



Reengagement Panel Report

Assessment of Capacity and Approval of QA Procedures

Part 1 Details of provider

1.1 Applicant Provider

Registered Business/Trading Name:	National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)
Address:	Sandford Lodge, Sandford Close, Ranelagh, Dublin 6, Ireland D06 YF65
Date of Application:	11.06.19
Date of resubmission of application:	
Date of evaluation:	
Date of site visit (if applicable):	27.09.2019
Date of reconvene meeting (if applicable)	26.11.2019
Date of recommendation to the Programmes and Awards Executive Committee:	6 February 2020

1.2 Profile of provider

The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) was established in 1980 in order to tackle the literacy difficulties experienced by a significant proportion of the adult population in Ireland. NALA defines literacy as reading, writing, working with numbers, listening and speaking, and using everyday technology to communicate and handle information. NALA's vision is an Ireland where adult literacy is a valued right, where everyone can develop their literacy skills and where individuals can take part fully in society.

In order to achieve its vision, NALA¹:

- Lobbies for further investment to raise adult literacy levels;

¹ NALA Strategic Plan 2017-2019 (p5)



- Helps people to develop the literacy, numeracy and digital skills that they need to play their full part in society;
- Engages with and responds to the needs of its members;
- Works with education providers, particularly the Education and Training Boards (ETBs), to identify and share best practice in how to teach adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills;
- Helps make learning and courses more accessible to people with literacy and numeracy needs;
- Supports organisations and services to be aware of literacy and to communicate clearly; and
- Conducts research into literacy needs and best practice in teaching and learning.

NALA's three main objectives as stated in its Strategic Plan (2017-2019) are to:

- build awareness of the importance of literacy for a more inclusive Ireland;
- lead innovation in the teaching and learning of adult literacy, numeracy and basic digital skills; and
- seek further investment in raising adult literacy and numeracy levels in Ireland.

NALA's Distance Learning Service (DLS) offers distance learning opportunities free of charge to adult learners who wish to improve their literacy, numeracy and digital skills. Since 2000 the DLS has used technologies such as television, radio, internet and telecommunications to offer learners varied ways of learning. Since 2008 NALA offers learning at Levels 1 to 4 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) through its eLearning website www.writeon.ie (WriteOn). A number of minor and major awards at Levels 2 and 3 have been validated, through the former Further Education Training and Awards Council (FETAC):

- Level 2 Major Award in General Learning (12 minor awards available),
- Level 3 Major Award in General Learning (14 minor awards available),
- Level 3 Major Award in ICT (14 minor awards available),
- Level 3 Major Award in Employability Skills (14 minor awards available).

Since 2008, over 6,000 learners have gained over 2,500 major awards and 36,800 minor awards at Level 2 and Level 3 through WriteOn.

Learners engage with WriteOn independently or through Centres throughout Ireland who use WriteOn as a blended learning tool. Centres who wish to use WriteOn for certification must go through a training and registration process to become a Registered WriteOn Centre. Currently there are 180 such Centres in Ireland.



Part 2 Panel Membership

Name	Role of panel member	Organisation
David Treacy	Panel Chair	Former Director of Further Education and Training, City of Dublin ETB (CDETB)
Angela Higgins	Panel Member	Education Development Officer, Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB)
David Collins	Panel Member	Training Manager, Chevron Training and Recruitment Ltd
Dr Catherine Maunsell	Panel Member	Associate Professor of Psychology and Human Development, Institute of Education, Dublin City University
Jan Cairns	Panel Member / Report Writer	Quality Assurance Officer, Technological University Dublin

Part 3 Findings of the Panel

3.1 Summary Findings

The purpose of the re-engagement process is to evaluate providers' QA procedures to ensure public accountability and to provide public confidence in them. The formal published evaluation of provider QA procedures by QQI improves public confidence in the programmes offered by providers e.g. that they enable learners to achieve intended learning outcomes and provide them with a well-supported learning experience.

The Panel received NALA's Application Form for Re-engagement, NALA's Quality Manual and other relevant documentation. It also requested further information following its planning meeting prior to its visit to NALA. The Panel thanks NALA for the provision of this information and for its engagement with the Panel during the site visit.

The Panel commends NALA on the following:

- NALA's continued role in championing and supporting adult literacy;
- The development and validation of accredited learning and the numbers of students who have engaged with NALA to achieve certification;
- The quality culture within NALA that ensures constant review and enhancement of its programmes and its processes;



- Its governance structures and the introduction of the new sub-committee with responsibility for Education, Training and Assessment.

Notwithstanding this, the Panel identified areas of concern relating to the verification of learners for assessment, the role of the various Centres who use NALA's WriteOn website for accreditation purposes and the implications for the NALA QA Procedures and the External Authentication process and agreed proposed mandatory changes in respect of these as outlined in Part 6, 6.1 of this report.

The Panel was of the view that the matters identified could be addressed promptly by NALA and therefore it availed of the option to defer its final decision to allow NALA six weeks to respond to these proposed mandatory changes and submit evidence that the changes identified had been satisfactorily addressed.

The Panel reconvened on 26 November 2019 following a desk review of the response from NALA and the evidence submitted. It was the Panel's view that, based on the evidence submitted for the meeting of 26 November, while much progress had been made to address the proposed mandatory changes and specific advice identified by the Panel, NALA had not satisfactorily addressed all proposed mandatory changes. The Panel consequently recommended that QQI refuse to approve NALA's QA procedures, pending a mandatory change relating to the need for a NALA business contingency plan.

NALA responded to this outcome by bringing to QQI's attention that such a Business Contingency Plan already existed. QQI agreed to bring the Business Contingency Plan to the Panel's attention at that point, and upon request by QQI, the Panel reviewed the Business Contingency Plan. The Panel indicates that while the Business Contingency Plan was referenced in the original Quality Manual submitted, NALA had not brought the document to the Panel's attention as it had not perceived it to be required. However, it is pleased to review the NALA Business Continuity Plan provided in December as requested by QQI. It notes that this document contains new information that was not contained in the original submission or in the subsequent documents supplied by NALA during the six week period provided by the Panel. The Panel believes that this document does respond satisfactorily to the Panel's concerns in relation to the requirements of 3.2.2 of the Guidelines. Therefore, it is happy to change its recommendation to QQI and it consequently recommends that QQI approves NALA's QA procedures.

Further Specific Advices are noted within Part 5 and Part 6 (6.2) of the report.



