July – August – September 2026

iab connect

The Institute of Accountants and Bookkeepers

MAKING TAX DIGITAL: WHAT BOOKKEEPERS NEED TO KNOW NOW

AML REFORM: LATEST DEVELOPMENTS FOR PRACTICES

CELEBRATING LONDON'S SMEs

IAB ANNOUNCED AS HEADLINE SPONSOR OF THE LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SME LONDON BUSINESS AWARDS

ACCOUNTEX 2026: PEOPLE, PROGRESS AND PROFESSIONALISM

IAB AND LCCI: A PARTNERSHIP BUILT ON HERITAGE AND STANDARDS

RESILIENCE, WELLBEING AND SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE

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Welcome

As we move through the summer months and into the second half of the year, this edition of *IAB Connect* opens with a celebration of the businesses that sit at the heart of our economy and the finance professionals who help them succeed.

We are delighted that the IAB has been announced as a headline sponsor of the London Chamber of Commerce SME London Business Awards. These awards recognise the innovation, resilience and ambition of small and medium-sized businesses across the capital, from sole traders to growing companies employing up to 250 people.

For IAB, this partnership feels especially important. Successful businesses depend on accurate records, strong financial management and trusted professional advice. Finance professionals are often the people working behind the scenes to provide that stability, helping business owners make decisions with confidence and stay focused on growth.

Through our support for the awards, we want to shine a light not only on London's outstanding SMEs, but also on the vital role our members play in their success. I would encourage members to speak to their clients about entering and to consider entering their own practices too.

Alongside the awards launch, this issue also looks at the major themes shaping the profession: Making Tax Digital, AML reform, resilience and wellbeing, international qualifications and the continuing strength of our relationship with LCCI.

Across every article, one message comes through clearly: accountants and bookkeepers, as finance professionals, are not just supporting compliance. They are supporting enterprise, confidence and economic resilience.

We hope this edition provides practical insight, encouragement and a reminder of the value you bring to businesses every day.

Sarah Palmer
Chief Executive Officer

VIRTUAL COFFEE MORNINGS

Connect with fellow members in a relaxed setting and keep up to date on the latest in technical, regulatory and industry developments. Find out about new software tools and gain practical business guidance. **Each session offers valuable insights and earns you one verified CPD point.**

Keep an eye on your inbox for reminder emails. We look forward to catching up over coffee.

Monthly meetings on:
15th July 2026
19th August 2026
16th September 2026

CPD APPROVED

from 11am to 12pm

IAB Announced as Headline Sponsor of the London Chamber SME Business Awards

The Institute of Accountants and Bookkeepers (IAB) is proud to be announced as a headline sponsor of the London Chamber SME London Business Awards, a celebration of the businesses, entrepreneurs and professionals driving growth, innovation and resilience across the capital.

Small and medium-sized businesses are the backbone of the UK economy. From sole traders and start-ups to companies employing up to 250 people, SMEs create jobs, support local communities and fuel economic growth. In fact, more than 95 per cent of UK businesses fall into this category, making their contribution to the economy both significant and deserving of recognition.

Behind many of these successful businesses are skilled bookkeepers and accountants, providing the financial clarity, compliance support and professional guidance that business owners rely on every day.

That is why IAB's support for these awards matters.

As a trusted professional body for accountants and bookkeepers, the IAB understands the critical role finance professionals play in helping businesses grow sustainably. Accurate records, strong financial processes and informed advice allow business owners to make better decisions, manage risk and plan confidently for the future.

Speaking on behalf of the SME Business Awards, Awards Director Damian Cummins said:
"We welcome with open arms the expertise, collaboration and support that the IAB brings to this year's awards. Through their support, we can ensure that the very best businesses, from sole traders right up to larger companies with up to 250 employees, are justly celebrated. These companies and individuals are the backbone of our economy."

The awards provide an important opportunity to recognise excellence across London's business community while showcasing the innovation, ambition and resilience that define the SME sector.

For IAB members, they also offer a valuable opportunity to champion the clients they support every day.

Whether a business has demonstrated exceptional growth, customer service, innovation, leadership or community impact, the awards provide a platform to gain recognition and celebrate success.

Why Enter?
Winning a respected business award can have a significant impact on a company's reputation and future growth.

