

Programmes

Church of England Professional Qualification for Headship (inc. NPQH)

Frequently Asked Questions (updated June 2020)

1. How long does the programme last?

CofEPQH Cohort 4 will run from December 2020 and conclude in June 2022. Formal teaching input takes places between January 2021 and December 2021. Assignments are completed in the final months of the programme.

2. Which regional group will I join?

We are delivering the programme in eight regions and you should indicate which of these is closest to you on your application form. You will be allocated to the region that you prefer as long as this is possible. Where it is not possible you will be offered a different group.

Regional groups are as follows: North East (York), North West (Preston), East (Cambridge), East Midlands (Derby), West Midlands (Birmingham), Oxford, South East (London), and South West (Tiverton).

3. How much does it cost?

In order to increase the accessibility of the programme for as many leaders as possible the programme fee has been reduced from previous years.

The total cost of CofEPQH is £1650 + VAT. Further information about value for money can be found on the website in a document titled Clear Expectations.

4. Is the programme the same as it was last year?

The content of the programme is the same as it was last year, however, we have made the decision to run Cohort 4 without the residential element. Participants will join their regional group on four occasions across the year, each time for a one day event. They will also join other participants from across the country to complete three modules in virtual classrooms.

The benefits of adapting the programme in this way include:

- reduced risk of needing to change plans given the current Covid-19 climate
- increased accessibility for those who work in remote locations
- decreased anxiety for participants and schools about taking time out for residential given the current climate
- increased opportunity to network and share with leaders from across the whole country

5. Do I get a discount if I am a small school?

If you working a school with less than 210 pupils you may be eligible for a Foundation bursary to support with the cost of your fees. Please note this information on your application form along with any additional information that we should consider in the case that the number of people requesting support is greater than the amount of funding we have available.

We shall ensure that all bursary funding is made fairly and according to our criteria. Those fitting multiple criteria will be prioritised.

Criteria:

- working in a small school with less than 210 pupils
- working in school where >30% receive pupil premium

6. Can I spread the cost over 2 financial years?

Fees may be paid in one instalment or split across two school years. Payment preference must be indicated by the sponsor when they complete the sponsor endorsement form. If making a split payment, the first payment will be due by December 2020 and second payment will be due by October 2021.

7. My school budget can't cover the cost of the programme what can I do?

Funding for this programme may be secured from a variety of sources. Participants on similar programmes have covered the cost through school funds; personal contribution; church contributions as well as charitable donations. It is worth making enquiries to ascertain if there is funding available from alternative sources.

8. I work in an opportunity area or in a category 5 or 6 school, can I receive funding for my fees?

The DFE offer full scholarship funding for participants who work in these prioritised areas. If this applies to you, please indicate this on your application form and we will confirm your eligibility before applying for this funding from the DFE on your behalf.

We are not able to guarantee that this funding will be available but, at the moment, the DFE have declared that this funding will continue until May 2021.

9. If I want to withdraw from the programme and I don't want to continue what happens?

Whilst we encourage all participants to try and complete the programme we appreciate that sometimes this is not possible. In some cases we will support you to defer your completion of the programme until your circumstances change. We do not offer refund on course fees.

If you are in receipt of DfE Scholarship funding you will be unable to apply for the same funding to complete the course with either ourselves or a different provider as this is not permitted by the DfE.

10. What is the criteria for joining the programme?

You need to be a Senior Leader within a school or be in the early part of your career as a Head. If you are not already a Head, you will realistically be ready for this transition within 18 months to two years.

Your application must be supported by the headteacher of the school you currently work in or your Trust CEO or Chair of Governors if you are a serving headteacher.

Your sponsor must indicate their support for you taking the necessary time out of school to complete the qualification.

11. If I apply, will I definitely be offered a place?

We will review and score all application forms in order to ascertain applicant suitability. We will then let you know if we are able to offer you a place by Thursday 3rd December.

We retain the right to prioritise applicants on the basis of the information provided in regions where we have more applicants than available places.

If we do not receive a viable number of applications in a certain region we retain the right to offer applicants a place in a region which was not their preferred choice.

