

National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership (NPQSL)

Application Guidance

(To be read by both applicants and sponsors)

August 2017

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1. INTRODUCTION

Dear applicant,

Thank you for the interest you have shown in applying to join the National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership. Leading Schools South West looks forward to working with you and this application process is an important part of the programme itself. In completing this form, you will need to work closely with the person who is to be your sponsor. Your sponsor should be your Headteacher, Principal or the person who has line management responsibility for you. It is their role to assist you in completing this application and to support your development as a school leader.

The application to join the NPQSL is, in itself, a rigorous process and consists of four sections:

- Registration details
- Applicant Statement
- Sponsor Statement
- Finance Agreement

2. ABOUT THE NEW NPQSL

The National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership (NPQSL) is designed for those who are, or are aspiring to become, a senior leader with cross-school responsibilities e.g. an experienced middle leader, an assistant Headteacher, or other senior staff.

This includes those who are, or are aspiring to be, a senior leader with cross-school responsibilities e.g. a Director of a Teaching School Alliance (TSA).

NPQSL will give you the confidence, skills and professional knowledge you need to deliver the best for pupils and all members of the school community in your first Senior Leadership post.

NPQSL

- takes account of your professional development needs, prior learning and achievements.
- improves and develops further your strategic leadership expertise.
- develops key leadership and management skills.
- provides opportunities to work in different educational contexts.
- gives you the confidence and competence to take up your first Senior Leadership so you will make a positive impact on your school, and on the lives of children, young people and their families.

The Levels and Qualifications Framework

The Levels and Qualifications Framework ensures that the reformed NPQs provide a coherent suite of professional development opportunities for aspirant and serving leaders at all levels of leadership within the school system.

The new NPQs are a set of four qualifications covering four levels:

Qualification	Level	Target audience
National Professional Qualification for Middle Leadership (NPQML)	Leading a team	<p>Those who are, or are aspiring to become, a middle leader with responsibility for leading a team e.g. a key stage leader, a curriculum area leader, a pastoral services leader, a subject leader, a special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), or a head of department.</p> <p>This includes those who are, or are aspiring to be, a middle leader with cross-school responsibilities e.g. a Specialist Leader of Education (SLE).</p>
National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership (NPQSL)	Leading across a school	<p>Those who are, or are aspiring to become, a senior leader with cross-school responsibilities e.g. an experienced middle leader, a deputy Headteacher, an Assistant Headteacher, or other senior staff.</p> <p>This includes those who are, or are aspiring to be, a senior leader with cross-school responsibilities e.g. a Director of a Teaching School Alliance (TSA).</p>
National Professional Qualification for Headteachers (NPQH)	Leading a school	<p>Those who are, or are aspiring to become, a Headteacher or Head of School with responsibility for leading a school</p> <p>This includes those who are, or are aspiring to be, a Head or Head of School with cross-school responsibilities e.g. a National Leader of Education (NLE).</p>
National Professional Qualification for Executive Leadership (NPQEL)	Leading across several schools	<p>Those who are, or are aspiring to become, an Executive Headteacher or CEO of a MAT with responsibility for leading across several schools</p>

Content Areas

There are six content areas for NPQSL, which set out what a leader should know or be able to do. The six content areas are common to each NPQ level, but the knowledge and skills within them increases in sophistication, depth and breadth progressively through the qualification levels. They are:

- Strategy and Improvement
- Teaching and Curriculum Excellence
- Leading with Impact
- Working in Partnership
- Managing Resources and Risks
- Increasing Capability

Each content area contains a series of 'Learn how to' and 'Learn about' statements linked to specific assessment criteria. Leading Schools South West has developed provision that covers all of the knowledge and skills in the 'Learn how to' section and has commissioned NPQonline to provide courses to cover the 'Learn about' section, for the NPQSL. A participant's knowledge and skills will then be assessed through the corresponding assessment tasks, covered below. Further information on the NPQSL content area is available at [Appendix 1](#).

Leadership Behaviours

There are seven leadership behaviours, common to each NPQ level, which set out how the best leaders operate. ([See Appendix 2](#))

They are:

- Commitment
- Collaboration
- Personal Drive
- Resilience
- Awareness
- Integrity
- Respect

The Qualification

LSSW's NPQSL training is designed as a blended learning experience, consisting of face-to-face sessions, short on-line courses (including independent research and development) and the application of leadership learning through school-based improvement projects. This will involve leading a change programme in the participant's own school ([see table over](#)).

Participants should be supported in their own school by the sponsor who supported the application to join the qualification.

