National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH)

Qualification Specification

About NPQH

The National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) is accredited by the UK Department for Education (DfE). The qualification is delivered by Best Practice Network, a provider of UK accredited qualifications for education professionals worldwide, with a mission to help every child access an excellent education.

NPQH focuses on the key skills needed for headship and meets the highest standards for leadership development anywhere in the world.

Entry requirements

NPQH is for those who are, or are aspiring to become, a Headteacher or head of school with responsibility for leading a school.

In order to be accepted onto NPQH, prospective candidates must first pass our gateway assessment process. Gateway assessment has been designed to ensure the readiness and suitability of applicants to undertake the qualification and embark upon headship.

Benefits for candidates

- Time to reflect on leadership practice and to network with a wide range of school leaders
- Increased confidence to drive vision and improve standards
- Increased capability and capacity to take on whole-school responsibility and a strengthened ability to hold others to account
- Transferable qualification for leaders relocating to UK schools
- Contextualised to the needs of the international schools workforce and underpinned by robust evidence and expertise
- Masters credits towards an MA in Educational Leadership

Benefits for schools

- Support succession of school leaders and build a cohesive, impact-focused school leadership team
- 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 delegate responsibility effectively empowering staff to lead on whole-school improvement
- 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
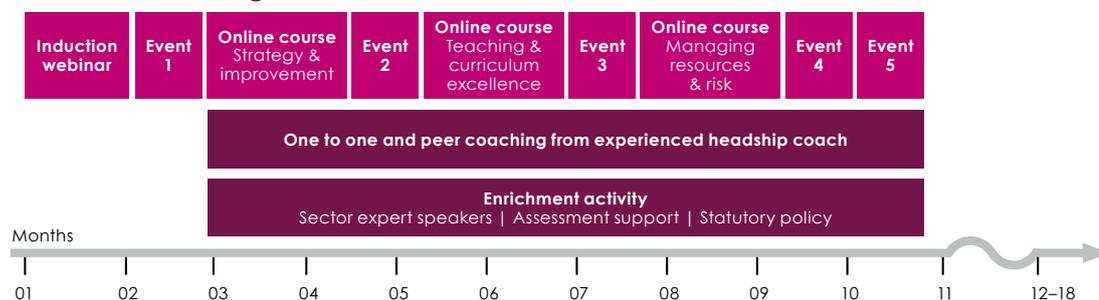
Qualification components

Component	Overview	Guided Learning Hours
360° leadership diagnostic	Work-based peer feedback at the start and end of the qualification, closely aligned to qualification content requirements, providing 360° feedback on candidate strengths and areas for development.	32
Events	5 events consisting of tailored practice tasks, group networking and self-managed learning interaction supporting powerful dialogue and leadership training.	40
Online courses	3 facilitated online courses each consisting of 4 modules covering the following: Strategy & Improvement, Teaching & Curriculum Excellence, and Managing Resources & Risk.	60
Performance coaching	3 hours of individual coaching focused on improving performance and developing leadership skills and behaviours.	3
Online briefings	A series of online briefings providing key qualification information, support, guidance and assessment insight.	6
		Total 112

Qualification schedule

Self-directed learning

Initial 360° diagnostic	School-based improvement project	Endpoint 360° diagnostic	Submit final assessment
	9 day school placement		

Facilitated learning

Induction webinar	Event 1	Online course Strategy & improvement	Event 2	Online course Teaching & curriculum excellence	Event 3	Online course Managing resources & risk	Event 4	Event 5

One to one and peer coaching from experienced headship coach

Enrichment activity
Sector expert speakers | Assessment support | Statutory policy

Months

01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12–18

Qualification content

The qualification covers 6 content areas which set out what a leader should know or should be able to do, and 7 leadership behaviours which set out how the best leaders operate. The content areas have been embedded within 3 online courses, with the leadership behaviours explored during the events.

