

## SLE Application Guidance

The SLE application form is accessible from the Teaching School to which you wish to apply to during the application round. This guidance document aims to support potential applicants by explaining the application and reference requirements and the assessment process.

### Before you begin your application

- **Check that you are eligible to become a SLE:** SLE designation is open to individuals that hold middle or senior leadership roles in schools and who have particular area(s) of expertise. We do not plan to try to define precisely middle or senior leadership – we recognise that roles and responsibilities are different in different schools and that routes to leadership are not always straightforward. The headteacher of a potential SLE will be asked therefore to confirm that the individual holds a middle or senior leadership position. There are rigorous eligibility criteria. You will need to evidence that you meet all areas of the criteria and are outstanding in at least one of the agreed SLE areas of expertise. For the current criteria and agreed areas of expertise, please refer to the Teaching School website for the ‘Who can apply’. Please note that although SLEs themselves must be outstanding at what they do, they do not have to come from outstanding schools - they can come from any school.
- **Read through the application questions:** To help you complete your application form, the application questions are shown in the table below. The table also shows how the evidence provided in your application will be assessed against the eligibility criteria.
- **Talk to your referees:** Your application must be supported by two references:
  - 1) Your current headteacher/principal
  - 2) A middle or senior leader you have supported **or** a middle or senior leader who has first-hand knowledge of the work you undertook with colleagues in his/her school and the **impact** of your supportThe references are an essential part of your application, and we strongly recommend that you contact your referees to explain your application and to make them aware of the deadline. It is very important that referees complete and return their forms by **the date stated on the Teaching School website** otherwise there is a chance that the Teaching School assessing your application will not consider it complete.
- **Set sufficient time aside:** Applying for SLE designation is a thorough and rigorous process, requiring you to provide evidence about your readiness for the role. You should set aside plenty of time to think about, discuss and complete the application form.
- **Print the criteria and guidance:** You are strongly advised to print a copy of the eligibility criteria and this guidance document so that you can refer to these when completing your application.
- **Have your personal and school information to hand:** When you start the application form you will need to enter or verify certain information about yourself, your school

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and your referees. Details can be found in the application process section of this document.

### The application form

The application form is completed and returned to the Teaching School to which you wish to apply.

It is essential that you provide an accurate email address on the form. This email address will be used for all subsequent contact with you.

### Key points to note about the form

- You can access the SLE application form from your teaching school on their website, **for The Diamond Teaching School Alliance use [www.diamondtsa.com](http://www.diamondtsa.com)**
- You are advised to inform your referees as soon as possible after you start the application, to give them the maximum possible time to complete their references.
- Questions marked with \* are mandatory and you will not be able to submit your application without completing these questions.
- **You must submit the final application form by the deadline stated on their website [www.diamondtsa.com](http://www.diamondtsa.com)**

### How the application questions link to the eligibility criteria

The table below details the application questions and how these link to the eligibility criteria. This is provided to help applicants to ensure they provide the appropriate evidence in each response.

	Application information requested	How the question links to the eligibility criteria
General	<b>Leadership Role</b> Please confirm you hold a leadership role or responsibility within your school.	Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SLEs will have a minimum of two years' experience in a leadership role within a school or academy.</li></ul>

