



Department
for Education

National Professional Qualifications framework review: call for evidence

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Respond by 16 May 2025

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Introduction

National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) are a national suite of leadership qualifications designed to support the professional development of teachers and leaders. They are based on the best available evidence and best-practice of teaching and leadership in education. The NPQ frameworks can be found here: [National professional qualifications frameworks - GOV.UK](#)

In 2021, the NPQ frameworks were reformed in collaboration with the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) who independently reviewed the frameworks to ensure they drew on the best available evidence and that this evidence was interpreted with fidelity.

However, evidence is not static, and insights evolve. The department is reviewing the frameworks to ensure they are based on the most up-to-date, best available evidence and best-practice of teaching and leadership in education. Further information on the NPQ framework review can be found here: [National professional qualifications framework review - GOV.UK](#).

The department is seeking recent, relevant and high-quality research that may inform updates to the evidence-base underpinning 3 NPQ frameworks to ensure:

- The frameworks and underpinning evidence are up to date.
- Possible gaps are identified, explored and addressed.
- The frameworks are fit for purpose for school leaders.

This call for evidence is seeking research that may inform updates to the following frameworks only: Headship ([NPQH](#)), Senior Leadership ([NPQSL](#)) and Executive Leadership ([NPQEL](#)). The department will launch a separate call for evidence in Autumn/Winter 2025 for the remaining NPQs.

Who this is for

This call for evidence is seeking views from anyone who has recent, relevant and high-quality research to share. The department is particularly interested in hearing from individuals or organisations with specialist expertise in education and pedagogy with knowledge of research, which may include:

- School leaders and teachers
- Local authorities
- Multi-academy trusts
- Academic researchers and research organisations (e.g., universities and consultancies)
- Pedagogy and education experts

- What Works Centres and Think Tanks
- Education charities, private organisations, and public bodies that commission and/or review education research
- SEND charities, private organisations, and public bodies that commission and/or review education research

Evidence guidelines

How to respond

If you have evidence to submit for consideration, please do so by completing the online survey. You are required to complete the survey form for each evidence submission. If you want to propose more than one evidence source, then you should complete the survey for each different evidence source. When responding, we are asking you to think carefully as to whether your submission is:

- Proposing evidence that underpins the current framework statements.
- Proposing the addition of new evidence to change an existing framework statement.
- Proposing evidence because you have identified a gap where an additional framework statement could be added.

When you select one of the above options, you will have an additional 5-7 questions to answer to provide further information about your evidence source and how it relates to the current framework statements. We are asking you to explain in the free text box field which NPQ and framework statement the evidence relates to. For example, if the statement is the first 'learn that' statement from the NPQ in Headship section one - School culture, then it should be written as NPQH: 1.1, as it is found in the framework. If it was relevant to the first 'learn that' then it would be NPQH: 1.a.

We estimate that each submission will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

If you think evidence applies to several framework statements

You may propose an evidence source that supports or proposes changes to multiple framework statements. In this scenario, you should submit the evidence referencing the framework statement that it is most relevant to and then record any other statements in the free text box field within your response.

There may be a scenario where you are proposing evidence that could both support a framework statement and propose a change to another. Again, respondents should submit the evidence source only once, referencing the statement that it is most relevant to, and then explain its impact on any additional statements in the free text box fields within the survey response.

If you have multiple evidence sources for the same framework statement

You may propose multiple evidence sources that support or propose changes to the same 'learn that' or 'learn how to' framework statement. In this scenario, you should complete the survey form multiple times. As above, you should take a consistent approach of completing the survey for each evidence source submitted, even if you are repeating which framework statement the evidence source applies to.

What is in scope for this call for evidence

The types of evidence that we are seeking include but are not limited to:

- Experimental research (such as randomised controlled trials)
- Systematic reviews
- Surveys and case studies
- Theoretical and narrative review papers
- Studies that use interviews and focus groups

The NPQ frameworks include some descriptive statements about the nature of teaching, learning, and school leadership, and other statements that make causal claims about the known efficacy or effectiveness of teaching, learning and leadership approaches. Whilst we are interested in all forms of relevant research evidence, studies that use a comparison group to test impact in a reliable way are necessary to support claims of the efficacy or effectiveness of an approach.

Therefore, any submissions which relate to 'learn that' statements which make causal claims should be backed up by studies with a valid comparison group. However, for other types of statements, including 'learn how to' statements, a range of evidence sources can be drawn upon. It is important that submissions provide a full reference to the source to enable accessibility.

What is not in scope for this call for evidence

This call for evidence is not seeking to collate other information concerning school and teaching that is not generated through the systematic collection and analysis of data.

This includes:

- Blogs and social media
- Newspapers
- Podcasts
- Accounts from education professionals (e.g. teachers, school leaders, consultants)

Submitting evidence outside of education

We acknowledge that there will be a range of evidence related to leadership that will not always be based on educational settings. We will consider the transferability of any evidence from outside of education to educational settings when reviewing the evidence, including the comparability of the context in which it was conducted and the relevance of any causal inferences. We ask that submissions explicitly identify how the evidence relates to leaders in education.

Submitting evidence because you have identified a gap

You may decide to submit evidence because you have identified a gap within the current framework statements. For example, this area or gap might focus on, but is not limited to, the key areas we have identified as focus areas of the review:

- Further best-practice for teaching pupils with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Ensuring that areas that are repeated across the different NPQ frameworks genuinely support progression through different levels of leadership
- Addressing how leadership practices can support workload reduction
- Further best-practice, particularly at executive leadership level, in operational aspects of leadership, such as how to manage a budget and deploy a workforce effectively

How responses will be used

Evidence submitted will be considered by the department and the Education Endowment Foundation. The frameworks will be independently reviewed and quality assured by the EEF to ensure they draw on the best available evidence and that this evidence has been interpreted with fidelity. To support the review, the department has convened a panel of experts representing a wide range of expertise from across the education sector, including serving school leaders. While the expert steering group (ESG) will advise on future changes, final decisions about amendments to the frameworks will be taken by the department.

