

NPQ Participants: Part-time, Deferral & Portability Policy

Last reviewed	July 2021
Next review due	July 2022
Responsible division	Programmes Division
Responsible director	Programme Director, NPQ
Applies to	Participants on National Professional Qualification programmes beginning Autumn 2021
Audience	NPQ participants, internal staff, Delivery Partners

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1. DfE Contractual Requirements

This policy outlines how participants who are part-time, defer or transfer schools during their NPQ will be supported to continue engaging with their programme.

Providers of National Professional Qualifications (NPQs), including Ambition Institute, must ensure their programme is suitable for teachers who work on a part time basis and be adaptable for those who move school mid-programme. As a result of a change of schools, Ambition Institute will continue to provide the programme to that teacher in a new school setting, unless that move is to a new geographical area that is not covered by this lead provider. No further output payments will be received by Ambition in such a case.

Guidance will be provided to Delivery Partners to help tailor the programme to individual needs, and induct staff where participants change job or role mid-programme.

2. Programme design

Ambition Institute’s NPQ programmes are designed to meet the needs of teachers regardless of their context, providing the agility to support a range of engagement patterns including part-time teachers, parental leave, and moving school mid-programme.

According to the DfE, teachers will need to engage with at least 90% of the programme to pass the course. Below is an overview of all course inputs, and approximate timelines for teachers working full-time.

NPQ programme inputs:

NPQLT NPQLBC NPQLTD	Whole Programme			
	Length	Total Number	When	Format
Conferences	1 Day	1	Half Term 1	In Person
Clinics	2 Hours	6	One per Half Term, starting with Half Term 2	Online or In Person
Asynchronous Content	50 Minutes	36	6 online learning modules per Half Term	Online
Communities	1 Hour	6	One per Half Term	Online or In Person

** Due to Covid-19, in-person conferences in Autumn 2021 can be replaced by online conferences*

NPQSL	Whole Programme			
	Length	Total Number	When	Format
Conferences	1 Day	2	Half Term 1 & Half Term 6	In Person
Clinics	2 Hours	7	One per Half Term, starting with Half Term 2	Online
Asynchronous Content	50 Minutes	56	6 online learning modules per Half Term	Online
Communities	1 Hour	9	One per Half Term	Online or In Person

NPQH	Whole Programme			
	Length	Total Number	When	Format
Conferences	1 Day	2	Half Term 1 & Half Term 6	In Person
Clinics	2 Hours	9	One per Half Term	Online
Asynchronous Content	50 Minutes	56	6 online learning modules per Half Term	Online
Communities	1 Hour	9	One per Half Term	Online or In Person
School Visit	5 Hours	1	Half Term 3	In Person
NPQH ASO	Lenth	Total Number	When	Format
Coaching	1 hour	3	One per Term	Online or In Person
Shadowing	Flexible	3	One per Term	In Person
Pre/Post-coaching activities	Flexible	3	One per Term	Online

NPQEL	Whole Programme			
	Length	Total Number	When	Format
Conferences	1 Day	2	Half Term 1 & Half Term 6	In Person
Clinics	2 Hours	5	One per Half Term, starting with Half Term 2	Online
Asynchronous Content	50 Minutes	54	6 online learning modules per Half Term	Online
Coaching	2 Hours	4	One per term	Online or In Person

3. Part-time participants

Lead Providers are required to ensure the programme is accessible for participants who work on a part-time basis. The NPQ programmes are designed with the following flexibility to accommodate part-time teachers:

- > Asynchronous Content: Independent (asynchronous) content is designed in the form of 'modules' which participants complete at a time which suits them. Online self-study materials must be accessed in sequence, but modules can be completed at any point within a 2-week window. Module content will be released ahead of schedule and will remain available for the duration of the programme.
- > Clinics: Dates for clinics will be shared far in advance to enable all participants, including those who work on a part-time basis, to plan to attend according to their schedule. Clinics should be attended in sequence, but a choice of sessions will be offered, providing the option of flexibility for any participants who work on a part-time basis.
- > Coaching (applicable to NPQEL and NPQH ASO only): Coaching can be scheduled based on the participant's availability.
- > Conferences: Attendance at all conferences is mandatory; dates will be communicated to participants far in advance to avoid scheduling conflicts.
- > Assessment: NPQ assessments take place during an 8-day window, which will be communicated far in advance. The assessment can be completed at any time within the window, allowing for flexibility around part-time schedules.

4. Deferral

Whilst we expect participants to plan to complete their programme in its entirety, we understand that there may be exceptional and extenuating circumstances which may impact their ability to do so, including (but not limited to) maternity leave or extended sick leave. In these circumstances, we want to support the individual to successfully complete their programme, and to complete assessments where applicable. This may include offering deferral to a future cohort. In the event of the deferral of a Delivery Partner's participant, the Delivery Partner agrees to follow the Ambition Institute policy for managing deferrals.

