NPQH and NPQEL Assessments : Contingency for Coronavirus
Updated: 26th March 2020

The following advice and guidance is provided by our assessment provider, NPQonline for participants on NPQ programmes with Learners First.

Following the government's advice to schools on 18th March, NPQonline encourage any participant close to being ready to submit to go ahead and prepare their script for submission over the next few weeks. NPQonline expects to work as usual throughout any school shut-downs and expect to be ready to receive and assess submissions as usual.

1.   NPQ Window dates to the end of the summer term 2020
12th March – 26th March 2020
16th April – 30th April
14th May – 28th May 2020
28th May – 11th June 2020
11th June – 25th June 2020
09th July – 23rd July 2020

2.   Signatures for assessment submissions
Where it has not been possible to collect a signature, please use one of two options:

i)   the signatory should scan or photograph their signature and send it electronically to the participant so that it can be pasted to the signature box on the submission form.

ii)   only in the very few cases where this is not possible, an email to assessors@npqonline.co.uk directly from the signatory would be acceptable. Emails must be named with the participant name as well as the sponsor/ line manager name.

3.   Sponsor statement.
Should there be difficulties obtaining the statement, it can be written by any more senior person who knows the participant's work well and can verify the project is their own. It does not have to be the same sponsor who has supported a participant through the programme. For NPQH task 2 this would include a senior person at the placement school, such as the deputy headteacher or Chair of Governors.

4.   Length of project compromised.
Where a project has not quite lasted for two long terms, participants may have suitable evidence to refer to, from before their originally-given start date. It is reasonable to conclude that following the government's instructions that schools will close from 20th March for nearly all pupils, that the term has also ended at that date, and therefore, the term between January and 20th March will count as a full term. Where a project is not quite complete, participants should write about how, given the evidence already gathered, the project is likely to end. If the project is significantly short of two long terms, it will need to be completed once the participant has returned to school, unless the remaining part can be carried out remotely.

5.   Data
Formal or external data is not needed.

Even if the whole project was intended to rely on SAT/ GCSE scores, it doesn't matter if this is not now available.

What is useful is a table of data which, at its simplest, looks like this:

	All pupils	Target group/s	Comparison group/s in school	Comparison groups national/ similar schools
Data prior to project beginning				
Data collected at start of project				
Data collected mid-project				
Current data (last collected)				
Projected data at end of project				
Future projected data				
Permanent effect on future data				

It is important to:

- Have carried out a proper analysis of early data to explain why you are working on the project you have selected;
- Understand that data means 'pieces of information' rather than a statistic (although all data can be made into a statistic, e.g. 'Six out of ten pupils said they were more confident');
- Evidence the general impact of your project on an improving trajectory of progress and attainment (even if the project was just one of a number of contributing factors);
- Identify the factors in the changed ways adults work as a result of their leadership, which is contributing to improved progress and attainment;
- Predict the changes in progress and attainment in the future;
- Reflect on which parts of the project you would have carried out differently for an even greater impact;
- Be reflective on the reasons why improvement has not met expectations;
- Understand that in two long terms, a properly- and robustly-planned and introduced change project is unlikely to lead to large amounts of, or readily-measurable change after such a short time, and to therefore write about the greater change which will occur in the future.

6. Recordings – NPQEL & NPQH

Where participants have had a problem with the recording at NPQH1, or NPQEL 1 and 2, it will be difficult for them to make a new recording over the next few weeks. Where a programme lasts into the future, the timing of the recording is not specified, and so this can be made when schools have returned. However, different arrangements may have to be made in the following circumstances:

- A participant is close to submission, or has not quite completed their project;
- Is unsatisfied with the recording they have made;
- Has not yet made a recording, but wishes to submit;
- Has technical problems with their recording.

In these circumstances, participants should take the following steps:
- Organise a webinar with appropriate stakeholders or governors, in which they can make their presentation. Webinar services, such as Zoom, are free to use for limited length meetings, or for limited numbers of participants, and can be recorded.

Where this is not possible:
- Attach script, notes, presentation or detailed minutes as an extra additional appendix. This does not count towards the word or page count

- Add an explanation at the top of the submission form, including an extract of this advice. Again, this is not included in the word count

- Record themselves reading the script, making clear at the beginning of the recording the circumstances, and that this is not recorded in front of an audience, and giving the reasons why. Include the recording as would usually be expected.

Participants MUST explain the circumstances, and should not assume prior assessor knowledge. Assessors will score the lack of a recording as a zero where no explanation is given.

NPQH Participants need to: 'Analyses stakeholder views systematically'

NPQEL Participants need to:

Task 1. 'Present their chosen strategy to their governing board/board of trustees, record it, answer questions, and gather its feedback.'

Task 2. 'Present their plans to a group of relevant stakeholders (for example, the relevant governing boards, teachers and community representatives), record it, answer questions and gather their feedback'

The timing of the recording within the project is not specified in any of the requirements to record, and it may be an advantage to record a meeting later in the project, when the audience is more knowledgeable about the project details.

7. Deferral

We encourage participants to complete and submit for assessment within the 18-month timeframe wherever possible. If participants are unable to complete assessments owing to school closures, then deferrals may be granted by Learners First. In order to apply for a deferral, please email teachingschool@learnersfirst.org with your request outlining briefly the reasons for the request.

8. NPQonline

NPQonline is entirely web- and internet based, and has no premises. All of their systems are set up to work online, and they do not envisage any reduction in service across this time.