

NPQ Quality Framework

This Quality Framework consists of five sections and an annex:

- **Section 1** - Purpose and use of this Quality Framework
- **Section 2** - Failure to Comply with this Quality Framework
- **Section 3** - Quality Requirements: Providers' Leadership and management
- **Section 4** - Quality Requirements: Providers' Provision
- **Section 5** - Metrics: Technical Definitions and Reporting Requirements
- **Annex A** - Indicative target numbers for Metrics 2 and 3

Section 1 - Purpose and use of this Framework

Purpose of this Quality Framework

This Quality Framework sets out the requirements that all those accredited to deliver NPQs are required to meet and maintain. This Quality Framework, and Quality Assurance (QA) activities pursuant to it, support:

- Consistently high quality leadership development for all NPQ participants;
- High levels of participant satisfaction, recruitment, retention and achievement;
- Providers to continuously and systematically improve the quality of their delivery, with support from DfE/its QA Agent where necessary; and
- Continued confidence in the NPQ brand.

The Quality Framework gives all providers a shared understanding of DfE quality requirements and a means of maintaining the standards of their NPQ programmes. Compliance with this Quality Framework means that NPQ provision and outcomes are comparable and consistent across England.

All NPQ providers are required to operate within the terms of this Quality Framework and co-operate with the quality assurance activities undertaken by DfE and/or its QA agent pursuant to this framework.

In total, there are 15 requirements and 7 accompanying metrics. Each provider must be able to demonstrate that they are delivering provision that meets all of the requirements and accompanying metrics in this framework.

DfE and/or its QA agent will monitor performance and regularly conduct reviews of NPQ providers to ensure that they are meeting the requirements of this Quality Framework.

Where providers are not meeting all of the requirements and accompanying metrics in this Quality Framework, DfE/its QA Agent will assess the reasons for this, and, where necessary, require remedial action to be taken by the provider.

In the event of serious underperformance, providers will lose their accreditation and no longer be able to deliver provision that leads to the award of an NPQ.

Use of this Quality Framework

NPQ providers must use this Quality Framework to maintain and improve the quality of their NPQ programmes. Where they do not meet and maintain the quality requirements in this framework, they must take remedial action as set out by DfE and/or its QA agent.

DfE/its QA agent will use this Quality Framework as a benchmark against which they assess the performance of NPQ Providers. Where a provider is not meeting the quality requirements and accompanying metrics in this Quality Framework, DfE/its QA agent will assess the reasons for this and where necessary, require remedial action to be taken by the provider.

For the education sector and those applying for, or participating in, NPQ programmes, this Quality Framework clearly sets out what is expected from providers, including the standards and quality of provision they are required to meet and maintain. Provider performance against the metrics in this framework must be made public by providers, so informed judgements can be made by the education sector and those applying for, or participating in, NPQ programmes, as to the quality of each Provider.

Providers and DfE and/or its QA agent will undertake the following activity within the context of this QA Framework:

Stage	Provider	DfE/QA agent
Application for accreditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aspirant provider submits accreditation application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assesses capacity, capability and commitment of aspirant providers; awards accreditation to successful applicants
Years 1 and 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submits six-monthly (mid-year and end-year) self-assessment against the requirements in sections 3 and 4 of this framework Returns six-monthly (mid-year and end-year) data on achievement of metrics and supporting evidence to substantiate the achievement of metrics Publishes performance against the metrics in this framework Where necessary, implements remedial action identified by DfE/its QA agent to mitigate underperformance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews the self-assessment against sections 3 and 4 of this framework Monitors metric returns and reviews supporting evidence to substantiate the achievement of the metrics Assesses six-monthly participant feedback (mid-year and end-year) National moderation of final assessments, against DfE standards Provides feedback and support (including outcome of moderation of final assessments) Where necessary, identifies remedial action that providers who are underperforming must take
Year 3 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Returns annual data on achievement of metrics and supporting data to substantiate the achievement of metrics Publishes performance against the metrics in this framework Where necessary, implements remedial action identified by DfE/its QA agent to mitigate underperformance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitors metrics returns and reviews supporting evidence to substantiate the achievement of the metrics Assesses annual participant feedback National moderation of final assessments, against DfE standards Undertakes periodic performance reviews of all providers Undertakes immediate performance reviews of any providers that are underperforming Provides feedback and support (including outcome of moderation of final assessments) and Where necessary, identifies remedial action that providers who are underperforming must take

Section 2 - Failure to comply with this Quality Framework

Where a provider fails to comply with the terms of the Accreditation Agreement including the requirements and accompanying metrics within this framework DfE reserves its right to terminate the Accreditation Agreement and revoke a provider's accreditation. However, where DfE/its QA agent considers that remedial action is possible it will instead give notice to the provider of all required remedial action that the provider must take in order to improve their performance and retain their accreditation.