Event content

Event 1: **Induction**	• Qualification outcomes, process and schedule • Supporting your leadership learning • Effective leadership learning and development • Leading change for improvement: In-school leadership practice • Avenues of support for your leadership learning and development journey
Event 2: **Strategy &** **Improvement**	• Strategy & Improvement: Getting the foundation right • Check-in on leadership learning & practice • Self-managed task: Future direction and strategic development • Presentation to 'the governing board' • Modelling characteristics of team effectiveness
Event 3: **Teaching &** **Curriculum** **Excellence**	• School leader perspective: Vision & reality • Check-in on leadership learning & practice • Presenting my vision for teaching, learning and curriculum excellence • Self-managed task: Leading vision to reality • How leaders improve & demonstrate improvement
Event 4: **Managing** **Resources & Risk**	• School Leader perspective: Ensuring school and staff accountability • Check-in on leadership learning & practice • Managing performance • Financial management: Effective & efficient resourced teachers • Personal reflection and plenary
Event 4: **Readiness**	• School Leader perspective: What successful leadership looks like • Successful leader presentations • Powerful learning conversations • Assessment criteria in practice • Assessment: Supporting successful submission

Online course content

	Strategy & Improvement	Teaching & Curriculum Excellence	Managing Resources & Risk
Module 1	Context for change & strategic development	Context for change - teaching & learning reality	Financial efficiency & effectiveness
Module 2	Creating the vision & strategic improvement environment	Creating the learning culture for effective teaching and learning and curriculum opportunity	Accountability & governance School-led partnership and impact
Module 3	Establishing credible relationships & effective collaboration	Growing talent and quality momentum	Staffing recruitment, retention and performance
Module 4	Transforming the culture for improvement and impact	Transforming lives and opportunities for improvement and impact	Transforming schools through school-led partnership and impact

Content has been contextualised to the needs of the international schools workforce and underpinned by robust evidence and expertise

Qualification delivery

Distance learning

Candidates for whom time away from school or access to local delivery is not available have the opportunity to complete the qualification via a distance learning model. With distance learning, the three event days are each delivered flexibly over the course of two weeks through a combination of online briefings and candidate activity. Distance learning candidates benefit from additional support from their personal tutor, and their live events are scheduled according to time zone.

Whole-school training

If a school, or schools cluster, have a number of staff wishing to access training then the qualification can be delivered in-house saving release costs and delivering content tailored to meet local context and scheduled according to local requirement.

Regional Training Centres

We have a number of school-led training centres located across the globe. Candidates located within a convenient distance can access the qualifications delivered face-to-face at any of these centres.

What's next?

Candidates who successfully complete NPQH may choose to continue their professional development through the completion of a master's degree in educational leadership or by continuing onto the National Professional Qualification for Executive Leadership (NPQEL). Professionally, NPQH graduates may choose to apply for a Headship post.

Masters accreditation

The qualification has been developed in collaboration with Chester University to be delivered at Masters Level 7. Candidates successful in achieving the qualification have the opportunity to accrue credits towards an MA in Educational Leadership with Chester University.

Assessment

Task 1

Candidates must lead a change programme at whole-school level lasting at least two terms and aiming to improve pupil progress and attainment. Candidates must present the plan to the Governing Board prior to implementation and gather their feedback. A written account of the project covering the design, implementation and evaluation must then be submitted for assessment.

Task 2

Candidates are required to research a placement school's current and/or projected resource and capability challenges and design an action plan to address these. The placement must be undertaken in a contrasting school to their home school (for example, by performance, pupil profile, geography etc.) and last at least nine working days. These can be spread across a number of weeks at the candidate's discretion. Candidates must present the plan to their placement school's governing board and gather their feedback. A written account of the project must then be submitted for assessment.

Project scripts and supporting evidence are assessed in accordance with a mark scheme provided by the DfE and are subject to national moderation.

In order to achieve NPQH candidates must:

- complete 3 online courses and associated core tasks
- engage with practice-based events
- pass final assessment within 18 months of starting the qualification

Course intakes

We have two intakes per year; a January start and a September start. For further information and for application deadlines please see our website **www.bestpracticenet.co.uk/npqh**

Further information

For further information regarding our qualification offer please contact the team via **cpd@bestpracticenet.co.uk** or call us on **+44 (0) 117 920 9200**.

Contact us

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