Irfan Ahmad

Quality Engineering Leader

Bengaluru, India · irfan@checkops.com · checkops.com · github.com/irfanahmadein · linkedin.com/in/irfanahmadein

Engineering Manager, QA at McKinsey & Company. 14+ years in software quality, with 7+ years leading quality engineering teams across automation, scalability, and agentic projects. Guest speaker and mentor at global conferences.

Experience

Engineering Manager, QA, McKinsey & Company

Jan 2025 — Present · Bengaluru

Views are my own.

- Lead a 40+ member QA organisation through managers and leads. Transformed QA from manual, to automated, to fully agentic QA engineering.
- Cut delivery time from about four weeks to under four days, holding defect leakage under 5%.
- Designed and delivered an AI agentic testing eval framework, scaled to platform engineering teams.

Senior Engineering Manager, upGrad

Apr 2023 — Dec 2024 · Mumbai

- Headed Test and Platform Engineering: org-wide release quality, testing strategy and security practices.
- Led three teams (Platform, UG BAU, Test Automation) of 12+ senior SDEs and SDETs.
- Ran the org-wide VDP security and GDPR compliance programmes, reporting to the CIO.
- Mentored SDEs and SDETs on architecture, automation, performance, security and CI/CD.

Engineering Manager, upGrad

Apr 2022 — Apr 2023 · Mumbai

- Migrated all of upGrad from AWS ECS to AWS EKS (Kubernetes) with zero issues.
- Scale-tested the upGrad Live platform for 1K–10K live learners on real browsers and devices.
- Built self-serve releases (Docker, EKS, Spinnaker): dev leads ship in minutes with live tests and rollback.
- Founded the Platform team (5+ SDEs, 10+ SDETs); set up Jenkins/Spinnaker CI/CD with OWASP ZAP DevSecOps for major apps.

QA Manager, upGrad

Apr 2020 — Mar 2022 · Mumbai

- Delivered up to 20x system scalability for brand campaigns through Gatling load testing and APM.
- Built end-to-end automation across backend, web and mobile (Java, Cucumber, Selenium, Appium, RestAssured) plus Gatling load suites.
- Scaled Test Engineering to 20+ SDETs and ran a 5-member DevOps/SRE team, owning release quality for all products, reporting to the CTO.

Release Manager, upGrad

Apr 2018 — Mar 2020 · Mumbai

- Founded and led DevOps, SRE and Tech Support teams (10+), reporting to the CTO; set up CI/CD on Docker, AWS ECS and Jenkins.
- Automated 80% of releases (JIRA, Bitbucket, Confluence), cutting release time from hours to minutes.
- Cut 1-hour test runs to 10 minutes by scaling automation to Selenium Grid, an Appium device farm and parallel CI on AWS Lambda.

Lead QA Engineer, upGrad

Feb 2016 — Mar 2018 · Mumbai

- Founded Test Engineering and led 6 SDETs, owning quality across backend, web and mobile, reporting to the Head of Engineering.
- Set up test automation (Ruby, Python, Cucumber, Selenium, Appium, RestAssured) with CI on Jenkins and BrowserStack.

Software Engineer - Quality, TinyOwl

Apr 2015 — Feb 2016 · Mumbai

- Owned order-management quality end to end, building Ruby E2E automation for web, mobile and APIs with Jenkins CI.
- Built a backup/restore service that resets test environments in minutes for all devs and testers.

Software Engineer, then Senior Software Engineer, Amdocs

Aug 2012 — Apr 2015 · Pune

- Ran end-to-end testing of the entire telecom product suite on the in-house test automation framework.
- Delivered E2E test automation for Bell Canada; presented the in-house self-serve Linux batch-testing tool to the client on site in Montreal.
- Cut ops manual effort by up to 70% for Sprint Nextel (USA) by automating payment-plan uploads and validations (QTP, VBScript, Oracle DB).

Education

Bachelor of Engineering (IT), University of Pune

Jul 2008 — May 2012

Graduated with Distinction, 70.8%.

Courses

Oct 2023 — Mar 2024

PCP Cybersecurity, Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur

Jul 2021 — Feb 2022

Leaders of Tomorrow: Leadership Program, upGrad

Jun 2019 — Jan 2020

Product Management Certification Program, Duke University

Skills

- End-to-end and system testing (web, backend, mobile, APIs)
- Kubernetes and cloud infrastructure (AWS EKS/ECS, Docker)
- Performance and scale (Gatling, APM)
- Automation strategy (Java, Selenium, Appium, RestAssured)
- Agentic and AI testing and evaluation
- Org building and leadership
- CI/CD and release engineering (Jenkins, Spinnaker)
- DevSecOps and compliance (OWASP ZAP, VDP, GDPR)