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# Appointment of AAT Trustee Board Chair

**August 2026**

**Project code: QBREH**

AAT is a registered charity. No. 1050724

## Introduction

**Thank you for your interest in serving as Chair of AAT's Trustee Board. The Chair will provide independent oversight and strategic leadership to accelerate delivery of AAT's 2030 strategy and vision in support of our charitable objectives.**

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 and Accounting Technicians (Services) Limited.

We develop finance qualifications that ensure businesses can draw upon skilled people, fully equipped to meet 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 real-world expertise valued by organisations in all sectors.

AAT is also a major awarding organisation, supporting tens of thousands of learners each year with award-winning NQF L2-L4 qualifications. These are valued by employers and 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 the market leader in accounting apprenticeships. AAT's qualifications and short courses also extend beyond trainees, with more than 5,000 employers relying on AAT to upskill or professionalise their talent.

As part of the AAT community, our nearly 137,000 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 help 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.

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# AAT highlights 2024/25

**9.3/10 rating** for satisfaction for our AAT Connect and Impact Awards from 218 delegates

**99% thumbs up** rating for CPD Bitesize.

**28% higher** combined completion rates across all our qualifications and levels compared to the previous year.

**42 bursaries** awarded last year, greatly expanded from the previous year and rising to 50 this year.

**AAT internship Programme** launched in Botswana in 2025 to support local students to find employment.

**Governance has evolved** with a skills-based Board, and new Members' Advisory Council to best support AAT and champion our membership.

# AAT's Governance structure

AAT's refreshed governance structure, approved by members at the 2024 Annual General Meeting, has now been fully implemented. The changes were designed to reflect AAT's values and to align with the Charity Governance Code, raising expectations of what effective, transparent and accountable governance should look like.

At the heart of the structure is the AAT Trustee Board, which acts as AAT's governing body and is the highest decision-making authority. Led by the Chair and made up of 12 Trustees – a balanced mix of AAT members and independent appointees – the Board operates on a skills-based model to ensure it has the capability, experience and diversity needed to guide AAT's strategic direction and long-term sustainability.

Supporting the Board are three Board Committees, each chaired by a Trustee and comprising Board members. These committees work closely with AAT's two Compliance boards – the Professional Regulation and Standards Compliance Board and the Awarding Organisation Compliance Board – to provide assurance across core areas of AAT's regulatory responsibilities.

The governance framework is further strengthened by the Members' Advisory Council (MAC). With up to 50 members and chaired by the AAT President, the MAC brings together a broad cross-section of the membership to provide insight, advice and member-led perspectives. It plays an important advisory role, offering feedback and recommendations to the Board on issues that matter to the wider AAT community.

## The role

AAT is seeking an outstanding Board Chair who will be a Trustee and a non-executive director.

### Candidate Profile

The Chair will provide independent leadership to the Board of Trustees, setting high standards of governance, decision-making and accountability. Candidates should have significant experience chairing boards and committees, a strong understanding of charity governance, and the ability to build constructive challenge and consensus.

They will bring sound judgement, integrity and discretion, and be confident operating in complex governance and stakeholder environments, engaging effectively with members, partners and external stakeholders. They will understand the responsibilities of a Trustee and the duties of a non-executive director and will act as an ambassador for AAT's mission and values.

The Chair will work closely with Board members, the President, the CEO and Executive Leadership Team to set strategic direction, oversee performance and risk, and support effective organisational leadership. They will ensure Board priorities advance AAT's strategy and charitable objectives, and that governance and culture enable delivery and impact for members, learners and the wider public.

# AAT's Trustee Board Chair: role description

## Responsibilities of the Chair

- Work with the Trustee Board and the Executive Leadership Team to provide strategic leadership and oversight of delivery of AAT's 2030 strategy and vision, in accordance with our charitable objectives.
- Ensure exemplary governance of the charity, including shaping and sustaining an effective Board and embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in the Board's approach and decision-making.
- Ensure that the Board delivers its key strategic role in securing the charity's long-term 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 independent leadership of AAT and its Board, ensuring the organisation has maximum impact for its community.
- Ensure that the Board fulfils its duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity, including regular review of risks and opportunities and maintaining financial health.
- Chair meetings of the Board effectively and efficiently, enabling inclusive participation, high-quality debate and collective ownership of decisions taken in the best interests of AAT.
- Support Board members, acting as a mentor and adviser when appropriate, making full use of trustees' skills, knowledge, experience and networks, and addressing conflict and underperformance when required.
- Support the Chief Executive through regular contact and close liaison, providing constructive challenge and support, ensuring clear accountability, and promoting high performance.
- Safeguard AAT's reputation and strengthen its profile and impact through stakeholder engagement and awareness of developments across AAT and the profession.
- Act on behalf of the Board where delegated, taking urgent decisions in line with the scheme of delegation.

