



Route to Certification in Business Psychology

“Business Psychology is the study and practice of improving working life. It combines an understanding of the science of human behaviour with experience of the world of work to attain effective and sustainable performance for both individuals and organisations”

The document lays out the Business Psychology Certification process which is being introduced by the Association for Business Psychology (ABP). This is intended to support candidates and mentors who are going through this process. This document has three main sections:

1. Introduction and overview of certification and framework
2. Detail on the process, criteria and evidence required to achieve certification
3. Appendices to provide details of framework

1. Introduction and Overview

What is Business Psychology?

Business psychology is an applied science that investigates how to make people and organisations more effective. It uses social scientific research methods to study people, workplaces and organisations to better align their multiple and sometimes competing needs. Its goal is to create healthy, productive and mutually beneficial relationships between people and organisations.

As an applied science, Business Psychology can inform organisations about what constitutes effective organisational practice. It has a reciprocal relationship with business, drawing insights from those with experience of what works at work to enable psychological research to be applied pragmatically in ways that are appropriate to the situation. It also allows a cross fertilisation of experience: from business into psychology, and of academic knowledge and rigour from psychology into business.

Certification Objectives

The two main objectives of the ABP Business Psychology certification process are

- a) to provide a route for ABP members to certification which evidences their expertise, competencies and skill and
- b) to facilitate professional benchmarking within the field.

In achieving these objectives, the ABP certification framework aims to:

1. support the training and professional development of members engaged in the field of Business Psychology
2. facilitate individuals in gaining formal recognition for their contributions to teaching and learning in Business Psychology
3. acknowledge the variety of fields and approaches that encompass the field of Business Psychology
4. embed scientist practitioner thinking and practice in Business Psychology
5. encourage new developments in the field of Business Psychology

Overview of Certification Framework

To become a certified Business Psychology practitioner, applicants must show their understanding of how business psychology is applied effectively to improve performance for organisations and individuals at work.

There are three levels of certification which can be applied for, depending on the experience of the candidate:

- Certified Business Psychologist (stage one)
- Certified Principal Business Psychologist (stage two)
- Fellow of the Association for Business Psychology (stage three)

Different criteria are applied at each level (see section 2 below). The candidate will choose, with the help of their mentor, which level is most appropriate for them. It is possible to apply directly to any stage provided the criteria for that level are met.

For each of the three levels, evidence is required which shows the candidates understanding and experience across three core areas:

1. The Consulting Cycle (CC)
2. Professional Business Practice (PB)
3. Areas of Practice (AP)

In addition, candidates must show an understanding of and commitment to working within the ABP Values (V).

1. The Consulting Cycle (CC)

Practitioners of Business Psychology typically work across the consulting cycle, as follows. The certification process is designed to support practitioners in evidencing their knowledge, skills and experience at each stage of the consulting cycle, as follows:

- Stage 1. Advise** - as independent professionals who can be trusted to offer an unbiased, scientifically credible perspective, practitioners can advise on a wide range of people issues at work – from careers to large scale organisational change.
- Stage 2. Diagnose** – helping organisations to better understand issues and challenges (e.g. high turnover and low engagement), using social scientific research methods to investigate human behaviour at work.
- Stage 3. Design** – creating solutions to organisational challenges (e.g. designing psychometric tools or assessment exercises to improve employee selection).
- Stage 4. Implement** – implementing solutions to organisational problems through facilitation rather than by taking ownership of the problem for the client.
- Stage 5. Evaluate** – demonstrating evidence of the individual and organisational benefits of interventions (a core principle of Business Psychology).

2. Professional Business Practice (PB)

The ABP has identified several core professional practice principles which differentiate the field from other psychological disciplines. Practitioners of Business Psychology are expected to demonstrate and apply knowledge in these areas:

- **Business or commercial acumen**, for example, business income, return on investment, feasibility studies, creating business studies, business impact and sustainability
- **the legal environment** in which organisations and individuals operate
- business ethics
- diversity and inclusion
- both a critical consideration of latest **business developments** in the field and being able to critique their appropriateness
- promoting the informed application of **evidence-based psychology** in the world of work and demonstrate its value.

3. Areas of Practice (AP)

Business psychologists are often both specialists and generalists, applying their skills and knowledge to solving problems in diverse and ambiguous environments. The ABP has identified five broad practice areas in the field covering

1. The Psychology of Selection and Assessment
2. Strategy and Organisational Effectiveness
3. The Psychology of Learning and Development
4. Behavioural Science
5. Human Motivation and Wellbeing

Business Psychology practitioners are additionally expected to evidence their practice through the scientist practitioner model by showing how their work is informed by the theory, principles of business psychology.

