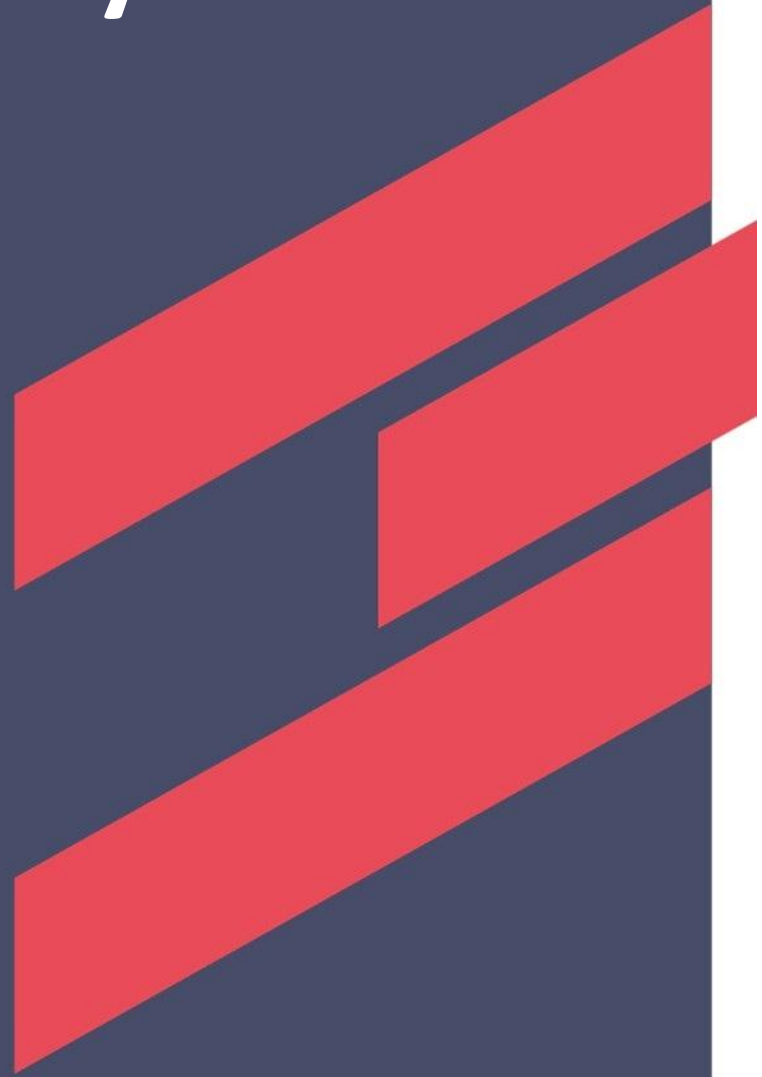




**Ambition
Institute**

NPQ Recruitment, Selection and Admission Policy



NPQ Recruitment, Selection and Admission policy

Policy Owner	Associate Director, NPQ Admissions
Version	3.0
Last reviewed	February 2025
Approved by	Programme Operations Committee
Next review due	December 2025
Applies to	All National cohort National Professional Qualification (NPQ) and Early Headship Coaching Offer (EHCO) applicants and stakeholders
Exceptions	N/A
Audience	Available on Ambition Institute’s website

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Section 1: Overview

1.1. Purpose

- 1.1.1. This document aims to establish a transparent, reliable, inclusive recruitment, selection, and admission policy that supports social mobility. Ambition Institute is dedicated to helping educators keep getting better, ensuring disadvantaged children receive the best education.
- 1.1.2. The National Professional Qualification (NPQ) and Early Headship Coaching Offer (EHCO) programmes provided by Ambition Institute are open to applicants from all backgrounds, provided they meet certain eligibility criteria established by the Department for Education (DfE).
- 1.1.3. The Equality Act (2010) stipulates that we must ensure there is no unlawful discrimination against people with protected characteristics, including age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, religion or belief, race, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, caste, pregnancy, and maternity.

