

# Expression of interest

# Title: Evaluation of the reformed NPQ delivery model

**Project reference: EOR/SBU/2017/046**

**Deadline for expressions of interest: 5pm 24 August 2017**

## Summary

Expressions of interest are sought for a process and impact evaluation of the reformed National Professional Qualifcations. It is anticipated that this will adopt a mixed-method approach to explore operational learning, potential for impact and continuous improvement; and feasibility work to develop and then deliver an impact analysis model to report on impacts for participants, schools and pupils.

## Background

The Department for Education (DfE) wants to achieve a highly educated society in which opportunity is equal for children and young people, no matter what their background or family circumstances.

Working with top headteachers, multi-academy trust chief executive officers and other sector experts, DfE has recently developed a reformed delivery model for National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) to better prepare leaders for the range of roles in today’s school system. The aim of the reformed NPQs is to increase the supply of quality leaders, particularly in areas of greatest need. The key elements of the reforms to NPQs are:

* **An expanded range of qualifications –** a new Levels and Qualification Framework, which (a) extends the current suite of NPQs to four different levels, by establishing a new National Professional Qualification for Executive Leadership[[1]](#footnote-2) (NPQEL) and (b) targets all NPQs at both aspirant and serving school leaders.
* **A new approach to content development –** a new Content and Assessment Framework that (a) sets out the knowledge, skills and behaviours that providers’ NPQs must cover, (b) allows space for bespoke, context-based content in and around these requirements, and (c) devolves content development to providers (previously DfE/NCTL-led content development).
* **A new approach to final assessment and it delivery –** a new Content and Assessment Framework that (a) sets out revised assessment tasks and criteria through which all NPQ participants must be assessed, and (b) devolves the delivery of final assessment to providers (rather than a single national final assessment provider, as in previous arrangements).
* **A new approach to quality assurance and its delivery** – a new Quality Framework that (a) sets out strengthened quality requirements and metrics within which providers are required to operate, including challenging recruitment targets for Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) candidates and candidates working in schools with a high proportion of Free School Meals (FSM) pupils, and (b) quality assurance to be delivered by a QA agent, procured though an open competition.
* **A** **new approach to delivery** – an accreditation-based model that has (a) given providers the freedom to determine the range of qualifications they wish to deliver, the areas within which they wish to deliver them, course content and modes of delivery, and their minimum recruitment targets, (b) allowed new providers to enter the market, and (c) will introduce greater competition between providers in particular areas. Subject to contract, 44 high-quality accredited providers will be offering the reformed NPQs from the academic year 2017 to 2018 and their details will be available shortly.
* **Targeted funding** – £10million of funding from the Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund (TLIF) will be targeted to support / incentivise participation in the reformed NPQs in Opportunity Areas and Category 5 and 6 areas. There is no central funding for delivery of NPQs.

## Evaluation aims

**Overarching aim of the evaluation:** To understand the effectiveness of the reformed NPQs, and how they are delivered, in reaching target groups, meeting participant needs and contributing to the supply of quality leaders in areas of most need; and, in doing so, to support continuous improvement of the NPQ offer.

**The research objectives are to:**

* Provide emerging learning to maximise the reach of recruitment, to support social mobility and school improvement;
* Capture, and share, insights about ‘what works’ and how best to tailor NPQs to context and need;
* Identify any gaps / opportunities for improvement in NPQ content development, delivery and approach; and,
* Understand, and measure, outcomes and impacts of the reformed NPQs for participants, schools and pupils.

**Research questions:**

The research questions look to investigate impact on the supply of quality leaders across all four levels of the reformed NPQ; and, to access operational learning to understand, and improve, the potential for impact. They sit under three main themes.

**Recruitment and retention**

* How effective are NPQs in reaching, attracting and retaining talent from diverse pool of potential leaders? How can this be improved? What is the role of the Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund (TLIF)? Do NPQs support the supply of leaders where they are needed most?

**Content development, delivery and approach**

* How effective are new approaches to NPQ content development, delivery, and assessment, in meeting the needs of participants? What are the strengths and weaknesses?

**Supply of quality leaders / impact**

* How do NPQs contribute to the supply of leaders, quality of leadership, and pupil outcomes? What are the perceived / reported benefits and measurable impacts of the NPQ for the individual, the school and the pupils?

