QA Lead/Senior/Real-Time Position Interview Questions and Answers

1.What are the responsibilities of a QA Lead?

QA lead, as any other tester, will have to perform all testing activities in common. But, along with those, there are certain expectations to be met:

- Taking leadership/ownership in the project
- Mentoring juniors
- Team handling – mainly coordination activities
- Reviewing everybody's tasks
- Handling Client communication
- Handling delivery management
- Providing billing details to the customer for entire team

2. Brief upon how will be your typical/ideal day as a QA lead

The typical/ideal day for a QA Lead will be as:

- Check for emails
- Handle client emails at first
- Analyze the tasks for the day and delegate it to the team based on priority and team member's experience (keep few to yourself as well, because test lead also will have testing activities to perform)
- Keep track on status at particular intervals, if lagging have a conversation with team
- Call for daily meetings
- Review tasks at the end of the day and Daily reports
- Plan for training, mentoring, etc if necessary

3. Is QA lead expected to write test cases?

Yes. The QA lead is expected to write test cases as any other team members do.

4. Can the team rely on you in case of issues? How do you handle team member issues?

Yes. Firstly have an informal talk over the coffee and understand their point of view on the issue. If something can be resolved easily, advise them to resolve it mutually. If not, call for a meeting and handle it as a non-offending discussion to both the parties. Let the things not to get escalated at this point in time.

If there is some serious issue and is affecting the project, send out the mail to the member(s) including project management in the loop about the impact and ask not to hamper the work. If required escalate the issue to higher management/human resources team.

5. How do you set objectives for the team members?

Setting objectives for the team members depend on their experience. Higher the experience, higher the expectations and so will be their objectives. It's always good to set objectives keeping in mind to create a positive environment within the team, healthy competition among team members, and encouraging to learn new things.

6. How do you provide feedback to a member who is not performing well in the team?

Be prepared to have a discussion with the poor-performing team member. Make note of the objectives set for the member and the statistics on the deviation or lagging from each point. Call for a meeting and present the analysis done. Explain the expectations from the member and where he stands for correct

reasons. Let the member also speak so that he/she can communicate the reasons for lagging. Once done, give the time period of 15 days or 30 days to improve the performance. Again if things are not satisfactory, set-up new plan to up-bring the member, come up with measures to fix the lagging.

Also, appreciate the member for good things he/she has done to the project. Keep the member motivated and encouraged to learn new things or existing things in a new way.

7. How do you plan for training?

Identify the subject matter expertise for each component and ask them to keep all the related artifacts ready. Plan the dates for training and send out the meeting request for training to the team or new members or selected members of the team, based on project necessities. Make sure training is carried out on time and all the key points are delivered during training.

Have an audio recording, screen recording of the training and share it with the team. Also, save the recordings in sharing location so that any team member can access it at their need.

8. How do you review test cases?

Test cases are reviewed against requirements documents. The review is done for:

- To check whether the test steps are clear to understand
- To check whether test case is complete
- To check whether no ambiguity introduced
- To check whether test is serving the purpose and is the requirement
- To check whether any functionality is missed out
- Is the test case name following naming convention?
- Is the template used correctly?
- Are the previous review comments implemented?
- To analyse the coverage

Once the review is done, list out review comments for the test cases and share it with the member who has written to incorporate the review comments. Once the review comments are incorporated, perform one more round of review to make sure all the review comments are taken care.

9. How do you appreciate a team member's work?

Good thing is to send out the mail detailing the outstanding work done by the member. Mention the challenges he/she took client feedback for the work in the mail and send it to the member keeping the entire team, project management in the loop.

Also, bring up this in the meeting and appreciate the member for the work he/she has done. Meanwhile, encourage other team members to take up such challenges and prove their efficiency in this regard.

10. How do you handle the situation if a team member is having a problem with you and has escalated the issue to higher management?

Let's answer this way: If the issue is known to me, then will definitely talk to the member in-person and will try to resolve it in good manners. If something has skipped at my level and has been escalated, they will analyse the situation and provide all the statistics regarding the issue and will try to defend in case not wrong. If the team member has mistaken for something where the fault is not mine, I will give a try to coordinate with the member and resolve the issue the other possible way.

11. Do you prefer team outings? How often?

Yes, team outings are the most preferred ones to keep the team together and build the strong bond between members. This is one such activity which keeps the team motivated, help them to relax a while keeping work pressure apart, they can come back start with great enthusiasm, etc. Overall, this helps in team bonding. But again this has to max once in a month.

