

# Scrum Alliance Certified Agile Coach (CTC/CEC) – Application Document Instructions

This document provides instructions for applying to become a Certified Team Coach<sup>SM</sup> (CTC) and Certified Enterprise Coach<sup>SM</sup> (CEC).

## Working on this application is a learning process!

You can make this an awesome experience, but it's unlikely to be easy. The agility of the process largely depends on your asking for feedback, early and often, from many sources.

This is likely to be your first experience with Scrum Alliance where you don't automatically and easily pass. The application is designed so that you reflect and learn about yourself and your learning journey while you are working on it.

The review team will support you with honest feedback, and we will do our best to provide it in a timely fashion. You can support us in doing that before you start the process by taking in all the instruction and support material available, and later by asking for feedback early and by engaging with us in the feedback process.

## Application Review Process Overview

The Review Process has two parts. Part I of the application must be submitted and approved before Part II can be started. Part I and II are two separate Google documents. Part I is the same for both the CTC and CEC. The main difference is the expected number of coaching hours, breadth and depth of experience, and fluency in multiple coaching approaches.

Current process steps are outlined in the Application Steps section below.

### Application Document Part I: Qualification and Prerequisites

The first part of the application process gives you a chance to introduce yourself to us as a **coach**. The review team then evaluates your information against the elements identified in the [Summary of Expectations](#) and the assessment dimensions identified within the application template. **Please note that we are more interested in your coaching proficiency than in your agile expertise.**

### Application Document 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. **We expect guide level coaches are able to articulate their thinking and practice in concise written form, which is why we ask for a written application.**

## Application Steps

### Identify whether you are qualified

1. Download and read through this instruction document.
2. Download and read through the appropriate sample application PDF.
  - Sample Certified Agile Coach (CTC/CEC) Application - Part I
  - Sample CTC Application - Part II
  - Sample CEC Application - Part II

3. Evaluate your qualifications, education, community engagement, and experience against the requirements (please refer to the [CTC Requirements Checklist](#) or [CEC Requirements Checklist](#)).
4. Receive preliminary feedback on your readiness to complete the application process by connecting with a [Scrum Alliance Coach](#) for a pre-application conversation. This is a free service offered by the Scrum Alliance Certified Agile Coaches review team. It is not an approval step; rather it's an opportunity for you to discuss and demonstrate your qualifications with a member of the review team to assess your readiness, identify any gaps, and receive feedback on how any gaps identified might be addressed.

#### Demonstrate your prerequisite qualifications through -Part I of your application

1. Pay a nonrefundable \$250 application fee.
2. Once your application fee has been received, the Scrum Alliance<sup>®</sup> will provide you with a link to Part I of the Application, a shared Google folder.
3. Read through the entire application to ensure that you understand all of the qualifications. Ask if you need any clarification. The candidate google groups ([Candidate-CTC](#) and [Candidate-CEC](#)) are a great place for that. The coach you had your pre-application call with will be happy to help as well.
4. Complete the Part I entering your information directly in the Google document. This document may be used by reviewers to ask you for more information via sidebar comments.  
**Attention: This is where you determine how interactive your application process is going to be. Ask mentors, colleagues, other applicants to give feedback on your application early. We recommend you don't spend more than an hour or write more than a couple of paragraphs before you ask for feedback.**
5. When you have completed Part I, notify the Scrum Alliance via email at: [coachingcertification@scrumalliance.org](mailto:coachingcertification@scrumalliance.org).
6. Part I Application Review Process
  - a. You will be contacted by email by the reviewer when the review of your application begins. The reviewer will add comments to your Google doc application to clarify questions. **Please do not reply to or close the comment; instead, make any appropriate revisions directly in the text of your application.** Please inform the Scrum Alliance and your reviewer when your application has been revised and is ready for a second pass.
  - b. If, after making any necessary revisions based on the comments that have been provided, the reviewer determines you have met all expectations, you will be informed that your Part I has been approved and that you may continue with the Part II application.
  - c. The review team maintains a "no single point of failure policy". If the first reviewer assesses that your Part I does not meet qualifications, a second reviewer will be invited to review the application. In the event both reviewers agree that expectations have not been met, you will be informed by email that your application has been deferred. The email will identify gaps and provide recommendations for next steps in your development to address those gap areas. If there is a split decision between the first two reviewers, a third reviewer will be invited to review the application as a tie-breaker. In the case of deferral, you will be offered a conversation with the reviewers to clarify any questions you have.

#### Demonstrate your coaching knowledge, competencies, and mindset through -Part II of your application

1. Once your Part I has been approved, you will receive a notification via email of your approval and will be provided with access to the respective Part II application..
2. Read and complete Part II (in the same shared Google Drive folder as Part I).