Award-winning businesses often benefit from:

- Increased visibility and brand recognition
- Enhanced credibility and trust
- Stronger reputation among customers and stakeholders
- Valuable marketing and PR opportunities
- Increased confidence among employees and prospective clients
- Automatic progression to the SME National Business Awards for London winners

Recognition from a credible awards programme helps businesses stand out in competitive markets and provides an independent endorsement of their achievements.

Why Nominate Your Clients?

As trusted advisers, bookkeepers and accountants often have a unique perspective on the achievements of the businesses they support.

You see the challenges they overcome, the growth they achieve and the contribution they make to their sectors and communities.

We encourage all IAB members to speak to their clients about entering and help shine a light on their success.

For many businesses, entering an award programme is something they may never have considered. A recommendation from a trusted adviser can be the encouragement they need to put themselves forward.

Why Enter Your Own Practice?

This opportunity is not just for clients. Bookkeepers and accountants play a vital role in supporting business success, and their contribution deserves recognition too.

These awards provide an opportunity to showcase your expertise, celebrate your achievements and gain recognition for the impact you make on clients and the wider economy.

Whether you are a sole practitioner, a growing practice or an established firm, entering can help raise your profile, build credibility and highlight the value of professional bookkeeping and accountancy services.

The IAB would be delighted to see members walking the red carpet, celebrating their achievements and raising a trophy on the night.

Businesses can enter up to three categories, and the awards team recommends selecting multiple categories to maximise the opportunity for recognition.

We look forward to celebrating the very best of London's SME community and the finance professionals who help those businesses thrive.

For entry information, category guidance and application details scan one of the QR Codes:

Award Categories **Entry Rules**

For enquiries, contact the awards team on **01908 542720** or email **kathryn@smenationals.co.uk**

Good luck to all entrants.

The Enduring Value of Commercial Education: IAB and LCCI

Partnerships matter, particularly those rooted in shared purpose, long-standing credibility and a commitment to raising professional standards.

Our collaboration with the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry reflects a legacy that continues to shape the future of professional education both in the UK and internationally.

At a time when businesses are navigating economic uncertainty, digital transformation and evolving workforce needs, the value of practical, internationally recognised qualifications has never been greater.

The relationship between IAB and LCCI combines heritage with modern relevance. Since the late nineteenth century, LCCI has been associated with commercial education designed to equip individuals with practical workplace skills. That emphasis on employability, accessibility and professional standards remains just as relevant today.

Together, IAB and LCCI continue to deliver qualifications grounded in real-world business needs while maintaining the rigour and credibility associated with UK professional education.

Importantly, this partnership is not simply about qualifications. It is about supporting employability, professional development and workforce capability internationally.

Across global markets, demand for UK-led standards remains strong.

Through LCCI and our wider international work through IAAP, we continue to support learners, employers and governments in building professional confidence and economic capability.

What is particularly encouraging is that this demand continues to grow despite wider geopolitical and economic uncertainty. Across Asia and other international markets, we are seeing increasing engagement with qualifications that provide practical, employment-focused skills and internationally recognised standards.

Through LCCI and our wider international work through IAAP, we continue to support learners, employers and governments in building professional confidence and economic capability.

The world of work continues to evolve, shaped by technology, regulation and changing expectations, but the underlying need remains the same…

The world of work continues to evolve, shaped by technology, regulation and changing expectations, but the underlying need remains the same: practical skills, trusted qualifications and clear pathways into employment and professional development.

That is what the partnership between IAB and LCCI continues to represent: heritage with purpose, standards with relevance, and education that supports opportunity.

Sarah Palmer
IAB CEO

MAKING TAX DIGITAL FOR INCOME TAX IS LIVE AND YOU NEED TO ACT NOW

Craig Ogilvie
HMRC Director of Making Tax Digital

Making Tax Digital for Income Tax (MTD) is here. If you or your clients have combined business and property income over £50,000, you are now expected to submit quarterly updates to HMRC.

The bookkeeping profession has already taken significant steps to support this change, and we know many of you have been actively preparing clients. For those who are mandated, MTD is now the standard way of working.

By now, you should be ensuring clients are signed up and using MTD-compatible software ahead of the first quarterly submission deadline on **7 August 2026**.

MTD is designed to help sole traders and landlords manage their finances more accurately, keep records up to date and reduce errors at the end of the year. Hundreds of thousands have already signed up and are actively engaging with the service.

