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# Appointment of the AAT Trustee Board Chair

**November 2024**

Reference: **QBREA**



## An introduction

Thank you for your interest in the Chair role at AAT. This is an exciting time at AAT and the Chair will become the inaugural AAT Chair and support the build of the new Board structure.

AAT is the Association of Accounting Technicians, the world's leading professional body for accounting technicians. It is a UK company, limited by guarantee, registered as a Charity, and its subsidiaries are AAT Botswana, AAT Publications and Accounting Technicians (Services) Limited.

We develop finance qualifications that ensure business can draw upon skilled people, fully equipped to meet its challenges head-on. We believe everyone should have the opportunity to unleash their career ambition – so we make it happen. We break down barriers, empowering more people with the real-world expertise valued by organisations in all sectors.

AAT is also a major Awarding Organisation, providing tens of thousands of learners every year with award-winning NQF L2-L4 qualifications which are valued by employers and are recognised by all four of the UK's qualifications authorities, as well as a number of international regulators. By some measures AAT is the largest provider of accounting and finance skills in the UK. With more than 85% of all accounting apprenticeships undertaken in the UK underpinned by AAT qualifications, it is undisputably the market leader in accounting apprenticeships. But AAT's qualifications and short courses extend beyond trainees, with more than 5,000 employers counting on AAT when it comes to upskilling or professionalising their talent.

As part of the AAT community, our nearly 124,000 members and students belong to an inclusive association of accountancy professionals around the world. With access to a network of insights, opportunities and lifetime learning – we keep skills up to date, relevant and ready for business.

We are committed to being an inclusive and welcoming place to work. We encourage applications from diverse candidates and make recruitment decisions based on skill and experience. We are a disability-confident committed employer and have signed up to the Race at Work Charter. We have also signed up for the Women in Finance Charter, and in 2022 we exceeded our target for appointing females into senior positions.



## Our highlights in 2023–24



## Our charitable objectives

Our charitable objects underpin our business model and strategy:

1. to advance public education and promote the study of the practice, theory and techniques of accountancy;
2. (a) to prevent crime; and
  - (b) to promote the sound administration of the law for the public benefit by promoting and enforcing standards of professional conduct amongst those engaged in accountancy by monitoring and supervising their compliance with money laundering legislation.

## The Governance structure and an overview of the new structure



AAT is undertaking a change to its governance structure that was voted for by 95% of its members at the 2024 Annual General Meeting. The changes were made to reflect the values of AAT and the Charity Governance Code in 2020 that raised the bar in what Good Governance looks like.

AAT and its members are welcoming a new AAT Board that will take on the role of Trustees and will be the highest decision maker. It will be led by a Chair, and joined by 11 Board members all will be a mix of member and independent roles. It will be a skills-based Board and we will ensure the new governing Board has the requisite diverse skillset to guide AAT effectively into the future.

The Board members will sit on its three board committees and will be supported by the Professional Regulation and Standards Compliance Board, the Awarding Organisation Compliance Board and the new Members' Advisory Council.

The Members' Advisory Council will have up to 50 members of AAT to ensure it will have a diverse representation of its members. The President will chair that. It will advise on issues important to the AAT community and will provide reports to the Board. Its members will generally be elected, with some appointees. It is intended that some provision for the greater involvement of students. Oversight of the Board by the AAT membership.



## The role

AAT are now looking for their inaugural Board Chair who will be a Trustee and a non-executive director.

### Candidate Profile

Given that the new Board Chair will help with the development and set-up of the new Board, including the appointment of board members, candidates should have direct experience as a Board Chair and an understanding of good governance. They will know what an established Board looks like and how it operates successfully. They will be accustomed to complex governance arrangements and be able to navigate strategic, sectoral and the stakeholder environments, and be a champion and influence. They will understand the responsibilities of a Trustee. The Chair may or may not be a member of AAT.

The Chair will work closely with other Board members, the President, the CEO and Executive Leadership Team to move the Board's agenda forward and ensure that they reflect AAT's values and objectives to ensure the board makes an impact for this and future generations.

## The Chair of AAT

### Responsibilities of the Chair

- › Work with the Board and the Executive Leadership Team to provide strategic leadership to ensure AAT aligns to its 2030 strategy and vision in accordance with our charitable objectives.
- › Ensure exemplary governance of the charity, including playing a leading role in building the new Board, shaping its effectiveness and providing equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded.
- › Ensure that the Board delivers its key strategic role in securing the charity's longterm viability and sustainability, in accordance with AAT's Articles of Association and scheme of delegation, and in compliance with relevant regulation and legislation.

