



Information for ETBs

NALA's new online learning platform, [Learn with NALA](#), was launched in February 2020 and builds on the expertise, experience and insights gained through the 11 years of the former platform www.writeon.ie. During that time, NALA has supported over 200 ETB centres and their learners in accessing level 1 to 4 courses in reading, writing, maths and technology with Major and Minor Award certification options at level 2 (General Learning) and level 3 (ICT, Employability Skills and General Learning). See Appendix 1 for a full list of courses.

Learn with NALA can be used by ETB centres in multiple ways to support learners, including:

- As a resource to support or re-inforce learning in addition to classroom learning.
- As a blended learning tool to support delivery of content during classroom learning.
- As an independent learning tool that learners can follow at their own pace.

The 'Registered WriteOn Centre' process that existed for the WriteOn platform has now been replaced with a [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#) process for Learn with NALA. To date, **one hundred and twenty five** centres across **fifteen ETB** areas have been set up on Learn with NALA.

Designed to overcome traditional barriers to learning and bring more learning and certification opportunities to adults, use of this platform in ETBs seems even more pertinent in light of the current challenges of COVID-19.

Learn with NALA features

Incorporating feedback from the ETBI National Advisory Committee, requirements for a new system were drawn up in 2018 and development work on our new platform began in 2019.

The new platform has already exceeded our expectations in what it can offer ETBs.

- **ETB centres** have access to the back end of the system and can **monitor their learners**, enabling tutors to have oversight on how their learners are progressing.
- Learners using the site who register through their centre have a large banner with **the logo of their centre on their home page**.
- Learners in ETB centres are **not asked** for data for PLSS purposes.
- Interactive content for all courses is available and be used in a self-directed or blended learning context.
- Uniquely '**Recognition of Prior Learning**' is built into all courses allowing learners to skip to final assessment if they demonstrate the relevant skills.
- Learners receive **digital badges** as they progress through courses.
- **Assessment** questions are **randomised**.
- **QQI certification** options are available currently at levels 2 and 3.
- **Certificates** achieved by learners are **sent to the ETB** to be presented.
- The platform is presented via a clear, **user friendly** and **mobile responsive** website.

Recognition of Prior Learning

A mechanism for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is built-in to all QQI certified Learn with NALA courses. This allows a learner who can demonstrate their skills to skip the course and go to the final assessment. Learners can decide to complete a section called 'What do I already know' at the start of the course. Whatever questions they get correct in this section allows them to skip those parts of the course. E.g. if they get the question about recognising devices correct in the Using Technology course, they can skip that section in the course. If they get everything correct, they can skip the whole course and go straight to the final / summative assessment.

Certification process

All level 2 and 3 courses on Learn with NALA are certified by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) through NALA's Quality Assurance agreement and Course Validation agreements with

QQI. ETB centres are free to put learners forward for QQI certification through the Learn with NALA platform or through their own centre based certification process:

- If learners complete the ETB centre-based assessment and certification process then the process is governed by the ETB centre's QQI Quality Assurance and Course Validation agreements. These learners are registered with QQI via the ETB centre's QBS profile.
- If learners complete the Learn with NALA online assessment process (i.e. they complete the course and complete the summative assessment and portfolio requirements) then the process is governed by NALA's QQI Quality Assurance and Course Validation agreements. The assessment is processed via NALA's assessment process (Internal Verification, External Authentication and Results Approval) before being submitted to QQI via NALA's QBS profile. QQI send the certificates to NALA who in turn post them to each ETB centre to award to their learners.

In both cases, the ETB centre records the certification outcome in the learner's PLSS record as normal.

SOLAS funding

ETB centres that use Learn with NALA will register all their own learners with PLSS as normal. NALA does not register any ETB learners on PLSS as of January 2020.

SOLAS is very supportive of ETBs using Learn with NALA in reaching their certification outcomes and has confirmed that:

- There are no funding implications for ETB programmes that use any or all of the features of Learn with NALA including certification.
- There is no link between QBS and PLSS. Reports and statistics from QQI's QBS system are not linked with PLSS or in any way involved when ETB reports are created or when ETB funding requests are under consideration.

Professional Development

In 2020, NALA began the process of creating online and [blended professional development courses](#) from the wealth of resources and training materials within the agency. The first three courses have now been launched (green below) and will be followed in 2021 with three more courses (black below):

1. **Introduction to Integrating Literacy**
2. **A practical guide to Integrating Literacy**
3. **Integrated Literacy lesson planning workshop**
4. Preparing learning materials
5. Literacy awareness training: understanding literacy
6. Literacy awareness training: delivering a literacy friendly service

All courses are available online for free for ETB centre literacy practitioners and staff.

NALA membership

NALA has been a membership organisation since 1980 and encourages all organisations it works with to become members. Membership fees, which are nominal, apply to small organisations at €50 and large organisations (e.g. an ETB and up to two of their centres) at €150 per year. Many benefits accrue to membership, including a monthly e-zine update, voting rights at NALA's AGM, receipt printed editions of the Literacy Matters magazine twice per year, discounts for events and professional development opportunities, access to the Student Development Fund, discounts on NALA's plain English services, access to the Better World Book Fund and access to Learn with NALA.

ETBs have been members of NALA for decades and regularly nominate their staff and Board members for election to the NALA Board. Currently 10 ETBs are Large Organisation members of NALA. From these 10 ETBs, an additional 40 centres are Small Organisation members of NALA. Within the remaining 6 ETBs, 55 centres are Small Organisation members of NALA.

The fees generated through membership amount to approximately €25K per year and is declared to SOLAS in annual accounts. As a charity that receives funding commitments on an annual basis from SOLAS, it is vital that NALA builds up other income to support its work.

NALA uses this additional income annually to further support services to the sector with the vast majority allocated to services to ETBs. For example, in both 2018 and 2019, much of the additional income generated was used to extend the Student Development Fund beyond the SOLAS committed budget. NALA also supports centres outside of ETBs and having all these groups in membership helps build communities of practice between organisations as well as providing an efficient administrative process for NALA to operate, i.e., one database.

In many cases ETBs draw down significant funding supports from NALA through their membership. For example, a large organisation member that pays €150 membership can access up to €1,300 funding through the Student Development Fund and up to €1,000 through the Better World Book Fund per year.

Appendix 1 - Courses on Learn with NALA

Courses with QQI certification options

Courses in green are available on Learn with NALA from 9 March 2021. Courses in black will follow later in the year.

Major Awards:

1. Level 2 General Learning
2. Level 3 General Learning
3. Level 3 Employability Skills
4. Level 3 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Minor Awards:

1. Level 2 Reading
2. Level 2 Writing
3. Level 2 Listening and Speaking
4. Level 2 Quantity and Number
5. Level 2 Pattern and Relationship
6. Level 2 Setting Learning Goals
7. Level 2 Personal Decision Making
8. Level 2 Using Technology
9. Level 2 Shape and Space
10. Level 2 Data Handling
11. Level 2 Quantitative Problem Solving
12. Level 2 Computer Skills
13. Level 3 Personal Effectiveness
14. Level 3 Career Preparation
15. Level 3 Mathematics
16. Level 3 Communications
17. Level 3 Personal and Interpersonal Skills
18. Level 3 Computer Literacy
19. Level 3 Digital Media
20. Level 3 Internet Skills
21. Level 3 Application of Number
22. Level 3 Functional Mathematics
23. Level 3 Self Advocacy
24. Level 3 Event Participation
25. Level 3 Health and Safety Awareness
26. Level 3 Managing Personal Finances

Other courses: Course aligned to QQI Minor Awards:

These courses follow QQI Minor Award specification but do not have certification options as yet on Learn with NALA. Courses in green are available on Learn with NALA from 9 March 2021. Courses in black will follow later in the year.

1. **Level 1 Reading**
2. **Level 1 Writing**
3. **Level 1 Quantity and Number**
4. **Level 1 Data Handling**
5. **Level 1 Personal Decision Making**
6. **Level 1 Using Technology**
7. **Level 1 Computer Skills**
8. **Level 1 Pattern and Relationship**
9. Level 1 Listening and Speaking
10. Level 1 Shape and Space
11. Level 1 Problem Solving
12. Level 1 Setting Learning Goals
13. Level 4 Mathematics
14. Level 4 Communications
15. Level 4 Digital Media Technology

Preparing for Level 3 Courses:

1. Numbers
2. Measurement
3. Problem Solving
4. Algebra
5. Reading
6. Writing
7. Interpersonal Communications.