3.2 Recommendation of the panel to Programmes and Awards Executive Committee of QQI

	Tick <u>one</u> as appropriate
Approve [the provider's – insert name] draft QA procedures	✓
Refuse approval of [the provider's – insert name] draft QA procedures with mandatory changes set out in Section 6.1 (If this recommendation is accepted by QQI, the provider may make a revised application within six months of the decision)	
Refuse to approve [the provider's – insert name] draft QA procedures	



Part 4 Evaluation of provider capacity

4.1 Legal and compliance requirements:

	Criteria	Yes/No/ Partially	Comments
4.1.1(a)	Criterion: <i>Is the applicant an established Legal Entity who has Education and/or Training as a Principal Function?</i>	Yes	NALA provided its Certificate of Incorporation to the Panel.
4.1.2(a)	Criterion: <i>Is the legal entity established in the European Union and does it have a substantial presence in Ireland?</i>	Yes	NALA is based entirely in Ireland and has a substantial presence in that learners participate in NALA's provision across Ireland.
4.1.3(a)	Criterion: <i>Are any dependencies, collaborations, obligations, parent organisations, and subsidiaries clearly specified?</i>	Yes	NALA currently has no dependencies, collaborations, obligations, parent organisations and subsidiaries. It has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) and with the registered Centres who support students to use WriteOn.
4.1.4(a)	Criterion: <i>Are any third-party relationships and partnerships compatible with the scope of access sought?</i>	Yes	NALA has third party relationships with various centres across Ireland who support students to use WriteOn, NALA's eLearning website. Memoranda of Understanding are in place with these centres. These arrangements do not give rise to legal obligations.
4.1.5(a)	Criterion: <i>Are the applicable regulations and legislation complied with in all jurisdictions where it operates?</i>	Yes	NALA operates exclusively in Ireland. It complies with all relevant regulations and legislation.
4.1.6(a)	Criterion: <i>Is the applicant in good standing in the qualifications systems and</i>	Yes	NALA is in good standing in the qualifications systems in Ireland. Currently it offers



<p><i>education and training systems in any countries where it operates (or where its parents or subsidiaries operate) or enrolls learners, or where it has arrangements with awarding bodies, quality assurance agencies, qualifications authorities, ministries of education and training, professional bodies and regulators.</i></p>		<p>programmes leading to minor and major awards validated by FETAC and accredited by QQI.</p>
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Findings

The Panel received various documentation from NALA prior to its site visit such as its Certificate of Incorporation, Company Registration details and on this basis the Panel is satisfied that NALA meets the legal and compliance requirements for reengagement.

**4.2 Resource, governance and structural requirements:**

	Criteria	Yes/No/ Partially	Comments
4.2.1(a)	Criterion: <i>Does the applicant have a sufficient resource base and is it stable and in good financial standing?</i>	Yes	The Panel received audited accounts as part of NALA's application.
4.2.2(a)	Criterion: <i>Does the applicant have a reasonable business case for sustainable provision?</i>	Yes	NALA is a charity with a strong mission to tackle the literacy difficulties experienced by a significant proportion of the adult population in Ireland. NALA cites an OECD Survey of Adult Skills, 2012 that one in six Irish adults (18%: 550,057) have difficulty with reading and writing. One in four adults (25%: 763,969) struggle with everyday maths, and two in five adults (42%: 1,283,467) in Ireland are at Level 1 in technology.
4.2.3(a)	Criterion: <i>Are fit-for-purpose governance, management and decision-making structures in place?</i>	Yes	NALA has a Board with the following sub-committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff and Policy Sub-committee• Audit and Finance Sub-committee• Education, Training and Assessment Sub-committee• Student Sub-committee The membership and key functions (terms of reference) are stated in NALA's Quality Assurance Manual.
4.2.4(a)	Criterion: <i>Are there arrangements in place for providing required information to QQI?</i>	Yes	NALA has a member of staff who has a direct responsibility to liaise with QQI – QQI Co-ordinator.

Findings

Given the above, the Panel considers that NALA has a sufficient resource base and is stable and in good financial standing. It also considers that there is strong evidence that NALA has a reasonable business case for sustainable provision.

The Panel was provided with details of the NALA's Board and Sub-Committee structure, with membership and terms of reference. On that basis as well as the Panel's discussions with NALA management during its visit, the Panel considers that NALA has fit-for-purpose governance, management and decision-making structures in place.

**4.3 Programme development and provision requirements:**

	Criteria	Yes/No/ Partially	Comments
4.3.1(a)	Criterion: <i>Does the applicant have experience and a track record in providing education and training programmes?</i>	Yes	NALA was established in 1980 and has a track record since 2008 of providing education and training programmes leading to accreditation.
4.3.2(a)	Criterion: <i>Does the applicant have a fit-for-purpose and stable complement of education and training staff?</i>	Yes	NALA has a CEO and 20 full-time members of staff. It also maintains a panel of contract staff as tutors for its Distance Learning Service.
4.3.3(a)	Criterion: <i>Does the applicant have the capacity to comply with the standard conditions for validation specified in Section 45(3) of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012) (the Act)?</i>	Yes	On the basis of the organisational and governance structure of NALA, and its application for reengagement, the Panel considers that NALA has the capacity to comply with the standard conditions for validation as specified in Sections 45 (3)
4.3.4(a)	Criterion: <i>Does the applicant have the fit-for-purpose premises, facilities and resources to meet the requirements of the provision proposed in place?</i>	Yes, following the reconvened Panel's meeting on 26 th November 2019.	NALA's provision is delivered either through the Distance Learning Service or through the WriteOn programme which is delivered online. The Panel viewed and was impressed with the content of the programmes on WriteOn. However, it noted that the IT system was over ten years old and while it has stood the tests of time the Panel had concerns about the VLE's capacity to verify the identity of learners, guarding against cheating, plagiarism and other kinds of unfair advantage. It also noted that there was no security certificate for webpages that collect personal data. The Panel noted that NALA is moving to a new online system which will allow further enhancements in this regard. The Panel was satisfied with the information provided in response to



			<p>this concern summarising how the new platform and its service provider will ensure compliance with relevant guidelines on blended learning.</p> <p>NALA's staff are based in its premises in Sandford Lodge.</p> <p>While learners may also be based in other Centres, this is not a requirement for registering for an award and so the facilities provided at these Centres are not the responsibility of NALA.</p>
4.3.5(a)	Criterion: <i>Are there access, transfer and progression arrangements that meet QQI's criteria for approval in place?</i>	Yes	The Panel is of the view that NALA's stated mission is to support access, transfer and progression opportunities, and considers that its arrangements in this regard are appropriate.
4.3.6(a)	Criterion: <i>Are structures and resources to underpin fair and consistent assessment of learners in place?</i>	Yes, following the reconvened Panel's meeting on 26 th November 2019.	NALA's eLearning website WriteOn is an assessment tool for accreditation as well as a learning tool. While the Panel was impressed with WriteOn as a piece of instructional design, it had concerns regarding the ability of NALA's system to comply with QQI's Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes and its Assessment and Standards document 2013 in relation to the verification of assessment. The Panel agreed proposed mandatory changes in this regard. The Panel was satisfied with the information provided in response to this concern summarising how the new platform and its service provider will ensure compliance with relevant guidelines on blended learning. It also noted that there shall be no further assessments through WriteOn in 2019



			and the current website will not be used again.
4.3.7(a)	Criterion: <i>Are arrangements for the protection of enrolled learners to meet the statutory obligations in place (where applicable)?</i>	Not Applicable	As NALA's provision is free to all learners, arrangements for the protection of enrolled learners are not required.

