



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

Specialist leaders of education (SLE)

Application and reference form

General guidance

This form is set out in two sections. Section 1 is to be completed by you, the applicant, and section 2 is to be completed by your headteacher (as your referee). There is a 300 word limit for each answer. Once you have completed section 1, the form should be emailed to your headteacher to complete the reference section and submit the document to the relevant teaching school on your behalf. This will complete the application process.

Applicants are strongly advised to read the full SLE application guidance before completing their application.

Headteacher reference

It is important that headteachers endorse the applicant's intention to apply for the role of an SLE. You are therefore required to provide a reference from your headteacher that supports your application and validates both your eligibility and capacity to perform the role.

Once your headteacher has completed the reference section of this form, he or she will need to return the whole document using the instructions provided by the teaching school. **Until this has been carried out, your application will not be fully submitted so cannot be considered.**

What your information will be used for

As part of the application/funding process, it will be necessary for your teaching school to share certain relevant information about you that you provide in this application form (first name, surname, school URN, TRN and specialisms) with the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL), an Executive Agency of the Department for Education. This is in order for NCTL to fund the core training and be able to report on the numbers and specialisms of designated SLEs.

Where the sharing of your personal information is necessary for these purposes, it will be carried out in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998. If you have any questions about the sharing of your personal information with NCTL, speak to your teaching school or contact the NCTL at sle.enquiries@education.gsi.gov.uk.

Section 1

Application form (to be completed by the SLE applicant)

Applicant details

Title*	
Surname*	
First name*	
Role	
School	
School URN*	
School phase*	
TRN (where applicable)*	
Address	
Phone	
Email	

* Indicates the applicant data that teaching schools will be required to share with NCTL when confirming application outcomes.

Teaching School Alliance you wish to consider your application.	<i>(Teaching School to insert alliance name)</i>
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Eligibility criteria confirmation

a) Do you hold a leadership role or responsibility **within your school**?

Yes

No

b) Please indicate how long you have been in this role. If it is less than two years, please provide details of your previous leadership role or responsibility. Please include the name of the school where the role was held.

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Your specialism

Please indicate the specialist area(s) that you wish to be designated for.

Specialism	Mark your specialism(s) with a cross (X)	Length of time in role (this should be at least two years)
Leadership and management		
Academies and academy transition		
Assessment		
Leadership of continuing professional development (CPD)		
School business management and financial management		
Leadership of curriculum		
Pupil achievement		
Art		
Closing the gap		
Drama		
Design and technology		
Early years		
English		
Geography		
History		
Information and communications technology (ICT)		
Maths		
Music		
Modern foreign languages (MfL)		
Personal, social and health education (PSHE)		
Phonics		
Physical Education (PE)		
Science		
Special educational needs (SEN)		
Support for most able pupils		
Religious Education (RE)		
Quality of teaching		
Initial teacher training (ITT) and newly qualified teacher (NQT) development		
Behaviour and safety		
Behaviour and discipline		
Attendance		

Question 1

What **motivates** you to participate in system leadership?

Word limit: 300 words

Question 2

Please outline the **significant impact of your contribution** as a leader to supporting leaders in other schools or to your own school's performance. Please detail the impact and demonstrate clear evidence of your outstanding practice within your area(s) of expertise or specialism.

Word limit: 300 words

Question 3

Please provide examples of where you have worked sensitively and collaboratively with peer colleagues using **coaching or facilitation skills** to grow leadership capacity in others leading to sustainable improvements.

Word limit: 300 words

Question 4

Please provide a clear example of a time when you have significantly **challenged, collaborated, motivated and/or inspired** your colleagues to establish new, innovative working practices. What was the impact?

Word limit: 300 words

Question 5

Please give excerpts from Ofsted reports if your practice has been cited there and/or performance results/outcomes you have been accountable for in your area of work have been commented on. Please reference clearly the Ofsted report(s) where these comments are made as these may be verified.

Word limit: 300 words

Additional information

Please provide any other information that demonstrates your expert knowledge in your field of expertise in support of your application.

Word limit: 300 words

Additional requirements

If you are successful, you will be invited to a face-to-face assessment by the teaching school alliance you have selected. If you have any special requirements that they should be aware of, please state these below.

Section 2

Reference (to be completed by the headteacher referee)

SLEs are outstanding leaders, with at least two years' experience and excellent knowledge in a particular field of expertise. They work to support individuals and teams in other schools by providing high-level coaching, mentoring and support, drawing on their knowledge and expertise in their specialist area.

All applicants must meet the essential criteria to be accepted as an SLE. Each application is rigorously assessed against the [eligibility criteria](#). We therefore ask referees to take this into account when making a decision to recommend an applicant for the role.

In accordance with the Data Protection Act, the applicant you are providing a reference for has the right to view this reference, should he or she contact the relevant teaching school in order to see it. Please do not include any information that you would not be happy to discuss with the applicant as part of a professional conversation.

Headteacher details

Name	
Confirmation of role	
School name	
Email address	
How long have you known the applicant?	

1a. Please confirm the applicant's current role.

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1b. Does the applicant hold leadership responsibility within your school?

Yes No

2. Please provide a supporting statement in the box below on how you consider the applicant meets the following criteria:

- The applicant is an outstanding middle or senior leader with at least two years' experience and excellent knowledge in a particular field of expertise.
- The applicant has a successful track record supported by substantial evidence of impact of working effectively within his or her own school and/or across a group of schools, or working with a range of leaders within a single school.
- The applicant has a commitment to outreach work and the capacity to undertake such work.
- You support their application and the applicant can be released from school for a mutually agreed allocation of time.
- The applicant understands what constitutes 'outstanding' in his or her field of expertise.
- The applicant has an appreciation of how his or her specialism and skills can contribute to the wider school improvement agenda.
- The applicant has an analytical approach to identifying needs and can prioritise accordingly.

3. Do you support this application and agree to the applicant being released from the school for a mutually agreed allocation of time?

Yes No

4. Please provide evidence to confirm that the applicant has supported a middle or senior leader or group of leaders from another school or academy. Alternatively, please provide details demonstrated with colleagues from within the applicant's own school.

5. Please tick a box below to indicate which statement matches your support for the applicant:

- a. I recommend this person unreservedly to undertake the role of an SLE
- b. I recommend this person for the role of SLE, but have some reservations
- c. I am unable to recommend this person for the role of SLE

6. Additional comments

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form. If you have indicated that you have reservations in recommending or feel unable to recommend this applicant, the teaching school alliance may contact you to discuss the position.

Please return this form to:

Name: *(Teaching School to insert contact details for application return)*

Email:

This application will not be considered until this process has been completed.

If you have any queries regarding this application, please refer to the guidance for further help and support or contact the NCTL Teaching School and system leader helpdesk on **0800 085 0984**.

[Guidance for applicants](#)

(Press control and click to view documents)