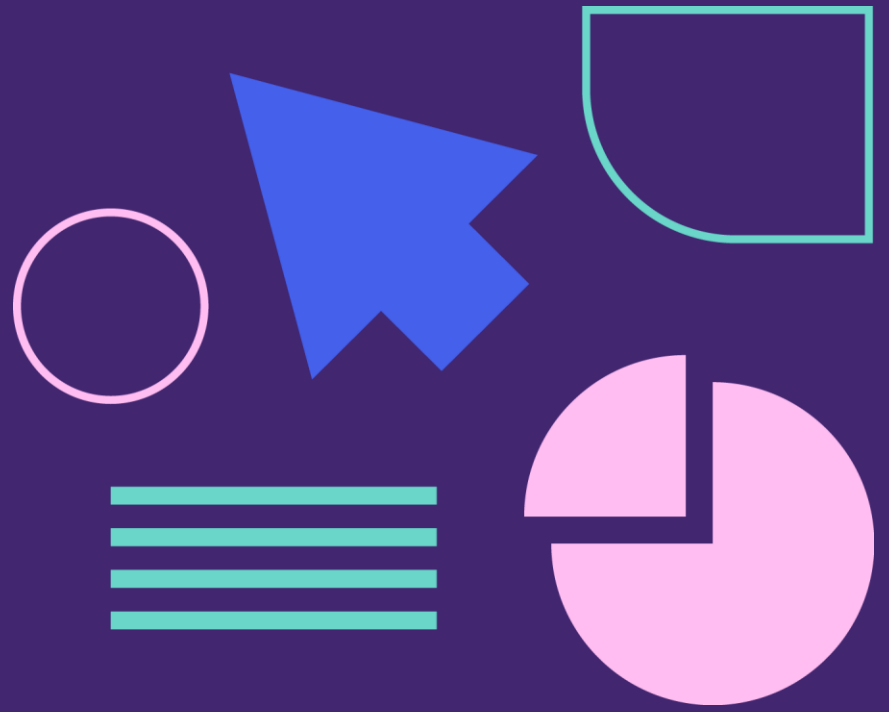
Designing for access, inclusion and sustainability



D2L Connection

KIT Tropical Institute, Amsterdam, Netherlands

30 October 2026

Elaine Cohalan, Learning Strategy and Education Manager, NALA
Caitriona Whelan, eLearning Developer and Content Creator, NALA

NALA
National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

Overview

- About NALA
- About literacy
- NALA as a provider of literacy education
- Learn with NALA virtual learning environment
- What's next
- Questions

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About NALA



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About NALA

National **A**dult **L**iteracy **A**gency **is the voice of adult literacy and numeracy in Ireland**

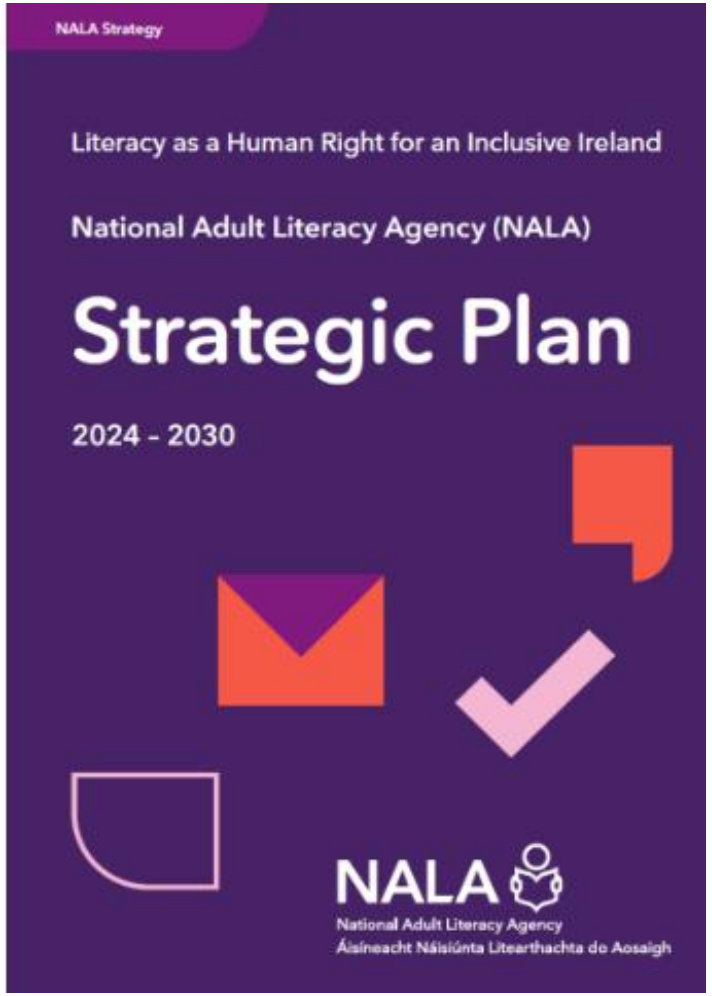


We do this by:

- Supporting adults to improve their literacy, numeracy and digital literacy skills; and
- Supporting organisations to use a literacy friendly approach.

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Our strategic plan 2024 - 2030



[Strategic Plan 2024 – 2030]

Our vision is that adult literacy is a human right. Everyone in Ireland should have the chance to develop their literacy, numeracy, and digital skills to take part fully in society.

Our mission is to:

- campaign for literacy as a human right
- be leaders and champion best literacy practice
- support organisations in their efforts to be literacy friendly.

