



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

National Scholarship Fund for special educational needs support staff

Round 3 - handbook

This publication was archived on 17 June 2015

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1. Introduction

A central premise of the Green Paper, *Support and aspiration*, was to raise the quality of special educational needs (SEN) provision in schools. Amongst the proposals was a commitment to develop a national scholarship for support staff working with pupils with SEN and disability (SEN/D).

What is the National Scholarship Fund for SEN support staff?

The aims of the scholarship are to:

- foster high expectations of those working to support disabled children and children with SEN in the classroom ('children with SEN' refers to those at School Action, School Action Plus and those with a statement of special education needs).
- strengthen knowledge and understanding of SEN/D, both in support staff and across the school.
- open up career opportunities for SEN support staff and enable them to have more control of their careers.
- share learning, knowledge and expertise across the school system.
- bring about a culture change to create expectations within the sector about the importance of scholarship throughout a support staff's career.

Applications for Round Two of the National Scholarship Fund for Support Staff closed on 25 April 2013.

The awards were announced on 29 August 2013 as follows:

- 113 scholarships for support staff to develop their practice in SEN

2. Round 3

Applications for Round Three open on **30 April 2014** and close at midnight on **8 June 2014**.

Please ensure you have read this handbook before starting your application.

The third round will focus on staff who have already attained a **full level 3 qualification** (see *Appendix 1: Qualifications and Levels*) or hold higher level teaching assistant (HLTA) status.

For the third round of National Scholarship Fund (NSF) we are encouraging schools to join and work in partnership, with a lead school submitting an application on behalf of a collaborative group. Our criteria for allocating funding for NSF round three will support larger partnerships of schools, whilst continuing to allow individuals to apply for funding.

The scholarship funding can only be used for the activity specified in the application form. Applicants must cover 50% of the course fees, and will also be responsible for any additional costs such as travel and accommodation.

All applications must be online. If an applicant has a special need or disability and cannot complete the online form, they should contact DfE general enquiries on 0370 000 2288 to discuss.

The online application process will be available from **30 April 2014**.

The deadline for all completed applications is **midnight on 8 June 2014**.

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3. Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for the National Scholarship Fund for SEN Support Staff, you must meet **all** the criteria below:

- Work in an eligible school/college in England (see below)
- Spend at least 50% of your contracted time supporting disabled children and children with SEN in learning based activities
- Have achieved qualifications equivalent to, at least, **full level 3** (see *Appendix 1 - Qualifications and Levels*) or hold HLTA status

In the case of a lead school applying on behalf of a collaborative group of schools, the lead school takes responsibility for ensuring that every member of the collaborative group is eligible for the award according to the eligibility criteria presented here.

Eligible schools/colleges

- Maintained schools (including special schools)
- Non-maintained special schools
- City technology colleges
- Academies
- Free schools
- Pupil referral units (PRUs)

Eligible activities

Support staff working with children with special educational needs or a disability are free to choose the course or activity that is most suited to their needs. Similarly, they are free to choose a provider. There are some restrictions, however:

- The activity should deepen your knowledge of SEN/D and enhance your ability to provide effective support to the teaching and learning of pupils with SEN/D.
- The programme of study must be at **Level 4** (see *Appendix 1 - Qualifications & Levels*) or above, **or**
- An approved non-accredited specialist training course. (see *Appendix 2 - List of eligible non-accredited qualifications*)

Funding is **not** available to support staff who have already started their course or have completed some modules. The National Scholarship Fund is only available to applicants starting *new* courses or activities between September 2014 and August 2015. This is because the Government wishes to incentivise support staff who would not otherwise engage in such studies.

Support of school / college

All applicants must provide a supporting statement from their headteacher. This should provide evidence that the applicant has the support of their school and will be able to complete the proposed activity and demonstrate impact. For lead schools submitting an application on behalf of a collaborative group, the lead school must satisfy themselves that each headteacher in the collaborative group supports their teachers' participation.

Lead school and collaborative groups

In this model, the **lead school** takes responsibility for:

- completing the application form; all personal details of beneficiaries, the activity, the proposal & support from the school / college. In addition to standard contact details, we will also require: personal email and school email addresses
- including a supporting statement written by the lead school on behalf of each school in the collaborative group. It is the responsibility of the lead school to satisfy themselves that the headteacher of each school supports the application.

