NPQSL Final Assessment

Guidance
For
Participants and Sponsors
# NPQSL Final Assessment

Guidance for Participants and Sponsors

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Overview of the final assessment process

Graduation from NPQSL will demonstrate your ability to be an effective senior leader. The NPQSL final assessment process has been designed to enable you to demonstrate that you can deliver successful and sustainable school improvement in your own school setting and can use the experience to reflect upon and improve your own leadership competencies. NPQSL final assessment is competency-based, testing the key competencies that are required for successful senior leadership.

The final assessment process comprises one assessed task in which you lead, for an extended period, on a school improvement priority across your school. The task, which needs to be achievable within a 12 month period, must produce demonstrable positive impact and sustainable change.

For the task you will be expected to draw upon your practical experience, research and relevant school, local and national data to inform your leadership decision making. You will also be expected to apply your learning from the essential (Educational Excellence – Closing the gap, Strategic Leadership – Succeeding in senior leadership) and elective modules you have completed and to draw upon your knowledge and expertise in relevant national policy priorities.

The task will include written evidence/appropriate documentation submitted by you and further evidence/verification from your sponsor and headteacher.

You will need to book your final assessment in advance. You should do this as early as possible following the guidance set out below in ‘Registering for final assessment’.

Sponsorship

The task you submit for Final Assessment for NPQSL needs to be verified by senior leaders in your school. For this purpose you will need a sponsor who will verify your work and the evidence provided in your submission to help to confirm your effectiveness as a senior leader. Your headteacher will need to agree to the sponsor.

Who should be nominated as a sponsor for NPQSL?

The sponsor is required to complete a task-related form to verify that your evidence is accurate and to provide further evidence of how you demonstrated evidence of competence as a senior leader in undertaking the task.

The form should be completed by a senior leader (your line manager or a leader of equivalent seniority) who is in a position to know the work you have done well, has a good knowledge of how you lead across the school and who is able to assess your achievements and the impact of your leadership.

The additional evidence provided by the sponsor will be assessed alongside your submission. It is therefore very important that you:

- ensure that your sponsor reads the guidance provided carefully
- discuss your task and your submission with your sponsor.
Where your sponsor is not the headteacher of your school, the headteacher will also need to sign the form to validate the evidence.

Further details are provided below on the submission process.

**NPQSL Competency Framework**

NPQSL is underpinned by a competency framework of 19 competencies. These competencies define the characteristics that are needed to be successful school leaders. In preparing for development and final assessment for NPQSL it is important to read and understand the competencies in the Competency framework – there is a description of each competency tested, a statement as to ‘Why it matters’ and the main competency indicators in Appendix 1.

The competencies include characteristics that are needed for highly effective leadership, including knowledge (including specific technical knowledge), skills, motives and ability which are expressed in actions or behaviours:

- Knowledge is what a person knows about a particular area, for example, strategies for improving teaching and learning, ways of managing financial and human resources, and project management for planning and implementing change, performance management and legal issues relating to employment or child protection.
- Skills are things a person knows how to do well to achieve a goal, for example, collecting and analysing data, monitoring progress, using new technologies, planning, communicating, getting community feedback and carrying out accurate self-assessment.
- Motives may be expressed in a person’s values such as what he/she believes in or what he/she believes it is important to do (for example, commitment to the pursuit of excellence, working in a collaborative way, insisting on a safe and healthy working environment or through preferences (such as achievement or affiliation), for example, a person with a strong achievement motive will continuously want to achieve and make things better.
- Ability covers both a person’s ability to think and act rationally and to use their emotional intelligence, for example, identifying trends in performance, using school self-review to make sound decisions, and the ability to build effective teams. Ability can be affected through the working of the emotions and changed through self-awareness and self-management of these.

The 19 competencies in the framework are grouped into three areas that reflect key dimensions of highly effective leadership, as demonstrated through research evidence:

**Strategic leadership**: highly effective school leaders have a strong sense of direction: they understand the vision for the school and have a clear sense of how to contribute to achieve the vision. They can lead successfully in a highly autonomous and accountable system.
**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 and students.

**Operational management:** highly effective school leaders have very effective systems and processes that are consistently applied by their teams: they manage their responsibilities to ensure efficient and effective use of resources and achieve a fit-for-purpose organisation.

