



Quality Coach

# Applicant Guide



## Quality Coach



This guide and all associated materials of the Quality Coach Development Programme are available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike Licence 4.0

This licence permits others to remix, adapt, and build upon this piece of work even for commercial purposes, as long as you credit us and license any and all new creations under the identical terms. (CC-BY-SA)

For additional information contact  
[clcht.continuous.improvement@nhs.net](mailto:clcht.continuous.improvement@nhs.net) or the Q Community

The *Applicant Guide* is part of the wider Quality Coach Development Programme © resource bundle. For more information visit:  
<https://q.health.org.uk/resource/quality-coach-development-programme/>

© Quality Coach Design Group 2023.

### Authors

Samuel Díaz Hernández  
Hannah Pearson

# Welcome to the Applicant Guide for the Quality Coach Development Programme.

This guide has been designed for individuals who are interested in joining the programme.

The guide provides an introduction to the programme, including the benefits of becoming a Quality Coach within your organisation.

# What is the Quality Coach Development Programme?

The Quality Coach Development Programme aims to build improvement capability and capacity by training staff in the essential skills and knowledge needed to successfully coach teams and individuals through quality improvement (QI) work. The programme has been designed and developed by a dedicated group of subject matter experts from across the QI community in the UK.

Quality Coaches play a pivotal role in supporting improvement within health organisations and across health systems. In their role, they have ring-fenced time (agreed locally within your organisation) to support services and colleagues with the planning, implementation and evaluation of QI work. Through the Quality Coach role, improvement is supported and managed at all levels of an organisation, rather than exclusively held and managed by an improvement function (such as QI leads and their teams).

A summary of this role is shown in the visual below.



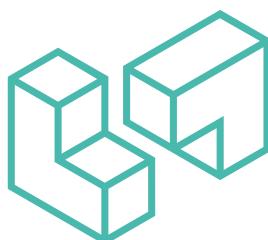
**A person with a passion for QI, who has experience of running a project**



**Has dedicated time to support QI**



**Teaches and explains the use of QI tools**



**Works to engage people and teams in QI**



**Develops and nurtures relationships based on trust and support**



**Observes QI work of team – provides guidance, support and encouragement**



## *What is the purpose of the programme?*

Even well-trained staff need support to run QI work. Understanding the theory is not enough when applying QI; this is especially true in multi-organisation projects.

Easy access to a colleague who can help an individual or team apply QI approaches in a practical and pragmatic way is key to unlocking widespread continuous improvement. However, access to this individual or team is not always guaranteed or easily accessible.

Currently, various NHS organisations provide QI support to their staff members through a centralised improvement team. Staff within these improvement teams are trained and experienced in improvement concepts, tools and methods and use this knowledge to support frontline teams with improvement work. Whilst the current approach works, it is not sustainable given the ever-increasing interest and demand for QI support. Within our organisations we cannot continue to employ more and more improvement specialists in order to support bottom-up improvement work. Coaches can fill this gap by meeting demand for QI at the frontline.

# What does the programme involve?

The content of this programme has been carefully designed by a group of national QI experts. The structure has been created to reflect the different tasks that are typically expected of a coach at various stages of work they are coaching.

There are five modules of the programme, shown in the table below.

Module	Session	Session detail
Pre-programme		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understanding self, reflective practice and a refresher of quality improvement.</li><li>- How the programme will work and setting expectations from the start.</li></ul>
Coaching and the Foundations of QI	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How QI relates to other change approaches, such as audit, research, transformation etc.</li><li>• The fundamental skills and knowledge every coach needs such as GROW coaching, coaching an aim and the common challenges in coaching QI.</li></ul>
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How to contract as a coach and a first go at coaching.</li></ul>
Working with People	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How to foster good relationships within teams.</li><li>• How Liberating Structures can support good and fair participation in group discussion.</li></ul>
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Context, culture, and sustainability, and how contextual factors can make or break QI work.</li></ul>
	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strategies to advocate for better inclusion and engagement of patients. Coaches are also given the chance to individually teach a technical concept.</li></ul>
Coaching Measurement	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How to use data to support teams, breaking down measurement into easy, practical methods.</li><li>• How to use Statistical Process Control (SPC) charts, a common feature of many providers' reports, as well as improvement work.</li></ul>
Human Side of Change	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How to apply an evidence-based model to support behaviour change, and how to use a simple model for framing resistance to change.</li></ul>
	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How to use change concepts and creative thinking to promote new ideas to tackle a problem.</li><li>• Next steps as a coach.</li><li>• Preparation for the final assessment (where applicable).</li></ul>

# What are the benefits of the programme?

## Benefits to you

- Learn advanced concepts of improvement coaching techniques that will enable you to coach others in QI work. Many concepts and techniques that you will learn are transferable and beneficial for everyday working life
- Play a pivotal role in supporting improvement in your organisation and become a champion and advocate for improvement
- Take on a rewarding role that makes a real difference to teams, services and patients
- Develop strong links with others working in improvement
- Potential to accrue CPD credits (if your organisation chooses to apply for formal accreditation)
- Opportunity to join a national network of qualified Quality Coaches through the Q Community
- Professional development and opportunities to develop in your career.

