



The Neil Thompson Academy Prospectus

**Access the Ideas, Frameworks and Insights of a
Leading Voice in Professional Development**



The Neil Thompson Academy provides access to one of the most extensive bodies of work in professional development for social work, social care, management and leadership. With over 45 years of experience, more than 50 published books and a distinguished academic career spanning five UK universities, Neil Thompson has established himself as a trusted guide for professionals seeking to develop their practice, enhance their effectiveness and make a meaningful difference.

The 3Ps Framework: Our Foundation

At the heart of the Neil Thompson Academy's approach is the 3Ps Framework, a philosophy that recognises the interconnection between three fundamental elements of professional effectiveness:

People

Success in any professional context depends fundamentally on people - who they are, how they are treated, how they are led and how they develop. Whether you work in social care supporting vulnerable individuals or in management leading teams and organisations, understanding people is paramount. The Academy's resources help you develop sophisticated people skills, emotional intelligence and the capacity to build relationships that enable others to flourish.

Problems

Every professional role involves grappling with problems – from the complex challenges facing service users in social work and social care, to the organisational and strategic issues that managers and leaders must address. The Academy provides frameworks and insights for sophisticated problem solving, helping you move beyond simplistic solutions to engage with complexity in informed, thoughtful ways.

Potential

The most effective professionals recognise and cultivate potential – in the people they serve, in the colleagues they work with, in the organisations they lead and in themselves. The Academy's resources are designed to help you identify and realise potential, converting challenges into opportunities and supporting sustainable growth and development.

This integrated understanding of People, Problems and Potential informs everything the Academy offers, providing you with a coherent philosophical foundation for your professional development.

Who is Neil Thompson?

Dr Neil Thompson is an independent writer, educator and adviser whose work has influenced professional practice across multiple sectors. Many professionals have come to see Neil as a guide and mentor, not only on their learning journey but also on their whole outlook on life, people, problems and potential.

With an impeccable academic pedigree, an outstanding publications record and a wealth of direct experience of making a positive difference, he stands out as a source of invaluable wisdom and guidance.

Academic distinction

He has held full or honorary professorships at five UK universities and is currently a visiting professor at the Open University and Wrexham University. His qualifications include a first-class honours degree in Social Sciences, an MBA, a doctorate (PhD) and a higher doctorate (DLitt), alongside professional qualifications in social work, training and development and mediation and dispute resolution.

Professional achievements

Neil is a Chartered Manager and a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute, as well as a Fellow of the Learned Society of Wales. He has over 45 years' experience in the helping professions as a practitioner, manager, educator and consultant.

Extensive published work

With over 50 books to his name, Neil has established a reputation for explaining complex ideas clearly and accessibly without oversimplifying them, and for successfully blending theory and practice. Key publications include:

Promoting Equality (Bloomsbury, 4th edn, 2018)

Effective Communication (Bloomsbury, 3rd edn, 2018)

People Skills (Bloomsbury, 5th edn, 2021)

The Managing People Practice Manual (Avenue Media Solutions, 2022)

The Critically Reflective Practitioner (with Sue Thompson, Bloomsbury, 3rd edn, 2023)

Managing Stress (Routledge, 2nd edn, 2024)

Effective Problem Solving (Routledge, 2nd edn, 2025)

Authentic Leadership Revisited (Edward Elgar, 2nd edn, 2025)

His website, featuring his acclaimed *Manifesto for Making a Difference*, is at www.NeilThompson.info.

What the Academy Offers

The Academy provides multiple pathways to access Neil's extensive body of work and to benefit from his frameworks, insights and guidance. Whether you are a social work or social care professional seeking to enhance your practice, or a manager or leader looking to develop your effectiveness, the Academy offers resources tailored to your needs.

Books and training manuals

Neil has produced a range of books and manuals that have earned him a well-deserved reputation for explaining complex ideas clearly and accessibly without oversimplifying them, and for successfully blending theory and practice. These publications provide foundational access to his thinking and frameworks.

The Avenue Subscription Service

This service provides access to over 60 online courses developed by Neil and a small group of trusted colleagues, covering topics relevant to both social work/social care professionals and management/leadership practitioners.

Individual access: £99 + VAT – less than £2 per course

Organisational access: £3,000 + VAT for up to 300 staff

Visit www.NeilThompson.info/subscription-service/ to find out more.

