

up Step to lead

Accredited NPQ provider



Department
for Education



LSSW
Leading Schools
South West

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Welcome

Welcome to your Teach First National Professional Qualification.

This guide, along with the Introduction course on Brightspace, will support you with the NPQ programme and contains the information and policies you should familiarise yourself with now and refer back to during the course if needed.

Teach First is a charity that believes education is the most powerful tool to help a child fulfil their potential. For 20 years, we've been providing high quality training for teachers and leaders and currently work with over 3,200 schools across the country.

We're delighted to be one of a select group of national providers to design, deliver and assess National Professional Qualifications (NPQs). NPQs provide training and support for teachers and school leaders at all levels. Powerful leadership is one of the most important factors in an educational setting's success, supporting pupils to succeed. With precise, high-quality and research-informed development opportunities, alongside practical support and advice, we aim to help leaders, for all education settings, to thrive.

Our NPQs refresh and fill gaps in knowledge, which allows for different levels of prior experience. Each programme focuses on both the 'how' and the 'what' - we've designed the learning to be relevant and practical through the use of real-life examples, case studies and best practice from a range of contexts specific to your role and level.

Most of the NPQ learning opportunities can be accessed online - meaning you can fit the programme around your schedule at a pace that suits you. You'll also attend live learning in small groups, where you'll consolidate your knowledge, prepare for the next stages and connect with other leaders on your programme. Our online resources and tools will help you reflect on and track your leadership development, all while tackling the issues impacting your school. We tailor the curriculum to each programme member's point, current context and workload. You'll have the opportunity to 'have a go' at applying learning throughout the programme in a manageable way.

While on the NPQ programme, you'll build relationships with leaders who are working in similar roles to yourself.

This is a valuable opportunity for you to strengthen your own professional network of peers, a group to share ideas with, learn from and offer support to. By looking outside your current setting for these connections, you have the chance to bring fresh perspectives to your work. We encourage you to invest in these relationships, share contact details where appropriate and continue conversations with one another outside of the scheduled events.

We're excited to be working alongside you over the next stage of your leadership journey. Together, we can give children facing the biggest barriers to success the chance to fulfil their potential.

Preparing for the programme

- ✓ Read this guide to understand how to access the programme, what to expect and how to complete it.
- ✓ Make sure the relevant agreement has been signed, by your school or setting.
- ✓ Log on to My Teach First and Brightspace when you get your log in instructions by email.
- ✓ Confirm your personal information details on My Teach First.
- ✓ Complete the Introduction module on Brightspace (available through My Teach First).
- ✓ Consider how you will set aside time each week to complete the online content. It's designed to be completed in bitesize chunks to work around your schedule, so you may wish to add these to a calendar or task list.
- ✓ Hold event dates in your diary as soon as you get them.
- ✓ Speak to your line manager or governing board about the programme and how you expect it will align with your development.
- ✓ Read the important policy information at the end of this guide.



Accessing the programme

Your programme will be delivered through a blend of online and in-person activities.

In-person

There are two in-person conferences to attend. Dates will be shared at the start of the programme.

Online

My Teach First is the online platform you'll use to access study materials and activities on our learning management system, Brightspace. Brightspace is used across all Teach First programmes. You'll get your login information by email at the start of the programme. If you have any technical issues, get in touch via the 'contact us' button on My Teach First or Brightspace. Our helpdesk is on hand to provide customer service support 7:30am to 6:00pm Monday to Friday.

Seminars

Dates for seminars will be shared at the start of the programme.

Accessibility for all

Inclusivity is at the forefront of our programme design, and we aim for all digital learning content and platforms to meet minimum accessibility standards. Information is provided in multiple ways where needed, for example alt-text on images, transcripts of audio or audio descriptions on video where required. This ensures content is accessible to the widest possible user base, regardless of disability or need. More detailed information can be found in our **Brightspace Accessibility Statement**.