---

## Benefits to your team or service

- Staff are empowered and supported to implement their ideas for improvement, with higher likelihood for sustained change
- The team or service will have a local expert to support improvement work
- The gap between theory and practice will be bridged, meaning more successful improvement work within the service or organisation
- More capacity within the service to test, implement and spread improvement ideas, with no additional recruitment required
- Enthusiasm for QI will be spread to colleagues locally, with QI capability built through on-the-job training and exposure to improvement principles, methods, tools and techniques
- Faster access to QI advice for the team or service from a familiar face.

---

## Benefits to your patients

- Patients, staff and partners will be equipped with lasting skills and the opportunity to lead meaningful change through co-production
- Improved outcomes for patients as a result of co-production. QI projects that have meaningful co-production are four times more likely to deliver successful improvements<sup>1</sup>
- Through involvement, programmes can be designed to deliver effective and sustainable change in the areas that are most important to patients.

---

## Benefits to your organisation

- The programme brings together national expertise in the fields of improvement, coaching, psychology of change, measurement, facilitation, liberating structures, human factors, and contextual and cultural insights, amongst others. Your organisation may not have the in-house expertise to develop Quality Coaches – this programme enables it to do so
- The programme content is adaptable and can be tailored to your organisation's or system's needs to complement its approach to building improvement capability.

---

<sup>1</sup> Kostal, G and Shah, A. (2021). Putting improvement in everyone's hands: opening up healthcare improvement by simplifying, supporting and refocusing on core purpose. *British Journal of Healthcare Management*. [www.magonlinelibrary.com/doi/full/10.12968/bjhc.2020.0189](http://www.magonlinelibrary.com/doi/full/10.12968/bjhc.2020.0189)

# *How do I make the case for the programme to my manager?*

Allow time to have an honest conversation with your manager about how this programme will play a role in your personal development, your career goals, and the organisation's improvement strategy. Although it will require a considerable investment in time, the programme will support you to develop valuable skills in coaching improvement, and you, your manager and your wider team will all benefit from these skills. Key points to raise include:

- Many of the skills you will learn as a delegate on the programme are directly transferable to everyday work and management. For example, you will learn to:
  - Use creative problem-solving tools to support the team to tackle a complex problem that they face
  - Use coaching methods to mentor and support individuals in the team with their own growth and personal development
  - Use innovative facilitation skills to empower quieter individuals in the team or service to contribute to team challenges and opportunities
  - Use change management and behaviour theory to work with resistance to change, overcoming obstacles that were previously insurmountable
  - Develop better measurement frameworks to support your team with better understanding their service
- Delegates on the programme join a network of improvement specialists – internally and externally, to support improvement work and gain insights to further enhance service delivery
- There is a financial benefit to this programme. You will leave this programme with the knowledge and skills needed to coach your service and colleagues to carry out improvement work that can be managed from within – meaning there is less reliance on contractors or additional improvement roles to support improvement work
- Change that is led from those on the frontline (bottom-up improvement) is far more purposeful, impactful and sustainable than imposed (top-down) improvement work. Coaches are enablers of bottom-up improvement
- This course demonstrates a commitment to improvement, which will be beneficial for your team/service.

The list goes on!

# *Is this programme right for me?*

Consider your previous experience in QI to assess how joining the programme would fit with your own personal and professional backgrounds and goals.

