



**CHESHIRE LEADERSHIP AND  
TEACHING ALLIANCE**



**CHESHIRE  
TEACHING**  
SCHOOL HUB



**Outstanding  
Leaders  
Partnership**

# National Professional Qualification in Senior Leadership (NPQSL)

## Qualification Specification



### **NPQSL AT A GLANCE**

- Course Duration: **18 months**
- Face-to-Face Events: **4 events**
- Online Learning: **38 hours**
- Coaching: **10 hours**
- Total Learning Hours: **98 hours**
- Final Assessment: **Case study scenario**
- ★ Awards **30 Master's Credits**

# About NPQSL

The DfE-accredited NPQSL delivers evidence-based senior leadership training to those who are, or aspire to be, senior leaders. This flexible part-time training fits around a teacher's timetable and is delivered through a combination of face-to-face events, online study, webinars and coaching. Completing NPQSL is hugely beneficial for participants as well as their school and pupils.

## Benefits for participants

- ✔ Improved outcomes for pupils across the school
- ✔ Increased awareness and understanding of self and of the behaviours needed to lead across a school
- ✔ Time to reflect on leadership practice and ability to check learning and development needs
- ✔ Increased capability and capacity to take on leadership across a school – having the skills, knowledge and understanding to do the job more effectively

## Benefits for schools

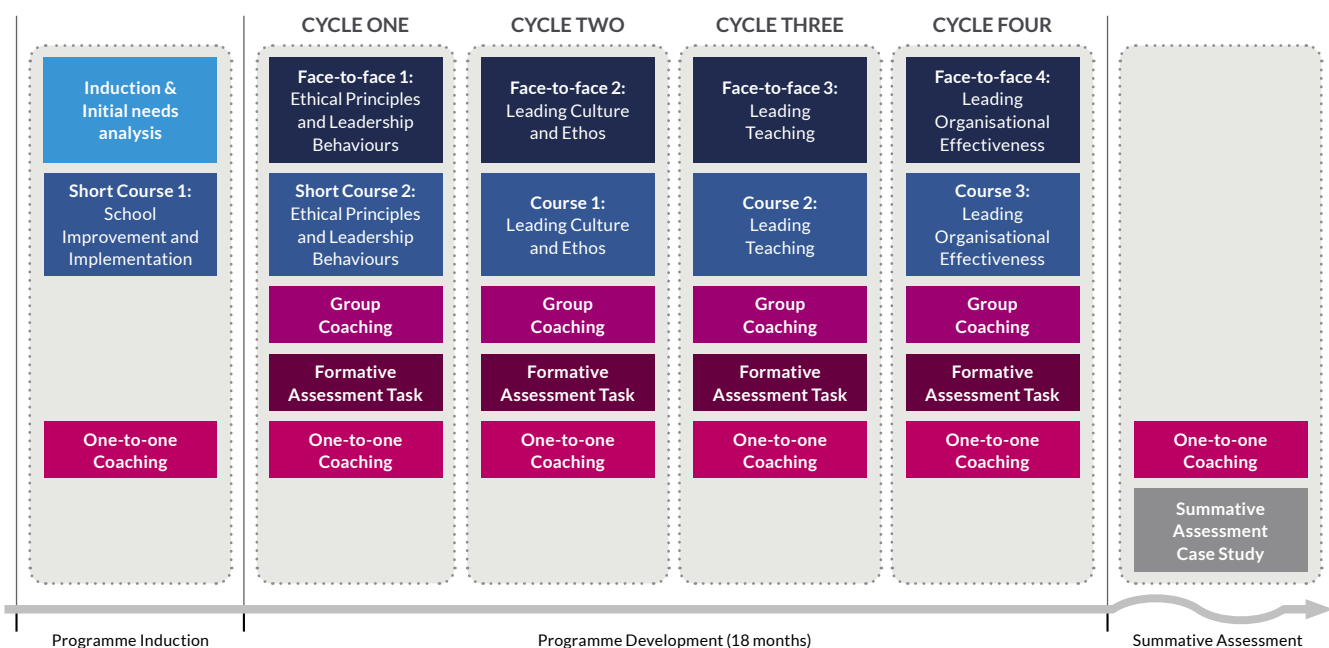
- ✔ Support succession of school leaders and build a cohesive, impact-focused school leadership team
- ✔ Evidence-based sustainable school improvement undertaken to reduce variation in pupil progress and attainment and to improve teaching
- ✔ A professionally aware and informed leader who can make evidence-based decisions and approach new challenges in an effective and efficient manner
- ✔ The ability to review and evaluate practice in order to bring about change and get the best for young people and staff within the organisation

