**National Professional Qualifications Announcement**

Today the Department for Education (DfE) has announced updated funding eligibility criteria for National Professional Qualifications (NPQs), the launch of the NPQs in Leading Literacy and Early Years Leadership and the reopening of the DfE’s digital service.

**Introduction of the NPQ in Leading Literacy (NPQLL) and NPQ in Early Years Leadership (NPQEYL)**

From autumn 2022, we are introducing the NPQLL and NPQEYL. The NPQEYL, will support leaders to develop expertise in leading high-quality education and care, as well as in effective staff and organisational management, working with and through their colleagues so that every child gets the best start in life.

Following completion of the NPQEYL, participants will have covered the following seven areas:

* Culture
* Child Development, Curriculum and Assessment
* Additional and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
* Professional Development
* Organisational Management
* Implementation
* Working in Partnership

The NPQEYL is aimed at leaders qualified to at least Level 3 with a full and relevant qualification who are, or are aspiring to be, managers of Private, Voluntary and Independent nurseries, headteachers of school-based or maintained nurseries, or childminders with leadership responsibilities.

[Read the full Early Years Leadership framework here.](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1057342/National_Professional_Qualification_for_Early_Years_Leadership.pdf)

**Funding**

As part of the government’s long-term education recovery plan, £184 million of new funding for NPQs was announced in June 2021 to be spent over the course of this parliament.

Since autumn 2021, teachers and leaders employed in state-funded schools, as well as those employed in state-funded organisations in England that offer education to 16-19 year olds, have been able to access DfE funded training scholarships for all NPQs. We are now extending this funding for the next two years, to support participants undertaking NPQs in 22/23 and 23/24.

From autumn 2022, organisations eligible to access scholarships will include:

* independent special schools
* virtual schools (Local Authority run organisations that support the education of children in care)
* hospital schools not already included in other categories of eligible organisations
* young offender institutions

In addition, Early years practitioners and leaders working in the following settings in England will be eligible for scholarship funding from the DfE for the NPQEYL **only**:

* childcare providers registered on the Ofsted Early Years Register, providing childcare on non-domestic premises.
* childcare providers registered on the Ofsted Early Years Register, providing childcare on domestic premises.
* childminders registered on the Ofsted Early Years Register.
* childminders registered with an Ofsted-registered childminder agency, caring for early years children.

As with the existing funding criteria, lead providers should assess the suitability of early years participants for this NPQ.

We are also introducing additional payments to small schools, to enable them to support their teachers and leaders to undertake NPQs.

The Targeted Support Fund gives a grant payment of £200 per participant to settings with 1-600 pupils, for every teacher or leader they employ who participates in an NPQ. Organisations that are eligible for NPQ scholarships will also be eligible for targeted support funding, with the exception of non-school based early years settings (group-based providers and childminders).

**Registering for an NPQ**

Teachers, leaders and practitioners who are interested in taking an NPQ should visit <https://professional-development-for-teachers-leaders.education.gov.uk/index>. Once they have chosen their provider and NPQ course of study, their provider will signpost them to register for their NPQ course using the GOV.UK ‘Register for a National Professional Qualification’ service. All participants who are interested in taking an NPQ will need to register with the Department in order to access scholarship funding where applicable and to obtain a certificate upon completion of their training.

**Over 29k participants**

To date, 29,153 reformed NPQ courses have been declared as started since the launch of the NPQ reforms in autumn 2021.

To put this number in context, during the academic year 2017/18 11,802 participants were successfully recruited onto the then reformed NPQ courses. This exceeded our target at the time while also reaching schools and teachers in more challenging areas. Following the change in eligibility criteria, our targets for the current suite of NPQs are more ambitious and the current NPQ Year 1 delivery is almost 3 times higher than [2017/18](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1035430/Evaluation_of_the_2017_National_Professional_Qualifications.pdf).

