# RaPAL Response to Second Draft Literacy Standards, August 2016

**Bearing in mind these are Standards, which have a wider set of potential uses and are not the Subject Content, do you have any comments on the draft National Standards for Literacy?**

A consultation with RaPAL members, which included literacies teachers, researchers and teacher trainers across adult, further, community and higher education, returned the following perspectives on the second draft of the standards. Gratitude was expressed for the participative process and responsive adaptation of the standards.

The following commentary was reiterated:

- links within the standards to further guidance are needed (i.e. the subject content, best practices and models of excellence, for interpreting and applying) and/ or a resources list included alongside the glossary. This would contribute to alleviating concerns of simplistic mechanical outcome listings, recognise the breadth of curriculum implied, and provide guidance to those seeking clarity in more depth.

- 'Financial' literacy (like 'health' and 'family' literacy) is a recognised area of priority social development: reference cannot be limited to e-banking (which cannot be accessed in class!) and product comparison. Many, if not all, entry level learners may be working, with lives, families and responsibilities dependent on their 'independent' improvement. We respectfully refer you across the sector. One cannot assume that an entry level learner is otherwise fully resourced and otherwise fully supported and financial literacy capacities should be appropriately incorporated into national literacy (and numeracy) standards. Functionally, this may run from the fundamentals of paying-in slips and receipts (E2) and reading payslips, invoices, and statements (E3) to issuing receipts and invoices (L1), interacting with credit-related letters, trading standards, consumer legislation and other forms of advocacy. As well as contracts, this extends to communicating around salient points, risk, agency and role negotiation. Thank you for substantially incorporating the 'information' and various other literacy suggestions in the previous round.

- more emphasis is needed on communal, reflective, literary or other reading which is not so instrumental but with pleasure, spiritual, other reasons behind it.

- some reference to reading skills specific to reading aloud should be included. There is no mention of the reading skills that are specific to oral practices (use of voice etc), or criteria of performance in speaking (and listening)

- emphasis on language variety necessary, particularly when 'correct grammar' is mentioned around L1 or L2. At L1 and L2 learners are developing the competence to utilise grammar functions in terms of contextually appropriate standards vs non standards rather than correct vs incorrect - thank you for modifying the entry level criteria to an awareness of social media versus more formal norms, and adapting to context in the Level 1 standards.

- At L2 learners could be more explicitly directed towards more sophisticated grammatical and lexical tools such as utilising modality to communicate risk factors around probability and desirability, as well as politeness strategies and role negotiation

- the nature of text types and suggested activities in areas of the document could be more explicitly indicative of diversity of genres and socio-economic activities and digital engagement, and balanced across receptive and expressive speaking, listening, reading and writing activity. It may be appropriate to put this out to civic groups in addition to consulting within the sector.

- it is helpful to carry the descriptors across numerals across levels. This is lost after the first section of Speaking and Listening due to the different number of criteria at each level impacting on the 'start point' at each level of the subsequent skill. As the levels require different numbers of criteria, it may be helpful to preface the numerals or otherwise subset them such that criteria run identifiably across levels

Where the standards cannot fully respond to these, we suggest consideration in a preamble, footnotes or addendums linking to further guidance.

In the following, we give more detailed feedback on the criteria:

Entry Level Standards

Reading Entry 3: 17 imperatives are second person therefore suggest "e.g. use of second person imperatives"

Reading Entry 3: 15 and 17 are related (potentially as set and subset/ significant example) and might be located alongside each other; equally 16, 19 and 20

Writing Entry 2: 28 suggest "use adjectives and simple adverbials appropriately"; 32 suggest "… work out correct spelling and grammar" 34 suggest "produce legible text to basic appropriate layout"

Writing Entry 3: 34 repeats Entry 2 :29 in listing punctuation with little distinction between levels; 38 suggest "produce legible text to appropriate layout"

Entry Level Examples

Citizen and community Entry 2 is short reading activity and could include understanding the gist of a newsletter and the topic of a notice

Domestic and everyday life Entry 3 "follow cooking and food safety instructions on packaged food" is a repeat of Entry 2; Entry 3 "read a story to a child from a picture-book" should be Entry 2; Entry 3 could include following the instructions on a straightforward children's activity

Leisure and culture Entry 1 "ask directions to a local place of worship" could be extended to "… or community centre, and service or opening hours."

Education and Training Entry 2 "practise spelling and grammar on paper, using a book or using a spelling list app" suggest "practise spelling and grammar on paper, using a book or using a spelling list app"

Level 1 and 2 Standards

Speaking and Listening Level 1: 13 "use non-verbal methods intended to reassure..." suggest "use non-verbal methods intended to support social cohesion..."

Reading Level 1:15 and 2: 15 are effectively identical. Level 2 could miss this criteria out given level 1 is implicit in level 2. Alternatively it could extend "trace and understand" to compare, apply, critique and/ or synthesise (though synthesis moves into level 3). It could refer across extended and/ or multiple text types. These points appear to be covered in other criteria and descriptors within the level.

Reading Level 2: 16 "recognise how language identifies the purpose of a text" is repeated in 25, therefore suggest "recognise how language <u>and other features/ textual devices such as layout</u> identif<u>y</u> the purpose of a text, <u>such as inform, persuade…</u>"

Level 1: 19 is identical to Level 2: 23 and the examples in Level 2 would be better moved back to Level 1

Writing Level 1:27 and 2: 32 are effectively identical. Level 1: 27 could refer to "use <u>key features of</u> format and structure for different purposes"

Writing Level 1: 29 might refer to different language varieties and standards

Writing Level 1:33 and Level 2: 36 repeat and "subject-verb agreement, correct and consistent use of tense, definite and indefinite articles" are more appropriate in Level 1. As well as general "syntax" which incorporates Level 1 criteria, Level 2 could start to explore, for example, use of modality devices to express probability and desirability (and therefore communicate risk) as well as politeness strategies and role negotiation.

Writing Level 1: 37 and Level 2: 41 suggest "produce legible text <u>to established genre layouts</u>"

<u>Level 1 and Level 2 Examples</u>

Domestic and everyday life Level 1 and 2 activities appear inter-mixed and not to recognise graduation in complexity (and associated responsibility) from Level 1 to Level 2, e.g. Level 2 "~~correctly~~ <u>create and</u> follow instructions for preparing a meal <u>of more than one course, or party entertainment</u>"

Education and training Level 2 contains three references to summarising information as the main point of activity; Level 1 could include writing a simple project evaluation, creating a notice or flyer; Level 2 could include constructing a questionnaire, survey or interview and comparing the results with other information sources, writing a project plan, planning project meetings and minuting, writing an extended project evaluation, using social media to communicate and share information about an event or project

Thank you for the consultation.