NPQ for SENCO Framework publication

Background

In the SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan (SENDAP IP), published in March 2023, we announced the commitment to create a new National Professional Qualification for Special Educational Needs Coordinators (NPQ for SENCOs) to replace the existing National Award for SEN Co-ordination (NASENCo) as the mandatory qualification for this role.

The introduction of the new NPQ for SENCOs will play a key role in achieving our ambition to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND by ensuring SENCOs consistently receive high-quality, evidence-based training. This is crucial given the central role SENCOs play in supporting pupils with SEND.

This will become the mandatory qualification for SENCOs from September 2024, with teaching beginning in Autumn 2024. The three-year window to complete the mandatory qualification upon taking up a SENCO post will remain following the introduction of the NPQ for SENCOs. Further information on the transition to the new NPQ can be found here: Transition to national professional qualification for special educational needs co-ordinators - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The full NPQ for SENCOs framework has now been published and can be found here: National professional qualifications frameworks - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Q&A

When will the NPQ for SENCOs be available?
• The national professional qualification for SENCOs will be available from Autumn 2024. Further information can be found at Transition to national professional qualification for special educational needs co-ordinators - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

I'm a SENCO, what qualification should I take?
• The NPQ will become the mandatory qualification for SENCOs from September 2024. First teaching of the NPQ for SENCOs will take place in autumn 2024. Aspiring SENCOs should continue to sign up for the NASENCO qualification until the end of the 2023 to 2024 academic year. Further information can be found at Transition to national professional qualification for special educational needs co-ordinators - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

What is the target audience for the new NPQ, and what will it cover?
• The new qualification is designed for existing or aspiring SEN Co-ordinators (SENCOs). The NPQ will be underpinned by a new content framework which sets out what SENCOs need to know and be able to do to fulfil their role successfully and confidently.

Will SENCOs that have undertaken the NASENCO be required to take the NPQ for SENCOs?
• No. SENCOs who have successfully completed the NASENCO are already qualified for the role. They will not be required to undertake the NPQ.

When will SENCOs be required to undertake training?
• The three-year window to complete the mandatory qualification upon taking up a SENCO post will remain following the introduction of the NPQ for SENCOs. Schools and SENCOs will need to ensure that, where necessary, they are enrolled on training that will allow them to meet this requirement. Further information can be found at Transition to national professional qualification for special educational needs co-ordinators - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Who will deliver the NPQ for SENCOs?
• The Department is launching a procurement shortly and a market warming Prior Information Notice (PIN) will be published prior to this. Details of the lead providers accredited to deliver this NPQ will be published once they have been chosen.

Will the NPQ for SENCOs be funded?
• All arrangements around the funding will be communicated in due course.