1.2. Scope

- 1.2.1. The policies and procedures outlined herein apply to NPQ and EHCO applicants applying to Ambition Institute's National Cohort.
- 1.2.2. This policy applies to the following National Professional Qualifications:
 - > NPQ for Leading Teacher Development (NPQLTD)
 - > NPQ for Leading Behaviour & Culture (NPQLBC)
 - > NPQ for Leading Teaching (NPQLT)
 - > NPQ for Leading Literacy (NPQLL)
 - > NPQ for Leading Primary Mathematics (NPQLPM)
 - > NPQ for Early Years Leadership (NPQEYL)
 - > NPQ for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (NPQSENCO)
 - > NPQ for Senior Leadership (NPQSL)
 - > NPQ for Headship (NPQH)
 - > Early Coaching Headship Offer (EHCO)
 - > NPQ for Executive Leadership (NPQEL)

1.3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 1.3.1. **The Partnerships Team** handles recruitment strategy and marketing, always aiming to be transparent, reliable, inclusive, and supportive of social mobility. Ambition provides all relevant information about our programmes on our website. This makes key details fully transparent, available, and accessible to everyone.
- 1.3.2. **The Admissions Team** is responsible for reviewing NPQ and EHCO applications. One of Ambition's key aims is to provide our customers and participants with the highest standards of

service. This means that we constantly work to ensure that the information we provide is accurate, up-to-date, and reliable.

1.4. Definitions

Admission	offering a place to a candidate on a specific cohort of a specific NPQ programme.
Applicant	a person who has completed an application for one of our programmes
Funding eligible	the identification of a candidate who is eligible for a Department for Education scholarship place. It is confirmed via the Department for Education's NPQ registration service.
Scholarship-funded place	a scholarship-funded place can be offered to an applicant who is eligible for Department for Education scholarship funding and have a submitted application.
Selection	the identification of suitable candidates for a programme from all applicants.
Suitability	the identification of an applicant who is appropriate for a programme via their experience, role, or qualifications.

Section 2: Policy and Procedure

2.1. Programme suitability

- 2.1.1. The reformed NPQs are intended to be accessed by as many teachers, leaders, and education providers as possible, and hence role suitability criteria are focused on ensuring that the programme is suitable for the applicant. Programmes are open to teachers and individuals with aspirations to be in a role, therefore it is not an essential suitability criterion to be in a specific job role at the point of application if there is a realistic aspiration to reach that role.
- 2.1.2. Ambition Institute does not encourage candidates to complete multiple NPQs at the same time. You may be asked to show school support to ensure you have sufficient capacity to engage in the programme.

2.2. Funding eligibility

- 2.2.1. The Department for Education will provide full scholarship funding to applicants from publicly funded schools and 16 to 19 education organisations for four programmes: the NPQ for Headship and Early Headship Coaching Offer, the NPQ for Leading Primary Math and the new NPQ for SENCOs.

- 2.2.2. For all other NPQs, funding to cover the full programme cost will be available to applicants from:
- > The 50% of English schools with the highest proportion of students who attract pupil premium funding.
 - > 16-19 education settings identified as having high disadvantage.
 - > Highly disadvantaged early years settings (for NPQ in Early Years Leadership only).
 - > Accredited Initial Teacher Training providers (for NPQ for Leading Teacher Development only).
- 2.2.3. NPQ participants will only be eligible for funding if they meet the role suitability criteria described in Appendix A: Table 1.
- 2.2.4. Funding eligibility is confirmed via the Department for Education's NPQ registration service.
- 2.2.5. There are a limited number of scholarship-funded places. If scholarship-funded places have more interest than availability, candidates will be directed to our NPQ Waitlist Policy.
- 2.2.6. We recommend that candidates submit their applications as early as possible to secure a scholarship-funded NPQ place.
- 2.2.7. Funding is only available once for each NPQ.
- 2.2.8. Special Educational Needs Coordinators currently in their role and who have not yet completed the National Award for SENCOs will receive priority for DfE scholarships for the NPQSENCO programme, as it is a mandatory requirement for their position.
- 2.2.9. Candidates who have previously withdrawn or already completed the NPQ programme they are applying to will not be eligible for funding.
- 2.2.10. Candidates who are not eligible for funding or wish to complete an NPQ where no scholarship-funded places are remaining and meet the role suitability criteria for the programme will be offered the opportunity to self-fund their place on the programme.
- 2.2.11. As above, if our programmes have more interest for self-funded and scholarship-funded places than availability, candidates will be directed to our NPQ Waitlist Policy.
- 2.2.12. Schools' outside of England are not eligible to complete any NPQ with Ambition.