The DfE/its QA agent will treat providers fairly and consider any extenuating circumstances when establishing the reasons for underperformance, and the need for, or nature of, remedial action. It will take into account a provider's:

- self-assessments against this framework
- metrics (including the outcome of the national moderation of final assessments)
- participant feedback
- previous performance reviews, where applicable

In addition, providers will have an opportunity to supply additional evidence or information to inform the DfE/QA agent's assessment of the reasons for underperformance, and the need for, or nature of, remedial action.

In the event of serious underperformance, DfE/its QA agent will terminate the Accreditation Agreement and revoke the provider's accreditation. Seriously underperforming providers are those who:

- without compelling evidence, fail to take the remedial action identified by DfE/its QA agent as necessary to meet and maintain the quality required by this framework.

OR

- fail to take reasonable steps to prevent malpractice or maladministration that leads to the incorrect award of an NPQ.

OR

- fail to report any investigations into, or confirmed instances of, malpractice or maladministration to DfE/its QA Agent immediately.

Where accreditation is revoked, the provider will no longer be able to deliver provision that leads to the award of an NPQ.

Providers will have the right to appeal the removal of their accreditation. The appeal will be heard by an independent panel convened by DfE. The panel will examine evidence from both the provider and the QA agent on the provider's quality and reasons for removal of their accreditation. The independent panel makes the final decision regarding removal of accreditation and no further right of appeal exists.

Section 3

Quality Requirements: Providers' Leadership and management

Requirement A - General Management

Providers operate clear governance, financial, risk management and administrative processes (including for the handling and protection of personal data), which adhere to statutory requirements, and effective mechanisms to ensure that these are understood and followed by all employees and partners.

Providers comply with any request for information made by the DfE/its QA Agent for the purposes of performing its functions under this framework. Any information provided must be accurate, complete and timely.

Requirement B - Engagement Strategy

Providers operate a coherent strategy to recruit additional schools (including teaching schools) and others with relevant expertise and resource, to ensure that their provision has sufficient reach and depth.

Requirement C - Resourcing and Contingency Planning

Providers operate robust resourcing, recruitment, retention, contingency and succession planning strategies. These must ensure there are sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced personnel available to deliver provision, at least 50% of whom (except for NPQEL) must be serving school leaders.

Providers ensure that in the event of accreditation being removed, provision is made for participants on programmes to complete their study and final assessment with other providers. Where this is not possible, providers ensure participants are refunded for undelivered services.

Requirement D - Recruitment and Admission of Participants

Providers operate robust recruitment, selection, deferral and admission policies for participants. These must be transparent, reliable, inclusive and support social mobility and include a meaningful role for the lead school.

Providers recruit from schools throughout their specified area of operation.

Providers report recruitment data to DfE/its QA Agent at least every 6 months.

Metric 1: Providers recruit at least 100% of their target number for each year and for each NPQ level offered¹

Metric 2: Providers ensure that their allocated target of all those recruited are from schools where 30% or more pupils are known to be eligible for Free School Meals, for each NPQ level offered²

Metric 3: Providers ensure that their allocated target of all those recruited are from a non-white British background, for each NPQ level offered³

¹ Accredited providers will be required to submit annual recruitment targets for each NPQ level offered.

² The target percentage will be adjusted for each accredited provider to reflect the nature of the school population in their area of operation and notified to the provider by DfE. See section 5 and Annex A for further details.

³ The target percentage will be adjusted for each accredited provider to reflect the nature of the relevant teaching population in their specified area of operation. See section 5 and Annex A for further details.

Requirement E - Transparency

Providers make publicly available a clear, up to date, description of their programmes and outcomes, including (but not limited to):

- Cost of participation, including assessment
- Duration of programme, including number of guided learning hours for each type of study, for example face-to-face, peer, online, individual and work-based
- Performance against the metrics in this framework

Providers comply with DfE guidance regarding the use of DfE and NPQ branding.

Requirement F - Continuous Improvement

Providers operate a robust strategy for continuous quality improvement, so that every participant, regardless of their individual needs, is enabled to develop to the best of their ability. This must include a meaningful role for the lead school and the regular evaluation of their provision, leadership and management, through:

- self-assessment
- seeking and acting on feedback from personnel, participants and partners
- taking account of new evidence and research
- working with DfE and/or its QA agent on any additional measures to improve quality, where applicable

Requirement G - Complaints and Appeals Procedures

Providers operate fair, accessible and timely procedures for handling participants' complaints

Providers co-operate with DfE/its QA agent in the event of a participant launching an appeal against a complaint outcome.