For those earning £50,000 or more, the first MTD quarterly update marks the real shift from annual reporting to more regular engagement with tax and business financial data.

Getting the foundations right

To use MTD effectively on a client's behalf, agents need to follow the correct set-up sequence:

- Create an Agent Services Account
- Obtain client authorisation
- Select compatible software
- Complete the MTD sign-up process
- Link software and authorisations correctly

Completing these steps in the right order helps avoid delays and disruption.

From preparation to routine

Once clients are signed up, the focus shifts from preparation to day-to-day record keeping.

Income and expenses should be recorded digitally throughout the quarter using recognised software. Good bookkeeping remains at the heart of the process.

Importantly, quarterly updates are not full tax returns.

There is no requirement to make year-end accounting adjustments at this stage. Quarterly updates simply provide summaries of income and expenses drawn directly from digital records and submitted through software.

> **Income and expenses should be recorded digitally throughout the quarter using recognised software. Good bookkeeping remains at the heart of the process.**

> **The objective is simple: spread the workload across the year rather than creating pressure at year end.**

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Progress, not perfection

Mistakes will happen.

HMRC recognises that quarterly updates may occasionally contain omissions or categorisation errors. These can be corrected later as part of the year-end process.

The focus during the first year is on embedding new behaviours and improving record keeping over time.

There are no penalties for late filing of quarterly updates during the 2026–27 tax year, giving businesses and agents time to adapt.

Good digital record keeping paired with MTD-compatible software will ultimately make quarterly updates a straightforward "check and submit" process.

The profession has a critical role to play in helping businesses make this transition successfully.

Holding It All Together:

The Reality of Resilience for Accountants and Bookkeepers

Kim Searle
Mindset Coach

For many accountants and bookkeepers, pressure has become part of the profession. Deadlines don't move. Clients can be slow to respond. Last-minute requests arrive at exactly the wrong moment. Software doesn't always cooperate when you need it most.

Most professionals accept this as part of the job. But over time, constant pressure can take its toll. What often begins as a busy week can gradually become a permanent state of stress. You may find yourself rechecking work repeatedly, avoiding difficult conversations, struggling to switch off, or carrying work-related concerns long after the working day has ended.

From the outside, it can appear that everything is under control. Internally, however, many professionals feel they are constantly trying to stay one step ahead.

Understanding resilience

We often think resilience means being able to cope with anything. Resilience is not about never feeling stressed. It is about recognising when pressure is affecting us and responding in ways that support rather than deplete our wellbeing.

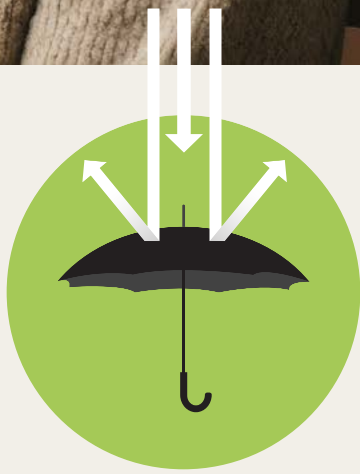
When the brain detects pressure or uncertainty, it activates a natural stress response. Focus narrows. Urgency increases. The body prepares for action. This response can be helpful in short bursts. However, when pressure becomes constant, it begins to affect decision-making, concentration, confidence and energy.

Small changes make a difference

Resilience is built through awareness. It can be as simple as

- Recognising when your thinking is becoming unhelpfully negative
- Taking short breaks throughout the day
- Setting realistic expectations with clients
- Establishing healthy boundaries
- Asking for support when needed

None of these actions remove responsibility or deadlines. What they do provide is a greater sense of control.



Building sustainable success

Accountants and bookkeepers and are often supporting everyone else. Clients rely on you. Colleagues rely on you. Businesses rely on you. But resilience starts with recognising your own needs too.Small changes made consistently can transform how pressure is experienced and managed.

Success in this profession is not about carrying everything alone. It is about developing the habits, awareness and support systems that allow you to perform at your best over the long term.
Because resilience is not about never feeling pressure. It is about learning how to respond to it.

From policy to payroll: navigating the Employment Rights Act in practice

Georgie Ward MCIPPdip, CIPP Policy and Research Officer, dives into the Employment Rights Act and how it will impact employers in their day-to-day practices

The Employment Rights Act (ERA) 2025 represents the most significant shift in UK employment law in a generation.

