



# National Professional Qualifications

Teaching ☒



Department for Education

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# Introduction

**National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) are professional development courses for teachers and leaders in schools, colleges and early years settings. They are fully funded by the government, so they are free to take and are flexible so you can fit them around your work and personal life.**

The courses have been developed in collaboration with education experts and are informed by up-to-date research and evidence. There are a range of different options to choose from, suitable for teachers and leaders at any stage of their career.

The two types of NPQs are:

- Specialist NPQs to help you develop expertise inside and outside the classroom ([page 2](#))
- Leadership NPQs to help you become a confident and expert leader ([page 11](#))

This guide covers all currently available NPQs. For more information visit the [professional development for teachers and leaders website](#).



# Specialist NPQs

Take a specialist NPQ to enhance and develop your existing expertise, both inside and outside the classroom.



There are four specialist NPQs

- **Leading Teacher Development** – learn how to successfully support teachers in your school to expand their expertise.
- **Leading Teaching** – learn how to lead the teaching and learning of a subject, year group or phase.
- **Leading Behaviour and Culture** – learn how to create a culture of good behaviour and high expectations in which staff and pupils can thrive.
- **Leading Literacy** – learn how to effectively teach and promote literacy across a whole school, year group, key stage or phase.



# National Professional Qualification for Leading Teacher Development (NPQLTD)

## Course overview

This course will help you gain confidence and develop expertise in:

- implementing evidence-based professional development programmes focused on improving classroom teaching
- promoting a strong professional development culture across your school

## Who this course is for

This course is for staff who have, or want to have, responsibilities for leading the development of other teachers in their school. This includes anyone interested in mentoring trainees, early career teachers, and those in specialised roles including:

- continuous professional development co-ordinators
- personal development leads
- ECF induction tutor or mentor
- initial teacher training lead mentors

## What you will learn

This course covers themes including:

- designing and delivering effective professional development
- how to make informed, evidence-based professional development decisions
- techniques for tailoring and adapting support based on individual development needs

## Summary

<b>For</b>	Teachers and leaders interested in developing others
<b>Course duration</b>	12 months
<b>Average weekly study time</b>	1 to 2 hours
<b>Study type</b>	Mix of self-study and group sessions
<b>Assessment type</b>	Reflection based on case study (1,500 words)
<b>Next steps to apply</b>	<b>Step 1:</b> Speak to your line manager to choose a <b>training provider</b> <b>Step 2:</b> Visit <b>register-national-professional-qualifications.education.gov.uk</b> to register





## What participants are saying about the course



**Taking an NPQ has made my approach to teaching more reflective. I have become a lot more confident in the strategies that are used because I know that they are based on up-to-date evidence, and that I can always improve them.**

Sophie, Assistant Leader of Teaching and Learning  
and Pastoral Phase Leader

# National Professional Qualification for Leading Teaching (NPQLT)

## Course overview

This course will help you gain confidence and develop expertise in:

- creating a culture of high expectations
- supporting colleagues with all aspects of their teaching
- contributing to effective professional development linked to teaching, curriculum and assessment

## Who this course is for

This course is for teachers and middle leaders who have, or want to have, responsibilities for leading teaching in a subject, year group, key stage or phase. This could include those in specialised roles including:

- subject leaders
- year group leads
- key stage and phase leaders
- heads of faculty
- heads of department

## What you will learn

This course covers themes including:

- understanding what good teaching practice is and how to implement it
- supporting colleagues to design a broad and coherent curriculum
- planning effective lessons and stimulating your pupils' thinking
- helping colleagues adapt their teaching to different needs
- contributing to the design of school assessment systems
- aligning your professional development with wider school improvement priorities

## Summary

<b>For</b>	Classroom teachers and middle leaders
<b>Course duration</b>	12 months
<b>Average weekly study time</b>	1 to 2 hours
<b>Study type</b>	Mix of self-study and group sessions
<b>Assessment type</b>	Reflection based on case study (1,500 words)
<b>Next steps to apply</b>	<b>Step 1:</b> Speak to your line manager to choose a <b>training provider</b> <b>Step 2:</b> Visit <b>register-national-professional-qualifications.education.gov.uk</b> to register





## What participants are saying about the course



**Taking an NPQ for Leading Teaching was my way to enable my career aspirations and map out my own career path. It permitted me to take control and be part of the process to improve my existing skills for myself, my school and ultimately my pupils' outcomes.**