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Our services and activities

- Advocacy, policy and research
- **For learners**
  - National Freephone advice, information and referral service
  - Learn with NALA distance learning and eLearning
  - Events and development programmes
- **For tutors**
  - online training
  - resources
- **For organisations**
  - Literacy awareness training and outreach
  - Plain English editing and training





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About literacy



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What is literacy?

- Literacy involves listening, speaking, reading, writing, using numbers and everyday technology to:
  - communicate;
  - build relationships;
  - understand information; and
  - make informed choices.
- Literacy enables us to:
  - reach our full potential;
  - be active and critical participants in our families, work and society;
  - help address poverty and social exclusion; and
  - take part in, and make sense of, the world.



Poll

1. Average OECD rate at or below level 1 in literacy
2. Average OECD rate at or below level 1 in literacy
3. Average EU rate at or below level 1 in digital literacy

https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/quWtUfNB7D

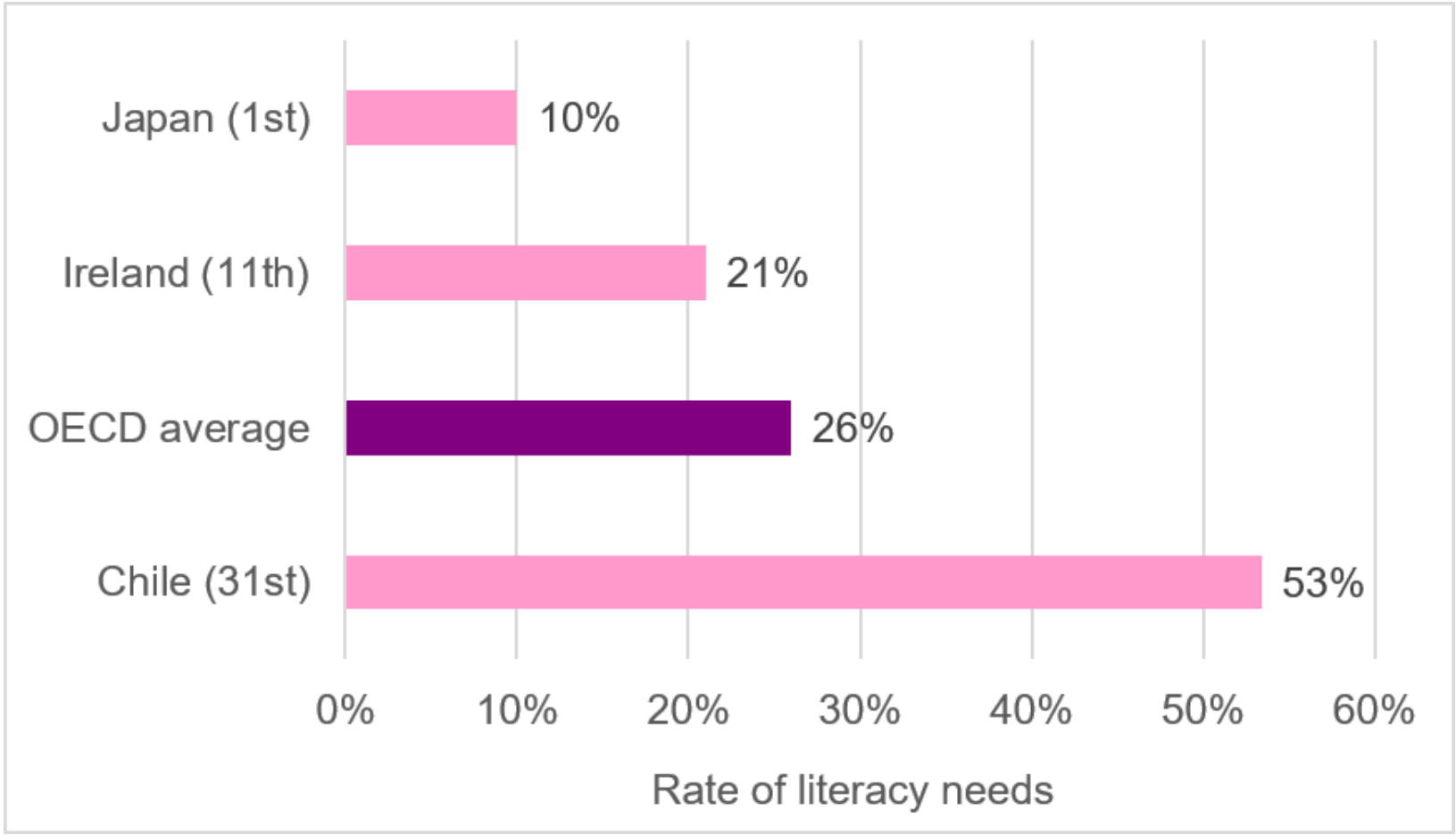
Responses

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OECD comparison: literacy

Average OECD rate at or below level 1 in literacy

Adults who find everyday text, such as a bus timetable or medical instructions, hard to read and understand.