In scale, the ERA is substantial. It affects core areas of employment including sick pay, family leave, flexible working and dismissal rights. Crucially for employers, the changes are being introduced in stages, meaning compliance isn't a one-off exercise, but an ongoing process lasting right through to 2027.

To understand how the ERA plays out in practice, take Jane, who runs a 300-person ethical coffee business with a non-unionised workforce heavily reliant on part-time and zero-hours staff across the manufacturing, hospitality and retail sectors.

Her Head of Payroll resigned with immediate effect on 1 April, just before the first phase of changes arrived on 6 April. This created immediate risk, but also an opportunity to strengthen her systems and processes. The first phase of reforms focused on baseline employment protections, many of which sit directly within payroll and everyday management decisions.

Where things stand now

Most employers will already have felt the impact of the April 2026 changes, especially with the changes to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP). Removing the three-day waiting period and the Lower Earnings Limit means SSP now starts from day one, for everyone, regardless of how much they earn or the hours they work.

For Jane, that means a lot more people are now eligible, particularly those on lower pay or irregular hours, pushing up the cost and creating administration challenges. In a busy environment where rotas are constantly changing, it's important that managers are feeding absence information through properly, otherwise it's very easy for things to go wrong.

The way that SSP is calculated has also changed. Instead of a flat rate, it's now the lower of the statutory rate or 80% of the employee's average weekly earnings. That sounds simple enough, but in practice this puts more pressure on payroll systems, especially where hours may vary. It is also important to remember that SSP is the only statutory payment that cannot be reclaimed from the Government, meaning the business will need to absorb all the extra cost. Jane will have had to ensure her systems were configured correctly, calculations tested, the budget reviewed and her sick policy updated before the first payroll run in April.

Family leave has shifted too. Paternity Leave and Unpaid Parental Leave are now day-one rights, so there is no longer a service requirement. In a business like Jane's, where there are lots of working parents, this means that requests could come much earlier and more frequently. This will need forward planning and clear communication on what's paid and what isn't.

There's also the added requirement for employers to keep records of annual leave and pay for up to six years. Most businesses will have already had record keeping in place, but this is something that they will have had to review, and increases the need for consistency, accuracy and audit readiness across payroll processes within businesses.

What's coming next?

From October 2026, several important changes come into play, particularly around workplace conduct, pay transparency and worker protection.

One of the biggest areas of change is harassment. Employers will face a strengthened duty to prevent sexual harassment. Rather than taking reasonable steps, there will be a clearer expectation to take **all** reasonable steps, alongside the potential for further guidance on what that looks like in practice expected to be published.

Importantly for a business like Jane's, this now extends to third-party harassment, including from customers and clients. In a coffee shop environment, where staff interact with customers every day, this could create a real operational issue. Jane will need to show that her managers are trained to deal with incidents properly, that staff feel confident raising concerns, and that there are clear steps in place to prevent problems before they escalate.

There are also other changes to the hospitality sector for Jane, specifically around tipping. Employers will need to consult with staff before introducing or updating a tipping policy and formally review that policy at least every three years. For Jane, this isn't just a policy exercise. It means being clear and transparent about how tips are collected, distributed and recorded in her coffee shops. This is an area where getting it right can reinforce trust, but getting it wrong could quickly create discontent among staff.

At the same time, employment tribunal limits will increase from three months to six months. In practical terms, this will give employees more time to raise claims, which may increase the likelihood of issues being formally challenged. For Jane, this again reinforces the importance of getting the fundamentals right, particularly around pay, records and how issues are handled day-to-day.

There are also wider trade union related changes. Employers will be expected to inform employees of their rights to join a trade union, with representatives being given stronger rights to access workplaces. While Jane's workforce is currently non-unionised, these changes still matter. This increased visibility of rights makes it easier for employees to organise or seek representation if they feel it is needed.

One of the most impactful changes arrives in 2027: the qualifying period of service for unfair dismissal will drop from two years to six months and the cap on compensation will be removed. For Jane, this means that decisions around performance, conduct and dismissal will need to be well managed as soon as the employee is hired. It also makes good record-keeping essential if any dispute arises.

