Department of Education and Skills

Adult Literacy Programme

Operational Guidelines for Providers

2013
# Table of Contents

Purpose 3
Definition and Scope 3
Management structure 4
Financial Management 4
Staffing Structure 5
Volunteers 5
Target groups: Recruitment and Referral 6
Initial Assessment 7
Formative Assessment and Accreditation 8
Tuition Models 9
Intensive Literacy 10
Numeracy 10
ICT, Distance and Blended Learning 11
Family Literacy 11
Workplace Literacy 12
ESOL Provision 12
Integrated Service Approach 13
Integration of Literacy with other Programmes 13
Adult Literacy Promotion and Publicity 14
Outreach 14
Adult Education Guidance 14
Progression 15
Reporting Requirements 15
Continuing Professional Development 16
Operational Guidelines
Adult Literacy

Purpose
1. These operational guidelines are for Education and Training Board (ETB) staff managing, administering and delivering adult literacy programmes funded by the Department of Education and Skills. The operational guidelines are supported by NALA Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work¹, which outline the principles and philosophy of Adult Literacy work as it has evolved in Ireland, in order to support practice.

2. Any queries in relation to these guidelines or the Adult Literacy Programme should be addressed to :

Further Education Section
Department of Education and Skills
Cornamaddy
Athlone
Co. Westmeath
Tel: 0906484252
Email: info@education.gov.ie

Definition and Scope of Adult Literacy Provision
3. Literacy is fundamental to personal fulfillment, active citizenship, social cohesion and employability. For the purposes of these guidelines, the definition of Adult Literacy is:

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

4. Adult literacy programmes should be primarily focussed on learning outcomes at NFQ Levels 1-3. The priority target cohort for adult literacy programmes are those adults with primary education or less and whose literacy and numeracy skills do not match Level 3 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). It is recognized that there some adults with upper second level education whose literacy and numeracy skills are less than or equivalent to NFQ Level 3 and ETBs may include this cohort for programmes. However, as set out in paragraph 56 below, it may also be appropriate to offer integrated basic skills support to these learners as part of broader vocational and general learning programmes.

¹http://www.nala.ie.sites.default/files/publications/nala_guidelines_for_good_adult_literacy_work.pdf
5. All ETB adult literacy programmes should be offered free-of-charge to any person over 16 years of age, whose full-time education has ceased and who fulfils the criteria outlined in paragraphs 4 and 50 (in relation to ESOL participants).

**Management Structure**

6. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has overall responsibility for all ETB activities including Adult Literacy. The CEO may delegate the management of adult literacy to the Adult Education Officer (AEO) as part of an integrated Adult Education Service, which may also include Community Education, Back to Education Initiative (BTEI), Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education (ITABE), Family Literacy, Skills for Work, the Adult Education Guidance Initiative, Youtheach, VTOS or the Prison Education Service.

7. Any transfer of adult literacy funding to any other programme must have the prior written approval of the Department. Such a decision should be formally recorded in the Education and Training Board’s proceedings and be identified on the Form A2 and Form A3.

8. The AEO is line manager for relevant adult education service managers, including Adult Literacy Organisers (ALOs – for conditions of service please see Circular M15/2001 available on the DES website). ALOs manage the delivery of Adult Literacy programmes in consultation and co-operation with colleague co-ordinators from the other ETB adult/further education services. The organisation of adult literacy programmes and their management by ALOs, e.g., in relation to “catchment areas”, is a decision for the CEO.

**Financial Management**

9. Funding for adult literacy is allocated to ETBs by the Department under the Adult Literacy, Community Education and SPIDAS Scheme (ALCES). Adult literacy programmes may also be delivered under the ITABE, DEIS Family Literacy and BTEI but within those schemes’ terms and conditions. Funding for all these schemes is allocated by the Department on an annual calendar year basis.

10. The CEO may delegate the responsibility for the management of the funding allocated under these schemes to relevant adult education service managers, including managers for adult literacy programmes. The CEO approves allocations to adult literacy programmes from within the schemes, in consultation with the AEO and relevant adult education service managers. The disbursement of these allocations to relevant adult education service managers is a decision for the CEO. The AEO should agree allocations with relevant service managers from within those approved allocations in line with the highest financial and accounting practices.

11. The adult literacy programme allocation is to be used to meet pay and non-pay costs.
12. **Pay Costs** are the costs of tuition, co-ordination and administration staff, including ALOs and paid tuition staff. *A minimum of 50% of the Adult Literacy budget allocation must be spent on the provision of tuition i.e. direct tuition pay.*

13. **Non-pay costs** include equipment and materials, overheads (such as rental) and staff training and/or Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Non-pay costs may also include the limited provision of childcare and limited additional guidance input, the latter to be arranged in consultation with the AEGS.