Brightspace was launched as Teach First's learning management system in 2020, and we have acted on user feedback to ensure the navigation and layout of content is clear, consistent and intuitive. We have built testing and review into our design process to provide a streamlined user experience, and have established a contact centre to support you with any technical issues quickly and efficiently in order to limit impact on learning. We're mindful that busy programme members would appreciate indications of how long reading tasks may take so that they can plan their time effectively. We have added this where appropriate and tried to keep these as short as possible for the main content. We have also sought to use accessible and, where appropriate, relatively informal language in our materials to aid the readability.

Programme overview and structure

Our NPQ programmes are designed in collaboration with subject-matter experts. All content is based on high-quality evidence and research and will equip you with core and specialist knowledge. At times, we will repeat some elements of this knowledge to allow for spaced practice. We also have a particular focus on how to put learning into practice and will include concrete examples of this.

Relevant examples and expert content are included throughout the modules, including content from the [Key for School Leaders](#) and the [Chartered College Impact Magazine](#) (content only accessible via a membership normally). You may consider joining both of these organisations as a source of excellent, credible content to support your ongoing development as a leader.

Our programmes follow the [DfE NPQ framework structure](#) and are a blend of online modules and seminars and in-person content. You'll spend time looking at how to put your learning into practice and implement improvements in your setting based on the NPQ programme you're working towards.



Programme components

Our model is delivered through the following components:

LEARNING MODULES

Asynchronous, online

Each module should take you around four hours to work through.

Example format:

- **Diagnostic activity** to help identify prior knowledge on which to build learning, and sign-post how to engage with the content of the module.
- A number of units of content for you to work through, including **foundational or advanced content** and some choice elements to build knowledge, depending on your individual starting point. This includes exemplification of practice from school leaders and input from subject matter experts.
- **Formative tasks** that recognise the importance of school context and give you the chance to put some of your learning into practice.
- **Reflection on learning** (following seminar).

SEMINARS

Synchronous, online or in-person

Led by delivery partner facilitators. These will usually consider scenarios and persistent problems leaders are likely to face and give you the chance to work through examples with the support of peers and an expert facilitator. These will build on the online content and link to the formative task.

Before your seminars, please make sure you complete the Formative Assessment task at the end of the corresponding online learning module or unit.

Key terms

Asynchronous = flexible in your own time

Synchronous = in real time

ONE-TO-ONE SUPPORT

In addition, programme members in schools in particularly challenging circumstances will have free access to Teach First one-to-one support. These are a series of virtual coaching calls focused on supporting you to contextualise your learning and implement changes in your school. If you are interested in receiving this one-to-one support, please contact your delivery partner.

CONFERENCES

Synchronous, in-person

Each programme will include two conferences, designed to:

- build on knowledge acquired and provide a choice of practice activities, supporting you to move from novice towards expert and ensuring that actions become habitual for maximum application (for example simulating giving precise feedback after a lesson observation)
- bring insights from serving school leaders and subject matter experts
- provide opportunities for focused collaboration, supporting you to apply your learning but also build trust and engagement in the programme
- build relationships between peers that will support participation in the programme

SCHOOL / TRUST / SETTING VISITS

In terms 3 and 4 of your NPQ you will arrange a visit to a different school which will broaden your experience and allow you to see good practice examples and other approaches. Guidance will be provided to help you arrange this.

The visits will:

- allow you to observe and understand expertise in a contrasting context (for example, observing a senior leader introduce a new policy to the school)
- be focused with accompanying guidance and prompt questions, driven by your needs. You can identify the school / trust / setting and the focus of the visit that would benefit you most

