



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

Leadership curriculum

Module descriptions
July 2013

Level 3: Aspiring to lead an organisation: educational excellence

Educational excellence

Highly effective school leaders have the leadership of teaching at the heart of their work: they can lead effectively in a self-improving system to deliver high-quality outcomes for all pupils.

Purpose

Through this module, NPQH participants will know how to develop, improve and sustain high-quality teaching across a school. They will also know and understand the importance of teachers' subject knowledge, effective planning and accurate pupil assessment.

The module will cover how to establish consistently high standards across a school and raise all teachers' expectations so that pupil attainment continues to improve. Participants will be taught how to achieve high standards of behaviour in the school and in all classrooms. They will understand a headteacher's responsibilities in relation to teacher appraisal and how to hold all teachers to account for their performance. Practical strategies for monitoring individual performance, rewarding outstanding teachers and dealing effectively with underperforming teachers will be covered. Participants will also be taught how to evaluate teaching using Ofsted criteria and identify appropriate strategies for improvement.

What leaders will know on successful completion:

- effective teaching and the headteacher's role and responsibilities in leading and improving teaching
- Ofsted inspection framework
- holding all staff to account for performance
- high standards of behaviour
- classroom management in relation to high-quality teaching and positive behaviour
- monitoring, evaluating and improving teaching
- teacher appraisal, including how to improve teacher performance and address underperformance
- how to work with pupils and parents to improve pupil attainment

What leaders will be able to do on successful completion:

- define, articulate and implement a school-wide vision for effective teaching with high and ambitious expectations and standards for all pupils
- identify and implement key improvement priorities in relation to improving the quality of teaching, based on analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses
- demonstrate outstanding leadership to improve teaching
- work with teachers to improve their performance and, where required, address underperformance effectively
- ensure all teachers understand the relationship between positive behaviour and high-quality teaching
- enable all teachers to recognise and understand how to make their lessons outstanding within a safe, well-ordered school
- work with leaders and teachers at all levels to ensure that the strategy for lesson observation, teacher appraisal and professional development are aligned and working to secure improvement
- collaborate with other schools to share and improve practice

Purpose

In this module, participants will be taught how to lead the development and implementation of a broad, flexible curriculum that includes the national curriculum and is appropriate to context and needs. The curriculum should ensure all pupils reach their full academic potential and contributes to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The module covers curriculum design, development and delivery, including the use of effective assessment to monitor, support and improve pupils' progress. Participants will be taught about the importance of subject knowledge, curriculum-based budgeting, curriculum analysis and IT to support teaching. Legal and statutory accountabilities in relation to the curriculum, including the teaching of synthetic phonics and requirements at key stages 2 and 4 will be covered.

What leaders will know on successful completion:

- curriculum design, evaluation and review, including curriculum-based budgeting
- curriculum analysis and international comparisons
- national curriculum requirements, including teaching reading through synthetic phonics, and subject teaching
- curriculum links 3 to 19, including careers guidance and advice
- use of curriculum freedoms to improve pupil attainment
- statutory accountabilities in relation to the curriculum
- formative and summative assessment

What leaders will be able to do on successful completion:

- lead curriculum design and development, based on a robust diagnosis of the needs of the school and its context, to deliver high standards for pupils
- use curriculum freedoms to improve pupil attainment
- work with leaders and teachers to provide a curriculum focused on excellence
- deploy the principles, practice and implications of curriculum-based budgeting
- build effective partnerships with other schools to improve the curriculum offer
- establish an assessment framework that provides both formative and summative feedback that help pupils learn
- secure appropriate advice and guidance so pupils make the best possible curricular and career choices
- use technology to enhance and improve teaching

Leading inclusion: achievement for all (elective module)

Level 3

Purpose

This module covers the principles and practice of leading for inclusion. It teaches participants how to improve practice and raise expectations so that all pupils, but particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEN/D), can achieve. Participants will be taught how to implement some of the key strategies from the Department for Education project Achievement for All (AfA), including improving assessment, tracking and intervention; working more effectively with parents; and improving wider outcomes for children and young people.