**Top Lines**

* NPQs are part of a wider set of [teacher development reforms](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reforms-to-teacher-development) which together will create a ‘golden thread’ of high-quality evidence underpinning the support, training and development available through the entirety of a teacher’s career. This begins with Initial Teacher Training (ITT) through to the implementation of an Early Career Framework (ECF) based induction for early career teachers and onto the introduction of new and reformed NPQs for more experienced teachers. These root teacher and leader development in the same consistent evidence-based understanding of what works.
* NPQs provide training and support for teachers, leaders and practitioners at all levels and deliver improved outcomes for pupils and children.
* NPQs have been designed with teachers, leaders and practitioners in mind, using the latest and best available evidence, and can be completed flexibly around existing commitments.
* The specialist and leadership NPQs provide training and support for teachers and leaders at all levels by utilising the best available evidence and collective wisdom of the profession to ensure that every child in every setting gets the best start in life.
* There are three leadership NPQs available:
* NPQ in Senior Leadership (NPQSL) – for school leaders who are, or are aspiring to be, a senior leader with cross-school responsibilities.
* NPQ in Headship (NPQH) – for school leaders who are, or are aspiring to be, a headteacher or head of school with responsibility for leading a school.
* NPQ in Executive Leadership (NPQEL) – for school leaders who are, or are aspiring to be, an executive headteacher or have a school trust CEO role with responsibility for leading several schools.
* There are three specialist NPQs for teachers and school leaders who want to develop their existing knowledge and skills in specialist areas of teaching practice:
* NPQ in Leading Teacher Development (NPQLTD) – for teachers who have, or are aspiring to have, responsibilities for leading the development of other teachers in their school.
* NPQ in Leading Behaviour and Culture (NPQLBC) – for teachers who have, or are aspiring to have, responsibilities for leading behaviour or supporting pupil wellbeing in their school.
* NPQ in Leading Teaching (NPQLT) – for teachers who have, or are aspiring to have, responsibilities for leading teaching in a subject, year group, key stage or phase.

**Q&A**

**Q:** **What is the NPQ in Early Years Leadership?**

**A:** The [NPQ in Early Years Leadership](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1057342/National_Professional_Qualification_for_Early_Years_Leadership.pdf) will aim to underpin and increase early years-specific pedagogical leadership in early years settings, strengthen staff pedagogy, and support children whose development has been impacted by the pandemic.

The course will cover early education and child development, with a focus on communication, language, and physical development as well as personal, social, and emotional growth, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) reforms. The setting of strategic direction and organisational culture, as well as pedagogical leadership, including evidence-based learning will also be explored. The content framework for NPQEYL is based on the evidence about leadership in early years as well as high-quality education and care and draws on advice from an Expert Advisory Group. It also builds on the expert guidance already established in the EYFS statutory framework

**Q: Who can undertake an NPQEYL?**

**A:** The NPQEYL is designed to provide training and support for early years current and aspiring leaders, whether they work in Private, Voluntary and Independent nurseries, school-based or maintained nurseries, or as childminders. It will support current and aspiring leaders to develop expertise in leading high-quality education and care, as well as in effective staff and organisational management.

This course is for leaders qualified to at least Level 3 with a full and relevant qualification, who are, or are aspiring to be, managers of Private, Voluntary and Independent nurseries, headteachers of school-based or maintained nurseries, or childminders with leadership responsibilities

**Q: Are there any eligibility criteria that need to be met for participants to be able to access funding for NPQEYL?**

**A:** Teachers and leaders employed in the following settings will be eligible for scholarship funding for the NPQs, including the NPQEYL:

* State-funded schools in England
* State-funded organisations in England that offer education to 16-19 year olds
* Independent special schools
* virtual schools (Local Authority run organisations that support the education of children in care)
* hospital schools not already included in other categories of eligible organisations
* young offender institutions

In addition, Early years practitioners and leaders working in the following settings in England will be eligible for scholarship funding from the DfE for the NPQEYL **only**:

* childcare providers registered on the Ofsted Early Years Register, providing childcare on non-domestic premises.
* childcare providers registered on the Ofsted Early Years Register, providing childcare on domestic premises.
* childminders registered on the Ofsted Early Years Register.
* childminders registered with an Ofsted-registered childminder agency, caring for early years children.