**Figure 1: Three areas of competency**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Leadership</th>
<th>Educational Excellence</th>
<th>Operational Management</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-awareness</td>
<td>Delivering continuous improvement</td>
<td>Information seeking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal drive</td>
<td>Modelling excellence in leadership of teaching and learning</td>
<td>Analytical thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>Learning focus</td>
<td>Relating to others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resilience and emotional</td>
<td>Serving others</td>
<td>Holding others to account</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maturity</td>
<td>Broad organisational understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conceptual thinking</td>
<td>Partnership working</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Future focus</td>
<td>Inspiring others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact and influence</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not all of the 19 competencies will be directly tested in the final assessment process. There will be a focus upon assessing the **nine** leadership competencies which research shows are critical for successful senior leadership:

**Figure 2: Leadership competencies assessed for NPQSL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Excellence</th>
<th>Strategic Leadership</th>
<th>Operational Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Delivering continuous improvement</td>
<td>• Impact and influence</td>
<td>• Information seeking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Modelling excellence in leadership of teaching and learning</td>
<td>• Self awareness</td>
<td>• Analytical thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learning focus</td>
<td>• Personal drive</td>
<td>• Holding others to account</td>
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Final assessment task: leading a school improvement priority across the school

This task will enable you to demonstrate that you can lead across the school to deliver successful and sustainable school improvement and that you can use the experience to reflect upon and improve your own leadership competencies.

The key requirements of the task are:

- You are required to lead across the school for an extended period (a minimum of two terms) on an actual school improvement priority.

- The task needs to be completed within a twelve month period and must be sufficiently advanced by the time of submission for you to demonstrate sustainable improvement.

- The improvement priority selected should be in the school improvement plan or similar whole school plan and you will implement it across the school.

- You are required to demonstrate your capacity to effectively utilise school, local and national data.

- The school improvement priority you select should be one that is sufficiently ambitious and challenging to enable you to demonstrate:
  - your focus upon improving teaching and learning and positive outcomes for pupils
  - your development as a leader, and
  - all nine competencies tested in the task.

- You are required to demonstrate improvements in your leadership and in the nine leadership competencies. The essential (Succeeding in senior leadership and Closing the gap) and elective modules will introduce you to leadership strategies and behaviours that will support your development. The full descriptions of these leadership competencies can be found in Appendix 1 and you should begin by reading these. There is further guidance below on the competencies and on how you can develop these and then demonstrate them in your final assessment submission.

The task will be assessed in three parts and your submission will reflect these:

Part 1 Planning for improvement:

For this part of the task you should document your seeking and analysis of information, relevant school, local and national data and of underpinning issues to set targets and to determine and plan for the delivery of improvement strategies. At this stage you should also set priorities and targets for your own leadership development. Your submission should include:

- Target setting for improved teaching and learning, including pupil outcomes based upon your understanding of school performance. Your targets should include one or more of the following:
- improved pupil progress and personal development
- improved attainment
- improved teaching
- improved pupils’ behaviour and safety
- improved attendance
- improved resource efficiency (financial, human or environmental resources).

- Devising, evaluating and selecting strategies to improve teaching and learning, using appropriate information. It is for you to decide on the most appropriate analytical tools to support your planning.

- Developing an action plan to deliver your targets to improve teaching and learning, including pupil outcomes. The plan should make it clear what school and other evidence you will be collecting to measure impact. It is for you to decide on the most appropriate format for your action plan. This plan must form part of your submission.

- Identification of your leadership development priorities and personal development targets. It is for you to decide how to set your development priorities/targets: some of these should be measurable, but in all cases they should relate to specific aspects from each of the nine key leadership competencies and you are required to clearly identify where you intend to improve your performance. The nine leadership competencies are detailed in appendix 1 and in the three parts of the task, starting with part 1 below.

Part 1 of the task will assist you to develop four of the leadership competencies in particular and the assessment of this part of the task will focus upon Information seeking, Analytical thinking, Delivering continuous improvement and Personal drive.

A summary of the key competency indicators used in the assessment for part 1 of the task is provided below:

- Information seeking, including how you systematically gather and organise information from a wide range of sources to stay in touch with headline developments in the education sector and to identify longer term trends, inform planning and to help to solve issues. You seek information to understand issues/situations and make decisions; as well as using easily available information you dig deeper, obtaining data or feedback to develop a deeper understanding and a wider perspective.

- Analytical thinking, including analysing complex data and understanding issues/situations by breaking these down into constituent parts and identifying chains of events and cause and effect relationships between several aspects of a problem. You prioritise what needs to be done in order of importance and use a range of analytical methods to identify and weigh up the merits of different solutions and to create complex plans in which possible obstacles have been addressed.

- Delivering continuous improvement, including articulating a clear and compelling vision and high expectations for improvement. You
embed and use a variety of means of analysing data/assessing teaching performance and identify well-defined strategic priorities for improvement, linked to a clear and compelling vision. You convert proposed improvements into effective plans with clear targets.

- **Personal drive**, including setting your own targets to achieve the highest standards in your role; wanting to do the job well and striving to improve on personal performance objectives. You consistently challenge yourself and others to improve performance. You seek out new challenges and ways of working, dedicating personal effort and taking calculated risks to achieve challenging educational objectives.

**Part 2 Leading the implementation of the priority across the school:**

For this part of the task you should document how you conveyed your vision and expectations to stakeholders and staff and led staff to implement your leadership strategies, including those to whom you distributed leadership. You should explain how you overcame any difficulties and monitored to hold staff to account and to keep the improvement work on track.

