



Department  
for Education

# **Senior mental health lead training**

**Frequently asked questions from schools  
and colleges**

**September 2021**

## Frequently asked questions

### 1. Who can be a senior mental health lead?

The senior mental health lead is a strategic leadership role in a school or college, responsible for overseeing the settings whole school or college approach to mental health. School and colleges can decide who gets the training as every setting's circumstances are different. Training could be for your:

- headteacher
- deputy headteacher
- member of the senior leadership team (SLT)
- if not a senior leader, an appropriate member of staff, working with colleagues, who is empowered to develop and oversee your setting's whole school or college approach

### 2. Can more than one person from a school or college attend a training course?

A senior mental health lead training grant is intended to develop a single person (a strategic lead) in each setting; to learn everything they need to implement and sustain an effective whole school or college approach. Training for additional staff cannot be paid for through this grant, and only one grant will be available per school or college.

### 3. When can schools and colleges book a training course?

Schools and colleges that are ready to benefit from this training can book a quality assured course now.

If you do, you must provide your contact details via [Get notified when you can apply for your grant for senior mental health lead training \(office.com\)](#)

To get a grant to cover (or contribute to) to the cost of a course, you should first check if you are eligible for a grant. You will be asked to declare there is commitment from your senior leadership team to implement a whole school or college approach, and that you have identified a senior mental health lead who will oversee your whole school or college approach, available to commence training before 31 March 2022.

If you are not ready to benefit from senior lead training, please do not book a course or apply for a grant. We expect to provide further grants next financial year.

You can check if you are eligible and see the conditions of a grant here [insert link].

[To assess your learning needs and select a course most closely meeting your specific needs, please \[insert link to Carnegie tools\]](#)

**4. How will schools and colleges access the grant for senior mental health lead training?**

Schools and colleges will be able to apply in autumn term through a DfE digital grant application service. Before receiving a grant, evidence of booking a DfE assured senior lead training course will be required. Further information is provided in the [grant conditions](#).

**5. How do schools and colleges sign up to be notified when the grant application service becomes available?**

Schools and colleges can provide their contact details and receive notification by completing [Get notified when you can apply for your grant for senior mental health lead training](#). Please only complete this form if you have booked a quality assured training course. We will also update our gov.uk pages and communicate through other available channels.

**6. Are all schools and colleges who book onto a training course now guaranteed funding this financial year?**

Eligible schools and colleges meeting the conditions in [grant conditions](#), and booking a course before the DfE grant application service becomes available, will have a grant reserved for them. Schools and colleges must sign up via [Get notified when you can apply for your grant for senior mental health lead training](#), and formally apply for a grant through the application service within 2 weeks of our notifying it is available.

Once the grant application service is available, schools and colleges must then apply for a grant first. Funding is available to provide grants to around a third of all schools and colleges in 2021/22 financial year.

**7. What types of education settings are eligible to receive the grant?**

All state funded education settings in England are eligible for a grant, including:

- mainstream academies and maintained schools (including hospital schools)
- alternative provision academies
- pupil referral units
- special academies and maintained schools (including those specialising in: communication and interaction, cognition and learning; social, emotional and mental health; sensory and physical needs)
- further education colleges attended by under 18 year olds (one claim per campus ID)
- sixth form colleges

**8. When do we need to start and complete our training course by?**

Training courses paid for through a 2021/22 DfE grant should commence by no later than 31 March 2022. Courses should be completed by the end of the 21/22 academic year wherever possible.

**9. Do we need to refresh senior mental health lead training, and will this be grant funded?**

Courses undertaken should also support a senior leads to sustain their settings whole school or college approach e.g. through introducing the senior lead to peer networks, or resource libraries. This will help senior lead to continually refine and improve their knowledge and skills of what works, and how their whole school or college approach operates.

**10. I have already completed a senior mental health lead course. If the provider is on the list, can I be refunded?**

We encourage senior leads who have previously attended training to look to build on their knowledge and skills by attending further training wherever possible.

However, you may seek a grant to pay for a course attended prior to 1 September 2021 if the identical course is now on the DfE quality assured list. You will need to provide evidence of this before you are given a grant.

**11. Can I be required to attend a particular course by my local authority?**

Some local areas have well developed programmes to support settings with their whole school or college approach, including existing arrangements to develop senior mental health leads. Your local authority should explain the local offer to you, to help you take a decision around what additional training you seek to undertake. If a good free local offer exists, you might wish to use a DfE grant as a contribution towards a higher level senior lead training course, or to develop a particular skill previously not addressed.

It is ultimately for each school or college to decide which course is most suitable for their particular circumstances, needs and preferences. Every school and college, and every senior lead is different.

If a training provider has further questions, please email [mentalhealthQA@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:mentalhealthQA@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)



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