Through a partnership with the University of St Mark and St John in Plymouth, participants will have the opportunity to use the NPQSL to contribute to a Masters in Educational Leadership. The University has agreed that the NPQSL is worth 30 credits toward a Masters degree with the applicant submitting an additional, reflective statement.

Progress will be tracked against key milestones to assist participants in meeting the full requirements of the course and achieving the NPQSL. An On-line Tutor will track progress and provide an important point of reference for support and guidance throughout the qualification.

Assessment Criteria

For each content area, there are corresponding assessment criteria setting out the standards against which participants will be assessed. These are listed by content area and by assessment task in [Appendix 1](#). LSSW will assess against the NPQSL assessment criteria, through a series of defined assessment tasks using the mark scheme provided by the DfE. Participants will be expected to draw on the relevant bodies of research or examples that relate to the nature of their project.

NPQSL Assessment Tasks Description

Project Summary

Working across the school to a) reduce variation in pupil progress and attainment b) improve the efficiency and effectiveness of teaching (5,000 words)

Part A	Part B
Strategy and Improvement	Managing Resources and Risks
Teaching and Curriculum Excellence	Increasing Capability
Leading with Impact	
Working in Partnership	

Participants must:

- **Lead** an improvement project across their school, lasting at least 2 terms, to reduce variation in pupil progress and attainment (part A) and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of teaching (part B).
- **Submit** a written account of the project to the provider for assessment, which aims to evidence the criteria indicated. This should cover the design, implementation and evaluation of the project.
- **Submit** supporting documents/material as evidence where indicated below. Supporting evidence must be concise and directly related to the candidate's project and corresponding assessment criterion.
- **Not exceed** a total word count (across both parts of the project) of **5,000**, excluding supporting documents or annexes.

3. GENERAL GUIDANCE - HOW TO APPLY

The application form should be completed by both applicant and sponsor and returned according to the instructions set out on the website. It is important that applicants adhere to the deadlines set out on the website.

The application form has four sections:

Section 1 To be completed by the applicant	Registration details must be completed by the applicant
Section 2 To be completed by the applicant	Applicant Statement about their current role and areas of responsibility.
Section 3 To be completed by the sponsor	Sponsor Statement about the applicant's experience and suitability for the programme
Section 4 To be completed by the Business Manager/Finance Lead	Finance agreement to accept responsibility of payment of fees.

Appendix 1 NPQSL Content Areas

Strategy and Improvement

NPQSL (Leading across a school)			
Learn how to:	Learn about:	Assessment Criteria	Tested in
Analyse performance data to identify the causes of variation within a school and against comparative schools (for example, in relation to national benchmarks, historical performance or between different groups)	Sources of internal, national and socio-economic data that can inform pupil progress and identify underachievement (for example, Progress 8 and the EEF's Families of Schools database)	1.2.1 Deploys statistical and/or data analysis concepts to identify variation in pupil performance and contributing factors, applying the findings to design of own plans	Part A Supporting document required: Raw data analysis
	Statistical and data analysis concepts, including confidence intervals, statistical significance, sampling, correlation and causation		
Ensure data collected is necessary, proportionate and manageable for staff	Data collection best practice, including the principles and recommendations identified by the Independent Teacher Workload Review Group and clarification of Ofsted inspection requirements		
Work with the governing board effectively to identify and agree approaches to school priorities	The key features of effective governance as set out in the Governance Handbook	1.2.2 Evaluates research into, and examples of, implementing change successfully and applies findings to the design and implementation of own plans	Part A
Design and implement sustainable change across a school	Research into the characteristics of successful change programmes, drawn from a range of schools and non-school contexts		

Teaching and Curriculum Excellence

NPQSL (Leading across a school)			
Learn how to:	Learn about:	Assessment Criteria	Tested in
Use a range of techniques to gather evidence on teaching quality and the impact of interventions across a school	A range of techniques to gather evidence in relation to teaching quality and evaluate the impact of interventions	2.2.1 Evaluates teaching quality across a school accurately, exploiting appropriate techniques to gather evidence	Part A
Reduce variation within the school and against comparative schools by improving pupil progress, attainment and behaviour	Research into, and examples of, leadership or management strategies that have improved pupil behaviour, progress and attainment and reduced variation across a school, drawn from a range of schools (for example, the EEF's toolkit on teaching and learning)	2.2.2 Analyses different leadership/management strategies aimed at improving pupil progress, attainment and behaviour and applies findings to own plans	Part A
	Legal frameworks and guidance relating to behaviour management, attendance, exclusions and bullying	2.2.3 Designs, implements and evaluates an improvement project that reduces variation in pupil progress and/or attainment across the school	Part A Supporting document required: Pupil performance data
Develop and maintain a rich, high-quality school curriculum	Research into, and examples of, curriculum development approaches/techniques (for example, through strengthening subject knowledge, developing subject-specific pedagogy or applying evidence on the effective use of Teaching Assistants)	2.2.4 Exploits opportunities to develop and grow the school curriculum	Part A

