



Terms of Service for the Befriending Networks Quality in Befriending Award.

Effective Date: 1st March 2025

These Terms of Service ("Agreement") cover your participation in the Quality in Befriending Award ("Award") offered by Befriending Networks ("we," "us," or "the Provider"). By applying or taking part in the Award, you agree to follow these terms.

1. About the Quality in Befriending Award

1.1 What's the Award?

The Quality in Befriending Award and Quality in Befriending Excellence Award are here to help organisations assess how well they're doing in seven domains across your befriending service. The Award assesses indicators covering:

- The Service
- Policies and Procedures
- Staff Management
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Befriender Journey
- Befriender Journey
- Matching and Endings

1.2 Who Can Apply?

To apply, your organisation must meet these basic requirements:

- Operates a volunteer befriending service in the UK or Ireland
- Is a member of Befriending Networks and agrees to remain a member throughout 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.

2. How to Apply

2.1 Application Process

New Awards (First Time Applicants)

- Make a note of interest on our website.
- Fill out the Pre-Award Checklist form sent to you by Befriending Networks.
- Complete the online application form available on our website.
- Pay the assessment fee within 7 days of receipt of the invoice.



Reaccreditations (Year 3, 6, 9 Applicants)

- Complete the online application form available on our website.
- Pay the assessment fee within 7 days of receipt of the invoice.

Age UK Local Partners

- Have CQS in place then apply using the Age UK application form available on our website.
- Agree to the terms of the CQS passport which includes information sharing with Age UK.
- Pay the assessment fee within 7 days of receipt of the invoice.

2.3 Application and Award Timeline

We will acknowledge all applications within 10 working days. The Award should be completed within 6 months of being provided access to our online platform and the allocation of an Award assessor. If we foresee any delays in allocating you an Award assessor, we will notify you of this before invoicing.

3. How We Review Your Assessment

3.1 Review Process

The Award is organised by 7 domains and the assessment includes:

- a review of submitted evidence
- interviews with stakeholders
- submission of case studies
- an online or in-person site visit to assess the remaining indicators

The Award should take 6 months to complete. You will receive ongoing feedback from your Assessor.

3.2 Our Decision / Award Outcome

Your Assessor will guide you through the Award and bring to your attention any indicators which require additional evidence, change or improvement. You can resubmit evidence as agreed with your Assessor up to an agreed date, this will be confirmed by email. Once all evidence is finalised we will notify you of the outcome of your Award. You will receive this by email.

All assessments will produce a Quality Award Report and a Quality Award Tracker. You will receive a copy of both documents by email.

If your assessment achieves a positive outcome, you will also receive:

- A certificate recognising your achievement
- Permission to use our Award logo and logo guidance
- Inclusion in the Quality Award database

If your assessment does not attain the required standard you will be given 3 months to address the immediate recommendations, these Award indicators will be



reassessed. If you are unsuccessful after reassessment there are no further opportunities other than to apply for the Award again in the future once all indicators are in place.

3.3 Appeals Policy

All services hold the right to appeal assessment outcomes within 28 days. Discussion and clarification should first take place with the assessor. If you still wish to appeal against the outcome of your assessment, please write to our CEO Susan Hunter at susan@befriending.co.uk. Detail what you think needs to be addressed and reviewed, referencing indicator numbers and sections. The CEO will acknowledge the appeal within four working days and will detail how long the appeals process will take. We aim to resolve appeals within 15 working days. If the process is going to take longer than this to complete, the CEO will contact you to tell you when to expect a response. The CEO's decision will be final.

4. Fees

4.1 Assessment Fee

You'll need to pay an assessment fee before you will be given access to our online portal and before the assessment of evidence will begin. Please note that the fee is non-refundable, even if you don't achieve the Award.

4.2 Additional Costs: Membership

You will be required to pay an annual membership fee to Befriending Networks for the duration of your Award to retain your Quality in Befriending status.

4.3 Additional Costs: Excellence

Excellence that is assessed as part of your initial or other full Award has no extra fee. If you wish to upgrade to excellence you will be required to pay an additional fee to have an assessment undertaken of the Excellence indicators:

If you request this at reaccreditation (years 3 or 6) the cost will be reaccreditation fee + £75.

If you wish to attain excellence at any other time as an Award holder the fee is £200.