	Please confirm you have at least two years' experience in your current role. If you have indicated 'no' to the question above, please detail your previous leadership role or responsibility and school name.	<p>Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SLEs will be outstanding middle or senior leaders, with at least two years' experience and a first-class knowledge in a particular field of expertise.</li> <li>SLEs will have a minimum of two years' experience in a leadership role within a school or academy.</li> </ul>
<b>Specialist area(s) of expertise</b>	<b>Your Specialism</b> Please indicate your specialist area(s) and the length of time you have been a specialist within the selected field(s) of expertise.	<p>Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SLEs will be outstanding middle or senior leaders, with at least two years' experience and a first-class knowledge in a particular field of expertise.</li> </ul>
	<b>Question 1.</b> What motivates you to engage in system leadership?	<p>Capacity and commitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SLEs will have a commitment to outreach work, and the capacity to undertake such work.</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership experience and capacity</b>	<b>Question 2a.</b> As a leader, please outline the significant impact of your contribution to supporting leaders in other schools, or to your own school's performance, detailing the impact of this, and demonstrating clear evidence of your outstanding practice within your area/s of expertise/specialism.	<p>Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SLEs will be outstanding middle or senior leaders, with at least two years' experience and a first-class knowledge in a particular field of expertise.</li> </ul> <p>Track record</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SLEs will have a successful track record, supported by substantial impact evidence, of working effectively within their own school and/or across a group of schools, or working with a range of leaders within a single school.</li> </ul> <p>Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SLEs will have an understanding of what constitutes "outstanding" in their field of expertise and the ability and confidence to articulate this.</li> <li>SLEs will have an appreciation of how their specialism and skills can</li> </ul>

		contribute to the wider school improvement agenda.
<b>Ofsted/ results</b>	<b>Question 2b</b> Please detail performance results/ outcomes you have been accountable for, in your area of work (please cite sources as these may be verified).	Track record <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLEs will have a successful track record, supported by substantial impact evidence, of working effectively within their own school and/or across a group of schools, or working with a range of leaders within a single school.</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership experience and capacity</b>	<b>Question 3</b> Please provide examples of where you have worked sensitively and collaboratively with peer colleagues using coaching/facilitation skills to grow leadership capacity in other leaders leading to sustainable improvements.	Track record <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLEs will have evidence of successfully using coaching and/or facilitation skills to bring about sustainable improvements.</li> <li>• SLEs will have excellent communication and interpersonal skills.</li> <li>• SLEs will have the ability to utilise high levels of emotional intelligence to work sensitively and collaboratively with peer colleagues.</li> <li>• SLEs will have the ability to grow leadership capacity in others.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership experience and capacity</b>	<b>Question 4.</b> Please provide an example of significance where you have challenged, collaborated, motivated and inspired your peer colleagues to set and establish new and innovative working practices. How did you approach this? What impact did this have?	Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLEs will have excellent communication and interpersonal skills.</li> <li>• SLEs will have an analytical approach in identifying the needs and ability to prioritise accordingly, including the ability to set and establish new and innovative working practices.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Questions 5</b> Please address each area, evidencing where you have utilised each skill and the positive impact you have brought about.</p>	<p><b>Skills and Experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLEs will have excellent communication and interpersonal skills</li> <li>• SLEs will have the ability to utilise high levels of emotional intelligence to work sensitively and collaboratively with peer colleagues.</li> <li>• SLEs will have an understanding of what constitutes “outstanding” in their field of expertise and the ability and confidence to articulate this.</li> <li>• SLEs will have an appreciation of how their specialism and skills can contribute to the wider school improvement agenda.</li> <li>• SLEs will have an analytical approach in identifying the needs and ability to prioritise accordingly, including the ability to set and establish new and innovative working practices</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Additional Information.</b> Please detail any other qualifications which demonstrates your first-class knowledge in your field of expertise, which you feel is relevant to support your application</p>	<p><b>Experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLEs will be outstanding middle or senior leaders, with at least two years’ experience and a first-class knowledge in a particular field of expertise.</li> </ul>

## References

- 1) As part of the application process you will be required to provide **two referees** to support your application. One must be the headteacher/principal of the school in which you are currently employed. The other referee must be a middle or senior leader you have supported in another school **or** a middle or senior leader who has first-hand knowledge of the work you undertook with colleagues in his/her school and the **impact** of your support

NB: if you do not have experience in another school it is possible to include a referee from someone you have supported within your own school.

Please refer to the second referee document. This should be sent to your second referee for completion **by the date stated on the Teaching School's website**. Each referee will be required to complete a supporting statement to provide evidence relating to how you meet the eligibility criteria for the role.

You are advised to contact your referees as soon as possible after you start the application, to give them the maximum possible time to complete their references.

