



National Professional Qualifications – Suitability and eligibility guidance

The NPQ for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (NPQSENCOs) is our newest NPQ. This new 18-month NPQ is designed for leaders who will gain the expertise to lead on SEN provision and learn how to implement strategies and solutions related to their school's context.

Applicants should be:

- > A current Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
- > Aspiring to become a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
- > Line managing a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator or other senior leaders with responsibility for curriculum, behaviour, pastoral needs or managing provision
- > Some applicants may be outside a school setting (e.g. a local authority) and work regularly with SENCOs.

This is a mandatory programme for current SENCOs who have not done the National Award for SEN Coordination (NASENCO) and should be completed within their first three years in role. However, the programme remains open for any other applicants who are in suitable roles and interested in the NPQ.

At this stage, we do not know the eligibility criteria for participants to access DfE scholarship-funded places. As such, we can only provide suitability guidance.

Suitability

This guidance is to support you in assessing the suitability of your applicants for the NPQSENCO. It follows the same format as the [Ambition Institute: NPQ DP Suitability and Eligibility guidance](#) which will be updated shortly before launch to ensure you can find everything you need in one place.

Important notes:

- > All participants must register with the DfE for their NPQ or EHCO.
- > Participants do not need to have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) however in most cases, we would expect this of SENCO applicants to meet the SENCO role requirements.

	Suitable for	Example roles	Not suitable for
<p>NPQ for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (NPQSENCOs)</p> <p>This 18-month programme helps you become an expert leader of special educational needs and learn how you can build an inclusive culture in your school where all pupils can succeed.</p>	<p>This is a leadership level qualification, primarily for SENCOs, school leaders or aspiring SENCOs.</p> <p>A Qualified Teacher Status certificate is required as part of the application process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Assistant headteacher/Associate assistant headteacher > Deputy headteacher/Vice principal > Head of faculty/ department/subject > Head of year > Head of key stage/early years > Headteacher/ Principal > SENCO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > ECT > Unqualified teachers > Teaching assistants > Higher level teaching assistants

Assessing the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator application form

To support your assessment of NPQSENCO applications, the application form will ask the following question. We intend to launch the NPQSENCO application form alongside all other NPQs – in the early summer term. Note that this is a leadership programme – we have not listed Classroom teacher as suitable or unsuitable and would recommend investigating applicants who have listed their role as Classroom teacher.

Please note that the application form remains subject to review. The questions below are proposed and may change following DfE guidance.

Question: *Please explain briefly how your role allows you to access and practise the learning of the NPQ of your choice.*

We ask this question of all our NPQ applicants. It helps you understand your applicant’s background, role and responsibilities in a bit more detail.

Question: *‘What are your motivations for applying?’*

Applicants are asked if they are a current SENCO, an aspiring SENCO, if they line manage a SENCO or invited to list ‘Other’. This may help you prioritise applicants who are current SENCOs where the NPQSENCO is mandatory for them.

Question: *‘How long have you been a SENCO?’*

We ask this question for applicants who are current SENCOs. This will help you understand if completion of the NPQSENCO is mandatory for the participant.

Question: *‘Have you completed or are you completing the National Award for SEN Coordination?’*

As above, we ask this question for applicants who are current SENCOs. This will help you understand if completion of the NPQSENCO is mandatory for the participant. If a participant has completed an NASENCO, this does not prevent them from completing the NPQSENCO.

Useful Links

The Ambition Institute documents listed below are under review and will be updated for 24-25 recruitment. As ever, please don't hesitate to contact our Admissions team at NPQadmissions@ambition.org.uk if you have any questions or feedback.

- > [Ambition Institute: DP Recruitment handbook](#)
- > [Ambition Institute: NPQ DP Suitability and Eligibility guidance](#)
- > [Ambition Institute: NPQ Applicant guidance](#)
- > [Ambition Institute: recruitment, selection, and admissions policy](#)
- > [Ambition Institute: NPQ Waitlist Policy](#)
- > [DfE: National Professional Qualification Framework \(from Autumn 2021\)](#)
- > [DfE: Guidance, National Professional Qualifications \(NPQ\) Reforms](#)
- > [DfE: Register for a national professional qualification \(NPQ\)](#)
- > [DfE: Funding for national professional qualifications \(NPQs\)](#)