations that receive the grant have to gather student feedback on topics set by NALA. This year's recipients gave feedback on numeracy and accreditation. This is one of the ways we gather the opinions and experiences of adults who are improving their literacy and numeracy skills. This information helps inform our work and supports the learner voice

element of the Further Education and Training Strategy. This element of the strategy seeks to benchmark learners' views and satisfaction with their FET courses.

## In their own words

Here's what staff from some of the ETB centres had to say about the positive impact of the Student Development Fund:

"The most important thing is that the students drive the application process. They decide where they want to go and what they want to do. This gives them a real sense of success and belonging."

**Youthreach Mahon, Cork**

"A lot of learners attend courses on different days and at different times so a trip together enables them to feel like they are part of a learning community. They also know that the feedback they give is useful for NALA, SOLAS and the Department of Education and Skills and this gives a sense of respect for their experience and views."

**KLEAR adult literacy centre, Dublin**

"The fund allows the students to mix with each other and to mix with students from another centre. This gives them a sense of unity and confidence to realise they are not on their own."

**Wicklow adult literacy centre**

"It gives us a chance to bring learners together, giving them an opportunity to relate to each other in a new way, breaking down any perceived barriers between them, and between them and their tutors. Everyone sits together, travels together, learns together and laughs together."

**Kenmare adult literacy centre**

# Plain English and Literacy Advisory Service

We worked with organisations to help make their services more accessible to people with literacy needs.



Rosemary Steen, EirGrid director of external affairs; Declan Black, managing partner, Mason Hayes & Curran; Dr Inez Bailey NALA CEO.

## Objective 1

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### Action 5

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Support organisations such as education and training services, health services, local authorities, libraries, private services, utilities, public bodies and charities to provide literacy-friendly services.

Literacy and numeracy difficulties often prevent people from carrying out a range of everyday activities, for example accessing services. We provide a plain English service to help organisations remove literacy and numeracy related barriers to customers accessing their services. Plain English gives people information they understand and enables them to make informed choices.

We also work closely with many organisations to show them how to become more literacy-friendly. A literacy-friendly organisation encourages commitment, in all parts of the organisation and among all levels of staff, to remove literacy-related barriers in their organisation.

## Plain English editing and training

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Our editing and training service was busier than ever this year, which means more organisations are providing information in plain English.

During 2017, 118 organisations used our Plain English Editing and Training service. This is an increase of 31% on the previous year. The organisations are from a range of different sectors, including the financial, regulatory, health and public sector. The health sector is the biggest user of our editing and training services.

## Plain English Mark

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Many of the organisations who used our Plain English Editing and Training Service wanted to achieve our Plain English Mark. This is a logo that



organisations can include on their websites or printed documents to show that their information meets international plain language writing and design standards.

The following organisations are just a selection of those who were awarded our Plain English Mark for documents during 2017:

- The Office of the Ombudsman
- Central Bank of Ireland
- Adoption Authority of Ireland
- The Road Safety Authority of Ireland
- The Law Society of Ireland
- The Quality and Qualifications Authority
- Health and Safety Authority
- The Health Service Executive

## Training

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This year NALA delivered plain English training to more than 1,000 people. This is an increase of about 300 people from 2016. This means that more people than ever have a basic knowledge and understanding of our plain English guidelines. Evaluations of the service are carried out with the trainees after they complete their training. The evaluations consistently show that trainees are satisfied with the training and resources they receive.

Some examples of Government departments and other organisations who used our training services in 2017 include:

- The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation
- The Department of Foreign Affairs
- The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment



- The Health and Safety Authority
- The Residential Tenancy Board
- PeoplePoint
- UCD Higher Diploma in Safety and Health at Work
- The Centre for Development and Learning in Tallaght Hospital

## Plain English resources

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Many organisations also sought our help to update or develop plain English resources such as style guides. Two examples, both of which feature our Plain English Mark, include:

- The HSE's Communicating Clearly Guidelines. NALA presented workshops on the guidelines and on health literacy to the HSE's Communications Network.
- The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) plain English style guide. This guide was developed late in 2016 with our assistance and was shared electronically in 2017 with members of the Civil Service Quality Customer Service Officers' network and all staff in DPER. The guide was mentioned in the OECD's external report on the Irish Public Service in summer of 2017 along with DPER's other training work with NALA.

Our plain English information is also cited in national resources such as the National Disability Authority's new communications toolkit. This was developed in association with DPER.

## Plain English Awards

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There was great excitement when the winners of the Plain English Awards were announced at a ceremony in Dublin last February. NALA developed the Plain English Awards to reward organisations that communicate clearly in plain English. Over 50 organisations entered the competition

and an independent panel of plain English experts judged the entries. The winners were announced by the RTÉ broadcaster and journalist John Murray at an awards ceremony in the Law Society of Ireland.

EirGrid, the state-owned company that manages the supply of electricity across Ireland, were crowned the overall national winner. The Plain English Awards, which were sponsored by leading law firm Mason Hayes & Curran, was covered in a Drivetime special on RTÉ radio and also in the Irish Times and Irish Examiner.

## Plain English and the law

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This year we published **Plain English and the law: the legal consequences of clear and unclear communication**. We did this to show how plain English can save companies time and money by avoiding unnecessary legal costs. It is a joint initiative by NALA and Mason Hayes & Curran.

The booklet presents lessons from three Irish legal cases where the clarity and interpretation of language was central to the judgments made. Two of the legal case studies show how unclear language was argued in court. A third legal case study shows how a case was won because it was proven that a company had provided clear information to a consumer.

