

Guidelines on the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in adult literacy services

SOLAS

An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
Further Education and Training Authority



etbi

Education and Training
Boards Ireland
*Boird Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Éireann*



NALA

National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

Guidelines on the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in adult literacy services

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List of acronyms

ALS	Adult Literacy Service
ALCES	Adult Literacy and Community Education Scheme
BTEI	Back to Education Initiative
CIL	Centre for Independent Living
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DSI	Down Syndrome Ireland
ETB	Education and Training Board
ETBI	Education and Training Boards Ireland
FET	Further Education and Training
HSE	Health Service Executive
IHREC	Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
II	Inclusion Ireland
NALA	National Adult Literacy Agency
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NCSE	National Council for Special Education
NDA	National Disability Authority
NFVB	National Federation of Voluntary Bodies Providing Services to People with Intellectual Disabilities
SESS	Special Education Support Service
SOLAS	An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna (Further Education and Training Authority)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

About the Guidelines

Background

This is a revised edition of Guidelines on the inclusion of adults with learning disabilities in literacy schemes (NALA 1999).

In 2013, the Department of Education and Science (DES) Review of Adult Literacy Provision recommended revising and updating the original Guidelines. In 2015, SOLAS asked NALA to produce a Scoping Paper to inform that work. The Scoping Paper included a draft set of guidelines. It was informed by a literature review, interviews with practitioners and learners from adult literacy services and disability services, and interviews with personnel from national organisations in the disability and further education sectors.

In 2017, the draft guidelines were considered by the National Advisory Committee (advising SOLAS regarding the implementation of the FET Literacy and Numeracy Strategy), the SOLAS Senior Management Team, Directors of Further Education and Training, and individual ETB Adult Literacy Services. NALA and ETBI finalised the guidelines in light of the feedback received.

The revised guidelines are intended for providers of adult literacy and numeracy services. They suggest broad elements of a strategy which each service can adapt to their particular situation.

We would like to thank all those who helped in developing the guidelines: those who contributed to the research for the Scoping Paper; who gave feedback on drafts; and who shared their experience and good practice in inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in adult literacy services.

We look forward to working and learning with all concerned in continually developing capacity to serve adults with intellectual disabilities who wish take part in literacy provision.

Section 1

Introduction

Key terms

Inclusion

The **Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019** defines active inclusion as 'enabling every citizen, notably the most disadvantaged, to fully participate in society.' (SOLAS 2014, p 91).

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (**UNESCO**) states that:

Rather than being a marginal issue on how some learners can be integrated in mainstream education, inclusive education is an approach that looks into how to transform education systems and other learning environments in order to respond to the diversity of learners. It aims towards enabling teachers and learners both to feel comfortable with diversity and to see it as a challenge and enrichment of the learning environment, rather than a problem.

(UNESCO 2005, pp 15 - 16)

The Inclusive Education Framework, published by the National Council for Special Education (**NCSE**), describes inclusion as:

...responding to the diversity of needs of learners through **enabling participation** in learning, cultures and communities;...**removing barriers** within and from education through the accommodation and provision of appropriate structures and arrangements to **enable each learner to achieve the maximum benefit** from his / her attendance...

(NCSE 2011, pp 13 - 14, citing Winter and O Raw, 2010, p 39. Emphasis added.)

The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies Providing Services to People with Intellectual Disabilities (**NFVB**) also stress that inclusion is about **removing barriers** that create disadvantage and discrimination **and providing individual support**. They point out that inclusion 'involves a high level of participation, engagement and the building of roles and relationships' (NFVB 2009, p 6).

UNESCO presents the following **key elements of educational inclusion**. While referring here to children's education, they also apply in adult education:

1. Inclusion is a **process**. ...It is about learning how to live with difference and learning how to learn from difference...
2. Inclusion is concerned with the **identification and removal of barriers**. It involves collecting, collating and evaluating information from a wide variety of sources in order to plan for improvements in policy and practice...
3. Inclusion is about the presence, **participation and achievement of all students**. 'Presence' is concerned with where [people] are educated and how reliably and punctually they attend; 'participation' relates to the quality of their experiences and must incorporate the views of learners; and 'achievement' is about the outcomes of learning across the curriculum, not just test and exam results.
4. Inclusion invokes a **particular emphasis on those...at risk of marginalisation, exclusion or underachievement**. This indicates the moral responsibility to ensure that...steps are taken to ensure their presence, participation and achievement in the education system. (UNESCO 2005, pp 15 - 16. Emphasis added.)