**Attention: This is your second chance for you to determine how interactive your application process is going to be. Again, ask mentors, colleagues, other applicants to give feedback on your**

application early. Many reviewers will quickly look at and comment on one answer from your application. Once you know you're moving in the right direction in the right way, you can proceed with more confidence.

**And:** read the instructions carefully, completely. Structure your text in a way that it's obvious how it follows the question ("provide two examples..." → have two distinct paragraphs in your text, etc)

3. You need one mentor and two clients to send recommendation letters to [coachingcertification@scrumalliance.org](mailto:coachingcertification@scrumalliance.org). Links to guidelines for mentor and client recommendations are included in the Part II application document. Applicants who submitted references in prior application attempts are allowed to resubmit those recommendations to avoid having to ask the recommendation provider for another recommendation, so long as the recommendations were written within the last two years.
4. After your submission of Part II, your application is reviewed by the review team for coaching experience, agile knowledge, mindset, approach, and skills. Similar to Part I, once the review work on Part II of your application begins, your reviewers will contact you by email indicating they have started reviewing your application. The reviewers will start adding comments to your Google doc. **Please do not reply to or close the comment; instead, make any appropriate revisions directly in the text of your application.** Please inform the Scrum Alliance and your reviewer when your application has been revised and is ready for additional review.
5. You may be requested to participate in a phone/video call with members of the review team.
6. You 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 that your certification is approved.
  - b. If you do not meet the qualifications of the program, you will be invited to address your qualification gaps and resubmit your application after the deferment period identified with your feedback. You will be offered a phone/video call with the review team to talk through their feedback. **Do not miss this opportunity**, regardless of how unhappy you are with the feedback. It is possible that either your writing did not reflect your coaching awareness in its entirety, or that their perception of your writing differs from your intention. Use the call to clarify.

## Further guidance for filling out the application

### Provide clear, concise, and well formatted responses in English

Applications are expected to be submitted in English and to be clear, concise, well formatted, and grammatically correct. Consideration will be made for applicants whose first language is not English (unless your written English is fluent). Certified Agile Coaches are expected to communicate efficiently and effectively in both written and spoken form.

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. If there are single images, diagrams or other elements that significantly enhance your responses, include them inline in the application. **Note: Answers that have been culled directly from other sources are reviewed negatively.**

**Make sure you actually answer the prompt.** If the prompt is unclear, seek guidance from a mentor, the candidate Google group, your pre-application call coach, or other sources. Have a conversation before writing an answer that doesn't effectively address the prompt.

### Enlist a CEC or CTC to preview your application iteratively

**Before you fill out either part of the application, engage with a current CEC or CTC and discuss how**

you satisfy the prerequisites as well as some of your proposed answers, to get early feedback. A Scrum Alliance Certified Agile Coaching credential is demanding, and early feedback may save you hours of rework. You may share your application document with mentors or other informal reviewers to assist you in your application process. Remember this is a learning journey. And keep in mind that agile is all about collaboration, and frequent inspection and adaptation. While completing the application shouldn't be a team effort, the application will benefit from the agile practice of inspecting, adapting, and retrospecting.

### Show your range of experience

Provide a description of your diverse coaching experiences by using different client engagement examples in each question in Part II. Repeat examples will be seen as a sign of limited experience and will be disregarded. We recommend you read over all of the sections in prior to responding to the first question.

### Scrum Coaching Recommendations (Part II)

Recommendations take time to acquire. Start planning for those early, and choose your recommenders wisely. 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.

### Application Word Counts

Most of the response 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 accommodate reduced fluency in English. Please indicate your usage of this exception in the application language entry field. Please don't use that additional word count if your fluency is comparable to native speakers.

## Scrum Alliance Certified Team Coach Application Definitions

### Organization

An organization is any client/company entity that engages a 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 coach. Larger companies typically contain multiple organizations, such as business units, divisions, or departments.

Applying to be a Certified Agile Coach 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 teams, groups, and organizations to achieve higher-quality collaboration and enable greater results
- Developing teams and organizations 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 Certified Team Coach (CTC) vs. Scrum Alliance Certified 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 executive coaching, Agile transformation, organizational change, and sustainable business agility. Enterprise Coaches are expected to 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.

- [Path to Coaching Online Course](#) and mentoring programs -- The Scrum Alliance Path to Coaching and associated Mentor programs are designed to provide aspiring coaches with the knowledge and support required to bridge the most common issue applicants face.
- [“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 CACs 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)