Your submission should include:

- Implementing your action plan and strategies to improve teaching and learning. This plan must form part of your submission.
- Preparing staff for the effective delivery of the priority.
- Taking actions which involve leading, preparing and holding to account teams of staff and individual team members.
- Monitoring and evaluating outcomes, including teaching and learning.

Part 2 of the task will assist you to develop four of the leadership competencies in particular and the assessment of this part of the task will focus upon Delivering continuous improvement, Modelling excellence in leadership of teaching and learning, Learning focus and Holding others to account.

A summary of the key competency indicators used in the assessment for part 2 of the task is provided below:

- **Delivering continuous improvement**, including articulating a clear and compelling vision and high expectations for improvement. You convert proposed improvements into effective plans with clear targets and implement highly developed strategies to achieve measurable gains in performance. You work with colleagues to push improvements forward. You review progress regularly, removing barriers and adapting plans to secure ongoing improvement

- **Modelling excellence in leadership of teaching and learning**, including constantly communicating your vision and what you want to achieve in relation to high quality teaching and its impact on learning. You provide others with the clarity they need to feel empowered and
accountable in their role and by adapting teaching and learning to pupils’ needs and actively sharing and motivating others around new ideas and approaches. You provide a model for effective leadership of teaching and learning at team and classroom level. You model the vision and values of the school in your own leadership of teaching and learning across the school, showing that being open to new experience and ongoing learning and continual improvement of children’s learning is your core role as a school leader.

- **Learning focus**, including keeping learning and pedagogy at the core of the whole school curriculum and your leadership practice. You have strong knowledge and understanding of learning theories and pedagogies and use these to enhance the experience of all learners, to explore new approaches in teaching and learning and to establish a culture of dialogue and collaborative learning. You are committed to learning and achieving excellence and to developing the culture of a learning-centred school and practice to ensure consistently high quality teaching and learning are achieved across the curriculum. You take on and lead challenging initiatives to improve teaching practice and learning, set specific teaching and learning objectives for yourself and others and encourage and promote others to show leadership and take risks, exploring and adopting innovative approaches to teaching and learning.

- **Holding others to account**, including clearly communicating expectations and what is to be done and consistently demanding high performance. You delegate tasks to those best placed to deliver them and set new, different or higher standards and expectations and check to ensure these are clearly understood. You regularly monitor progress of others against objectives to ensure these are achieved and hold others to account for performing in line with expectations, spelling out the consequences of non-compliance and intervening swiftly to both challenge underperformance and enforce consequences when performance levels drop.

**Part 3 Evaluating the impact:**

For this part of the task you should document your evaluation of your leadership of the school improvement priority and how you recorded impact, reported and accounted to stakeholders including governors/equivalent or headteacher/SLT. You should use relevant local/national data. If your action plan is being implemented over a longer period of time you should also address next steps and how you will measure the continuing impact you will have on school improvement. At this stage you should also evaluate the progress you have made in your own leadership development.

Your submission should include:

- At the conclusion of the task evaluating your personal impact and the positive difference your leadership had in the school and on meeting its goals, including quantified evidence, with reference to relevant school, local and national data, of one or more of the following:
  - improved pupil progress and personal development
- improved attainment
- improved teaching
- improved pupils’ behaviour and safety
- improved attendance
- improved resource efficiency (financial, human or environmental resources).

- Reporting, including in written form, to governors/equivalent or headteacher/SLT. It is for you to decide on the most appropriate format for your report but the report should cover progress on the school improvement priority and next steps, including the implications for school policy. This report must form part of your submission.

- Evaluating improvement in your leadership and progress towards meeting your development priorities/targets. It is for you to decide how you demonstrate the progress you have made against your development priorities/targets, including the specific aspects from each of the nine key leadership competencies you identified for improvement. You should provide specific examples of how you acted and how you interacted with individuals and groups in your submission.

Part 3 of the task will assist you to develop four of the leadership competencies in particular and the assessment of this part of the task will focus upon Analytical thinking, Personal Drive, Impact and Influence and Self awareness.

A summary of the key competency indicators used in the assessment for part 3 of the task is provided below:

- **Analytical thinking**, including how you analysed complex data and understood issues/situations by breaking these down into constituent parts and identifying chains of events and cause and effect relationships between several aspects of a problem. How you prioritised what needed to be done in order of importance and used a range of analytical methods to identify and weigh up the merits of different solutions and to create complex plans in which possible obstacles were addressed.

- **Personal drive**, including how you set your own targets to achieve the highest standards in your role; did the job well and strived to improve on personal performance objectives. How you consistently challenged yourself and others to improve performance. How you sought out new challenges and ways of working, dedicating personal effort and taking calculated risks to achieve challenging educational objectives. How you monitored your own and school progress and made significant improvements in measures of school performance.

