

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 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 service users, two befrienders, and one staff member.

Month 4 - Prepare and submit case studies and prepare evidence for the online live evidence assessment.

Month 5 - We will assess the remaining 25 indicators on a live evidence assessment which will take place online. Following the live evidence assessment, 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](#) and at the end of this information booklet. 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 befrienders, 2 of your service users and 1 staff member.
- A live evidence assessment 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, service users and befrienders, as well as funders, commissioners and other stakeholders.
- Increased feeling of pride amongst staff and befrienders 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 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

Age UK and Age Cymru network partners with current CQS certification can access a shorter version of the Quality Award at a reduced price. CQS certification demonstrates compliance with several of the Quality Award indicators either fully or partially. To reflect this, Network Partners are only asked to provide evidence for 46 indicators rather than the usual 60 indicators – the other 14 indicators have already been met during the CQS assessment.

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 Network 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 access details for your SharePoint folder and can begin uploading evidence - your 6-month Award journey begins!

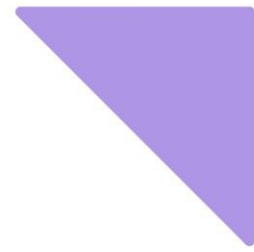
Please contact info@befriending.co.uk with any questions

Organisation Size/Annual Income	Full Award Fee	Reaccreditation Total	Age UK Local Partner Full Award Fee	Age UK Local Partner Reaccreditation Fee
Small Under £100K	£550	£275	£310	£220
Medium 1 Under £350K	£825	£412.50	£605	£330
Medium 2 Under 750K	£935	£467.50	£715	£374
Large Over 751K	£1045	£522.50	£825	£418

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.



Befriending Networks



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](#).



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Quality in Befriending Award

Domains, Indicators and Examples of Evidence



1. The Service

1. Board of Trustees

Minutes of a Board meeting

2. Funding

Communication from funder

3. Insurance

Insurance Certificates

4. Online/Print Presence

Online and print promotional materials

5. Service User Information

Service User handbook

6. Befriender Information

Befriender handbook

7. Organisational Risk Register

Risk assessment(s) for the organisation

8. Service Capacity

Process to manage number of referrals and matches

Excellence

1. Adapts materials for purpose of accessibility
2. Promotion of service using case studies

2. Policies and Procedures

9. Equality and Diversity

10. Rehabilitation of Offenders

11. Dignity at Work (Bullying)

12. Disciplinary Code of Conduct

13. Grievance

14. Complaints and Suggestions

15. Confidentiality

16. Data Protection/ GDPR

17. Handling, Holding and Destroying Information

18. Health and Safety

19. Safeguarding/Child Protection/Adult Protection

20. Drug and Alcohol

21. Handling Money and Prescriptions

22. Support and Supervision

23. Lone Working

Excellence

3. Driving and photography risk management

Domains 1-4/Indicators 1-35 = Service Framework

Evidence is uploaded for assessment. Sensitive/personal information must be redacted before upload.

Key

- Policy/procedure for whole organisation
- Applicable to Staff only
- Befrienders only/ simplified guidance

Example

X. Example Indicator

An example of suitable evidence for this indicator

If an indicator has been underlined it is a Fundamental Indicator

3. Staff Management

24. References and Vetting

References procedure

25. Staff Training

Staff training record/certificates

26. Support/Supervision

Staff supervision template

27. Appraisal

Yearly appraisal template

28. Staff Training Budget

Service budget

29. ID Badges

Badge template/copy

Excellence

4. Staff attend networking events
5. Trainers have undertaken 'train the trainers'
6. Training specific to challenges of service user group

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

30. Outcomes

31. Output/Targets

Service reports

32. Service Improvement

Communication/case study

33. Equalities Monitoring

Equalities form

34. Evaluation and Impact

Service User/Befriender surveys

35. Notification of Changes

Screenshot of email

Excellence

7. Monitor success of changes to policies and procedures
8. Demonstrate continuing need for service

5. Service User Journey

36. Service User Journey

Referral-match-review-end documents

37. Referral/Waiting Lists

Live spreadsheets

38. Referral Form

Completed referral form

39. Consent

Completed privacy statement

40. Service User Contact

Noted contact on database/list

41. Risk Assessments

Individual risk assessment

42. Befriender Reviews

Notes from match review

Excellence

- 9. Refer/family/carer made aware of how to give feedback
- 10. Service/organisational survey sent to all stakeholders
- 11. Follow on volunteer opportunities for service users

6. Befriender Journey

43. Befriender Assessment Procedure

Befriender journey flow chart in handbook

44. Befriender Records

Records of applicants, trainees and volunteers

45. Application and Consent

Completed application form and privacy statement

46. Befriender Interview and Vetting

Interview notes and logged PVG number

47. Befriender Initial Training

Training outline

48. Training Feedback

Completed feedback form

49. Befriender Selection

Decision notes post interview/training

50. Unsuccessful Applicants

Email to unsuccessful applicant

51. Befriender Support and Supervision

Notes of 2 supervision sessions with same person dated within 6 months

52. Befriender Contacts

Noted contact on database/list (quarterly)

53. Befriender training

Email/newsletter offering further training

Excellence

- 12. Personal aims and wellbeing information of befrienders captured and monitored
- 13. Complementary/value adding topics included in induction training
- 14. Existing befrienders attend induction training for new befrienders
- 15. Post induction training feedback and interview
- 16. Quarterly supervision (minimum)
- 17. Peer peer support sessions offered
- 18. On going developmental befriender training offered
- 19. Befriender social events at least yearly
- 20. Befriender newsletter at least twice a year
- 21. Resources available to use/borrow

7. Matchings and Endings

54. Matching Profiles

Referral/application forms

55. Matching Decision

Meeting record

56. Initial Meeting

57. Match Records

Case notes

58. Ending Planning

59. Unexpected Ending

Case notes/supervision notes

60. Ending Communication

Email/letter

Excellence

- 22. Befriending agreement in place
- 23. Guidance for staff on ending matches

Additionally we will carry out 5 **interviews** (2 service users, 2 befrienders, 1 staff member) and will ask for 2 **cases studies**.



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