

Professional Standards FAQs

1. What are the standards?

The [NASBM Professional Standards](#) are a blueprint for school business management in schools and academies. They contain values and ethics, behaviours and six individual disciplines, which collectively define school business management.

The six professional disciplines are inter-related, and are connected via the core whole-school leadership responsibilities set out in Leading Support Services. The standards are tiered to reflect the difference between entry-level and senior practice.

2. Why should I use the standards? What are the benefits to me?

As a practitioner, you can use the standards to check the level of your own knowledge and practice or to plan career progression. You can plan a career pathway based on your skills and areas for development. Adhering to the standards makes you part of a formally recognised profession and part of a self-governing professional community.

As a Head teacher or governor, you can use the standards to develop effective school business management in your school/trust. Use the standards to develop job descriptions and recruitment campaigns; make sure you secure the right level of skills and experience.

The tier that practitioners will be working at in each of the six professional disciplines will be dependent on their role within a school/trust. For example, in one school/trust, a single school business manager may operate in or oversee all six disciplines and require in depth knowledge of them all. In another setting, there may be a team of professionals supporting the SBM function, with a lead individual co-ordinating their activities.

The tiered approach allows SBM professionals and their employers to agree what level of knowledge, skills and technical mastery is required in each of the professional disciplines.

3. How will my school/trust use standards as part of my performance management?

These standards can be used to inform the performance management of school business management professionals. However, they are non-mandatory and due to the variety of SBM roles in each setting, do not establish a baseline of expected performance. They therefore should not be used as a checklist or as a baseline, and any shortcoming with respect to the standards is not a basis for questioning competence or initiating capability.

4. How should the NASBM Professional Standards be used?

The [NASBM Professional Standards](#) can be used for self-assessment, recruitment, individual performance management, organisational development and training and development. Refer to the main professional standards document for more information.

5. Where can I find and/or undertake the qualifications to equip me to work at a higher level in other disciplines?

The NASBM is currently working with providers of existing programmes to identify those that already map over to the [NASBM Professional Standards](#), as well as working on development of new CPD. NASBM expects to launch new training programmes in Spring 2016.

6. How much would the training cost, and how long does it take?

The cost and length of training will entirely depend on the type of course you taken whether that be a standalone CPD course, or a full qualification in a discipline within the standards.

7. My Headteacher isn't interested in the NASBM Professional Standards – what do I do to advise them of the benefits to me and the school?

Bring the standards to your performance review meetings; highlight how your activities and achievements demonstrate that you meet relevant disciplines of the standards. Use the standards when you make a case for development opportunities and training.

NASBM will support practitioners by developing case studies where schools used the standards to support effective school business management. The case studies will be published on the NASBM website in summer 2016 once the standards have been in place for six months. They will help you promote the value of standards and your role.

In addition NASBM has been working with stakeholders, including ASCL and NAHT, who have endorsed the standards, and this will encourage embedding with senior leadership teams.

8. How can the standards benefit me if I am buying in a specialist service?

Ask the bought-in service to confirm they will provide you with a service that meets the relevant discipline within the standards. The standards are for school business management professionals whether they work directly in school or for HR service providers or shared-bursar services etc.

The standards can be used as a guide to define service expectations or SLAs.

Finally, the standards set out the skills and technical knowledge needed to procure bought-in services effectively.

9. Do all of NASBM's strategic partners buy into and support the standards?

NASBM expects its partners to uphold to [NASBM Values and Ethics](#) outlined in the standards document. Where a professional identifies poor practice, they should contact NASBM to seek support and guidance.

10. Do the current SBM programmes map to the standards, and if so, at what level?

NASBM is currently working with providers of existing programmes to identify those that already map over to the NASBM Professional Standards, as well as working on development of new CPD. NASBM expects to launch new training programmes in Spring 2016.

11. Will tiers be allocated on an average overall if I am a specialist/ Tier 4 in one discipline, but lower tiers in other professional disciplines?

There is no specific rule on how to apply the standards across all the professional disciplines, and therefore how to aggregate.

The standards do not expect professionals to be specialists in all areas, as would be a reasonable assumption for any profession.

The operational level of school business management professionals depends on both role and context. Indeed, individuals working within the SBM profession are just that: individual, and therefore each person will demonstrate varying levels of proficiency. It is likely that most SBM professionals will demonstrate Tier 3+ technical mastery in one or two disciplines, with a lower level of technical proficiency in other areas.

To be defined as a Tier 4 practitioner, you need to demonstrate that you are operating at Tier 4 in Leading Support Services and at least one other discipline. This is also one of the requirements when applying for [NASBM Fellowship](#).

12. What about the SBM Competency Framework? Has this now been superseded by the NASBM standards?

The [NASBM Professional Standards](#) reflect the ethics, behaviours, professional disciplines needed, as well as the demands of school business management today.

The [NASBM Professional Standards](#) supersedes the SBM Competency Framework as the blueprint for effective practice and the reference point for updated qualifications. The NASBM standards evolved from the SBM Competency Framework; indeed elements of the original document have been incorporated into 'Leading Support Services'.

The SBM Competency Framework will no longer be maintained or updated.

13. Are there any supporting documents or a summary version of the standards?

Yes. NASBM has produced a summary of the standards, and this is publically available from www.nasbm.co.uk/professionalstandards.

14. How do I get hold of a hard copy of the standards?

All current NASBM members have now received (or should have received) a hard-copy. If you have any queries about this, or any issues, please contact info@nasbm.co.uk

The standards are also publically available to download from the NASBM website.