- **Impact and influence**, including how you demonstrated you have a positive influence and persuaded others through strategies such as direct persuasion, using evidence and reasoned argument and showing you can hold the attention of an audience when presenting or leading a discussion. How you listened to others and understood your audience and adapted your approach to best suit them. How you understood the need to take multiple actions to persuade and gain support and built support for complex ideas behind the scenes through
indirect influence, gaining support from key people and using others to influence third parties.

- **Self awareness**, including how you continuously sought understanding of your strengths and development needs; of your feelings and situations that arouse strong emotions for you and of how you impacted upon others. How you demonstrated that you understand how your own behaviour impacts on others and that you managed your emotional triggers appropriately. How you actively sought feedback to become more self aware. How you took decisions based upon self awareness, involving others when they were better placed to accomplish particular tasks/objectives.

Your evidence for self awareness should include your evaluation of your development as a senior leader in relation to your personal priorities/targets for development and the nine key leadership competencies.

**To summarise:**

**Figure 3 Competencies tested in school improvement task**

| Part 1 | • Information seeking  
|        | • Analytical thinking  
|        | • Delivering continuous improvement  
|        | • Personal drive  
| Part 2 | • Delivering continuous improvement  
|        | • Modelling excellence in leadership of teaching and learning  
|        | • Learning focus  
|        | • Holding others to account  
| Part 3 | • Analytical thinking  
|        | • Personal drive  
|        | • Impact and influence  
|        | • Self awareness  

**Preparation for the task:**

You should think about and plan in advance:

- how you will obtain and analyse information and relevant school, local and national data to inform your understanding of the school's performance and your planning – the data analysis tool in Closing the gap will help you to use different sources of information/data to identify gaps in achievement and attainment.

- how you will set targets for the school improvement priority, including considering your expectations for improvement based upon your understanding of the school’s performance.
• how you will define and measure the impact and the positive difference for the school - remember you are required to provide quantified evidence, using relevant school, local and national data, of your personal impact and the positive difference your work had in the school and on meeting its goals.

• how you will use research, knowledge and expertise in relevant national policy priorities and learning from the essential and elective modules to inform your leadership decision making.

• how you will devise, evaluate and select strategies to improve teaching and learning, using appropriate information. The Closing the gap module provides tools which may assist you in your analysis:
  o navigation task document
  o management task document
  o partnership task document.

It is for you to decide on the most appropriate analytical tools to support your planning; drawing upon the Closing the gap tools if you wish to do so.

• how you will plan for, lead the school improvement priority, monitor and evaluate progress and assess the impact of your actions. Closing the gap provides tools to help you to develop, implement and monitor the impact of an action plan, including the Closing the gap leadership action plan. It is for you to decide on the most appropriate format for your action plan. In choosing the most appropriate format for your action plan you can draw upon the Closing the gap tools if you wish to do so and make use of them in your work and your submission, or you can use any other appropriate planning methodology. This plan must form part of your submission.

• how you will use your self awareness of your strengths and development needs to identify your leadership development priorities, set personal targets, develop yourself as a leader and measure your own leadership development. It is for you to decide how set your targets. The Closing the gap module provides a range of effective leadership strategies and behaviours (Closing the gap leadership framework - 9 As leadership strategies and behaviours) relating to three roles:
  o **Navigator** – Awareness, Acceptance and Advocacy
  o **Manager** – Analysis, Action and Application
  o **Partner** – Aspect, Alignment and Area focus.

The module also contains leadership development activities for senior leaders linked to a case study to stimulate thinking and reflection. You may find it helpful to make use of your learning from the Closing the gap leadership framework but in doing so should ensure you set your personal development targets in relation to the nine key leadership competencies.

**Special circumstances**

To lead across the school as a senior leader you will need to have responsibility for several teams. If your context, such as a small school, does not provide such an
opportunity you could consider working across a cluster, Teaching School Alliance or Federation.

To complete the task you will need to work on the priority for at least two terms and so should you change schools you may need to consider whether undertaking the task in your new school is more likely to enable you to meet the requirements.

Submission of evidence

The submission for assessment will comprise:

- your submission for assessment
- your sponsor's/headteacher’s submission for assessment – based on both observation of your leadership of the improvement priority across the school and your submission for assessment.

Your submission for assessment

In your submission you should provide evidence of your leadership of the priority for school improvement across the school, your personal impact and the positive difference you have made and in doing so demonstrate your own development as a leader in relation to the nine competences being tested.

The format for your submission for assessment will be an electronic form in four sections to provide background details of the school improvement priority and evidence for each of the three parts of the task and actual school documents you have selected to provide supporting evidence.

The electronic form:

- The background section of the form enables you to provide details of the scope of the school improvement task, why you chose it and details of the teams you worked with across the school. This is background information and should be kept brief – you will benefit from using the majority of your page allowance for your competency-based evidence.

- Three parts relating to the task:
  - Part 1 Planning for improvement
  - Part 2 Leading the implementation of the priority across the school
  - Part 3 Evaluating the impact.