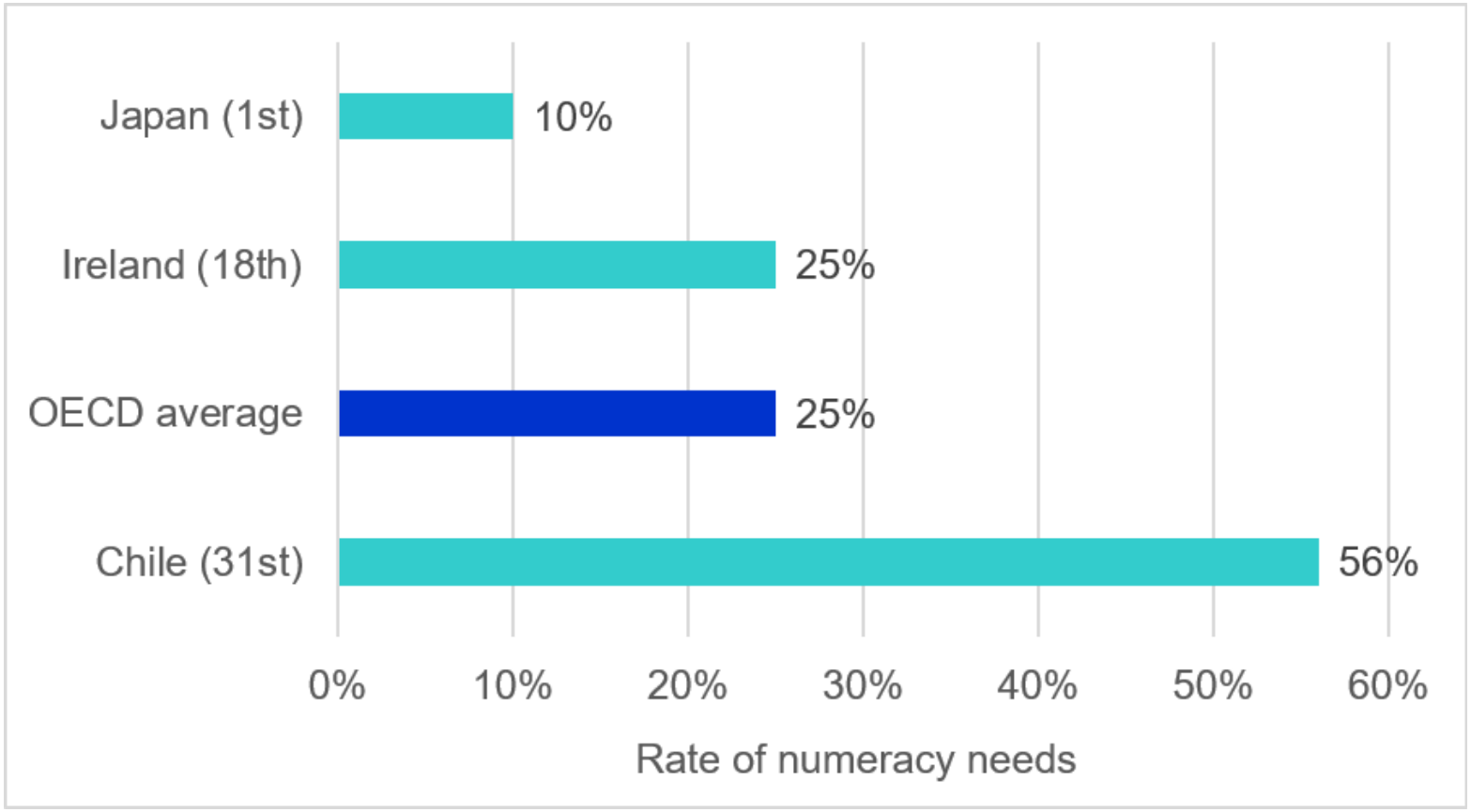
Source: OECD Survey of Adult Skills 2023

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OECD comparison: numeracy

Average OECD rate at or below level 1 in numeracy

Adults who struggle with everyday maths, such as working out a discount or dividing up a bill.



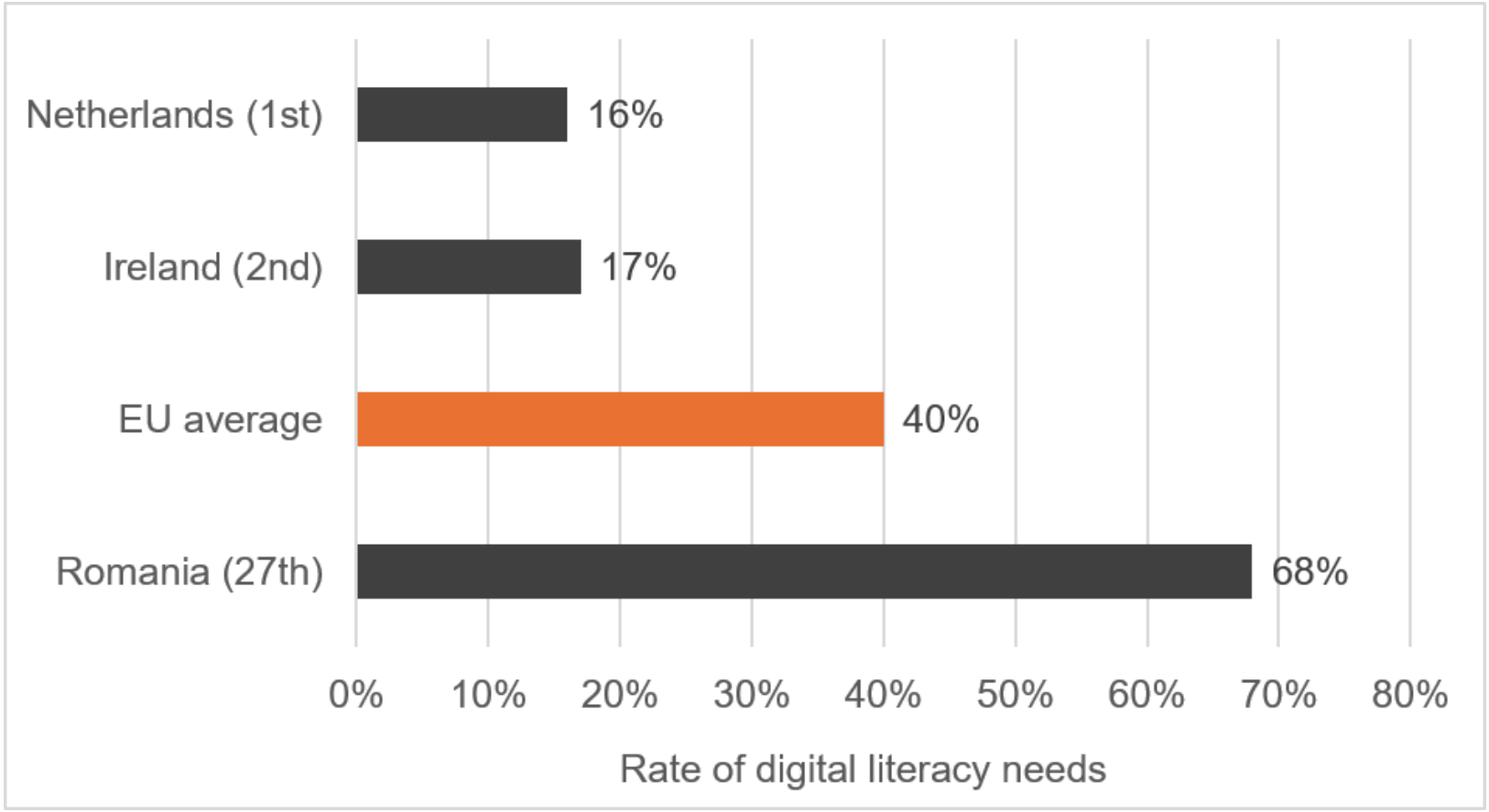
Source: OECD Survey of Adult Skills 2023