There is no one-size-fits-all model of inclusive provision. A core feature is that it involves a combination of universal design with targeted interventions to provide individual support (NFVB 2009; UNESCO 2005).

At all stages, the adult **learner's needs, voice and choice must be central** to decision making (NALA 2009; 2012; Kubiak 2015; DES 2010).

Intellectual disability

People with intellectual disabilities are not a homogeneous group, but individuals with diverse strengths, interests and needs.

Inclusion Ireland state that

Intellectual disability involves a greater than average difficulty in learning. A person is considered to have an intellectual disability when the following factors are present: general intellectual functioning is significantly below average; significant deficits exist in adaptive skills and the condition is present from childhood.

<http://www.inclusionireland.ie/content/page/questions-answers-qa>

The term 'learning disability' was used in the original edition of these Guidelines (NALA 1999). In this edition, we use the term intellectual disability to avoid any confusion with 'specific learning difficulties'.

Literacy

NALA defines 'literacy' as:

... listening and speaking, reading, writing, numeracy and using everyday technology to communicate and handle information. But it includes more than the technical skills of communications: it has personal, social and economic dimensions. Literacy increases the opportunity for individuals, families and communities to reflect on their situation, explore new possibilities and initiate change.

(NALA 2012, p 6)

The **Department of Education and Skills** Operational Guidelines for Adult Literacy Providers (2013) define literacy as

...the provision of basic education, including reading, writing and numeracy skills, and ICT for adults who wish to improve their literacy and numeracy competencies to enhance their participation in personal, social and economic life.

The following are widely accepted in Ireland as the **principles of good adult literacy practice**:

- Adult literacy work is based on a philosophy of adult education which is concerned with personal development and social action.
- Adult literacy learning is an active and expressive process. Students have the right to explore their needs and interests, set their own goals and decide how, where and when they wish to learn.
- Adult literacy work respects different beliefs, cultures and ways of being. An ethical code of trust and confidentiality underpins all aspects of the work.
- Students' knowledge and skills are vital for the effective organisation of adult literacy work. Students should have the opportunity to be involved in all aspects of provision.
- Adults learn best when the decision to return to learning is their own and the environment is supportive, relaxed and friendly.

(NALA 2012, p 7)

Adult literacy services are committed to inclusive provision and practice based on those principles and on values of equality and respect for human diversity.

Context: Legislation

Ireland signed the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**, and the Government has declared its intention to ratify the Convention in 2018. Section 24.5 requires States to:

ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. To this end, States Parties shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities.

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.p>

Ireland's **equality and human rights legislation** places a clear obligation on service providers to make their services accessible to people with disabilities, including to people with intellectual disabilities. The Disability Act 2005 requires organisations providing services and information to the public to do all that is reasonable to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities. The Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 and the Equal Status Acts 2000–2015 prohibit discrimination – direct, indirect or by association - on any of 9 grounds, including disability. Employers and educational establishments cannot discriminate on the basis of disability or of an attribute or behaviour that is linked to disability.

Section 7 of the Equal Status Acts prohibits discrimination with regards to admissions, access to courses, expulsion and any other terms or conditions of participation. Exemptions apply 'to the extent that compliance...would, by virtue of the disability, make impossible, or have a seriously detrimental effect on, the provision by an educational establishment of its services to other students.' However, this applies in the context of the legal obligation to provide **reasonable accommodation**. The Equal Status Acts also allow preferential treatment or **positive measures** to promote equality of opportunity and to cater for the special needs of persons. (For information on equality legislation see www.ihrec.ie)

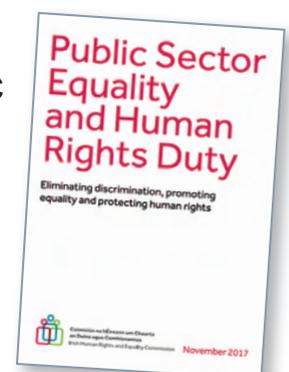
Public Sector Duty

The following information on the Public Sector Duty is based on the IHREC booklet (August 2016) <https://www.ihrec.ie/app/uploads/2016/09/Public-Sector-Equality-and-Human-Rights-Duty-Leaflet.pdf>