4. ABP Values (V)

The ABP has also a number of Values which Business Psychology practitioners at all levels are expected to understand and commit to. These are:

- **Being inclusive:** welcoming all those who embrace Business Psychology
- **Being accessible:** helping to make the application of Business Psychology user-friendly
- **Promoting Business Psychology:** raising awareness of the specialist value of Business Psychology for people and organisations
- **Demonstrating best practice:** sharing examples of Business Psychology's application
- **Building capability:** enabling the development of Business Psychology knowledge/skills

2. Certification Process and Criteria

The Process (CBP and CPBP)

The outline steps of the ABP Business Psychology Certification process for Certified Business Psychologist and Certified Principal Business Psychologist are laid out in figure 1 below.

Anyone who wishes to undertake the Certification process must be a member of the ABP. All prospective applicants are encouraged first to attend an introductory webinar which provides an overview of the certification process. The webinar will explain the application process, review with candidates the areas of practice and consider examples of how to use psychological evidence to support the application.

Those applicants who are motivated to proceed will complete an initial short application form and pay an initial small application fee. This fee is deducted from the total cost of certification should the applicant

continue through the process. This initial application allows the ABP to review the suitability of candidates before they embark upon the rigorous full application process.

Once the initial application is processed and approved, candidates will pay the full certification fee and will be matched with and allocated a mentor. Mentors are experienced ABP members who are allocated to each candidate to support and guide them through the application process. Candidates are encouraged to work closely with their mentors who will not only provide advice and encouragement but also assist the candidate in selecting instances of evidence-based practice and identifying how those examples meet the areas of practice, core knowledge, professional values and effectiveness standards required for Certification.

To submit a full application, applicants are required to complete the full evidence submission. This comprises an application form providing the names of two referees who can support the application. Referees are required to have known the applicant for a minimum of 3 years and must write a statement to support the application. Applicants also complete an evidence submission providing evidence of how their work experiences support the criteria needed.

Once the detailed application and evidence has been submitted, applicants will be invited to an interview panel to discuss their application with three assessors.

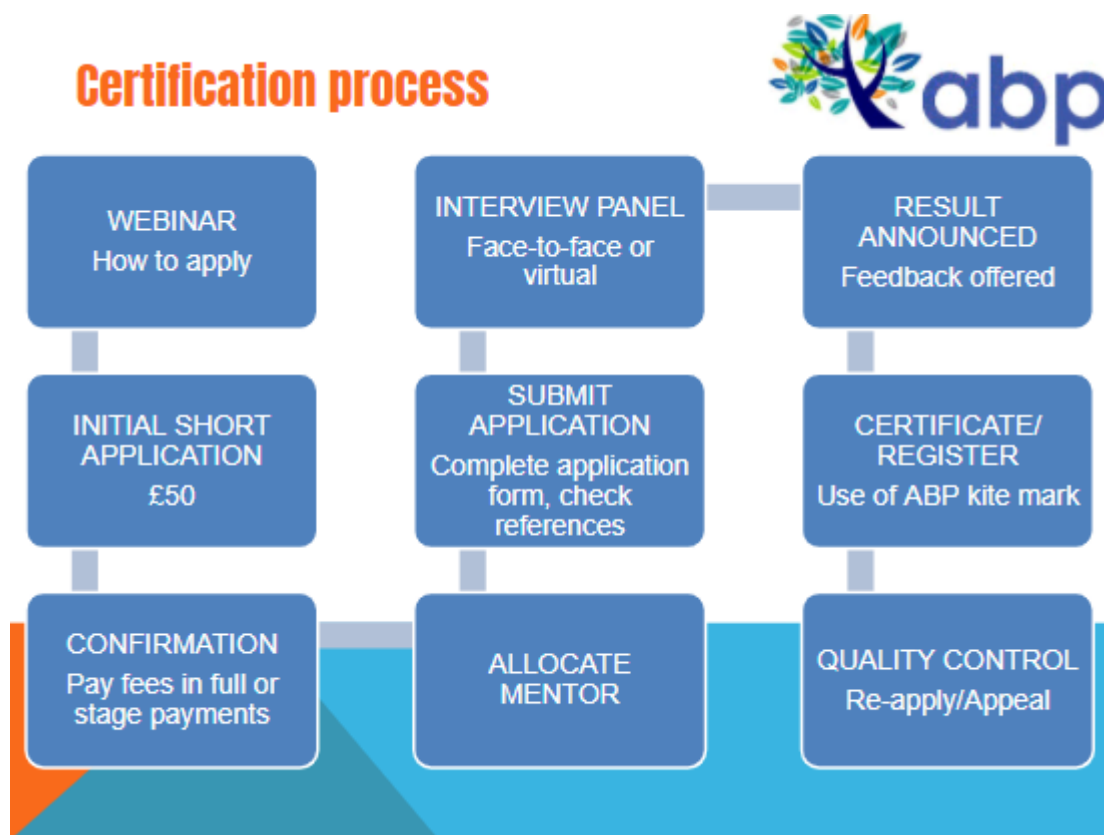
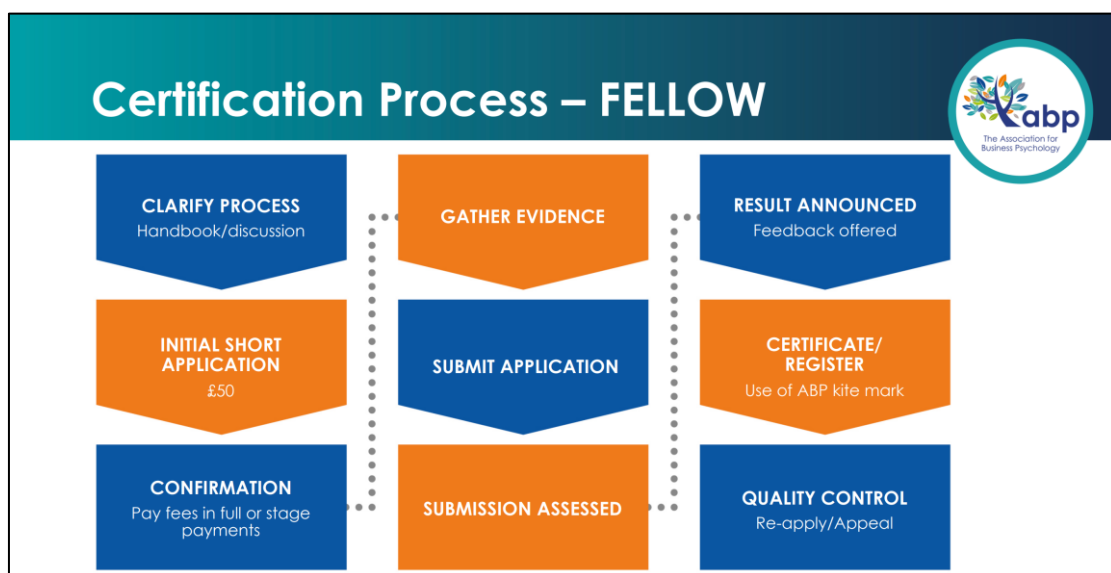