Completion and assessment

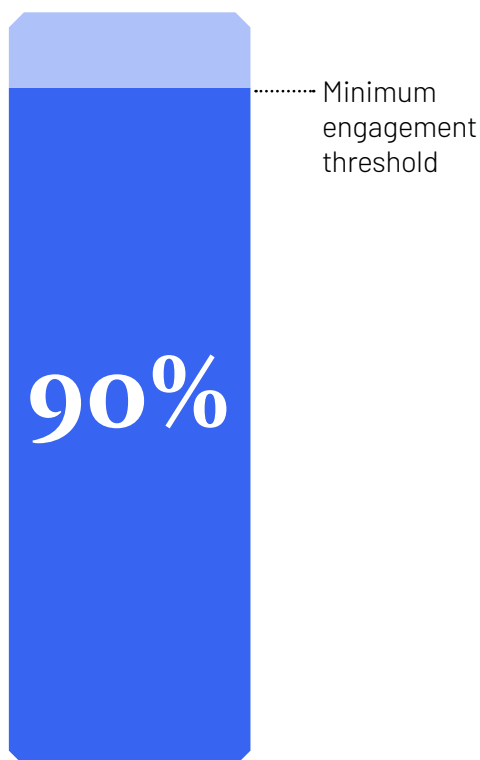
To pass the programme, you'll need to engage with at least 90% of the course and pass one summative assessment. The assessment process for all NPQs has been designed to reduce the workload burden on teachers while still providing an opportunity for you to apply your knowledge.

To ensure you meet the 90% engagement and can complete the course you need to:

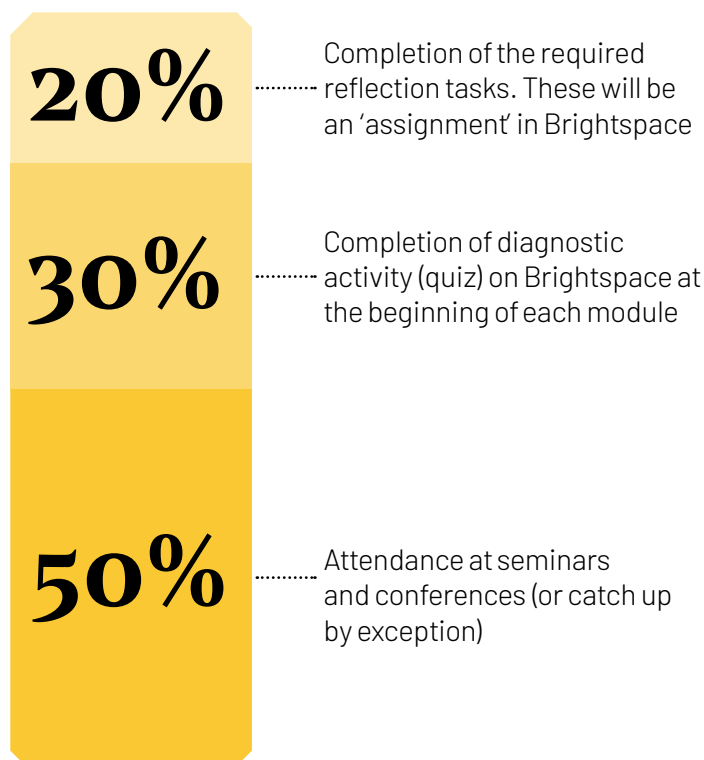
- attend seminars and conferences (or catch up in exceptional circumstances).
- complete the diagnostic activity on Brightspace at the beginning of each module.
- complete a reflection task at the end of each module. This is an 'assignment' in Brightspace.

Please note: If you don't meet the 90% engagement requirement at the time of assessment submission, it will not be possible to submit an assessment and you will not pass the NPQ.

PROGRAMME PARTICIPATION



ENGAGEMENT WEIGHTING



The summative assessment task will consist of a written response to a setting-based case study, which will outline an example context that draws on some of the content you've learnt throughout the programme.

This task takes place over a fixed eight-day window commencing at the end of your programme content. Please note that there is no capacity to change or extend the eight-day window for the case study. If you're unable to complete it in that time, you would need to defer to a future cohort to complete your NPQ. Please plan ahead to ensure you are available to complete the case study. If you fail your case study assessment, you will have the opportunity to re-enter one additional time in a future cohort's case study window.

Programme support and delivery

Seminars and conference sessions will be delivered by facilitators specially selected by your delivery partner. These are experienced leaders from across the education sector with extensive expertise in their respective fields. In sessions they will add contextual examples to the content and provide feedback so you can develop further.

