



Department
for Education

National Professional Qualifications - Mark Scheme

Introduction

This mark scheme sets out how participants must be assessed against the Assessment Criteria as described in the NPQ Content and Assessment Framework.

Assessors must mark participants in accordance with this mark scheme to ensure a nationally consistent approach is taken. The mark scheme will:

- Assure uniformity by ensuring that all participants have achieved a minimum core standard of skills and knowledge across the framework,
- Assure rigour by ensuring that participants have covered many of the criteria comprehensively, and
- Allow participants the flexibility to focus more extensively on the most relevant criteria to their role or development needs (with a less onerous demonstration of the others).

Using the mark scheme

Scoring

The mark scheme is a points-based marking system, with points awarded for successful demonstration of each assessment criterion assessed during an assessment task.

Each assessment criterion is marked out of a maximum of two, where “2” equates to fully demonstrating a criterion; “1” equates to partially demonstrating a criterion; and “0” equates to no relevant evidence provided.

Half marks are not permissible and no weighting is applied to any criterion.

When assessing participants’ work, Assessors must:

- **award a mark out of two for each criterion assessed, using the score descriptors at Annex A.** Assessors will need to use a ‘best fit’ approach and apply their professional judgement to assess whether the participant’s work fits best with the descriptions under the 0, 1 or 2 mark columns.
- **take notes to justify the mark they have given against each assessment criterion**

Pass mark

To pass an assessment task, the participant must:

- a) achieve the overall pass mark for the task (set at around 70% of the total marks available); **and**
- b) score at least a “1” in all of assessment criteria assessed in that task (i.e. a participant will fail if they score a “0” on any criterion)

The table below details the pass mark for each task. For NPQH and NPQEL, participants must pass both assessment tasks in order to be awarded the qualification.

NPQ level		Criteria Assessed	Marks available	Pass mark	Additional Requirements
NPQML		16	32	22	At least a ‘1’ in each assessment criterion
NPQSL		14	28	20	
NPQH	Task 1	15	30	21	
	Task 2	6	12	8	
NPQEL	Task 1	14	28	20	
	Task 2	12	24	17	

Providers must make participants aware of the minimum standards they must meet in order to pass their NPQ.

Grading

No grade classification is to be applied; participants will either pass or fail. Participants must be advised of their final assessment score, including a breakdown by each assessment criterion (and by each task for NPQH and NPQEL), once all moderation processes are complete. This will enable participants to identify areas for future professional development.

Word Limits

Assessors must not award marks for work that is beyond the word limit specified for that task, unless it forms part of support documents or annexes, which are excluded from the word limit.

Leadership behaviours

Leadership behaviours¹, which describe how leaders operate, are not to be formally assessed or scored through the assessment criteria and tasks.

However, at the beginning of their NPQ, providers must work with participants to evaluate the participant's strength in each leadership behaviour, and plan how the participant will develop these behaviours during their NPQ study. Providers have freedom to determine how this should be done and there is no requirement that this is done by way of a 360° assessment.

Moderation

As set out in the Quality Framework, Providers must establish their own moderation or peer review process. In addition, the Quality Assurance agent will carry out a national moderation of 10% of all assessed work.

Results must not be communicated to participants until the national moderation process for the relevant cohort is complete and the results are confirmed by the Quality Assurance agent.

Resit

Two resits are permitted after the first fail. Three attempts are permitted in total within a two-year period. If the first submission is within the 18 months' completion timeframe, then the two-year period begins at the point of first fail. Providers will need to consider what is a reasonable period for participants who have taken longer than the 18 months' timeframe to complete and not been granted a deferral. After the third failed attempt, participants wishing to try again must wait one year and will need to start the course afresh.

Academic misconduct

Providers must have a policy in place, which helps participants employ good academic practices and avoid academic misconduct, and which sets out how suspected cases of academic misconduct will be investigated. The policy must include that collusion and copying another participant's work is academic misconduct. Providers must publish their policy alongside their other programme information, and may wish to include a section on academic misconduct in their agreement with the participant. The Department and the Quality Assurance agent, once appointed, will draw up and issue further guidance on what to do if academic misconduct has been investigated and found to have occurred.

Glossary

A number of terms are frequently used in the score descriptors. Below is a list of those terms and their definitions.

¹ NPQ leadership behaviours across all four levels are: Commitment; Collaboration; Personal Drive; Resilience; Awareness; Integrity; and Respect.