We shared this resource with our members and at other events for adult literacy tutors and clients of our Plain English Editing and Training Service. You can read about it on our Plain English website [simplyput.ie](http://simplyput.ie)

## Sharing our experience

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During 2017 NALA gave presentations at several international conferences, including the Plain Language Association International's (PLAIN's) 10th Conference in 2017 in Graz, Austria. Our work with the board of PLAIN, including 10 meetings with the board and subcommittees in 2017, has helped us to keep abreast of planned international plain English initiatives and projects. NALA's plain English co-ordinator was on the conference group for PLAIN's 2017 conference and was specifically

requested by the Norwegians to provide support for the next PLAIN Conference that they will host in 2019.

In Paris in October, NALA also gave a presentation at the OECD conference on The Role of Statistics in Evolving Communications.

NALA gave presentations at national events including several hosted by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. NALA also submitted responses to various national consultations such as DPER's consultation on the Public Service Reform Plan.

## Students have their say

In the National Adult Learner Forum's policy report *Speak Today, Shape Tomorrow 2016*, learners recommended the greater use of plain English to:

"Standardise all information on SOLAS-funded programmes into readily accessible, plain English documents, with a specific focus on explaining new structures in the FET service."

SOLAS, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and the ETBs listened to this feedback and we are working with these organisations to further improve the clarity of some of their documents. We also involve students in talks about plain English at important high-profile plain English events such as the Plain English Awards.

## Our plain English website

Almost 5,000 people visited [simplyput.ie](https://simplyput.ie), our plain English website, in 2017. Also, several international organisations including EPALE included links to [simplyput.ie](https://simplyput.ie) on their websites.

## Plain English tenders won

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This year we were successful in bidding for several plain English editing and training tender contracts. These are with:

- The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
- The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
- The Arts Council of Ireland
- The National Office for Suicide Prevention

## Health literacy

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During the year, we worked closely with healthcare professionals to improve health literacy across the sector. Health literacy is the ability to read, understand and act on health information. Effective health literacy and numeracy involves a healthcare provider communicating clearly so the person receiving the information understands it correctly.

## Crystal Clear Mark

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In 2017, **15** pharmacies and **two** general practices were awarded our Crystal Clear Mark. The mark is Ireland's first health literacy quality mark and has been developed as part of our Crystal Clear Pharmacy and General Practice Programme. The mark is awarded to pharmacies and general practices that show their commitment to providing a health literacy-friendly service to patients. It was developed by NALA, MSD and the Irish Pharmacy Union (IPU) in discussion with the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP). It is supported by Healthy Ireland.

There are now **68** pharmacies and **five** general practices that have achieved the mark. A full list of the pharmacies and general practices that have received the mark are available on our website.

We also carried out some research on the Crystal Clear programme this year. Doris J Ravotas, a researcher with Western Michigan University in the United States, came to NALA for 11 weeks. She worked on a research study that looked at understanding the process and experience of Crystal Clear from the perspective of the pharmacy. This was done by analysing existing data from the approved pharmacies and doing a case study with four pharmacies.

The research found that all of the pharmacies adopted **new approaches** and they felt **validated** for the literacy friendly work they were already doing.

A full report from this study will be available in 2018.

## Healthy Ireland

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NALA's CEO, Dr Inez Bailey continued to attend Healthy Ireland Council meetings and contributed to the health literacy commitment in the HSE Implementation Plan for Healthy Ireland.

## Family health and wellbeing workshop

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In November, NALA facilitated a workshop to explore family health and wellbeing from an international and an Irish perspective. We ran it as a breakfast session at our Family Learning conference and 11 people attended. Doris J Ravotas spoke and shared best practice about family health and wellbeing in the United States. She also spoke about reading and working out medication instructions based on her own work and researching NALA's Crystal Clear programme. Helen Ryan from NALA spoke about our Well Now! programme.

## Literacy work in hospitals

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In 2017 NALA developed 18 literacy-related standards for hospitals. These built on the standards in the Crystal Clear programme and other audits. Many of these standards complement HIQA's National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare. They also complement the Mental Health Commission's Quality Framework for Mental Health Services in Ireland.

We also worked with University Hospital Limerick on becoming more literacy-friendly. We were asked by the Patient Advocacy Liaison Services (PALS) to deliver a literacy-friendly workshop with staff. NALA designed the workshop based on the findings from an internal literacy audit done on the eye ward.

After the workshop, NALA wrote up a report with recommendations for the hospital to consider. We also took part in a steering group set up by the hospital to review their signage. A new system for helping people find their way in the hospital has since been proposed.

NALA also worked with St Patrick's Mental Health Services (SPMHS) to help them become a literacy-friendly hospital. We did a health literacy audit with the hospital over the summer and facilitated a workshop with 17 hospital staff who have different roles within the hospital. We produced an audit report and action plan that looked at:

- what the hospital already does to support people who have literacy and numeracy needs; and
- what the hospital could do better to support them.

We are continuing to work with SPMHS as they implement the actions from this project.

## Improving awareness of health literacy

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This year NALA spoke about health literacy at a number of conferences and seminars including:

- Irish Community Health Nursing Annual General Meeting
- Department of Health research seminar series

We also delivered health literacy workshops and gave inputs to staff from:

- Dublin Simon Community;
- HSE Department of Public Health (HSE East);
- Irish Heart Foundation; and
- St Luke's Hospital, Dublin.

We linked in with a number of organisations to progress the area of health literacy. These included:

- GAA;
- HIQA;
- HSE;
- Irish Cancer Society;
- Local Community Development Committees;
- Medisec;
- Mental Health Commission;
- St Patricks' Mental Health services; and
- University Hospital Limerick.



## Media coverage of health literacy

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During the year, there were over 30 articles in medical magazines, local and national newspapers about health literacy.