## Qualification elements

<b>INDUCTION STAGE</b>	<b>Induction (incl. Initial needs analysis: 1 hour)</b>	<b>6 hours</b>	Total Guided Learning Hours:  <b>98</b>
<b>DEVELOPMENT STAGE</b>	<b>Face-to-face events</b>	<b>24 hours</b>	
	<b>Online course study</b>	<b>38 hours</b>	
	<b>Formative assessment tasks</b>	<b>20 hours</b>	
	<b>Leadership performance coaching</b>	<b>10 hours</b>	
<b>SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT STAGE</b>	<b>Case study scenario</b>	<b>Max. 1500 words</b>	

## Qualification programme structure

The NPQSL content is delivered across four development stage cycles that include face-to-face events, online study, a formative assessment task and leadership performance coaching. The context focus for each cycle aligns to each of the content areas identified by the DfE, and their sequencing across the delivery cycle has been carefully crafted to ensure depth of study and time for most effective reflection and review by each participant.



## Induction

The induction stage includes insight into and preparation for qualification engagement and the *School improvement and implementation* short course. Participants will complete their initial needs analysis as part of this stage.

### Induction and Initial needs analysis

Self assessment of skills, knowledge and understanding of 'learn that' and 'learn how to' statements derived from the DfE qualification frameworks and leadership behaviours. The outcomes of the analysis inform ongoing discussion and feedback throughout the programme.

## Face-to-face content outline

The NPQSL programme includes four face-to-face events spread across the 18-month duration of the qualification.

Each event precedes online course study and will introduce the climate and context for online study. The four event days consist of tailored practice tasks, group networking and self-managed learning interaction supporting powerful dialogue and leadership development.

### Face-to-face events

- **Day 1:** Ethical Principles and Leadership Behaviours
- **Day 2:** Leading Culture and Ethos
- **Day 3:** Leading Teaching
- **Day 4:** Leading Organisational Effectiveness

## Online course content outline

NPQSL participants will undertake two short courses and three full courses.

As part of online course engagement compliance, participants will be required to select and complete three practice activities and undertake one formative assessment task.

Each full course includes three study modules that are to be completed within a recommended time frame of 10 hours. Each short course is composed of 4 hours of study.

### Short courses

1. **School Improvement and Implementation**
2. **Ethical Principles and Leadership Behaviours**

### Full courses

1. **Leading Culture and Ethos**
  - Module 1: School culture
  - Module 2: Behaviour
  - Module 3: Professional development
2. **Leading Teaching**
  - Module 1: Teaching
  - Module 2: Curriculum and assessment
  - Module 3: Additional and SEN/disabilities
3. **Leading Organisational Effectiveness**
  - Module 1: Organisational management
  - Module 2: Working in partnership
  - Module 3: Governance and accountability

## Formative assessment tasks

The formative assessment tasks are in-school practice-led activities that participants choose to complete following an online course. There are four formative assessment tasks for NPQSL.

## Leadership performance coaching

NPQSL participants will engage with ten hours of coaching.