Term	Definition
Analyse	Break down data, information, or research and identify issues, common themes / concepts; identify advantages and disadvantages of approach; show how main ideas are related and why, and why important.
Apply	Make use of newly acquired knowledge and skills in the task / project
Assess	Use available information to make a judgement / take a decision.
Demonstrably	Providing evidence of understanding / use of knowledge and skills in the task / project to positive effect
Deploy	Make use of resources or strategies to address an issue.
Effectiveness	Producing desired result, impact or outcome.
Efficiency	Getting best use of resource with minimum wasted effort or expense.
Establish	Secure acceptance for; set up on a permanent basis.
Evaluate	Examine strengths and weaknesses, similarities and differences; make points for and against; review evidence from different perspectives and come to a valid conclusion or reasoned judgement.
Exploit	Make full use of, and derive benefit from, a resource, knowledge or skill; use to good advantage.
Implement	Put into practical effect; carry out.
Successfully	Evidence of outcome or impact of approaches / decisions taken.
Sustain	Maintain for a period of time relevant to the task / project.

ANNEX A - SCORE DESCRIPTORS

NPQML – leading a team

Assessment Task: Leading an improvement project within their team, lasting at least 2 terms, to improve pupil progress (part A) and team capability (Part B)

Word Limit: 4,500 words

Assessment Criteria: 16

Marks available: 32

Pass mark: 22

You are reminded that in addition to the pass mark above, participants must also score at least 1 mark in each assessment criterion in order to be successful in the task, e.g. a '0' will result in the participant failing the task.

NPQML Content area	Assessment criteria	Score descriptor 0 Marks	Score descriptor 1 Mark	Score descriptor 2 Marks	Supporting documents required
Tested in Part A					
Strategy & Improvement	1.1.1 Deploys tools and techniques to manage and analyse data on pupil progress and attainment, at group and individual level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant evidence submitted by participant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deploys tools and techniques to manage and analyse data on pupil progress and attainment at group and individual level; although tools and techniques deployed and/or conclusions drawn or trends identified during analysis are not always the most important/ relevant/ appropriate (for specified purpose/ context) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deploys appropriate tools and techniques to manage data on pupil progress and attainment at group and individual level effectively; analysis of progress and attainment accurately identifies the most important and relevant trends 	Raw data analysis
	1.1.2 Designs, evaluates and improves plans in light of data on pupil progress and attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant evidence submitted by participant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designs an improvement project, evaluates impact and modifies plans; although priorities identified or conclusions drawn are not always consistent with data supplied on pupil progress and attainment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designs an improvement project that identifies priorities that are wholly consistent with data supplied on pupil progress and attainment; evaluates impacts of plans robustly and makes improvements where necessary in important/ relevant/ appropriate respects 	
	1.1.3 Deploys change management tools and/ or techniques during the design and implementation of plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant evidence submitted by participant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deploys change management tools and/ or techniques during the design and implementation of plans; but not always the most important/ relevant/ appropriate (for specified purpose/ context) Change not sustained or implemented successfully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deploys the most important/ relevant/ appropriate/ change managements tools and/ or techniques (for specified purpose/ context) during the design and implementation of plans, to successfully implement sustainable change at team level 	

NPQML Content area	Assessment criteria	Score descriptor 0 Marks	Score descriptor 1 Mark	Score descriptor 2 Marks	Supporting documents required
Teaching & Curriculum Excellence	2.1.1 Analyses research into, and examples of, domestic and international teaching strategies/ pedagogical approaches and applies findings to own plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant evidence submitted by participant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyses evidence-based domestic and international teaching strategies/ pedagogical approaches; but not always the most important/ relevant/ appropriate research and examples (for specified purpose/ context) Participant's plans to grow excellent teaching in a team are not always consistent with the most important/ relevant/ appropriate findings of their analysis or not grounded in evidence of effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyses the most important/ relevant/ appropriate domestic and international teaching strategies/ pedagogical approaches for their specified purpose or context Participant's plans to grow excellent teaching in a team are wholly consistent with the most important/ relevant/ appropriate findings of their analysis and grounded in clear evidence of effectiveness 	
	2.1.2 Evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of curriculum taught by team, implementing improvements where necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant evidence submitted by participant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluates curriculum taught by team, identifying strengths and weaknesses; although improvements implemented are not always consistent with the most important/ relevant/ appropriate findings of their evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensively evaluates curriculum taught by team, implementing improvements that are wholly consistent with most important/ relevant/ appropriate findings of their evaluation 	
	2.1.3 Implements and evaluates an evidence-based project that improves pupil progress and/ or attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant evidence submitted by participant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implements and evaluates evidence-based project within a team; although impact of project on pupil progress and/ or attainment unclear or inconsistent with specified purpose or priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implements and evaluates evidence-based project within a team that demonstrably improves pupil progress and/ or attainment in line with specified purpose and priorities 	Pupil performance data