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EU comparison: digital literacy

Average EU rate at or below level 1 in digital literacy

Adults who struggle with basic digital tasks such as looking up a website or sending an email.



Source: Digital Economy & Society Index 2025, European Commission

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Literacy needs in Ireland



25% of adults (aged 16-65) have **numeracy** needs

835,000 people



21% of adults (aged 16-65) have **literacy** needs

700,000 people



17% of adults (aged 16-74) have **digital literacy** needs

640,000 people

Sources: OECD Survey of Adult Skills 2023 and EU Digital Economy & Society Index 2025

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NALA as a provider of literacy education



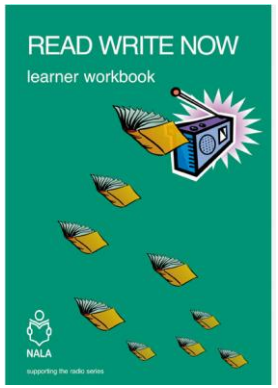
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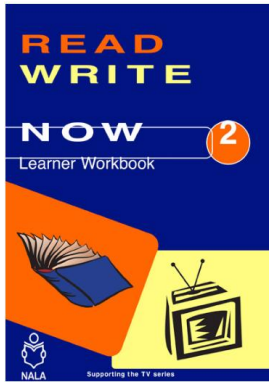
NALA's history of provision



