

Scrum Alliance Certified Team CoachSM (CTC) – Application Instructions

This document provides instructions for applying to become a Certified Team CoachSM (CTC).

Application Review Process Overview

The CTC Review Process is in two parts. Part I must be submitted and approved before Part II can be started.

Part I: Qualification and Prerequisites

The first part of the application process evaluates your credentials against the required elements (prerequisites) of the program. It focuses on the quantitative measures of your body of work as a coach.

Part II: Agile Knowledge, Coaching Competencies, Coaching Mindset, and Recommendations

The second part of the application is a qualitative evaluation of your capability as a coach as shown through the diversity of your coaching and your ability to demonstrate proficiency across a wide range of competencies.

Application Steps in Completing the CTC Certification

Identify whether you are qualified for the CTC Program

1. Download and read through this instruction document.
2. Download and read through the sample CTC Application PDF.
3. Evaluate your qualifications, education, community engagement, and experience against the requirements (please refer to the [CTC Requirements Checklist](#)).
4. Receive preliminary feedback on your readiness to complete the CTC application process by connecting with a [Scrum Alliance Coach](#).

Demonstrate your prerequisite qualifications to the CTC Program-Part I

1. Pay a nonrefundable \$250 application.
2. Once your application fee has been received, Scrum Alliance[®] will provide you with a link to the CTC Application, a shared Google document that contains both application parts.
3. Read through the entire CTC Application, including both parts, to ensure that you understand all of the qualifications.
4. Complete the CTC Application Part I only, entering your information directly in the Google document. This document may be used by reviewers to ask you for more information via sidebar comments.
5. When you have completed Part I, notify Scrum Alliance via email to teamcoach@scrumalliance.org.
6. Your CTC Application Part I will be evaluated by a member of the certification application review team.
7. Receive a response from the reviewer whether or not you meet the qualifications.
 - a. If you meet the qualifications, you will be requested to continue on to Part II of the application.
 - b. If you do not meet the qualifications, you will be required to address your qualification gaps and resubmit your Part I after a determined waiting period identified in your response.

Demonstrate your coaching knowledge, competencies, and mindset to the CTC Program-Part II

1. Receive a notification via email of your approval and qualification for the CTC Application Part I.
2. Read and fill out the CTC Application Part II (in the same shared Google document as Part I).

3. Once you have received all 3 letters of recommendation and completed Part II of your application, send an email notification to teamcoach@scrumalliance.org with your letters of recommendation attached.
4. Your application is peer reviewed by a review team for coaching experience, Agile knowledge, mindset, approach, and skills.
5. You may be requested to join a phone/video call with members of the peer review team.
6. Receive a response from the review team as to whether or not you meet the qualifications.
 - a. If you meet the qualifications of the program, you will be notified of acceptance into the program.
 - b. If you do not meet the qualifications of the program, you will be invited to address your qualification gaps and resubmit your application Part II after a determined waiting period identified in your response.

Part I Requirements: Prerequisite Qualifications

CTC Applicants must meet the following qualifications to submit their applications for Part I Approval.

Application fee is paid

Applying to the CTC program requires proof payment of the application fee of \$250 to Scrum Alliance.

Active Certified Scrum Professional[®] (CSP-SM[™] or CSP-PO[™])

Applying to the CTC Program requires proof of an active Scrum Alliance CSP-SM[™] or CSP-PO[™] certification. Longer and more active participation in the CSP Program is recognized.

Agile Coaching Experience

Applying to the CTC Program requires demonstration of experience in Scrum coaching at multiple levels (e.g., team, program, leadership, departmental) and over multiple teams (within one company or across multiple companies). A minimum of 1,000 hours of coaching experience over the past two (2) years is required. Additional hours, diversity, and sustained client relationships can be listed to demonstrate breadth and depth of experience. If needed, company/client names may be listed anonymously as per instructions in the application form.

Coaching Education AND Mentorship

Applying to the CTC Program requires demonstration of a journey of learning through education, mentorship, and collaboration in coaching and related activities over a minimum of two (2) years. Formal education may include a wide range of courses on topics including facilitation, leadership, consulting, coaching, and other related activities that have influenced your coaching practice. Formal education may or may not be related to a degree or certification. Formal education does require a training institution and structured learning objectives. Informal education may include reading and personal study, webinars, or other research related to your coaching practice. Mentorship includes engaged and active learning from one or more experienced Scrum/Agile guides. Mentorship from CSTs and CECs is not required but will be recognized.

Agile Community Participation

Applying to the CTC Program requires demonstration of active engagement in the Agile community over a minimum of two (2) years. Participation includes engagement in Agile user groups, gatherings, retreats, camps, and conferences. Diversity in global and local engagement, as well as a diversity of responsibilities, is recognized. Events organized or supported by Scrum Alliance are considered especially valuable.