The **Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) Act 2014** established IHREC as Ireland's national human rights institution and equality body. Section 42 (1) of the IHREC Act 2014 states that a public body shall, in the performance of its functions, have regard to the need to

1. eliminate discrimination;
2. promote equality of opportunity and treatment...
3. protect the human rights of its members, staff and the persons to whom it provides services (p 3).

A 'public body' under the Act includes 'all bodies financed with public money (even partially)' (p 5).



The Act obliges public bodies to take three core steps:

1. In preparing strategic plans, assess and identify human rights and equality issues relevant to all of the service's functions.
2. Identify the policies and practices that they have in place or that they plan to put in place to address these issues.
3. In annual reports or equivalent documents, public bodies must report in a manner accessible to the public on their developments and achievements in that regard.

The Further Education and Training Act 2013

This Act created new national structures for further education and training. It established SOLAS as the further education and training authority and established 16 Education and Training Boards. The new structures have been described as providing an opportunity to address structural and systemic barriers to inclusion of people with learning disabilities in FET (Duggan, C & Byrne, M, 2013).

Context: National strategies

Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2014-2019

The **FET Strategy** (SOLAS 2014) states that

The FET sector will seek to increase levels of active inclusion through the provision of high quality, more accessible and flexible education, training and skill development interventions and supports suited to the individual (p 91).

The FET Strategy notes the specific goal in the **National Disability Strategy** Implementation Plan (2013-2015), that 'people with disabilities get the education and training that enables them to reach their potential'.

In order to facilitate the realisation of this goal, SOLAS, through the annual business planning process with the ETB sector and in conjunction with DES, DSP/Intreo and the disability sector, will agree FET targets and associated supports for people with disabilities participating in FET (SOLAS 2014, p 97).

The FET Strategy highlights that FET organisations can work with IHREC to develop guidelines, codes of practice, performance measures, operational standards and preventative strategies around FET policy and practice to ensure that they comply with equality legislation (p 93).

The FET Strategy 2014-2019 also incorporates the **Adult Literacy and Numeracy Strategy**.

Adult Literacy and Numeracy Strategy

The following elements of the Adult Literacy and Numeracy Strategy are particularly relevant to these guidelines:

- Encourage increased participation and completion and attainment of major awards at Levels 1, 2 and 3, among priority target groups.
- Target better outcomes through accredited provision.
- Facilitate literacy provision for personal, family, social and community contexts.
- Provide continued funding for non-accredited group provision with emphasis on the recruitment of specific priority target groups.
- Focus on data collection and analysis with intensive feedback to providers to support evaluation and programme review.
- Identify and develop priority research areas with a focus on improving literacy and numeracy practice.
- Support staff through Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

New Directions Strategy

The Health Service Executive (HSE) strategy, New Directions: Personal Support Services for Adults with Disabilities, was published in 2012. The HSE describes New Directions as a new approach to Day Services that envisages all the supports available in communities will be mobilised so that people with disabilities have the widest choice and options about how to live their lives and how to spend their time. <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/disability/newdirections2012.pdf>

The strategy focuses on **de-institutionalisation, person-centred planning** and **individualised supports** delivered, where possible, through **mainstream services**. It specifies 12 supports for people availing of HSE-funded day services. Those most relevant to adult literacy services include:

- Inclusion in one's local community
- Accessing education and formal learning
- Personal and social development
- Accessing bridging programmes to vocational training
- Accessing vocational training and work opportunities
- Personal expression and creativity.

Interim Standards for New Directions

The HSE has ratified Interim Standards for New Directions, Services and Supports for Adults with Disabilities. See: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/newdirections/interim-standards-for-new-directions-services-and-supports-for-adults-with-disabilities.pdf>. The Interim Standards were developed with the support of the National Disability Authority (NDA) and apply to HSE-funded services for adults with disabilities. They are based on three principles: person-centred planning, community inclusion and active citizenship. The following Interim Standards are particularly relevant to adult literacy services and further education and training services generally:

- Standard 2.9: People access formal education programmes, in line with their choices, needs and abilities.
- Standard 2.10: People access bridging programmes to vocational training, in line with their choices, needs and abilities.
- Standard 2.11 People access vocational training and employment, in line with their choices, needs and abilities.

