

QA Checklist

A process-level quality-assurance checklist for managing a software release.

Plan the QA cycle

- ☐ Confirm the scope of the release and what is in and out of testing.
- ☐ Review requirements, designs and acceptance criteria with the team.
- ☐ Write a test plan covering test types, schedule and responsibilities.
- ☐ Define entry criteria for when testing can begin.
- ☐ Define exit and sign-off criteria for when testing is complete.
- ☐ Identify risks and prioritize areas that need the most coverage.
- ☐ Estimate effort and confirm resourcing for the cycle.

Prepare environments and data

- ☐ Set up a stable test environment that mirrors production closely.
- ☐ Deploy the correct build and confirm the version under test.
- ☐ Prepare realistic test data covering common and edge scenarios.
- ☐ Configure required integrations, accounts and feature flags.
- ☐ Verify access for all testers and the tools they need.
- ☐ Confirm the test management and bug tracking tools are ready.

Author test cases

- ☐ Write clear test cases mapped to requirements and acceptance criteria.
- ☐ Cover positive, negative and boundary scenarios for each feature.
- ☐ Mark which cases are candidates for automation.
- ☐ Prepare a regression suite for previously released functionality.
- ☐ Peer review test cases for coverage and clarity.
- ☐ Link test cases to the stories or tickets they verify.

Execute tests

- ☐ Run smoke tests first to confirm the build is testable.
- ☐ Execute planned test cases and record actual results.
- ☐ Run the regression suite to catch unintended side effects.
- ☐ Log defects with clear steps, expected and actual results.
- ☐ Capture evidence such as screenshots, logs and recordings.
- ☐ Track test execution progress and coverage against the plan.

Triage and manage defects

- ☐ Triage each defect by severity, priority and impact.
- ☐ Assign defects to owners with clear reproduction steps.
- ☐ Agree which defects block the release and which can be deferred.
- ☐ Verify fixes and confirm they don't introduce regressions.
- ☐ Re-test resolved issues and close them when verified.
- ☐ Maintain a current list of open issues and their status.

Sign-off and reporting

- ☐ Confirm exit criteria are met, including critical tests passing.
- ☐ Verify there are no open blocker or critical defects.
- ☐ Summarize results in a test report with coverage and known issues.
- ☐ Document any agreed risks or workarounds for remaining issues.
- ☐ Obtain formal sign-off from QA and stakeholders.
- ☐ Capture lessons learned to improve the next QA cycle.