What leaders will know on successful completion:

- effective whole-school leadership relating to inclusion (eg vision, commitment, collaboration and communication) to drive organisational change so that all pupils can achieve
- whole-school approaches to improving the performance of vulnerable pupils
- monitoring, evaluating and reviewing performance in relation to the attainment of pupils with SEN/D
- improving assessment mechanisms
- working with pupils and parents
- improving the attendance and behaviour of vulnerable pupils
- improving educational provision for vulnerable pupils

What leaders will be able to do on successful completion:

- establish practice based on what works
- ensure that the principles and practice of inclusion are effective in raising performance
- work with relevant groups (teachers, teaching assistants, school leaders, parents and governors) to implement a plan to raise the achievement of all pupils
- use the Ofsted framework and in particular the sections on the achievement of pupils with SEN/D
- secure and implement an agreed approach to inclusion in their school
- compile and implement a school improvement plan that is relevant for vulnerable pupils
- use evidence from the latest research, impact findings and resources relevant to their own school

Purpose

This module will teach participants how to close gaps in achievement and attainment that can occur across specific groups of pupils, particularly by addressing the needs of disadvantaged pupils, including those entitled to free school meals. The module considers how to identify gaps, diagnose causes and address within-school variation (eg differences in performance by teachers with similar groups of pupils). Evidence drawn from research will be used to demonstrate which pupils perform least well nationally and why.

Using examples drawn from headship, participants will be taught about strategies for monitoring, evaluating, reviewing and improving pupil attainment, improving teacher performance and addressing within-school variation. They will also learn how to make sure teachers work effectively together to narrow identified gaps.

What leaders will know on successful completion

- methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation
- ways to improve teaching to narrow pupil attainment gaps
- how to raise expectations and achieve high standards of behaviour
- best practice to address within-school variation
- how to use collaboration between teams, within school and across schools

What leaders will be able to do on successful completion:

- understand which pupils underperform nationally and why
- identify which pupils are underperforming in their school and why
- use their expertise to identify leadership action required to close gaps and reduce within-school variation between individual teachers
- ensure effective collaboration between teams to address attainment gaps

Aspiring to lead an organisation: operational management

Level 3

Operational management

Outstanding leaders use very effective systems and processes that are consistently applied by all staff: they manage the school or team to ensure efficient and effective use of all resources and achieve an organisation that is fit for purpose.

Purpose

This module will teach NPQH participants about the key management systems required in an effective school, particularly teacher performance, pupil behaviour and financial management. This will include legislation linked to these management systems. They will be taught how to implement a consistent and effective staff performance management system (teacher appraisal) so they can quickly tackle staff underperformance and address capability across the whole school. Issues related to human resources (HR), such as employment legislation, and staff recruitment and deployment will be addressed.

A strong focus on high standards of pupil behaviour and safety across the school will make sure that participants can deliver systematic, consistent management of behaviour. Child protection and essential health and safety legislation and practice will be taught. Participants will also be taught about financial management and how to work with the governing body so that financial resources are used efficiently and effectively for school improvement priorities.

What leaders will know on successful completion:

- key management processes (including behaviour, personnel and financial management)
- governing body and headship accountabilities relevant to the module
- managing performance, professional development and sustained school improvement
- performance management, capability, misconduct and grievance
- behaviour management
- strategic financial planning and operational budget management
- HR law, including pay and conditions, and employee rights
- health and safety in schools
- child protection

What leaders will be able to do on successful completion:

- implement HR procedures, connected to performance management (teacher appraisal) and professional development
- take action to challenge and vigorously address mediocre and poor performance
- secure good standards of behaviour and safety
- implement child protection legislation so all staff understand their responsibilities
- use financial resources efficiently and effectively to achieve value for money

Using data and evidence to improve performance (elective module)

Level 3

Purpose

This module teaches participants how to analyse and interpret a range of quantitative and qualitative data to monitor and evaluate progress, identify strengths and weaknesses and set school improvement priorities. School evaluation and working with key groups (governors, teachers, parents, pupils) to consider evidence will be included in this module. Participants will learn how to interrogate research evidence and use it discerningly.

