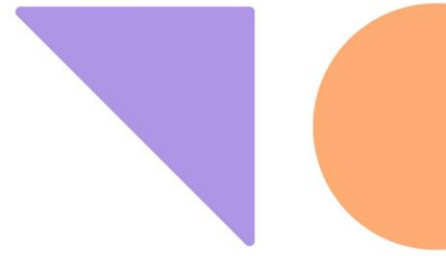


All About the Quality in Befriending Award



**Befriending
Networks**



Quality in Befriending Award

The Quality in Befriending Award is the only award in the UK and Ireland specifically tailored for befriending services. It is valued by referrers, befrienders, commissioners, and funders. Developed by Befriending Networks in consultation with member organisations and experts in the field of befriending, the award launched in 2010 and was revised and updated in 2021. There are more than 50 organisations currently holding a Quality in Befriending Award in the UK and Ireland!

Your organisations can work towards the standard level of the award, or you may choose to work towards Excellence. Once achieved your Award will be valid for 3 years.



What is Befriending?

Befriending is a relationship supported by an organisation to enable meaningful connections. The befriending relationship has boundaries. This begins with an organisation matching individuals together and then providing ongoing support to both befriender and service user. The befriending relationship will be monitored by the organisation and supported at all stages, including managing the ending. Befriending can be diverse in its delivery but shares a common goal of enabling meaningful connections. This connection can be between people with shared or different life experiences. Befriending is a planned social interaction which can take place in a 1:1 or small group settings. In our network, there are delivery models which include:

- Face-to-face befriending, taking place in the home or community.
- Distance befriending, including telephone and video calls, letter writing, and gaming.
- Some services provide a mixed or hybrid offer to their service users.

Befriending organisations will provide one or more of these delivery models. Befriending will achieve positive outcomes and prevent negative ones, for individuals and communities. Befriending reduces loneliness and social isolation by increasing connections. The befriending relationship is nurturing, enriching, and trusting. Befriending is predominantly provided by trained and supported volunteer befrienders. In some projects, befriending may be delivered by a paid employee.

What does the Quality Award Involve?

The Award requires your organisation to collate, submit or demonstrate evidence of policy, procedure or practice across 60 quality indicators organised into 7 domains.



Month 1 and 2 - you will submit evidence for the first 35 Quality Indicators by uploading documents to our online portal ready for assessment.

Month 3 - We will assess and provide feedback on your submitted evidence. We will carry out interviews with two befriendees, two volunteers/befrienders, and one staff member.

Month 4 – Prepare and submit case studies and prepare evidence for the site visit.

Month 5 - We will assess the remaining 25 indicators on a site visit which can take place either online or in person. Following the site visit, we will prepare your assessment report and Award tracker and share the outcome of your award with you.



Completing the Award can take up to 6 months and requires a time commitment from the organisation working towards achieving a Quality Award.

You can read all the indicators that are assessed in our [Pre-Award Checklist](#). We encourage those intending to work towards the award to complete the Pre-Award Checklist and locate or list evidence you already have or would need to update for each indicator.

Reaccreditation

Seven months before your Quality Award is due to expire, you will receive a reminder email from us that it's soon time for your reaccreditation. You should aim to complete this process before your current award expires.

The reaccreditation process is quicker than the full award process, as hopefully a lot will have remained the same for your service or will now be even better. We still advise that you give yourself 6 months for the process – if you complete it earlier, your new award will still begin at the expiry date of your previous award.

Reaccreditation will be evaluated via:

- Uploading evidence for 25 indicators (Fundamental Indicators from Domains 1-4 and all of Domain 2 - Policies and Procedures)
- Interviews with 2 of your volunteers, 2 of your befriendees and 1 staff member.
- A site/remote visit to review progress on the recommendations made in your previous Quality Award plus the remaining 7 Fundamental Indicators.

If you are already holding the Excellence award standard, you will be Reaccredited at this level. If you decide you would like to work towards Excellence during Reaccreditation, please let us know so that we can discuss what this would involve. There is an additional fee for Excellence at any time after the Full Award process, including at the stage of Reaccreditation.

Excellence

To be awarded Quality in Befriending Excellence, your organisation will have an additional 23 indicators to evidence while you are completing the full award. We encourage all organisations to aim for excellence.

There is no additional fee for Excellence if you are aiming to achieve it while you are completing your Full Award. If you decide to do it afterwards, or during Reaccreditation, there is an additional fee.

If you are already holding the Excellence award standard, you will be Reaccredited at this level in years 3 and 6.





Why might you work towards the Quality in Befriending Award?

Organisations who have successfully completed the Quality Award enjoy a range of benefits, including:

- Increased confidence in the organisation from potential referrers, befriendees and befrienders, as well as funders, commissioners and other stakeholders.
- Increased feeling of pride amongst staff and volunteers for being part of a recognised Quality Award organisation.
- The chance to review and reflect upon all aspects of your befriending service.
- An external audit of the organisation's policies and suggestions on how the quality of the befriending service can be improved.
- A certificate and the use of the Quality Award logo, as well as inclusion in our public directory of Quality Award holders.