Findings

The Panel agreed proposed mandatory changes in relation to Criterion 4.3.4 (a) and 4.3.6 (a). Following its meeting on 26th November 2019, the Panel agrees that these proposed mandatory changes have been addressed.

4.4 Overall findings in respect of provider capacity to provide sustainable education and training

The Panel is of the view that the documentation submitted by NALA as part of its application for reengagement indicates that NALA has the capacity to provide sustainable education and training, subject to a satisfactory response in respect of the Panel's agreed proposed mandatory changes.

Part 5 Evaluation of draft QA Procedures submitted by NALA

The following is the panel's findings following evaluation of National Adult Literacy Service quality assurance procedures against QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (April 2016) and Topic Specific QA Guidelines - Blended Learning. Sections 1-11 of the report follows the structure and referencing of the Core QA Guidelines.

1 GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF QUALITY**Panel Findings:**

NALA's Governance and Management of Quality Policy sets out the governance structure of NALA. NALA's Board takes overall responsibility for NALA and how it operates. The Board has four subcommittees:

- Audit and Finance Sub-committee
- Education, Training and Assessment Sub-committee
- Staff and Policy Sub-committee
- Student Sub-committee.



The composition of these sub-committees and their main duties are set out within the Quality Assurance Manual. During the Panel's site visit, NALA staff explained the extensive process undertaken in preparation for its application for reengagement, including both internal self-assessment and external consultation. This review and gap analysis exercise, taking into account QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines process, led to the decision in 2018 to constitute a new sub-committee to take particular responsibility for quality – the Education, Training and Assessment Committee – to ensure greater alignment with QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines.

The Panel was pleased to meet the Chairperson of the Education, Training and Assessment Sub-Committee. This sub-committee was established to oversee the education provision in NALA and to advise on the future development of the programme. The sub-committee has the remit to review all policies and procedures in relation to NALA'S education provision. The Education, Training and Assessment subcommittee has a broad range of expertise and is made up of members including learner representatives, Education and Training Board (ETB) practitioners, Further Education and Training (FET) practitioners and Higher Education Authority (HEA) representatives. NALA'S CEO is also a member. As well as responsibility for policy development, it also scrutinises proposals for new programmes and carries out reviews of existing programmes, including consideration of all self-evaluation and learner feedback reports. Currently this sub-committee also undertakes the role of results approval board, once the internal verification and external authentication processes are completed. This appears to be time-consuming work as it involves checking that matters arising in one part of the process have been resolved.

The Panel commends the establishment of the Education, Training and Assessment Committee which it considers plays a key role in the management of quality. It also welcomes the diversity of its membership. While the Panel acknowledges that this is a relatively new committee and has not yet had time to reflect on its role, it agrees Specific Advice and recommends that the Education, Training and Assessment Sub-committee should have oversight of all aspects of the procedures in respect of assessment including results but that the External Authentication group itself should serve as a Results Approval Board providing that there is a separation of membership from the Internal Verification group. This would, the Panel considers, remove this workload from the Education, Training and Assessment Sub-committee to allow time for considering the effectiveness of the QA policy and procedures. It also recommends that the Education, Training and Assessment Sub-committee should embed a plan for reflecting on its work over time. The Panel considers that this would result in the revision of its terms of reference in order to formalise its important role in quality assurance and enhancement.

During its site visit the Panel met with the Innovation Manager and the QQI Co-ordinator who both have important roles in relation to teaching and learning and quality assurance. In commending these positions, the Panel agrees Specific Advice and recommends that one or both of these posts should be included in the membership of relevant sub-committees, in particular the Education, Training and Assessment Sub-committee, the Internal Verification group and the External Authentication group to strengthen further these roles as well as ensure the input of these important roles to the management of quality policy and procedures.

On the basis of the documentation submitted by NALA, in particular the Quality Assurance Manual and the application for reengagement, the Panel is satisfied that appropriate governance is in place for the management of quality within NALA. It considers that there is a clear reporting line between the Board and its Sub-committees. It particularly welcomes the establishment of the Education, Training and



Assessment Sub-committee, while making recommendations in relation to a review of its terms of reference as well as strengthening its membership.

2 DOCUMENTED APPROACH TO QUALITY ASSURANCE

Panel Findings:

The work undertaken by NALA in preparation for reengagement with QQI is acknowledged by the Panel. In the past two years NALA has carried out an in-depth process to self-assess, update and develop new policies and procedures. Having completed this review, all Quality Assurance policies and procedures were then collated into the Quality Assurance Manual in 2019. NALA sought external expert advice at various stages during this process to give feedback on governance, the structure of policies and procedures, document management, general observations and feedback on specific procedures. The Panel commended this comprehensive approach to the review of its quality assurance policies and procedures and the external input into this process.

The Quality Assurance Manual provides information on NALA, its educational provision, the evolution of NALA quality assurance, and all relevant policies, procedures, NALA Board and sub-committees structure, membership and main duties (terms of reference). This includes the following policies:

- Government and Management of Quality
- Programme Approval, Development, Evaluation and Review Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment of Learners Policy
- Supports for Learners Policy
- Staff recruitment Policy
- Staff Training and Development Policy
- NALA GDPR Policy
- NALA Subject Access Request Policy
- Communications Policy
- External Parties Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy

The Governance and Management of Quality Policy aims to ensure that:

- All NALA employees, Board members and ambassadors are aware of and support the agency's approach to quality.
- An appropriate quality assurance system (a set of quality assurance policies and procedures) is in place to realise the vision and mission of the agency.
- Structures are in place to monitor and review the effectiveness of such policies.

