

Inspiring leaders;
improving children's lives

ASPIRING
HEADTEACHERS

Provision

National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH)

**Information for
prospective applicants**

Isn't it time you applied?

The National Professional Qualification for Headship is NCSL's highly successful flagship provision for aspiring headteachers. It is mandatory to hold or have a place on NPQH in order to apply for a headship in the maintained sector.

“Being a headteacher is challenging but it is also a great job. It is a privilege to be able to make a difference to the lives of children, staff and the local community through school leadership.”

Steve Munby

Chief Executive, NCSL

NPQH has been redesigned to reflect the changing role of headship and of school leadership in general. Headteachers today have new responsibilities and in the last few years there have been radical changes to the way schools interact with each other and with other services. The redesigned NPQH will prepare you for 21st century strategic leadership and management challenges.

Who is NPQH for?

The redesigned NPQH is for those who aspire to headship, not for those just seeking really good professional development. You should be highly motivated to be a headteacher and no more than 12-18 months from applying for headship posts when you apply for NPQH. You should then be ready to take up a headship as soon as you graduate.

Benefits for aspiring headteachers

The redesigned NPQH puts you in the driving seat, enabling you to create your own flexible, personalised development pathway that:

- takes account of your professional development needs and your prior learning
- improves and develops your strategic leadership expertise
- develops key leadership and management skills
- enables you to build on your strengths
- provides opportunities to work in different educational contexts
- gives you the confidence and competence to take up your first headship so you will make a positive impact on your school, the lives of children, young people and their families



**“Creating, innovating,
trouble-shooting,
working with people
and making a
difference - how
fantastic is that?!”**

Dr Irene Bishop, Headteacher,
St Saviours and St Olaves School,
London



Key features of NPQH

There are five stages to the redesigned NPQH, devised to ensure that aspiring headteachers are given every opportunity to fulfil their potential, as soon as possible.

Pre-entry stage

If you are thinking of applying for NPQH, you will have the opportunity to access online activities, diagnostic tools, background materials and case studies, designed to help you find out more about headship and reflect on your readiness for the role. You will also be able to familiarise yourself with the National Standards for Headteachers, which underpin NPQH.

These resources, together with your performance management discussions with your headteacher or line manager, will enable you to identify your learning and development needs and to make a decision about your readiness to apply.

Entry and development process

During the entry stage, you will make an online application with the support of your headteacher or line manager. If you are successful at application stage, you will engage in a number of self-assessment activities and attend a two-day regional assessment and development event. This event will further assess your motivation, capability and readiness to progress onto NPQH and enable you to create a personalised leadership development plan.

Accessing provision

You will spend between 4 and 12 months as an NPQH trainee headteacher, starting with a regional induction day at which you will have the opportunity to network with NCSL regional leaders, form self-directed learning groups and find out about coaches and placement schools.

The provision you access whilst on NPQH will depend on your own development plan and will include opportunities to:

- access NCSL's leadership and management materials, modules and online communities
- engage in peer learning
- access coaching for improvement
- undertake a placement in another school context
- attend NCSL seminars and master classes
- learn about the latest research and national policies
- access additional local leadership development activities

Graduation

You will present yourself for graduation when you are ready for headship. A panel, including serving headteachers, will examine your portfolio of leadership and management evidence. If you meet the National Standards for Headteachers, NPQH will be awarded and this will signal your immediate readiness for headship.

First headship

Coaching and support will continue into your first headship. Your learning on NPQH and any further development needs will inform performance management discussions with your governors and help you plan your involvement in NCSL's Early Headship Provision.



Do you want to lead a school and make a difference to the lives of hundreds of children, young people and their families?

Before you apply:

- visit the NCSL website
- read the National Standards for Headteachers
- learn more about the challenges of headship today
- talk to your headteacher or line manager about your aspirations and obtain their support
- undertake the activities and diagnostic tools to test your readiness to apply



Redesigned model NPQH

Pre-entry stage

Register your interest and engage in online activities to test your readiness to apply



Entry and development process

Make an application supported by your headteacher/line manager
Undertake online activities including a 360° diagnostic
Attend a two-day assessment and development event to assess your readiness for headship



Trainee headteachers (4 to 12 months)

Attend a regional induction event to meet NCSL leaders and other trainee headteachers
Work through your personal development plan supported by NCSL materials, peer learning and coaching for improvement

Core leadership development provision

Undertake a placement in another context

Attend NCSL seminars and master classes

Access research and policy

Engage with online activities

Additional leadership development activities:

Personalised and determined development plan, available locally



Graduation process

Present your portfolio of evidence to a panel for assessment of your professional knowledge and understanding, leadership effectiveness and readiness for headship



First headship

Continue to receive coaching
Link your further development needs to performance management and your engagement with NCSL's Early Headship Provision



**“The power of
Headship doesn’t lie
in coercion; it lies in
unlocking potential
and seeing people fly.”**

Simon Uttley, Headteacher,
St. Pauls Catholic College,
Middlesex

Also available from NCSL:

- www.ncsl.org.uk/leadershipnetwork

The Leadership Network brings together the experience and ideas of school leaders across the country to create a powerful focus for change and development in school leadership.

- www.ncsl.org.uk/leadershiplibrary

The Leadership Library is a free unique resource bringing together some of the best leadership and management thinking from around the world.

- www.ncsl.org.uk/tomorrowsleaderstoday

The Tomorrow's leaders today campaign is about finding, developing and keeping great headteachers.

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