The **key targets** for the New Directions National Implementation Group in 2017 were:

- The establishment of a Community Health Organisation implementation structure
- Implementation of a Person Centred Planning Framework
- Implementation of Interim Quality Standards
- Analysis of current resource allocation for Day Services Provision
- Provision of new services for school leavers in line with New Directions
- Development of Transition and Person Centred Planning programmes for those exiting Rehabilitative Programmes.

The Community Health Organisation (CHO) implementation structure for New Directions has been established.

There are **nine regional CHO Implementation Groups** for the New Directions strategy. The membership of each Implementation Group includes: HSE Disability Managers, HSE RT / Occupational Guidance Service Managers, and representatives of each Adult Disability Day Service Provider in the CHO area.

For details of the CHO New Directions Implementation Group in your region see <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/newdirections/new-directions-bulletin-november-20171.pdf>

Revised Guidelines

Research indicates that people with intellectual disabilities can still experience barriers when accessing further education and training, including adult literacy provision (Duggan & Byrne 2013; WALK 2015). The original Guidelines (NALA 1999) have been revised in light of the developments outlined above, and of adult literacy services' experience and good practice in inclusive provision.

The following section proposes 10 guidelines for inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in adult literacy services. They suggest broad elements of a strategy which each service can adapt to their particular situation. A local adult literacy strategy for inclusion is best developed as part of a **cross-programme, FET-wide** partnership and plan. It also requires **cross-sector** partnership, including between adult literacy services and intellectual disability services.

Section 2

Guidelines

Guidelines on the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in adult literacy services

- Guideline 1:** Develop shared understanding of and commitment to inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities.
 - Guideline 2:** Develop a policy and plan.
 - Guideline 3:** Designate an inclusion development worker.
 - Guideline 4:** Build and maintain partnerships to support inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities.
 - Guideline 5:** Provide continuing professional development to support inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities.
 - Guideline 6:** Build inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities into promotion and outreach.
 - Guideline 7:** Build inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities into the access procedures.
 - Guideline 8:** Support effective participation.
 - Guideline 9:** Support progression.
 - Guideline 10:** Review and evaluate the strategy for inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities.
- 

Guideline 1: Develop shared understanding of and commitment to inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities.

Inclusion does not happen as the result of a once-off decision. It is an ongoing process of learning and development for all involved. The following are some suggested actions:

- Make inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities a topic of discussion and learning in the service or centre. Facilitate all involved to explore this, either as a specific project or in the context of other projects or activities.
- Build equality and diversity awareness, and disability awareness, into professional development plans. Include a particular focus on intellectual disability.
- Encourage positive learning relationships. Foster high expectations for all learners. Avoid assumptions about a person's potential and ability.
- Invite adult learners with intellectual disabilities who are currently taking part in your programmes, to make presentations or give a talk to fellow - learners and tutors. Invite guest self-advocates and advocates for learners with intellectual disabilities to speak with learners and tutors.
- In induction for tutors and learners, include information and discussion on the service's commitment to inclusion and equality.
- Cooperate with other adult and further education and training programmes and with local disability organisations to develop shared understandings and strategies for inclusion.

Guideline 2: Develop a policy and plan.

- Make an explicit statement of commitment to inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in adult literacy services on an equal basis to others. Build this into quality assurance processes and into other policies as appropriate (for example, the admissions policy).
- Include a commitment to universal design and to using accessible information and inclusive communication strategies. (For information on universal design, visit <http://universaldesign.ie> For guides on accessible information and inclusive communication, see Appendix 1).
- Inclusion is an ongoing process. However, it is important to allocate a specific period of time to **systematically review and document**
 - your service's current good practice and procedures for inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities;
 - any barriers to inclusion and or other areas for further development. Take time to examine the service's policies, plans and core procedures to identify their actual or potential impact on people with intellectual disabilities. Affirm and document strengths and good practices. Adjust policies, plans and procedures as may be required to remove unintended barriers to inclusion. Prioritise areas for development, and plan actions to phase in more fully inclusive provision and practice. Build in a process to review and evaluate the impact of the planned actions.
- In cooperation with local disability support services and with partners from other FET programmes, gather data to inform planning for inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities. Identify the resources necessary to respond flexibly and effectively to potential demand.

