

# National Institute of Teaching (NIoT)

Star Academies, Shadsworth Road, Blackburn BB1 2HT

## Inspection dates

29 January to 1 February 2024

## Inspection judgements

National professional qualifications (NPQs) inspection

### Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of professional development and training

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

N/A

## What is it like to be an NPQ participant at this lead provider?

Participants across all NPQ programmes are extremely positive about their experience on their chosen course. From the outset, the NIoT provides participants with the diagnostic tools to be reflective and analytical about their knowledge and practice. As the programme progresses, participants gain deep insights into their own development, and crucially how they can bring about sustained improvements in their own schools. Participants value highly how the programme helps them to be successful in their current roles, while giving them the knowledge and confidence to be ready for future leadership opportunities.

For each programme, the NIoT provides an optimal balance between building on participants' strengths while simultaneously stretching their educational thinking and practice. Expert facilitators are always on hand to guide participants through the theoretical principles of educational leadership and how these can be contextualised and applied. This includes, for instance, 'virtual school' visits where participants see first-hand how to translate learning effectively into their own roles.

'Respecting participants' time' is a thread that runs through all programmes, reflecting the priority that the NIoT gives to managing well-being and workload. Leaders astutely anticipate and remedy potential issues that participants might face. For instance, the NIoT provides self-study materials well in advance of the related seminars, face-to-face training

and practice sessions. This is so that participants access what they need at a time that fits in with any other commitments. Participants were complimentary about how leaders tailor learning around their busy lives.

## **Information about this lead provider**

- The NIoT was founded by four multi-academy trusts (MATs), organised into four regional campuses. The founding MATs comprise: The Harris Federation, Oasis Community Learning, Outwood Grange Academies Trust and Star Academies.
- There are 2,354 participants undertaking one of the lead provider's eight NPQ programmes. The NPQ for Leading Primary Mathematics is due to be offered from February 2024.
- Delivery of the NPQ programmes takes place across the country through 16 delivery partners. Delivery partners are either schools that are part of the NIoT's regional campuses or associate colleges. Associate colleges are made up of non-founding MATs and teaching school hubs.

## **Information about this inspection**

- This inspection was carried out by seven of His Majesty's Inspectors. The inspection was carried out through in-person meetings, online meetings and on-site visits to three of the NIoT regional campuses and four associate colleges. In addition, there was an online visit to the fourth NIoT regional campus and online visits to three associate colleges.
- Inspectors met with the national NIoT lead for NPQs, the head of the NPQ faculty, the senior NPQ faculty manager and the NIoT executive director of programmes. They also met with regional principals, delivery partner leads, facilitators and programme participants. The lead inspector also met the chair of trustees and the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out focused reviews in all of the eight NPQ programmes offered at the time of the inspection. Twelve focused reviews were carried out in total. For each focused review, inspectors met with delivery partner leaders and facilitators, discussed training with groups of participants, met with headteachers and senior leaders from participants' schools and educational settings, reviewed the exemplified training materials and scrutinised documentation. An inspector also visited an online live training delivery session. In total, inspectors visited 11 delivery partners, either on site or online.
- The inspection team considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for NPQ participants, delivery partners and school leaders.

## **What does the lead provider do well and what does it need to do better?**

The NIoT has designed NPQ programmes expertly, with pertinent educational research used discerningly to shape and refine the delivery of the curriculum. The development and

training offered on each programme are extremely ambitious and maintain fidelity to the NPQ frameworks. However, it is the way in which the provider ensures that these programmes respond and adapt to participants' prior knowledge that underlies their exceptional quality. This means that, whichever programme participants are on, what is learned and applied is tailored with sensitivity and precision to their individual professional context and development needs.

The NIoT selects delivery partners carefully, making sure that they have the required expertise and experience to implement the programmes consistently well. Close ongoing collaboration between the centre and delivery partners has embedded the NIoT's exacting expectations for participants' professional development. From virtual school visits to exemplification materials, everything is focused on enabling participants to affect positive change for pupils. School leaders hold the NIoT in high regard. They praise the positive effect the course has on participants' professional behaviours and leadership skills.

The rigour in the NIoT's approach extends to the selection of its programme facilitators. These facilitators are experienced school leaders who bring the programme to life through local seminars, master classes, practice clinics and coaching sessions. Facilitators know exactly how to lead participants in applying the NPQ framework to their own school context, drawing on the NIoT's high-quality and comprehensive course materials. Participants said that they benefit immensely from learning how facilitators approach educational issues in their own settings. Facilitators also play a key role in assessing what participants know and remember from the course. When facilitators identify gaps in participants' knowledge or where there are misconceptions, they act swiftly and adjust the curriculum accordingly.

Participants are very well supported to assess their own professional development. For example, as participants complete modules, they return to the NIoT's diagnostic tools to evaluate the progress that they have made through the curriculum. This is complemented by skilful feedback from facilitators, who adapt sessions based on participants' needs and progression. These strengths in the NIoT's approach come together effectively to ensure that participants learn the intended curriculum exceptionally well. Participants become highly confident in honing their professional skills and applying what they learn in practice.

Leadership is epitomised by a relentless focus on continuous improvement. Leaders' oversight is rooted explicitly in strengthening participants' readiness to apply what they learn in their setting. Quality assurance systems, both at delivery partners and at the centre, are rigorous. These play a pivotal role in securing and sustaining the consistent delivery of the programmes. Leaders seek the views of participants, facilitators, delivery partners and school leaders frequently. They are quick to respond to suggestions, for example, by adjusting the format of some resources to make them more accessible.

All NPQ programmes comply with safeguarding and equalities requirements. Course materials set out the NIoT's expectations and systems clearly, including how concerns can be raised. Participants feel extremely well supported, both with their development and well-being. They know who they can report concerns to, should these arise.

## Lead provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2707642
<b>Inspection number</b>	10309973

This inspection was carried out by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) in accordance with [early career framework \(ECF\) and national professional qualification \(NPQ\) framework and handbook](#).

The framework and handbook set out the statutory basis for ECF and NPQ inspections in England.

<b>Lead provider programmes offered</b>	NPQ
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	19 to 21 June 2023

## Inspection team

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