### How evidence provided by your referees will be assessed against the eligibility criteria

Referee	How the referee's evidence links to the eligibility criteria
Headteacher /principal	<p>Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLEs will be outstanding middle or senior leaders, with at least two years' experience and a first-class knowledge in a particular field of expertise.</li> </ul> <p>Track record</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLEs will have a successful track record, supported by substantial impact evidence, of working effectively within their own school and/or across a group of schools, or working with a range of leaders within a single school.</li> </ul> <p>Capacity and commitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLEs will have a commitment to outreach work, and the capacity to undertake such work.</li> <li>• SLEs will be supported in their application by their headteacher and chair of governors, and be able to be released from their school for a mutually agreed allocation of time.</li> </ul> <p>Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLEs will have an understanding of what constitutes 'outstanding' in their field of expertise and the ability and confidence to articulate this.</li> <li>• SLEs will have an appreciation of how their specialism and skills can contribute to the wider school improvement agenda.</li> <li>• SLEs will have an analytical approach in identifying the needs and ability to prioritise accordingly, including the ability to set and establish new and innovative working practices.</li> </ul>

<b>Middle or senior leader you have supported or who has first-hand knowledge of the support you have given to colleagues</b>	<p>Track record</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SLEs will have a successful track record, supported by substantial impact evidence, of working effectively within their own school and/or across a group of schools, or working with a range of leaders within a single school.</li><li>• SLEs will have evidence of successfully using coaching and/or facilitation skills to bring about sustainable improvements.</li></ul> <p>Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SLEs will have excellent communication and interpersonal skills.</li><li>• SLEs will have the ability to utilise high levels of emotional intelligence to work sensitively and collaboratively with peer colleagues.</li><li>• SLEs will have the ability the ability to grow leadership capacity in others (and how you as the recipient of the applicant’s support have grown as a leader).</li></ul>
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## The assessment process

### Initial sift

An initial sift will be undertaken by the Teaching School when the recruitment round closes. This sift will check that applications meet the following minimum criteria:

- The application form has been fully completed
- Two references have been completed.
- The applicant is a middle/senior leader, with a minimum of two years’ experience in a particular field of expertise
- The applicant has at least two years’ experience in a leadership role within a school or academy

Applications which do not meet the minimum criteria from the initial sift will be considered unsuccessful.

### Assessment

The Teaching School will then invite applicants to undertake a face to face assessment, in the form of an individual presentation and a formal interview. **Please see the Teaching School website for the interview date** (for Diamond TSA: [www.diamondtsa.com](http://www.diamondtsa.com) ).

The individual presentation to the panel will be on the theme detailed by the individual Teaching School, with an opportunity for questions from the assessment panel at the end.

Each applicant will be notified in advance about the length of their individual presentation. On average this would usually not be more than 10 minutes.

The assessment panel will review all presentations, with this review forming part of the overall judgement against the criteria.

You may be asked to consider and talk about a given scenario, such as the one listed below:

<p>Consider the following scenario and discuss what issues and challenges it raises for an SLE deployed in another school. What strategies might you use to resolve these issues?</p> <p>You are asked as an SLE to support a leader in another school for which you have been given in advance some performance data relating to your field of expertise. Following introductions, you are given an informal tour of the school along with some short drop-in lesson observations. Through these observations it becomes apparent that some priorities are not consistently understood or may be misplaced; and some strategies for improvement seem unlikely to realise the desired outcomes. The leader you are supporting seems unaware of these issues.</p>	<p>SLEs will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• have excellent communication and interpersonal skills</li><li>• have an appreciation of how their specialism and skills can contribute to the wider school improvement agenda</li><li>• have an analytical approach in identifying the needs and ability to prioritise accordingly, including the ability to set and establish new and innovative working practices</li><li>• have the ability to grow leadership capacity in others</li></ul>
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### **Additional Optional Assessment**

In addition the Teaching School may also ask you to take part in a group exercise or a written task.

Following this final stage of the assessment process, we will communicate decisions by within two weeks from the interview date.