- Adults with intellectual disabilities are diverse individuals with varying abilities, needs and learning preferences. Plan to provide a range of tuition options:
 - one to one;
 - group provision specifically for adults with intellectual disabilities; and
 - participation in general group provision.
- Ensure all learners have access to the option of certification at Levels 1-3.
- Plan to develop digital skills and resources, including assistive technologies to enhance communication and learning.
- Centrally involve adult learners – including adults with intellectual disabilities - in the review and planning process, along with tutors and other key participants and partners. (See Curriculum Development: An evolving model for adult literacy and numeracy education <https://www.nala.ie/resources/curriculum-development-evolving-model-adult-literacy-and-numeracy-education>)

The Further Education Support Service (FESS) Equality Action Planning Framework provides useful templates and checklists which you can use and adapt as required.
http://www.fess.ie/images/stories/Equality/Equality_Action_Planning_WEB.pdf

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) guide to implementing the Public Sector Duty also provides a clear and practical framework for review and planning.
https://www.ihrec.ie/download/pdf/ihrec_public_duty_booklet.pdf

Guideline 3: Designate an inclusion development worker.

- Allocate time and resources for a tutor to act as inclusion development worker. Their precise role would depend on the local situation and plan. It could include
 - building and maintaining relationships and partnerships for inclusion (see Guideline 4);
 - developing expertise and knowledge in inclusive strategies and in methodologies related to general learning disabilities;
 - supporting and advising tutors and learners as required to support participation and progression, and proposing relevant initiatives across the; and
 - over time, building a bank of teaching and learning resources and of communication aids and strategies.

Guideline 4: Build and maintain partnerships to support inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities.

- Actively involve **adult learners**, including **adults with intellectual disabilities**, in developing and implementing the strategy and in building partnerships for inclusion.
- Work with other **adult education programmes and services**, including the Adult Education Guidance Service, to systematically facilitate access, participation and progression of adults with intellectual disabilities.
- Build strong working and learning relationships with your local **intellectual disability support services**.
 - Agree procedures for working together to support adults with intellectual disabilities to access adult literacy services should they so choose.
 - Clarify and agree clear roles, expectations, responsibilities and boundaries.
 - Agree a named contact person in each service.
 - Share knowledge and to help build the capacity of each service to respond to the needs of adults with intellectual disabilities.
- Some adults with intellectual disabilities self-refer to adult literacy services. Others access the literacy service with the help of their disability service or their natural support person (such as a family member). Whatever the situation, **respect the adult learner's autonomy and keep their voice and choice central**. Ensure that any communication about the learner - between the literacy service and, for example, the disability service - takes place only with the learner's permission. In that context, cooperate with the learner's support service or natural support person if and as required by the learner.

Contact information:

The Health Service Executive lists local disability services on its website:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/disabilityservicescounty.html>

Each of the 9 HSE Community Health Organisation areas has a New Directions Implementation Group. Its membership includes the HSE Disability Manager and representatives of Adult Disability Day Service Providers in the CHO area.

See <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/newdirections/new-directions-bulletin-november-20171.pdf>

Guideline 5: Provide professional development to support inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities.

- Provide training in equality and disability awareness for all involved in the centre or service. Include a particular focus on intellectual disability. Include this in initial and ongoing tutor training.
- Ensure that all group tutors have training in inclusive teaching and learning methodologies, differentiation, multi-sensory strategies and universal design for learning.
- Ensure that the scheme has an appropriate number of tutors specific training in teaching and learning strategies for students with general learning disabilities.
- Use mentoring and peer learning approaches in addition to formal training. For example, at tutor meetings allocate some time for those who have taken part in formal training to share key points of learning, and key resources, with their colleagues.
- Agree reciprocal training with local disability support services, to support inclusion and literacy development for adults with intellectual disabilities. For example, the adult literacy service could provide training for disability staff in integrating literacy into their work; the disability service could provide training in response to needs identified by the adult literacy service.

