

NPQ BULLETIN

Vantage Teaching School Hub



IN THIS ISSUE

**AUTUMN 2026 COHORT DETAILS -
HOW TO REGISTER AND SECURE
YOUR PLACE FOR OUR NEW COHORT**

MEET THE CENTRAL VANTAGE TEAM

OUR NEW ENGAGEMENT POLICY

**PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK - WHAT DO
OUR PARTICIPANTS SAY ABOUT THE
PROGRAMMES**

**BRIGHTSPACE COMPLETION &
ENGAGEMENT MEASURES - KNOW
WHAT IS REQUIRED TO MEET THE
ENGAGEMENT EXPECTATIONS**

**KEY DATES & CONTACTS - DATES
OF ASSESSMENT WINDOWS AND
USEFUL POINTS OF CONTACT**

I am delighted to welcome you to our first newsletter of the new academic year, 2026–2027.

We are thrilled to begin the year with some fantastic news. In the first week of this term, we received the assessment results for Cohort 4A specialist and Cohort 4B Leadership, and I am delighted to confirm that our pass rate with Teach First is 97.1%. A huge congratulations to everyone involved and, most importantly, to all of our programme members for their hard work and commitment. Well done!

In this newsletter, you will find information about our new Autumn 2026 cohort, an introduction to the Vantage Central team, key dates for the year ahead, and much more.

Wishing you all a successful and positive start to the new academic year.

Best wishes,

Sarah

Sarah Paddock
Regional Lead for NPQs

November 2026 Cohort 6 - expressions of interest

Apply now for NPQs starting November 2026

We are 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/AdVyjhYKFQ>

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

Please note that places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, and some programmes are already filling up quickly.

The final deadline is Thursday 22nd October 2026.



Participant scholarship funding

Scholarship funding is available for teachers and leaders in publicly-funded schools (including maintained nursery schools) and 16 to 19 educational settings in England for the following NPQs:

- special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs)
- senior leadership
- headship
- early years leadership

Scholarship funding, based on disadvantage criteria, is available for the following national professional qualifications (NPQs):

- leading teaching
- leading behaviour and culture
- leading literacy
- leading primary mathematics
- executive leadership
- leading teacher development

The eligible settings are fixed for the autumn 2026 recruitment period. Check if your setting is eligible here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/funding-for-national-professional-qualifications-eligible-settings

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.



Introduction to the Vantage Central Team

Delivered in partnership with Teach First, our NPQs bring together strong leadership, operational experience, and expert facilitators to support your ongoing professional development. Whether you are an early career teacher or preparing for executive leadership, our team is here to guide you through every step of your NPQ journey - helping you advance your career and make a lasting impact on your students.

Get to know the central team supporting your NPQ journey:

Marc Cooper - Director of Lifelong Learning

- **Role & Background:** Marc holds an executive leadership role within St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust, having previously served as a secondary Headteacher and designated as a National Leader in Education in 2022.
- **Hub Focus:** He provides strategic leadership for Vantage Teaching School Hub following its designation in Spring 2021 and chairs the Vantage North Humber Teacher Training Strategic Partnership Board.



Sarah Paddock - NPQ Regional Lead

- **Role & Background:** Combining leadership of NPQs through Vantage Teaching School Hub with current classroom teaching and previous experience leading a department of more than 20 teachers, this role brings a practical, school-based perspective to the support provided.
- **Hub Focus:** Sarah leads the strategic development and delivery of NPQ programmes across the region, working with schools, facilitators and partners to ensure high-quality provision and strong delegate support.



Introduction to the Vantage Central Team

Jo Sims - Hub Business Manager

- **Role & Background:** Bringing 27 years of experience in education, Jo's career spans 16 years as a Primary School Business Manager and 5 years as PA to a secondary Headteacher providing executive support and contributing to the leadership of the school.
- **Hub Focus:** Serving as Business Manager since 2022, she oversees hub operations and supports the delivery of high-quality professional development programmes across the region. Jo is committed to delivering the best possible experience for our programme members while creating a positive and enjoyable working environment.



Sarah Page - Administration Assistant

- **Role & Background:** Sarah joined the Vantage team in January 2026, providing dedicated administrative support across all NPQ programmes. She brings extensive experience across admissions, education, finance and the charity sector, including her previous role as a Team Leader in Admissions at the University of Hull, where she supported admissions within the Faculty of Health Sciences, as well as undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.
- **Hub Focus:** Sarah guides delegates through every step of their NPQ journey- from application to completion: She manages programme administration, responds to queries, helps resolve issues and works closely with delegates, facilitators and the wider Hub team to ensure participants receive timely, consistent and effective support. Her role helps create a positive and well-organised delegate experience, enabling participants to engage fully with their professional learning and successfully progress through their NPQ.



Participant feedback

Cohort 4 leadership programme members

At the endpoint survey, 100% of NPQSL programme members agreed that the programme had effectively equipped them for their role as school leaders



Cohort 4b SENCO participant:

It has been great to collaborate with others in similar roles.

Cohort 4b NPQH participant:

Facilitators are very knowledgeable and it was great to hear their first hand experience.



Engagement Policy

Cohort 5 already has its NPQ programme calendar, and Cohort 6 will receive theirs shortly. Please add all dates to your diary as soon as possible and arrange cover for the conference days at the earliest opportunity. This will help you and your school plan effectively around the programme commitments.

The NPQ programme includes online seminars and two face-to-face conferences. Active participation in the live seminars is an important part of the programme, with breakout discussions providing opportunities to explore the content, share practice and apply learning to your own context. These activities are also designed to support your preparation for the final assessment and your wider professional role.

Session Recordings and Absence

The NPQ programme is designed for **live engagement**. Recordings of the sessions are therefore only available in limited circumstances.

- Participants are permitted access to a maximum of two (2) session recordings across the duration of the programme.
- These recordings are intended to support **exceptional and unavoidable absence** only.

After the limit is reached:

- Recordings will still be shared where appropriate.
- The session will be recorded as non-completed, and no engagement credit will be awarded.

Catch-Up Requirements

- For the two permitted recorded sessions only, participants must email npqadmin@scmhull.org within 10 days to evidence that they have watched the recording and engagement with the session content.
- Failure to inform npqadmin@scmhull.org will result in the session being recorded as non-attended.

Conference Attendance

- Conferences are a mandatory component of the NPQ programme and typically represent the equivalent of 6 hours of structured learning.

Where a participant is unable to attend a conference:

- Programme resources will be shared for reference. However, due to the scale and interactive nature of the session, no catch-up option is available.
- The conference will be recorded as non-attendance, and no credit will be awarded.



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
4b	NPQEL, NPQSENCO, NPQH, NPQSL, NPQEYL	Sep 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
6	NPQLPM, NPQLT, NPQLTD, NPQLL, NPQLBC	Oct 3, 2027	08/11/27 - 15/11/27
6	NPQEL, NPQSENCO, NPQH, NPQSL, NPQEYL	Mar 26, 2028	10/05/28 - 17/05/28

Please make sure you record the dates in your diary, as they are set by the DfE and cannot be changed.

For our new Cohort 6, commencing in Autumn 2026, we will send out a schedule of events as soon as the calendars have been finalised. We hope to share these with you shortly.

Assessment outcomes

Cohort 4A Leadership outcomes and Cohort 4B Specialist outcomes should now be available and will have been sent to you via email directly from Teach First. Please check your junk mailbox.

If you have not received your outcome, please contact npqadmin@smchull.org.

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>