## Working with local authorities

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In 2017 NALA continued to work with a number of local authorities and libraries. We worked with Cork City libraries to help with implementing actions from their literacy audit. We also worked with South Dublin County Council (SDCC) to deliver health and wellbeing courses for older people.

## Literacy awareness training

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We delivered two literacy awareness training sessions to 50 staff from SDCC during Social Inclusion Week in November. We also delivered literacy awareness training in September to 420 students from the Law Society.

## Family literacy

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We know that parents who are engaged in their child's learning have a significant positive impact on their educational achievement. More and more parents are using the internet to find out about fun things they can do to help their child learn.

Our online activity involves delivering information through daily updates on Facebook, a monthly e-zine and regular updates on [www.helpmykidlearn.ie](http://www.helpmykidlearn.ie). This website was developed as part of the Department of Education and Skills' national strategy to improve literacy and numeracy among children and young people.

We worked with our stakeholders to promote the website and we also promoted it through Facebook and Google advertising. This has resulted in:

- 178,000 people using helpmykidlearn.ie, which is a 21% increase on 2016;
- 1,761 people receiving our e-zine, which is a 5% increase on 2016; and
- 19,222 likes for the helpmykidlearn.ie Facebook page.

## Supporting primary schools

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In 2017 NALA continued to work closely with primary schools. In May and June we sent 46 schools Help My Kid Learn activity packs. These packs show parents and guardians how they can support their child's literacy and numeracy development through fun, everyday activities in the home.

NALA Strategic Plan:

## Objective 2

Lead innovation in the teaching and learning of adult literacy, numeracy and basic digital skills.



## Why it matters

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NALA works to ensure people with literacy and numeracy difficulties can take part fully in society. However, Irish society, especially in relation to further education and training, is rapidly changing. We recognise that appropriate, learner-centric innovation in adult literacy work is crucial in order to make approaches to teaching and learning more effective.

Our renewed attention on innovation in practice and practice-driven research has allowed us to build our focus on measuring the impact of our work in useful and more meaningful ways. In 2017 we have developed a solid foundation for exploring the shifting adult learning context in Ireland.

### Under Objective 2 we have five actions.

1. Work with SOLAS and the ETBs to implement the adult literacy and numeracy strategy as set out in the FET Strategy 2014-2019.
2. Support SOLAS in agreed aspects of work such as the Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy, the Learner Forum and the FET Framework for Workforce Development.
3. Create self-directed, peer, blended, distance and eLearning programmes and supports that help people with literacy and numeracy needs to use everyday technology and digital media.
4. Provide continuous professional development (CPD) for tutors and other professionals involved in literacy and lifelong learning in line with the FET Professional Development Strategy 2017-2019.
5. Provide opportunities for those interested in literacy and numeracy to gather, discuss and share best practice.



# Integrating literacy

We supported students with literacy difficulties to learn.



Anne O Mahony, tutor at Cork ETB and Dr Maeve O Grady, lecturer on NALA courses in adult and further education in WIT.

## Objective 2

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### Action 1

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Work with SOLAS and the ETBs to implement the adult literacy and numeracy strategy as set out in the FET Strategy 2014-2019.

At NALA we work closely with a range of organisations to help them implement strategies that will improve the literacy, numeracy and digital skills of adults. Our work in this area involves integrating literacy development into vocational courses and training. This helps to ensure that people who want to take up education and training programmes are not excluded because of the literacy and numeracy demands of the course.

## Courses and resources

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### Integrating literacy workshops

In 2017, 128 FET practitioners took part in NALA workshops on integrating literacy and numeracy with vocational and other learning. Fifty people took part in workshops provided under the joint ETBI-NALA professional development programme. We also co-operated with Maynooth University (MU) providing a seminar for FET practitioners working towards the Higher Diploma in Further Education.

At the NALA Tutors Forum, 30 tutors took part in workshops on delivering literacy-friendly health and wellbeing programmes for older adults.

## Webinars

NALA provided two webinars on integrating literacy in 2017, one for Turas Nua tutors and another for vocational trainers. The webinar for vocational trainers was held during European Vocational Skills Week in November.

## Videos

This year we published several videos on integrating literacy and numeracy into vocational education and training. NALA would like to thank the organisations that were involved in these workshops, including Galway Roscommon ETB Training Centre (Mervue); Liberties College of Further Education, Dublin; Tolka Valley Community Training Centre (CTC); North Wall CTC; Kylemore CTC; and Newbridge Youth Training and Development Centre.

The 34 short videos are sorted into the following three playlists on our YouTube channel and they have been watched 380 times.

- Integrating language and literacy in Post Leaving Cert courses;
- Integrating literacy and numeracy in Apprenticeship training; and
- Integrating literacy and numeracy in Community Training Centres.

## Well Now!

In 2017 we continued to develop our Well Now! programme. This is a 10-session literacy-friendly course for adults on health and wellbeing. The programme helps them to explore health and wellbeing topics and to increase awareness, knowledge, understanding and skills to support healthy choices.

Well Now! was developed using a partnership model of provision between a local authority, a local education provider and local health service professionals, piloted in South County Dublin. In 2017 we extended the Well Now! programme outside of the Tallaght area for the first time. The 10-session introductory course ran in Áras Chrónáin, Clondalkin, from September to November. The experience of this programme will help us in developing resources and guidelines for providers and facilitators.



In 2017 we also published the Well Now! facilitator pack to help ETBs, local authorities and others to provide literacy-friendly health and wellbeing programmes for adults. The pack is based on the programmes NALA developed in partnership with SDCC and An Cosan.

### Including people with intellectual disabilities

The Department of Education and Skills recommended that NALA update the guidelines on inclusion of adults with learning disabilities, first published in 1999. After research and consultation, we have updated the guidelines. The new guidelines on inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in adult literacy services will be launched in early 2018.

