

NPQ BULLETIN

Vantage Teaching School Hub



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I am delighted to welcome you to the second NPQ Bulletin of the 2025–26 academic year.

I am incredibly proud to share that our most recent cohort of NPQ applicants achieved a 100% pass rate - a fantastic accomplishment for all delegates. My sincere thanks go to our facilitators for their dedication and support in guiding colleagues through their NPQ journeys. To date, we have supported 652 colleagues to successfully achieve their NPQ qualification, with a further 404 colleagues currently enrolled on our programmes. This means over 1000 colleagues across the region have now engaged in high-quality professional development with Vantage TSH.

In this issue, you will meet one of our experienced facilitators, Rachel Hitchenor, hear from current participants about their experiences, and catch up on the latest programme updates.

Wishing you all the very best for the start of the Spring term.

Sarah

Sarah Paddock
Regional Lead for NPQs



November 2026 Cohort 6 - expressions of interest

Apply now for NPQs starting November 2026

We are now accepting expressions of interest for our next cohort of NPQ programmes. Please note that the DfE is offering only one NPQ intake per academic year, and for 2026–27, programmes will begin in November 2026.

If you're interested in joining the next cohort, please complete our short Expression of Interest form:

👉 <https://forms.office.com/e/AdVyjhYKFKQ>

Feel free to share this opportunity with any colleagues who may also be considering an NPQ next academic year.



Participant scholarship funding

Decisions about which NPQ programmes will be eligible for scholarship funding for Autumn 2026 have not yet been confirmed by the Department for Education (DfE). This information is expected to be published in Spring 2026.

Where scholarship funding is available, it may cover the full cost of NPQ programmes for Autumn 2026 cohorts for teachers and leaders working in:

- the 50% of schools with the highest proportion of students who attract pupil premium funding
- 16 to 19 educational settings identified as having high disadvantage
- For the early years leadership NPQ, highly disadvantaged early years settings will also be eligible.

Please note that your schools' eligibility for scholarship funding is not a guarantee that a scholarship-funded place will be available. Vantage TSH will receive a limited allocation of scholarship funded places for all programmes. Applications for the NPQ SENCo programme will prioritise existing SENCos who do not hold the approved qualification (E.G. NASENCo award). All other places will be allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis to suitable and eligible applicants.



Facilitator Focus - Rachel Hitchenor

I have been teaching for over 30 years and have held a role in senior leadership for 12 of those in both a secondary school and sixth form college context in West Yorkshire, the East Riding of Yorkshire and Hull. I have not stopped learning! My vision of education is that it is our responsibility to develop resilient, creative, independent learners, who have flexible skills, and can also work together with others to achieve more than they thought possible, regardless of background.

High quality teaching, involving both cognitive and metacognitive strategies, is the most important element to improve achievement, and it is vital that every teacher is supported and challenged to deliver this. I trained as one of the first 20 research leads in the UK with the Education Endowment Foundation and the University of Durham (the RISE project) over 3 years, investigating how to use evidence informed TLA effectively, completing a Masters in Education to further deepen my understanding. I am an advocate for teacher leadership and providing high quality professional development.

I have experience facilitating both the National Professional Qualification for Leading Teacher Development and the National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership to many cohorts. In addition, empowering teachers at my own college to participate in and complete these qualifications has developed both innovative specific capacity and leadership capacity in general. As a facilitator I value the high-quality resources, learning activities and scenarios that encourage the sharing of ideas across phase and subject, leading to rich and meaningful discussions.



Participant feedback

NPQLT participant:

I really appreciated how the course balanced theory with practical classroom strategies. The peer discussions gave me new ideas that I've already started trying with my team, and it's made a noticeable difference in engagement



NPQSL participant:

This NPQ challenged me to think differently about school-wide priorities. I now feel more confident leading complex projects and supporting staff effectively.

NPQEYL participant:

I found the course content very relevant to my setting, especially the modules on SEND and curriculum planning. I am leaving with actionable ideas that I'm excited to implement with my staff and children.



Brightspace online platform

Completing activities in Brightspace

The information below highlights the essential activities and Brightspace tools you will utilise during your self-directed study. These are designed to enhance and build upon the sessions delivered by your facilitators as part of your NPQ experience.

Please note that the diagnostic activity and post-seminar reflection form on Brightspace are part of the engagement metric used to measure the completion of your programme.

Diagnostic activity

At the beginning of each module, you will complete a diagnostic activity on Brightspace designed to assess your existing knowledge and experience. This will help you identify the areas of the module where you may need to focus more or less attention, allowing you to tailor your learning journey effectively.

Formative assessment tasks

Prior to each seminar, you will need to complete a formative assessment task found on Brightspace. These activities are designed to engage your thinking and help you apply the knowledge gained from the online content, ensuring you are well-prepared for the seminar discussions. It is important that these tasks are completed before the seminar takes place. While you don't need to submit them on Brightspace, make sure to have your responses ready to bring with you to the seminar.

Post-seminar reflection

After each seminar, you will be required to complete a reflection task on Brightspace. The reflections you record in the assignment tool will serve as a valuable resource to revisit during live sessions, online discussions and during your end of programme assessment. Depending on the specific task, you may be asked to enter your response directly into Brightspace or upload a document. Make sure you allocate sufficient time to complete these reflections thoughtfully after each seminar.

What are the eligibility requirements for the summative assessment?

To be eligible for your summative assessment, you must achieve 90% engagement across the programme.

Engagement is measured through the following:

- Attendance at events (online and face-to-face seminars and conferences)
- Completion of diagnostic activities on Brightspace
- Completion of post-seminar reflection activities on Brightspace



Key Dates

Cohort	Programme	Engagement Deadline	Assessment window
4a	NPQEL, NPQSENCO, NPQH, NPQSL	Mar 8, 2026	20/04/26 - 27/04/26
4b	NPQLPM, NPQLT, NPQLTD, NPQLL, NPQLBC,	Mar 8, 2026	20/04/26 - 27/04/26
4b	NPQEL, NPQSENCO, NPQH, NPQSL, NPQEYL	Aug 2, 2026	05/10/26 - 12/10/26
5	NPQLPM, NPQLT, NPQLTD, NPQLL, NPQLBC,	Oct 14, 2026	30/11/26 - 07/12/26
5	NPQEL, NPQSENCO, NPQH, NPQSL, NPQEYL	Mar 28, 2027	17/05/27 - 24/05/27

**Please ensure you have these dates in your diary as they are set by the DfE and cannot be amended.*

Assessment outcomes

Cohort 4A specialist outcomes should be available by 31st January 2026 and you will receive notification of your result via email.

Useful contacts

Unable to attend a training event?

Email: npqadmin@smchull.org

Want to discuss your NPQ in more detail?

Contact: spaddock@smchull.org

For general support and technical issues with Brightspace:

Visit: <https://www.teachfirst.org.uk/contact-us/form>