Alex, Head of Year

**I found that I've learnt teaching techniques that weren't around when I first started training to be a teacher and I wouldn't have had the opportunity to learn these if I hadn't taken the NPQ.**

Laura, Subject Lead



# National Professional Qualification for Leading Behaviour and Culture (NPQLBC)

## Course overview

This course will help you develop expertise and gain the confidence to enact changes in:

- creating a culture of high expectations and learning in your school
- enabling conditions for good behaviour for pupils and ensuring colleagues are supported in their classroom-level approaches
- supporting pupil wellbeing and understanding the impact this has on behaviour

## Who this course is for

This course is suitable for all teachers and leaders who are, or want to be, involved in developing and implementing behaviour and wellbeing strategies in their school. This course is also suitable for other specialised roles including:

- behaviour management leads
- special educational needs co-ordinators

- welfare managers
- pastoral team leads
- key stage and phase leaders
- social, emotional and mental health leads

## What you will learn

This course covers themes including:

- creating a culture of high expectations, including the impact this has on school outcomes
- enabling conditions for good behaviour, including through implementing effective behaviour management systems
- dealing with complex behavioural needs, including how to prevent and respond to bullying
- developing effective professional development linked to behaviour and culture
- implementing evidence-based improvement plans

Summary	
For	Teachers and leaders
Course duration	12 months
Average weekly study time	1 to 2 hours
Study type	Mix of self-study and group sessions
Assessment type	Reflection based on case study (1,500 words)
Next steps to apply	<b>Step 1:</b> Speak to your line manager to choose a <b>training provider</b> <b>Step 2:</b> Visit <b>register-national-professional-qualifications.education.gov.uk</b> to register

## What participants are saying about the course



**It's world-class training, advice and guidance, which is rooted in the best available research evidence from across the sector to deepen my understanding of effective learning behaviour and school culture.**

Hassnain, Deputy Head of Year



# National Professional Qualification for Leading Literacy (NPQLL)

## Course overview

This course will help you develop expertise and gain the confidence to enact changes in:

- running literacy improvement strategies
- supporting colleagues who want to develop their pupils' reading

## Who this course is for

This course is suitable for all teachers and leaders who have or want to have:

- responsibilities for leading literacy across a school, year group, key stage or phase

## What you will learn

This course covers themes including:

- contributing to effective professional development linked to teaching, curriculum and assessment across the school
- designing and implementing literacy improvement strategies
- supporting others to improve pupils' language capability and wider understanding of language
- developing the teaching of word reading and comprehension

Summary	
For	Teachers and leaders
Course duration	12 months
Average weekly study time	1 to 2 hours
Study type	Mix of self-study and group sessions
Assessment type	Reflection based on case study (1,500 words)
Next steps to apply	<b>Step 1:</b> Speak to your line manager to choose a <b>training provider</b> <b>Step 2:</b> Visit <b>register-national-professional-qualifications.education.gov.uk</b> to register



## What participants are saying about the course



**I chose to take an NPQLL because I would like to implement change successfully in my setting by applying theory into practice, while gaining the skills and confidence to become an effective literacy leader. I'm looking forward to exploring how supportive environments will enable change within literacy and ultimately help more children learn to read within my setting.**

Sandra, English Hub Lead



# Leadership NPQs

Take a leadership-focused NPQ to help boost your knowledge and confidence as you progress into more senior roles.

There are four leadership NPQs

- **Senior Leadership (NPQSL)** – develop your leadership knowledge and expertise to improve outcomes for teachers and pupils in your school.
- **Headship (NPQH)** – develop the knowledge that underpins expert school leadership and apply it to become an outstanding headteacher.
- **Executive Leadership (NPQEL)** – develop the expertise you need to become an outstanding executive leader, leading change and improvement across your group of schools or multi-academy trust.
- **Early Years Leadership (NPQEYL)** – develop expertise in leading high-quality early years education and care, as well as effective staff and organisational management.



# National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership (NPQSL)

## Course overview

This course will help you gain confidence and develop expertise in:

- leadership knowledge and the specialist expertise needed to tackle school improvement priorities
- supporting the development of a positive, predictable and safe environment for pupils
- contributing to your school's strategic direction and establishing an environment for pupil success
- helping ensure staff feel supported and valued

Teachers will get to train alongside peers with similar responsibilities. The course content focuses on the key challenges leaders face in their role.