Requirement H – Preventing and Dealing with Malpractice and Maladministration

Providers operate reliable and transparent procedures for preventing, investigating and mitigating the impact of malpractice or maladministration. This must include the reporting of any investigations into, and confirmed instances of, malpractice or maladministration to DfE/its QA agent immediately.

Section 4

Quality Requirements: Providers' Provision

Requirement I - Design of Content

Providers operate effective processes for the design, development, improvement and approval of NPQ provision, which must include a meaningful role for the lead school.

Providers adhere to the latest content and assessment framework set by DfE.

Requirement J - Types of Study

Providers ensure that there is a range of different types of study, for example face-to-face, peer, online, individual and work-based. Providers ensure that their provision includes:

- leadership training in the workplace, on the job, doing real work
- challenge and support – through a coach and/or mentor
- access to high quality resources, drawing on up-to-date research and evidence
- professional development from and with credible peers
- opportunities for structured reflection

Providers ensure that content is designed to be delivered over a period of at least two academic terms.

Requirement K - Availability of Venues

Providers have a sufficient number of appropriately-located, fit-for-purpose and value for money venues. This includes placement schools for those providers offering NPQH provision.

Requirement L - Support for Participants

Providers make available to participants a strong ongoing network of support, including from coaches, peers and external experts.

Requirement M - Accurate Assessment of Participants

Providers operate transparent and reliable processes for participant assessment which enable every participant to demonstrate accurately the extent of their ability and performance in achieving their NPQ. This must include a meaningful role for the lead school, the use of trained assessors and peer moderation of results (including borderline cases).

Providers comply with procedures for tracking participant attendance and progress to ensure that completion is based on secure evidence.

Providers comply with the assessment framework and accompanying guidance set by DfE.

Providers report participant assessment outcomes to DfE/its QA Agent at least every 6 months

Metric 4: Providers ensure that at least 90% of participants present for final assessment within 18 months of formally commencing the programme.

Metric 5: Providers achieve 95% accuracy level for all their final assessments⁴.

⁴ A sample of participants' assessment scripts will be subject to national moderation by DfE/its QA Agent. See section 5 for further details.

Requirement N – Use of Participant Feedback

Providers engage with all participants throughout the course of their provision, enabling participants to comment on the quality of the provider and the provision. Equally, providers ensure that all feedback to participants is transparent, valid and fair. This includes supporting participants to complete a DfE feedback questionnaire.

Metric 6: Providers ensure that the aggregated mean rating across all participant feedback received is at least 6 out of 10.

Requirement O - Participant Retention and Achievement

Providers ensure that all participants, in accordance with their level of performance and ability, show similar patterns of retention and achievement.

Metric 7: Providers ensure that there is no significant difference in retention and achievement rates between different groups, for example groups with protected characteristics or leaders from schools with different levels of performance.

Section 5 – Technical Definitions of metrics and reporting requirements

Metric 1: Providers recruit at least 100% of their target number of participants for each year and for each NPQ offered

Technical Definition	Reporting Requirements
<p>Definition of ‘recruited’: To be deemed recruited, participants must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have been enrolled by their provider to undertake the required provision • not be facilitators, administrators or provider team members involved in delivery of the programme • be counted only once if they have previously been withdrawn from, deferred, or failed the same qualification <p>Setting the target number:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers will be required to submit annual recruitment targets for each NPQ level 	<p>The data below must be reported to DfE/its QA Agent to assess the provider’s performance against the metric. This must be submitted in the format specified by DfE/its QA Agent. Only the data in <i>bold italics</i> must be published by the provider as part of ‘Requirement E – Transparency’</p> <p>For each participant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name • NPQ level recruited to • Teacher Reference Number (where applicable) • Current job role/post • Name of participant’s school • Unique Reference Number of participant’s school • the Local Authority Area of the participant’s school and, where different, the Local Authority District • Government region in which participant’s school is located • Phase and type of participant’s school • Latest OFSTED inspection rating of participant’s school <p>Accompanying analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Total number of participants recruited, for each NPQ level offered</i> • <i>Total number of participants recruited, expressed as a percentage of target number</i>

Metric 2: Providers ensure that their allocated target of all those recruited are from schools where 30% or more pupils are known to be eligible for Free School Meals, for each NPQ level offered