2.3. Selection and admission

- 2.3.1. Candidates who express interest (or who are put forward by their school or organisation) for an NPQ will be invited to submit an online application.
- 2.3.2. Within the application form, the applicant will be given access to a guidance document with detailed information on their NPQ of choice. With reference to this document, the candidate

will then be asked to briefly explain how their role allows them to access and practice the learning of their NPQ of choice.

- 2.3.3. Once submitted, their application will be assessed by Ambition Institute or a delivery partner to make sure their role is suitable for the programme. If approved, the candidate will be offered a place via email. Inaccurate or false information on the form could result in an applicant's place on the programme being withdrawn.
- 2.3.4. Ambition Institute will have a limited number of places each year. If our programmes have more interest than availability, candidates will be directed to our NPQ Waitlist Policy. We advise candidates submit their applications as early as possible to secure their place.

Section 3: Version Control

3.1.1. All Ambition policies are regularly reviewed by the Policy Owner. Feedback from employees and relevant stakeholders will be considered during the review process, and revisions will be made as necessary to reflect changes in laws, regulations, or company practices.

Version	Issue/release date	Summary of changes	Approver
3.0	May 2024	Funding eligibility updates considering the new Department for Education scholarship funding.	Director of Partnerships Operations
3.1	December 2024	Updates to prioritise current SENCOS for NPQSENCO scholarships in light of new Department for Education scholarship funding criteria.	Director of Partnerships Operations
3.2	February 2025	Updated list of eligible organisations in Appendix B, table 2.	Director of Partnerships Operations

Section 4: Appendices

Appendix A: Table 1 - Suitability

The table below provides guidance to identify suitable candidates for NPQ and EHCO programmes. The example roles provided are not exhaustive. Evidence provided in the application form should demonstrate suitability for the relevant NPQ.

Programme	Suitable for	Example roles	Not suitable for
<p>Leading Teaching (NPQLT)</p> <p>In 12 months, you will discover what outstanding teaching looks like and use this knowledge to become a high performing leader of teaching</p>	<p>Must be a candidate who has, or is aspiring to have, responsibilities for leading teaching in a subject, year group, key stage, or phase. Participants must be in, or have been in, a teaching role.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Head of teaching development/CPD lead > Year group leader > Subject leader > Key stage/phase leader > Head of department > Assistant/deputy head > Headteacher > Head of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) > Class teacher > LA supply staff <p>Participants must be in or have been in, a teaching role.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Early Career Teachers (ECTs) > Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) > Non-teaching staff
<p>Leading Behaviour and Culture (NPQLBC)</p> <p>In 12 months, you will gain expertise in behaviour management and discover how to create a culture where staff and pupils can thrive.</p>	<p>Must be a candidate who has, or is aspiring to have, responsibilities for leading behaviour and/or supporting pupil wellbeing in your school.</p> <p>Participants do not have to be in a teaching role to do this NPQ. Those not in a teaching role who have no previous teaching experience may require extra support and further reading; see note below.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Head of teaching development/CPD lead > Year group leader > Subject leader > Key stage/phase leader > Head of department > Assistant/deputy head > SENCo > Pastoral lead > Headteacher > Head of ITT > Class teacher > LA supply staff > Higher-level teaching assistants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Early Career Teachers (ECTs) > Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) > Teaching Assistants
<p>Leading Teacher Development (NPQLTD)</p> <p>In 12 months, you will gain the knowledge to become a</p>	<p>Must be a candidate who has, or is aspiring to have, responsibility for leading other educators to develop. You might support the development of all teachers in your school, trainees, or those early in their career.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Head of teaching development/CPD lead > Year group leader > Subject leader > Key stage/phase leader > Head of department > Assistant/deputy head > Headteacher > Head of ITT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Early Career Teachers (ECTs) > Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) > First time ECT Mentors > Teaching assistants

