

# School Closure Contingency for Autumn 20 and Spring 21 cohorts

Following the decision to close schools in January 2021, please find below a set of FAQs to address concerns you may have regarding your NPQ project work. The latest advice from DfE relating to special considerations for projects affected by Covid-19 was issued in September 2020. It stated that participants would not be disadvantaged at assessment because of interruptions to the implementation and evaluation of projects. This remains the key principle and should reassure you that solutions can be found to the ways your project work is being affected so you can continue to move towards a successful submission.

We have contacted DfE at the start of the Spring Term 2021 to ask if any additional adjustments are to be made in response to the new closures affecting schools. We will advise you as soon as we receive a response.

In the meantime, we want to reassure you that we will ensure all participants are fully supported and guided through the development stage to lead to a successful submission for final assessment.

## In summary, the key principles for your work at this time should be:

- Only do what you can do and try not to worry about what you are unable to do due to circumstances beyond your control
- All NPQ online courses will continue
- All virtual events will continue on the dates planned
- All leadership coaching sessions will continue for H/EL
- Assessment submission dates remain the same as those on your Learning Network. There are no further dates available
- Keep communication open with your online tutor.

## Online course study

- If an online task would normally require you to complete work in school, consider how you could address it in the current landscape and possible solutions/activities needed and why these would be relevant options.
- If, for any reason, you are unable to engage, short term, in online study contact your tutor
- If core tasks are received outside the course delivery window, they will be marked complete by the tutor, but no feedback will be received.
- Completion of the project overview and tracker reviews are to be completed and uploaded as and when you can
- We will not be unlocking the core tasks before the course window opens but you are able to access and read the modules and relevant resources available online and can reflect on the core task activities prior to scheduled completion
- If your in-school mentor/sponsor is unable to engage with face-to-face meetings, consider setting up a telephone conversation and record feedback in the tracker. There is no need to obtain their signature

## FAQs

### 1. I have been diagnosed with Coronavirus, what should I do/who should I contact regarding my work / training with you?

Please follow the latest government guidance available from:

- NHS - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- Phone- 111 Coronavirus Helpline
- Government Coronavirus Updates - <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>
- Public Health England Updates - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

If you are unable to attend a virtual event, contact the programme coordinator [cpd@bestpracticenet.co.uk](mailto:cpd@bestpracticenet.co.uk) and alternative arrangements will be made. Please ensure you keep in contact with your online tutor for support in relation to your online activity.

### 2. I am experiencing symptoms connected with Coronavirus, or recently returned from a Category 1 country, what should I do/who should I contact regarding my work / training with you?

Please follow the latest government guidance available from:

- NHS - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- Phone- 111 Coronavirus Helpline
- Government Coronavirus Updates - <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>
- Public Health England Updates - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

If you will be unable to attend or deliver an event or activity on your programme with us, please inform us on +44 (0) 117 920 9200, and/or contact [cpd@bestpracticenet.co.uk](mailto:cpd@bestpracticenet.co.uk) so alternative arrangements can be made

### 3. I am on the NPQ distance learning pathway. What difference will this make to me?

None. You will continue with the leadership activity online with your peers and online tutor. School closure may impact upon your final assessment submission and advice given in the assessment section of this update will apply to you.

## School Closure Contingency: NPQML, SL, H and EL Assessment Submission Guidance

### 1. Can I submit for final assessment with some evidence missing?

You will need to include all the evidence required for assessment criteria in each content area. For sections that require evaluation of data to show the positive impact of your work, it is possible to use internal data rather than external data where examinations/assessments have not taken place. Centre Assessed Grades and Teacher Assessments/Predictions are also valid. You can also explain how you have readjusted your project to consider the changes experienced through the pandemic and the re-engagement of pupils with their education, at any

level. You would need to confidently express how, what, and why your findings could and would be scaled up to support improved teaching and learning in the project area when circumstances allow.

## **2. What data can I use to support my pupil progress and attainment?**

You can use internal data for the raw data (baseline) and pupil performance data (mid and end-point data). This does need to be quantitative data. All school-based data will be acceptable.

If your project has started based upon your baseline data, but then interrupted, you can use any end of term data prior to the current school closures to create an endpoint for that period of time. On return to school, you could re-baseline the pupils involved in the project and continue to implement the project. When the project has run for long enough i.e., a minimum of 2 terms (in total between the two periods you have been able to implement) you would collect another set of end-point data. When you come to final submission write-up you would be able to evaluate the key findings from the first set of data and explain how you used it to inform the changes you made for the second period of implementation. You can then explain how your endpoint evaluation will inform future developments and how you had to adapt because of the barriers you faced because of closures and interruptions to pupils being in school.

## **3. Will the submission window change?**

Final assessment submission windows will remain the same, and we strongly recommend you do not submit in the final window for your cohort. There are no later windows other than those specified in the assessment tab of the learning network.

## **4. Can I plan/complete part/all of my project virtually?**

Yes, but you will still need to provide all the necessary evidence required for each of the project assessment criterion.

## **5. Can I submit without the sponsor comments?**

Unfortunately, you cannot. Unless the DfE provide advice otherwise, will need to submit the sponsor comments for:

NPQML 4.1.1

NPQSL 3.2.1 & 4.2.1

NPQH 3.3.2.