<p>Technical Definition</p>	<p>Reporting Requirements</p> <p>The data below must be reported to DfE/its QA Agent to assess the provider's performance against the metric. This must be submitted in the format specified by DfE/its QA Agent. Only the data in <i>bold italics</i> must be published by the provider as part of 'Requirement E – Transparency'</p>
<p>Setting the target number:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The target percentage will be adjusted for each accredited provider to take account of the nature of schools in their area of operation, based on the data collected in the 2016 School Census. • The target will be introduced from year 2 onwards and increase incrementally from year 2 to year 3. • Indicative targets for each area of operation are available in Annex A. <p>Definition of '30% or more pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will be based on the data collected in the 2016 School Census: Underlying Data (Spreadsheet 'SFR20_2016-Schools-Pupils_UD', column EE), which lists individual schools and the percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals within them. 	<p>For each participant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether 30% or more of the pupils in the participant's school are known to be eligible for Free School Meals, based on the 2016 School Census: Underlying Data (Spreadsheet 'SFR20_2016-Schools-Pupils_UD', column EE) <p>Accompanying analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of participants recruited from schools where 30% or more of the pupils are known to be eligible for Free School Meals, for each NPQ level offered • <i>The total number of participants recruited from school where 30% or more of the pupils are known to be eligible for Free school Meals, for each NPQ level offered, expressed as a percentage of the total number of participants recruited</i>

Metric 3: Providers ensure that their allocated target of all those recruited are from non-white British groups, for each NPQ level offered

<p>Technical Definition</p>	<p>Reporting Requirements</p> <p>The data below must be reported to DfE/its QA Agent to assess the provider's performance against the metric. This must be submitted in the format specified by DfE/its QA Agent. Only the data in <i>bold italics</i> must be published by the provider as part of 'Requirement E – Transparency'</p>
<p>Setting the target number:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The target percentage will be adjusted for each accredited provider to take account of the nature of the relevant teaching population in their area of operation, based on the data collected in the 2015 School Workforce Census. • The target will increase incrementally between years 1 and 3. • Indicative figures for each area of operation are available in annex A 	<p>For each participant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant's ethnicity, including whether they identify as white-British <p>Accompanying analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of participants recruited that do not identify as white-british, for each qualification offered • <i>Total number of participants recruited that do not identify as white-british, for each NPQ level offered</i>

Metric 4: Providers ensure that at least 90% of participants present for final assessment within 18 months of formally commencing the programme

<p>Technical Definition</p>	<p>Reporting Requirements</p> <p>The data below must be reported to DfE/its QA Agent to assess the provider's performance against the metric. This must be submitted in the format specified by DfE/its QA Agent. Only the data in <i>bold italics</i> must be published by the provider as part of 'Requirement E – Transparency'</p>
<p>Definition of 'present for final assessment':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants are deemed as having presented for final assessment when they have formally submitted their written assessment task(s) to their provider for assessment. <p>Definition of 'formally commencing':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants are deemed to have formally commenced the programme when they have both enrolled and started actively participating in the provider's professional development activities. 	<p>For each participant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participant's formal commencement date and date presented for final assessment <p>Accompanying analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Proportion of participants that present for final assessment within 18 months of formally commencing their programme, expressed as a percentage, for each NPQ level offered</i>

Metric 5: Providers ensure a 95% accuracy level for all their final assessments

Technical Definition	Reporting Requirements
<p>Verification of final assessment accuracy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A random 10% sample of a provider's assessment scripts will be subject to national moderation. • To achieve this metric, no more than 5% of overturns must occur. 	<p>The data below must be reported to DfE/its QA Agent to assess the provider's performance against the metric. This must be submitted in the format specified by DfE/its QA Agent. Only the data in <i>bold italics</i> must be published by the provider as part of 'Requirement E – Transparency'</p> <p>For each participant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant's final assessment script (a sample will be requested) • The final mark awarded to participant and whether this constitutes a pass or fail • Whether the participant's final mark was a) subject to peer moderation b) changed as a result of peer moderation <p>Accompanying analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This information will be supplied by DfE/its QA Agent and must be published</i>

Metric 6: Providers ensure that the aggregated mean rating across all participant feedback received is at least 6 out of 10.