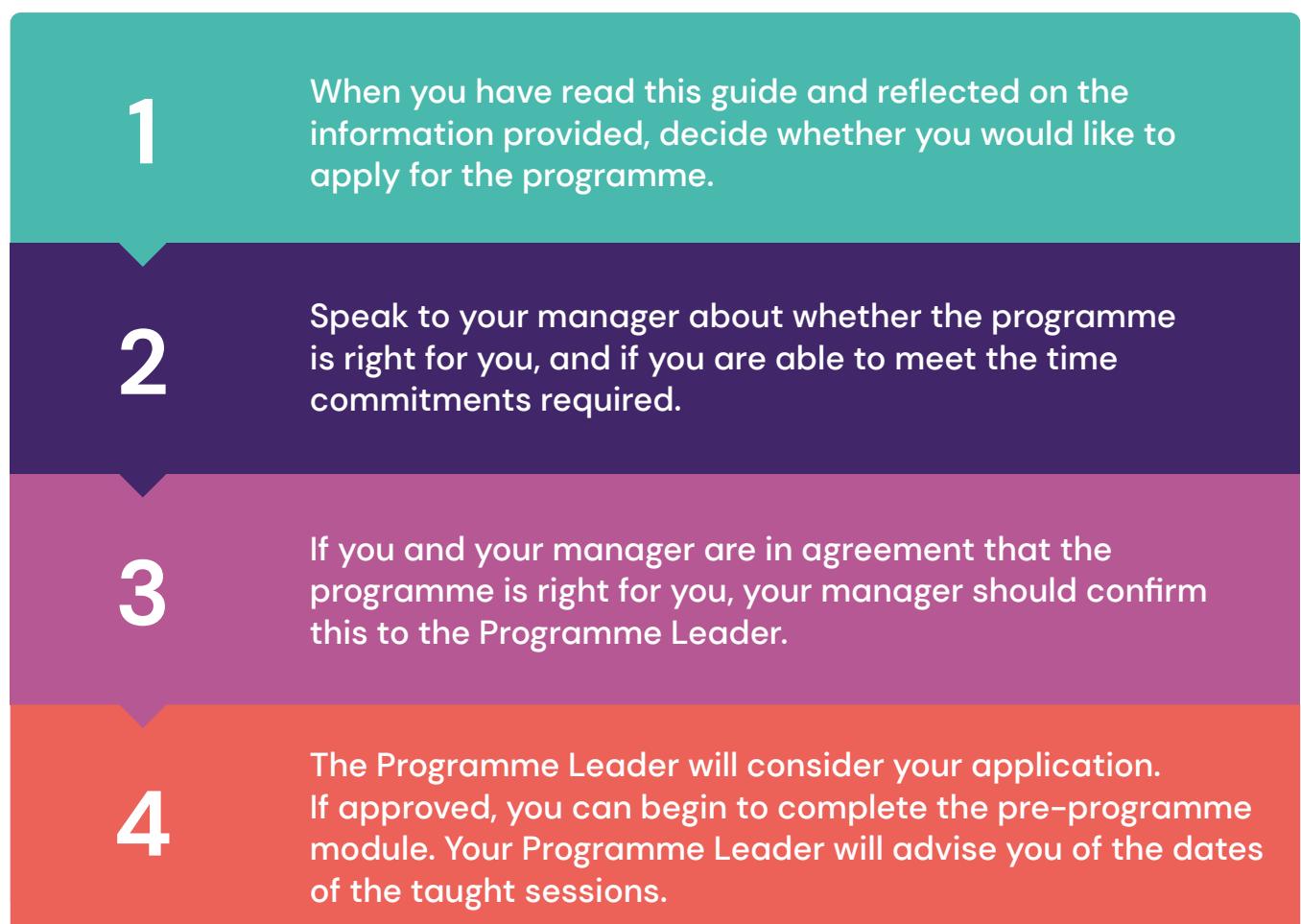
Ideally, you would have some previous experience in QI before joining the programme. This could be practical experience in running your own QI projects or completing QI training. If this is your first contact with QI, you should consider more basic to intermediate training before joining this programme. Completing training and learning to apply

simple QI methods in practice first will put you in a stronger position to benefit from the programme.

If the programme fits into your development goals, the next step would be to seek support from your senior manager. There is a minimum time commitment to participate in the programme and practise QI coaching outside of the classroom. Upon completing the programme you will also be expected to continue coaching QI work.

## *How do I apply?*

The diagram below will help illustrate the process in a series of simple steps:



## *What should I expect as a delegate?*

Throughout the programme you will be expected to attend the taught sessions, and commit some extra time in between for further reading and practice. This will be very similar to the time commitment expected after the programme is completed, which will be agreed locally within your organisation. During this time you will develop your role as a Quality Coach within your organisation, supporting different teams with their QI work.

The course will provide opportunities to build your skills in the fundamentals of QI as well as covering more advanced skills and tools. This includes fundamentals of the coaching method as well as techniques you will later use as a Quality Coach. The programme also includes sessions dedicated to measurement as well as evidence-based models to support behaviour change. For more information see the structure of the programme on page 6.

Regarding your development as a coach, you can expect to obtain with this programme both personal and professional development. You will enhance your skills, adding not only more in-depth knowledge of the methods used for QI, but also those required to coach the individuals and teams you will work with in the future. You will also acquire a certification as a Quality Coach at the end of the programme which will boost your professional skills and may count towards your CPD credits (if your organisation chooses to apply for formal accreditation). Even without accreditation, becoming a graduate of the programme will enhance your CV and create opportunities for future career development.

The taught sessions will take place in an interactive group setting. Sessions are delivered either online or in person. Following this, your organisation may also arrange regular Coach Forum sessions for past and present delegates to continue building their knowledge and skills.



# Applicant FAQs

## *Is there any cost?*

This programme is free to run and join. It has been developed by QI experts in the UK and funded by the Q Community to be available for other organisations to use. Therefore no cost should be incurred to run or participate in the programme.

## *How do I get more information about the programme if I need it?*

Speak to your Programme Leader who will be responsible for leading the programme in your organisation and will be able to provide any further information you require.

**Programme Leader name:**

---

**Programme Leader email:**

---

For additional information contact  
clcht.continuous.improvement@nhs.net or the Q Community

The *Applicant Guide* is part of the wider Quality Coach Development  
Programme © resource bundle. For more information visit:  
<https://q.health.org.uk/resource/quality-coach-development-programme/>

© Quality Coach Design Group 2023.

Design by Studio Quercus



Quality Coach