As with the existing funding criteria, lead providers should assess the suitability of early years participants for this NPQ.

**Q: How is the NPQEYL recognised / what is its status? Is it equivalent to EYPS / EYTS / QTS / other Level 6 qualifications?**

**A:** The NPQs are a set of prestigious professional qualifications, already widely recognised by the school sector. They are voluntary and have to date been designed to support the professional development of teachers and school leaders at all primary and secondary schools. The NPQEYL fills a key gap for current and aspiring early years leaders and is a high-quality continuous professional development (CPD) offer, developed to underpin and increase early years-specific pedagogical leadership, strengthen staff pedagogy, and support children whose development has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The NPQEYL is a high-quality CPD offer, and as with other NPQs, does not appear on Ofqual’s register of regulated qualifications. It does not have a qualification level attached to it, and instead it is envisaged that the NPQEYL will complement existing early years qualifications that leaders already hold.

**Q: How will the NPQEYL impact staff: child ratios?**

**A:** It is envisaged that the NPQ training offer will complement existing Early Years qualifications leaders and practitioners already hold. DfE defines the qualifications that staff must hold to count in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) staff: child ratios. The NPQEYL will not be included in this list. Early Years Providers must make sure that staff have the appropriate qualifications to count in the staff: child ratios.

**Q: Are childminders eligible for funding for the NPQEYL? If so, do they have to have assistants or work in other settings to be eligible?**

**A:** Childminders who are registered on the Ofsted Early Years Register, or who are registered with an Ofsted-registered Childminder Agency and are caring for early years children, are eligible for funding for the NPQEYL. However, to fully benefit from the NPQEYL we would expect childminders to either already employ, or be close to employing, childminder assistants. Childminders interested in taking the NPQEYL should contact one of the lead providers to discuss whether the course is suitable for them.

**Q: Does the NPQEYL cover Reception classes/age-groups?**

**A:** NPQEYL is aimed at leaders qualified to at least level 3 with a full and relevant qualificationwho are, or are aspiring to be:

* managers of private, voluntary and independent nurseries
* headteachers of school-based or maintained nurseries
* childminders with leadership responsibilities

The NPQEYL fills a key gap as a high-quality training offer for early years leaders or those aspiring to be early years leaders. The NPQEYL is a high-quality CPD offer that has been developed to underpin and increase early years-specific pedagogical leadership, strengthen staff pedagogy, and support children whose development has been impacted by the pandemic. It is envisaged that the NPQ training offer will complement the existing Early Years qualifications which leaders and participants may already hold.

The NPQEYL may also be of interest to Reception teachers with an interest in progression in Early Years leadership. Some of the key elements of the NPQEYL content framework are tailored more specifically to those in management roles, such as budget and resource management. We would therefore suggest reception level teachers review the [NPQEYL content framework](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1057342/National_Professional_Qualification_for_Early_Years_Leadership.pdf) on which the course will be based,and work with providers to determine whether the course is suitable for them and their aspirations.

It may be that Reception level teachers consider undertaking one of the Specialist NPQs, which have been designed to support teachers and school leaders at all levels who want to develop their expertise in specialist areas of teaching practice. Three specialist qualifications which focus upon the following areas are available:

[NPQ in Leading Teacher Development](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/925511/NPQ_Leading_Teacher_Development.pdf) (NPQLTD) - supporting the training and development of others, including early career teachers

[NPQ in Leading Teaching](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/925513/NPQ_Leading_Teaching.pdf) NPQLT) - developing teachers who are subject leads or responsible for improving teaching practice in a subject or phase

[NPQ in Leading Behaviour and Culture](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/925508/NPQ_Leading_Behaviour_and_Culture.pdf) (NPQLBC) – developing teachers who have responsibilities for leading behaviour and culture

**Q: How long will funding for these qualifications be available for?**

**A:** NPQs are backed by £184 million, allowing the programme to deliver 150,000 NPQs to teachers and leaders up until the 2023/24 academic year.