Technical Definition	Reporting Requirements <p>The data below must be reported to DfE/its QA Agent to assess the provider's performance against the metric. This must be submitted in the format specified by DfE/its QA Agent. Only the data in <i>bold italics</i> must be published by the provider as part of 'Requirement E – Transparency'</p>
<p>Definition of rating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are required to provide feedback on to what extent their provider has met requirements in this framework. • The feedback form will be standardised and issued centrally by DfE or its QA agent. • Successful participants will only receive their qualification once they have completed the feedback form. • Providers are expected to give participants time and access to complete these. 	<p>For each participant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A – This information will be gathered by DfE/its QA Agent <p>Accompanying analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The aggregated mean rating will be supplied by DfE/its QA Agent and then must be published</i>

Metric 7: Providers ensure that there is no significant difference in retention and achievement rates between different groups, for example, groups with protected characteristics or leaders from schools with different levels of performance.

Technical Definition	Reporting Requirements <p>The data below must be reported to DfE/its QA Agent to assess the provider's performance against the metric. This must be submitted in the format specified by DfE/its QA Agent. Only the data in <i>bold italics</i> must be published by the provider as part of 'Requirement E – Transparency'</p>
<p>Definition of 'no significant difference':</p> <p>Whether the retention or achievement rate of a particular group varies more than 10% from the provider's overall mean retention or achievement rate for the NPQ level offered.</p> <p>Definition of 'Retention Rate':</p> <p>The percentage of participants who present for final assessment, as a proportion of those who formally commence the programme</p> <p>Definition of 'Achievement Rate':</p> <p>The percentage of participants who achieve a pass, as a proportion of those who present for final assessment</p> <p>Definition of 'different groups':</p> <p>Particular groups of participants, include (but are not limited to), the following definitions:</p> <p>Sex, Ethnicity, Disability, Phase and type of school, Ofsted rating of school, Whether the participant's school has 30% or more of its pupil eligible for Free School Meals</p> <p>Providers should also consider other protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.</p>	<p>For each participant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant's sex • Whether the participant has a disability • Whether the participant has withdrawn or deferred from the qualification, and where applicable, the reasons for this <p>Accompanying analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The overall retention rate for each NPQ level offered</i> • <i>The retention rate for different groups</i> • <i>The overall achievement rate, for each NPQ level offered</i> • <i>The achievement rate for different groups</i>

Annex A – Indicative Targets for Metrics 2 and 3 (See Section 5 for technical definitions of each Metric)

Indicative Targets for Metric 2: <i>“Providers ensure that their allocated target of all those recruited are from schools where 30% or more pupils are known to be eligible for Free School Meals, for each NPQ level offered”</i>												
Area of Operation	NPQML			NPQSL			NPQH			NPQEL		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+
England	-	11%	13%	-	12%	14%	-	12%	14%	-	13%	15%
East Midlands	-	8%	10%	-	8%	10%	-	8%	10%	-	9%	11%
East of England	-	4%	6%	-	4%	6%	-	4%	6%	-	5%	7%
London	-	16%	18%	-	16%	18%	-	16%	18%	-	18%	20%
North East	-	20%	22%	-	20%	22%	-	18%	20%	-	25%	27%
North West	-	17%	19%	-	18%	20%	-	17%	19%	-	18%	20%
South East	-	5%	7%	-	5%	7%	-	4%	6%	-	6%	8%
South West	-	7%	9%	-	8%	10%	-	7%	9%	-	8%	10%
West Midlands	-	17%	19%	-	17%	19%	-	17%	19%	-	18%	20%
Yorkshire and the Humber	-	13%	15%	-	13%	15%	-	13%	15%	-	13%	15%

Indicative Targets for Metric 3: *“Providers ensure that their allocated target of all those recruited are from a non-white British background, for each NPQ level offered”*

Area of Operation	NPQML			NPQSL			NPQH			NPQEL		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+
England	5%	9%	14%	4%	9%	13%	4%	8%	12%	2%	4%	7%
East Midlands	3%	6%	9%	3%	5%	8%	2%	5%	7%	1%	3%	4%
East of England	4%	8%	12%	4%	7%	11%	3%	6%	9%	2%	4%	6%
London	13%	26%	39%	12%	25%	38%	11%	22%	33%	8%	15%	23%
North East	1%	2%	3%	1%	2%	3%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%
North West	2%	4%	6%	2%	4%	6%	2%	3%	5%	1%	2%	3%
South East	3%	7%	11%	3%	7%	10%	3%	6%	9%	2%	3%	5%
South West	2%	3%	5%	2%	3%	5%	1%	3%	4%	1%	2%	3%
West Midlands	5%	9%	14%	5%	9%	14%	4%	8%	13%	3%	5%	8%
Yorkshire and the Humber	3%	5%	8%	2%	5%	7%	2%	4%	6%	1%	2%	3%