**Staffing Structure**

14. As set out above, the ALO manages the delivery of adult literacy programmes. Staff delivering adult literacy programmes should be paid tutors or unpaid volunteers. The CEO may approve the appointment of other staff including administrative, caretaking, cleaning and other support staff. In addition, the CEO may allocate a resource worker or development officer to work under the direction of the ALO in the development and delivery of the local Adult Literacy Programme. A clear rationale and job description, in line with the objectives of the adult literacy programme, should be established for such posts. *The provisions of Circular 22/2009 and 23/2009 on public sector appointments must be adhered to.* (Particular guidelines apply to the recruitment and management of volunteer tutors and these are outlined later in this document.)

15. Paid tutors should be recruited in line with best practice and a panel of tutors should be established, with associated subject areas where relevant. With the approval of the AEO and CEO, ALOs should allocate tuition hours in accordance with the panel in the first instance and other factors such as availability in the second. As part of the recruitment and induction process, all paid tutors should be provided with a contract of employment stating their entitlements. Paid tutors, as with all other staff employed in the ETB sector, should be Garda vetted.

**Volunteers**

16. Volunteers play an important role in the delivery of adult literacy programmes. They are engaged in one-to-one tuition and may also assist paid tutors in groups. This practice should be positively encouraged as an alternative to one-to-one tuition or as complementary, according to need. There is also a range of other activities within the local adult education service in which a volunteer may become involved.

17. Each ETB should have a volunteer tutor policy in place, which should cover the recruitment, vetting, initial and on-going training, selection, supervision and support of volunteer tutors. ETBs should publish this policy on their websites. Recruitment of volunteer tutors should be carefully considered in the context of the capacity of the adult literacy programme and the wider needs of the adult education service, and the training of large numbers of volunteers should not be undertaken if there is no opportunity to engage them in provision. The number of initial volunteer tutor training courses should be limited and, given the level of ETB resources devoted to this training, volunteers should
generally be requested to make a commitment of at least 24 months once training is completed. Regular in-service training should be organised on an annual basis for all volunteers without exception, and attendance at this in-service training should be clearly highlighted as a condition of recruitment for volunteers. The NALA WIT Accreditation Project provides a system for the accreditation of volunteer training programmes, which supports quality and consistency. NALA also provides teaching and learning supports through annual events and the tutor’s corner section on [http://www.nala.ie/tutors](http://www.nala.ie/tutors).

18. All tutors should be required to engage in Garda vetting without exception. Tutors may commence work once they have signed the declaration and the vetting application has been submitted to the appropriate Authority. Initial tutor training should be quality assured in all cases and accredited where appropriate; tutors should normally have completed their training prior to being matched with an adult learner. The volunteer tutor policy should specify the criteria used to select learners in volunteer tutor training. The Department will issue a separate sample template for volunteer protocols in due course.

**Recruitment and Referral**

19. The Adult Literacy Review concluded that there were wide variations in the literacy, language and education levels of participants enrolled in VEC Adult Literacy programmes. It recommended that:

- There should be a renewed emphasis on the priority target group, adults whose literacy and numeracy skills do not match Level 3 on the NFQ.
- Within this target group, priority should be given to unemployed adults and those with only a primary education or less;
- ETBs should avoid “first come, first served” policies but develop clear and transparent enrolment policies, which focus on the priority groups identified above.

20. Within this target cohort listed above, there are individuals and groups that experience particular and acute barriers to participation. These are identified in Government and EU policy documents such as the National Action Plan on Social Inclusion:

- The unemployed and in particular, the long term unemployed
- Lone Parents
- Travellers
- Migrants
- Older people
- People with a disability
- Disadvantaged women and men, particularly those living in rural isolation
- The homeless
- Ex-offenders
- Substance misusers.
21. Within the cohort of unemployed people and in the context of the current high levels of unemployment the following four areas have been identified as a priority:

- The low skilled
- The long term unemployed
- Under 35s
- Those formerly employed in declining sectors - construction, retail and manufacturing sectors.

22. Significant numbers of unemployed people already access adult literacy programmes, both mainstream programmes and ITABE. However, ETB Adult literacy staff, under the direction of the CEO/AEO, should ensure that there is appropriate liaison with local and regional welfare offices to ensure the referral of unemployed people to adult literacy programmes in accordance with Circular 76/2011 - *Interim Protocol to enable referral of unemployed people to Further Education programmes funded by the Department of Education and Skills*. The DES has issued targets for the recruitment of unemployed people to ETB programmes.

