



PARTNERSHIP  
BROKERS ASSOCIATION

# Become a qualified professional Partnership Broker

## PBA Accreditation Programme in detail

### Who is this for?

Accreditation is an internationally recognised professional qualification for individuals – whatever their background, sector or context – whose focus is on building more effective, impactful and transformative partnering approaches in [a systematic, principled and ethical way](#).

Whether operating as part of an organisation or independently, the qualification builds competence and confidence and deepens insights and learning for those working for, or on behalf of, partners, partnerships or one of the many emerging new forms of multi-stakeholder collaboration.

*“Through the Accreditation Programme, I have expanded my knowledge and grown in confidence about my partnership brokering practice, which has helped me to address and support those I work with and to be courageous in challenging the many misconceptions there are about partnering.”*

### Background to the programme

The Accreditation Programme was established in 2003 by the UK's Overseas Development Institute and the International Business Leaders Forum. Since 2012 it has been managed, further developed and validated by the Partnership Brokers Association (PBA) which is registered in the UK as a not-for-profit training organisation with a network of authorised trainers, mentors and service providers across the globe.

Our courses are widely recognised by donors, corporations, I-NGOs, NGOs, international agencies and public sector institutions as a pre-requisite for taking on a role to help those involved to become better partners. PBA is the only entity providing a formal, professional qualification in partnership brokering.

The Accreditation Programme is regularly reviewed and modified to ensure it is fit for purpose in the rapidly changing global environment and partnering landscape. Our ambition is that the programme is increasingly accessible, inclusive and relevant for all those who are keen to benefit from it – including those operating in widely diverse geographies, cultures and sectoral contexts.

The PBA's Accreditation Programme is designed to help you:

- **ENHANCE** your capability in adapting concepts, tools and processes to your own context
- **CONNECT** with peers and counter-parts across the globe for mutual support and learning
- **BECOME** a more reflective practitioner to learn from experience
- **CONTRIBUTE** your ideas and experience to this emerging paradigm
- **BUILD** your courage as a collaboration change-maker
- **ACHIEVE** an internationally recognised professional qualification

What the  
programme  
offers

# Pathways to eligibility

There are different entry points leading to enrolment for the PBA Accreditation Programme – see [Accreditation Training Pathways](#).

Based on your individual professional experience, learning needs and development goals we will help you identify the most suitable pathway for you.



## A personalised programme to suit you

### Getting started

**APPLICATION:** We know that everyone's experience and professional development requirements are unique, so we make it a priority to understand your particular situation, needs and expectations.

**DECISIONS ON THE MOST APPROPRIATE PATHWAY:** If it is not clear which entry point is most suitable for you, we will accompany you in a fact-finding and decision-making process. With a number of options and combination of options now available, we are confident we advise on the best pathway for you.

**MENTOR-MATCHING:** A key to the success of this programme is to ensure a good fit between you and one of our authorised mentors. Factors taken into consideration include: your learning style preferences; whether comparable or very different partnership brokering experiences would be most useful for you alongside more technical considerations such as compatible time zones and languages\*.

\*We have mentors who can undertake mentoring in a few other languages if working in English is a major issue and we are expecting to expand possibilities as new mentors with different language skills join our mentor and examining pool.

**ACTIVITIES-PLAN AND LEARNING AGREEMENT:** At the first meeting with your mentor, you will be able to discuss the programme of partnership brokering work that you expect to focus on during your time together and co-create an agreement that will underpin your learning relationship.

### The programme in action

**3.5 MONTHS OF MENTORED PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE:** You will quickly establish a routine for interacting with your mentor and there will be an opportunity after the first month to review how things are going and to address any concerns.

**JOINING AN INFORMAL, SELF-ORGANISING COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE** with others undertaking accreditation at the same time is an option – this offers you a space to explore your partnership brokering issues with peers and to compare and share experiences of the accreditation process itself.

**COMPILING A LOG BOOK (OR EQUIVALENT):** You are required to compile a record of, and reflection on, your partnership brokering journey – we describe this as a 'log book' (a term used by sailors in recording a voyage) but it can take other forms than simply a written record. Working out what form of recording your experience works best for you is part of the accreditation process. This is also an opportunity to explore how reflective practice can become an enduring feature of your professional approach.

**THE FINAL PROJECT:** At the end of the mentored practice period, you will shift your focus to look at the bigger picture. You are required to undertake a final project that gives you an opportunity to make your own unique contribution to the partnership brokering field. To date, these projects have been in the form of papers (many of which have been subsequently published by PBA) but there are other options for the type of submission – including video, audio, visuals and story-telling – and these can be discussed with your mentor.

