

## NPQ Programme Completion: Attendance, Withdrawal, Deferral and Extension

### Policy and Guidelines

Ambition will consider all participants who have attended **Session 1** of their programme of study as have started their programme. Participants have **18months from the date of Session 1** to complete and submit their assignments for assessment. In certain cases, a deferral (of engagement with the NPQ programme to that with a future cohort) or an extension (beyond the 18month window) may be granted. Details on this can be found below and you should be aware that we expect 90% of participants complete their NPQ (viewed as submission of assignments for assessment) within the 18month timeframe (and as per DfE metric 4).

### Attendance

Participants are expected to complete 100% of their chosen NPQ programme, including but not limited to facilitated training sessions and any (if completing the NPQH) any school placements. It is the responsibility of the partner to monitor and respond to individual attendance records as well as any patterns in attendance across cohorts and across NPQ programmes.

Where circumstances arise in which it is unavoidable that a participant must miss a session, the Partner is required to provide the participant with:

- Access to the session materials, and
- The opportunity to discuss the session including the learning objectives and any key activities with the session's lead facilitator.

Should a participant miss more than two sessions (i.e. 3 or more than 3 sessions) they will be unable to complete the NPQ and submit their assignments for assessment. This is because it is considered that too much learning will have been missed, hampering the participant in successfully completing the assessment requirements. In this case the partner may:

- Offer the participant the option to defer engagement to a later cohort where they must attend the relevant session(s) as part of that particular programme cycle;
- Offer a suitable 'catch-up' option which we view to be attendance at a facilitated training session which covers the relevant missed content.

**Process**

We ask that you track and monitor the following information, sharing this with us within 7 days of the final training session.

**1. Attendance tracking**

**Partner name:**

**Cohort name:**

Participant first name	Participant last name	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6	Details of catch-up completed for each session missed	% Attendance	Eligible to submit and complete NPQ?

**2. Withdrawal**

Should a participant choose to withdraw from a programme you should notify us using the relevant form as soon as possible. We are also required to report on retention to the DfE – both as part of our metrics as a provider and also in connection to any scholarship payments.

Please note that:

- Ambition will consider all participants who have attended Session 1 as the confirmed cohort size and will register these participants with the DfE for their NPQ qualification;
- Ambition will price the value of the contract against the number of participants who have attended session 1 and who are named on the Participant Registration Form;

- Ambition will not refund the participant fee for those participants who have attended Session 1 and who were named on the Participant Registration Form should they withdraw at a later point;
- The DfE reserves the right to claim back any funding awarded to that individual;
- Should the participant have applied for a scholarship, any withdrawal may impact their eligibility to apply for another one in the future.

Providers are required to notify DfE (via Ambition) in writing when, and why, a participant does not complete their funded course. The DfE reserves the right to reclaim scholarships awarded to any individual who has withdrawn from a programme for whatever reason, and so if a scholarship refund has been paid to the partner by Ambition we reserve the right to claim back the appropriate amount from the partner:

- If the participant completes less than 25% of the course content/time/value –75% of the value will be repayable to DfE.
- If the participant completes up to 50% of the course content/time/value, 50% of the costs will be repayable to DfE.
- Where over 50% of the course costs have been incurred by providers and/or completed by participants, other than in exceptional circumstances, the DfE do not expect clawbacks/refunds to apply.
- If the licensee (Ambition) ceases to be accredited NPQ providers, funding will cease, and funding held by providers related to any undelivered courses/content will also need to be repaid to DfE.

### **Process**

When a participant withdraws or is removed from a programme, we ask that you as Partner complete the below Withdrawal Form and share this with us. We will ensure that this information is logged and our records are updated.

**Withdrawal form**

**Partner name:**

**Cohort name:**

Participant first name	Participant last name	Programme (ML, SL, H or EL)	Start date (Session 1)	Date of Withdrawal	% of programme completed at point of withdrawal  (0%, 25%, 50%)	Reason for withdrawal	Scholarship applied for (Yes/No)	Confirmed by (individual in Partner organisation)

**3. Deferral**

Whilst we expect Participants to plan to complete their programme within 18months of starting, we do understand that there may be exceptional and extenuating circumstances which are out of the Participant’s control and which will impact their ability to do so. In these circumstances we want to take every reasonable effort to support the individual to successfully complete their programme and submit their projects for assessment, and so may agree a deferral. Examples of circumstances where a deferral may be offered are below:

- Illness and/or health-related issues and leaves of absence which impact the individual’s ability to fully engage with and complete the programme of study;
- Maternity, paternity or parental leave;

- Bereavement or changes to personal circumstances which impact the individual's ability to fully engage with and complete the programme of study;
- Any other change or occurrence which is out of their control and which could not have been foreseen or planned for, and which may impact the individual's ability to fully engage with and complete the programme of study.