Hear from some of our award holders...

We recommend the Award as it has given us confidence in the quality and processes of our befriending service, a morale booster for staff and volunteers, and confidence when promoting the service to partners and funders. Befriending Networks were brilliant from start to finish.

Community Together CIC

Having a nationally recognised accreditation is essential to further development and obtaining future funding and partners. It has been useful in our organisation's efforts to obtain support and care contracts where this sort of service is highly regarded and beneficial to overall care and support.

SeAscape

It's always useful to review your service, update and tighten processes where needed, and have the benefit of expertise and advice from a different perspective. As a bonus, it's great to be able to use the Quality Award logo, which is a quick and straightforward way to demonstrate you meet a required Level of practice.

INtegr8 Befriending Service

Being quality assured means that our service is fully aligned with Quality in Befriending guidelines and allows us to provide a best practice service to our clients and volunteers. It has also been hugely beneficial for funding opportunities. The Quality Award demonstrates that we are robust, effective and aligned with a best-practice delivery framework.

London Irish Centre



What support will you receive?

Befriending Networks will assign your organisation an assessor, who will be alongside you throughout the assessment process. You can expect:

- To meet your assessor to make a connection, share insight about your befriending service, and then plan and discuss the timeline for your assessment and discuss if you are aiming for excellence.
- Timely responses by email or by phone from your assessor during your assessment, as well as signposting to our training, networking events, and membership services team.
- Ongoing feedback about the evidence you have submitted.
- Guidance and resources to help you provide evidence and complete any development work required to meet the indicators throughout the assessment period.
- A final report which shares the outcome of your assessment and gives recommendations for continuous service improvement.

Who can apply for the Quality Award?

Your service can apply for the Quality Award if it:

- Operates a volunteer befriending service in the UK or Ireland
- Is a member of Befriending Networks and remains a member during the award period.
- Has completed at least one full cycle of befriending work before registering to undertake the Quality Award. Your service must have completed a full matching journey from referral through to ending.
- Has completed the [Pre-Award Checklist](#).

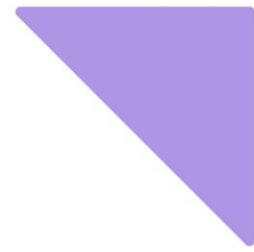
Services which don't meet these requirements but would still like to work on developing the quality of their delivery should contact our team to discuss how we can support you with a bespoke offer. Please contact us at info@befriending.co.uk.

Age UK Partnership

Local Age UK and Age Cymru partners with current CQS certification can access a Quality Award passport opportunity, offering a shorter assessment and discount to qualifying services.

CQS certification demonstrates compliance with a range of Quality Award indicators. Organisations holding current CQS certification benefit from a reduction in the number of required indicators and must provide evidence for only 46 of the total 60 indicators.

Contact info@befriending.co.uk to find out more, or let us know that you are interested [here](#).



How to apply

- First Award – [Note your interest here](#)
- Reaccreditation - Fill in our [online application form](#)
- Age UK Partners – [apply here](#)

<https://befriending.co.uk/quality-award/apply-now/>

Once we have processed your application -

- An invoice will be issued including the fee for the award, this amount is non-refundable.
- An initial online call with your assessor will be arranged
- Once we've received your fee, you'll receive your login details for the online Moodle platform and can begin uploading evidence - your 6-month Award journey begins!
- Age UK

Please contact info@befriending.co.uk with any questions

Organisation Size	Organisation's Annual Income	Full Award Fee	Age UK Full Award Fee	Reaccreditation Fee
Small	Under £100K	£500	£300	£250
Medium 1	Under £350K	£750	£550	£375
Medium 2	Under 750K	£850	£650	£425
Large	Over 751K	£950	£750	£475

If your organisation wishes to apply for the Quality Award for more than one service and requires more information on fees for multiple services, please contact us at info@befriending.co.uk to discuss.





About Us

Befriending Networks are the network for befriending organisations. We were established as a charity in 1994 and have thirty years of experience in supporting and connecting befriending services.

Our members form the largest network of befriending services in the world.

- We provide access to sector-specific training, events, resources, and awards which support quality in befriending.
- Each year we coordinate Befriending Week from the 1st – 7th November.
- Our vision is of a society where quality befriending support is available to everyone who needs it, and the importance of meaningful connection is recognised.

Membership

We provide support, training and accreditation to befriending projects of all sizes worldwide, creating networking opportunities for those in the sector to collaborate, share ideas and voice their experiences.

We welcome a diverse range of befriending services to join us and recognise the wide spectrum of befriending. Our services are specifically tailored to support the befriending sector, with members enjoying a range of benefits.

To find out more, please visit [our webpage](#) or [contact our membership team](#).



Befriending Networks Ltd is a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee, registered in Scotland No. SC195896, Charity No. SC023610

5-7 Montgomery Street Lane, Edinburgh, EH7 5JT

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