Figure 1: Outline of Certification process steps for CBP and CPBP

The process for Fellow Certification is as follows:

1. Complete the initial application
2. Start completing the Fellow submission form
3. Submit the form along with any supporting documentation and the fee
4. Once the fee is paid, your evidence will be assessed and a decision made
5. We operate an ‘approved’ or ‘not yet approved’ approach.
 - a. Approved – you will be send your certificate, digital badge and confirmation that you can use the post-nominals FABP.
 - b. Not yet approved – you will be offered feedback and a period of 1 year in which to resubmit your evidence taking into account the feedback.
 - c. If more than 1 year has elapsed since your initial application then a further fee may become due.

Please note that for Fellow, it is important that you can demonstrate your impact and influence on the profession and that to an extent, your contributions speak for themselves.



Evidence criteria

The evidence criteria required for Certification depends on the level of certification being applied for. All levels require evidence of an understanding and experience across the Consulting Cycle, Professional Business Practice principles and Areas of Practice. Candidates are required to complete the evidence matrix, providing examples of their work experiences which are mapped to the required ABP criteria and show an understanding of the underpinning psychology.

Criteria relevant to all three levels

Can demonstrate, through practical examples, knowledge and experience of implementing an end-to-end approach to Business Psychology – Starting with issues/problems/objectives, thoughtfully choosing solutions with a rigorous psychological underpinning, implementing solutions, measuring the results and

impact against the original objectives, continuous learning and adjusting for future application. This is what distinguishes Business Psychologists – the conscious, evidence-based application of psychology to real world business issues.

Stage 1 (Certified Business Psychologist)

Demonstrates a broad understanding of some aspects of the approach, philosophy and practice of business psychology. Individuals may work in a supportive role with more experienced colleagues or mentors, or they may function as part of a team.

Will provide evidence of:

1. Evidence driven solutions through 3 aspects of the consulting cycle.
2. Engagement with 3 areas of the ABP areas of practice (or 2 if able to demonstrate real depth of experience).
3. Broad knowledge of psychological theory as applied to all areas of practice.
4. A commitment to the professional values of the Association for Business Psychology.
5. Engagement with professional development activities (CPD).

Stage 2 (Certified Principal Business Psychologist)

Demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the key psychological principles of understanding, designing and managing people, processes and organisations. Candidates will be experienced individuals who are likely to have leadership and or management expertise in the areas (outlined in table 1) and demonstrate impact and influence.