The Panel has already commended the establishment of the Education, Training and Assessment Sub-committee and has agreed Specific Advice in this regard. Following discussion with NALA and the Chair of the Education, Training and Assessment Sub-committee, the Panel was pleased to note that this sub-committee also receives and considers data on student evaluations of programmes as well as student performance and completion data. It advises that this might be more specifically addressed within its main duties/terms of reference.



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

Having read NALA's Application for Reengagement and its Quality Assurance Manual, and having met members of NALA staff, the Panel is satisfied that an appropriate quality assurance system (a set of quality assurance policies and procedures) is in place that aligns with QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and that structures are in place to monitor and review the effectiveness of such policies. Furthermore, it is pleased to note that there appears to be a strong shared commitment to quality at all levels within NALA.

**3 PROGRAMMES OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING****Panel Findings:**

NALA's Programme Approval, Development, Evaluation and Review Policy states that 'regular evaluation is a key element of good adult literacy work. NALA is committed to a policy of monitoring on an ongoing basis and self-evaluation at key points in the programme'. The policy aims to ensure that 'programmes are designed to meet the needs of adult literacy learners and programmes are critically reflected upon and continuously improved upon through self-evaluation, monitoring and review'.

The Panel is satisfied that the processes and procedures for the quality assurance of its programmes of education and training are comprehensive and fit-for-purpose and are in accordance with QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines. Roles and responsibilities in this regard are also clearly outlined.

The Panel discussed with NALA how student evaluations and data on student performance and completion was considered and it transpired that this fell within the remit of the Education, Training and Assessment Subcommittee as the committee with responsibility for monitoring evaluation and review findings. The Panel has already noted Specific Advice in relation to the terms of reference of the Education, Training and Assessment Sub-committee.

Currently NALA delivers learning at Levels One to Four on the National Framework of Qualifications, with certification through minor and major awards at Levels Two and Three. It is planned to offer certification for Level 1 learning in the future.

Panel members had been given access to NALA's WriteOn website and so they had been able to register as a learner and participate in the learning exercises and assessments. The Panel is impressed with WriteOn as a piece of instructional design but noted that the programmes as currently constructed did not meet the QQI QA Guidelines for Blended Learning and this has resulted in the Panel offering Specific Advice that NALA should review their current programmes and submit for validation as soon as possible to inform both its blended learning approach and ensure compliance with QQI Guidelines. It is noted that NALA has completed a procurement process for a new online platform and this will be in place by the end of 2019. The urgency to revise the programmes and achieve validation is apparent as the new IT system is currently being developed and should meet the requirements of the revised programmes when validated.



4 STAFF RECRUITMENT, MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Panel Findings:

There are clear and transparent criteria and development processes in place to ensure that new and current staff have the appropriate experience for their role. The Quality Assurance Manual includes policies on Staff Recruitment and Staff Training and Development as well as related procedures.

NALA currently has 20 full-time members of staff including its CEO. It also employs a panel of (part-time) 13 NALA DLS Tutors and Learning Support Workers.

The Staff Training and Development Policy states that there are three levels of training: organisational training and development; professional development; and personal development. For NALA, identifying training and development needs and helping individuals to improve their performance are key issues, as is measuring the effectiveness of any training and development undertaken by staff. All training and development initiatives in which NALA invests are fundamentally connected to and must support the Strategic Plan. Performance Management is a key element of NALA's Training and Development Policy and therefore the purpose of any training and development activity is to improve individual performance, thereby contributing to and enhancing the performance of the organisation.

5 TEACHING AND LEARNING

Panel Findings:

The Panel is satisfied that NALA's Teaching and Learning Policy and associated procedures as documented within the Quality Assurance Manual are in accordance with QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines.

NALA's Distance Learning Service (DLS) offers distance learning opportunities free of charge to adult learners who wish to improve their literacy, numeracy and digital skills. Since 2000 the DLS has used technologies such as television, radio, internet and telecommunications to offer learners varied ways of learning. Since 2008 NALA offers learning at Levels 1 to 4 of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) through its eLearning website www.writeon.ie (WriteOn). A number of minor and major awards at Levels 2 and 3 have been validated, through the Further Education Training and Awards Council (FETAC):

- Level 2 Major Award in General Learning, (12 minor awards available)
- Level 3 Major Award in General Learning (14 minor awards available),
- Level 3 Major Award in ICT (14 minor awards available),
- Level 3 Major Award in Employability Skills (14 minor awards available).

WriteOn learners can be either:

- Distance Learners who have the support of a NALA Distance Learning Tutor through one-to-one 30 minute sessions each week;



- Independent learners who can work by themselves but do have the support of the NALA Freephone service and access to NALA Distance Learner Tutor Support if needed;
- Learners who attend a registered WriteOn Centre who use WriteOn as a blended learning tool.

NALA appoints a panel of part-time staff as DLS Tutors who deliver the Basic Learning Skills Programme and they evaluate each session with their learners as well as a more in-depth six week review. These tutors also provide additional support as necessary to WriteOn Learners, and they act as NALA Assessors. The DLS Tutor Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the Basic Learning Skills Programme (phone sessions) is monitored on an ongoing basis and for the periodic self-evaluation of the programme.

Role of Registered Centres

The Panel notes that as a result of NALA's gap analysis with respect to its relationship with its Registered Centres a Memorandum of Understanding replaced the Registration and Terms and Conditions Form in 2018. The Panel notes NALA's engagement with these Registered Centres and the training that takes place.

The Panel also notes that many of these Registered WriteOn Centres are Education and Training Centres with their own QA procedures, while more recently other disability services, Probation services and other community groups have registered as Centres. In order to register, Centres must go through a training process and NALA offers training and support to Centres on an ongoing basis as required. Each Centre signs a standard MOU which sets out the responsibilities of the Centre and of NALA.

Initial training for Centres on how to use WriteOn includes the technical aspects of the programme, quality assurance and the accreditation process. WriteOn Centres are continually supported through the NALA DLS team and DLS Administrator to deal with any queries or issues that may arise.

NALA was asked how the Centres who provided teaching and learning fitted into their QA process. NALA explained that a learner undertaking certification through WriteOn may or may not be attending a Centre as approximately 30% of learners submitting for certification are independent learners. Therefore, any tuition that is provided to learners through their attendance at a Centre is *additional* to the learning delivered through the WriteOn website itself, and from NALA's point of view, WriteOn delivers all the learning and teaching required, as well as assessment for certification, and it is that teaching and learning for which NALA has responsibility.

Following this discussion, the Panel understands better the NALA view of their relationship with the Centres in relation to the delivery of WriteOn, and why these Centres are described by NALA as second providers and not collaborative providers.