23. ETBs should use local demographic data and Census Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS)\(^2\) profiles as a tool to aid local planning and targeting, in relation to the educational and economic profile of adults in their areas. The SAPS online tool can be used to target older people with low education levels (primary education or less) as well as those in younger age brackets. A further key theme relates to migration and the data can be used to inform planning for ESOL provision.

24. Adult literacy staff (in collaboration with other ETB personnel) should participate in networks and partnerships with other local organisations, including key community and voluntary interests, employers, employment services and relevant state agencies. ETB literacy programmes may already have a range of referral networks with local agencies and organisations but referral protocols should be established with key agencies; such protocols should detail the relevant contact persons in both the ETB adult literacy programme and the local agency.

**Initial Assessment**

25. All ETB Adult Literacy Programmes should carry out structured initial assessment to identify learning goals and needs of learners as part of a comprehensive assessment framework. Currently a wide variety of tools and materials are used for initial assessment,

including tools developed for use in primary and post-primary Irish education settings and tools developed for use in adult literacy provision in other jurisdictions. ETBs are free to select and adapt their own assessment tools but it is important that learners’ needs be assessed on the basis of evidence gathered in a systematic manner and not exclusively based on ‘self report’ or information provided by the learner. Assessment systems used should reference learning outcomes at NFQ Levels 1-3. A separate initial assessment should be carried out for ESOL learners (see paragraphs 49 and 50).

26. Learners should be assessed on entry following an initial meeting with the ALO/resource/development worker in a way that is supportive to the learner and respects their adult status, but which elicits sufficient information for the ALO to ensure that they are correctly placed in the appropriate model of provision. These assessments should also form the basis of data on students’ literacy levels on entry to tuition returned to the Department and form the basis of an individual learning plan. Referral to other ETB programmes may also be considered, as appropriate. Further guidance on the initial and formative assessment process is in preparation and will be circulated in due course.

Formative Assessment and Accreditation

27. Formative assessment gives the learner insight into their progress and facilitates them to reflect on their learning and to set goals. All ETB Adult Literacy Programmes should ensure that all learners have access to both formative and summative assessment.

28. Summative assessment provides evidence of achievement of the learner’s goals and whether he or she has achieved a specific standard. Informal summative assessment is especially appropriate during the adult learner’s initial engagement in the Adult Literacy Programme. ETBs should ensure that structured systems are in place to provide informal summative assessment, as appropriate.

29. Adult literacy learners’ right to attend for personal, family or other reasons without working towards a formal qualification should be respected and it is acknowledged that many learners attend exclusively in order to address specific goals relating to reading, writing and numeracy in everyday life, and not with the objective of gaining qualifications. While accreditation is not a requirement of participation, the Adult Literacy Programme should provide the option of appropriate accreditation to all students and should encourage all students to avail of this option and progress. Progression is one of the cornerstones of further education, along with access and transfer.

30. All ETB Adult Literacy Programmes should ensure that they validate programmes leading to awards at NFQ Levels 1-3. Achieving certification on the NFQ empowers and enables learners to progress. However, currently, a very small proportion of Adult Literacy learners achieve certification in Communications and Numeracy. Provision at Levels 1 and 2 is also extremely low compared to Level 3 and above and some ETBs still do not offer any accredited programmes at these levels.
31. Every effort must be made to encourage and facilitate learners to avail of accredited options, including Levels 1 and 2. Modularized awards help to motivate low-skilled and low-qualified adults, particularly those with primary education or less, by offering the possibility of taking small steps towards full awards over time. The development of Level 1 and 2 awards as part of the Irish NFQ is acknowledged as providing these pathways for learners to progress at their own pace and it is a significant innovation, at both national and international levels. Therefore, every ETB should make accredited options, at appropriate levels, available to Adult Literacy learners so that they can avail of progression opportunities and build qualifications and skills. These options may include access to certification through www.writeon.ie.

Tuition Models
32. Each Adult Literacy Programme should provide a core service of group literacy and numeracy tuition, available during the daytime and evenings, as well as Family Literacy, ESOL and Work Based provision. One-to-one tuition may also be provided where appropriate, as this can be an important stepping-stone for returning to learning for many learners.

33. Tuition may be provided to groups ranging between 4 and 8 learners for up to 8 hours per week, including intensive tuition options.