Each section has a box to enable you to briefly outline your key actions in relation to each part of the task and to cross reference your main supporting documents. This is followed by a box for each of the competencies tested in the section. As the assessment process for NPQSL is competency-based you should ensure you include your key evidence in the relevant boxes for each competency. The guidance given above, including the summaries of the competency indicators will help you to decide what evidence to include for each of the four competencies tested in each part. You should demonstrate your competence using examples: good competency-based evidence should cover not only what you did but also how you did it, with specific examples of your
leadership relating to actions taken and your interactions with individuals and groups.

You should also use the form to make reference to your supporting documentation and to explain how the documentation demonstrates the competences being tested.

An outline of the form is provided in figure 4 below.

**Supporting evidence from actual school documents:**

- These documents must also be submitted electronically.
- As stated above, **it is a requirement that you include your action plan and your evaluation report to governors/equivalent or headteacher/SLT.** Where these documents are too lengthy to allow you to submit them in full and keep within your page allowance you should submit appropriate extracts. You can use the electronic form to explain you have done this.
- You are able to choose what additional supporting documents you submit, subject to the page limits set out below.
- You will need to decide what actual school documents, or extracts from these, could best demonstrate your actions and the impact on the school and your own leadership development but these could include, for example:
  - Extract from school improvement plan or equivalent for the priority
  - Outline of staff development led by you
  - Extract from policy document(s) produced under your leadership
  - Quantified analysis of outcomes /positive impact prepared for use in school.
- Overall, you should aim to get a good balance between actual school documents and evidence provided using the electronic form if you are to provide the best competency-based evidence you can. **You are advised not to exceed 10 sides on the form as your supporting documents will provide important direct evidence of your work and competence.**
- Please number your supporting documents (eg 1, 2, 3) and annotate any key sections that you refer to in the appropriate column in the form (eg 1a, 1b, 1c) to enable your sponsor/headteacher and the assessors to find your supporting evidence easily.

**Length of submission**

- When submitting your written evidence of your leadership and leadership development, the form plus actual school documents/extracts from school documents, **must not exceed 22 sides of A4.**
- The form will be provided in a pre-set format and you should not reduce the font size. For other documents the overall page limit is based upon the use of a font no smaller than size 11 for Arial, Tahoma or equivalent.
• In the event of a submission exceeding these limits the additional pages will not be assessed.

• One of the skills needed in school leadership is the ability to present complex information clearly and succinctly. You should explain clearly what you did and how you led the priority. It is suggested you use active rather than passive sentence constructions and you use ‘I’ rather than ‘we’ when describing what you did yourself (eg I did x, then I did y). On occasions you may also need to explain why you took the action you did.

Sign-off by sponsor/headteacher

You need to agree with your sponsor that you are ready to submit.

When your form and the supporting documents are complete you should email these to your sponsor, together with a copy of this guidance, to enable her/him to complete her/his sections of the form. You should ensure that your sponsor is aware of this process and that she/he is expecting the email from you and will be required to submit the documentation to the headteacher once she/he has completed the relevant sections. You should also make sure that your sponsor has a generous amount of time to complete these sections of the form before the deadline for submission.

Sponsor's submission

Sponsors are asked to verify the evidence you submit and give his or her assessment of your leadership of the school improvement priority, the positive outcomes for the school, and of your leadership development. They will be asked to give an evaluation of your leadership of the improvement priority based upon both their observation of your leadership in school and their reading of your submission for assessment.

Sponsors should read:
• The descriptions of the nine leadership competencies being tested in Appendix 1 and the further guidance on the competencies being tested in each part of the task given above.
• The guidance for participants on undertaking the task and submitting evidence for assessment.

Sponsors should complete the boxes relating to the competencies in parts 1 - 3 of the form, covering Parts 1 to 3 of the school improvement task. The background is for the participant to complete on the background to the school improvement task – sections shaded grey should be left blank.

In completing parts 1 - 3 of the form sponsors are asked, in relation to the nine leadership competencies:
• As sponsor, to verify the evidence provided by the participant and to give an assessment of the participant’s leadership of the school improvement priority across the school, including commenting upon the evidence provided by the participant on their impact and the outcomes for the school.
• As sponsor, to verify the evidence provided by the participant and to comment on key aspects of their personal development.

• To award the most appropriate grade from the scale set out below to reflect the extent to which the participant has used the opportunity of leading the school improvement priority across the school to:
  - consolidate their learning from the essential and elective Level 2 modules, from research and school evidence, and from knowledge and expertise in relevant national policy priorities, and
  - the degree of progress the participant has made in developing the aspects of the leadership competencies tested in each part of the task.

The scale:

- **Very good**: participant made full use of the opportunities for development and made outstanding progress in leadership development
- **Good**: participant made use of many opportunities for development and made significant progress in leadership development
- **Moderate**: participant made some use of the opportunities for development and made some progress in leadership development
- **Poor**: participant made limited use of the opportunities for development and limited progress.