Teachers and education experts designed this course to fit around busy teaching timetables. There's no project work and minimal time out of school required.

## Who this course is for

This course is for teachers and leaders who are, or want to be, senior leaders with cross-school responsibilities.

## What you will learn

This course covers themes including:

- school culture
- effective teaching
- supporting curriculum and assessment development
- behaviour
- additional and special educational needs
- professional development
- organisational management

You will also learn about:

- implementation strategies
- working in partnership with parents and carers
- governance and accountability

## Summary

<b>For</b>	Experienced classroom teachers, middle and senior leaders
<b>Course duration</b>	18 months
<b>Average weekly study time</b>	1 to 2 hours
<b>Study type</b>	Mix of self-study and group sessions
<b>Assessment type</b>	Reflection based on case study (2,500 words)
<b>Next steps to apply</b>	<b>Step 1:</b> Speak to your line manager to choose a <b>training provider</b> <b>Step 2:</b> Visit <b>register-national-professional-qualifications.education.gov.uk</b> to register





## What participants are saying about the course



**The face-to-face learning has been fantastic to network with colleagues, in particular with other women who are in senior roles in schools.**

Sarah, Subject Leader

**The best thing about the NPQ is how beautifully it complements my day-to-day role with the opportunity to turn to it for the latest research.**

Zira, Assistant Principal

# National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH)

## Course overview

This course will help you gain confidence and develop expertise in:

- curriculum and assessment
- behaviour
- professional development
- governance and accountability
- implementing school improvements

## Who this course is for

This course is for school leaders who are, or want to be, a headteacher or head of school.

## What you will learn

This course covers themes including:

- school culture
- effective teaching
- supporting curriculum and assessment development
- establishing and sustaining a positive, predictable and safe environment for pupils
- additional and special educational needs
- professional development
- organisational management

You will also learn about:

- implementation strategies
- working in partnership with parents and carers
- governance and accountability

## Summary

<b>For</b>	School leaders and headteachers
<b>Course duration</b>	18 months
<b>Average weekly study time</b>	1 to 2 hours
<b>Study type</b>	Mix of self-study and group sessions
<b>Assessment type</b>	Reflection based on case study (2,500 words)
<b>Next steps to apply</b>	<b>Step 1:</b> Speak to your line manager to choose a <b>training provider</b> <b>Step 2:</b> Visit <b>register-national-professional-qualifications.education.gov.uk</b> to register





## What participants are saying about the course



**Meeting people from lots of different locations and settings has been really valuable for my development, and we get a real buzz from talking to each other.**

Tiffany, Deputy Headteacher

**If someone was to ask me whether they should do the NPQ, it would be a resounding yes. It's flexible and the benefits that you get from putting your learning into practice day in, day out are absolutely brilliant.**

Graham, Headteacher

# National Professional Qualification for Executive Leadership (NPQEL)

## Course overview

This course will help you gain confidence and develop expertise in:

- the specialist knowledge required to run a multi-school organisation
- developing processes and systems that enable and encourage collaboration between staff within and across schools
- effectively managing resources and establishing sustainable policies

## Who this course is for

This course is for school leaders who are executive headteachers or have a School Trust chief executive role with responsibility for leading several schools.

## What you will learn

This course covers themes including:

- trust culture
- effective teaching
- supporting curriculum and assessment development
- behaviour
- additional and special educational needs
- professional development
- organisational management

You will also learn about:

- implementation strategies
- working in partnership with parents and carers
- governance and accountability

Summary	
For	Executive school leaders
Course duration	18 months
Average weekly study time	1 to 2 hours
Study type	Mix of self-study and group sessions
Assessment type	Reflection based on case study (2,500 words)
Next steps to apply	<b>Step 1:</b> Speak to your line manager to choose a <b>training provider</b> <b>Step 2:</b> Visit <b>register-national-professional-qualifications.education.gov.uk</b> to register

A photograph of a group of people in a meeting. A woman with red hair, wearing a light blue striped shirt, is smiling and looking towards the left. She is surrounded by other people, including a woman with dark hair and a man with dark hair, who are also looking in the same direction. They are sitting around a wooden table with papers and a glass of water. In the background, there is a whiteboard with some charts and a bookshelf.