### Duties

- › Provide leadership to AAT and its Board, ensuring that the organisation has maximum impact for its community.
- › Ensure that the Board fulfill their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity, including regular review of risks and opportunities and maintaining financial health.
- › To chair meetings of the Board effectively and efficiently, with engagement from members and high-quality debate to take collective ownership of decisions made in the best interest of AAT.
- › To support Board members, acting as a mentor and advisor when appropriate making full use of the skills, knowledge, experience and networks of the Board members but also dealing with conflict and underperformance.
- › To provide support to the Chief Executive, ensure regular contact and close liaison to provide support, constructive challenge and ensure accountability and high-performance.
- › Keep abreast of developments in AAT and the profession. Engage with stakeholders and the community helping to safeguard AATs reputation and strengthen the profile and impact.
- › To act on behalf of Board when matters are delegated, and to take urgent decisions, in accordance with the scheme of delegation, when required.

## Knowledge and experience

- › Understanding of the role of Chair and experience of operating at a senior strategic leadership level within an organisation.
- › Understanding of Corporate Governance either as a Chair/Board member or via exposure at Board level.
- › Demonstrable experience of and passion for EDI and leadership development.
- › Experience of motivating senior teams to deliver strategic objectives.
- › Knowledge and understanding of AAT; its work and the context it works within or the enthusiasm to rapidly gain this.
- › Has good insight into developing and maintaining organisational culture, providing advice that inspires others.
- › Demonstrable experience of building and sustaining a variety of external relationships with key stakeholders, to support delivery of organisation objectives.
- › Experience working in or on a board for a membership organisation and/or charity.

## Skills and qualities

- › Ability to involve all Board members, listen to others' contributions, challenge in a constructive way, and reach consensus.
- › Ability to provide leadership and direction to Board meetings as well as manage conflict.
- › Leads by example.
- › Able to exercise sound judgement, that is evidenced-based.
- › Ability to ensure that the culture and commitment to EDI runs through all that the Board do and through the governance structure.
- › Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

## Key terms

- › The remuneration for the role of Chair will be £30,000 per annum for an expected minimum of 30 days. There will likely be an expectation to attend networking and promotional functions on a voluntary basis.
- › The meeting cycle is quarterly, and the Annual General Meeting is in October.
- › The terms of Office will be three years with the option to be re-appointed for a second three-year term.



## Suitability criteria

Candidates for the role must be suitable for the role. This essentially means that there is nothing connected to the candidate that could potentially bring the office or AAT into disrepute. This will include, but not necessarily be confined to:

- any instances, or unresolved allegations, of professional misconduct
- any unspent convictions (excluding minor motoring offences)
- any offences, whether spent or unspent, involving fraud
- any matter that could lead to disqualification as a director or trustee.

A candidate has an obligation to declare whether there is any matter that could potentially bring the office or AAT into disrepute, and to authorise the governance team to carry out checks to determine the same.

Applicants from all backgrounds and professions are invited to apply.



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*ready to deliver***

## Brief description of the process and key dates

Saxton Bampfylde is acting as employment advisor agency to AAT. Following the longlist meeting, candidates will be invited to attend an online preliminary interview with Saxton Bampfylde. Following a shortlisting meeting of the selection panel, shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend a final interview with AAT. The appointed candidate will be expected to attend the interviews for the board member recruitment process. Key dates for the process can be found below.

### Key dates

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Application deadline              | Noon 18 December 2024                     |
| Longlisting                       | 9 January 2025 (candidates not required)  |
| Shortlisting                      | 23 January 2025 (candidates not required) |
| Interviews                        | 10 February 2025 and 11 February 2025     |
| Interviews of board members       | w/c 24 February and w/c 10 March 2025     |
| Training                          | 26 and 27 March 2025                      |
| People and Nominations Committee  | 10 April 2025                             |
| Finance and Performance Committee | 24 April 2025                             |
| Board of Trustees                 | 1 May 2025                                |



## How to apply

**Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to AAT on this appointment.**

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at [www.saxbam.com/appointments](http://www.saxbam.com/appointments) using code **QBREA** for the Chair role.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload:

- a CV
- cover letter
- complete the online diversity monitoring\* form
- Charity Commission Declaration form
- HMRC Fit and Proper Persons Declaration

The closing date for applications is noon on **18 December 2024**.

\* The diversity monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

As a Disability Confident employer, we will guarantee an interview for people with disabilities who meet all the essential criteria and so if you would like to be considered under this scheme then please let us know.

### **GDPR personal data notice**

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.



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