### Working with homeless services

People who are homeless often have literacy and numeracy difficulties. In January, staff from Dublin Simon took part in an initial adult literacy tutor training course, along with staff from Focus Ireland and Merchants Quay Ireland. NALA delivered the course in co-operation with City of Dublin ETB and Dublin Adult Learning Centre. It was accredited by Waterford Institute of Technology.

The training gave a broad understanding of literacy in Ireland and introduced some of the best ways to support adults with literacy difficulties. Since the training, Dublin Simon's literacy staff have also co-operated with other Dublin Simon services on literacy matters. For example, they have edited documents such as consent forms and information leaflets to make them clearer and easier to use. They also collaborated with NALA to provide staff training in health literacy.

NALA's work with services for people who are homeless is part of our support for implementing the National Adult Literacy and Numeracy Strategy.

## Objective 2

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### Action 2

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Support SOLAS in agreed aspects of work, such as the Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy, the Learner Forum, and the FET Framework for Workforce Development.

Throughout 2017 NALA worked closely with SOLAS to help the organisation achieve the objectives set out in the FET Strategy 2014-2019. Throughout the development of that strategy, SOLAS agreed it would listen to and consult with learners in FET.

The National FET Learner Forum, led by ETBs and AONTAS, was developed to help SOLAS do that. This approach places learners at the centre of the FET service, recognises the value of their contribution and offers them an opportunity to shape future national policy decisions. The forum's second meeting took place in April.

As NALA have a great deal of expertise in working with students, our staff attended and acted as rapporteurs for the learner discussion sessions at the event. This meant that they were responsible for recording the opinions and thoughts of learners about the FET service.

NALA's student and membership officer is also part of an advisory group for the forum. The advisory group met three times during 2017. The group is made up of representatives from AONTAS, SOLAS, ETBI, the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, the Adult Education Officers' Association, the INOU, the Department of Education and Skills and two student representatives.

# Distance learning

We helped people to improve their literacy and numeracy skills.



Adult learners Olive Phelan and Lee Mitchell.

## Objective 2

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### Action 3

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Create self-directed, peer, blended, distance and eLearning programmes and supports that help people with literacy and numeracy needs to use everyday technology and digital media.

NALA's distance learning service (DLS) was created to provide high quality learning opportunities for people who want to improve their basic skills. The service gives learners the opportunity to work with a tutor over the phone or online. The service is designed to fit in with the needs of each individual learner.

In 2017 our DLS supported 215 learners to improve their basic skills through one to one tuition over the phone. The service also enabled 919 learners to achieve Level 2 and Level 3 QQI accreditation through WriteOn.ie. This is an interactive learning website that learners can use at home on their own, with the help of a distance learning tutor, or through blended learning in an education centre.

Learners also now have the option to gain a NALA certificate of achievement for learning at Level 1 on WriteOn.ie. Our DLS uses a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) tool that uses assessment to allow learners receive qualifications for what they have previously learnt but never received formal accreditation for. This RPL tool is available at Level 2 and Level 3.

Table 1 outlines how the DLS supported learners in 2017.

**Table 1: 2017 Summary of distance learning work**

<b>Initial assessment</b>	<p>3 learning support workers involved in initial assessment</p> <p>120 initial assessments were done with potential learners. If this assessment shows that a learner is suitable for distance learning, they are matched with a distance learning tutor</p> <p>120 learners were matched with a distance learning tutor</p>
<b>Distance Learning</b>	<p>9 distance learning tutors worked with learners over the phone, email or by post</p> <p>215 learners availed of 2,207 learning sessions with a distance learning tutor</p>
<b>Accreditation</b>	<p>919 learners received awards</p> <p>There were 3,656 minor awards in total. This includes 3,081 Level 2 minor awards and 575 Level 3 minor awards.</p>
<b>Adult Education Centres using our DLS</b>	<p>Learners from 91 centres received awards using WriteOn.ie</p>
<b>WriteOn.ie</b>	<p>8,353 new learning accounts set up</p> <p>28,841 different visitors to the website</p> <p>17 minutes was the average time on the website</p>
<b>Training</b>	<p>8 free training sessions provided</p> <p>93 tutors provided with training</p> <p>30 centres across six different counties</p>

## WriteOn Preparing for Level 3

As part of our ongoing work to improve WriteOn.ie, we responded to the needs of distance learning tutors and students who told us that there was a gap between Levels 2 and 3 under the Quality and Qualifications (QQI) Ireland system. The feedback also showed that learners had difficulty making progress with maths, particularly with algebra, the classification of numbers, fractions, and working out area and volume.

As a result of this feedback, we created a new level called Preparing for Level 3. This new level has content to support learners who are starting at Level 3, or moving from Level 2 to 3.

The new content is unaccredited, meaning that learners are free to move up and down the lesson path and start on any area that suits them. There are no assessments so the learner is free to browse through the videos and exercises that will support new learning. Learners can also replay videos or go back over exercises to reinforce learning. The content includes instructional videos and practice exercises on several topics, including algebra, ratio and scale drawings.

During the summer, following further feedback and input from NALA members, additional content was added to Preparing for Level 3. This content is focused on the QQI learning objectives for communications and it gives learners the opportunity to proof read their own work, and to read and write longer pieces than those found at Level 2. They can also deal with more complex written pieces and consider aspects of writing such as bias and genre.

As with the maths content, the communications content is unaccredited and free for anyone to access and use as they need. An evaluation of the new Preparing for Level 3 content will be carried out in 2018.

### Future proofing WriteOn.ie

Over the last 10 years, WriteOn.ie has been very successful in offering adult learners an independent and blended way to approach their learning. The website is an example of how technology enhanced learning (TEL) can add significant value to adult learners' efforts.