Terms and conditions

- If, within three years, they voluntarily cease to work with pupils with SEN/D, or fail to complete the funded activity, they must return all funding awarded to National College for Teaching & Leadership
- They must agree to share the learning from the activity; including participating in follow up activities such as focus groups or conferences

Impact reports

All successful applicants must agree to provide the National College for Teaching & Leadership with an impact report at the end of February 2015 and a final report in September 2015. This should evidence the benefits of the professional development activities on the school, pupils and the wider school system.

4. Application guidance

Please read this guidance carefully before completing and submitting your application form.

Important notes

- Applicants **must** apply online. Forms submitted via any other route or in any other format will not be accepted. If an applicant has a special need or disability and cannot complete the online form, they should contact DfE general enquiries on 0370 000 2288 to discuss.
- In the case of collaborative applications from groups of special educational needs support staff, the lead school takes responsibility for coordinating a single application form with details of all participants from all schools involved.
- The deadline for all completed applications is **midnight on the 8 June 2014**. Any applications received after this deadline will **not** be accepted even if the delay is due to technical difficulties.
- Incomplete applications will not be accepted and will not be returned.
- Applicants must ensure that they are eligible to apply and that their proposed activity meets the scholarship criteria. (See the 'Eligibility' information above.)
- Applicants should ensure that spelling, punctuation and grammar are checked and of an appropriately high standard.
- Applications must adhere to the word count.
- Any application which includes plagiarised text will not be accepted: this includes text copied from course information (other than course titles, text copied from other applicants and multiple entries using the same text. In particular, every section of the scholarship proposal must be completed in the applicant's own words and with respect to the applicant's individual situation.
- Successful applicants will be notified by the end of August 2014. Please note that notification will be by email so please ensure you supply a correct email address.
- We are not able to provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

Completing the form

Gather all your information before starting to fill in the form.

You will also need to have obtained a statement of support from your headteacher or Chair of Governors. In collaborative applications, the lead school takes overall responsibility but must satisfy themselves that each individual applicant has the support of his/her headteacher.

The form

The form is divided into 4 sections:

- Personal details (of all participants in the case of a collaborative application)
- The activity
- The proposal
- Support from the school / college (of all applicants in the case of a collaborative application)

All sections must be completed in full. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Part 1: Personal details

In addition to standard contact details, we will also require:

- Your personal email address
- Your school email address

All mandatory fields must be completed accurately and in full. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Part 2: The activity

- The formal, accurate title of the planned course or activity
- Name and address of the provider
- The course code (if applicable)
- Start and end dates of the course/activity
- Reference number
- Course fees (estimated if necessary)

The National Scholarship Fund is only available to applicants starting *new* courses or activities between September 2014 and the end of August 2015.

This section requires factual information about the course or activity you wish to undertake. If the actual cost of the activity is not yet available then you should provide the *best estimate* based on consultation with the provider.

The award will be based on the figures (and timescales) provided in the form and cannot subsequently be changed.

Do not leave any part of this section blank. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Please note that the maximum award is 50% of the total cost up to a maximum of £2000. The current funding commitment is only until 31 March 2015 and no deferrals can be accommodated in round three.

Applicants should also note that due to the highly competitive nature of the scholarship they should not undertake any commitments based solely on the possible success of their application.

Part 3: The proposal

This is the key part of your application. Before you begin to compose answers, please read through **all** the sections carefully to ensure that there are no overlaps, repetition, or gaps.

Only evidence included in each section will contribute to the score for that section

Question guidance – in collaborative applications, the lead school completes the questions on behalf of the collaborative group

1. What is the nature of the professional development activity to be undertaken?

How will the proposed activity deepen and extend knowledge relating to SEN/D including specific impairments and disabilities?

Is the proposed activity rigorous and academically challenging? How can you demonstrate this?

What is the purpose of the activity – what outcomes have you identified? What difference will undertaking the proposed activity make: in the classroom, for your colleagues and for the wider school system beyond your own place of work?

Max 1800 characters 30 marks

2. How will pupils benefit from the proposed professional development activity?

Applicants are expected to evidence how their pupils and the wider school will benefit from their having undertaken the proposed activity.

Max 1200 characters 20 marks

3. How will you disseminate your learning beyond the school?

A key aim of the scholarship fund is to share knowledge across the school system so that the impact of the activity extends beyond the applicant's school or collaborative group.

Applicants must explain how this will be achieved.

