Business Culture Certification

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Welcome to Business Culture Certification, an approach to measuring and recognising workplace culture developed in partnership with the research, leadership and management faculty at Hult International Business School, supported by an Advisory Panel of senior HR leaders. This initiative builds on 10 years of Business Culture Awards data and is designed to help organisations:

- Gain recognition for cultural strengths
- Identify opportunities for growth
- Align culture, purpose, values and behaviours with strategy
- Prepare for the future workplace

What's Involved

A Certification application is based on four key elements which make up the whole evidence base. Although these are Steps 1-4 they can be undertaken concurrently, or in any order:

1. **Employee Survey** Measures perceptions across 12 cultural dimensions. Accessible via phone, tablet or laptop. Takes ~10-15 minutes to complete. There are 2 versions: (a) For senior management and above and (b) For everyone else.
2. **People, Culture & Business Strategy Report** A strategic overview answering six questions about your business and people strategy. (500 words each question max)
3. **People & Culture Documentation** Upload existing materials (e.g. EVP, policy handbook, People Strategy) to provide context and evidence.
4. **Eligibility & Integrity Declaration** A statement confirming there are no material reasons why your organisation should not be certified.

What makes our Certification Unique



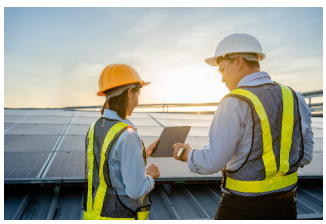
Credible & Robust
Developed with leading academics and researchers at Hult International Business School, with an advisory panel of CPOs and HRDs, our framework ensures integrity and reliability.



Culture and Strategy-Focused
Unlike generic engagement metrics, our Certification measures what truly matters - your organisational culture and how aligned this is to your business strategy.



Global Perspective
Designed for relevance across industries and geographies, supporting organisations both in the UK and worldwide.



Future of Work Focused
Provides a Future Workplace Readiness score that reflects your organisation's ability to adapt to emerging trends and evolving workplace demands.

Timeline

- Programme Launch: February 2026
- Survey & Data Collection: Over 2- 3 weeks (at the most convenient time for the applicant)
- Assessment & Results: Within approximately 2 weeks (or in up to 3 months if you need more time to complete any of the steps above)

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Business Culture Assessment Components

The assessment explores the following cultural components, each shown to be strongly linked to business performance and outcomes:

1. Purpose & Values Alignment – Assesses the extent to which the organisation's "espoused" purpose and values are genuinely lived day to day.
2. Culture Strategy Alignment – Examines the organisation's cultural profile and whether it supports the successful delivery of business strategy.
3. Future Workplace Readiness – Evaluates the organisation's ability to sustain long-term performance through a forward-looking, adaptable culture.
4. Employee Voice - Measures how effectively employees feel heard and able to contribute.
5. Cultural Dimensions - A deeper exploration of specific cultural factors (outlined below).

Cultural Dimensions

The survey explores the following dimensions, all correlated with organisational performance and outcomes:

1. Purpose, Strategy & Direction
2. Leadership
3. Management
4. Employee Voice & Psychological Safety
5. Inclusion, Fairness & Respect
6. Development, Performance & Recognition
7. Wellbeing & Work Environment
8. Engagement & My Experiences
9. Teamwork & Community
10. Values & Accountability
11. Culture as Enabler / Obstacle
12. Culture–Strategy Alignment (Senior Managers & above)

Communications Toolkit

When you set your Survey completion window and your overall completion date for the 3 elements you'll receive:

- Teaser email for employees
- Launch day email template, which will include your survey links
- Optional video script for CEO/CPO, if you would like to record a video to accompany your survey launch
- Optional follow-up email template for employees
- FAQs (below)

What You'll Receive

- A detailed report on your organisation's culture, including your Business Culture Profile and rating within each of the areas measured including culture-strategy alignment, future workplace readiness, purpose & values alignment, and cultural strengths across each of the dimensions which correlate with stronger business performance.
- Certification badge (if the threshold rating is met)
- Practical insights to strengthen culture and change behaviours
- Optional media coverage and recognition



Achieving Certification

To be eligible for certification, companies must:

- Demonstrate no material issues that would prohibit certification, as detailed in the Eligibility & Integrity Declaration.
- Show alignment between their cultural practices and business strategy.
- Attain the overall threshold rating or above.

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FAQs

How has the programme been created and is it robust in its measurement?

The Certification programme has been developed in partnership with the research, leadership and management faculty at Hult International Business School. This work has also been supported by an Advisory Panel of senior HR leaders for a robust practitioner perspective. It builds on 10 years of Business Culture Awards data. The programme has undergone a pilot phase during Autumn Winter 2025, to validate the assessment tools and methodology. The research team at Hult has conducted statistical analysis during the pilot phase to ensure the validity of culture measurement.

What do I need to do to undertake the assessment for Certification?

There are 4 steps in total, including an employee survey; a People, Culture & Strategy Report; other People & Culture Documentation and an Eligibility & Integrity Declaration.

How long does the Certification process take?