Next steps

Once the call for evidence has closed, the department will publish a response with information about the evidence that was received and the next steps for its use. The department will launch a separate call for evidence in Autumn/Winter 2025 for the remaining NPQs.

Enquiries

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the call for evidence, you can contact NPQFrameworks.EVIDENCE@education.gov.uk

If your enquiry is related to the Citizen Space website or the process in general, you can contact the DfE Ministerial and Public Communications Division by email:

coordinator.consultations@education.gov.uk, telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the [DfE Contact us page](#).

Additional copies

Additional copies are available electronically and can be downloaded from [GOV.UK DfE consultations](#).

Respond online

To help us analyse the responses please use the online system wherever possible. Visit [DfE consultations on GOV.UK](#) to submit your response.

Other ways to respond

If for exceptional reasons, you are unable to use the online system, for example because you use specialist accessibility software that is not compatible with the system, you may request an alternative format of the form.

By email

NPQFrameworks.EVIDENCE@education.gov.uk

By post

Teacher Workforce: Teachers and Tutors
Developing Teachers and Leaders Division
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London, SW1P 3BT

Deadline

The call for evidence closes at 23.59 on 16 May 2025.

Submission of evidence for updating the NPQ frameworks

About you

- **Would you like us to keep your response confidential?**

Yes No

Information provided in response to calls for evidence, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018 or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

If a request for disclosure of the information you have provided is received, your explanation about why you consider it to be confidential will be taken into account, but no assurance can be given that confidentiality can be maintained. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the DfE. The DfE will process your personal data (name and address and any other identifying material) in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Evidence submitted will be shared with the EEF, but personal information will not.

- **If you would like to keep your response confidential, please explain your reason for confidentiality:**

(Open text box)

If you want all, or any part, of a response to be treated as confidential, please explain why you consider it confidential.

- **What is your name?**

(Open text box)

- **Do you consent for the DfE to contact you via email about your response? If yes, please provide your email address.**

Yes No

(Open text box)

The DfE may contact you to seek clarification or further detail on the information that you submit.

- **What is your role?**

(Open text box)

- **What is the name of your organisation?** (if applicable)
(Open text box)
- **What type of organisation is this?**
(School; multi-academy trust; training provider; local authority; research organisation (e.g., universities and consultancies); pedagogy and education experts; What Works Centres and Think Tanks; education charity; Education charities, private organisations, and public bodies that commission and/or review education research; SEND charities, private organisations, and public bodies that commission and/or review education research; other.

Evidence submission

- **Which of the following options best describes this response and the evidence that you are submitting.**
 - I am proposing new evidence that underpins the current framework statements
 - I am proposing the addition of new evidence to change an existing framework statement
 - I am proposing evidence because I have identified a gap where an additional framework statement could be added

Survey pathway if you answered that you are proposing evidence that underpins the current framework statement in the previous question

- **What is the source? Please provide a link and full reference to the source of evidence that you are submitting.**
(Open text box)
- **Was the study conducted in a school setting?**
 - Yes No
 - **If answered no, which field is it from?**
(Open text box)
 - **If answered no, how is the study relevant to improving leadership skills and behaviours? And how can it apply to an education setting?**
(Open text box)
- **Which NPQ and framework statement(s) does this new evidence relate to? Please state the NPQ and framework statement(s) number.**
(Open text box)

- **How does the evidence you have submitted substantiate/strengthen the current framework statement?**

(Open text box)

Survey pathway if you answered that you are proposing the addition of new evidence to change an existing framework statement

- **What is the source? Please provide a link and full reference to the source of evidence that you are submitting.**

(Open text box)

- **Was the study conducted in a school setting?**

Yes No

- **If answered no, which field is it from?**

(Open text box)

- **If answered no, how is the study relevant to improving leadership skills and behaviours? And how can it apply to an education setting?**

(Open text box)

- **Which NPQ and framework statement(s) does this new evidence relate to? Please state the NPQ and framework statement(s) number.**

(Open text box)

- **What change are you proposing? Please be as specific as possible, including proposed wording for any suggested statement changes.**

(Open text box)

- **How does the evidence you have submitted substantiate an amendment to the current framework statement?**

(Open text box)

Survey pathway if you answered that you have identified a gap where additional framework statements could be added

- **What is the source? Please provide a link and full reference to the source of evidence that you are submitting.**

(Open text box)

- **Was the study conducted in a school setting?**

Yes No

- **If answered no, which field is it from?**

(Open text box)

- **If answered no, how is the study relevant to improving leadership skills and behaviours? And how can it apply to an education setting?**
(Open text box)

- **Which area or gap does the evidence submitted relate to?**
(Open text box).

For example, this area or gap might focus on, but is not limited to, the key areas we have identified as focus areas of the review: further best-practice for teaching pupils with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND); ensuring that areas that are repeated across the different NPQ frameworks genuinely support progression through different levels of leadership; addressing how leadership practices can support workload reduction; further best-practice, particularly at executive leadership level, in operational aspects of leadership, such as how to manage a budget and deploy a workforce effectively.

- **What change/addition are you proposing? Please be as specific as possible, including proposed wording for any suggested statement.**
(Open text box)
- **In what ways does the evidence source submitted substantiate an addition to the framework statement?**
(Open text box)



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