Distance Learning Service

2000





Write On

2008

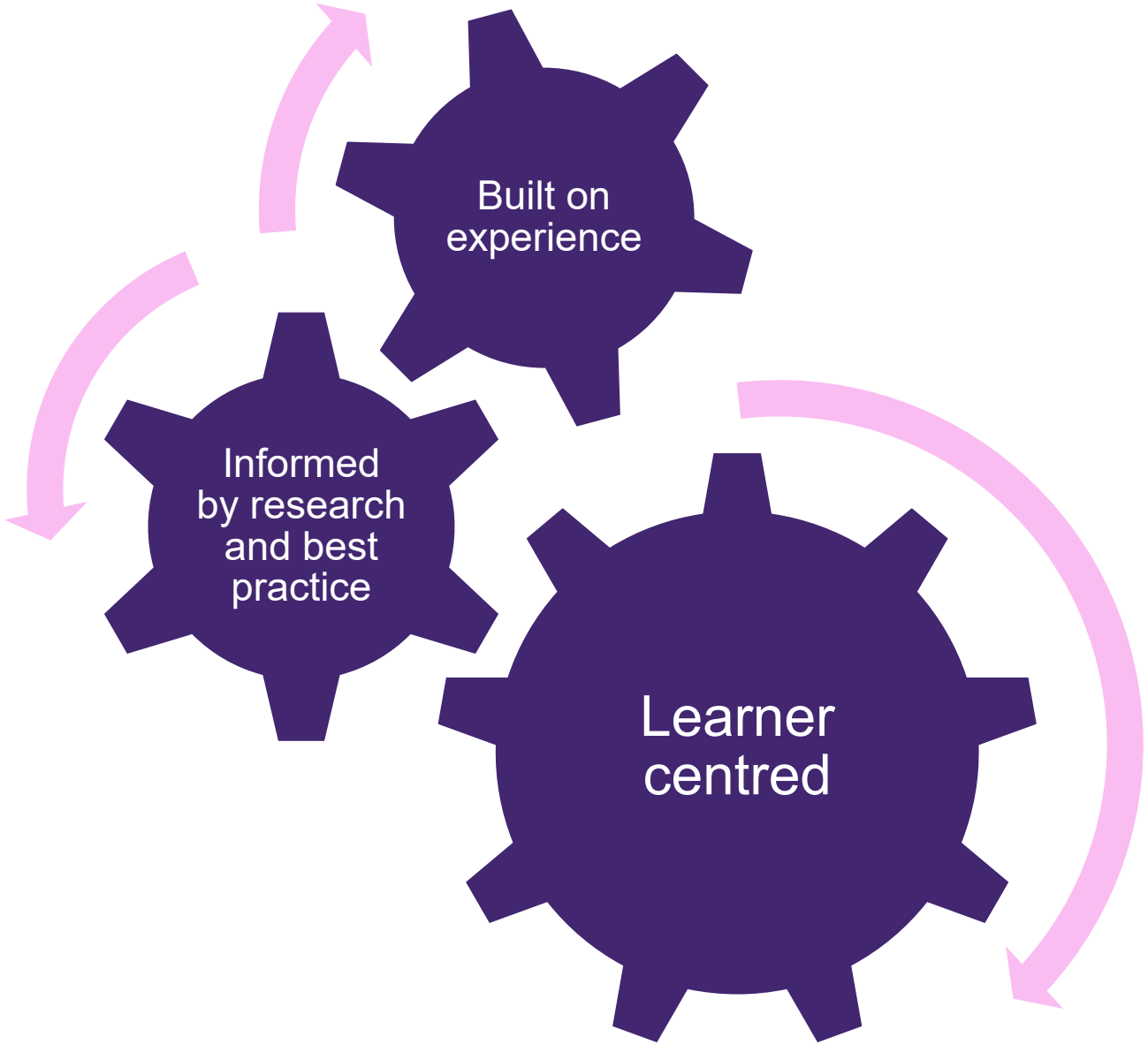
Learn with NALA

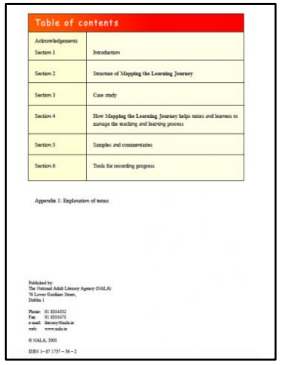
2020

[Leading the way in online learning 2022]

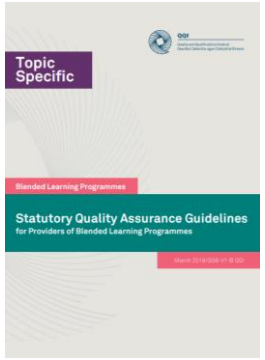
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Ethos

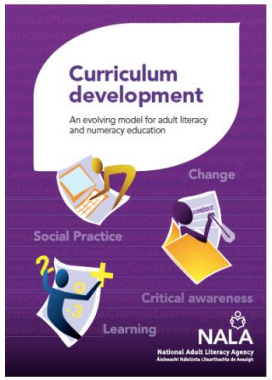

Built on experience
Informed by research and best practice
Learner centred

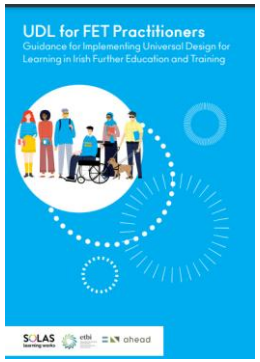

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SOLAS

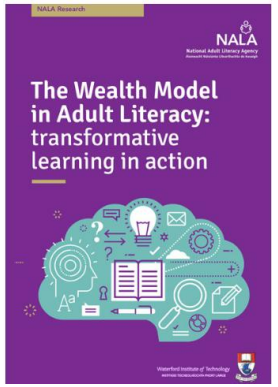

Topic Specific
Blended Learning Programmes
Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines
for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes

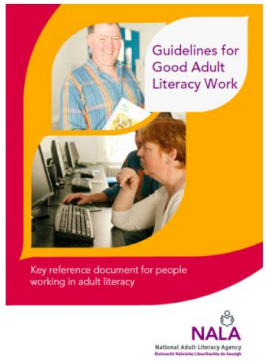

Writing and design tips
NALA


Curriculum development
An evolving model for adult literacy and numeracy education
Change
Social Practice
Critical awareness
Learning
NALA


UDL for FET Practitioners
Guidance for Implementing Universal Design for Learning in Irish Further Education and Training