34. Research shows that there is a positive association between tutor qualifications and experience and adult literacy learners’ progress. Adult Literacy programmes should therefore strongly promote group tuition to new applicants as the preferred option, which will provide them with access to more qualified and experienced tutors and a more structured learning experience with the support of their peers. Volunteers may assist paid tutors in groups and this practice should be positively encouraged as an alternative to one-to-one tuition. It has been traditional for learners to be initially placed in one-to-one provision and to then progress to group tuition; however, as a general principle, learners should be offered a place in a group in the first instance. Learners in receipt of one-to-one tuition should be reviewed at regular intervals, initially after 3 months and should be encouraged and supported to avail of group tuition, in the first instance with their volunteer.

35. Tutors should develop a programme plan for a specified period of sessions in line with the learner’s goals and the needs identified during initial assessment. Programme plans should be developed for both one-to-one and group provision and should be reviewed and monitored by the ALO. Further guidance on curriculum and programme development issues may be obtained through Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) (www.qqi.ie), the Further Education Support Service (www.fess.ie) and the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) (www.nala.ie).

36. Where required in Gaeltacht areas, tuition may be offered through Irish.
**Intensive Literacy**

37. Intensive Literacy Programmes were first piloted by the Department in 2006, in partnership with the then IVEA and NALA. This Intensive Tuition of Adult Basic Education (ITABE) initiative has now been mainstreamed, with specific allocations made on an annual basis for programmes of 14 weeks duration, consisting of 6 hours per week. A specific pre and post assessment tool, designed for ITABE, is used to capture learner literacy and numeracy levels prior to engaging with ITABE programmes and again on completion of programmes. Monitoring and evaluation of the ITABE initiative, including post-course assessments, have demonstrated that it is effective in offering learners the option of accelerated and demonstrable progress in basic education. This evidence is corroborated by research from both the US and the UK, which demonstrates that learners who attend longer courses make more progress than those who attend less intensive programmes. Blended learning programmes also offer potential for increased learning time.

38. Responses received as part of the Adult Literacy Review indicate that, on average, learners access a very limited number of tuition hours per year, much lower than the number of hours that research demonstrates is needed for them to make significant progress. However, the number of learners enrolled in intensive programmes as part of core provision is increasing and ETBs should ensure that these intensive programmes continue to be prioritised using the existing ITABE model, even if this results in a smaller number of learners being enrolled.

39. Statistics demonstrate that nearly 50% of all participants on ITABE programmes are unemployed, indicating that core intensive provision should be aimed at this target group in the first instance. Please also refer to separate detailed guidelines designed for ITABE programmes.

**Numeracy**

40. Numeracy should be an integral part of the range of learning options offered through the ETB Adult Literacy programme. Responses received as part of the Adult Literacy Review demonstrate that there is relatively little numeracy provision delivered at present and ETBs should adopt a higher focus on numeracy, both as a standalone subject and integrated into broader basic skills provision.

41. Evidence provided as part of the Adult Literacy Review also demonstrated that in ETBs where an increased focus has been placed on numeracy and Maths provision enrolments and outcomes have improved. Separate ‘stand alone’ numeracy provision should be advertised and promoted widely and learners should be offered an opportunity to gain accreditation at NFQ levels 1-3. Numeracy should also be integrated wherever possible into literacy programmes, using appropriate strategies and themes, such as financial and budgeting literacy. Short taster courses may be used to promote awareness of numeracy, e.g. Maths for Parents, Fun with Maths, Everyday Maths.
42. ETBs should ensure that staff has access to in-service training for numeracy teaching, including non-accredited and accredited provision.

**ICT, Distance and Blended Learning**

43. As a general principle, ICT provision should be integrated with other literacy and numeracy tuition. Where ICT provision is offered as a standalone subject, it should be targeted at learners from the priority groups listed in paragraphs 21 and 22. However, it is generally preferable to offer learners access to ICT tuition as part of broader basic skills provision.

44. Research shows that learning technology may help to attract, engage and motivate learners. Blended learning provides a means of extending learning time and encouraging independent study through the provision of additional flexible learning opportunities. Learners should therefore be provided with other learning options such as distance and blended learning, as appropriate. Access to distance and blended learning should be integrated into all service delivery and these options should be promoted for all students in Adult Literacy Programmes, in order to increase access to learning opportunities. Therefore, every ETB should offer distance and blended learning options, both as standalone, and integrated into mainstream delivery. Further details are available from [www.writeon.ie](http://www.writeon.ie).

