

National Professional Qualification for Headship

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS AND SPONSORS

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1. About NPQH

The National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) is designed for those who are, or are aspiring to become, a Head teacher or Head of School with responsibility for leading a school.

Successful applicants must be highly motivated to become a Head teacher, no more than 12 to 18 months from applying for headship posts, and, if not already in post, ready to take up a headship as soon as they graduate.

2. NPQH Content and Assessment Framework

Content Areas

There are six content areas for NPQH, which set out what a leader should know or be able to do. The six content areas are common to each NPQ level, but the knowledge and skills within them increases in sophistication, depth and breadth progressively through the qualification levels. They are:

- Strategy and Improvement
- Teaching and Curriculum Excellence
- Leading with Impact
- Working in Partnership
- Managing Resources and Risks
- Increasing Capability

Leadership Behaviours

There are seven leadership behaviours, common to each NPQ level, which set out how the best leaders operate. They are:

- Commitment
- Collaboration
- Personal Drive
- Resilience
- Awareness
- Integrity
- Respect

TELA will help evaluate a candidate's strength against each of the behaviours at the beginning of the training, and help develop these behaviours during the course of study.

Leadership behaviours will not be assessed through assessment criteria or assessment task.

3. TELA's Qualification

TELA's NPQH training consists of five face-to-face training days supported by individual research and development, and application of leadership learning. This will include leading a change programme in the candidate's own school and designing an action plan to address a placement school's current and/or projected resource and capability challenges (see below). Candidates will be assigned a personal coach for individual support. Candidates will need to be supported in their own school by a

sponsor who will be closely involved in supporting the candidate’s application to join the qualification, their subsequent development and in the final assessment process.

4. Assessment Tasks

For NPQH, these consist of two projects, one of which must be based on the candidate’s experiences during a 9-day placement in another school. **TELA** will support candidates in the identification of a placement school to undertake their project work. Whilst these tasks define the key parameters for a project (word count, duration etc.), **TELA** will work with candidates to agree an appropriate topic, based on their current school environment, and that of their placement school.

5. NPQH Assessment Tasks Description

Project Theme

1. Leading a whole-school change programme
2. Designing an action plan to meet placement school’s resourcing and capability needs

Content Areas Assessed

Project 1 (Own school)	Project 2 (Placement school)
Strategy and Improvement	Managing Resources and Risks
Teaching and Curriculum Excellence	Increasing Capability
Leading with Impact	
Working in Partnership	

Task 1 – Candidates must:

- Lead a change programme at whole-school level, lasting at least 2 terms, to improve pupil progress and attainment.
- Present the plan to the governing board prior to implementation and gather feedback.
- Submit a written account of the project, which aims to evidence the criteria indicated. This should cover the design, implementation and evaluation of the project.
- Submit supporting evidence where indicated. Supporting evidence must be concise and directly related to the candidate’s project and corresponding assessment criterion.

Task 2 – Candidates must:

- Undertake a placement in a contrasting school (for example, by performance, pupil profile, geography etc.), lasting at least 9 working days.
- Research the placement school’s current and/or projected resource and capability challenges and design an action plan to address these.
- Present the plan to the placement school’s governing board and gather feedback.
- Submit a written account of the project to **TELA** for assessment, which aims to evidence the criteria indicated.
- Submit supporting documents/material as evidence where indicated below. Supporting evidence must be concise and directly related to the candidate’s project and corresponding assessment criterion.

6. Readiness to Apply

The application process has been designed to help candidate's self-assess their readiness for NPQH in terms of the six content areas. Candidates are also asked to self-assess their experience, ability and impact on whole school improvement with regard to their two strongest content areas. Candidates will use sources of information such as performance management targets, discussions with their Head teacher and external professionals as appropriate in order to inform their decision about whether or not to apply for NPQH. While the candidate's sponsor has to endorse the candidate's self-assessment in relation to the content areas, they must also assess the candidate against the seven leadership behaviours. It will be useful for candidates to complete this exercise themselves in advance of making an application in order to judge their readiness.

It will be for **TELA** to make an overall assessment of a candidate's readiness and to confirm acceptance on to the qualification. By taking themselves through the application process and discussing their professional readiness with their sponsor, candidates will get a feel for the requirements of headship and the qualification. This will help to establish a baseline for their professional journey towards NPQH. This will be further developed with the 360° leadership diagnostic that candidates will complete at the start of the qualification that will in turn help them to establish milestones against which they will be able to judge their progress towards the qualification.

TELA will deliver briefings and workshops to assist candidates in assessing their readiness for NPQH and completing the application process.

The 360° leadership diagnostic will include a section to be completed by those in a position to comment on a candidate's knowledge, skill and understanding. These are therefore likely to be their peers and seniors.

7. Who should be a Sponsor?

The nature and content of the leadership framework strongly suggests that a candidate's sponsor should be someone with a detailed and thorough professional knowledge of their work and professional characteristics as well as the demands of headship, the associated leadership behaviours and the requirements of the content areas.

8. Making an Application for NPQH

Applications for NPQH must be made by completing the NPQH application form and sending it to npq@thomasestley.org.uk to register your interest. NPQH application forms can be found on the **TELA** website (www.telaonline.co.uk/npq). The gateway application form will be sent to potential applicants once your interest is registered. The gateway application form should be returned before the closing date with candidate and sponsor areas fully completed to npq@thomasestley.org.uk

Gateway application form overview

1.Applicants are asked to self-assess their experience, ability, and impact in the six NPQH Content Areas using the following scale:

Little or no experience of the content area at whole school level	1
Developing experience of the content area through membership of senior leadership teams or external bodies and organisations	2
Developing direct experience and responsibility for the content area with clear potential to apply the 'Learn how to' and 'Learn about' statements to ensure maximum impact on whole school improvement	3
Substantial experience and proven ability and impact on whole school improvement in the content area	4

2.Applicants must then provide a brief outline of their experience and performance as a senior leader by selecting their two strongest content areas and outlining the impact and positive difference they have made. This must be supported by quantifiable evidence. This is particularly important as it will provide key information, verified by their sponsor, to help assess their readiness for NPQH.

3.The applicant's sponsor must then assess the applicant against the seven NPQH Leadership Behaviours using the following scale:

The applicant has significant weaknesses in this leadership behaviour	1
The applicant needs to focus on some aspects of this leadership behaviour in order to develop into an effective Head Teacher	2
The applicant has many strengths with regards to this behaviour with some aspects that need to be improved further in order to become an effective Head Teacher	3
The applicant excels with regards to this behaviour	4

4.The applicant and their sponsor are required to sign a declaration at the end of the form.

What happens next?

Candidate applications will be scored using the assessment scales copied above by our assessment partner. To be accepted on the qualification, applicants and their sponsors will need to demonstrate that the applicant has the capability to meet the requirements of the six content areas over the course of the qualification. The scoring will enable a judgement to be made as to whether applicants will be able to address any aspects of the leadership behaviours needed to be an effective Head Teacher. Applicants will need the full support of their sponsor to be accepted onto the qualification.

If successful, candidates will be notified and sent details of the next steps. If an application is considered to be borderline or not demonstrating readiness for NPQH, the application will be referred to a **TELA** moderator who will contact the applicant's sponsor for further information, or clarification of issues as appropriate. The **TELA** moderator will judge whether or not an applicant is to be accepted onto the qualification and they will be informed accordingly. If unsuccessful, applicants will be provided with developmental feedback to assist them with any future applications.