12. What are the things to keep in mind when planning for team outings?

Any test case is considered as qualitative only when it meets below criteria:

- Discuss the venue and date well in advance with the team
- Inform the project manager about the unavailability of team for the period
- Get the approval from client
- Ensure that the work is not affected
- Ensure that the deliverables are still met (plan for early entry for the day or come back and late exit, or try to compensate subsequent days – based on priorities)
- Share the compensation plan with management and client
- Make sure that the plan is well-executed. Do not stretch the activity time as there will be permitted from the project management only for certain period

13. How do you hire a member of the team?

Hiring a member of the team depends on various factors:

- Communication
- Attitude
- Technical knowledge of the domain and project specific requirements as mentioned in description

Here make sure that the member is answering interview purely based on experience. Observe for the statements which may hint that member is answering based on preparations rather than experience.

14. What factors make you release a member of the team?

Common factors to release the member from the team:

- Poor performance even though fair chances were given to improve
- Maybe the member's experience does not match with client's current needs
- Non-willingness to work on the project
- Skills not up-to-the-mark

15. How do you make the new member in the team feel comfortable?

When the new member has entered the team, give equal importance as given to other members of the team.

- Introduce the new member formally in the meeting.
- Send out welcome mail
- Make sure he/she has been allocated seating at the earliest (if not, they may be asked to work in meeting rooms or share some other's workspace – which may not be comfortable)
- Provide them basic access to project resources
- Provide training and get their feedback on the training provided
- Involve them in all the meetings, so that they can understand the process much better before actual tasks start
- Let them speak in the meeting, share their ideas if any
- Encourage them to be-a-part of the team – take them for coffee, a walk, lunch together

16. How do you introduce your team to the new process to be followed?

It's very difficult to new things in place on the team. This is because everyone will have their own opinion and their way of working. New things are not so easy to adapt. But if the project demands, then call for meeting

- Give them overview on the current process being followed
- Give overview on the new process that has to be adapted
- Explain the advantages of using new process
- Provide training or detailed discussion on the new process
- Pass out the references to new process in the mail
- Explain why is the decision taken to move to new process

17. Which areas do you prefer that your team should specialize in?

Technical areas like automation, scripting, and upcoming methodologies are few where the team has to be specialized in. Encourage the team to learn new things in this direction so that it will be helpful to the project as well as themselves. Provide training or short demos to the team so that they can take it forward with their own interest.

18. Apart from testing activities, what other activities you would like your team to engage with?

- Take the training provided at organizational level
- Involve in workshops conducted within the organization
- Involve in tech-summits within the organization
- Write technology related standard articles and share it within the project or can take it forward to management level with the help of leads to publish
- Involve in case-studies, proof-of-concepts for the projects

19. How will you reject a member's leave plan?

The only reason when the leave plan has to be rejected is that it is on production launch day or near to production or it is during tight deadlines. Reject the leave plan with proper reason how the work will be hampered in case of approval.

20. What are the risks that have to be avoided while testing?

Risks to avoid during testing are:

- Resource crunch
- Missing deadlines
- Exceeding allocated budget

21. How do you provide estimations?

Best practices for providing estimations are that:

- Add buffer time, so that it helps to deal with delays caused due to any unexpected reasons
- Resource planning. Have balanced team with variant experience and skills
- Past experience. Use the learnings from your past experience while estimating, assuming possibilities

22. What good practices you can bring in the team?

As a QA lead, there will be opportunities to put the ideas the way wanted. Few things that can be practiced within the team can be:

- Documentation standards

- Review standards
- Metris
- Recognitions
- Teamwork and bonding
- Continuous scope of learning

23. When is the bug in the new state, as a responsibility to open it, what factors you look into?

When the bug has to be Opened and assigned, below factors should be considered by QA Lead:

- Is the bug valid
- Is the bug information complete?
- Are all the fields provided correct values?
- Is the proper analysis done before logging the bug?
- Is the bug duplicate / out-of-scope for the release?
- Is it really a bug or environment issue?
- If the bug logged during regression, is it linked to test case that is failed because of this bug

24. What Are the Steps You Follow to Create A Test Script?

Ans# Creating a test script usually requires the below steps.
Step-1# The primary requirement is to get a thorough understanding of the Application Under Test.
- To achieve this, we will read the requirements related documents very thoroughly.
- In case the requirements document is not available with us, then we will use other available references like the previous version of the application or wire-frames or screenshots.