<p>teacher educator and successfully support teachers in your school to expand their skills.</p>	<p>Participants must be in, or have been in, a teaching role.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Class teacher > LA supply staff <p>May be a lead mentor for ITT or indirectly manage a team of mentors or coaches and their work is focussed on supporting ITT, ECTs as well as wider development of all colleagues across the school.</p>	
<p>Leading Primary Mathematics (NPQLPM)</p> <p>In 12 months, you will become an expert leader of primary mathematics and learn how to embed high-quality mastery maths teaching in your school.</p>	<p>Must be a candidate who has, or is aspiring to have, responsibilities for leading mathematics across a group of schools, school, year group, key stage, subject or phase. Candidates must have some maths mastery training via the Teaching for Mastery programme, a programme equivalent or may have experienced in-school training.</p> <p>Candidates must be in a primary school or responsible for educating primary aged pupils.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Primary Head of teaching development/CPD lead > Primary maths/ numeracy leader > Key stage/phase leader > Assistant/deputy head of primary or all-through school > Headteacher of primary or all-through school > Class teacher aspiring to lead mathematics > LA supply staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Early Career Teachers (ECTs) > Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) > Teaching assistants > Secondary school teachers and leaders
<p>Leading Literacy (NPQLL)</p> <p>In 12 months, you will learn the essential knowledge and skills to effectively lead high quality, literacy development and teaching in your school.</p>	<p>Must be a candidate who has, or is aspiring to have, responsibilities for leading literacy across a group of schools, school, year group, key stage, subject or phase.</p> <p>Participants do not have to be in a teaching role to do this NPQ. Those not in a teaching role who have no previous teaching experience should have middle leadership responsibility to influence approaches to literacy teaching across the school, group, key stage, or phase.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Head of teaching development/CPD lead > Year group leader > Subject leader > Key stage/phase leader > Head of department > Assistant/deputy head > Headteacher > Head of ITT > Class teacher > LA supply staff > Literacy co-ordinator > Literacy/ English Lead > MAT lead/ Director of subject <p>May lead subject networks across multiple schools/educational settings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Early Career Teachers (ECTs) > Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) > Teaching assistants

<p>Early Years Leadership (NPQEYL)</p> <p>This 18-month programme helps you develop expertise in early years leadership, helping to give all children up to the age of five the best possible start in life.</p>	<p>This qualification is for leaders qualified to at least Level 3 with a full and relevant qualification. They should be, or are aspiring to be, managers of Private, Voluntary, or independent nurseries, staff in school-based or maintained nurseries with leadership responsibility, staff in state-funded schools or childminders with leadership responsibilities.</p> <p>A Level 3 qualification is not mandatory and there may be some instances where it is appropriate for participants without this to take the NPQ. However, they must demonstrate are in a suitable role and organisation to access the programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Early Years/ KS1 phase leader > Assistant/deputy head or principal > Headteacher/ principal > Class teachers aspiring to and close to leadership > LA supply staff > Childminders responsible for one or more staff > Room leader > Deputy/ assistant manager > Nursery officer > Lead/ senior practitioner > After school club manager > Childcare manager > Play leader > Staff in a state-funded schools including school-based nursery, local authority nursery or staff in key stage. State-funded schools do not require a nursery to be an eligible organisation but should reflect on individual aspirations and experience of the EYFS framework. <p>Additional requirements for Early Years practitioners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Registered on Ofsted’s Early Years Register as Active unless part of a state-funded school/nursery. > Applicants qualified to at least Level 3 or with a full and relevant qualification. A list of qualifications can be found here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > ECT > Secondary school teachers or leaders > Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) > First time ECT Mentors > Teaching assistants > Childminders operating by themselves > Play assistant > Childminder assistant
<p>Special Educational needs co-ordinators (NPQSENCO)</p> <p>This 18-month programme helps you become an</p>	<p>A leadership level qualification, primarily for SENCOs, school leaders or aspiring SENCOs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Assistant headteacher/Associate assistant headteacher > Deputy headteacher/Vice principal > Head of faculty/ department/subject > Head of year > Head of key stage/early years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > ECT > Teaching assistants > Higher level teaching assistants