**Q: How many participants from each setting can access the funding provided?**

**A:** There is no limit on the number of participants who can undertake an NPQ per setting. This funding is applied per participant, not per setting, so multiple participants within a single setting can all access NPQs simultaneously.

Access to funding remains conditional on successful validation of participants’ registration information against Teaching Regulation Agency records, so you must ensure that the information supplied to your NPQ provider matches your teacher record. You can check and update your record via the Teaching Regulation Agency’ teacher self-service portal.

Participants do not need to be teachers to obtain a TRN and can request one on the basis they are accessing an NPQ. Participants should email the Teaching Regulation Agency at [qts.enquiries@education.gov.uk](mailto:qts.enquiries@education.gov.uk).

For the NPQEYL, access to funding for those without a Teaching Regulation Agency record remains conditional on successful validation of information against the Ofsted Early Years Register, and eligibility checks undertaken by NPQ lead providers.

**Q: Why do I need a Teacher Reference Number (TRN)? How do I get one?**

A TRN is required to allow participants to register with the DfE’s online service. You should [visit the service](https://register-national-professional-qualifications.education.gov.uk/) to find out more about how to get a TRN.

**Q:** **How do applicants apply for a qualification?**

**A:** Teachers, leaders and practitioners who are interested in taking an NPQ should visit <https://professional-development-for-teachers-leaders.education.gov.uk/index>. Once they have chosen their provider and NPQ course of study, their provider will signpost them to register for their NPQ course using the GOV.UK ‘Register for a National Professional Qualification’ service. All participants who are interested in taking an NPQ will need to register with the Department in order to access scholarship funding where applicable and to obtain a certificate upon completion of their training.

**Q. How has the NPQEYL content been created?**

**A:** The course content for NPQEYL is under development by lead providers ahead of its launch in autumn 2022. The development of course content during its design will align closely with the [NPQEYL framework](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1024896/National_Professional_Qualification_for_Early_Years_Leadership.pdf). The content framework is based on the best available evidence about leadership in early years as well as high-quality education and care, and was developed in consultation with an Expert Advisory Group as well as being independently assessed by the Education Endowment Foundation. The NPQ content frameworks will be kept under review as the evidence base evolves.

**Q: How is the NPQEYL delivered? For example, what is the amount of Face to Face, small group work and synchronous study?**

**A:** The NPQEYL has a minimum of 12 hours face to face delivery. For NPQEYL there is a minimum of 30 hours synchronous delivery, also known as self-study.

Each Lead Provider may plan to have more face-to-face sessions than the minimum set out by the Department.

Information about the providers of the qualifications will be available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-professional-qualifications-npqs-reforms/national-professional-qualifications-npqs-reforms) in due course, and you should contact your chosen provider to discuss their delivery methods.

**Q: Do the qualifications consider professionals in SEND settings?**

**A:** NPQs have been designed to ensure teachers, leaders and practitioners expand their existing knowledge and skills to support all pupils to success in both mainstream and specialist settings. This includes those pupils identified within the four areas of need set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of practice.

**Assessment**

**Q: What will the assessment of the NPQEYL look like?**

**A:** The assessment process for NPQs has been refreshed to reduce the workload burden on participants while still providing an opportunity for them to apply their knowledge. To pass an NPQ, participants will need to engage with at least 90% of the course (exact requirements to be determined by the provider) and complete a final assessment.

At the start of their training, providers must provide participants with a complete list of course elements that will count towards participation metrics and set out how participation in those elements will be measured.

The final assessment will take the form of a case study and represent a likely situation to be faced by a participant at the relevant NPQ qualification level or role. It will test participants on a variety of ‘learn that’ and ‘learn how to’ statements from within the relevant NPQ Content Framework. Participants will be allowed an eight-day calendar window to provide a 1500 - 2500 word written response to the case study in an ‘open book’ setting.