In 2018, NALA will carry out work to develop and improve WriteOn.ie to ensure its continued success. To help us with this, we have partnered with Trinity College's Learnovate Centre, a centre of excellence for research and innovation in learning technologies. This partnership will enable us to explore new avenues of adult learning such as mobile learning and recognition of prior learning.



# Tutor training and professional development

We led innovation in the teaching and learning of adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills.



Richard Bruton, Minister for Education and Skills; Brian Cody, Kilkenny hurling manager; Dr Inez Bailey, NALA CEO; and Dr Anthony Mann, OECD senior policy analyst at our conference on International Literacy Day.

## Objective 2

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### Action 4

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Provide continuous professional development (CPD) for tutors and other professionals involved in supporting literacy and lifelong learning in line with the FET Professional Development Strategy 2017-2019.

### Action 5

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Provide opportunities for those interested in literacy and numeracy to gather, discuss and share best practice.

Our range of specialised professional development events were very much in demand this year. In total, **530** tutors, resource workers, co-ordinators, managers and adult literacy organisers attended **14** different events.

The topics and workshops covered at our events are based on feedback and suggestions from literacy, numeracy and ESOL workers. We carried out an anonymous survey with participants after each event to measure its impact.

We are delighted that almost everybody who attended said that they learned something new at the events. It was also great to hear that almost everybody said that the event inspired them to make some changes to their work practices.

Here is a summary of each event in 2017.

## National Forum for Adult Literacy Tutors

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**Eighty-nine** tutors attended our National Forum for Adult Literacy Tutors in January. The theme of the forum was 'Literacy and numeracy in health and

in finance'. Many important and useful topics were discussed including the relationship between active inclusion and economic growth.

We also examined the role and importance of functional literacy in people's everyday lives. Participants were also able to take part in workshops that covered a variety of health and finance topics.

## English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) conference

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In March, **86** tutors attended our ESOL conference. This was a **30%** increase on the amount of participants for 2016. The title of our conference was 'Ways for ESOL students to improve their English outside the classroom'.

There were presentations on topics such as preparing ESOL students for employment, rights and entitlements of ESOL students, managing tutor boundaries and self-care for ESOL tutors.

## Numeracy conference

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In May, **75** tutors attended our numeracy conference. The conference looked at how tutors can use real life situations to teach maths to learners. Among the guest speakers at the event was Niall O'Connor, a maths teacher from Dublin, who spoke about the benefits of using the flipped classroom. This approach flips how things are normally done because the teaching takes place online at home in the evening and homework is then done in class.

The event also saw Dr Inez Bailey, NALA CEO, launch a new maths e-learning content on WriteOn.ie. The new content, which helps to bridge the gap between maths at Level 2 and Level 3, includes instructional videos and practice exercises on several topics, including algebra, ratio and scale drawings.

## International Literacy Day conference

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In September, **121** people attended our International Literacy Day (ILD) conference. The theme of the event was 'Using technology in adult literacy and numeracy tuition'. In his opening address at the conference, Education and Skills Minister Richard Bruton told the audience that education is the best asset people have to prepare for the future.

Anthony Mann, senior policy analyst at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), spoke about adult skills in Ireland.

There were also presentations on the SOLAS and ETBI strategy for technology enhanced learning strategy in the FET sector.

## Numeracy workshops

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During Maths Week in October, **108** people took part in **nine** numeracy workshops that were organised by NALA. The events, which were run in conjunction with local ETBs, took place in Cavan, Tralee, Waterford, Ennis, Bantry, Dundalk, Tallaght, Galway and Mullingar. The themes of the workshops included teaching and learning algebra, geometry, project maths, fractions, decimals and percentages, technology, problem solving and working with parents of primary school children.

## Family literacy conference

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In November, 50 people attended our conference on fresh approaches to family learning. The event was chaired by Irene Keogh, the integrated services manager at Tusla.

There were several engaging presentations during the event. Cath Harcula, chairperson of the National Family Learning Forum in England, talked about the impact of family learning on children and adults.

Lána McCarthy, a family and community literacy co-ordinator in Ballymun, spoke about the importance of creating a framework for family learning practice.

Dipankar Biswas, a play therapist, talked about the relationship between play and brain development in children.

## What is the impact of our events?

Table 2 shows that the vast majority of the participants who attended our events in 2017 learned something new. Most people also said that they will make changes to how they teach after attending our conferences.

Table 2: Impact of NALA conferences in 2017

	Learned something new	Inspired changes to work
National Tutors' Forum	100%	95%
ESOL conference	98%	95%
Numeracy conference	100%	93%
ILD conference	97%	92%
Numeracy workshops	97%	97%

Our surveys were done anonymously using Survey Monkey.

## In their own words

Here's what some of the tutors who attended our conferenced during 2017 had to say:

"It was great to meet other tutors and find out what they do in their classes."

"I've learned not to expect all students to progress very quickly as sometimes the transformation can be at a slow pace."

"I have started to incorporate some wellbeing tips into classes because I am more conscious of the impact a pleasant environment has on learning."

"I don't feel nervous about using technology in classes anymore."

"It was great. I got some valuable insights and resources and I can put everything I learned into practice more confidently now."

"I learned how to incorporate visual aids in my class which will be more interesting for my learners."

"I'm much more aware now of the difficulties that the students encounter in their attempt to understand whereas I wasn't before."

"I learned how relatively easy it is to introduce digital learning into the classroom by making more use of smartphones and tablets."

"The conference showed me how adult learners can be empowered by their experiences in education."

"I've learned lots of fun ways to increase learners' passion for maths."

## Promotional videos

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In 2017 we produced a series of promotional videos to encourage people to attend our events and to give them a taste of what to expect. We produced videos for our ESOL, numeracy, ILD and family learning conferences. These videos, which are all available on our YouTube channel, were watched 452 times.



