

ABP Membership Categories and Post-Nominals FAQ's

Q1. What about students?

Students who attend ABP Accredited Masters courses will automatically achieve CertBP from 2021. Students from non-ABP accredited Masters and other student members can apply for the Certification for the same fees and Members within the transition period and afterwards at full rates.

Q2. I was one of the founding members of the ABP way back in the days when using psychology in business was in its infancy. I do not have a psych degree. The BPS was and is a place for psychologists – Business, like everything we encounter in this world has psychological undertones. The fear embedded in this organisation from psychologists is palpable. This was NOT the intention off the original ABP.

Please watch this video which helps to explain why we developed the certification. We can reassure you that this initiative is not driven by fear in the slightest. None of our discussions over the last 10 years about the Certification have come from a place of fear. Rather it is driven by a desire to support anyone who is interested in applying psychology in business and be recognised for doing so, based on the quality of their interventions.

Please see this 10 minute video <https://vimeo.com/255076126>

Q3. I feel that some move towards making the ABP seem more professional is required and to bring it in line with other similar industry bodies, as well as to make the post-nominals hold more value. However, I feel that I would lose out as a MABP.

Our hope is that MABP members will fall into two categories – 1. Those who are members purely for their interest in psychology in business not looking for professional recognition. 2. Those who are experienced and/or developing Business Psychologists who would like to progress towards Certification over time and are willing to invest time and money to attain this.

Q4. Not entirely clear what the change will signify or indeed what impact it will achieve, this was not clearly signposted in the video. The rationale was missing.

The vision of the ABP is to be the home and voice of Business Psychology. There are many people who study Business Psychology and/or who work in the field who are either ineligible or choose not to follow the BPS professional route. The certification is aimed at offering an inclusive and rigorous and cost effective alternative for those who would like recognition for their knowledge, skills and experience in the application of Business Psychology at work.

Q5. It is difficult to see the relevance of the "professionalising" the ABP considering the very broad church of the membership. I think there needs to be a more compelling case to make these changes, with additional fees, and to convince members to back the changes.

Please watch this video and if, after watching it you still feel a 'compelling case' is missing, let us know. <https://vimeo.com/255076126>

Q6. For example, will the changes help psychologists gain more business or have a better professional standing as a result of the proposals?

This is a little bit chicken and egg. Our vision is that in the medium to long term, you will start to see 'CertBP' as a criteria on Job Descriptions. The certification is already starting to cause people in the field to consider this. Some of the large Business Psychology consultancies are already considering ABP Certification as a viable alternative to the BPS route and are funding some employees through certification.

Q7. How will the changes take members to the next level and what will it give members over and above what is already available with the ABP?

Already, our entire operation is structured around our Business Psychology framework. When choosing conference speakers, awards categories, training, speaker events, the first question we ask is 'does this fit within the framework'. We are continuing to shift the ABP from a networking and learning organisation to a professional association with clear standards, whilst maintaining inclusivity.

Q8. Will there be an increase in membership with parity with the BPS?

Only time will tell but that is the intention. Our certification is available globally, so in time, this is very feasible.

Q9. How are the certificate fees arrived at?

We assessed the amount of time required for those involved in the certification process – Admin, mentors, panelists, quality control and auditing. We pay fees for each of these, not high fees, acceptable fees. We then add a small amount on top so that we start to build a pool of money which can be used for marketing and other initiatives to continuously improve the certification process. We have also considered the cost of similar qualifications, market rates and how to position the fees so that the process is perceived as valuable.

Q10. At the moment there are too many questions to answer to be able to accept or reject the proposals.

Please ask these questions and we will do our best to answer them.

Q11. Utter bureaucratic nonsense that adds no value. You are creating the exact thing that the ABP was set up to avoid and you should be ashamed. As a founder member it seems like it's time for another breakaway and a new association.

We would be very interested in having this debate to understand what sits beneath these words. It is certainly not our intent to be bureaucratic or to act in a way that is not aligned to the founding principles of the ABP. In fact, the opposite is our intent. Please call us to discuss further.

Q12. Don't really see the point of a digital badge - makes it sound like membership of the brownies - however seems harmless and can't vote against it

The Brownies is a very respected institution! Digital certificates, logos and resources are becoming the norm. It is fairly common for members to use the ABP logo in their LinkedIn profiles, on email

signatures etc. The digital badge will be issued for each membership level and can be used or deleted depending on your individual preferences.

Q13. If general members have a digital badge, other membership categories will need their own. If you run your own consultancy you will want to put a badge on your website demonstrating your affiliation with the ABP

See response to Q12

Q14. I am speaking about my own situation only here. As a current MABP I will be very dissatisfied to lose the post-nominals. This is because I feel that I have earned some form of post-nominal, from having a masters degree in Organisational Behaviour as well as 20 years' experience in management development consultancy. My experience extends to varied areas of business psychology application including recruitment, outplacement, training and development. I am not eligible for a higher level in the ABP, simply by not having a first degree in psychology. Hence being stuck at MABP level, I would lose the value of not having MABP post-nominals, which carry some weight for me.