12. Who will be my mentor?

Participants from Church of England schools are required to speak with their Diocese to request support for their application and to select a suitable mentor together. This conversation with the Diocese must happen **before an approach is made** to the potential mentor. Once agreed, the application form can be completed. Participants from other school backgrounds may request support from the Regional Host and Partner School in selecting a suitable mentor should this be helpful.

CofEPQH mentors need to have the skills to coach and support the participant, offering a different perspective, encouragement and occasional challenge. They will be a serving headteacher from a different school (not working within the participant's own school).

13. What will mentors receive in return for their involvement?

Mentors will receive a welcome briefing in which they will hear an overview of the assignments. They will also be provided with the course handbook, assignment handbook and resources offering guidance on how to prepare for mentoring. They will have the option of completing a Mentor Essential virtual training session with our partners 3D Coaching. Attending the briefing is compulsory and attending the 3D Coaching is encouraged as is an excellent professional development opportunity.

14. How much time should I tell a possible mentor they would need to set aside to support me?

During the CofEPQH, mentors will hold at least 5 x 1-hour sessions with the participant, usually at their own workplace. Mentors will also support participants in preparing for their assignments, reflecting on their practice together and ensuring the participant understands what is required.

15. Will I get to visit other schools?

The 9-day placement is a critical part of the NPQH qualification and is **compulsory**. Your sponsor (headteacher, Chair of Governors or MAT CEO) must be aware that, in agreeing that a successful applicant may start the CofEPQH, they are agreeing to releasing you for both 4 days of course input **and** 9 days for the school placement. In light of Covid- 19, it has become possible for many of the placement school activities to be completed using zoom, skype or holding telephone calls so this number of days may realistically be reduced to 5 or 6 on site at the placement school.

You should identify a contrasting school to your own in which to complete the 9-day placement. Diocese Staff can provide support in identifying suitable placement schools and in addition, participants may also draw on the local knowledge and support from the Regional Host and Partner School for the region.

The school placement does not necessarily need to be completed as consecutive days. It may be split into smaller sections (e.g. 3 + 3 + 3 days or 1 + 5 + 3 days) to decrease the burden of taking time out of school.

There are a number of learning outcomes that need to be covered during the placement and these outcomes form the basis of one of the two NPQH assignments.

16. Do you have to be a Christian take part in this programme?

This programme is open to everyone regardless of their religion and we welcome those of Christian faith, other faiths and no faith who feel our approach resonates with their own.

Throughout the programme, we refer to the Church of England's vision for education <https://www.churchofengland.org/education/publications.aspx>, we challenge participants to reflect on their beliefs and values, and we begin and end every learning event with prayer and simple act of collective worship.

17. Is the programme the same as NPQH?

Yes. The programme incorporates the NPQH content areas whilst also being rooted in the Church's vision for education. All participants will complete both their two NPQH assignments and an additional assignment which is unique to our programme.

This additional assignment involves presenting on how you have embedded the Church of England vision for education within the life of your school and takes place at the very end of the programme.

18. Can I do this programme if I already have NPQH?

We recommend that you discuss your professional experience and skills with a member of the Programmes team to ensure that you will receive appropriate professional development by taking part in this programme.

19. I don't have NPQH but I've been a serving head for 2 or more years, can I still do the programme?

We recommend that you discuss your professional experience and skills with a member of the Programmes team to ensure that the Foundation will provide you with appropriate professional development.

20. Is the programme open to me if I'm not in a church school?

Yes the CofEPQH is open to leaders in secondary and primary schools in Church of England, community or other faith schools.

21. How will I be assessed?

Participants will complete two NPQH projects: 1) Leading a whole-school change programme (4,000 words), and 2) Designing an action plan to meet your placement school's resourcing and capability needs (2,500 words). You will select the assessment windows that work best for you- December 2021, January 2022 and March 2022.

You will also deliver a presentation to peers from your diocese and diocesan colleagues about how you have embedded the Church of England Vision for Education. This will take place in June 2022.

22. Does the programme have any M Level credits associated with it?

The programme does not currently have Master's Level accreditation. The NPQH qualification is a highly practical qualification and calls on participants to integrate learning into their practice and record evidence of doing so, rather than writing in an academic manner.