# Objective 3

Seek further investment in raising adult literacy levels in Ireland.



# 3



## Why it matters

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There is a clear link between literacy and equality. People with the lowest skill levels have low educational attainment, earn less and are more likely to be long-term unemployed. To encourage more people to get involved in learning opportunities, we need to adopt new and creative policy measures.

The EU Skills Agenda encourages countries to prioritise adults with the least education, offering them an assessment and a customised learning programme, as well as a chance to get recognition for their achievements.

However, Ireland is below the EU average for participation by adults in lifelong learning. Ireland needs more investment to create the structures needed to involve more people in adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills learning.

## There are four actions under this objective:

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1. Deepen appreciation by politicians and policy makers of how improving literacy and numeracy skills can impact positively on Irish society.
2. Make the case, to politicians and policy makers, for increased long-term funding for literacy, numeracy and digital skills.
3. Collaborate with organisations which can help us achieve lifelong learning policy and practice in line with the targets set out in the National Skills Strategy 2025.
4. Define and support the measurement of the positive effect of literacy strategies and initiatives.

These actions will be carried out over the next three years.

# Policy work

We made the case to policy makers and politicians to improve literacy and numeracy skills to positively impact on Irish society.



Roisin Doherty, director of active inclusion, SOLAS; Richard Bruton, Minister for Education and Skills; Nikki Gallagher, director of communications, SOLAS; and Brian Cody, Kilkenny hurling manager.

## Objective 3

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### Actions 1-4

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Seek further investment in raising adult literacy levels in Ireland.

Our policy work has a key role to play in providing significant opportunities that will improve the skills of people with literacy and numeracy difficulties and ensure they can fully take part in society.

NALA believes that social policies on health, education, employment and active citizenship must be integrated and not separate. Government, educators and employers have a role to play in offering support and providing access to flexible, high quality training options for people who want to improve their literacy, numeracy and digital skills.

In 2017, we worked with a range of stakeholders to implement national policies that support adults improve their literacy and numeracy skills. These national policies include:

- Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2014-2019
- National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy for Children and Young People 2011-2014
- Pathways to Work
- Healthy Ireland
- Putting People First and
- National Skills Strategy 2025

To build our case for further investment in adult literacy, we started work on a scoping paper called 'Ireland can do better: A vision for improving lives through better adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills over the next 10 years'. This scoping paper will be published in early 2018.

Also in 2018, we will set up a task force of experts and stakeholders from several sectors across Irish society, including education, work, family, health, finance, consumer, community, and sport.

This task force will:

- evaluate adult literacy levels in Irish society;
- assess what is currently available for adults wanting to develop their skills;
- share the evidence of the impact that improving adult literacy levels has on individuals and society; and
- re-imagine a more radical, creative and ambitious approach to improving adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills across all areas of Irish society for the coming decade.

We will announce the chairperson and members of the task force early in 2018 and begin our work.

In 2019 we will present this radical, creative and ambitious plan to inform and influence future Government policy and strategy on improving lives through better adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills over the next 10 years.

## NALA submissions

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NALA made three written submissions to the Government in 2017.

### 1. We recommended increased funding from the National Training Fund for workplace basic education.

There is clear evidence that employers are major beneficiaries of education and training (see for example the 2016 report 'Investing in National Ambition: A Strategy for Funding Higher Education'.) Since 2004, the National Training Fund (NTF) has funded the Workplace Basic Education Fund. As a result the Skills for Work programme was created. Skills for Work provides much needed upskilling for adults in work with low or no qualifications. Their budget is currently €2.8 million and provides adult literacy and numeracy courses in the workplace to 3,000 employees every year, mainly in the private sector. There is no cost to the employer or employee for the training programme. It is managed by Dublin and Dun

Laoghaire ETB. NALA believes that it should be a priority of the NTF to continue to fund and expand Skills for Work. This will help individuals to reach their true potential, benefit employees and employers, strengthen economic growth and deliver benefits to society as a whole.

## 2. Submission to the 'Action Plan for Jobs 2018'

The Action Plan for Jobs is a Government initiative to promote job creation. In 2017 the Government called for ideas to help businesses to create and sustain jobs. In our submission, NALA suggested that:

- All adults in work with literacy, numeracy and digital needs, and less than a QQI Level 4 qualification, should be offered a high quality and relevant learning programme with a local education and training provider.
- New and innovative ways to upskill employees should be developed. These could include blended and distance learning and intensive workplace basic education programmes.
- The Government should introduce a targeted paid learning leave programme for employees with less than a Level 4 qualification to develop their basic literacy and numeracy skills if they wish to do so.

## 3. Action Plan for Education 2018

The Government's Action Plan for Education aims to make the Irish education and training service the best in Europe. In 2017 the Government called for ideas to help it achieve this aim. In our submission, NALA suggested:

- an increased investment in the Skills for Work programme;
- a family literacy, numeracy and language strategy with a focus on disadvantaged communities and involving all DEIS schools and the ETB adult learning services;
- a national CPD programme to integrate literacy and numeracy support and development into all publicly funded further education and training; and

- increased investment in research and evaluation that captures outcomes and evidence of good practice.

### Adult literacy in Europe

NALA attended the European Basic Skills Network (EBSN) in June, where Dr Inez Bailey was elected onto the Board of EBSN. As well as this, we were involved with the European Semester Report for Ireland and met with a European Commission delegation in Dublin in October.

We also worked on a proposal to meet the requirements of the Upskilling Pathways initiative from Europe. This was submitted to the Department of Education and Skills to consider when devising the Irish Upskilling Pathways plan.