As a minimum the sponsor must also rate each content area on the final assessment submission form, and we recommend strongly that the sponsor also provides additional evidence in the relevant column to secure more depth.

## **6. I can't get my sponsor proper signature for my final assessment form.**

Use an electronic version.

## **7. Unfortunately, with the school closed, my planned face to face meetings with my team and mentor /sponsor can no longer take place.**

You can use email or set up a virtual meeting.

## **8. Can I submit for final assessment beyond the original submission windows?**

No, unfortunately there are no further submission dates available as Autumn 20 and Spring 21 cohorts are the last iteration of the current NPQs. Autumn 20 participants (including those on the Apprenticeship route) need to submit by window 2 that is open between 10/12/2021 – 14/01/2022. Spring 21 participants (including those on

the Apprenticeship route) will need to submit in window 1 that is open between 10/12/2021 – 14/01/2022. There is one more assessment window after these dates, in May, where you will be able to resubmit if you need to.

#### **9. My project was due to be completed by Easter and I will be in a new school from April – what will I do?**

This will depend upon the nature of your project and the stage it was at.

If your project was close to completion and the evidence yet to be gathered relates largely to pupil outcomes and an evaluation of the project's effectiveness, we would suggest that you contact your old school for any relevant information you require when this becomes available. A good way of evaluating your situation is to complete the whole of the Project Tracker – this will give you an indication of how much/little evidence remains to be collected. Contact [cpd@bestpracticenet.co.uk](mailto:cpd@bestpracticenet.co.uk) if you are still unsure.

#### **10. My school is now closed, and this will affect the completion of my in-school project**

Don't worry, complete your project when you can and submit outcomes in the first available assessment window. Complete the project tracker as this will give an indication of what you will still need to follow up when you are back at school.

#### **11. If I have missed any virtual sessions will this affect my ability to complete the programme?**

No, but we do expect you to engage with the recorded version of the session.

#### **12. How will I be kept informed about the current situation and NPQs and who will I contact if I am concerned about the programme and its completion?**

Updates will be made available through Canvas and on the OLP website. If you have a specific issue about the programme, please contact your online tutor or your programme coordinator [cpd@bestpracticenet.co.uk](mailto:cpd@bestpracticenet.co.uk)

#### **13. Is it better if I defer into the next intake?**

No, there is not an opportunity to defer as the Autumn 20 and Spring 21 intakes are the last ones of this iteration of the NPQs.

#### **14. I am on the apprenticeship route (ML and SL) what does this mean for the completion of the programme?**

There is additional advice for apprenticeship route participants. Please contact the apprenticeship team if you have any further questions after this advice has been issued. [apprenticeships@bestpracticenet.co.uk](mailto:apprenticeships@bestpracticenet.co.uk)

## **School Closure Contingency: NPQH and NPQEL Additional Assessment Submission Guidance**

### **1. My governance/stakeholder meeting has been cancelled so I can't do the presentation and recording for NPQH Task 1 or NPQEL Task 2**

It is acceptable to hold the meeting virtually. You may wish to consider using Skype or a similar online communication platform.

If you are not able to do this alternative acceptable evidence is a PowerPoint presentation instead of a recording (NPQH/NPQEL). This would need to be supplemented with a Transcript/Key notes that illustrate what was said and the outcomes, including answers to questions. Use the note section under each slide so it is clear what dialogue took place and the outcomes from discussion. You could also record your presentation on relevant slides if you prefer.

### **2. My governance/stakeholder meeting has been cancelled so I can't deliver the action plan presentation for NPQH placement Task 2.**

It is acceptable to hold the meeting virtually. You may wish to consider using Skype or a similar online communication platform. The Action Plan may be distributed to governors as a document. If this is the case, you must invite governors to provide feedback. It is strongly recommended that you include the Action Plan as one of your additional supporting documents, together with feedback and responses from Governors as part of what you would have said if a formal meeting had taken place.

### **3. Can I undertake the NPQH placement task virtually?**

Yes. We recommend you spend sufficient time to ensure you have the relevant evidence for each of the six-assessment criterion to be able to submit a successful assessment submission.

### **4. Do I still need to complete 9 days for my placement project?**

We are waiting for guidance from the DfE. However we recommend you spend sufficient time to ensure you have the relevant evidence for each of the six-assessment criterion to be able to submit a successful assessment submission.

### **5. My placement school does not want me in school at this present time what should I do?**

If the placement school leader is happy to support the process earlier and you can accommodate this then that is fine. However, we recommend you leave the placement project until the later in the Summer term and/or before February half term in the Autumn if you are planning to submit in the December window.

Hold your initial meeting with the Placement school leader as soon as you can so they are clear about timescales, their commitment and you can agree the focus for the action plan and your leadership work.

### **6. My governance meeting has been cancelled so I am unable to present my chosen business development strategy for NPQEL Task 1.**

It is acceptable to hold the meeting virtually. You may wish to consider using Skype or a similar online communication platform. The business strategy may be distributed to governors as a document. If this is the case, you must invite governors to provide feedback. It is strongly recommended that you include the business strategy as one of your additional supporting documents, together with feedback and responses from Governors as part of what you would have said if a formal meeting had taken place.