Facilitators are regularly quality assured and undergo Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to maintain up-to-date sector expertise.

Teach First one-to-one support is delivered by expert former leaders through Teach First, for those in eligible settings receiving this.

Evaluation

Teach First will distribute programme evaluation surveys directly to you at key points during your NPQ. These will be included within Brightspace online learning modules.

Other opportunities to be involved in supporting us to improve our programmes include; evaluation interviews, focus groups and surveys from the Department for Education. We will be in touch to share timing and detail of these during the programme.



Important information and policies

The following information should be read before starting the programme. This supplements everything set out in the programme agreement. It is all correct at the time of production but is subject to change.

Please note, full policies are available to you on My Teach First.

Part-time policy

Part-time programme members will be expected to complete the necessary content and associated activities to achieve the NPQ qualification. To ensure that the course is accessible for you, we are committed to:

- a blended learning approach with modules available online. This ensures you can work through content at your own pace at a convenient time
- high-quality catch-up resources for all seminars if they are scheduled on a non-working day. This ensures important content will not be missed – your delivery partner will make sure this is possible for the content they are delivering
- a dedicated point of contact to discuss progress and ensure work or time commitments are balanced effectively – your delivery partner will ensure they have a member of staff who can provide this support.

Part-time programme members do not get longer to complete the programme. You may be able to defer if you find it isn't feasible to complete the programme in the allocated time.

Reasonable adjustments

Teach First is committed to making our ways of working, venues and premises accessible and we routinely make reasonable adjustments in accordance with legislation so that people with disabilities, health conditions or impairments are not unfairly disadvantaged. If you require additional adjustments in-year you are encouraged to share that with us and your delivery partner as soon as you are able. This should be done via the 'contact us' feature of My Teach First.

Extensions, deferrals, change of employment and NPQ type/level transitions

We understand that you may come up against issues that make completing the programme a challenge. We will support you with any difficulties you are facing before exploring an extension, withdrawal or deferral.

EXTENSIONS

Because of the fixed nature of the assessment windows it is not possible for programme members to be granted an extension. Instead, you would need to defer to the next cohort.

DEFERRALS

If you're unable to complete the programme and/or submit for assessment in the designated submission window for your cohort, you can defer your place on the programme and pick it up again at an appropriate point in a future cohort. Deferrals are possible to any future cohort, not just the next one. For evaluation purposes we will collect information on the reason for the deferral, but this does not affect a deferral being granted. You will need to specify your return date when you submit your deferral request.

WITHDRAWALS

If you want to withdraw from the programme you are able to do so at any time. For evaluation purposes we will collect information on the reason for the withdrawal, but this does not affect a withdrawal being granted. If you withdraw from an NPQ you will not be eligible for scholarship funding for the same NPQ again.

CHANGE OF EMPLOYMENT

We appreciate that during the NPQ programme, you may face changes to your employment (either within your current school or setting, or moving to a new school or setting). Our overarching principle is to support all changes of employment where possible.

NPQ TYPE/LEVEL TRANSFER

It will not be possible for you to change NPQ type once you have commenced on a programme. You would need to withdraw from the NPQ and reapply at the new level in a future cohort.

COMPLAINTS

We're committed to providing the best service we can, but we recognise that our practices could always be improved. When we fall short of the high standards we set for ourselves, we would like to hear about it. We take all feedback seriously – both good and bad – and treat all feedback as an opportunity to develop. The Teach First complaints policy, including how to make a complaint, can be found [here](#).

If you wish to provide feedback regarding the running of the partner programme, we would expect in the first instance that this is discussed/resolved between you and your delivery partner. If a complaint or issue is raised directly with us that relates to a delivery partner, we will check with you whether you have contacted the delivery partner. Where appropriate, we will involve the delivery partner in supporting with the issue resolution.

CONTACT

If you have any questions about anything in this guide or your programme, please contact your delivery partner.