Step-2# After developing an understanding of the requirements, we will prepare an exhaustive list of the areas to be tested for the AUT. The focus in this step is to identify "What" to test. Thus the outcome of this step is a list of test scenarios.
Step-3# After we are ready with the test scenarios, our focus shifts on "How" to test them. This phase involves writing detailed steps about how to test a particular feature, what data to enter (test data) and what is the expected outcome.
With all this done we are ready for testing.

25. What Are the Key Elements in A Bug Report?

Ans# An ideal bug report should contain the following key points.
- A unique ID.
- Defect description – a short description of the bug.
- Steps to reproduce – include the detailed test steps to emulate the issue. We should also provide the test data and the time of its occurrence.
- Environment – add any system settings that could help in reproducing the issue.
- Module/section of the application in which issue has occurred.
- Severity.
- Screenshots.
- Responsible QA – This person is a point of contact in case you want to follow-up regarding this issue.

26. How Will You Overcome the Challenges Due to Unavailability Of Proper Documentation For Testing?

Ans# If the standard documents like System Requirement Specification or Feature Description Document are not available then QAs may have to rely on the following references if available.
- Screenshots.

- A previous version of the application.

Another reliable method is to have discussions with the developer and business analyst. It helps in closing the doubts and opens a channel for bringing clarity on the requirements. Also, the e-mails exchanged could also be useful as a testing reference.

SMOKE testing is another good option which will help to verify the main functionality of the application. It also reveals some very basic bugs in the application.

If none of these works we can just test the application from our previous experiences.

27. Is There Any Difference Between Quality Assurance, Quality Control, And Software Testing. What Is It?

Ans# Quality Assurance (QA): QA refers to the planned and systematic way of monitoring the quality of process which is followed to produce a quality product. QA tracks the outcomes and adjusts the process to meet the expectation.
Quality Control (QC) is related to the quality of the product. QC not only finds the defects and suggests improvements also. Thus the process that is set by QA is implemented by QC. QC is the responsibility of the testing team.

Software Testing is the process of ensuring that product which is developed by the developer meets the user requirement. The motive to perform testing is to find the bugs and make sure that they get fixed. Thus, it helps to maintain the quality of the product to be delivered to the customer.

28. What Is The Best Approach To Start QA In A Project?

Ans# A good time to start the QA is from the beginning of the project start-up. In this way, the QA team will get enough time to do proper planning for the processes followed during the testing life cycle. It'll also ensure that the product to be delivered to the customer satisfies the quality criteria.

QA also play an important role to initiate the communication between the domain teams. The testing phase starts after the test plans are written, reviewed and approved.

29. Explain The Difference Between Smoke Testing And Sanity Testing?

Ans# The main differences between smoke and sanity testing are as follows.

- Sanity testing touches critical areas of the product to ensure the basics are working fine. However, smoke tests include a set of high priority test cases focussing on a particular functionality.

30. Is There Any Difference Between Retesting And Regression Testing?

Ans# The possible differences between Retesting and Regression testing are as follows.
- We perform retesting to verify the defect fixes. But the regression testing assures that the bug fix didn't break other parts of the application

- Also, regression test cases verify the functionality of some or all the modules.
- Retesting involves the execution of test cases that are in a failed state. But the regression ensures the re-execution of passed test cases.
- Retesting has a higher priority over regression. But in some cases, both get executed in parallel.

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32. Explain The Difference Between Smoke Testing And Sanity Testing?

Ans# The main differences between smoke and sanity testing are as follows.
- Whenever there is a new build delivered after bug fixing, it has to pass through sanity testing. However, smoke testing is done to check the major functionalities of the application.
- Sanity testing is done either by the tester or the developer. However, smoke testing is not necessarily done by a tester or developer.
- Smoke tests precede sanity test execution.
- Sanity testing touches critical areas of the product to ensure the basics are working fine. However, smoke tests include a set of high priority test cases focussing on a particular functionality.

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34. What Are The Severity And Priority Of A Defect? Explain Using An Example.

Ans# Priority reflects the urgency of the defect from the business point of view. It indicates – How quickly we need to fix the bug?
Severity reflects the impact of the defect on the functionality of the application. Bugs having a critical impact on the functionality require a quick fix.

Here are examples which show the bugs under different priority and severity combinations.

High Priority And Low Severity.

The display of the company logo is not proper on its website.

High Priority And High Severity.