<p>expert leader of special educational needs and learn how you can build an inclusive culture in your school where all pupils can succeed.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Headteacher/ Principal > SENCO 	
<p>Senior Leadership (NPQSL)</p> <p>This 18-month programme helps you develop your leadership knowledge and expertise to improve outcomes for teachers and pupils in your school.</p>	<p>Must be, or are aspiring to be, a senior leader with cross-school responsibilities. Participants must be at middle leadership or above currently.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Assistant headteacher/Associate assistant headteacher > Deputy headteacher/Vice principal > Head of faculty/ department/subject > Head of year > Head of key stage/early years > SENCO > Head of ITT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > ECT > Class teacher > Headteacher > Executive headteacher > Teaching assistants > Higher level teaching assistants
<p>Headship (NPQH)</p> <p>Within 18 months, you will develop the knowledge that underpins expert school leadership and apply it to become an outstanding headteacher.</p>	<p>Must be, or aspire to be, a headteacher or head of school with a responsibility for leading a school. Participants must be at senior leadership level or above currently.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Headteacher > Head of school > Director of teaching school > Deputy headteacher/Vice principal/Assistant headteacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > ECT > Class teacher > Director of Learning for any subject/ Head of department or key stage > SENCO > Teaching assistants > Higher level teaching assistants
<p>Early Headship Coaching Offer (EHCO)</p> <p>In 12 months, this programme will help you</p>	<p>Must be a current headteacher in their first 5 years of headship. They must not have previously withdrawn from the ASO (previous name).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Headteacher > Head of school > Principal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Deputy headteacher > Assistant headteacher > Class teacher > Acting headteacher/ Interim headteacher

<p>to settle into your post by giving you access to one-to-one coaching and a toolkit of resources to help you thrive as a leader.</p>	<p>Must have completed or be undertaking and NPQ for Headship programme.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Teaching assistants > Higher level teaching assistants
<p>Executive Leadership (NPQEL)</p> <p>In 18 months, you will develop the expertise you need to become an outstanding executive leader, leading change, and improvement across your group of schools or multi-academy trust.</p>	<p>Must be a school leader who is, or is aspiring to be, an executive headteacher or have a school trust CEO role with responsibility for leading several schools. Participants must be in a headteacher role or above currently.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Executive headteacher > Headteacher/principal > CEO (in first year) > Associate headteacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > ECT > Class teacher > Head of ITT > Deputy Head > Assistant head > CFO

Important notes:

- > All participants must register with the DfE for their NPQ or EHCO. Participants from Young Offenders’ Institutions must contact the DfE at continuing-professional-development@digital.education.gov.uk to register for their NPQ.
- > All Participants will be asked to provide proof of their employment at the institution they work in.
- > Returning teachers who are not yet in school are eligible for scholarship funding for all NPQs. They must first confirm their interest via the Return to Teaching Agency (RTTA) and receive support from an RTTA Advisor.
- > Participants working across multiple schools (i.e., they do not work in one school or may be part of a trust central service team) **must be associated with a school** to be eligible for DfE scholarship funding. This enables Ambition Institute to match participants with the DfE NPQ register.
- > Applicable to NPQLBC and NPQLTD: Although we believe that all participants will benefit and gain value from completing an NPQ, the curriculum is designed based on participants

being in a classroom. Therefore, participants not in a teaching role will need to do further reading or reflection to make the most of the content. It will also be necessary to speak to any non-teaching candidates to discuss extra support they may require throughout the programme.

- > Participants do not need to have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) to complete an NPQ.
- > Applicants need a Teacher Reference Number (TRN) to register for an NPQ. Applicants who do not have a QTS can contact us for guidance on how to get a temporary TRN.