When the sponsor has completed and signed the form; the form and the supporting documentation should be forwarded to the headteacher for sign-off.

**Referral to headteacher for sign-off**

The headteacher will have the opportunity to review all of the evidence and the judgements made before signing-off the form/supporting documentation for submission for assessment.

When the headteacher has signed the form; the form and the supporting documents should be submitted by you, electronically, to meet the deadline (see Registering for final assessment below).

The form will need to be scanned to ensure all the signatures are included.
Figure 4: NPQSL task: leading an improvement priority across the school

Name of participant…………………………

Name of sponsor…………………………... Role of sponsor…………………………

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Participant evidence</th>
<th></th>
<th>Sponsor verification, additional evidence and grade – Very Good / Good / Moderate / Poor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background</strong></td>
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<td>Scope of the school</td>
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<td>improvement priority</td>
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<td>Reasons for selection</td>
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<td>improvement priority</td>
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<td>Teams you worked with</td>
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<td>across the school</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Part 1</strong></td>
<td>Planning for</td>
<td>Participant</td>
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<td><strong>Competency: Delivering</strong></td>
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<td>Competency: Learning focus</td>
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<th>Competency: Holding others to account</th>
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<tr>
<th>Part 3</th>
<th>Evaluating the impact</th>
<th>Participant document references</th>
<th>Sponsor verification, additional evidence and grade – Very Good / Good / Moderate / Poor</th>
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<td>Competency: Analytical thinking</td>
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<th>Competency: Personal drive</th>
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<th>Competency: Impact and influence</th>
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<th>Competency: Self awareness</th>
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<td>Sponsor grade:</td>
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Participant’s signature……………………………. Date…………………………….

Sponsor’s signature…………………………… Date……………………………

I confirm this submission (form and supporting documents) is accurate and verify all the evidence it contains

Headteacher’s signature……………………….. Date……………………………..
Registering for final assessment

You will be able to select when you book your final assessment window with the final assessment provider EMLC. The assessment windows will typically be within, 6, 9, 12 and 18 months of your commencement on the programme. **You should book your assessment window as early as possible and in good time to allow for the timeline set out below.**

The process for registering for your final assessment is as follows:

- **STEP 1:** provide details of your preferred assessment window – to do this please visit [www.emlc.co.uk](http://www.emlc.co.uk) and click on the link ‘Booking your assessment window’ and complete the ‘Provisional Booking’ Form. **Please ensure you notify EMLC of any changes to your details such as email address. Please ensure that you notify your licensee of your provisional assessment window.**

- **STEP 2:** A minimum of 5 weeks before your assessment date EMLC will confirm the date your documentation will be required. **You will be asked to confirm that you still intend to submit your school improvement task and you will be required to confirm this with your licensee, so that they can verify you have completed all the Essential and Elective modules for the qualification.**

- **STEP 3:** You will need to upload your completed documentation electronically to the EMLC website by the specified date.

If you have any further queries regarding final assessment please visit [www.emlc.co.uk](http://www.emlc.co.uk) or contact NPQSL@emlc.co.uk or phone us at EMLC on 01234 880130.

You should note that your submission will not be considered without the form being complete including the sponsor’s sections and the sponsor’s and the headteacher’s signatures.

In addition, **late submissions cannot be accepted.** You are therefore advised to talk to your sponsor as early as possible and ensure that she/he is fully aware of these requirements.

**Award of NPQSL**

The award of NPQSL will depend upon reaching the required standard in the nine leadership competencies tested through the school improvement task.

You will receive some developmental feedback on your performance at the end of the process.

If you do not reach the required standard you will be advised of this and the reasons why. You will then be given the opportunity to strengthen the evidence within your submission and re-submit the task again or to undertake further work depending on the reasons why your work did not meet the required standard. The advice you
receive will enable you to plan for any further development you require in the competencies tested and to prepare for re-submission.
Appendix 1 NPQSL competencies tested at final assessment