For information on Disability Equality Training available through the National Disability Authority see <http://nda.ie/Resources/eLearning/>

Guideline 6: Build inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities into promotion and outreach.

- In all **promotional material and activities**, state your service's commitment to equality and inclusion.
- Develop proactive promotion and outreach to adults with intellectual disabilities. Plan this in cooperation with adults with intellectual disabilities and disability support services and organisations.
- Ensure that prospective learners get **clear information** on your service. Produce all promotion and information material intended for the general public in **plain English** (see www.simplyput.ie). For printed or online material specifically intended for people with intellectual disabilities, use **Easy to Read** format (see Appendix 1).

Guideline 7: Build inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities into access procedures.

- Develop a process to make your information and communication procedures more accessible. **Accessible information and inclusive communication** means recognising that adults have a range of communication abilities, and respecting and valuing all forms of communication equally. It is a core element of an inclusive adult literacy service. It involves providing information in a range of formats. It also means facilitating the person's preferred communication mode. For example, some adults with intellectual disabilities might use particular aids to communication, such as symbol systems. Ask the learner (if the need arises) how they prefer to communicate, and accommodate that. If the learner is accompanied by a chosen **communication assistant** facilitate that option, remembering to look at and speak directly to the learner during the discussion.
- Where appropriate, with the learner's permission, let their fellow learners, tutors and other relevant staff know the learner's preferred communication mode.
- Begin the process of supporting access as early as possible, in cooperation with the learner and, where relevant, with their support service or support person. Together, identify what practical supports the learner may need to access and participate in the programme. Agree steps to put those supports in place. (See Guideline 4).
- Provide **access, bridging or transition programmes**, designed in cooperation with adults with intellectual disabilities, their advocates and support services. Together, develop tailored **transition strategies**. For example, facilitate pre-placement visits by the learner to the adult literacy centre, to get familiar with the centre and to meet their tutor and other learners.
- Provide directions to the centre in Easy to Read format. Where appropriate, provide individualised aids such as photographs of the building and of landmarks on the way. Provide accessible signage within the centre (see Appendix 1).

Guideline 8: Support effective participation.

- Adult literacy tutors are experienced in supporting students with varying abilities, needs and goals to participate effectively, enjoy the learning experience and achieve their goals. From initial assessment through to progression, **apply the service's core principles, procedures and practices, adjusting** materials, timing and communication modes **as required** to suit the abilities and needs of the learner.
- As is common practice in adult literacy schemes, develop an **individual learning plan** (ILP) with the learner. Focus on the language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills associated with the adult learner's current interests, activities, roles and aspirations. If the learner has developed a personal plan with a disability support service, consider how the literacy work might support them in that.
- Facilitate learners with intellectual disabilities to take part in the various aspects of student life in the centre or service, according to their choice and interests.
- Have and communicate **high expectations** for the learner. **Review progress** frequently with the learner and revise goals and plans accordingly. Where relevant, and with the learner's permission, work collaboratively with the learner's support service or support person at every stage of the programme.
- As in all good adult literacy work, use a range of **active, multi-sensory adult learning methodologies**. Adjust pacing, timetabling and length of sessions as appropriate. Present one idea or step at a time, checking understanding frequently. Use **visuals, symbols and concrete objects of reference** as appropriate to help communication and understanding. Use a variety of practical activities.
- In group programmes, encourage cooperative learning and use differentiation strategies as appropriate.
- Apply the principles of Universal Design for learning and assessment
 - Multiple means of engagement: tapping into learners' interests, offering appropriate challenges, developing motivation
 - Multiple means of expression: providing learners with alternative ways of demonstrating what they know
 - Multiple ways of representation: giving learners various ways of acquiring information and knowledge.

(<https://www.ucc.ie/en/teachlearn/resources/udl/curriculum/>)

For information on Universal Design for Learning see <https://www.ahead.ie/udl>

- Build up, over time, a **resource bank** of accessible teaching and learning materials, as they are developed by and with learners with intellectual disabilities.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (**NCCA**) and the Special Education Support Service (**SESS**) have produced a range of **resources and guidelines** for teachers of students with general learning disabilities. For examples and further information, see the links below.

