

# **NPQ Programme Deferral and Withdrawal Policy (v.02)**

## **Deferrals**

### **What is a deferral?**

We appreciate that there may be circumstances which may impact a participant's ability to complete their NPQ course in its entirety over a continuous period. In these circumstances, we want to support participants to successfully complete their course, including the final assessment stage. This may include offering the option of a deferral period. Examples of circumstances that may impact a participant's ability to engage with and complete their NPQ course, and where a deferral may be offered, include but are not limited to:

- Illness and/or health-related issues and leaves of absence;
- Maternity, paternity, shared parental, adoption or parental leave;
- Bereavement or changes to personal circumstances;
- Any other change or occurrence which is out of their control, and which could not have been foreseen or planned for.

### **Eligibility to apply for a deferral**

To be eligible for deferral, participants must have started their NPQ course (the participant has engaged to a sufficient point for a start declaration to have been made), and payment (where applicable for school or self-funded participants) must have been received.

If a candidate wishes to defer prior to a starter declaration having been made and/or prior to payment having been received (where applicable), then their course enrolment will be deferred to the next cohort. In these cases, we reserve the right to require any application eligibility and suitability assessments to be repeated if appropriate.

When requesting a deferral, the participant or should specify their expected date of re-joining their course, which should normally be no longer than 12 months from the point of deferral.

The exact date of re-joining will take account of the cohort and course delivery cycles, and this will mean that the exact deferral period may vary slightly to ensure that no programme content is missed due to the deferral.

Developed by



In partnership with



Evidence Based  
Education

Funded by



If deferrals or extensions are not possible then the withdrawal policy will apply.

Please note:

If the school is not eligible for scholarship funding, no refund will be available at the point of deferral as the participant is expected to return to the programme. For scholarship funded NPQs, DfE reserves the right to claim back funding which has been awarded to schools to cover the cost of individuals who do not complete the programme. In such cases, Education Development Trust similarly reserves the right to re-claim these amounts from the school or Trust.

## Applying for a deferral

Should a participant or wish to defer, they should:

- first discuss this with their Delivery Partner to consider whether the deferral can be avoided;
- send their deferral request in writing to [npqs@educationdevelopmenttrust.com](mailto:npqs@educationdevelopmenttrust.com), providing specific details regarding the date they wish start their deferral, and their planned date of return to the programme.

All applications to defer will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and the decision about whether to grant a deferral will be at the sole discretion of Education Development Trust.

If it is decided that deferral is the appropriate course of action, the programme team will contact the participant and Delivery Partner to discuss next steps.

Once agreed, the deferral will be confirmed in writing to the participant, including the expected date of return to the programme and arrangements for re-joining the programme.

## Re-joining the programme

The programme team at Education Development Trust will monitor deferrals and contact the participant 3 months prior to the planned return date requesting confirmation of their intent to return.

If the participant chooses not to return, they will be classed as withdrawing from the programme. In this case the terms outlined in the withdrawal policy will then apply.

Once the return date is confirmed, the programme team at Education Development Trust will ensure that all of the relevant details are provided to allow the participant to resume their NPQ course.

## Withdrawals

All applicants are encouraged to complete the entire NPQ course for which they have applied. However, circumstances may arise which mean that withdrawal from a course is unavoidable, for example a change in role (meaning the course is no longer applicable) or sudden/long term illness.

Withdrawal should be discussed with their Delivery Partner lead in the first instance. Where possible, applicants will be encouraged to defer completion of their NPQ rather than withdrawing completely.

If an applicant wishes to proceed with their decision to withdraw, then a request should be submitted in writing to the Education Development Trust programme team at [npqs@educationdevelopmenttrust.com](mailto:npqs@educationdevelopmenttrust.com), detailing the planned date of withdrawal and the reasons for doing so.

Developed by



In partnership with



Evidence Based  
Education

Funded by



Once confirmed, the withdrawal will be confirmed in writing to the participant and Delivery Partner, the participant will be removed from their course on the Learning Management System and records updated to reflect the withdrawal.

Where a school has paid for an NPQ (or the participant is self-funded) and the participant has withdrawn, a whole or partial refund of fees is at the sole discretion of Education Development Trust. The timing of the withdrawal (whether it is before the programme has started, halfway through etc) will be considered, as will the costs incurred by the Delivery Partner and Education Development Trust from the point at which the applicant accepted their place on the programme.

## Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

### **What is the definition of a withdrawn participant?**

A participant who has commenced training (as defined earlier in this Q&A) and has then confirmed they no longer want to continue with the NPQ. This could also be a participant who is no longer engaging with the programme or communicating with their Delivery Partner or Lead Provider after numerous attempts.

### **At what point is a participant considered to have commenced their training?**

A participant is considered to have started their NPQ training once they have met at least one of the Output 1 (Teacher Validated and Training Commenced) criteria from the NPQ Engagement & Participation Guidance. The criteria are:

- Confirmation of the participant having attended a face-to-face training event or live webinar led by the Delivery Partner either in person or online during the milestone period.
- The participant having accrued at least one self-study credit, as evidenced by the 'credit report'.
- Confirmation of the participant having viewed at least 90% of the Block 1 video introduction.

### **Can a participant be considered as withdrawn before Output 1 (Teacher Validated and Training Commenced)?**

A participant can only be considered to have withdrawn if the Lead Provider has submitted a starter declaration for Output 1 (Teacher Validated and Training Commenced) to the DfE. If a participant withdraws before this point, this is simply considered as them having either withdrawn or deferred their application to study a NPQ (depending on their wishes). Equally if the participant does not commence training at all, they are not considered as withdrawn and will not be counted towards your KPIs.

### **Can a participant withdraw from an NPQ with one Lead Provider, begin a NPQ with another Lead Provider and receive DfE funding?**

If a Lead Provider marks a participant as withdrawn on the DfE digital system, the participant would not be able to access DfE funding for the same NPQ with any Lead Provider. This would not prevent a participant to access funding for a different NPQ. Delivery Partners and Lead Providers should ensure that participants withdrawing from an NPQ are aware they will not be eligible for funding for the same NPQ in the future.

### **If a participant starts an NPQ and then withdraws, can the Delivery Partner still claim funding for part of the course already completed?**

If a participant commences an NPQ with a Lead Provider and withdraws from their NPQ in between two Output review points, an Output Payment will be paid for the full period between the two review points but no further Output Payments will be made past that point as the Lead Provider is no longer delivering to that participant and will therefore not be able to claim for further payments from the DfE. For example, if the participant withdrew between Output 1 and Output 2, a payment would be made for Output 2 but no more Output Payments will be made past Output 2.

Developed by



In partnership with



Evidence Based  
Education

Funded by



**What is the funding process for participants that defer?**

The payment approach will depend on the point in which the participant defers:

- where a participant defers within one calendar month before an Output Review Point (please see the 'NPQ Engagement & Participation Guidance'), payment will be made for the upcoming Output Payment, in recognition of the provision the participant would have accessed.
- where a participant defers more than one calendar month before an Output Review Point, payment will not be made for that provision until the participant has re-joined the programme.

In all cases, the Delivery Partner will only be entitled to the number of Output payments specified in their contract (three for Specialist NPQ participants, four for Leadership NPQ participants).

**What happens if a participant is unable to undertake the summative assessment due to health reasons/chronic illness/COVID etc?**

If a participant is unable to complete their summative assessment due reasons such as health/chronic illness/COVID, the Delivery Partner and Lead Provider should defer this participant to the next assessment window.

Developed by



In partnership with



Funded by