The table below provides the competency descriptions, the why it matters statements and lists the main indicators used in NPQSL final assessment. These indicators have been selected from the wider range of indicators in the NPQML/NPQSL competency framework for use in final assessment on the basis of research evidence on effective senior leadership. To be successful at NPQSL final assessment participants should be able to demonstrate all of the indicators listed at levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 for each competency. Indicators at the higher levels (levels 3 and 4) often build upon those at levels 1 and 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>Level 1 Indicators</th>
<th>Level 2 Indicators</th>
<th>Level 3 &amp; 4 Indicators</th>
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<tr>
<td>Educational Excellence</td>
<td><strong>Someone who is strong on delivering continuous improvement</strong> secures and maintains positive improvement through articulating a clear vision, setting high expectations and leading a cycle of research, planning, monitoring, analysis and change. They use data confidently and effectively to identify priorities and secure improved standards, in order to close any achievement gaps and to drive forward sustained improvement in performance. They demonstrate the ability to combine operational action with strategic planning, securing short term improvements whilst building sustainable change. They review progress regularly and effectively to inform future priorities and are prepared to change plans, if necessary, in order to secure more rapid improvement. They reflect on and review progress regularly. <strong>Why it matters:</strong> Leadership to deliver continuous, sustained improvement is stronger and more effective when it is linked to clear strategic and operational planning informed by effective monitoring, evaluation and analysis of pupils’ progress and performance data as well as teaching, learning and curriculum practices that impact on outcomes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delivering continuous improvement</td>
<td>• Uses data and monitoring to inform changes to teaching practice</td>
<td>• Embeds a variety of means of analysing and assessing teaching performance into day to day ways of working</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Works with colleagues to push improvements forward</td>
<td>• Converts proposed improvements into effective plans with clear targets</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Articulates clear expectations for improvement</td>
<td>• Establishes well-defined strategic priorities for improvement, linked to a clear and compelling vision</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Applies highly developed strategies across the school to achieve measurable gains in performance.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Regularly reviews progress against strategic priorities, removes barriers and adapts plans to secure ongoing improvement</td>
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**Modelling excellence in leadership of teaching and learning**

| Someone who is strong on modelling excellence in the leadership of teaching and learning consistently demonstrates and communicates their vision, passion and commitment to high quality teaching and its impact on learning. They lead by example, have high levels of professional credibility and demonstrate total commitment to high quality teaching through their own leadership behaviours, including way they interact with teachers and pupils and their focus on classroom practice. **Why it matters:** In leadership practice modelling is concerned with the power of example and it is clear that the example set by leaders strongly influences pupils and colleagues alike. Modelling is key in setting and maintaining a culture committed to high quality teaching and in reinforcing vision, values and agreed monitoring / improvement strategies. Greater freedom and autonomy means school leaders need to be skilled at designing a curriculum, appropriate to the local context, to meet the needs of children and young people. |  
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Adapts teaching and learning approaches to suit the needs of students  
2. Actively shares new ideas and tries out new approaches to teaching and learning | 1. Provides a model for effective leadership of teaching and learning at team and classroom level  
2. Energises and motivates others around new teaching and learning initiatives | 1. Sets a clear example by modelling the vision and values of the school in own leadership approach  
2. Constantly expresses what she/he stands for and what she/he wants to achieve in relation to high quality teaching and learning  
3. Models openness to new experience and ongoing learning  
4. Provides others with the clarity they need to feel empowered and accountable in their role |

**Learning focus**

| Someone who is strong on learning focus keeps learning and pedagogy at the core of the whole school curriculum and at the heart of their leadership practice. Their strong knowledge and understanding of learning theories (both adult and children) and pedagogies allows them to use their leadership to influence and improve effective teaching and learning. They encourage a culture of dialogue – formal and informal – about pedagogy, learning, curriculum design and development (assessment). **Why it matters:** Leaders need have the knowledge, skills and experience in the leadership of learning and teaching in order to develop school wide capacity and commitment. They must have clear sense of the changes in culture, skills and practice that are needed to achieve best practice and to ensure high quality teaching and learning consistently across the school. |  
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Applies theory and knowledge of learning to improve outcomes for children  
2. Is committed to learning and achieving excellence | 1. Sets specific teaching and learning objectives for self and the team  
2. Has a secure understanding of the concepts underpinning learning and uses these to enhance the experience of all learners | 1. Takes on and leads challenging initiatives within the school to improve teaching practice and learning  
2. Develops culture of the learning-centred school and skills and practice to ensure consistently high quality teaching and learning is achieved across the curriculum  
3. Works to ensure that all learners (pupils and adults) are actively engaged in collaborative learning  
4. Encourages and promotes others to show leadership and take risks, exploring and adopting innovative approaches to teaching and learning |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Leadership</th>
<th>Level 1 Indicators</th>
<th>Level 2 Indicators</th>
<th>Level 3 &amp; 4 Indicators</th>
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| **Impact and influence** | **Someone who is strong on impact and influence** has a positive impact on students, colleagues and the wider community through persuading, convincing and bringing others round to their perspective. They understand others’ perspectives and priorities and tailor their communication to suit their audience.  
**Why it matters:** School leaders must be able to influence students, colleagues and the community in an appropriate and considered manner. To do this, they must understand the needs of others and adapt their approach to create the desired impact. | **Uses direct persuasion when interacting with others**  
**Holds the attention of an audience when presenting or leading a discussion** | **Carefully prepares data and arguments to use in persuading others**  
**Takes multiple action to persuade and gain support** | **Listens to others, considers audience and adapts approach to best suit them**  
**Understands the need to, and uses others to influence third parties**  
**Builds behind the scenes support for complex ideas**  
**Uses indirect influence and gains support from key people** |
| **Self awareness** | **Someone who is strong on self awareness** is aware of their personal strengths and areas for future growth and understands how own behaviour impacts on others. This involves being aware of your own emotional triggers and identifying ways to manage these more effectively. Takes ownership for what one can do and sharing out responsibilities when others are better placed to accomplish particular tasks or objectives.  
**Why it matters:** School leaders need to understand their own strengths and weaknesses as well as how they impact others, so that they are more adept at making good decisions and behaving appropriately. | **Is aware of own feelings**  
**Takes time to evaluate own thoughts and behaviour** | **Identifies situations that arouse strong emotions for them**  
**Recognises own strengths and development areas** | **Understands why situations arouse strong emotions for them and manages this appropriately**  
**Makes decisions based on understanding of own strengths and limitations**  
**Actively seeks feedback to become more self aware**  
**Continuously seeks to understand self and how impacts upon others** |
### Personal drive