What leaders will know on successful completion:

- the relationship between data, research evidence and school improvement
- data analysis and its use for accountability
- approaches to school evaluation for improvement
- key research relating to high-performing international systems
- communicating data outcomes to different audiences
- analysis and use of research to inform performance improvement
- school-based research focused on performance improvement

What leaders will be able to do on successful completion:

- gather and interpret data to identify school improvement priorities
- use data and research evidence to inform decision-making
- involve colleagues and others (eg governing body) in the identification, collection and analysis of data
- hold others to account for making evidence-based decisions
- seek out and use relevant research findings to achieve school improvement
- identify key performance issues that may benefit from school-based research

Purpose

This module will enable participants to know how to work with staff to establish and implement effective professional development that improves teaching and pupil attainment. Participants will be taught about delegation, talent development, succession planning and teamwork that is characterised by high expectations and collective responsibility for school improvement.

Through examining their own practice, along with relevant national and international research, participants will know how to lead and develop teams committed to sharing and improving their practice. Participants will be taught how leaders can develop high-performing teams that will significantly improve teaching across the curriculum.

What leaders will know on successful completion:

- using professional development to improve teaching
- evaluating the impact of professional development
- talent management and succession planning
- performance management to improve teaching
- developing and improving leadership in the school
- improving teamwork and developing high-performing teams

What leaders will be able to do on successful completion:

- develop a talent and succession management strategy, involving governors where appropriate
- identify and work with teachers with high potential
- delegate effectively, hold others to account and draw on their expertise
- develop the school's ability to evaluate the impact of professional development activities
- develop and work with leaders who will lead high-performing teams to collaborate positively across the school
- fulfil headship roles and responsibilities effectively with regard to leading staff

Aspiring to lead an organisation: strategic leadership

Level 3

Strategic leadership

Highly effective school leaders have a strong sense of direction: they have a vision for the school or team and a clear sense of how to achieve their vision. They can lead successfully in a highly autonomous and accountable system.

Purpose

In this module, NPQH participants will be prepared for their first headship. They will be taught the essential legal and accountability components of headship and governance, with a focus on how successful headteachers operate in practice. Knowing how to achieve a successful strategic relationship with the governing body and be held to account by it will be addressed, as will relationships with key groups within and beyond the school.

They will be taught how to identify and plan for the immediate, intermediate and long-term improvements required and how to produce and implement appropriate plans. They will be taught how to use national and international evidence on effective headship so they can exercise professional judgement in a highly autonomous and accountable system.

What leaders will know on successful completion:

- non-teaching aspects of Ofsted framework
- how to establish themselves as a headteacher, including building trust and credibility with governors, staff and parents
- how to manage their time and maintain resilience
- effective leadership in high-performing international systems
- key management tools, including operational and strategic planning
- implementing change effectively

What leaders will be able to do on successful completion:

- prepare effectively for taking up their first headship
- know the steps to take, once in post, to improve the school
- work strategically with the governing body and chair of governors
- be held to account by the governing body, including in their own appraisal
- make evidence-based judgements about the school's strengths and weaknesses and devise plans for further improvement
- establish high expectations for pupil behaviour with parents, pupils and the wider community
- keep a balance between operational management and strategic leadership
- work effectively with staff and other key groups to improve the school

Purpose

This module will teach participants the essential knowledge linked to leading change in order to achieve school improvement. Participants will review various case studies and accounts of practice to evaluate how leaders implement change for improvement and consider a range of approaches to leading change for improvement (including models from Michael Fullan, John Kotter and G Bridge). Building on Michael Fullan's research work and using one of his analytical tools, participants will develop their own knowledge to help them lead change in their school when they take up headship.

What leaders will know on successful completion:

- how organisations change to improve the characteristics of successful and unsuccessful change programmes
- international evidence relating to effective change, including different ways of approaching change
- leadership and management processes and tools that support change in schools
- professional qualities of effective headship in changing situations

What leaders will be able to do on successful completion:

- use the essential components of leading effective change to secure continuous improvement linked to the school's strategic plan
- use their skills and professional qualities to lead change for improvement
- offer practical guidance and support to leaders responsible for organisational and team change
- use research evidence and practical examples to make informed decisions about the direction and pace of change
- make judgements about how effectively change has brought about improvements in pupil outcomes

Purpose

This module will give participants access to a range of half modules created by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) in consultation with academy and school leaders and other organisations which emphasise the unique features of specific education contexts. The selection of half modules will reflect the diverse and changing nature of schools and contexts where headship recruitment can be a challenge. Participants will consider the leadership implications of these contexts.