Beyond that, changes will continue to roll out across 2027, particularly around transparency and fairness in working arrangements and expectations in flexible working. It will no longer be enough to simply refuse requests on business grounds, employers will be required to show that requests have been properly considered, handled consistently, and

> **One of the most impactful changes arrives in 2027: the qualifying period of service for unfair dismissal will drop from two years to six months and the cap on compensation will be removed.**

refused with clear and justifiable reasons. There's also a clear shift on how zero-hours and variable-hours contracts are expected to be used, to create greater predictability for workers, including compensation for cancelled shifts. With Jane's business relying heavily on flexible shifts in both retail and hospitality, it's important she is across the new rules and shifts are communicated clearly with enough notice. In practical terms, that may mean looking more closely at rotas, identifying where temporary flexibility has become a regular pattern, and aligning employee contracts more closely to this.

Furthermore, from April 2026, employers with more than 250 employees were encouraged to publish voluntary gender pay gap (GPG) and menopause support action plans when publishing their usual GPG report. Given Jane's reliance on part-time and variable-hours workers, this is likely to highlight patterns that need to be understood and explained. These action plans will become mandatory in 2027, with mandatory disability and ethnicity pay gap reporting intended to be in place by 2029, building on the existing GPG framework.

Final thoughts

All together, these changes reinforce a broader shift. It's no longer just about having policies in place, it's about being able to show that they're working in practice; across pay, working patterns and decision-making.

Although these reforms may feel challenging, especially without a payroll lead in place, or someone new to the role, they also bring opportunities. More predictable rights and clearer entitlements can strengthen employee confidence and align well with Jane's ethical values.

If systems are configured correctly, earnings calculations remain accurate, record-keeping is prioritised, and communication across the business is strong, Jane will be able to implement these reforms smoothly and continue to support a diverse, flexible and happy workforce.

In the end, this isn't just about compliance, it's about whether your business can stand up to scrutiny, in practice as well as on paper.

AML UPDATE:

ACCOUNTANTS AND BOOKKEEPERS - 'NEED TO KNOW'

Parliament has approved the Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (Amendment) Regulations 2026, introducing 15 targeted reforms to strengthen the UK's AML regime while reducing unnecessary compliance burdens on firms. The amendment is expected to be effective from 30 June 2026.

Anti-money laundering (AML) compliance continues to evolve. Recent developments reinforce the importance of strong procedures, accurate documentation, and clear understanding of the 'risk-based approach' described in the regulations and expected of bookkeepers and accountants.

Currently, one of the most significant developments is the continued reform of AML supervision in the UK. The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) already exercise supervision of AML compliance in some areas, for example in relation to cryptocurrencies. However, under ongoing Government reforms, the role for 'professional body supervisors' (PBS) in AML supervision will be removed and the FCA will take over as the only AML supervisor for bookkeepers and accountants.

This change also signals a continuing move towards increasingly robust supervisory expectations driving consistency through one agency, the FCA, rather than several different PBS. The changes will involve new legislation which is now being developed and the FCA have already announced an expected timetable for implementation over the next three to four years.

The change is focused on how, and by whom AML Supervision is carried out rather than specific compliance requirements. The MLR are comprehensive and already provide that a practice must implement a clear, risk-based AML framework which demonstrates each practice has effective capability to:

- Identify and assess the money laundering risks associated with their clients, services, and jurisdictions.
- Carry out appropriate Customer Due Diligence (CDD) before establishing business relationships.
- Apply Enhanced Due Diligence where higher-risk clients or transactions are identified.
- Maintain ongoing monitoring procedures to identify suspicious activity.
- Retain CDD and transaction records for at least five years.

There is also a strong emphasis on governance and accountability. Each practice expected to appoint a nominated officer or Money Laundering Reporting Officer (MLRO) and ensure effective management oversight of AML compliance.

> **Since January 2026, the UK Sanctions List has become the sole official source for sanctions designations, replacing the previous dual-list structure. Practices should ensure that internal procedures, software systems, and sanctions checks are aligned with the updated framework**

Practices must also remain alert to operational changes affecting day-to-day compliance. One immediate update is the move to a single UK Sanctions List. Since January 2026, the UK Sanctions List has become the sole official source for sanctions designations, replacing the previous dual-list structure. Practices should ensure that internal procedures, software systems, and sanctions checks are aligned with the updated framework.