While making an online purchase, if the user sees a message like "Error in order processing, please try again." at the time of submitting the payment details.

Low Priority And High Severity.

Suppose we have a typical scenario in which the application crashes, but such a scenario has a rare occurrence.

Low Priority And Low Severity.

These are typo errors in the displayed content like "You have registered success". Instead of "successfully", "success" is written.

35. What Is The Role Of QA In Project Development?

Ans# QA stands for QUALITY ASSURANCE. QA team assures the quality by monitoring the whole development process. QA tracks the outcomes after adjusting the process to meet the expectations. Quality Assurance (QA) does many tasks like the following.

- Responsible for monitoring the process to be carried out during development.
- Communicates the QA process to other teams and their members.
- Ensures traceability of test cases to requirements.

36. As Per Your Understanding, List Down The Key Challenges Of Software Testing?

Ans# Following are some of the key challenges of software testing.
- Availability of Standard documents to understand the application.
- Lack of skilled testers, tools, and training.
- Understanding requirements, Domain knowledge, and business user perspective understanding.
- Agreeing on the Test Plan and the test cases with the customer.
- Re-execution efforts due to changing requirements.
- The application is stable enough to be tested otherwise retesting efforts become high.
- Testers always work under stringent timelines.
- Deciding on to which tests to execute first.
- Testing the complete application using an optimized number of test cases.
- Planning test cases for other stages of testing like Regression, Release, and Performance testing.

37. It's observed that the testers in your organization are performing tests on the deliverable even after significant defects have been found. This has resulted in unnecessary testing of little value because re-testing needs to be done after defects have been rectified.

You are the test manager and going to update the test plan with recommendations on when to stop testing. List the recommendations you are going to make.

Following steps need to be taken:
a) Acceptance criteria should tighten.
b) Test cases should be re-evaluated (preferably peer review).
c) If possible more test cases should be added. With boundary value and equivalence class partition

cases.

d) More test cases with the invalid condition should be added.

e) Stop criteria needs to be modified.

38. Do you write test cases?

The answer always should be a resounding "Yes". Test leads are testers too.

39. How do you resolve team member issues?

Informally, first. Ask them out for coffee individually and listen to each one's side of the issue. If it's a simple misunderstanding, ask them to resolve it within themselves mutually. If need be, call for a meeting and talk to them without letting things escalate. Tolerate until things do not impact work. When they start to cascade and affect project, warn and if necessary, escalate to human resources as a last resort.

40. How do you provide feedback to a team member who isn't doing very well?

First and foremost, set guidelines for all team members of what is expected of them and in what time frame. In short, define the parameters of success. For example, if it's a new team member, let them know what you expect from them:

- What module they will be working on?
- Timelines
- Deliverables
- Formats of deliverables
- Updating/managing work on tools (such as QC, Rally, JIRA, etc.)
- Timesheets and so on…

Set a period of time after which to evaluate, such as 30 days or so. Once done, collect statistics-

- How many times has the timesheet not been filled?
- Negative review comments received on work
- Deliverable not been done on time…etc

Based on the statistics, if the performance isn't satisfactory, follow the below steps:

- Discuss the results with the team member
- Seek approval or confirmation that they understand what hasn't been working
- Set up a new plan, new attributes of success and a new performance review timeline
- Think of measures to fix it or provide help

41. How do you handle induction of new team members? OR What do you do to train new team members?

- Set aside time for knowledge transfer and orientation
- Share all the information regarding who to get in touch with in case of questions regarding different areas of the system and their email addresses or physical introductions (For example: BA, networking team, tool admins, help desk, Dev team etc.)
- Provide tool accesses
- Share documentation, templates, previous artifacts, test plans, test cases, etc
- Share the expectations in terms of their performance (refer to the answer to questions number: 3)

- When possible, assign a team member to work with them closely for a brief amount of time
- Keep the channels of communication open to stay in touch and understand their progress

42. How much is your involvement in reviews of test cases, defects and status reports?

I am involved in the test case reviews just as any other team member is. We do periodic peer reviews. I do not review every one's work; however, we review each other's work. There are very strict processes established before this process begins so all of us can share work and make sure this goes on smoothly.

All the defects are re-checked by me to make sure they are valid, not duplicates and complete in their description. This is more of a task in the beginning of the test cycles, however as we get more into testing, this step reduces as the teams are more comfortable with the process and can do this effectively. All status reports are consolidated and sent by me as this is a team lead's job as per the company's process.