### Group coaching

- Four hours (one hour following each online course)

### One-to-one coaching

- Six hours (one hour during the induction stage and then one hour following the completion of each formative assessment task, plus an impact review prior to the summative assessment stage)

## Assessment

Qualification elements that count towards final assessment

To pass an NPQ, the following criteria need to be met:

- Participants must engage in 90% of the course elements determined by the provider.
- Participants must submit and pass one summative assessment that takes the form of a case study. Participants have an eight-day window to provide a written response of a maximum 1500 words and submit this by midnight on the designated eighth day.

What are the course elements I must engage with?

1. Leadership Development Record (LDR) review
2. Face-to-face events
3. Online practice activities
4. Formative assessment tasks
5. Coaching

## Course intakes

There are two intakes per year, one beginning in autumn and one in spring. Please see our website for application deadlines and delivery schedules.

## Delivery locations

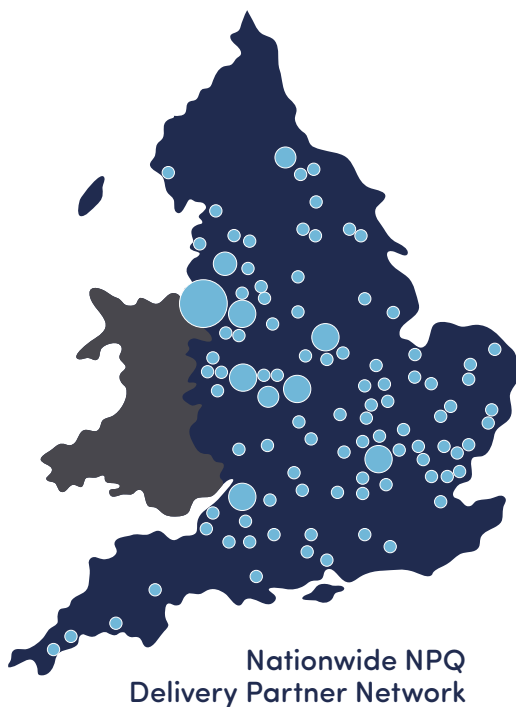
Delivery venues are largely provided through our national network of teaching school and multi-academy trust partners. Participants applying from one of our partner groups will be allocated to that group for the face-to-face events\*.

In addition to partner groups we also have a number of groups located according to the geography of the participants that register, helping minimise travel time for the majority of participants.

Participants not registering through a school partner will be allocated to their most geographically convenient group for the three training events and will be provided the opportunity to change group, or join our distance learning model, if their allocated group does not suit.

Our face-to-face groups take place across the country and we strive to ensure all participants have access to local delivery.

\* Subject to group viability



## Contact us

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## Entry requirements

NPQSL is for those who are, or are aspiring to become, a senior leader with cross-school responsibilities such as an experienced middle leader, a SEN coordinator, an assistant headteacher or other senior staff.

In order to be accepted onto the qualification, participants must have their application endorsed by their headteacher via a signed headteacher declaration that is uploaded as part of the participant's application.

## How to apply

Completing an NPQ is a huge achievement that requires a significant investment in time and effort. As such we advise all participants to follow these steps when applying:

- Discuss the NPQ with your headteacher or CPD lead. What are your goals? How will the NPQ benefit your school and pupils?
- Contact us with any questions about the qualification or the availability of funding.
- Start your application as early as possible to avoid the last minute NPQ rush!

The new and simplified NPQ application form can be found at [outstandingleaders.org/npqsl](https://outstandingleaders.org/npqsl)

It should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete and our NPQ advisors are on-hand via our website's livechat to answer your questions and support your application.

We look forward to working with you 😊

## What's next?

Participants who successfully complete NPQSL may choose to continue their professional development through the completion of a master's degree in educational leadership using the 30 master's credits earned through completion of the qualification.

Alternatively, if they deem themselves to be within three years of applying for headship roles, participants might go on to complete the National Professional Qualification in Headship (NPQH).

Professionally, NPQSL graduates may choose to apply for senior leadership or system leadership roles such as deputy head, specialist leader of education (SLE) or teaching school director.

Accredited NPQ provider