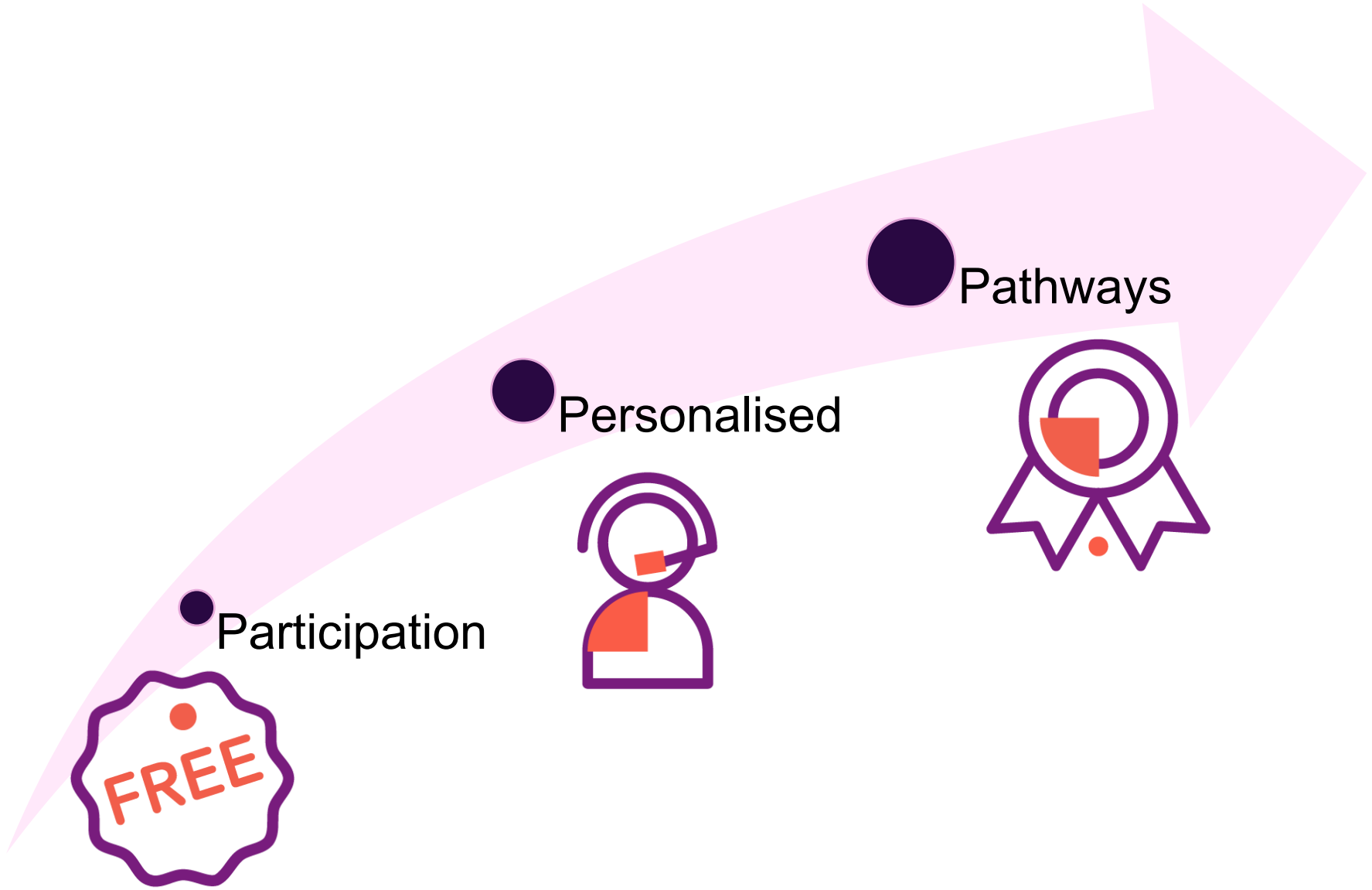

NALA Policy and Research
Literacy Impact
An Outcomes Framework for measuring the impact of improved literacy, numeracy and digital skills
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NALA Research
NALA
The Wealth Model in Adult Literacy: transformative learning in action


Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work
Key reference document for people working in adult literacy
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Goals of NALA provision