5. Confidentiality and Data Protection

5.1 Confidentiality and Privacy

Keeping your organisational information confidential is important to us. You will be sharing with us organisational policies, procedures, training materials, risk assessments etc. These will be uploaded to our online portal (Moodle) or shared by email, we will review this evidence for the purposes of the assessment and provide you with feedback on these. These will be visible to Quality Award Assessors, Moodle administrators, and the CEO, who are all employees of Befriending



Networks. You may wish to redact business email addresses, staff names, or commercially sensitive information prior to submitting your evidence. It is your responsibility to redact personal information prior to uploading evidence, this should be done to a level where the person cannot be identified by the assessor. Applicants are informed that failure to redact is a data breach and they will be unable to attain a Quality Award.

Once the assessment is complete, we will retain evidence for three months after which time we will securely delete all evidence you submitted.

Your organisation will be required to provide personal data to Befriending Networks for individuals who will be interviewed as part of the assessment process. Data required will include names and contact details, this is to set up interview times and conduct interviews. It is the responsibility of the Quality Award applicant to obtain the permission of the individual interviewee before sharing the required information with Befriending Networks. This data is stored within Office 365. This information will only be retained for the duration of the Quality Award assessment after which it will be securely deleted. Any disclosure or welfare concern raised in interviews will be reported in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

A record of attainment of a Quality Award is retained within our Salesforce CRM and is associated with a membership record. Further details of which can be found in our Privacy Policy.

5.2 Protecting Your Data

We take data protection seriously and will handle your information according to our organisational Data Protection Policy and in line with GDPR. Your personal and organisational data will only be used for processing the application, assessing your Award and related communications as an Award holder.

5.3 Good Practice Examples

The Quality Award is an opportunity for us to identify good and excellent practice. As a networking organisation, we may invite you to consider sharing policy, procedure or practice with other organisations within our membership. We will always seek your permission to do this and explain where the example will be shared, with who and for how long for. You can withdraw this permission at any time.

5.4 Publicity

If you achieve the Award, you agree that we can use your organisation's name, logo, and other details in our promotional materials. You may also be asked to participate in case studies, testimonials, or interviews.



6. Revoking the Award

By applying, you confirm that all information you submit is true and complete. In the instance of policies and procedures, these should be the most current version approved by your Trustees/Board. If we find out any information is incorrect or misleading, your award could be revoked.

- If you have achieved the Award but are later found to have misled, misrepresented, or provided incorrect evidence against any indicator we may revoke your Award.
- Your Award may also be revoked if there are significant changes to your organisation's governance, legal structure, or charitable purposes.
- Your Award will be revoked if you leave the membership of Befriending Networks.

All Awards will expire 3 years after they have been awarded.

7. Responsibilities

7.1 Our Responsibilities

We'll provide:

- A competent and experienced assessor to guide and support you through your Award.
- Confidential, fair and supportive assessment with continuous feedback to support improvement and achievement.
- An online platform for you to upload evidence to each indicator.
- Detailed feedback to support your organisation to learn and develop.
- Notification of the requirement for annual monitoring
- Notification that your Award is due to expire, and an invitation to reaccredit or reapply.
- The opportunity to participate in review, feedback and development of the Award.
- A directory of Quality Award holders on our website.

7.2 Your Responsibilities

You agree to:

- Work at a pace which will result in the Award being fully assessed and an outcomes report prepared and shared within 6 months of commencing. Any foreseen delays or setbacks should be communicated as early as possible.
- Appoint a named point of contact for your Award and notify us of any change to that person or their contact details for the duration of your Award.
- Submit a return to Annual Monitoring on or before the anniversary of your Award at the end of Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3.



- Remain a member of Befriending Networks to retain your Award status.
- Notify us of any significant changes to the governance, leadership, structure or funding of your befriending service; this includes any Age UK partners who no longer hold CQS or are no longer affiliated with Age UK.
- Notify us of any involvement/investigation your organisation may have with regulatory bodies such as the Charities Commission, OSCR, or the ICO.
- Remove all mention of the Award from your promotional materials, website, emails etc if your Award expires or is revoked or you cease to be a member of Befriending Networks.

8. Changes or Ending the Program

8.1 Ending Your Participation

You can withdraw from the Award process at any time by letting us know in writing. However, the fees paid will not be refunded.

8.2 Ending the Award Assessment

We can end the Award assessment at any time for any reason. If we do, we'll notify you and provide a refund of fees, minus any administrative costs.

8.3 Changing These Terms

We may update these Terms from time to time. Any changes will be posted on our website, and they'll apply to new applicants and reaccreditations.

9. Dispute Resolution

If any disagreements come up, we'll try to resolve them through dialogue and discussion, if that doesn't work, we may involve externally appointed advisors or mediators. Our Complaints process can also be followed.

10. Confirmation

By submitting your application and making payment for the Award, you confirm that you've read and agree to these Terms of Service.