# Strengthening our effectiveness as an organisation

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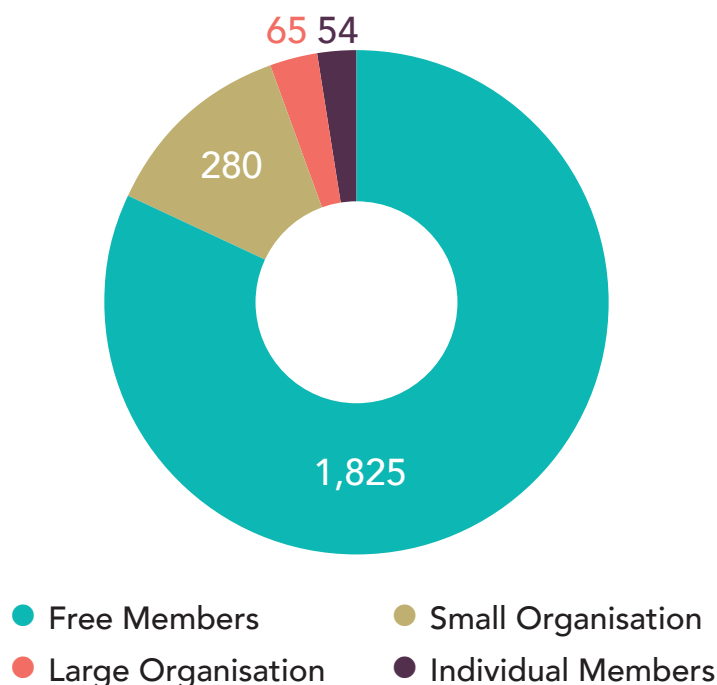
## Membership

### NALA membership up by 97% in 2017

NALA had 2,224 members in 2017. This represents a 97% increase in members since 2016.

The biggest increase was in free membership, which grew from 730 in 2016 to 1,825 in 2017. The number of large organisation members also increased during this time from 54 in 2016 to 65 in 2017. Income from membership fees was €24,650 which is a 18% increase from 2016.

### NALA membership in 2017



### Our individual and free members are:

- adult literacy students;
- tutors;
- people working in education; and
- members of the public who are interested in literacy and numeracy.

### Our small organisations members are:

- adult literacy centres;
- youthreach centres;
- schools and community training centres;
- prison, probation or Garda projects;
- National Learning Networks;
- disability support organisations; and
- traveller organisations.

### Our large organisations are:

- ETBs;
- county libraries;
- education-related national organisations; and
- organisations that are engaged in work with NALA through the Plain English Service, Literacy Awareness Training and solidarity work in the community and voluntary sector.

You can see a list of our large and small organisation members on [www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie)

In 2017, NALA worked on a strategy to recruit more free members and also to re-engage people or organisations whose membership had expired. The largest increase in free members came from a social media campaign. Free members must provide NALA with their postal address and we communicate with them by email once they have joined. NALA very much appreciates the support of all its members.

## Communicating our work

Our online communications work allows us to keep our members, education partners and the general public up to date with changes in the sector and the work we do.

In 2017, we continued to provide information through our social media platforms, our website [www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie), our monthly e-zine and our Literacy Matters magazine which is sent to members in Summer and Winter.

	2017	2016	% increase
www.nala.ie unique visitors	150,000	140,000	7% increase
www.nala.ie page views	568,000	536,000	6% increase
E-zine – sent monthly to 2,000 members	In 2017 <b>27%</b> of members opened the e-zine and <b>7.9%</b> clicked to read articles	In 2016 <b>22%</b> of members opened the e-zine and <b>5.3%</b> clicked to read articles	5% increase in open rate and 2.6% increase in click through rate
Facebook followers	7,020	4,025	74% increase
Twitter followers	3,052	2,639	15% increase

## Our interactions with people on Facebook and Twitter

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In 2017 we implemented a digital marketing strategy to help us increase our engagement with our Facebook audience. As a result our posts on Facebook were clicked on, reacted to, commented on or shared **477,000** times by our fans. The videos we posted on Facebook promoting adult literacy were watched almost **three million** times.

In 2017, NALA's tweets were seen **251,000** times and engaged with, which means they were clicked on, liked, retweeted or replied to **5,724** times by our followers.

## Impact of our media work

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In 2017, NALA's public relations activity resulted in our activities receiving coverage:

- **54** times in regional newspapers
- **13** times in national newspapers
- **14** times in trade media publications

## Radio and TV

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During 2017, NALA spokespersons were interviewed on nine national radio shows and appeared on one TV show.

## For what it's worth

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During 2017 we were able to put a monetary value on our media work. The direct advertising value of our newspaper work was €109,000. This is how much it would have cost to buy the equivalent amount of newspaper space through advertising. This newspaper coverage was also worth the equivalent of €327,000 in public relations.

The direct advertising value of our radio and TV work was €57,000. This is how much it would have cost to buy the equivalent amount of time in advertisements on radio and TV. This coverage was also worth the equivalent of €171,000 in public relations.

## Administration

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- Our administration team provided event support to over **981** delegates at **18** events in 2017.
- Our information helpline staff helped refer **800** callers to educational opportunities, including to ETB adult education centres and NALA's distance learning service. On average, each caller was given information on two routes to learning.
- The administration team had a busy year supporting members, with membership growing by **97%** in 2017. The team provided support with invoicing, renewal of memberships and registering new members and took on all administration of free members as well as maintaining the database.
- The team sent **878** information packs to individuals seeking details of learning and tutoring opportunities, an increase of **25%** on 2016.
- NALA sold **260** books to members through our resource room and online bookshop.
- The administration team prepared nearly **1,600** packs and other materials for distribution at training and sponsored events, an increase of **6.5%** on 2016.