Sophisticated learning systems

The Academy's learning systems go far beyond conventional online courses. Rather than simply offering insights and exercises, our systems provide a step-by-step process geared towards maximising learning and putting it into practice. Each system offers:

- Access to video materials and extensive learning resources
- A structured pathway designed to bring the learning to life
- Practical frameworks for making a positive difference to your practice

Leading for Success

An expert-led programme geared towards developing excellence in leading teams. Participants will be helped to achieve optimal results through effective team management. This programme can form the basis of a Level 5 qualification in Management and Leadership.

System3V

Based on the V2V principle of converting vicious circles into virtuous ones, this innovative programme offers an excellent basis for people management. It can contribute to a Diploma in Strategic Leadership Practice at Level 7.

Centre of Excellence

The Neil Thompson Academy Centre of Excellence is an online membership platform for anyone committed to developing their capacity and effectiveness as a leader - whether as a manager or an influential professional in their field.

Are you ready to benefit from our FRESH approach?

Fully committed to achieving the best results – recognising that 'good enough' is not good enough

Reflective practice oriented – ready and willing to think, plan, learn and develop

Equality, diversity and inclusion minded – committed to fairness and dignity for all

Self-development focused – happy to take the lead on boosting your learning to the full

Healthy body and mind aware – prepared to take your health and wellbeing seriously

The Centre offers:

- A sophisticated platform of health and wellbeing resources to optimise physical and mental health
- A growing library of resources to boost personal and professional development
- Challenging exercises to help you stay focused on learning and development

- The opportunity to ask Neil questions about your development and current challenges
- Potential CPD credit for involvement in the Centre's activities

Visit www.NeilThompson.info/centre-of-excellence/ for full details.

Chartered Management Institute qualifications

The Academy works in partnership with TFL Education to offer opportunities to obtain qualifications in management and leadership accredited by the Chartered Management Institute at three levels: Awards, Certificates and Diplomas.

Participants in Leading for Success and System3V are eligible to register for CMI qualifications at Level 5 or Level 7 respectively. See the Appendix for details of the diploma options available, including specialist diplomas for adult social care leadership, children's social care leadership and people management, engagement and wellbeing.

Chartered Manager status and CMI fellowship

If you are already a qualified and experienced manager, you may be eligible to be assessed to achieve Chartered Manager status and Fellowship of the CMI (CMgr FCIM). Completing one of our CMI diplomas gives you access to a fast-track assessment pathway. Visit www.NeilThompson.info/chartered-manager for more information.

Our Philosophy of Learning

The Academy's approach to learning is grounded in the principle of self-directed learning, or 'heutagogy', to use the technical term.

Traditional formal learning - from school through to in-service training - typically involves other people deciding what you learn and how you learn it. While this approach has its advantages, it inevitably has drawbacks. We have known for quite some time that different people learn in different ways, so a one-size-fits-all approach is inherently limited.

At the Neil Thompson Academy, we believe that self-directed learning – where you decide what you want to learn and how you are going to learn it – is the most effective form of learning. In this approach, you determine the learning outcomes and the learning pathway that will work best for you. Teachers, trainers and tutors play a facilitative role, helping you to decide rather than deciding for you.

This approach gives you considerable freedom and flexibility and allows you to tailor the learning to your specific needs and circumstances. The Avenue Subscription Service, with over 60 courses to choose from, provides the flexibility to select the options that best fit your needs and plans. Once you have finished a course, you can decide whether to explore a different topic or do more work on consolidating what you have learned.

When it comes to formal qualifications, a balance is required. Awarding bodies must set standardised expectations to ensure comparability, so certain aspects of CMI qualifications are predefined. However, this does not mean you have no flexibility. CMI assignments are not like maths tests with single right answers. They are

designed to test your understanding, and you have scope to demonstrate that understanding in ways that connect with your particular interests and workplace context.

To a large extent, you will be in the driving seat of your own learning, albeit within the structure of the CMI system. And being in the driving seat does not mean you are on your own - we provide guidance and support throughout your learning journey.

Our Philosophy of Management and Leadership

Throughout my career, I have witnessed major changes in how management and leadership are understood and practised. Thankfully, these changes have, for the most part, been positive and welcome. In the early stages of my career, few managers had management qualifications and many did not see value in achieving one. Now it is quite common for managers to have qualifications, and those who do not are in danger of being left behind.

This emphasis on qualifications reflects a growing recognition that management and leadership roles are difficult, challenging and complex if done properly - and, as such, incredibly rewarding.