The MOU set out a very limited role for the Centres in respect of the management of QA. It specified that the Centres "*must ensure that assessments are the work of a single learner*", they must provide "*secure storage for the learner information*" and "*manage learner registration on WriteOn*". The Panel noted that the MOU did not specify how assessments should be managed. It was also noted that for centres that provide teaching and learning there is not recognition of this in the MOU and no specific requirements set out. Yet the Panel was clearly informed that Centres do use WriteOn as part of a blended learning programme and for certification. However, it notes that the Centres might have some



impact on the assessment if learners are completing assessment for certification while attending a centre, and it considers that, as a proposed mandatory change, it should be clearly stated and agreed what the role of each centre, or type of centre, might be within the Memorandum of Understanding (see Part 6, 6.1).

Having availed of the option to defer its decision, the Panel reconvened on 26th November to consider NALA's response and the submission of evidence to satisfy the Panel that its concerns had been addressed. The Panel received amended MoUs, one for Teaching and Learning Centres and one for Non Teaching and Learning Centres. It was pleased to note the additions to the MoUs in particular around assessment requirements and the role of the Centres in this regard. It therefore considers that this mandatory change has been met. It agrees further Specific Advice in relation to the MoUs:

1. Given the alignment between the two MoU templates there should be one MoU template going forward.
2. At the top of the MoU, the Centre should state how it will engage with WriteOn and learners and the MoU be tailored to reflect this.
3. The purpose of the MoU should be revised to indicate that the main purpose of the MoU is to state the relationship between NALA and the Centre and the roles and responsibilities of each.
4. NALA should give consideration as to how it should satisfy itself that the Centres remain in compliance with the terms of the MoU.

New Website platform

The Panel was also informed that a new platform for WriteOn has been procured and will be in place by the end of 2019. NALA has plans to develop WriteOn when the new platform is in place, to enhance the experience for learners, tutors and Registered WriteOn Centres, for example through the development of the user interface for adult literacy learners, improvements in accessibility, interoperability with Fetch courses, Recognition of Prior Learning system and scalability.

6 ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS

Panel Findings:

NALA's Assessment of Learners Policy and related procedures are provided in NALA's Quality Assurance Manual. The policy explains that assessment processes are 'underpinned by the principles of adult education and good adult literacy work' and that 'assessment processes gather information and supply evidence of learners' progress towards their individual learning goals, including those which include working towards certification'. Feedback to students on their work is built into the WriteOn platform.

The WriteOn online system is an assessment tool as well as a teaching and learning tool and Panel members were taken through how learners are assessed for certification through this system. While most of the assessment for award is through eLearning, some learning outcomes for particular awards are assessed through the learner's online portfolio which involved real-world tasks with evidence uploaded into an eportfolio or posted to NALA.



There are two rounds of certification annually. The Internal Verification Panel comprises the Internal Verifier, member of NALA management, members of the DLS administration team and a learner representative. This Internal Verification Panel verifies that agreed assessment procedures were followed, that the evidence has been developed in accordance with the validated programme and that grades have been awarded in line with QQI requirements. Once the Internal Verifier signs the Internal Verification report, this is submitted to the External Authenticator (EA).

The role of the EA is set out in the Quality Assurance Manual. The EA reviews a sample of the assessments and prepares a written report. The IV report and the EA report is presented to the External Authentication Panel which then convenes to confirm the results and that the evidence has been assessed in accordance with the award specification and that the results presented are consistent with national standards for the award. The External Authentication Panel may highlight issues that may then lead to recommendations for change, i.e. to instructions to learners on their assessments. During the site visit NALA provided examples of such instances. Once the External Authentication process is complete results are then communicated to learners and it is at this point that learners may appeal the outcome of the assessment. The Education, Training and Assessment Sub-committee carries out the results approval process including a review of the IV and External Authentication processes, noting any matters that have arisen. Following approval through this sub-committee the data is then submitted to QQI.

The Panel is of the view that these processes are clearly outlined within the Quality Assurance Manual. However, it considered, and agreed as a proposed mandatory change, that there should be more than one External Authenticator appointed for an assessment cycle.

Having availed of the option to defer its decision, the Panel reconvened on 26th November to consider NALA's response and the submission of evidence to satisfy the Panel that its concerns had been addressed. It received a revised External Authentication Policy and noted that two External Authenticators shall be on the EA Panel. It is therefore agreed that this mandatory change has been met.

The Panel agrees further Specific Advice in relation to External Authentication:

1. The External Authenticator should carry out no more than three consecutive rounds of authentication, as is agreed practice.
2. The External Authentication Panel as stated on page 7 of the policy should be renamed the Results Approval Panel, to avoid confusion over terminology.
3. The terms of reference for the above Panel should more explicitly state that it approves results.
4. The 'member of management' on the Results Approval Panel should be the manager with responsibility for teaching and learning.

The Panel has also made **Specific Advice** in relation to the Education, Training and Assessment Sub-committee's role in the approval of results (see Section 1 above). Having reconvened on 26th November 2019 to consider NALA's response, the Panel is happy that this matter has been satisfactorily addressed.

The Panel was concerned that NALA did not meet QQI's Quality Assurance of Blended Learning Programmes Guidelines, specifically para. 3.2.3 *'There are robust arrangements in place across the*



organisation to confirm the identity of remote learners and mitigate against fraudulent practices, attempts to gain unfair advantage, or academic malpractice'. NALA explained how the online system works, i.e. learners when they register must confirm that they are who they say they are, that the randomisation of questions should prevent a learner being able to 'google' the correct answer. The Internal Verifier and External Authenticator are able to view all work submitted from each Centre and so are well placed to query or investigate further if malpractice is evident. However, the online system was not able to track IP addresses and Panel members were concerned that, particularly for the eLearning assessments, the system could not verify the identity of learners, and it agreed a proposed Mandatory change in this regard (see Part 6.1).

As above, the Panel reconvened on 26th November 2019 to consider NALA's response and additional documentation. NALA submitted an action plan and timelines for the new eLearning platform. It was noted by the Panel that the new Platform will be operational in January 2020. In addition, NALA submitted a detailed document that summarises how the new platform and its service provider will ensure compliance with relevant guidelines on blended learning. The Panel welcomes the fact that the new platform will have the capacity to identify the IP address from which learners attempt their assessments, and that these can be tracked by NALA. It is also pleased to note that there will be a security certificate in place and learners will be required to give active consent regarding the use of their data to bring the system in line with Data Protection requirements.