## Structure and funding

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The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) is a member-based organisation. Our membership is open to all people and organisations interested in adult literacy and numeracy development.

At our annual general meeting, members elect a Board that oversees our work. The Board includes students and tutors, people involved in adult and further education and training, and the private sector. In 2017, the Board met seven times.

NALA is a registered company with limited and charitable status. We receive a grant from SOLAS that enables us to staff our office in Dublin and carry out our work. SOLAS, along with other Government departments, state bodies, the European Union and the private sector, also funds specific research and development work. All staff are paid according to the public sector general service pay scales.

## Governance and compliance

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NALA has always sought to operate to the highest standards and complies with the Governance Code for Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations. Even before the Governance Code was published in 2012, the organisation was engaged in benchmarking to best practice. NALA is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association and a Constitution which you can view at [www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie)



## A new level of quality

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In 2016, NALA was awarded the PQASSO quality mark at Level 1. This widely recognised award verifies the quality and credibility of an organisation. It enables us to improve the services we provide to adult literacy students, members, funders and staff. In 2017 we began working to achieve Level 2 of the PQASSO quality mark.

## Our work on data protection

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The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will be introduced in May 2018. GDPR significantly changes data protection law in Europe. It gives people greater control over how their data is used and governs the way in which every business and organisation must handle consumer and employee data. We have taken a number of steps to help us comply with the new legislation including an audit of our current data management procedures. This audit will help us to update our policies and procedures on all areas of data management including data requests, retention and destruction. NALA staff are also being provided with training to ensure they are prepared for GDPR.

## Audited accounts

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You can view or download a copy of our full audited accounts, details of our organisation's structure and board members, staff and executive committee and all our publications from [www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie)

**Patron:** Michael D Higgins, President of Ireland

**Chairperson:** Trevor Moore

**CEO:** Dr Inez Bailey

**Registered company number:** 342807

**Charity number:** CHY 8506

## Some acronyms and terms explained

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### Advocacy

Actively supporting or arguing for a cause, idea or policy, which may involve raising awareness, recommending particular actions and, or, speaking up for individuals' rights.

### AGM

Annual General Meeting

### ALOA

Adult Literacy Organisers' Association

### AONTAS

The national adult learning organisation

### Blended learning

This refers to a mix of different teaching and learning techniques. For example, a blended learning approach can combine face-to-face tuition with computer based learning.

### Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

This is the way members of professional associations maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge and skills and develop the personal qualities required in their professional lives.

### DES

Department of Education and Skills

### DEASP

Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

### DPER

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

### Distance learning

Distance learning occurs when learners and tutors are separated by either space or time. For example, a student can follow an online computer programme from their home while their tutor is in another location.

### EAAL

European Agenda for Adult Learning

### EBSN

European Basic Skills Network

### EirGrid

State-owned company that manages and operates the transmission grid across the island of Ireland

### ELINET

European Literacy Policy Network

### EPALE

European Platform for Adult Learning in Europe

### ESOL

English for Speakers of Other Languages

### ESRI

Economic and Social Research Institute

### ETB

Education and Training Board

### ETBI

Education and Training Boards Ireland – the national representative association for Ireland's 16 Education and Training Boards

### EU

European Union

## Evaluation

A process of studying something carefully and measuring its features against certain standards to see what is good or needs to be improved

## FET

Further Education and Training

## HSE

Health Service Executive

## ICGP

Irish College of General Practitioners

## Implement

Put something into place, for example carrying out the recommendations

## Integration of literacy and numeracy

Designing and delivering education and training programmes in a way that develops the course-related language, literacy and numeracy as part of the core subject

## INOUE

Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed

## Learning opportunities

The range of literacy learning options, such as individual and group tutoring, workplace literacy programmes and distance education

## Level (1 – 10) qualification

One of the 10 levels of qualifications a person can get in Ireland

## Mission

An aim of a group, an organisation or a person

## MSD

Merck Sharp & Dohme Ireland (Human Health) Ltd

## NGO

Non-Governmental organisation

## Numeracy

A life skill that involves the competent use of everyday mathematical skills and the confidence to manage the mathematical demands of real-life situations

## Objectives

Planned results to be achieved within a stated period

## Outcome

Outcome means what happened or the result of something

## Partnership

Two or more people or groups working together on an activity or to reach a particular goal

## Plain English

Plain English is a way of presenting information that helps someone understand it the first time they read or hear it.

## Policy

A course of action adopted or proposed by an organisation or person

## PQASSO

PQASSO, or Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations, is a performance evaluation system and quality mark for charitable organisations.

## Putting People First

An Irish Government plan to improve local Government

## QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland

## Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

A process used to evaluate skills and knowledge acquired outside the classroom to recognise competence against a given set of standards

## SOLAS

The authority for further education and training

## Stakeholder

A person or group with an interest (a stake) in the actions or policies of an organisation, which means that they may affect the actions or policies and or be affected by them

## Strategic

Something that forms part of or relates to a long-term plan to achieve an aim

## Survey Monkey

Survey Monkey is an online survey tool

## WIT

Waterford Institute of Technology

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**Literacy learning websites:**

[www.writeon.ie](http://www.writeon.ie)

[www.helpmykidlearn.ie](http://www.helpmykidlearn.ie)

**Plain English website:**

[www.simplyput.ie](http://www.simplyput.ie)

**Freephone support line:**

1800 20 20 65



# Looking ahead to 2018

In 2018, we will work to:

- build awareness of the importance of literacy for a more inclusive society;
- lead innovation in the teaching and learning of adult literacy, numeracy and basic digital skills;
- seek further investment in raising adult literacy levels in Ireland; and
- strengthen our organisational capacity to deliver on our strategic objectives.



**National Adult Literacy Agency**  
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

[www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie)