

Equality and Diversity Policy



NALA

National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

Policy area	HR and Recruitment
Document reference number	NALA/ED03
Version	3
Document drafted by	NALA
Date Policy approved	29 June 2022
Policy to be reviewed	Q2 2025

Equality and Diversity

Purpose

Equality is one of the core values at the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA). The purpose of policy is to demonstrate NALA's commitment to equality of opportunity in line with the requirements of the Employment Equality Acts, 1998-2015. The policy also supports the rights of people availing of goods or services under the Equal Status Acts, 2000-2018.

Our aim is to promote equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all Employees, job applicants, customers, students and all people with whom our Employees come into contact in the course of their day-to-day work.

Scope

This policy applies to all Employees and should be followed when dealing with:

1. All applicants for employment, employees and all those who work for NALA in relation to all decisions regarding recruitment and selection, promotion, access to training and terms and conditions of employment.
2. All learners and learner applicants, in relation to all decisions regarding the admission of learners to Learn With NALA and our Distance Learning Service and the provision of all services to learners including assessment, progression and award and support services.
3. All visitors, customers, contractors and clients of NALA in relation to all services, both internal and external, provided by NALA.

Policy

We promote a work environment free from unlawful discrimination. The Employment Equality Acts and the Equal Status Acts set out nine protected grounds in relation to which no discrimination should occur. These grounds are ***gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, religion and membership of the Traveller community.***

NALA is committed to equality of opportunity, and operates non-discriminatory practices in relation to access to employment, conditions of employment, access to training and experience, promotion or re-grading of posts, classification of posts, admission of learners and provision of services to all who come into contact with NALA employees through the course of their work. Employment decisions will not be made with reference to these grounds unless these are legitimate criteria given the particular situation, as permitted by legislation.

It is also the policy of NALA to recognise people as a key resource required for the successful attainment of NALA's mission. In support of this, it is important to remember the differences between people, whether derived from their different backgrounds and personalities, cultures and/or their different abilities, can be a source of strength to NALA.

Direct discrimination occurs where a person is treated less favourably than another person is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation due to one of the nine protected grounds specified in this policy.

Indirect discrimination is taken to occur where an apparently neutral provision, requirement, policy or rule puts a person with one characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared with others without that characteristic.

Procedures – Employment

Access to Employment:

- All recruitment and selection competitions will be open to all suitably qualified applicants
- Recruitment decisions will be made against specified criteria as required for the particular vacancy
- NALA will seek to ensure that the recruitment process is free from any direct or indirect discrimination on any of the nine protected grounds
- Every applicant, external or internal, will be assessed against fair and consistent criteria relating to the job
- If an applicant indicates that they have special needs, to facilitate their participation in the recruitment and selection process, reasonable accommodation will be provided, subject to this not imposing a disproportionate financial or operational burden on NALA.

Access to Training:

- Training will be provided on the basis of individual needs and the requirements of the post held by the Employee
- Selection for training will not be based on any of the nine protected grounds

- If an individual's disability impedes their ability to fully participate and engage in training activities, reasonable accommodation will be provided subject to this not imposing a disproportionate financial or operational burden on NALA
- Although every effort will be made to arrange training to facilitate attendance by part-time Employees, there is an expectation that part-time Employees will make themselves available, from time to time, to attend training outside their normal hours of work. NALA's Time in Lieu policy will apply in these instances.

Conditions of Employment:

- Terms and conditions of employment will be applied fairly to all Employees, with no reference to any of the grounds in the Employment Equality Acts
- NALA seeks to provide equal pay for like work
- NALA endeavours to provide a work environment free from bullying, harassment or sexual harassment.

Promotion:

- There will be equality of opportunity at all stages of the promotions process
- Selection for promotion will be based on defined criteria related to the requirements of the post, and no reference will be made to the nine protected grounds of equality in the selection process.

Classification of Posts:

- Gender neutral job titles will be used and no reference will be made to any of the other eight grounds in classifying positions.

Reasonable Accommodation:

- Reasonable accommodation shall be provided in order to facilitate a person with a disability to apply for positions with NALA, to attend for interview, to engage in employment and to participate in training activities as applicable
- This commitment is subject to such reasonable accommodation not presenting a disproportionate burden on NALA, unless otherwise deemed appropriate.

Equal Status:

- No person will be discriminated against or treated adversely while availing of goods or services provided by NALA, except where this is legally permitted and undertaken with a legitimate aim. No person availing of goods or services should be subject to bullying, harassment or sexual harassment while availing of these
- Any complaints in this respect should be brought to the attention of your Manager.

Any Employee who feels that there has been a breach of this policy or procedure may raise the matter through NALA's grievance procedure. No Employee will be subject to adverse treatment as a consequence of raising a complaint in relation to this policy. NALA will monitor the workplace for incidents of victimisation following a complaint.

NALA will take appropriate disciplinary action towards an Employee who fails to follow this Equality and Diversity Policy.

Procedures - Learners and Learner Applicants***Advertising and Information***

NALA's publications and advertisements for learner recruitment will state its commitment to Equality and Diversity. Language and images used in all publications, written and electronic material will not be discriminatory. NALA will make available for all learners, information on its policy and procedures with respect to admissions, complaints, equality, harassment (including sexual harassment) and bullying.

Admissions

Fundamental to the implementation of NALA's Admissions Policy are the principles of Equality and Diversity, and in particular, equality of access, of participation and of outcome. This applies to all learners accessing NALA's Learn with NALA eLearning platform and Distance Learning Service.

We welcome and support people with disabilities. We will make reasonable accommodations and endeavour to meet specific learning requirements.

Curriculum Development and Learning Materials

It is the responsibility of the Learn with NALA Co-ordinator, the Adult Literacy Educators and all employees whose duties include the design and delivery of teaching and or training curricula, to

promote equality and diversity and to avoid bias and discrimination in these areas. All employees are encouraged to capitalise on opportunities to promote equality and diversity, where appropriate, through the design and delivery of teaching and training curricula.

Procedures – All

NALA will demonstrate its commitment to equality and diversity by using non-discriminatory language and images in all its documents and publications. Everyone is expected to seek to ensure that their written, spoken and electronically transmitted or published material does not contain language that may knowingly cause offence to others. Rather than be prescriptive about use of language, employees and learners are asked to exercise good judgement and be aware of common, inappropriate or offensive references to any of the nine grounds.

If a member of the public (including visitors and contractors) feels that they have been discriminated against on the grounds of discrimination listed above, they can submit a complaint in accordance with NALA's Complaints Policy which is available on NALA's website.

Review

This policy will be reviewed in three years from the date it was approved or earlier if changes in the law affect this policy.