The action plan submitted by NALA indicates that all the relevant guidelines on blended learning will be met by the new platform. The Panel felt that it would be important to review this assertion when the website is operational in early 2020. In addition, the Panel was concerned that, while the contingency plan of the service provider is noted, NALA had not provided its own institutional contingency plan, that is, what NALA will do in the event that the service provider cannot deliver, such as in the case of insolvency in advance of the reconvene meeting.

The Panel considered that to satisfy paragraph 3.2.2 of the QQI's Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes, such a contingency plan is required.

Following the meeting of 26th November NALA provided its Business Contingency Plan and requested through QQI that the Panel consider this Plan. The Panel was happy to comply with this request and upon consideration of the Plan it agreed that this mandatory change had now been fully addressed.

7a SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS

Panel Findings:

A Support for Learners Policy is included within NALA's Quality Assurance Manual along with associated procedures. This policy states that 'NALA's Distance Learning Service (DLS) works with individuals who want to improve their literacy, numeracy and basic digital skills. Learners can work online by themselves, in a Registered WriteOn Centre or with a DLS Tutor over the phone or online. Learners come from many different backgrounds with a wide variety of learning goals, strengths, needs and interests. Support for the learner is built into all elements of the programme.'



The supports provided to learners are: NALA's Freephone service support, Learning Support Worker supports, DLS Tutor support, the WriteOn platform, Disability support, Student Days, and availability of resources free of charge through NALA's website. All learners who are interested in joining NALA's Distance Learning Service receive a DLS Learner Pack.

The NALA Distance Learning Service Learner Charter explains to learners what they can expect from the Distance Learning Service, and what NALA expects from the learner.

NALA seeks feedback on its services and resources and the Student Sub-committee, whose membership comprises mainly current and past learners, gathers and discusses adult literacy student issues and communicates key issues to the NALA Board.

Learners are provided with information on NALA processes and procedures through a variety of methods including the Learner Charter and the DLS Learner Pack and they have full access to all documentation including the Quality Assurance Manual through the NALA website.

It is clear to the Panel that NALA's ethos and culture focus on the needs of the adult learner and that the Team is committed to the continual enhancement of its services and supports. The Panel is satisfied that NALA's learner support arrangements are in accordance with QQI guidelines in this regard.

8 INFORMATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT

Panel Findings:

NALA's Quality Assurance Manual documents its policies and procedures in relation to Information and Data Management including NALA's obligations as a Data Controller under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

During the site visit, NALA reported that it is currently moving towards compliance with GDPR and has employed a consultant for advice in this regard. Currently, work is being completed in relation to retention schedules, an updated privacy policy and consent matters.

The Panel acknowledges the quality of the instructional design aspect of the programmes on the VLE. It is noted that the VLE is over 10 years old and has stood the test of time. However, for the delivery of online education/training and assessment, robust and consistent systems and processes need to be in place. The Panel have concerns about the VLE's capability of verifying the identity of learners, guarding against cheating, plagiarism or other kinds of unfair advantage.

The Panel had specific concerns about the IT security, GDPR compliance of existing legal and privacy statement and recording of IP addresses. The Panel noted the lack of a Security Certificate for the NALA website. NALA reported that this matter could not be addressed until the new online system is operational at the end of 2019. It has reported this matter to its GDPR consultants who advise that it should be addressed through the move to the new online system.

The continuing use of the existing system posed a risk of a data breach and this was the subject of a proposed mandatory change (see Part 6. 6.1. below). The Panel reconvened on 26th November 2019 and was informed that there shall be no further assessments through WriteOn in 2019 and the current website will not be used again. Therefore, the Panel has no remaining concerns regarding the existing system and considers that this mandatory change has been addressed.



The Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programme states “if assessing learners through an on-line medium the reliability of the learner evidence is an important consideration. Specific procedures must be established in relation to ascertaining the reliability and ensuring the security of learner evidence generated through the on-line assessment.” The Panel noted that the existing online assessment system did not provide details of the IP address that any assessment was submitted from. The Panel asked if the new system would meet that standard and the NALA staff present were unable to confirm that it was included in the specification of the new IT system. This resulted in a proposed mandatory change (see Part 5.6 above and Part 6. 6.1. below).

As above, the Panel reconvened on 26th November 2019 to consider NALA’s response and additional documentation. NALA submitted an action plan and timelines for the new eLearning platform. It was noted by the Panel that that the new Platform will be operational in January 2020. In addition, NALA submitted a detailed document that summarises how the new platform and its service provider will ensure compliance with relevant guidelines on blended learning. The Panel welcomes the fact that the new platform will have the capacity to identify the IP address from which learners attempt their assessments, and that these can be tracked by NALA. It is also pleased to note that there will be a security certificate in place and learners will be required to give active consent regarding the use of their data to bring the system in line with Data Protection requirements.

The action plan submitted by NALA indicates that all the relevant guidelines on blended learning will be met by the new platform. The Panel felt that it would be important to review this assertion when the website is operational in early 2020. In addition, the Panel was concerned that, while the contingency plan of the service provider was noted, NALA has not provided its own institutional contingency plan, that is, what NALA will do in the event that the service provider cannot deliver, such as in the case of insolvency in advance of the reconvene meeting.

The Panel considered that to satisfy paragraph 3.2.2 of the QQI’s Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes, such a contingency plan is required.

Following the meeting of 26th November NALA provided its Business Contingency Plan and requested through QQI that the Panel consider this Plan. The Panel was happy to comply with this request and upon consideration of the Plan it agreed that this mandatory change had now been fully addressed.

9 PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Panel Findings:

NALA’s Quality Assurance Manual documents its Communication Policy and associated procedures. NALA recognises that ‘effective and appropriate communication is important in achieving its aims and objectives. It is also important to its credibility as a publicly accountable organisation.’ This Communication Policy is complemented by a range of policies, strategies and guidelines, including its



Communications Strategy, Standard Operating Procedure for dealing with media queries, Brand Guidelines, Publications Policy, Social Media Policy and Style Guide. NALA's Communication Manager and Communications Officer play coordinating roles in this regard. A priority is to ensure that NALA's communications are clear and consistent.

Learners are provided with information on NALA processes and procedures through a variety of methods including the Learner Charter and the DLS Learner Pack and they have full access to all documentation including the Quality Assurance Manual through the NALA website. NALA is aware of the need to adapt its communications to its target audiences, whether internal staff, learners and their families/supporters, and external organisations and individuals.

The Panel is satisfied that NALA's arrangements for public information and communication are in accordance with QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines in this regard.