## What participants are saying about the course



**Normally I would gravitate to lots of other secondary heads, whereas now I'm also networking with primary heads, heads of special schools, heads of alternative provision. I feel my understanding of education in the current situation is a lot wider.**

Joanna, Headteacher



# National Professional Qualification for Early Years Leadership (NPQEYL)

## Course overview

This course will help you gain confidence and develop expertise in:

- delivering high-quality early education and care
- organisational management and staff development
- giving constructive feedback to parents and carers
- working with children who have additional and special educational needs

Early years professionals helped us to design this course to fit around busy schedules to help you manage your time.

## Who this course is for

This course is for leaders qualified to at least level 3 with a full and relevant qualification who are, or want to be:

- managers of private, voluntary and independent nurseries

- childminders with leadership responsibilities
- headteachers of school-based or maintained nurseries

## What you will learn

You will learn how to:

- establish and sustain your setting's strategic direction
- develop an evidence-based teaching culture
- plan and deliver care and a high-quality curriculum to support child development
- implement communication, language and literacy approaches to support children's learning
- effectively manage children's behaviour and support children's personal, social and emotional development

## Summary

<b>For</b>	Early years leaders
<b>Course duration</b>	18 months
<b>Average weekly study time</b>	1 to 2 hours
<b>Study type</b>	Mix of self-study and group sessions
<b>Assessment type</b>	Reflection based on case study (2,500 words)
<b>Next steps to apply</b>	<b>Step 1:</b> If you have a line manager or work in a setting with a headteacher, speak to them for support  <b>Step 2:</b> Visit <a href="https://professional-development-for-teachers-leaders.education.gov.uk/early-years-leadership">professional-development-for-teachers-leaders.education.gov.uk/early-years-leadership</a> to find a training provider offering this NPQ



## What participants are saying about the course



**I believe that this course will give me invaluable inspiration and confidence to help make the environment for the children as rich as possible, and to gain skills and knowledge to use with the families, children and practitioners in my nursery. I strongly believe that learning is a lifelong process that helps us to get better at what we do. Taking an NPQEYL will be a great opportunity for me to learn from experts in the field, reflecting on and sharing this knowledge and experience in face-to-face meetings with other early years professionals.**

**Konstantina, Professional Development and EYFS Co-ordinator**

# How to apply

## Step 1

Speak to your line manager for support.

## Step 2

Once you have your school's approval, they will be able to help you choose a **training provider**.

You can also contact your local lead provider or **teaching school hub** directly for more information about the courses they offer.

## Step 3

Visit **[register-national-professional-qualifications.education.gov.uk](https://register-national-professional-qualifications.education.gov.uk)** to register so we can confirm you are eligible to take your chosen course for free.

We will give your details to your chosen provider once you have registered. They will then send you an application form.



# **Additional support**

## **Have you been a headteacher for less than 5 years?**

Our Early Headship Coaching Offer is a one-year support package tailored to the needs of new headteachers. It features a range of support, including coaching and networking opportunities.

It provides structured, unassessed face-to-face support based on the best available evidence about what makes an effective headteacher. You can complete it alongside the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) or if you have recently taken the NPQH.

While the exact content of this support will depend on your chosen training provider, activities could include a combination of group coaching, one-to-one support discussions and peer network support.

You are eligible for this support if you:

- are in your first 5 years of headship at a state-funded school or state-funded organisation that offers 16 to 19 places in England
- are taking or have completed the NPQH
- have not withdrawn from the additional support programme previously

## **Do you work in a state-funded setting with 1 to 600 pupils?**

State-funded schools and state-funded 16 to 19 educational settings with 1 to 600 pupils will be paid £200 for each teacher or leader they employ who takes an NPQ.

This is to help teachers and leaders in smaller settings who may find it harder to engage with professional development.

This funding will apply to state-funded schools and 16 to 19 educational settings in England that have between 1 and 600 pupils. It will be paid for each NPQ participant in these eligible settings.

Funding is not available for participants taking the early headship coaching offer unless they are also taking another NPQ course.

**For more information about the Early Headship Coaching Offer or additional funding available to small schools, please visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)**



For more information, visit  
[professional-development-for-teachers-leaders.education.gov.uk](https://professional-development-for-teachers-leaders.education.gov.uk)

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