

## NPQML/SL – FAQs relating to Covid-19

Updated 1 February 2021

**We know that you are working in unprecedented times and appreciate that the recent upheaval in schools due to the national lockdown has brought with it further challenges. We understand that these changes will mean that many of you will have questions about the impact this may have on your NPQ.**

This live FAQ document has been produced to help share answers to the most common queries we are receiving about the NPQML & SL in relation to Covid-19.

If you have not yet requested support from the programmes team and this document does not answer your question, please get in touch at [eml@ambition.org.uk](mailto:eml@ambition.org.uk)

### FAQs

#### Project design, implementation and evaluation

##### **How can I complete my assignment without access to the data I was intending to use (such as exam results?)**

The DfE's stance is that if you cannot access the original data you intended to use in your assessment, you may use alternative data so long as it demonstrates the impact of your project. For example, in the absence of exam results this summer you may now use Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs).

Please note that the mark scheme does not specify one type of data as a requirement. This means that you can use **any source of data** – or information to support your project. You can also change the type of data you use part-way through your assignment.

You can also speak to your sponsor who may be able to help you with ideas for data that could support your project. Please refer to the relevant handbook to ensure that your proposed adaptations meet all of the assessment criteria:

- > [NPQSL Assessment Handbook](#)
- > [NPQML Assessment Handbook](#)

##### **How can I complete my project with the majority of my pupils out of school?**

If schools are still shut for the majority of students when you commence your work, you should still be able to complete your work with some adjustments. For example, you can adapt your assignment to reflect that your school has switched to home-learning.

If your strategy cannot be adapted to online provision, you may also be able to down-scale your project to a smaller sample size of pupils / teachers, providing you can extrapolate how your findings and recommendations could be applied whole-school. As above, you will need to refer to your NPQ Assessment Handbook to ensure that you will still be able to meet the assessment criteria.

As with any project adaptations, if you think it is best to continue your project but working with a reduced number of pupils/teachers than originally intended, please get in touch with us so we can ensure this is the right option for you and so we have a record we can share with the assessment team if required.

### **I'm struggling to understand how I can adapt my project, is there anyone I can speak to about this?**

If you have any concerns or questions about how you can adapt your project, please contact the programme team as we are happy to help.

### **Given the current context, I do not feel like it is fair to implement my improvement project and ask my staff to take on additional workload. What are my options?**

We understand that this is a difficult time to implement a new improvement project and we don't want this to create unmanageable workload for your team. In this situation we recommend that you:

- Speak to your sponsor to raise your concerns and ensure you have school support to continue with your project or adapt it
- Speak to a member of the programmes team to explore the options of adapting your project that could help with reducing workload for your staff
- Look at the Canvas content on motivation and influencing staff ([HT3, Week 2](#)), this may have some helpful pointers on how to bring them on board with your project

If you have explored the options for adapting your project and you really don't feel comfortable proceeding, and don't believe adjusting the timeframe would also support you, deferring may also be an option (see the FAQ below).

## **Project duration, timelines and deadlines**

### **Will there be any flexibility on timeframes for completing my assignment?**

As is the case for all NPQ providers, we are contractually bound by our license with the Department for Education (DfE) to work within the agreed timelines. The latest update from the DfE is that **you should continue to work to your original deadlines**, using existing guidance on adapting assignments impacted by Covid-19.

Whilst adaptations to your original plans which allow you to continue to your original timelines may be possible, we know this may not always be the case. In these cases, we understand that completing a two-term project within the timeframe available may no longer be possible and – depending on your circumstance – there are two options we can explore: you may be able to submit evidence relating to a project implemented over fewer than two terms (e.g. 1.5 terms), or we may be able to grant an extension to your submission deadline to allow you to complete a two-term project.

If you are concerned about your ability to complete a two-term project in the time available and would like to discuss your options, please contact the programme team at [eml@ambition.org.uk](mailto:eml@ambition.org.uk). We are happy to discuss your concerns and will work with you to identify the best possible solution given your unique situation. **Please**

**note that we are required to track any approved exemptions to the framework requirements or to submission deadlines, and so any such exemptions/adaptations must be agreed with us in advance.**

**I've fallen behind with the programme and I don't think I'm in a position to start to implement my project in the Spring term. What can I do?**

We recommend having a chat with the programme team ([eml@ambition.org.uk](mailto:eml@ambition.org.uk)) on how best to catch up on content you have missed.

If you have fallen behind specifically due to the impact of Covid-19, let us know and we can talk through options for adapting your project (see FAQ above on flexibility of timeframes).

**Can I defer and do my NPQ project next year?**

If you feel that adapting or shortening your project is not viable, or if the workload requirement is too difficult in the present climate, we can discuss deferral as an option.

However, please bear in mind that if you defer you can no longer do the NPQML or NPQSL. Instead, you will be completing the [NPQLT \(Leading Teaching\)](#) under the new NPQ framework which is being launched later this year and specifically aimed at developing teachers who are subject leads or responsible for improving teaching practice in a subject or phase. If you'd like to discuss this, please speak to a member of the team.

**Even with the adaptations and flexibilities available I don't think it's going to be possible to complete my NPQ. What do I do?**

If you feel that it will not be possible to launch your NPQ project at all, please contact us as soon as possible so that we can talk through the options and support available.

**Please note we are continuing to work with the DfE for updated guidance, and we'll keep you posted of any developments.**