



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2026-27



TransformED



Leadership Development Programme



The Department of Education and the Education Authority are delighted to announce the extended leadership development programme for 2026-27.

Supporting the priorities in TransformED and the new Teacher Professional Learning Strategy, Leading Together for Excellence, this comprises support for new and experienced Middle Leaders and Principals.

From 2027/28, additional support for Senior Leaders and a new replacement for the Professional Qualification for Headship will be introduced. Together, these opportunities will provide a coherent leadership pathway, helping school leaders at every stage of their career and strengthening educational quality across our schools.

What's new for 2026/2027?

MIDDLE LEADERS

- **Development Programme for Middle Leaders** – focusing on the building of knowledge, skills and professional behaviours required to lead with impact and purpose.
- **Leading from the Middle** – enhancing leadership capacity, greater organisational coherence and increased confidence in leading teams, priorities and change.
- **Empowering Improvement** – supporting middle leaders in strengthening their leadership of learning, teaching and school improvement.
- **Expanded Coaching and Mentoring Opportunities** – utilising experienced leaders to provide ongoing support, reinforcing the learning and skills development priorities drawn from the other elements of the middle leader programme.
- **Bursaries for Postgraduate Leadership Study** – for middle leaders seeking to further develop their professional knowledge and leadership expertise. Equivalent to one 30 credit Master's-level module.
- **Chartered Teacher Status (with Middle Leader Specialism), Chartered College of Teaching** – enabling participants to critically reflect on their leadership practice and develop evidence-informed approaches to leading within their school context.

- **T-REX Digital Badge** – Using Evidence for Middle Leadership in Educational Settings, Teachers' Research Exchange – strengthening instructional leadership

and build leadership capacity through the use of evidence to plan for research, design action plans and improve teaching and learning.

EXPERIENCED PRINCIPALS

- **Leading for Change** – supporting experienced principals in leading sustained educational improvement.
- **Leadership Development Event** – providing a flagship annual opportunity for professional reflection, leadership learning and engagement with the vision and ambitions of TransformED.
- **Bursaries for Postgraduate Leadership Study** – extending professional knowledge and leadership expertise through funding equivalent to one 30 credit Master's-level module.
- **Expanded Coaching opportunities through Coaching Service for School Principals** – strengthening leadership capacity, building resilience and sustained effectiveness through professional coaching.
- **Expanded Coaching opportunities through School leader as Coach** – building coaching expertise and confidence to use coaching as a strategic approach to leadership.
- **Leadership Exchange** – facilitating professional dialogue, knowledge exchange and collaborative learning between experienced principals in Northern Ireland and Scotland.
- **Chartered Teacher (Leadership Status), Chartered College of Teaching** – enabling experienced principals to engage with educational research, critically reflect on their practice and gain recognition for evidence-informed leadership that positively impacts schools, staff and pupils.

Ready to get started?

Further information on the programmes can be accessed through the Education Authority by **CLICKING HERE**.

Middle Leaders and Experienced Principals can apply for bursaries directly to the Department by **CLICKING HERE**.