NPQML Content area	Assessment criteria	Score descriptor 0 Marks	Score descriptor 1 Mark	Score descriptor 2 Marks	Supporting documents required
Leading with Impact	3.1.1 Exploits different leadership styles and justifies why these have been adopted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant evidence submitted by participant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopts different leadership styles; but not always most important/ relevant/ appropriate (for specified purpose/ context) Benefits and risks of approaches adopted not fully explained or justified appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopts different leadership styles successfully to ensure that team meets objectives Benefits and risks of different approaches fully explained and approaches adopted justified appropriately 	
	3.1.2 Exploits different communication styles and justifies why these have been adopted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant evidence submitted by participant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopts different communication styles, but not always most important/ relevant/ appropriate for specified audience, purpose or context Benefits and risks of approaches adopted not fully explained or justified appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopts different communications styles successfully, including in challenging circumstances, to communicate confidently and effectively with a range of stakeholders Benefits and risks of approaches adopted fully explained and justified appropriately 	

NPQML Content area	Assessment criteria	Score descriptor 0 Marks	Score descriptor 1 Mark	Score descriptor 2 Marks	Supporting documents required
Working in Partnership	4.1.1 Establishes relationships with others within and outside of own team, deploying appropriate structures and/ or processes to mitigate against any barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant evidence submitted by participant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deploys structures and/or processes to establish relationships within and outside of own team; but not always the most important/ relevant/ appropriate (for specified purpose/ context) Barriers to collaboration with important/ relevant/ appropriate stakeholders collaboration not always overcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deploys appropriate/ relevant structures and/ or processes to overcome barriers to effective collaboration A wide range of important/ relevant/ appropriate relationships successfully established within and outside of own team, including with more challenging partners/ stakeholders 	Sponsor comments
	4.1.2 Designs and/ or delivers plans in collaboration with others within and outside of own team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant evidence submitted by participant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designs and/ or delivers plans in collaboration with others inside and outside of team; but not always the most important/ relevant/ appropriate stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designs and/ or delivers plans successfully through sustained collaboration with important/ relevant/ appropriate stakeholders inside and outside of team 	

NPQML Content area	Assessment criteria	Score descriptor 0 Marks	Score descriptor 1 Mark	Score descriptor 2 Marks	Supporting documents required
<i>Tested in Part B</i>					
Managing Resources & Risks	5.1.1 Analyses the financial and staffing implications of own plans, during whole lifetime of plans, using a budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant evidence submitted by participant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget provides a basic analysis of the financial and staffing implications of plans, through whole lifetime of plans; but does not always include the most important/ relevant/ appropriate costs (for specified purpose/ context) Some consideration as to how to deliver efficiencies through the lifetime of plans; but not always in the most important/ relevant/ appropriate areas (for specified purpose/ context) or in the context of achievement of team objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget provides a detailed analysis of all relevant financial and staffing implications, during whole lifetime of plans Consideration given to how efficiencies can be achieved in respect of important/ relevant/ appropriate costs and how these impact on team objectives 	Budget
	5.1.2 Defines the steps required to successfully implement plans, using a project plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant evidence submitted by participant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project plan defines some of the steps required to successfully implement plans; although important activities (for specified purpose/ context) are poorly defined or absent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project plan defines all of the steps required to successfully implement plans 	Project plan
	5.1.3 Identifies and mitigates risks in plans, using a risk register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant evidence submitted by participant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk register demonstrates that some risks in plans are identified and mitigations are in place; although risks and/ or mitigations are not always the most important/ relevant/ appropriate (for specified purpose/ context) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk register demonstrates that all important/ relevant risks in plans are identified and relevant/ appropriate mitigations are in place (for specified purpose/ context) 	Risk register

NPQML Content area	Assessment criteria	Score descriptor 0 Marks	Score descriptor 1 Mark	Score descriptor 2 Marks	Supporting documents required
Increasing Capability	6.1.1 Assesses individuals' performance and capability methodically and identifies appropriate, targeted professional development opportunities within and beyond the school to support them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant evidence submitted by participant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assesses individuals' performance and capability identifies professional development opportunities; but these are not always the most important/ relevant/ appropriate opportunities (for specified purpose/ context) Assessment of individuals' performance unstructured or inconsistent with relevant guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assesses individuals' performance and capability methodically, consistent with relevant guidance Accurately identifies most important/ relevant/ appropriate opportunities targeted professional development opportunities within and beyond the school (for specified purpose/ context) 	
	6.1.2 Assesses their own performance and capability methodically, identifying appropriate, targeted professional development opportunities for self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant evidence submitted by participant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assesses own performance and capability; but these are not always the most important/ relevant/ appropriate professional development opportunities (for specified purpose/ context) Assessment of performance and capability unstructured and does not draw on relevant tools and techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assesses own performance and capability methodically, drawing on relevant tools and techniques and accurately identifying important/ relevant/ appropriate professional development opportunities for self 	
	6.1.3 Designs and implements plans to evaluate the impact and cost-effectiveness of professional development in terms of pupil outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant evidence submitted by participant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluates the impact and cost-effectiveness of professional development; but does not always relate these to important/ relevant/ appropriate impacts on pupil outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluates the impact and cost-effectiveness of professional development in terms of pupil outcomes, explicitly identifying the most important/ relevant/ appropriate impacts on pupil outcomes 	