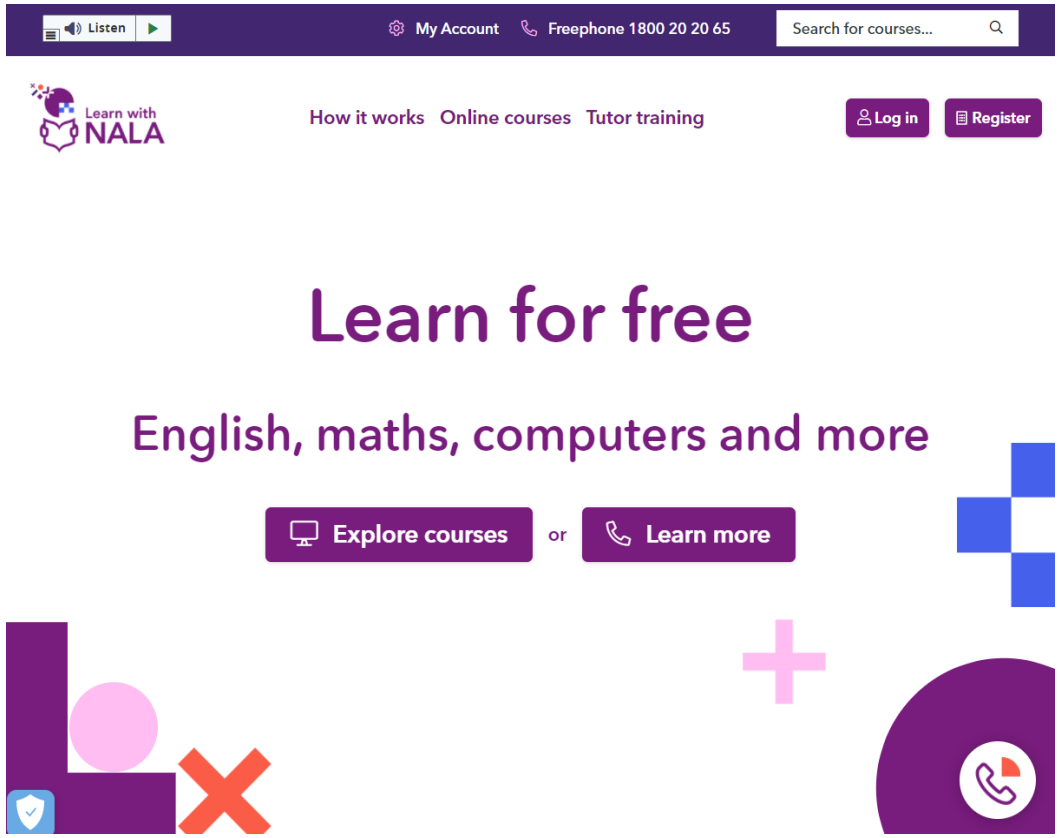


NALA as a provider of adult literacy services



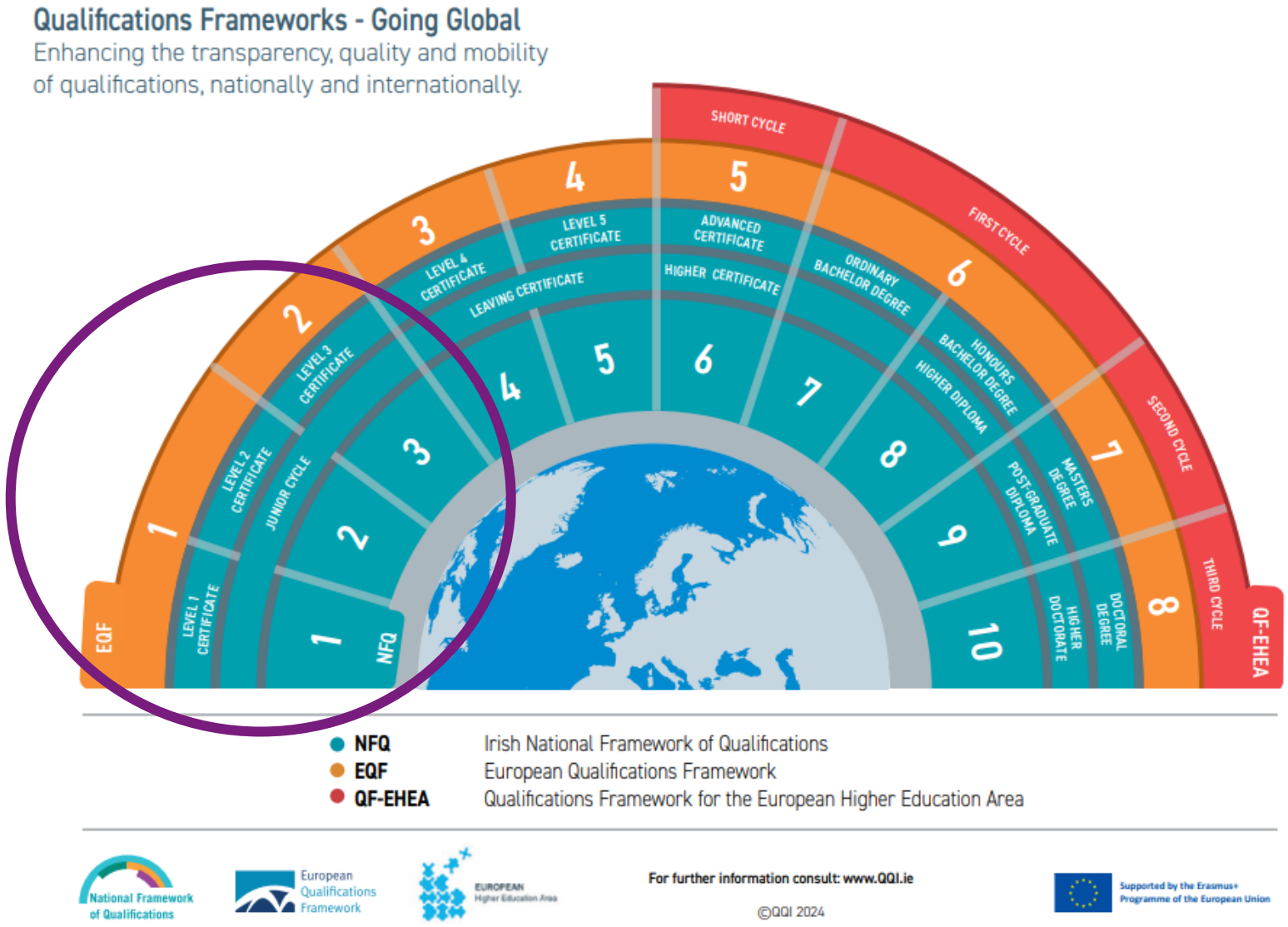
Learn with NALA Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

- 44 self-directed courses at Level 1 - 3
- QQI certification options at level 1, 2 and 3
- Interactive learning
- Learner led, blended approach
- Support helpline
- Free, confidential, flexible
- Tutor support available
- Option to learn with local registered centre



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National awards at Level 1-3



https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/2024-07/qqiglobalfansphere_2024.pdf

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Online learner profile



35 - 45

The highest proportion of learners were within the 35-45 year old age category.

For many respondents, their motivation to learn was:



23%

To attain a qualification.



22%

For career.



22%

For personal development.

[Learning with NALA 2024]