10 OTHER PARTIES INVOLVED IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING (incl. Apprenticeships)

Panel Findings:

NALA works with education providers, particularly the Education and Training Boards (ETBs), to identify and share best practice in how adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills are taught. In recognition of the shared aim of improving adult literacy and numeracy in Ireland, NALA and ETBI have a Memorandum of Understanding in place to inform its collaboration in a number of areas including advocacy and research. An ETBI-NALA Committee is in place to lead and oversee collaboration between the two bodies.

It has been noted above that many ETB centres, along with other providers, have registered with NALA as WriteOn Centres and undergo training in order to achieve this status. These centres offer teaching and learning support additional to that provided by WriteOn itself, therefore NALA considers these Centres as second rather than collaborative providers. NALA in preparation for the reengagement process agreed that a Memorandum of Understanding with its Registered Centres would replace the current Registration and Terms and Conditions Form in 2019.

The Panel had concerns regarding the Centres' role in the assessment process (see section 6) and therefore agreed a proposed mandatory change in relation to these MoUs as specified in Part 6, 6.1. As noted in section 6 above, the Panel is satisfied that these issues have been fully addressed by NALA.



11 SELF-EVALUATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Panel Findings:

One of the aims of NALA's Governance and Management Subcommittee is to ensure that 'structures are in place to monitor and review the effectiveness of such policies.' Its Staff and Policy Subcommittee monitors and supports policy development, although other subcommittees also review policies and procedures within their remit.

The Panel commends the culture and ethos of self-reflection that is evident within NALA, in its preparation for the reengagement process and the extensive internal and external review process, in the work of the committees aided by their diverse membership, and in the daily work of its staff. It is satisfied that NALA arrangements in relation to self-evaluation, monitoring and review are in accordance with QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines.

12 TOPIC-SPECIFIC QA PROCEDURES: BLENDED LEARNING

Panel Findings:

In Section 8 above the Panel expressed a concern in relation to the ability of NALA to verify learners within the online assessment process and therefore its ability to be compliant with QQI's Quality Assurance of Blended Learning Guidelines, and it agreed a proposed mandatory change in this regard (see Part 6, 6.1). As discussed in section x above, the Panel is satisfied that this issue has been appropriately and comprehensively addressed by NALA.

Evaluation of draft QA Procedures - Overall panel findings

At the conclusion of its visit to NALA, the Panel agreed to defer its decision and allow NALA six weeks in which to address the proposed mandatory changes and specific advice as set out in Part 6 of this report.

Having reconvened on 26th November 2019 to consider NALA's response and evidence submitted, and following the receipt of further documentation, the Panel is happy to recommend to QQI to approve NALA's QA procedures.



Part 6 Mandatory Changes to QA Procedures and Specific Advice

The following proposed mandatory changes were identified at the conclusion of the site visit on 27th September 2019.

1. In relation to verification of assessment:

- NALA should review its new software in light of the QQI's Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes and its Assessment and Standards document 2013 to ensure that NALA will be compliant with these guidelines. NALA should provide an action plan with associated timelines to indicate how the new software will meet these guidelines, specifically para. 3.2.3 'There are robust arrangements in place across the organisation to confirm the identity of remote learners and mitigate against fraudulent practices, attempts to gain unfair advantage, or academic malpractice'. This Action Plan will allow NALA to seek guidance as to where there is compliance as well as where gaps might exist, to allow NALA to work to address these gaps.

- In addition, given that the current IT system does not have a Safety Certificate, NALA should produce a contingency plan that indicates how any failure in the existing system will be addressed, prior to having a new system in place.

2. There should be a number of MoU templates for each type of Centre/second provider that uses Write-On for the certification of learners through NALA. The MoUs should clarify the responsibilities of these Centres for the conditions of assessment, i.e. how the Centres manage assessment. Where a Centre also has a teaching and learning role, the MoU should clarify roles and responsibilities in this regard.

3. NALA should revise its External Authentication Policy and Procedures in relation to the recruiting and training of External Authenticators. The Panel agrees that NALA should appoint at least a second External Authenticator and have at least two EAs operating in each certification process given the numbers of learners going forward for assessment in each period.

The Panel availed of the option to defer its decision to allow NALA an opportunity to address these issues within a six-week period.

The Panel reconvened on 26 November 2019 to undertake the desk review of the response from NALA and the evidence submitted. It was the Panel's view that, based on the evidence submitted for the meeting of 26 November, while much progress had been made to address the proposed mandatory changes and specific advice identified by the Panel, NALA had not satisfactorily addressed all mandatory changes, specifically there were remaining concerns relating to the need for a NALA business contingency plan.

However, subsequent to the above, NALA responded to this outcome, by bringing to QQI's attention that such a Business Contingency Plan already existed. QQI agreed to bring the Business Contingency Plan to the Panel's attention at that point, and upon request by QQI, the Panel reviewed the Business Contingency Plan. The Panel indicates that while the Business Contingency Plan was referenced in the original Quality Manual submitted, NALA had not brought the document to the Panel's attention as it had not perceived it to be required. However, it is pleased to review the NALA Business Continuity Plan provided in December as requested by QQI and it notes that this document contains new information that was not contained in the original submission or in the subsequent documents supplied by NALA during the six week period provided by the Panel. The Panel believes that this document does respond



satisfactorily to the Panel's concerns in relation to the requirements of 3.2.2 of the Guidelines. Therefore, it is happy to change its recommendation to QQI and it consequently recommends that QQI approves NALA's QA procedures.

6.1 Mandatory Changes

In relation to mandatory change 1:

The Panel received further information in relation to the new website software provider including an action plan and timelines for the new eLearning platform. It was noted by the Panel that the new Platform will be operational in January 2020. In addition, NALA submitted a detailed document that summarises how the new platform and its service provider will ensure compliance with relevant guidelines on blended learning. The Panel welcomes the fact that the new platform will have the capacity to identify the IP address from which learners attempt their assessments, and that these can be tracked by NALA. It is also pleased to note that there will be a security certificate in place and learners will be required to give active consent regarding the use of their data to bring the system in line with Data Protection requirements.

The action plan submitted by NALA indicates that all the relevant guidelines on blended learning will be met by the new platform. The Panel felt that it would be important to review this assertion when the website is operational in early 2020. In addition, the Panel was concerned that, while the contingency plan of the service provider is noted, NALA had not provided its own institutional contingency plan, that is, what NALA will do in the event that the service provider cannot deliver, such as in the case of insolvency in advance of the reconvene meeting. The Panel considered that to satisfy paragraph 3.2.2 of the QQI's Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes, such a contingency plan was required. NALA's Business Contingency Plan was subsequently provided to the Panel and the Panel agreed that this concern was now addressed.