Companies House reform also continues to have implications for the profession. Practices involved in identity verification or company filings through the new Authorised Corporate Service Provider (ACSP) framework must ensure they remain properly supervised for AML purposes and that identity verification procedures are robust and documented.

Recent supervisory findings across the accountancy sector continue to highlight a recurring weakness: Many practices still rely too heavily on generic templates without tailoring them to actual services, client base, or risk profile. Consequently, Policies and procedures do not accurately describe the reality of how the practice actually operates.

Good AML compliance is not simply about having a document. Policies should describe the important components of the

NEED TO KNOW

approach the practice has decided it will adopt. The practice procedures must then detail how those things will be carried out. A key purpose for these documents is to demonstrate that the practice, and, in particular the MLRO, properly understand and apply the MLR and legislation.

The IAB promotes continuous learning and development. Members are encouraged to use the eight AML Learning modules produced by the IAB to refresh their knowledge of AML principles. *(https://iabeducation.co.uk/)*

To remain effective, it makes sense that the practice approach is:

- Regularly reviewed
- Updated as the practice evolves.
- Understood by staff
- Embedded into everyday processes

For this reason, the IAB have recently introduced an important addition to *'AML Complete'* asking members to ensure each practice regularly benefits from 'independent review' to check and improve its methods.

> **Companies House reform also continues to have implications for the profession. Practices involved in identity verification or company filings through the new Authorised Corporate Service Provider (ACSP) framework must ensure they remain properly supervised for AML purposes and that identity verification procedures are robust and documented.**

As economic uncertainty, geopolitical tension, and digital financial activity continue to grow globally, regulators are increasingly focused on whether or not a practice can demonstrate pro-active and effective compliance rather than "tick-box" administration. The practical priorities remain clear:

- Review and update AML policies and procedures regularly.
- Ensure sanctions checks use the current UK Sanctions List
- Maintain accurate and proportionate client risk assessments.
- Document and explain decisions clearly and consistently.
- Keep staff training up to date.
- Ensure senior accountability for AML oversight.

> **As economic uncertainty, geopolitical tension, and digital financial activity continue to grow globally, regulators are increasingly focused on whether or not a practice can demonstrate pro-active and effective compliance rather than "tick-box" administration.**

Ultimately, effective AML compliance provides more than regulatory standing. It protects the practice, its clients, and the wider integrity of the financial system. Importantly it reinforces the professionalism and trust that underpin the bookkeeping and accountancy sectors.

Building Global Momentum

Tom Saltmarsh

When people talk about geopolitical uncertainty, shifting global markets and economic pressure, there is often an assumption that international education and professional development will slow down. From what I am seeing across Asia and our wider international markets, the reality is different.

Across the Institute of Accountants and Bookkeepers (IAB), the International Association of Accounting Professionals (IAAP) and our partnership with the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), demand for practical, internationally recognised qualifications continues to grow.

That growth reflects the enduring strength of UK professional standards, the global reputation of British qualifications, and the importance of delivering qualifications that remain relevant, employable and aligned to workforce needs.

The partnership between IAB and LCCI is particularly powerful because it combines heritage with modern delivery. LCCI's commercial education heritage stretches back to the nineteenth century, while IAB brings specialist expertise in bookkeeping, accounting, compliance and workforce-focused qualification development.

Together, we continue to deliver qualifications that support employability, professional capability and economic growth across international markets.

Strong Growth Across Asia

The first half of 2026 has delivered several significant milestones. More than 3,000 students in China have successfully completed the International Certified Public Accountant (ICPA) qualification, provided by IAAP. At the same time, more than 1,500 students have undertaken IAB LCCI Ofqual-regulated qualifications across our global centres.

Our qualifications have now been delivered across seven countries and regions: China, Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore, Malaysia, India, Cyprus and, most recently, Iraq.

In March 2026, we conducted the first examination sitting of the new IAB Level 4 Certified International Accounting Professional qualification. Forty-three students sat the inaugural examination, marking an important milestone in the continued development of our international qualification portfolio.

> **“The partnership between IAB and LCCI is particularly powerful because it combines heritage with modern delivery.**

Expanding Opportunity

In June, we delivered our first examination session in Iraq through the British Institute for Accounting & Management, offering the IAAP Level 3 Diploma in Accounting and Advanced Bookkeeping.
We are not simply exporting qualifications. We are helping build professional capability, support workforce development and create pathways into employment through trusted UK standards.