## Assessment process

**ASSESSMENT:** The assessment process is very thorough as befits a programme aiming at the highest possible standards. Your mentor will assess your Logbook (or

equivalent) and another mentor will assess your Final Project as part of a comprehensive review process to ensure consistency of approach. These assessments are then reviewed by a nominated Accreditation Examiner. The final decision about your accreditation will be signed off by the Programme Director before being announced to you. This process takes around 6-8 weeks.

**FEEDBACK:** In addition to being awarded accreditation, you will be sent the detailed comments from those who have assessed your work. To ensure our Accreditation Programme continues to meet what is needed in the field, you will be invited to give PBA feedback on your experience.

**AS AN ACCREDITED PARTNERSHIP BROKER** you will be eligible to:

- Join the PBA's Global Network of Accredited Partnership Brokers
- Participate in an active peer-to-peer learning programme
- Apply to become a PBA Associate
- Use this logo in your CV or email signature alongside other professional credentials



*“Writing the logbook required me to pause and step back. It has made me a more thoughtful professional. Whilst it was a challenge at first to find regular time for reflective practice, I found a rhythm that suited me, and it quickly became a habit—a habit that has become central to the way I now work.”*

## Post-Accreditation

## Working with your mentor

*“It surprised me how working with my mentor gave me such an opportunity to reflect and to benefit from discussing my professional challenges, approaches and strategies. Our discussions really added sharpness to my thinking and more intentionality to my work.”*

All mentors are highly experienced partnership brokers who operate in a wide range of contexts and thematic areas. They are accredited partnership brokers themselves and PBA Associates – with additional experience as trainers, practice partners and strategic partnership advisors. Mentors undertake mentoring as part of a deep commitment to building a global community of professional partnering practitioners and as part of their own continuous learning.

*“The opportunity to accompany a fellow practitioner as a mentor over a period of 3-4 months is both a privilege and an opportunity. We both get motivated and inspired by our regular interactions and learn something new about ourselves as partnership brokers. Over many years of mentoring on PBA's accreditation programme, I have gained many critical friends and working relationships of real value – I can't imagine a better way of building a professional peer-to-peer support network”*

The mentor's role is to: assist you to reflect on your practice, challenge your thinking and practice, provide support in pushing beyond 'business as usual' and to encourage you to try out new approaches in your partnership brokering practice.

# Commitment to ethical practice

Our commitment to setting and maintaining standards in this field is reflected in the way the programme is designed and assessed. Mentors will stress the importance of abiding by key partnering principles and partnership brokering commitments to ethical practice. Those who complete the programme successfully will be required to sign this commitment to ethical practice prior to being awarded accreditation.

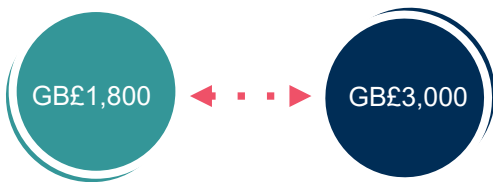
It is therefore essential that you are fully aware of this requirement before you apply to the programme.



## Finances

Since its inception, the Accreditation Programme has been designed and built on the principle of a peer relationship between mentors and mentees in which both parties learn and grow. PBA mentors undertake the role as part of their own commitment to continuous learning and to building the profession.

In spite of the mentors receiving a modest honorarium rather than being paid on a fee-per-day basis, the costs-per-head are significant due to programmatic intensity and detailed administration. The full fee for the course is GBP3,000 per person, but through cross-subsidy, where this amount is unaffordable, we can offer some reduction (of up to 40%). In the Application Questionnaire, you are invited to indicate what you can afford to pay on the sliding scale indicated below:



**THE SLIDING FEE SCALE:** The lower end represents the subsidized cost of the programme and the higher end of the scale indicates the full cost.

See Accreditation Application for details.

If you are convinced the programme is right for you, but as an applicant you find the fee completely beyond your means even with the 40% subsidy offered above, please indicate this in your Applicant Questionnaire.

PBA is a not-for-profit social business, which allows us to be both agile and independent. But we must generate enough revenue to cover costs. We do not have external grants to support accreditation costs. Our ability to cross subsidise is a mix of the PBA team offering some level of pro bono work and, critically, by applicants who can afford to pay higher fee doing so. This approach to financing relies on those who have the capacity to pay the full fee will do so in the understanding that doing so will enable PBA to: continue to cross-subsidise; undertake a continuing programme of development and grow the bursary fund for scholarships to those operating in under-served and low-income contexts.

The accreditation programme is developing new approaches to resourcing and supporting partnership brokering. We adjust our approach based on experience and feedback.

## Find out more

- Take a look at some [final papers](#) of Accredited Partnership Brokers
- Request a 1-2-1 conversation with the programme lead or a mentor or a recent accreditation graduate

## Ready to apply?

Complete the [online Accreditation Application](#)

Enquiries: [accreditation@partnershipbrokers.org](mailto:accreditation@partnershipbrokers.org)



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