**Family Literacy**

45. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy stresses the critical role of parents in supporting children’s literacy development and recent research highlights the effectiveness of family literacy programmes, both in improving child literacy and in improving parental support skills. Family literacy programmes aim to:

- Improve the literacy, language and numeracy skills of parents
- Improve parents’ ability to help their children learn
- Improve the developmental skills of young children and their acquisition of literacy, language and numeracy.

46. Feedback from the DEIS Family Literacy project and the Adult Literacy Review indicates a number of positive outcomes from these programmes, including increased engagement with school by parents and high completion rates with adult participants progressing to other programmes within the adult literacy and adult education service. Most family literacy provision is non-accredited but provides an important entry route for those who

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3 Department of Education and Skills, 2011, *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life: The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People*

4 European Commission, 2011, *Family Literacy in Europe: using parental support initiatives to enhance early literacy development.*
would not otherwise engage with the service. ETBs should ensure that family literacy programmes are also supported as part of core provision and funding. Please also refer to separate guidelines for Family Literacy, developed as part of the DEIS Initiative, 2006-2011.

47. Each ETB should agree a short referral protocol for family literacy programmes, particularly in cooperation with the Home School Community Liaison Service. ETBs should also link with other stakeholders to support family learning, including county childcare committees and libraries, and promote www.helpmykidlearn.ie as part of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy for Children and Young People.

**Workplace Literacy**

48. The rapidly changing and globalised competitive context faced by the Irish economy places an even greater and more urgent emphasis on the need for continued vocational education and training of the workforce. There are increasing skills requirements within workplaces, even for those considered relatively low-skilled, and due to new minimum qualifications requirements introduced through regulation. The National Skills Strategy draws attention to the need to upskill 260,000 people to NFQ levels 4 and 5. Every effort should be made to promote workplace basic education, through programmes such as Skills for Work and Return to Learning, but also through the mainstream budget. A wide range of resources to support providers to develop workplace basic education are available from NALA and the Skills for Work programme – www.skillsforwork.ie.

**ESOL Provision**

49. Decisions on allocation of hours for ESOL provision should take account of the learning needs of the wider local community, and it is essential that an appropriate balance be maintained between literacy provision and English language provision, reflecting the local population. The Census 2011 Small Area Population statistics (SAPS) may also be used to aid local planning and targeting in this regard. Decisions on allocation of hours for ESOL provision should also take account of ESOL provision provided by other ETB programmes.

50. ESOL provision should prioritise particular target groups to whom tuition is offered to a level of functional competency only (A2 on the Common European Framework of References for Languages, or NFQ Level 3). Providers should focus resources on the most disadvantaged ESOL learners who are at risk of social exclusion because of very poor English language skills and who may also have literacy needs. Priority target groups would include asylum seekers and low-income EU immigrant or migrant workers and unemployed EU migrants. Referral to ESOL provision organised by the Adult Literacy Programme should follow a formal structured assessment. As set out in paragraphs 51-54 below, an integrated service approach should be adopted for ESOL provision. Applicants whose language skills are higher than A2/NFQ Level 3 should be referred to other ETB ESOL programmes, including fee-paying classes.
Integrated Service Approach

51. There should be specific policies in place at ETB management level to promote an integrated service approach with regard to all part-time further and adult education programmes, including adult literacy, as this will ensure a focus on strategic planning and avoid duplication. Single programmes of adult learning for geographical areas within the ETB should be developed. The Guidelines to Enhance Co-operation between the Back to Education Initiative and Adult Literacy Programmes is a useful resource for developing intra-agency cooperation.⁵

52. The AEO should ensure that a comprehensive plan is in place to ensure that adult education services work co-operatively together on an intra-agency basis. This plan should be developed and agreed with the CEO and relevant members of the ETB senior management team and the AEO should report to the CEO on its implementation on a regular basis. The foundation of such an integrated approach includes communication, information sharing and joint planning and reporting and a formal forum for this should be established.

53. An integrated service model depends on more than ‘regular meetings’. Examples of features of such an integrated model include common applications processes, joint assessment of enrolments by coordinators, a common database, pre-course placement sessions, operational planning meetings, joint brochures and publicity, cross programme tutor packs, generic course descriptions, and outreach meetings.

54. Publicity and awareness raising promotional work should take place in the broader context of the single programme for adult learning established for specific geographical areas within each ETB. Such an approach will ensure that adult learners are directed to the service that best suits their needs.