Meeting Employer Demand

International demand is increasingly driven by employability. This is where UK professional qualifications continue to stand apart.

The combination of practical application, rigorous assessment and internationally recognised standards remains highly attractive across global markets.

Meanwhile, our new IAB LCCI Level 2 and Level 3 Computerised Accounting qualifications, launched with AutoCount in late 2025, continue to gain momentum, supporting digital accounting capability and workforce readiness across Asia.

Despite global uncertainty, the outlook remains positive. Demand for qualifications that combine professional credibility, practical skills and international recognition continues to grow – and with it, opportunities to support learners, employers and economies through trusted UK standards.

IAB AT ACCOUNTEX 2026:
PEOPLE, PROGRESS AND THE POWER OF PROFESSIONALISM

ACCOUNTEX LONDON 2026
EXCEL LONDON | 13-14 MAY

Brady Last
Chief Operating Officer

Accountex once again proved why it remains the highlight of the accounting and bookkeeping calendar.

For the IAB team, this year's event was one of our most successful yet.

From the moment the doors opened, our stand was buzzing with conversations. We welcomed existing members, met aspiring professionals taking their first steps into the industry and connected with businesses looking to strengthen their teams and invest in professional development.

Most exciting of all, we achieved a record-breaking number of new member sign-ups, demonstrating the growing recognition of the value professional bookkeepers and finance professionals bring to businesses across the UK and beyond.

Listening to the profession

One of the most rewarding aspects of attending Accountex is the opportunity to listen.

Whilst technology providers showcase innovation and industry leaders discuss future trends; we spend invaluable time gathering insight directly from members and the wider profession. These conversations help shape our future direction and ensure that everything we do continues to support the real challenges and opportunities facing bookkeepers, payroll professionals and finance practitioners.

These conversations help shape our future direction and ensure that everything we do continues to support the real challenges and opportunities facing bookkeepers, payroll professionals and finance practitioners.

The role of qualifications in an AI-driven world

A recurring theme throughout the event was the growing role of qualifications and professional development in an increasingly AI-driven environment.

Technology is transforming how we work. But it is not replacing the need for skilled, knowledgeable and trusted professionals.

The professionals who will thrive in the future are those who continue to develop their skills, strengthen their expertise and demonstrate the value they bring to clients and employers. This message resonated strongly with visitors to our stand.

We spoke with individuals looking to future-proof their careers, practice owners seeking ways to differentiate themselves and experienced professionals wanting to demonstrate their commitment to excellence. Qualifications were not viewed simply as certificates. They were viewed as evidence of competence, credibility and professionalism.

The importance of community

Accountex also highlighted something equally important: Community. Bookkeeping, payroll and finance can often feel like solitary professions. Many practitioners work independently or in small teams, navigating complex regulations and changing business environments. Events like Accountex demonstrate the value of bringing people together to share experiences, learn from one another and build meaningful professional relationships. That sense of community sits at the heart of the IAB.

Membership is about far more than letters after your name. It is about belonging to a network of professionals who understand your challenges, support your ambitions and help you grow throughout your career.

Looking ahead

The conversations we had over the two days left us optimistic about the future. They reinforced that professional standards matter. They reinforced that qualifications matter. Most importantly, they reinforced that people matter.

To everyone who visited the stand, shared their experiences and joined the IAB community — thank you. Your passion, professionalism and ambition continue to inspire us. Together we will continue to raise standards, champion professionalism and ensure that the voice of qualified finance professionals remains stronger than ever.

AML Modules 1 and 8 now with downloadable notes

Stay fully compliant with the latest AML requirements.

Module 1 now includes new questions and downloadable PDF notes to support deeper understanding and easier staff training.

Completion of Module 1 is mandatory annually for all IAB AML-supervised members – and will show as overdue on your AML Complete dashboard if not completed.

Please check your dashboard before submitting your supervision renewal, as overdue training will delay approval.

All relevant staff must complete Module 1, and MLROs must complete Modules 1 & 8.

When you add a new staff member to the AML Complete platform, they'll automatically receive access to the iabEducation Platform to begin their training.

- **Check your AML Complete dashboard for training alerts**
- **Do your AML training on time**