## Methodology

At this stage we are seeking expressions of interests from organisations who can demonstrate evidence of expertise, capacity and experience to deliver a mixed-method evaluation to explore operational learning, identify and inform potential for impact and, impact analysis. The process evaluation will run from Autumn 2017 to Spring 2019, with the impact evaluation and final report running on until Autumn 2020.

We envisage that the research will draw on a complementary basket of methods and apply these as appropriate to strike a balance between potential for learning, minimising participant and provider burden and, maximising cost efficiency. Flexibility to pursue learning about ‘what works’, why / why not and potential for impact and, to communicate this emerging-learning to support continuous improvement must be inbuilt. We want to ensure reciprocal benefits from participation in the evaluation.

* **Feasibility / development activity to design the impact analysis model and matching process**, potentially including tailoring or discrete approaches for different levels of NPQ.
* **Online surveys of perception and experiences** of participants and head-teachers at the start and end of programme with the potential to disaggregate by provider, area, key characteristics, and TLIF supported candidates. The surveys will be delivered as a census to ALL year one candidates.
* **Qualitative primary research** using a mix of targeted interviews, observation and case studies (with a focusing on learning from / relevant to the Opportunity Areas), informed by desk review, to provide richness of understanding and delivery insights.
* **Impact analysis** for ALL candidates recruited in Year 1 (2017/18 recruitment) and those schools, across ALL levels of NPQ and all 44 providers, to maximise the potential for analysis. Potenitally, likely to adopt a matched comparison design to evidence of impact of A) participant progression using School Workforce Census (SWFC); and B) school leadership quality using pupil outcomes.

The external evaluation will be complemented by 1) quality assurance assessment 2) in-house data analysis 3) interactive learning labs for providers 4) cost-benefit analysis, with all but the last of these (that reports on a similar timescale to the impact analysis) providing inputs to the evaluation. The successful contractor will need to be willing to engage and collaborate with others to ensure there is no duplication but that activities are mutually beneficial where possible.

## Timing

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| **Commissioning Stages** | **Deadline** |
| EOIs issued  | 09/08/17 |
| EOIs due in 5pm | 24/08/17 |
| EOIs assessed | 25/08/17 |
| **Indicative dates for next stages** |  |
| Invitation to tender Issued | 29/08/17 |
| ITTs due in  | 19/09/17 |
| ITTs assessed/interviews by | 22/09/17 |
| Evaluation inception meeting by | 04/10/17 |

## Assessment criteria

The expressions of interest for this evaluation project will be scored against the following criteria:

* Understanding of the Policy requirement
* Evidence of expertise in the design and delivery of mixed-method / flexible process evaluation and of impact assessment models.
* Evidence of experience of management of a process and impact evaluation of a delivery model with multiple providers and diverse content and delivery approaches.
* Evidence of experience in communicating emerging learning to cultivate innovation and continuous improvement.
* Evidence of capacity to deliver on time and to cost

EOIs will be evaluated on these criteria using the scale below, with the full invitation to tender only being issued to those organisations deemed to meet the requirements best. Please demonstrate each criteria by referring to what you did, how and and the impact.

0 – Totally fails to meet the requirement

1 – Meets some of the requirement, with limited supporting information

2 – Meets some of the requirement, with reasonable explanation

3 – Fully meets the requirement, with detailed explanation/evidence in support

4 – Exceeds the requirement, with detailed explanation/evidence in support

| **Closing date for EOIs: 5pm 24 August 2017****Send your EOI form to:** **zoey.breuer@education.gov.uk** **and** **Evaluation.COLLEGE@education.gov.uk** |
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## How to submit an expression of interest

You must submit an expression of interest (EOI) in order to be considered to be invited to tender. To do so, please complete the Expression of Interest Research template found on the Department’s research website. A submission of an EOI does not guarantee an invitation to tender and the Department does not routinely advise organisations that they have not been successful in being invited to tender. Feedback is however available on request.

In order to express an interest you must be registered with us and you will need your ID number. If you need to register then please do so using the online supplier registration form. If you have already registered and have forgotten your ID number, please send an email to Enquiries.RBU@education.gov.uk

All contracts are let on the basis of the [Department’s Terms and Conditions](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eoi-guide). You are encouraged to check these before submitting your expression of interest, as these form part of your contractual obligations.

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1. In addition to NPQs for existing and aspirant Middle Leaders (NPQML), Senior Leaders (NPQSL), and Headteachers (NPQH). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)