55. It may be appropriate for the adult literacy programme to offer specific supports for other programmes, such as pre-course literacy assessments and core skills support at Levels 3-5.

Integration of Literacy into other Adult Education Programmes

56. The integration of literacy into broader adult and further education programmes has been stressed in a number of recent policy documents at both Irish and EU/International levels, including the Programme for Government. These reports include the new Common Awards System published by FETAC, the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, the OECD’s review of VET in Ireland and the Report of the ETBI / NALA Integrating Literacy Working Group. The integration of literacy and numeracy is also supported by the European Framework of Key Competences. The ETB Adult Literacy Programme should collaborate

with other programmes and support processes in the context of an integrated service approach as set out above, to develop programmes that incorporate literacy, numeracy, ICT and learning to learn.

**Adult Literacy Promotion and Publicity**

57. A wide range of publicity, awareness-raising and promotion work is needed at both national and local levels. The Adult Literacy Programme should allocate a portion of its budget annually for promotional activities. Specific targeted approaches for vulnerable and ‘hard to reach’ groups are also needed.

58. Promotional strategies need to be creative and sensitive to learners’ needs and perceptions. They should be evaluated for their effectiveness and should evolve with changing learner and tutor profiles.

59. Promotional strategies undertaken at national level by both NALA and AONTAS assist ETBs to raise awareness of adult literacy and broader adult learning opportunities and provide a useful resource for local events and publicity.

**Outreach**

60. Outreach may be viewed as the provision of services and programmes outside traditional centres. This approach may engage learners for whom the primary barrier to access is the location of provision; however, outreach work may also involve the adaptation of organisational policies and practices to ensure more consultation with specific communities around their learning needs, leading to more flexible and tailored provision.

61. Such work is best undertaken in partnership with other ETB programmes, particularly part-time programmes such as community education and BTEI. This approach can promote the referral of specific target groups, including those listed in paragraph 21 above. Existing learners may also act as ‘champions’ and role models to reach their peers.

62. Further guidance on outreach work is contained in the publication “Guidelines for Effective Planning and Delivery of Back to Education Initiative Outreach Provision”.

**Adult Education Guidance**

63. Guidance should be a key aspect of Adult Literacy programmes and should be available at all stages including pre-entry stage and pre-exit on an integrated basis. The Adult Educational Guidance Service (AEGS) provides personal, educational and vocational

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guidance, which supports learners to make informed decisions about course choice and certification if required, progression plans and recognition of prior learning. AEGS provides on-going guidance, which also supports the learner’s motivation to continue with a programme, especially where previous educational experiences may have been negative. The role of the ALO and tutors in the delivery of frontline guidance is an essential one and can be supported by the AEGS.

64. It is essential that a communications protocol is in place between the Adult Literacy Programme and the Adult Education Guidance Service. The ALO and AEG Co-ordinator should put in place an annual plan for the provision of adult education guidance to adult learners engaging in the Adult Literacy Programme (example: Local Area plans drawn up between AEGS and ALO under ITABE could inform this protocol) and this should be communicated to the Adult Literacy Programme team with a particular focus on tutors. In-service training for adult literacy tutors (paid and voluntary) should include guidance awareness training in consultation with the AEGS. Information on adult education, and both one-to-one and group guidance should be provided to learners as appropriate. Particular consideration should be given to promoting progression options. Further guidelines on guidance provision for ITABE participants is available in ITABE guidelines.

Progression
65. Progression within and from the adult education service should be promoted and developed. It should be primarily managed by the ALO with input from the AEGS. Development, implementation and review of programme plans in combination with formative assessment are essential in the management of progression within the adult basic education service. Adult learners should move seamlessly through the service as their knowledge, skills and competences develop.

66. Learners should be encouraged to establish the relevant competencies and skills before embarking on broader accredited programmes with a specific vocational focus. However, a balance needs to be struck between learners progressing at their own pace and challenging learners to move on to programmes at higher levels of the NFQ. If learners make no demonstrable progress after one year, they should be supported, with appropriate assessments, to review their learning programme. Referral to the AEGS at this stage would support the learner to review all available options and make appropriate plans.

Reporting Requirements
67. The Adult Literacy Review highlighted the need for more accurate reporting in relation to the statistical returns. It is anticipated that this issue will be addressed by SOLAS in the context of broader initiatives concerning data collection and analysis. The CEO should sign off on the annual adult literacy statistical and expenditure returns which are required by the Department.
Continuing Professional Development

68. ETBs should ensure that staff has access to in-service training for teaching and learning that support the range of programmes and tuition models.