## Knowledge and experience

- Senior strategic leadership experience and a clear understanding of the Chair role.
- Strong corporate governance expertise, gained as a Chair or trustee/Board member and/or through significant Board-level exposure.
- Demonstrable commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and credibility to help shape and sustain organisational culture.
- Proven ability to motivate senior teams to deliver strategic objectives and outcomes.
- Knowledge of AAT and the context in which it operates, or the enthusiasm and ability to rapidly build this understanding.
- Experience building and sustaining external relationships with key stakeholders; experience with a membership organisation and/or charity board is desirable.

## Skills and qualities

- Ability to lead inclusive Board meetings with clarity and authority, drawing out all trustees' contributions.
- Ability to listen, challenge constructively, build consensus and manage conflict appropriately.
- Leads by example, setting the tone for effective governance, accountability and decision-making.
- Exercises sound, evidence-based judgement, including when handling sensitive or urgent matters.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with an ambassadorial approach.

## Key terms

- The role of Trustee Board Chair is voluntary and unpaid. However, Trustees can claim expenses for travel to meetings and other reasonable costs incurred, in line with the Expenses Policy.
- The time commitment for the Chair is expected to be around 30 days a year.
- The Board convenes around four times a year, including an annual strategy day which may include an overnight stay. Board meetings are scheduled on weekdays, with a preference for in-person gatherings that usually last a full working day.
- There is an expectation to attend networking and promotional functions on a voluntary basis.
- The term of office will be three years with the option to be re-appointed for a second three-year term.

## Suitability criteria

Candidates must be suitable for the role. This means there must be no matter relating to the candidate that could reasonably bring the office or AAT into disrepute. This includes, but is not limited to:

- any instances of, 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.

Candidates are required to declare any matter that could potentially bring the office or AAT into disrepute and to authorise the governance team to undertake checks to verify this.

**Applications are welcomed from candidates of all backgrounds and professions.**

# Brief description of the process and key dates

Once applications close, the selection panel will review all submissions against the role requirements and agree a shortlist for interview. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to meet with the panel for a final interview. Key dates for the process can be found below.

## Key process dates

Application deadline **noon Wednesday 30 September 2026.**

- Longlisting (candidates not required): w/c 5 October
- Shortlisting (candidates not required): w/c 26 October
- Informal conversations with the CEO, Sarah Beale: w/c 2 November
- Interviews: w/c 9 November
- Process outcome w/c 9 November onwards

## Key meeting dates

AAT Trustee Board - Thursday 23 October 2026 and Thursday 4 February 2027

# 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 roles.saxbam.com using code QBREH. Alternatively email Belinda.beck@saxbam.com. Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

Please ensure to include:

- your CV
- cover letter
- *Charity Commission Declaration form (only for the preferred candidate to complete)*
- HMRC Fit and Proper Persons Declaration

The closing date for applications is noon **on Wednesday 7 October 2026.**

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

## What to include in your cover letter

Your cover letter should outline why you are interested in Chairing the AAT Trustee Board and how your experience aligns with the role. Strong applications will:

- Explain your motivation for becoming Chair of the Board of Trustees and supporting AAT's purpose.
- Highlight relevant experience, particularly chairing/board leadership, strategic oversight and governance.
- Demonstrate how you meet the role criteria, drawing on examples from your career.
- Set out the contribution you would bring as Chair to the Board's effectiveness and to AAT's future direction.

Thank you for your interest in the Trustee Board Chair role at AAT.

- For further information, please contact Belinda.beck@saxbam.com.
- Read more about AAT's governance: https://www.aat.org.uk/about/what-we-do/governance.

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