The ABP Certification was set up precisely with you in mind. Our encouragement is that you apply for one of the other membership levels and do so during the transition period when the cost of doing so is significantly reduced – thus recognising your experience.

Q15. I'm just not sure that a Senior Business Psychologist is a good title. No lay person is going to look at the term Certified Business Psychologist and think that this is the 'basic' level of qualification. I wonder whether the two categories require differentiation at all. I get the alignment with the qualifications but from a business perspective I'm just not sure if it's helpful.

We are willing to consider alternatives to this title.

Q16. What are the proposed criteria for these categories?

All the details on this can be found here. Scroll down on the page and you can see the actual forms for the detail - <https://theabp.org.uk/professional-development/business-psychology-certification/>

Q17. Membership fees would be a concern, especially for people like who live outside of the UK.
300GBP

The annual membership fees will not be affected by this transition. They may change of course, but not in relation to this initiative directly.

Q18. I can't see how you can have a formal process of certification [a good thing] and then have auto enrolment to CertBP just because someone has been in practice for 5+ years - seems to me to undermine the essential principles of certification - implicitly a process of formalised peer review against a broad set of validated criteria - one should not just be able to claim it as a right just for being around long enough

This is a valid point and the decision to offer an auto-transition is a trade-off. We have many very experienced Principle Practitioner Members and we want to acknowledge that knowledge and expertise. A number of Principle Practitioners feel insulted that they will only auto-transition to CertBP and not to a higher level. This is a case of finding a middle ground as we can't please everyone.

Q19. I see the reasoning behind your proposal but I doubt I'm alone in being a member of both the BPS and ABP. I am a Chartered Psychologist and the idea of having to jump through yet more accreditation hoops is actually a bit insulting. I think Chartered Psychologists should be automatically transitioned to the CertSBP category since our calibre has already been rigorously evaluated.

See answer to the Q18. This is a trade-off between recognising the significant knowledge, skills and experience of our members and ensuring we have an evidence-based, rigorous and defensible approach.

Q20. I think my main concern here is about how this might feel like a revenue-generation exercise to our membership.

The ABP is a not-for-profit organisation. We are driven by the desire to be financially sustainable not profiteering. Each year we make a profit, we look at how much we have made and re-invest at least half of it in improving the organisation for our members. The ABP is run by a volunteer Board. That is why we are able to keep the costs of Certification low.

Q21. I'm not sure what the criteria for being awarded PABP currently are, but it feels that it would be fairer to auto-transition PABP to CertBP and auto-transition PPABP to CertSBP. From a personal perspective, as someone at PPABP level, who has served on the board of the ABP, who has 25 years' experience working as a Business Psychologist, as a Chartered Psychologist, Associate Fellow of the BPS, HCPC registered and as someone who mentors people through the ABP accreditation process, I would personally feel that it would be unfair to expect me to pay to reach the level of CertSBP - I would feel like I'd been demoted if I was transitioned to CertBP, and I think it would lessen my credibility with those I mentor.

See Q18 and Q19

Q22. Whilst this isn't a significant fee, in the current climate (where my work has almost completely dried up), it isn't something I would want to spend money on. I'd dearly like a Fellowship, but again even with the reduced fees I'm not sure I'd do it - many other priorities at the moment! I can see that establishing a way of identifying those who are more experienced and have made a greater contribution to business psychology in order to award FABP level makes sense - I don't think that all PPABPs would meet the criteria required in the accreditation process.

We understand that the timing is not ideal for this. The long transition period (currently set for 18 months) is designed to acknowledge the financial implications of this initiative.

Q23. I think there should be a simpler way of transferring some of those to FABP, so perhaps have the simple process and discounted fee for that transition, rather than the full accreditation process. If many people wanted to take that option, is there the capacity within the ABP to take people through the full Fellow accreditation process? Yes, we have capacity for this. Are there enough mentors who are FABP Yes (I don't think you could be mentored by someone who is at a lower level of accreditation/membership than the one you're going for? Agreed) to support people through this process? When I think about the experience levels of many of the Principal Practitioners of the ABP, I suspect they may feel the same; that as they're currently at the top level of membership there should be an easy way to be transitioned to the new top level.

The FABP process is relatively simple for those with a high level of experience. If someone applies at this level, it should be relatively self-evident that they meet the criteria, through their presence, credentials and impact on the national and international stage.

Q24: Does this mean my membership fee would jump from £78 to £300 a year?

The annual membership fee will not be affected by this transition. The £300 mentioned is specific to the certain variations of the transition and not related to ongoing annual membership fees.

Q25: What is the vision and reasoning behind the certification and what does the process look like?

For full details on why we introduced a Business Psychologist Certification and what the full process looks like, please see this 10 minute video, <https://vimeo.com/255076126>