NCCA: Guidelines for Teachers of Students with General Learning Disabilities: Overview https://www.ncca.ie/media/1980/overview_guidelines.pdf

SESS 2008. Signposts: A Resource Pack for Teachers [PDF] http://www.sess.ie/sites/default/files/Documents_Publications/SESS_Signposts_Complete_Document.pdf

See Section 6: General Learning Disabilities

Visit <http://www.sess.ie/categories/general-learning-disabilities> From there, **follow the links** to mild, moderate, and severe/profound learning disability. In each of those categories you will find a link to **Strategies for Teaching and Learning**.

Guideline 9: Support progression.

- Facilitate all learners and tutors to use the same **core procedures** for identifying and recording progress, **adapted as required** to suit particular needs. Identify progress in terms of using literacy and numeracy for personal purposes, as well as in terms of certification.
- Build **progression planning** into individual learning planning with the learner and, where relevant, with their support service or natural support person.
- Cooperate with the Adult Educational Guidance Service and with other FET programmes and services to **develop transfer and progression routes**. Help learners become familiar with the progression **options** available to them, and to make informed choices on those. Work together to adjust information and communication modes and materials as required.
- Apply reasonable accommodation as required in relation to **programme duration**, to ensure that the learner has adequate opportunity to achieve their learning goals.
- Ensure all learners have access to the option of **certification** in Literacy and Numeracy, Communication and Maths and in other modules. Also use other ways to acknowledge, affirm and celebrate learners' achievements, progress and contributions - for example, through exhibitions, in-house certificates and publication of learners' work.

Guideline 10: Review and evaluate the strategy for inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities.

- Record relevant data and information in relation to your service's current provision for inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities. For example, record data in relation to applications and enrolments, participation, persistence (retention) and outcomes.
- In cooperation with other FET programmes and with local disability services, record data and information in relation to current or potential demand, to inform planning for inclusion.
- Evaluate the inclusion strategy with learners, tutors and with partners in FET and disability services.
- Use the results of evaluation to inform the next phase of the strategy for inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities.

Section 3

References and Appendix

References and further reading

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Appendix 1: Guides to accessible information and communication

- **Make it easy: a guide to preparing Easy to Read information** is available on <http://www.inclusionireland.ie/sites/default/files/attach/basic-page/1193/makeiteasyguide2011.pdf/>. Developed by the **Accessible Information Working Group**.

'Easy to Read documents are made up of short, simple sentences that will communicate the most important messages you need to get across. These are usually accompanied by pictures that will aid understanding' (p 5).

- **Information for All: European standards for making information easy to read and understand**. Published by **Inclusion Europe**. Produced in the framework of the project: Pathways to adult education for people with intellectual disabilities. http://easy-to-read.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/EN_Information_for_all.pdf
- The **National Disability Authority** has produced an online **Accessibility Toolkit**. This includes practical guidelines on accessible information and inclusive communication. See <http://nda.ie/Resources/Accessibility-toolkit/Make-your-information-more-accessible/>
- **Accessible Information for All** was produced by the **Citizens Information Board** in 2009. http://www.citizensinformationboard.ie/downloads/accessibility/Accessible_Information_For_All.pdf
- **Plain English guidelines and resources** are available on www.simplyput.ie. These relate to print, online and face to face communication. NALA also provide a plain English editing service, and training in the use of plain English. **Contact:** Plain English Co-ordinator, NALA, Sandford Lodge, Sandford Close, Ranelagh, Dublin 6
- The **Centre for Excellence in Universal Design** has produced guidelines for accessible written, verbal and digital communication. http://publicservice.universaldesign.ie/media/NDA_Universal_Design_Public_Service_Toolkit.pdf

The National Adult Literacy Agency

The National Adult Literacy Agency is a charity and a membership organisation. We work to ensure that people with literacy and numeracy difficulties can take part fully in society and have access to learning opportunities that meet their needs. We are committed to literacy and numeracy development as a human right.



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www.writeon.ie (Distance learning website)

www.simplyput.ie (Plain English website)

www.helpmykidlearn.ie (Family learning website)

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