My philosophy has emerged from six sources:

Being managed - learning from both excellent and appalling managers

Studying management and leadership through formal learning and extensive reading

Practising as a manager in challenging situations

Teaching and training, learning from students and course participants

Acting as a consultant to help organisations tackle problems and realise potential

Writing about management and leadership to crystallise and consolidate learning

Key principles:

1. Management and leadership are different, but they overlap and both are needed for the best results
2. Organisational success depends on people - who they are, how they are treated and how they are led
3. People perform better when they feel valued, supported and safe
4. Professionals who do not keep learning can stagnate and become unsafe practitioners
5. Health and wellbeing are essential components of effective, sustainable organisations
6. Equality, diversity and inclusion are about getting the best out of people for everyone's benefit
7. A clear, workable vision, well articulated, is essential
8. The vision needs to be underpinned by explicit, meaningful values that are real, not just rhetorical
9. Anyone can make a mistake and everyone can learn
10. A key part of leadership is shaping the culture in a positive direction
11. Leaders need to take ownership of their choices and decisions and support their followers in doing the same

12. Leaders need to earn trust, respect and credibility
13. Staff are happier, more productive, engaged and less likely to leave if they are included and heard

For a fuller account of this philosophy, see *The Managing People Practice Manual* (Avenue Media Solutions, 2022).

Meet the Team

Working alongside Neil are two senior consultants:

Pauline Bowe, Certified Principal Business Psychologist – An expert in mental toughness and its role in effective leadership, with a strong background in coaching and mentoring and currently involved in doctoral research.

Dr Sue Thompson – A well-published author with extensive experience of learner support in a variety of settings. She has been a successful company director for over 20 years.

The Academy works closely with TFL Education under the guidance of management and leadership expert Aiden Harper.

Ready to Begin Your Development Journey?

If you feel that the Academy's approach resonates with your professional development goals, you will find comprehensive information at www.NeilThompson.info.

If you have any questions, you can contact Neil directly via the website. He will be happy to help you explore how the Academy's resources can support your development.

Appendix: Chartered Management Institute Qualifications

The Academy offers CMI diplomas at Level 5 (equivalent to the early stages of a BA degree) and at Level 7 (equivalent to Master's level). Diplomas are available in three forms: one focusing on people management and leadership with emphasis on engagement and wellbeing, and two designed for managers in adult social care and children's social care respectively.

Note: 37 credits are needed for a diploma.

Level 5 Diplomas

- Level 5 Diploma in Adult Social Care Leadership
- Level 5 Diploma in Children's Social Care Leadership
- Level 5 Diploma in People Management, Engagement and Wellbeing

Level 5 Diploma units

503 - Principles of Managing and Leading Individuals and Teams to Achieve Success (5 credits)

526 - Principles of Leadership Practice (8 credits)

506 - Managing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (5 credits)

507 - Principles of Delivering Coaching and Mentoring (5 credits)

511 - Principles of Recruiting, Selecting and Retaining Talent (5 credits)

522 - Managing the Customer Experience (5 credits)

525 - Using Reflective Practice to Inform Personal and Professional Development (5 credits)

Level 7 Diplomas

- Level 7 Diploma in Strategic Leadership in Social Care
- Level 7 Diploma in Strategic People Management, Engagement and Wellbeing

Level 7 Diploma units

702 - Leading and Developing People to Optimise Performance (10 credits)

716 - Strategic Approaches to Mental Health and Wellbeing (7 credits)

714 - Personal and Professional Development (9 credits)

715 - Strategic Approaches to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (8 credits)

612 - Coaching Skills for Leaders (7 credits)

What you can expect

When you register for a diploma with the Academy, you will receive comprehensive support:

- 1. Welcome video** setting the scene for your chosen diploma
- 2. Access to a password-protected website** containing introductory guides, 'Preparing to Study' videos, self-assessment tools, keynote videos for each unit, Success Guides, Study Guides, Assignment Guides and assignment checklists
- 3. A Diploma Companion workbook** to help you explore key issues and their application to practice

- 4. Unlimited online one-to-one tutor support** via Zoom from TFL Education
- 5. Complimentary CMI Affiliate membership** for the duration of your studies
- 6. Access to Management Direct** - the CMI's extensive online portal of management and leadership resources including checklists, videos, e-books, articles and journals
- 7. Access to the CMI Career Development Centre** providing tools, information and advice for your professional journey
- 8. Additional learning resources** developed or collated by Neil.



The Neil Thompson Academy

Avenue House, 1 Worcester Road
Bangor on Dee, Wrexham, LL13 0JB
[**www.NeilThompson.info**](http://www.NeilThompson.info)