Eligibility and deferral periods

- > To be eligible for deferral, participants must have started a programme, as defined by having attended at least one session, and where applicable, payment must have been received.
- > We cannot guarantee that deferral will be available where we are running the final cohort of a programme. Participants on such programmes will be made aware of this when they are offered a place.
- > If deferrals or extensions are not possible then the withdrawal policy will apply.
- > Where a candidate has been offered a place on a programme and wishes to defer their place we reserve the right to require any pre-programme assessment to be repeated if appropriate, e.g. in order to ensure that the programme is still right for them and they are well-placed to benefit as intended in the programme design.
- > When requesting a deferral, the participant should specify their expected date of re-joining the programme, which should normally be no longer than 12 months from the point of deferral.
- > The specific date of re-joining will take account of the delivery cycle, and this will mean that the exact deferral period may vary slightly to ensure that no programme content is missed because of the deferral.

Applying for a deferral

- > Should a participant wish to defer, they should discuss with their programme team (for programmes delivered by Ambition Institute) or their Delivery Partner (for programmes delivered by Delivery Partners) as soon as possible. This conversation will consider whether the deferral can be avoided, for instance, by catching up specific isolated content that they will miss within an alternative region or cohort.
- > The participant will be asked to apply in writing, providing specific details regarding the date they wish to defer, and their planned date of return to the programme.
- > The ultimate decision about whether to grant a deferral will be at the sole discretion of the Ambition Institute Programme Leader (for programmes delivered by Ambition Institute) or the delivery partner's NPQ Lead (for programmes delivered by Delivery Partners).
- > If it is decided that deferral is the appropriate course of action, the programme team will discuss next steps with the individual.
- > Once agreed, the deferral will be confirmed in writing to the participant, including the expected date of return to the programme and arrangements for re-integration.

Re-joining the programme

- > The relevant programme team will monitor deferrals and contact the participant 3 months prior to the planned return date requesting confirmation of their intent to return. At this point a discussion will take place regarding any reasonable adjustments that the participant may require on their return to the programme.
- > If the participant chooses not to return, they will be classed as withdrawing from the programme. In this case the terms outlined in the withdrawal policy will then apply.
- > Once the return date is confirmed, the programme team will ensure that all of the relevant details are provided to allow the participant to resume their programme. Depending upon the programme and timing on the return this may include supplying catch up materials from recent sessions and ensuring that the participant is connected to the cohort they are joining.

5. Portability

Participants will be asked at the point of application to confirm that they do not intend to move schools during the course of the programme; participants will also be informed that it cannot be guaranteed that they will be able to remain on the programme if they do move schools.

In instances where a school move is unavoidable and it is determined that the participant will remain on the programme, Ambition Institute will continue to support the participant to continue the programme as planned. In order to manage their transition, Ambition will arrange a call to support the participant with their school move.

Ambition Institute cannot guarantee that participants can remain on the programme in the event that they move to:

- > A school that is outside of our geographical or Delivery Partner network;
- > A school that is ineligible for funding (note that participants may be able to continue the programme through a school-funded place, provided they have the support of their new school; see www.ambition.org.uk for details of funding eligibility);
- > A role that is not appropriate for the programme in which they were enrolled;
- > A school that is not supportive of the participant continuing on the programme.

The NPQ programmes are designed with the following flexibility to accommodate teachers who move to a school within Ambition's delivery network during the programme:

- > Participants will continue to have access to all their prior learning and engagement, and module content will be released ahead of schedule and will remain available for the duration of the programme.
- > Dates for clinics will be shared far in advance to enable all participants, including those who might be moving schools, to plan to attend according to their schedule. Participants will be offered a choice of clinics, providing the option of flexibility for any participants who change schools.
- > Assessments are based on an existing case study and hence are not school-specific, allowing for school changes during the programme.

6. Delivery Partner Support

All Delivery Partners will have an Ambition Institute Delivery Partner Lead assigned to them who will be their point of contact throughout the lifetime of the contract. During 'check-ins' Delivery Partners will be able to discuss individual cases and concerns regarding part time participants, deferrals and participants moving schools.

Ambition Institute's Delivery Partner Leads play a key role in managing the relationships with Delivery Partners and ensuring that the needs of all participants are being met. Where we need to put processes in place to support part-time participants, deferrals or school movers, this will be picked up in the regular check-ins to protect participant experience and learning. As part of induction and onboarding with Delivery Partners, we will share the importance of flexibility for our participants, each of our roles and responsibilities in this, and share our policies to support the decision making and processes.