



Quality, Service Improvement and Redesign

QSIR College Frequently asked questions

Candidates

Q: I'm an experienced quality and service improvement specialist. Do I need to complete all components or just the online and teaching assessment components?

A: Attendance at the full five-day/eight-module QSIR Practitioner programme is a prerequisite for progression to the assessed components of QSIR College, to make sure you are familiar with the QSIR curriculum and workshop activities. Candidates are also expected to attend a facilitation skills workshop. To be considered for a place in QSIR College, candidates must have either:

1. attended a full QSIR Practitioner programme delivered by the ACT Academy team

or

2. certificated full attendance at a local QSIR Practitioner programme provided by accredited QSIR Teaching Faculty associates (QSIR College graduates).

Q: My colleagues can't make the specified dates. Can I apply on my own?

A: Unfortunately we cannot accept applications from individuals intending to deliver QSIR on their own in organisations. The QSIR development programme is best delivered as part of an organisational and/or system strategy to build long-term improvement capability. Ongoing commitment to delivering QSIR and supporting participants as they work on quality and service improvement projects requires a team approach with executive sponsorship.

Q: Is there a minimum to the number of individuals who can apply as a team?

A: For QSIR College, we suggest a minimum of three candidates for a team planning to deliver QSIR within an organisation. We strongly recommend a minimum of two candidates per organisation if you are submitting an application as a system-wide team.

Q: We would like to submit a system-based team application reflecting the joint improvement work we are doing in our local system across health and social care. Can our application include non-NHS staff as part of the team?

A: It is for you to decide how you recruit participants for your QSIR programme within your system. Your plans for QSIR delivery should be guided by your local system priorities, eg Sustainability and Transformation Plans. But please note we cannot offer places to agency staff or contract workers.

Q: Do I need to prepare for the online assessment?

A: We expect candidates to have a good knowledge of quality and service improvement tools and techniques and to have attended a QSIR Practitioner programme. The online assessment questions are based on the QSIR Practitioner programme content and related resources given to candidates. Therefore, we do expect candidates to do some revision and preparation for the online assessment.

Q: Does every nominated candidate from each organisation/system need to meet the criteria set by the online assessment process, or is it only the team that collectively needs to show an overall level of the necessary skills, expertise and experience in service improvement?

A: Every candidate must reach the standard threshold in the online assessment to progress, rather than the nominated team from each organisation/system achieving a threshold aggregate of marks. The standard threshold is calculated from the overall marks of all candidates sitting the exam.

Q: What happens if candidates do not meet the threshold standard after sitting the online assessment?

A: These candidates cannot progress as there is no opportunity to resit this assessment. Candidates who do not pass may re-apply for future cohorts of QSIR College.

Q: As a potential candidate, what if my organisation will not give me the protected time I need to either (a) prepare for and participate in the programme or (b) play my part in fulfilling the commitment to roll out a minimum number of cohorts of QSIR Practitioner within the accredited year?

A: Participating in QSIR College and the delivery of the QSIR programme in your organisation/system requires a significant time commitment. We only accept applications from those who are actively supported by organisational executive sponsors. We expect potential candidates to discuss how they will protect the necessary time with their executive sponsors in advance of completing the application form, to ensure they have full organisational support for ongoing QSIR delivery.

Q: Will I be able to transfer QSIR College accreditation if I change jobs/organisations?

A: This may be possible if you join another NHS organisation that has existing QSIR teaching faculty associates supported by an executive sponsor. Please contact us if you think this may apply to you. Previous cohorts have shown that executive sponsorship and a team of QSIR associates is key to embedding QSIR within organisations as part of building long-term improvement capability.

Q: What support does the ACT Academy faculty give to QSIR College candidates during the programme?

A: All candidates are given QSIR related resources that accompany and support the programme. The ACT faculty and QSIR College graduates are available at optional webinars to provide advice and answer questions from participants on delivering QSIR within their organisations and systems. QSIR College participants who feel they would benefit from our one-day facilitation skills workshop will be given priority access to places. Where appropriate, virtual coaching/revision sessions can provide support on specific areas of the QSIR curriculum and/or topics to support QSIR delivery.

Q: I have a holiday booked and can't attend one of the teaching assessment periods. Can I still apply?

A: We expect you to attend all three teaching assessment days within one of the teaching assessment blocks. We publish the dates in advance to allow applications to be made in full knowledge of these important dates. You may be able to request a specific week but there is no guarantee you will be accepted for that week. Acceptance of specific requests is at the discretion of the ACT Academy's QSIR faculty and subject to availability.

Q: What happens if candidates fail the teaching assessment?

A: Candidates will have one opportunity to resit a teaching assessment. If they do not pass the resit, they will not be accredited.

Q: Is this programme suitable for practising clinicians or are you looking to attract staff working in corporate quality and service improvement teams?

A: We are keen to receive applications from staff with a wide range of skills and experience of delivering quality and service improvement upon which they can draw to illustrate theoretical concepts as they deliver the content of the programme. It is up to organisations/systems to determine who is best suited to attend this programme, taking into account their current roles and responsibilities, knowledge of quality and service improvement and the significant time commitment.

Executive sponsors

Q: What happens if several of our QSIR teaching faculty associates leave the organisation and/or system during the 12-month accreditation period?

A: We manage such situations on a case-by-case basis and discuss strategies with the sponsors and QSIR teaching faculty associates affected.

Q: What happens if we can't deliver the expected number of QSIR Practitioner cohorts within the specified accreditation period?

A: By supporting the application of staff for QSIR College, you are making a commitment to meet this expectation. You are expected to have reporting mechanisms at organisational and system board levels to ensure local plans are adhered to and any risks of slippage are notified early so mitigating actions can be taken. You should notify the ACT Academy as soon as possible of any problems and we will help you meet this expectation as closely as possible.