The Panel was informed that there shall be no further assessments through WriteOn in 2019 and the current website will not be used again. Therefore, the Panel has no remaining concerns regarding the existing system.

In relation to mandatory change 2:

The Panel received amended MoUs, one for Teaching and Learning Centres and one for Non Teaching and Learning Centres. It is pleased to note the additions to the MoUs in particular around assessment requirements and the role of the Centres in this regard. It considers that this mandatory change has been met. It agrees further Specific Advice in relation to the MoUs:

1. Given the alignment between the two MoU templates there should be one MoU template going forward.
2. At the top of the MoU, the Centre should state how it will engage with WriteOn and learners and the MoU be tailored to reflect this.
3. The purpose of the MoU should be revised to indicate that the main purpose of the MoU is to state the relationship between NALA and the Centre and the roles and responsibilities of each.
4. NALA should give consideration as to how it should satisfy itself that the Centres remain in compliance with the terms of the MoU.

**In relation to mandatory change 3:**

The Panel notes the revised External Authentication Policy and that two External Authenticators shall be on the EA Panel. It is therefore agreed that this mandatory change has been met. The Panel agrees further Specific Advice in relation to External Authentication, see 6.2 below.

6.2 Specific Advice

1. The Panel recommends that NALA revises its programmes and submits them to QQI for validation as soon as possible, to inform both its blended learning approach and compliance with QQI guidelines, and the balance of teaching, learning and assessment. This will address the weaknesses identified by this re-engagement process and will ensure that the new IT system being developed will meet the requirements of the newly validated programmes.
2. The Panel recommends that the External Authentication group should serve as a Results Approval Panel, and that the Education, Training and Assessment Sub-committee should maintain oversight of results rather than it approving results. This should remove this workload from the Education, Training and Assessment Committee to allow time for more quality assurance policy and enhancement/improvement considerations.
3. There should be further differentiation between the Internal Verification Panel and the External Authentication Panel, to emphasise the separation and differentiation of both Panels' roles and responsibilities.
4. The Panel recommends that the Education, Training and Assessment Sub-committee should embed a plan for reflecting on its work over time. The Panel considers that this would result in the revision of its terms of reference in order to formalise its important role in quality assurance and enhancement.
5. The Panel commends the creation of the roles of Innovation Manager and QQI Co-ordinator. It recommends that these roles could be strengthened further through membership of relevant sub-committees, in particular the Education, Training and Assessment Sub-committee.

The Panel is happy that the above specific advice agreed at its meeting on 27th September 2019 has been addressed adequately within NALA's response. It agrees further specific advice at its meeting on 26th November 2019, namely:

1. Given the alignment between the two MoU templates there should be one MoU template going forward.
2. At the top of the MoU, the Centre should state how it will engage with WriteOn and learners and the MoU be tailored to reflect this.
3. The purpose of the MoU should be revised to indicate that the main purpose of the MoU is to state the relationship between NALA and the Centre and the roles and responsibilities of each.
4. NALA should give consideration as to how it should satisfy itself that the Centres remain in compliance with the terms of the MoU.



- 5. The External Authenticator should carry out no more than three consecutive rounds of authentication, as is agreed practice.
- 6. The External Authentication Panel as stated on page 7 of the policy should be renamed the Results Approval Panel, to avoid confusion over terminology.
- 7. The terms of reference for this Panel (see no. 6 above) should more explicitly state that it approves results.
- 8. The ‘member of management’ on the Results Approval Panel should be the manager with responsibility for teaching and learning.

Part 7 Proposed Approved Scope of Provision for this provider

NFQ Level(s) – min and max	Award Class(es)	Discipline areas
Levels 2-3	4 major awards with 26 minor awards	Literacy, numeracy, digital skills, health and safety
Level 4	Minor non-certified	
Level 1 (non-certified)	12 modules	Literacy, numeracy, digital skills,



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann



31 JAN 2020

Reception

Part 8 Approval by Chair of the Panel

This report of the panel is approved and submitted to QQI for its decision on the approval of the draft Quality Assurance Procedures of National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)

Name:

David Ineary

Date:

25th January 2020



Annexe 1: Documentation provided to the Panel in the course of the Evaluation

Document	Related to
NALA Application for Reengagement	Organisational information and capacity
NALA Quality Assurance Manual	Quality Assurance policies and procedures
Certificate of Incorporation	Organisational information
WriteOn Centre Registration Form and MOU with Registered Centres	Organisational arrangements with 3 rd party centres
NALA Audited Accounts for 2016, 2017, 2018	Organisational information and capacity
Funding Letter for 2019 from SOLAS	Organisational information and capacity
Insurance documents	Organisational information
Revenue eTax Clearance	Organisational information
NALA Child Safeguarding Statement	Organisational policy and procedures
NALA Strategic Plan 2017-2019	Organisational vision and strategic priorities
NALA Contract with Avallain	Organisational information and capacity
Data Processing Agreement with Connected Shopping Ltd	Organisational information and capacity
NALA Contract with D2L Europe Ltd	Organisational information and capacity
NALA Action Plan for eLearning Platform	Organisational information and capacity

**Annexe 2: Provider staff met in the course of the Evaluation**

Name	Role/Position
Inez Bailey	NALA Chief Executive Officer
Elaine Cohalan	Innovation Manager
Gillian Harris	QQI Co-ordinator
Miriam Johnston	Internal support
Caitríona Whelan	TEL Officer
Sinead Clinton	DLS Tutor
Joan Butler (by phone)	DLS Tutor Co-ordinator
Jennifer Duffy	Internal Support
The Panel also met Pat Ayton Chair of NALA's Education, Training and Assessment Subcommittee.	

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National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)

26-27 Denzille Lane

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D02 P266

29 January 2020

Re: Reengagement Panel Report – Assessment of Capacity and Approval of QA Procedures

To whom it may concern,

NALA received the draft Reengagement Panel Report on 28 January 2020 and reviewed it for any factual inaccuracies as requested. There are no noted factual inaccuracies.

We would like to offer our sincere thanks to the panel for their time, expertise and advice during the process and are pleased with both the report and its outcome. We will review and consider all specific advices that are recommended in the report.

We would also like to thank QQI for their support and professionalism throughout the process. We look forward to learning of the outcome of the Programme and Awards Executive Committee in February.

Yours sincerely,

Elaine Cohalan

Innovation Manager

Patron: Michael D Higgins, President of Ireland

Company limited by guarantee, registered in Dublin, Ireland.
Registered company number 342807. NALA is also a charity with CHY number 8506.