Coaching Tools, Techniques, and Frameworks

Applying to the CTC Program requires demonstration of an understanding and application of coaching tools, techniques, and frameworks. There are numerous resources in the Agile, coaching, facilitation, and leadership disciplines that coaches need to be aware of to effectively meet the demands of their clients. Coaching tools, techniques, and frameworks include assessments, surveys, retrospective or review techniques, build/integrate/deploy systems, scaling frameworks, Lean techniques and tools, metrics, etc. Use of diverse tools, techniques, and frameworks is recognized.

Note: There is not a specific number of education classes, mentorship relationships, community events, coaching tools, techniques, and frameworks that you must meet to qualify for the CTC Program. However, you must demonstrate a journey of learning, engagement, understanding, and practice across all dimensions to qualify. Thus you may have less experience in one dimension that can be compensated for through more experience in another dimension; however, you cannot completely lack any dimension.

Part II Requirements: Agile Team Coaching Knowledge and Competencies

The second part of the CTC Application is a qualitative evaluation of your capability as a coach as shown through a wide range of coaching experiences and your ability to demonstrate proficiency across a wide range of competencies. It evaluates your learning, mindset, and approach as a coach across diverse experiences.

Summary

There are four sections in Part II of the CTC Application. Each section carries equal weight, representing roughly 25% of your overall assessment as an Agile Team Coach. Applicants must demonstrate proficiency in each section to receive certification. Applicants are measured on their understanding, articulation, and application of the skill or competency through an effective coaching mindset and approach. Thus it is not enough that you have experience in the skill or competency; you must also demonstrate an appropriate coaching thought and execution process in seeing it through.

Agile Knowledge

Purpose: Agile coaches must demonstrate a solid understanding of the principles and practices of Scrum and related Agile frameworks. CTCs are required to demonstrate this knowledge and the ability to clearly explain concepts to others through a series of specific questions.

Coaching Competencies

Purpose: Agile coaches are Agile practitioners and guides to their client organizations in educating, facilitating, and coaching growth in Agile capabilities. CTCs are required to demonstrate proficiency in five (5) coaching competency areas.

Coaching Mindset

Purpose: To provide evidence of your ability to apply your Agile knowledge and coaching skills to a new situation. For each of two hypothetical scenarios, you will respond to each of the targeted questions that follow.

Client and Mentor Coaching Recommendations

Purpose: To provide evidence of proficiency in your coaching specialties and competencies as displayed with client organizations. Applying to the CTC Program requires three (3) recommendations as follows: two (2) client recommendations and one (1) mentor recommendation. A mentor recommendation is from someone who has provided learning and supported growth in your coaching journey. Recommendations that represent more substantial and diverse coaching and mentorship engagements are recognized.

CTC Applicants who submitted references in prior application attempts are allowed to resubmit those recommendations directly to avoid having to ask the recommendation provider for another recommendation

Guidance for filling out the application

Applying to the CTC Program requires a complete and professional application. Your submitted application and related recommendations represent your coaching body of work and your professionalism as an Agile Coach.

Download the sample application PDF to read the application and learn what is required (DO NOT FILL IT OUT)

The CTC Application is an online, shared Google document. Once you are ready to fill out the application and have paid the \$250 application fee, you will be provided with a link to your application.

The questions in Part I are more quantitative and the questions in Part II are more qualitative. Review both parts before you begin your journey to see whether the program is right for you and you have the education and experience to proceed. You may find that you want to gain additional experience or education in an area before continuing with the application. Understanding the big picture, and developing a strategy for approaching this application process, will aid in your progress through the application review.

Read the Instructions for each section and question. Many questions ask for more than a simple answer. Some request a list multiple answers. Some request an answer plus justification for that answer. Some ask for “why” as well as “how” and “what did you get out of it.” Incomplete answers will impact your application unfavorably.

Provide clear, concise, and formatted responses in English

Applications are expected to be submitted in English and to be clear, concise, formatted, and grammatically correct. Consideration will be made for applicants whose first language is not English. CTC Applicants are required to communicate efficiently and effectively.

Your answers should provide a clear response, in a concise and formatted structure that is easy to read and understand. Answers with multiple parts and examples should be formatted to highlight the separate ideas. Use clear formatting and tight paragraph structure to separate key points. If you have related work that is available on the Internet, provide links rather than embedding them in your answers. Answers that have been culled directly from other sources are reviewed negatively.

Enlist a CEC or CTC to preview your application iteratively

Before you fill out Part I of the application, engage with a current CEC or CTC and discuss your prerequisites as well as some of your proposed answers, to get early feedback. The CTC credential is challenging, and early feedback may save you hours of rework. You may share your CTC Application document with a mentor or other informal reviewer to assist you in your application process.

Join the Candidate-CTC Google Group and participate in the discussion

There is a [Google Group](#) with both candidate and active CTCs participating in discussions. Join that group and use that resource to learn from others, ask your questions, and share your thoughts. The group includes other candidates as well as CTCs and CECs.

