

# School Closure Contingency for Spring 19, Autumn 19 and Spring 20 cohorts

Following the decision to close schools in January 2020, 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 leadership coaching sessions will continue for H/EL
- Assessment submission dates remain the same as those on your Learning Network.
- Keep communication open with your online tutor
- 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 submit within the assessment window contact the Assessment Centre, [Assessments@bestpracticenet.co.uk](mailto:Assessments@bestpracticenet.co.uk) who will advise you.

## 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 are unable to submit within the assessment window contact the Assessment Centre, [Assessments@bestpracticenet.co.uk](mailto:Assessments@bestpracticenet.co.uk) who will advise you.

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

None. 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

### 4. 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 of the mark scheme. 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.

### 5. 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.

### 6. 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.

### **7. 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.

### **8. 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.

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

Use an electronic version.

### **10. 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.

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

Yes, though we would recommend that you aim for one of the specified windows for your cohort. If you do not feel that you will be able to submit by the last available window please contact [assessments@bestpracticenet.co.uk](mailto:assessments@bestpracticenet.co.uk), citing the reason and requesting an extension.

### **12. 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.

### **13. 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.

### **14. 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.

### **15. 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 the Assessment Centre, [assessments@bestpracticenet.co.uk](mailto:assessments@bestpracticenet.co.uk)

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

Only in exceptional circumstances are we expecting candidates to defer as the NPQ journey, you have stepped onto, will still focus on you and your leadership development. There will be flex in the actual submission of projects for final assessment and we will support you through to when schools re-open and you can continue work on your projects.

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

### **17. 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 when/what dialogue took place and the outcomes of discussion. You could also record your presentation on relevant slides if you prefer.

### **18. 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.

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

Yes, you are able to undertake the placement task virtually. The time spent on the task would have to equate to a minimum of 4.5 days and you would need to be confident that you have enough evidence to write-up the final submission against each of the six criterion. This may change following further advice from the DfE.

### **20. 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.