Leading with Impact

NPQSL (Leading across a school)			
Learn how to:	Learn about:	Assessment Criteria	Tested in
Lead, motivate and influence others, including beyond the line management chain, to deliver whole-school objectives	Research into, and examples of, leadership, motivation and influence, drawn from a range of schools and non-school contexts	3.2.1 Evaluates research into, and examples of, leadership and motivation and/or influence and applies findings to motivate or influence others across the school	Part A Supporting document required: Sponsor comments
Develop a communications plan that promotes or defends the school's performance, policies or decisions effectively	Examples of successful communications plans and techniques used by schools	3.2.2 Designs and implements a communications plan to promote and/or defend plans, drawing on campaigns and techniques used by other schools	Part A Supporting document required: Comms plan

Working in Partnership

NPQSL (Leading across a school)			
Learn how to:	Learn about:	Assessment Criteria	Tested in
Identify a range of local and national partners that can support school improvement	Tools and techniques to identify the organisation's stakeholders and analyse their views (for example, stakeholder mapping) Research into, and examples of, structured partnerships that have improved capability and performance, drawn from a range of schools and non-school contexts	4.2.1 Establishes and sustains partnerships that build capability and/or improve performance in priority areas for the school	Part A Supporting document required: Sponsor comments
Put in place systems, processes or structures which facilitate knowledge transfer and shared best practice within and beyond the school			
Identify the most effective partnerships for improving pupil progress	Tools and techniques to evaluate the impact of partnership working on pupil progress and attainment	4.2.2 Evaluates the effectiveness of partnerships in terms of pupil progress and/or attainment	Part A

Managing Resources and Risks

NPQSL (Leading across a school)			
Learn how to:	Learn about:	Assessment Criteria	Tested in
Deploy resources across a school effectively and efficiently to deliver school priorities (for example, in relation to the use of Pupil Premium funding)	Financial appraisal tools, techniques and concepts, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the collection on schools financial health and efficiency building business cases assessing value for money cost drivers and behaviours 	5.2.1 Analyses the value for money/cost effectiveness of different options and designs a business case for recommended approach	Part B Supporting document required: Business Case
Monitor the use of resources across a school, identifying opportunities and pressures (for example, in relation to teacher workload)	Resource monitoring tools and techniques (for example, in relation to finances, staffing and workload), drawn from a range of schools, including benchmarking		
Systematically identify, manage and mitigate risks to the school, its pupils and staff	Effective risk management tools, techniques and practice, drawn from a range of schools and non-school contexts	5.2.2 Implements a risk management plan that systematically assesses, monitors, mitigates and contingency plans for risks	Part B Supporting document required: Risk management plan
	The requirements, and examples of, effective practice in relation to managing Single Central Records		
	The Prevent Duty for schools and associated processes and practice		

Increasing Capability

NPQSL (Leading across a school)			
Learn how to:	Learn about:	Assessment Criteria	Tested in
Identify excellent professional development practice	Key research into, and examples of, excellent professional development, including for new/recently qualified teachers, drawn from a range of schools	6.2.1 Analyses key research into, and examples of, effective professional development and talent management in schools and applies findings to own plans	Part B
Identify talent within an organisation and put in place arrangements or tools to develop and retain it	Successful talent identification and retention strategies in a range of schools and non-school contexts		
Design professional development strategies, which engage all staff (including new/recently qualified teachers) and anticipate future professional development needs	Structures, tools and techniques that facilitate joint, work-based and self-directed study		
	Factors that drive changing professional development needs (for example, changes to legislation, the curriculum or pupil intake)	6.2.2 Analyses how professional development provision may need to change over time and applies findings to own plans	Part B

Appendix 2: NPQSL Leadership Behaviours

Commitment	The best leaders are committed to their pupils and understand the power of world-class teaching to improve social mobility, wellbeing and productivity
Collaboration	The best leaders readily engage with, and invest responsibility in, those who are best placed to improve outcomes
Personal Drive	The best leaders are self-motivated and take a creative, problem-solving approach to new challenge
Resilience	The best leaders remain courageous and positive in challenging, adverse or uncertain circumstances
Awareness	The best leaders will know themselves and their teams, continually reflect on their own and others' practices, and understand how best to approach difficult or sensitive issues
Integrity	The best leaders act with honesty, transparency and always in the interests of the school and its pupils
Respect	The best leaders their respect the rights, views, beliefs and faiths of pupils, colleagues and stakeholders