Show your range of experience

Provide a description of your diverse coaching experiences by using different client engagement examples in each question asked in Part II. Repeat examples will be seen as a sign of limited experience and will be disregarded. Provide different organizational, project/program, and leadership/team examples in your answers. Read over all of the sections in Part II, along with all of the questions, prior to filling out the response to your first question.

Scrum Coaching Recommendations (Part II)

Applying to the CTC Program will require three (3) recommendations as follows: two (2) client recommendations and one (1) mentor recommendation, as identified in Part II of the application. A mentor recommendation is from someone who has supported your learning and growth during your coaching journey. Recommendations that represent more substantial coaching engagements and back up the diversity of your experience are recognized. You may want to identify people from whom you would seek a recommendation before you begin Part II of this application.

Guidelines for mentor recommendations can be found [here](#).

Guidelines for client recommendations can be found [here](#).

Application Word Counts

Most of the answer areas have word-count limits. These limits are in place to provide the applicant guidance as to the level of detail the review team is seeking. They level the responses from all applicants so the reviewers can focus on the quality of the content over the quantity of written text. Google Docs has a word-count menu item in its Tools menu that provides word counts for selected text and for the overall document.

Nonnative English applicants may increase the word counts by 25% to allow for reduced fluency in English vocabulary. Please indicate your usage of this exception in the application language entry field.

Scrum Alliance Certified Team Coach Application Definitions

Organization

An organization is any client/company entity that engages a Team Coach to increase its effectiveness through the use of Scrum and other Agile approaches. This includes an organization that you work for as an internal employee or to which you deliver professional services as an external consultant. Larger companies typically contain multiple organizations, such as business units, divisions, or departments. Applying to be a CTC requires proof of engagement with multiple organizations that represent a diversity of experience across multiple companies or within one company.

Scrum and Agile Coaching

Scrum and Agile coaching is defined as engaging with an organization during which you are performing one or more of the following activities:

- Assessing team(s) and organization(s) for effectiveness in applying Agile principles and practices
- Mentoring others in Scrum and other Agile principles and practices
- Advising and consulting with organizations on Scrum and other Agile practices
- Facilitating team(s) and groups to achieve higher-quality collaboration and enable greater results
- Developing teams through guided self-discovery and growth

- Challenging the organizational and leadership status quo and enabling an Agile culture

Scrum and Agile coaching engagements do NOT include:

- Serving as a ScrumMaster on one or more teams
- Serving as an organizational leader in a capacity other than coach

Scrum Alliance Team Coach (CTC) vs. Scrum Alliance Enterprise Coach (CEC)

Scrum Alliance distinguishes a team-level coach from an enterprise-level coach primarily by differences in experience and scope of influence. A Team Coach works primarily with groups of interrelated teams within a larger project, a department, or a program. An Enterprise Coach has a wider reach across an organization and focuses more on Agile transformation, organizational change, and sustainable business agility. Enterprise Coaches typically have more experience working with organizational change and more mature coaching skills.

Additional Scrum Alliance Resources for Developing Coaching Skills

The following links provide additional resources supported by Scrum Alliance and its members to guide your Scrum coaching skills and assist you in filling out this application.

- [Candidate-CTC](#) – A Google Group where candidates can discuss aspects of coaching and the Certified Team Coach application process. This forum is moderated and participated in by other Certified Team Coaches and Certified Enterprise Coaches.
- [“Applying to Become a CSC”](#) – A Scrum Alliance article written by one of the CSC (now renamed CEC) founders that provides some helpful context to consider when filling out your Scrum Alliance Certified Team Coach application.
- [Coaching Retreats](#) – Scrum Alliance-sponsored events that provide any current or aspiring Agile coaches the opportunity to engage purposefully with their peers, dive deeply into their practices, enhance their skills, and broaden their perspectives. Retreats provide deep connection, learning, and growth with peers. Retreats often include coaching-focused workshops to broaden your skills.
- [Global Gatherings](#) and [Regional Gatherings](#) – Scrum Alliance-sponsored events that provide opportunities to participate in and present talks, share and lead sessions, and collaborate with others in the Agile community.
- [Agile Coach Path](#) – A learning library developed by peer CSCs as a guide to grow from Agile Team Coach to Enterprise Coach, providing resources for skills, learning, and various dimensions of coaching.

Additional Agile Community Resources for Developing Coaching Skills

The following links provide additional resources and context for growing your Agile coaching skills.

- [ICAgile Team Facilitator and Coach](#) – Agile team-level coaching learning objectives and potential courses providing education. These provide the foundational learning objectives for an Agile coach at the team level.
- [The Agile Coaching Institute](#) – A training organization that provides courses in learning Agile coaching skills.

- [Agile Coaching Camps](#) – Events that provide informal, open gatherings to share with and learn from other coaches.
- [International Coaching Federation](#) (ICF) – An organization that provides a number of coaching programs (not related to Agile but effective for general coaching techniques)
- [International Association of Facilitators](#) (IAF) – An organization that provides a number of facilitation programs (not related to Agile but effective for Agile coaching)