For collaborative applications use this section to explain your arrangements for working collaboratively with other schools/colleges.

For individual applications, explain how learning will be shared across your school, your local network of schools and further through the school system.

Max 1200 characters – 20 marks

4. How will you evaluate impact of the proposed activity?

Having identified intended outcomes in section 1, how will you measure that these have been achieved?

Max 1200 characters 20 marks

5. How will completion of the proposed activity benefit career progression and improving the quality of practice in SEN/D?

In this section you should consider the benefits on career progression and improving the quality of practice in SEN/D.

Max 1200 characters 20 marks

Part 4: Support from the school

Please note that this section **must** be completed in full **on behalf of** the headteacher. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. In the case of collaborative applications, a statement from each applicant's headteacher or Chair of Governors must be included.

This should provide evidence that all applicants have the support of their schools and that all employers are satisfied that applicants will be able to both complete the proposed activity and demonstrate impact.

In preparing for this section, you will need to ask all headteachers or Chairs of Governors to write a statement of support. They will also need to answer a number of questions **in writing**. You should retain these and use to complete this section of the form.

The statement of support should answer the following question in up to 1200 characters.

How will this development activity contribute to your school/college or collaborative group of schools' ability to meet the needs of your pupils?

- Does the applicant have the full support of the school?
- Does this member of staff play a significant role (ie at least 50% of their contracted time) in supporting teaching for pupils with SEN/D in the school?
- Are you satisfied that impact evaluation measures are in place?

Will the applicant be assured of:

- Appropriate protected time to access and complete the activity?
- Appropriate access to pupils with SEN/D to meet the requirements of the activity?
- Access to internal and external networks to disseminate learning?
- Access to school/college or external data to support the scholarship activity (provided that this complies with legislation and school/college policies)?

5. Payment

The value of the awards will vary according to the nature of the activity proposed. The maximum award is 50% of the total cost (i.e. course fees) of the proposed activity, up to a ceiling of £2000. The current funding commitment is only until 31 March 2015 and no deferrals can be accommodated in round three.

Applicants should also note that due to the highly competitive nature of the scholarship they must wait for notification of success before undertaking any commitments.

The scholarship funding can only be used for the activity specified in the application form. Applicants must cover 50% of the course fees, and will also be responsible for any additional costs such as travel and accommodation.

Payment process

Applicants are required to provide factual information about the course or activity in the application form. If the actual cost of the activity is not yet available then the applicant must provide the *best estimate* based on consultation with the provider.

Please note:

The award will be based on the figure (and timescales) provided in the form. These cannot subsequently be changed.

The current funding commitment is only until 31 March 2015 and no deferrals can be accommodated in round three.

Successful applicants will be provided with a sponsorship letter for presentation on enrolment.

Payments will be made directly to the provider of the course/activity. The provider will be issued a grant agreement detailing the scholars who will be supported, their course/activity and the amount of their awards. Once the provider returns a signed copy of the grant agreement, the National College for Teaching & Leadership (NCTL) will release the funds.

Appendix 1 - Qualifications and levels

Full level 3 qualifications

In order to be eligible for the SEN Support Scholarship applicants must hold a *full level 3 qualification*.

What are 'levels'? What does full level 3 mean?

Different qualifications are grouped together into various 'levels'. This can help you (and employers) see how qualifications compare and how one type can lead on to another.

Different qualification 'levels' are contained in three qualification 'frameworks'

- National Qualifications Framework
- Qualifications and Credit Framework (the new framework for vocational, or work-related qualifications)
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications

The frameworks group together qualifications that place similar demands on you as a learner. However, within any one level, qualifications can cover a wide mix of subjects, and take different amounts of time to complete.

The frameworks can also help you see how one type of qualification can lead on to other, higher levels of qualifications.

National Qualifications Framework (NQF): sets out the level at which a qualification can be recognised in England, Northern Ireland and Wales.

Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF): contains vocational (or work-related) qualifications, available in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. These qualifications are made up of units that are worth credits. You can study units at your own pace and build these up to **full qualifications** of different sizes over time.

Framework for Higher Education Qualifications: has been designed by the higher education sector, and describes all the main higher education qualifications. It applies to degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic awards granted by a university or higher education college (apart from honorary degrees and higher doctorates).

For the purposes of the scholarship, applicants must have achieved a pass grade in one of the following qualifications.