**Someone who is strong on personal drive** sets their own targets and achieves the highest standards within their role. Self motivated, energetic and willing to take on new challenges to improve own levels of performance, they make decisions having assessed what will be in the best interest for students and the school. They seek out opportunities and new challenges showing a desire to improve.

**Why it matters:** School leaders need to be motivated to reach the highest standards possible, to deliver tough objectives and take on challenges even when the outcome is not clear in order to achieve high performance throughout the school.

- Wants to do the job well and is positive about good performance
- Is intent on improving performance
- Strives to meet and improve on personal performance objectives
- Keeps track of and measures outcomes against personal standards not imposed by others
- Consistently challenges own and others' performance with a view to improving
- Takes calculated risks and seeks out new ways of taking the department/school to greater heights
- Dedicates personal effort and resources to achieve challenging educational objectives
- Makes significant improvements in measures of school performance

### Operational Management

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<th>Level 1 Indicators</th>
<th>Level 2 Indicators</th>
<th>Level 3 &amp; 4 Indicators</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Information seeking</strong></td>
<td><strong>Systematically scans the environment, seeking and networking for information.</strong> This involves paying attention to what is happening in school but also within the wider community. Leaders need to be curious about the community in which they are working and go beyond routine questioning to gather information from a wide range of sources that will improve their ability to lead effectively and further their understanding of the education sector.</td>
<td><strong>Why it matters:</strong> By keeping abreast of developments in the broader school context and the education sector, locally, nationally and globally, leaders are best positioned to understand the needs of their community and shape the future of the school.</td>
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- Uses easily available information to help inform decisions
- Seeks to understand immediate issues presented to you
- Digs deeper and doesn’t stop at first the answer if this isn’t sufficient
- Stays in touch with headline developments in the education sector
- Sets up a systematic approach to gathering a wide range of perspectives on relevant topics
- Reviews and analyses a broad range of information to identify trends in relevant sectors and inform long term planning
- Obtains data or feedback about a situation to help develop deeper understanding
- Collects and organises information from different sources to help solve issues
### Analytical thinking

**Someone who is strong on analytical thinking** comfortably analyses complex data and understands the connections that exist between issues through breaking down problems into their component parts. This competency also involves organising parts of a problem in a systematic way, prioritising issues moving forward, as well as establishing causal relationships between issues that may or may not be obviously related.

**Why it matters**
It is important that our school leaders can break down problems into manageable parts and link the related issues. This will help them to understand the implications of situations and employ sound judgement in their decision-making.

- Seeks to understand everyday problems and issues
- Breaks down problems into chunks or basic parts
- Identifies basic cause and effect relationships between issues/situations (e.g. if….then)
- Sorts out tasks in order of importance
- Makes multiple links between issues; establishes chains of events (e.g. A leads to B leads to C)
- Analyses relationships between several aspects of a problem (e.g. that may or may not be obviously related)
- Creates complex plans and anticipates possible obstacles and thinks ahead regarding the implications of particular issues
- Uses a range of analytical methods to identify and weigh up the merits of different solutions

### Holding others to account

**Someone who is strong on holding others to account** clarifies expectations, set high standards for others and ensuring that goals or objectives are achieved. This involves holding others to account for performing in line with expectations. Part of this will also involve using one's own position or authority to get others to do what is asked of them, and at times, this will involve making tough or unpopular decisions. However, these choices or actions will always be instigated with the best interests of students and schools in mind.

**Why it matters**
School leaders need to spell out what needs to be done, who needs to do it, by when and what the outcome should look like. They need to keep an eye on progress and ensure educational standards do not drop. This is critical in order for schools and the sector to continually deliver against what is expected.

- Tells people what they need to do
- Clearly communicates what is expected of others
- Clarifies expectations as well as standards required, checks with individuals to ensure they understand
- Delegates tasks or objectives based on who is best placed to deliver them
- Introduces new, different or higher standards of performance
- Consistently demands high performance and holds others to account for performance
- Regularly monitors progress of others against objectives, intervening swiftly to challenge underperformance
- Clearly spells out the consequences of non-compliance and enforces consequences when performance levels drop.