Appendix B: Table 2 – Funding Eligibility

Establishments eligible for Department-funded NPQ scholarships

Participants can come from the following organisations:

- > State-funded schools, as well as those employed in state-funded organisations in England that offer education to 16–19-year-olds
- > Other independent special schools
- > Local Authorities (LA) (Only LA staff working in direct teaching roles such as supply staff or peripatetic teachers or teaching staff part of a LA virtual school are eligible for scholarships.)
- > Young offender institutions
- > Hospital schools not already included in other eligible organisation categories.
- > Non-school based early years settings (group-based providers and childminders).
- > Accredited Initial Teacher Training providers (ITT lead mentors are eligible for NPQLTD only).
- > Returning teachers are eligible for scholarships. These are individuals who are ex-teachers and school leaders who are registered with the Department’s Return to Teaching Advisory Service and are seeking to return to teaching in a state-funded school. They must have been referred to register for an NPQ by their Return to Teaching Adviser.

Where an applicant works across multiple schools (for example, at trust level), they can apply with the details of any school for which they are involved in leadership. If one or more of the schools they work in is on the list of eligible settings, they should ensure they use those school details during registration.

Special Educational Needs Coordinators currently in their role and who have not yet completed the National Award for SENCOs will receive priority for DfE scholarships for the NPQSENCO programme, as it is a mandatory requirement for their position.

A full list of organisation types is below:

Establishments eligible for DfE-funded NPQ scholarships	
Academy 16 to 19 sponsor led	Free schools special
Academy 16-19 converter	General Further Education College
Academy alternative provision converter	Hospital schools (includes settings not on GIAS)**
Academy alternative provision sponsor led	Initial Teacher Training providers***
Academy converter	Local authority*
Academy secure 16 to 19	Local authority nursery school
Academy special converter	Non-maintained special school
Academy special sponsor led	Other Independent Special School
Academy sponsor led	Pupil Referral Unit
Agricultural & Horticultural College (known as ‘Land based’ on GIAS)	Secure units
Art, Design and Performing Arts College	Sixth Form College (General)

City technology college	Sixth Form College (Voluntary Aided)
Community school	Sixth Form College (Voluntary Controlled)
Community special school	Special post 16 institution
Foundation school	Studio schools
Foundation special school	University technical college
Free schools	Voluntary aided school
Free schools 16 to 19	Voluntary controlled school
Free schools alternative provision	Young Offenders' Institutions (includes settings not on GIAS)

** Within this category, only LA-employed supply teachers and employees of Virtual Schools (LA-run organisations that support the education of children in care) are eligible for DfE-funded scholarships. Participants from these institutions will follow a separate registration journey from the registration service and should contact the npqadmissions@ambition.org.uk if they identify that they should be eligible for funding.*

*** Includes hospital schools not included in other categories listed. Candidates from these institutions will follow a separate DfE registration journey and should contact the continuing-professional-development@digital.education.gov.uk if they identify that they should be eligible for funding.*

**** Applicants working as ITT Mentors in accredited providers can access DfE-funded scholarships for the NPQ for Leading Teacher Development only. A full list of eligible institutions can be found [here](#).*

Establishments not eligible for DfE-funded scholarships

British schools overseas	Non programme funded provider	Another FE provider
Establishments in Wales, Scotland, or Northern Ireland	Offshore schools	Specialist Designated College
Higher education institutions*	Other independent school **	Service children's education settings overseas
Independent learning providers	Other international schools	Supply teacher agency

** Participants working as ITT Mentors in accredited providers can access DfE-funded scholarships for the NPQ for Leading Teacher Development.*

*** Private, voluntary, and independent (PVI) nurseries identified as part of the 50% of settings offering funded places with the highest proportion of students eligible for either the Early Years Pupil Premium or 2-year-old disadvantage funding will be eligible for DfE-funded scholarships for the NPQ for Early Years Leadership. Applicants should hold a full and relevant Level 3 qualification or higher prior to starting the NPQ.*