- Level 3 Diploma in specialist support for teaching and learning in schools
- Level 3 Certificate in supporting teaching and learning in schools
- NVQ 3 in supporting teaching and learning in schools
- NVQ 3 for Teaching Assistants
- Level 3 Certificate for Teaching Assistants
- NVQ 3 in Early Years Care and Education
- Level 3 Diploma for the Children and Young People's Workforce
- NVQ 3 Childcare and Education
- NVQ 3 in Children's Care, Learning and Development

Or any of the following:

- 2 or more A levels (A2) (Grade E or above)
- 4 or more AS levels (Grade E or above)
- An NVQ 3
- A Level 3 Advanced Craft
- A National Certificate
- A National Diploma
- A GNVQ Advanced
- An AVCE Double Award
- An Access to Higher Education Course
- 4 Scottish Highers
- SVQ Level 3
- 4 Irish leaving certificates (Higher)
- Irish Level 5 Certificate
- NARIC certified non-UK equivalent qualification (to be verified by the head teacher)

Level 4 qualifications

In order for an application to the SEN Support Scholarship to be accepted it must be for a programme of study at Level 4 or above, or an approved non-accredited specialist training course (please refer to list of approved courses).

Level 4 qualifications include Certificates of Higher Education such as BTEC, Professional Diplomas Certificates and Awards, HNCs, and NVQ 4.

For more information about qualifications and levels please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean>

Appendix 2 - List of eligible non-accredited qualifications

Course Number	Name/title of course	Name of training provider/sponsor
1	Supporting the learning needs of young people LAC and SEN with Attachment deficits	National Centre for English Residential Child Care
2	Intervener training (for working with deaf blind children)	SENSE
3	Strategies for supporting children with autism based on the principles of Applied Behaviour Analysis	Beyond Autism
4	The Inclusion Assistant	Alliance for Inclusive Education
5	Communication, Language and Reading for children with Down's syndrome aged 2-11 years	The Down's Syndrome Association
6	Supporting social development and behaviour for children and young people with Down's syndrome	The Down's Syndrome Association
7	Support and Practice in Early Years Education for Children with Down's Syndrome	The Down's Syndrome Association
8	Support and Practice in Primary Education for children with Down's Syndrome	The Down's Syndrome Association
9	Support and Practice in secondary education for children and young people with Down's Syndrome	The Down's Syndrome Association
10	Access and Success - practical workshop for teachers working with pupils with Down's syndrome	The Down's Syndrome Association
11	Using Numicon to Support Understanding and Use of Number for Children with Down's Syndrome	The Down's Syndrome Association
12	Face to Face 2 days MSI	Sense specialist and a local NATSIP local authority partner
13	RCE 1 Day Course: A Practical approach to supporting access to learning for children and young people with deaf/blindness/MSI	Sense/NatSIP
14	Intervener MSI 5 days non-accredited	Sense
15	Working with deaf children from diverse families	The Ear Foundation
16	Deaf Teenagers: Social & Emotional Issues	The Ear Foundation
17	Developing listening & language through classroom routines	The Ear Foundation

Course Number	Name/title of course	Name of training provider/sponsor
18	Assessing functional listening	The Ear Foundation
19	Behaviour Management: Deaf children under 11	The Ear Foundation
20	Complex needs and Deafness: for staff in Special education settings	The Ear Foundation
21	Deaf children in the Early Years: for Teaching assistants	The Ear Foundation
22	Deaf children at Primary School: for Teaching assistants	The Ear Foundation
23	Deaf children at Secondary School: for Teaching assistants	The Ear Foundation
24	Understanding visual impairment in children and young people	RNIB
25	Pathways to Literacy	Ewing Foundation
26	Cerebral palsy in the classroom: An introduction to the causes and effects of cerebral palsy on the child and adolescent, common learning difficulties and strategies to support classroom learning	Scope
27	Neurologically based behaviours: An introduction to the way that behaviours are compelled within the brain and strategies to support behaviour managements based on environmental changes	Scope
28	Working with families of disabled children: An introduction to the journey families undertake with their disabled child and ways to support them and work together	Scope
29	Multi-sensory learning: Ideas for working with children operating within P scales 1-3	Scope
30	AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) in the classroom: Practical ideas to teach and include children who use alternative methods of communication.	Scope
31	Speech Language and Communication Framework (follow link to individual courses)	ICAN and The Communication Trust



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