Please note that the expectation is that Participants attend **all programme sessions** and **must not miss more than two sessions**. Where circumstances arise in which it is unavoidable that a participant must miss a session, the Partner is required to provide Participants with access to the content and also provide the opportunity for the Participant to discuss the learning objectives and any key activities with the session's lead facilitator. This can happen up to twice in any one programme of study per Participant but after this (three sessions and above) it is considered that too much face to face content will have been missed, hampering the participant in successfully completing the assessment requirements, and so the Participant should defer their participation in the programme to a future cohort. If a partner is running more than one cohort of a programme at one time they may choose to transfer a participant between cohorts, or offer an alternative session date in which to catch up missed content (rather than offering a deferral); this is at the discretion of the partner.

Should a deferral be required or requested, the partner should notify Ambition at the earliest and using the below template. Ambition will update all records and ensure that the 18month window for that individual is suspended from the date at which they deferred until the date at which they re-join a cohort and complete their programme of study. During this time period it is expected and understood that the Participant is not engaging in any element of their NPQ programme.

Please note that:

- Ambition will not charge any additional fees in this instance;
- A deferral must be to a named, future cohort with a confirmed 'stop' and 're-start' date;
- The participant must be made aware of their new deadline for submitting their assignment(s);
- A deferral assumes that the participant has stopped engaging with the NPQ programme – both training sessions and any projects/assignments;
- A participant can only defer once.

**Process**

When a deferral is requested or required, we ask that you as Partner use our policy and guidelines to make a decision about whether or not to offer a deferral, and – if one is granted - to agree a date for re-joining a programme along with a new submission deadline. Regardless of outcome, and for every request, we ask that you complete the below Deferral Form and share this with us. We will ensure that this information is logged and our records are updated, as well as reviewing the decision to ensure consistency of decision making across all programmes and partners, as well as alignment in interpretation and application of policy. Where required we will give feedback on any decisions made by our Partners.

**Deferral request form**

**Partner name:**

<b>Participant first name</b>	<b>Participant last name</b>	<b>Programme</b> (ML, SL, H or EL)	<b>Start date</b> (Session 1)	<b>Reason for deferral request</b> (why a deferral is required/ has been requested)	<b>Deferral agreed?</b> (Yes/No)	<b>Rational for decision</b> (why you have granted a deferral, or not)	<b>Inclusive deferral dates</b> (dates deferral is from and to)	<b>Revised submission deadline</b> (18months excluding period when engagement is deferred)	<b>Decision made by</b> (individual in Partner organisation)

#### 4. Extensions

##### Timeline

Participants have 18months from the start of their programme (Session 1) to complete the required projects and submit the write-ups for assessment. This timeline is set by the Department for Education (DfE) and as a provider we report on and are evaluated against related metrics (we are assessed against a target of 95% of all participants submit their projects write-ups for assessment within 18months of the start of the programme). We therefore expect Partners to support their Participants to meet their 18month deadline.

##### Extensions

Whilst we expect Participants to plan to meet this 18month deadline, we do understand that there may be exceptional and extenuating circumstances which are out of the Participant's control and which will impact their ability to do so. In these circumstances we want to take every reasonable effort to support the individual to successfully submit their projects for assessment, and so may agree a revised and extended deadline for them to work towards. Examples of circumstances which can be viewed as exceptional and extenuating are below:

- Illness and/or health-related issues and leaves of absence which are out of the individual's control and which could not have been foreseen or planned for when starting the programme, and which have impacted/will impact a Participant's ability to complete their projects and/or submit their assignments within the 18month window set;
- Bereavement or changes to personal circumstances which are out of the individual's control and which could not have been foreseen or planned for when starting the programme, and which have impacted/will impact a Participant's ability to complete their projects and/or submit their assignments within the 18month window set;
- Any other change or occurrence which is out of their control and which could not have been foreseen or planned for, and which has impacted/will impact a Participant's ability to complete their projects and/or submit their assignments within the 18month window set;
- Maternity, paternity or parental leave;

***In any of the above cases, where the Participant is not engaging with any element of their NPQ for a prolonged period of time, a deferral may be the better option.***

- If a Participant has any additional needs, including those linked to learning difficulties, which may be met by providing an extended deadline for them to complete their projects and submit their write-ups for assessment (please see the Reasonable Adjustment policy for more information).

**Process**

When a request for an extension is received from a Participant, we ask that you as Partner use our policy and guidelines to make a decision about whether or not to grant an extension, and – if one is granted - to agree a new submission deadline. Regardless of outcome, and for every request, we ask that you complete the below Extension Request Form and share this with us. We will ensure that this information is logged and our records are updated, as well as reviewing the decision to ensure consistency of decision making across all programmes and partners, as well as alignment in interpretation and application of policy. Where required we will give feedback on any decisions made by our Partners.

**Extension request form**

**Partner name:**

Participant first name	Participant last name	Programme (ML, SL, H or EL)	Start date (Session 1)	Submission deadline (18months from start date)	Reason for extension request (why the Participant has requested an extension)	Extension granted? (Yes/No)	Rational for decision (why you believe this is an exceptional and thus extenuating circumstance, or not)	Revised submission deadline (date)	Decision made by (individual in Partner organisation)