Learner award ceremonies



















UNESCO Award for literacy







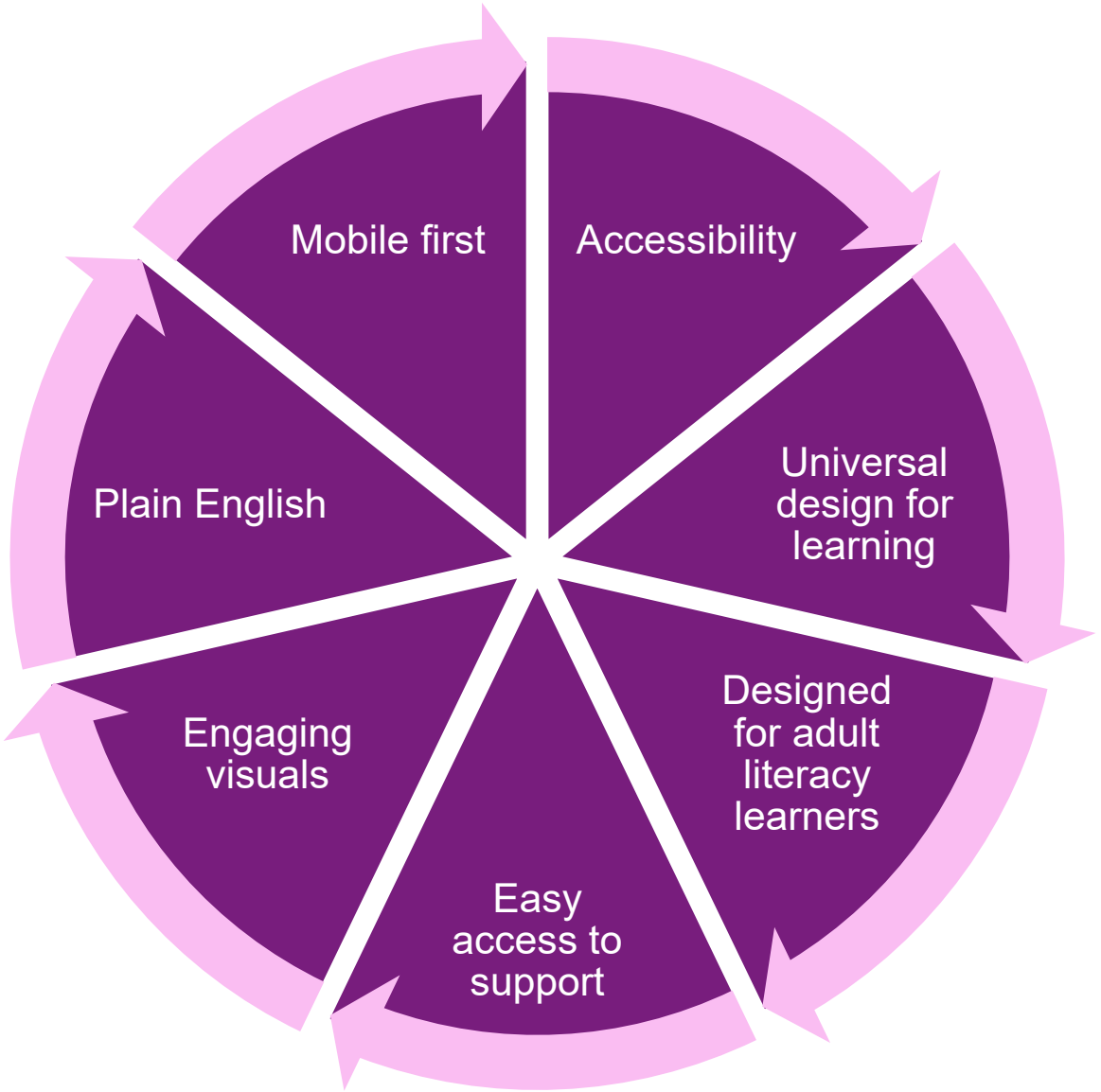


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Learn with NALA – powered by Brightspace and Course Merchant with ReadSpeaker



Design principles



Key requirements



The Learner Journey (Demo)



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What’s next?



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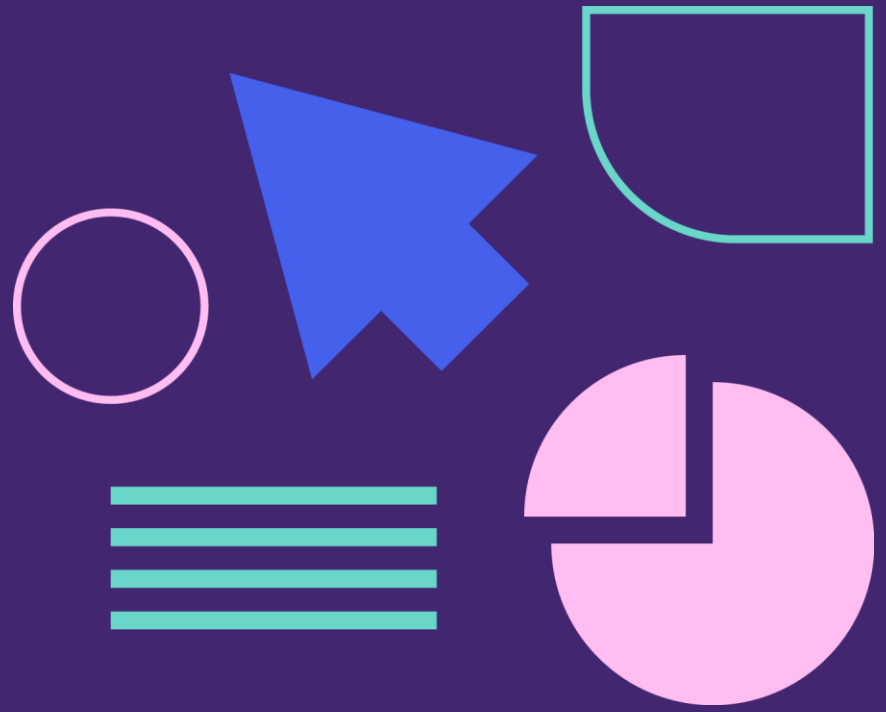
Learn with NALA Awards Day video



Learn with NALA awards day video

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Questions



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- Caitriona Whelan: cwhelan@nala.ie

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