As a guide, this should take approximately 4-5 weeks from the day your survey opens. Applicants can gather their People & Culture Documentation and write their People, Culture & Business Strategy Report during the survey window if they wish, to achieve the shortest possible timeframe. All data submitted will then be analysed and you will receive your overall rating and report within approximately 2 weeks. If you have achieved the minimum rating to be certified, you will receive your Certification badge and other promotional assets at this point also.

What support is available?

You'll receive templates, guidance, and access to a Certification Advisor for questions.

How do I see all the information I will need to provide in my Certification application?

A Certification Advisor is on hand to take you through the application steps, and can show you each of the four steps. The best way to do this is over a short call. When you register, they will be in touch promptly with a Certification Guide, your quote and to set up a call.

How long does the survey take to complete?

Around 15 minutes. It is accessible on all devices, therefore suitable for all employees, whether office-based, remote or frontline.

Do all employees need to complete the survey?

No, but a strong survey response rate helps ensure meaningful insights. A two-week window is recommended, which can be extended if you need to generate a higher number of responses. We can give guidance for your individual organisation on the minimum responses you would need to achieve, as this depends on your organisation size. For programme evaluation, there is no set percentage that is accurate for every population or organisation.

Is the survey available in other languages?

Yes, it is available in any language and employees can select the language they wish to complete it in.

Can we use our existing employee engagement survey instead of this one?

A standard survey is normally completed as part of the Certification process. In some circumstances, existing employee survey data may be reviewed to determine whether it can be used as part of the Certification assessment.

How long is the People, Culture & Business Strategy Report and who should complete it?

As a guide you should submit up to 500 words in answer to each of the 6 questions. You will not be able to exceed this number of words within the form. The best person to complete this is a senior leader or someone with strategic oversight of people and culture.

What sort of People & Culture Documentation will I need to provide and what if we don't have all the documents?

This is another important part of the certification evidence base and enables us to provide a more robust assessment of your culture. This will be existing documentation you already have within your business and we provide a list of the types of documents you can include. While it won't be necessary to provide all of them, the more data you include, the more insightful your Business Culture Assessment Report will be. Share what you have and we also understand that formats and content will vary significantly by organisation.

What if I need more time to gather all the evidence?

No problem, we understand that there are often competing business priorities and sometimes other tasks have to take precedence. As long as there have been no material changes within the organisation which would invalidate survey results, if this has already run, you would have up to 3 months to complete the other steps.

Will we receive feedback even if we don't complete all three steps?

Yes. The survey alone provides valuable insights across all cultural dimensions and you can undertake this step only as a Readiness Review. This will give an indication of the likelihood your organisation would be certified. We cannot certify an organisation if all 4 steps are not completed however.

What happens if our rating is below the threshold to be certified?

You'll receive your Business Culture Assessment Report and this will contain your overall rating and ratings for each individual area. A Certification Advisor will go through this with you to pinpoint the improvements that need to be made. You will then have up to 3 months to resubmit, assuming no material changes during this period within your organisation.

How long can we promote our Certification for before this needs to be renewed?

Your Certification lasts for a period of 24 months after it has been awarded. At 12 months you will have a call with a Certification Advisor and sign a new Eligibility & Integrity Declaration – a statement confirming there are no material reasons why your organisation should not be certified, including any material changes within the organisation, such as a change in company ownership or IPO. During the period that the certification applies, the organisation must undertake to live according to the spirit of the certification framework. At 12 months, an annual renewal fee will be due to continue your Certification and promotional assets. At 24 months, you would reapply by completing the four steps of the application process.

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Is there a minimum size of organisation who can apply for Business Culture Certification?

Organisations may apply if they have at least 10 full-time, permanent employees with a tenure of at least 1 month.

Is there a minimum length of time that a company needs to have been operating to apply for certification?

Companies should have been operating for at least two full years before they start the application process.

Is there a cost to participate?

Yes, this is highly competitive and is based on the size of your organization and whether you wish to apply for the whole organisation or one geographical location for example. Please register here to receive a quotation.

Will our data be shared externally?

No. All data is confidential and reviewed only by the Business Culture Certification team and the Hult research team. The applicant will be the only one to receive the full report. For certified organisations, we share a rating and short case study if we have their permission to do so. For organisations undergoing a Readiness Review, and for any other applicant who does not achieve certification, no data will be shared publicly.

Can we decide if we want our recognition to be promoted publicly, or to use the results internally only?

Certified organisations will be included within the Business Culture Certification directory and related Certification listings. Participation in case studies, media activity and other promotional features is optional and subject to the organisation's approval. If you wish to promote your recognition publicly, we make a a range of promotional assets available to you, including recognition badges, copy for your internal & external comms, certificate, and case studies.

Business Culture Certification is brought to you by:

Business Culture Connected and Awards. Established in 2016, the team have showcased achievement and winning approaches from over 500 different organisations. They have enabled peer-to-peer learning and insight for the 5k+ Business Culture Community, to help leaders and teams create better workplaces for their people. View 500+ case studies and insights here.

Register your interest by emailing
cath.longfield@businessculturecertification.com
or visit businessculturecertification.com/certification