For example:

- headship in faith schools
- academy leadership
- headship in small primary schools
- academy chains and federations
- special school headship
- new forms of school (eg free and studio schools, university technology colleges)

What leaders will know on successful completion:

- unique features, including legal requirements
- strategic leadership and governance
- context-specific management systems
- relevant research
- examples of outstanding schools and academies

What leaders will be able to do on successful completion:

- devise and implement a vision that takes account of the context
- lead within the context and its legal requirements, including its accountability systems
- ensure management structures reflect context and secure improvements
- devise and implement improvement plans that reflect the context

School improvement through effective partnerships (elective module)

Level 3

Purpose

This module will teach participants how to work successfully with different partners to address school improvement priorities. Using international research evidence drawn from a range of sectors, participants will consider how to establish both formal and informal partnerships that benefit pupils. Participants will know how to secure more effective links with the school's existing partners and be taught about the range of school improvement partnerships with, for example, teaching schools, chains of academies, and voluntary and business organisations.

What leaders will know on successful completion:

- building successful partnerships
- governance in the context of partnership working
- international evidence relating to partnerships for improvement
- principles of a self-improving system and school-to-school support in England
- Ofsted evidence relating to successful partnerships (eg academy conversion, joining a chain or federation)

What leaders will be able to do on successful completion:

- use evidence to establish effective governance for partnerships for school improvement
- use effective management systems across partnerships that hold teams and teachers to account
- undertake partnership work effectively within an autonomous, self-improving system
- ensure effective teamwork and collaboration across teams within partnership schools to ensure improvements in pupils' attainment
- work with other schools and agencies to evaluate whether partnership working is delivering school improvement

Purpose

In this module, participants will learn about the ways in which free schools connect with, and act as expressions of, community aspiration. The module will cover the added value that active community engagement can bring to a school's work and to the social health of the community. Participants will explore the characteristics of community-led developments and examine the factors that contribute to their success. They will understand how successful organisations build and manage their reputations and brands by taking a strategic approach to communication. They will also consider what success, accountability and self-evaluation mean in the free school context.

Strategies for building relationships and reputations, and securing and demonstrating accountability will be covered. The module will also provide participants with the opportunity to consider and compare their experience with examples from other sectors.

The module does not set out to provide guidance or information on all aspects of free school leadership. Rather, it explores some of the distinctive features of free schools and the challenges leaders of free school might face.

What leaders will know on successful completion:

- increasing the value of the school's work through close community engagement
- social capital as a valuable asset for improving educational outcomes
- communication to shape reputation and brand
- accountability to diverse community stakeholders
- effective systems of self-evaluation
- new ways of working

What leaders will be able to do on successful completion:

- build on and continue to promote community collaboration
- determine the criteria for successful community engagement
- develop trusting relationships in the community
- analyse and increase parental engagement
- create, build and sustain a positive school reputation
- identify and map systematic communications and marketing strategies
- secure accountability in the organisation to a complex stakeholder network
- create a self-evaluation system to suit diverse needs

Purpose

This module will teach participants about using the autonomy of free school status to create a successful, innovative and resilient school. Participants will explore successful school systems in other parts of the world, and projects that have benefited from using creative, alternative approaches to raising achievement and standards. They will consider the importance of their vision and strategic planning for long-term sustainability.

The module will cover how to create the conditions for innovation, using the freedoms of a free school to develop new ways of working. The challenges of getting the right people on board in a start-up setting, ensuring a high-performance culture, developing leadership capability and effective teamwork will also be included. Participants will have the opportunity to think about and compare their vision and context with examples from inside and outside education in this country and internationally.

What leaders will know on successful completion:

- the use of independence to innovate
- how to balance innovation and risk
- personal and organisational resilience
- characteristics of entrepreneurial leaders
- combining collaboration and competition
- strengthening autonomy through partnerships and alliances
- high-performance cultures
- successful leadership teams

What leaders will be able to do on successful completion:

- set meaningful success criteria
- audit attitudes to and manage risk
- identify and stimulate 'hot spots' of innovation
- analyse the benefits and costs of collaboration
- prioritise the attributes and skills for leading innovation
- align strategy, staff and skills to ensure successful outcomes for pupils
- establish, analyse and change staffing structures
- identify and attract high-potential leaders and develop their capacity