Will provide evidence of:

1. Comprehensive engagement throughout the consulting cycle.
2. Engagement with all the ABP areas of practice (or less if able to demonstrate real depth of experience).
3. Expertise in the application of psychological theory to organisations, business, people and systems
4. The successful integration of scientist practitioner thinking into practice.
5. Understanding of and engagement with relevant professional business practice principles.
6. Successful leadership in the field of Business Psychology and/or mentoring people to support Business Psychology
7. A commitment to the professional values of the Association for Business Psychology;
8. Engagement with professional development activities (CPD).

Stage 3 (Fellow of the Association for Business Psychology)

Candidates for this level will have a sustained record of leadership in Business Psychology. Candidates are likely to have a sustained and effective record at a strategic level. In addition to the requirements for Certified Principal Business Psychologists, candidates will demonstrate:

1. The active championing of the Association for Business Psychology, practices and values.

2. Establishing policies or strategies for supporting or mentoring other practitioners in the field.
3. Successful leadership in Business Psychology, with evidence of influencing the field at a national and / or international level.
4. Continual commitment to and engagement with professional development related to your professional practice.

Appendix A: Certification Framework



Areas of Practice (AP)

<p>AP1. The Psychology of Selection and Assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding role requirements (e.g. job analysis, competency frameworks and future proofing them); • Applicant attraction (e.g. advertisement design linked to role requirements, realistic job previews); • Assessment tools for selection (e.g. psychometric test, role play, interviews, video interviewing); • Assessor training (e.g. ORCE methodology including unconscious bias); • Knowledge, critique and application of latest tools and techniques (e.g. Game based assessment, virtual reality, biometric profiling).
<p>AP2. Strategy and Organisational Effectiveness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The psychology of entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship; • Leadership; • Organisational people strategy (e.g. for selection / development, including the use of big data to inform bus psych decisions); • Change management (e.g. communications, support and involvement during change, attitude change, mergers and acquisitions, whole systems change); • Team and group and inter-team behaviour (e.g. understanding, developing, utilising); • Creativity and innovation (e.g. conditions for, maximising, increasing competitiveness); • Organisational values.
<p>AP3. The Psychology of Learning and Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment tools for development needs and progression; • Learning and Development interventions (upskilling, training, career development, use of latest and emerging technologies and learning approaches); • Coaching; • Performance appraisal, feedback and subsequent management and improvement;
<p>AP4. Behavioural Science</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of human decision making (e.g. risk versus reward, probability estimate); • Behavioural Economics (e.g. marketing using psychological principles); • Behavioural Change (e.g. negotiating / influencing / persuading attitude and behaviour change, organisational politics and power, negotiating); • Consumer Psychology (e.g. influencing potential customers' behaviour, understanding the behaviour of crowds); • Conflict Management.
<p>AP5. Human motivation and workplace well-being</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational stress; • Motivation at work; • Workplace welfare, health and safety; • Workplace design and ergonomics; • Organisational climate and culture; • Engagement and retention

Consulting Cycle (CC)

CC1: Advise	As independent professionals who can be trusted to offer an unbiased, scientifically credible perspective, practitioners can advise on a wide range of people issues at work – from careers to large scale organisational change;
CC2: Diagnose	Helping organisations to better understand issues and challenges (e.g. high turnover and low engagement), using social scientific research methods to investigate human behaviour at work;
CC3: Design	Creating solutions to organisational challenges (e.g. designing psychometric tools or assessment exercises to improve employee selection);
CC4: Implement	Implementing solutions to organisational problems through facilitation rather than by taking ownership of the problem for the client;
CC5: Evaluate	Demonstrating evidence of the individual and organisational benefits of interventions.

Professional Business Practice (PB)

PB1: Business or commercial acumen	For example, P&L/Balance sheets, business strategy, return on investment, feasibility studies, creating business cases, business impact and sustainability;
PB2: Legal	Forming and running a business, contracting, managing;
PB3: Business Ethics	Conduct of individuals and organisations. How the right decisions are distinguished;
PB4: Diversity and Inclusion	Empowering people by respecting what makes them different;
PB5: Business Development	A critical consideration of latest developments in the field and being able to critique their appropriateness;
PB6: Evidence driven	Promoting the informed application of evidence-based psychology in the world of work and demonstrate its value.

ABP Values (V)

V1: Inclusivity	Welcoming all those who embrace Business Psychology;
V2: Accessibility	Helping to make the application of Business Psychology user-friendly;
V3: The promotion of business psychology	Raising awareness of the specialist value of Business Psychology for people and organisations;
V4: Demonstrating best practice	Sharing examples of Business Psychology's application;
V5: Building capability	Enabling the development of Business Psychology knowledge/skills.