



**aat** Accountants  
for the real world

# Appointment of Executive Director Strategy & Compliance

**June 2025**

Reference: **QBREE1**



## An introduction

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.

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.

## Vision from the CEO

Sarah Beale, CEO at AAT (Association of Accounting Technicians), has a vision to equip AAT's members with skills fit for the real world. Coming full circle when she became CEO of AAT, after gaining her AAT qualifications nearly 30 years earlier, Sarah has never been afraid to take the path less trodden. This was an unconventional route into a profession that hadn't embraced vocational learning.

Fearless in her approach, an ambitious new 2030 strategy for AAT has launched bringing innovative products and services relevant to a fast-changing business world. Previously, Sarah held multiple financially based roles and was appointed to Government Taskforces to promote the value of practical skills.



## 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.

## Executive Director Strategy & Compliance

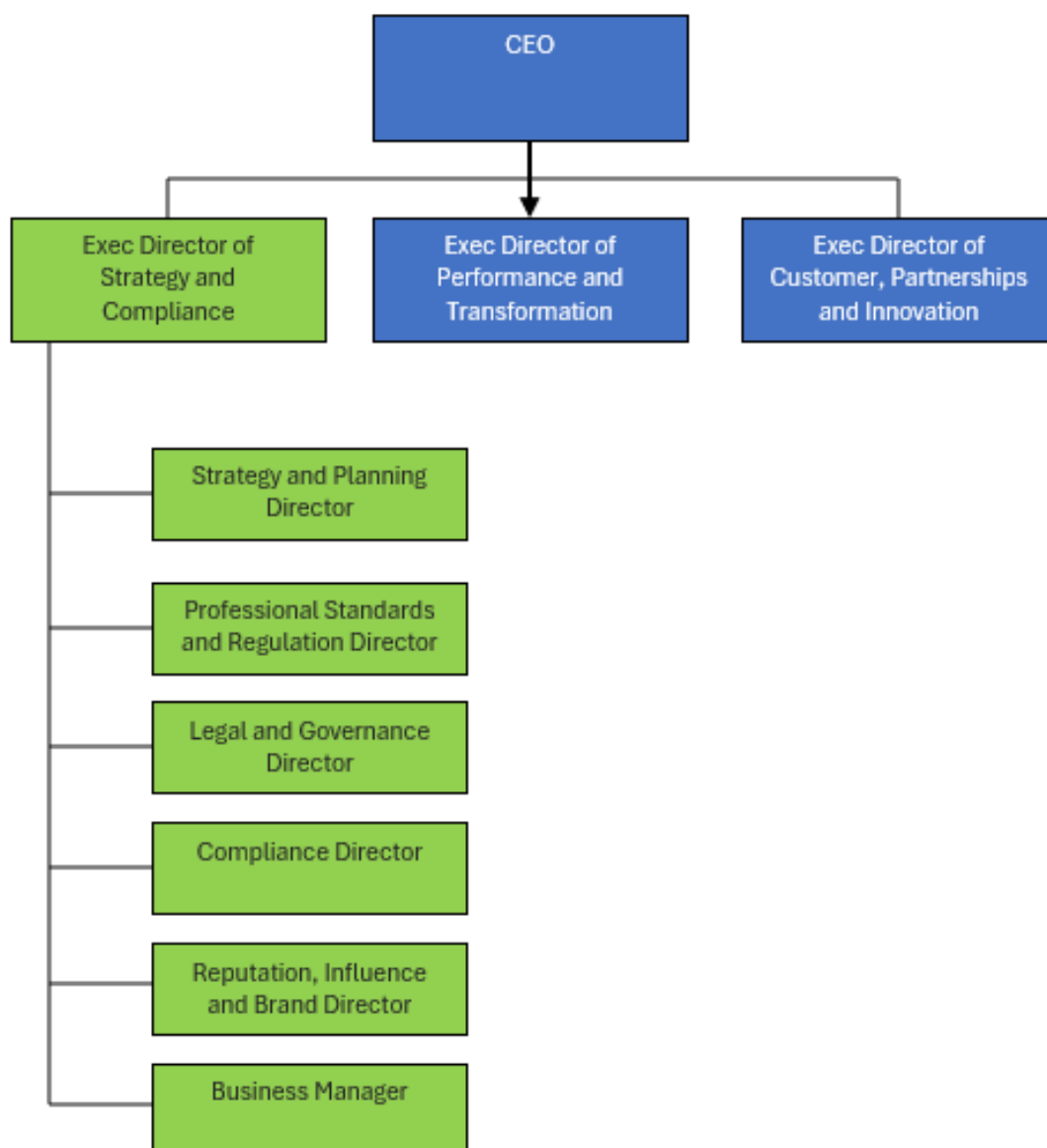
**Major responsibility is to lead all teams within the Strategy and Compliance Portfolio, and contribute as a member of the Executive Leadership Team, including:**

- › Providing strong organisational direction, overseeing the balance between innovation and oversight, and ensure AAT remains compliant with its responsibilities.
- › Ensuring that AAT understands, and responds effectively to, its regulatory obligations.
- › Creating, aspirational, achievable strategies that underpin AATs activity and represent our culture and obligations.
- › Contributing to the development of a strong and effective performance management culture throughout
- › AAT, empowering staff and enabling full accountability within an integrated working environment. Ensure that AAT's purpose and behaviours are understood and embedded across the organisation.
- › Actively embedding all relevant compliance and control considerations.
- › Lead on all aspects of responsible business
- › Development and conveying AAT's policy to stakeholders, including MP's, policy makers, press and media.
- › Forging and maintenance of effective senior relationships with other Awarding organisations, Professional Bodies, and other key stakeholders, for the benefit of AAT
- › Leading the Strategy and Planning function, creating a cohesive framework that ensures innovation, strategy formulation, business planning and reporting regarding AAT's direction and delivery.
- › Leading the Reputation, Influence and Brand function, establishing a clear voice for our community, which can influence government policy around the accounting profession and associated education raising the profile of AAT through thought leadership and publishable research.
- › Ensuring trust and confidence in AAT, and its members, through effective oversight of its Professional Standards and Regulatory functions.
- › Leading the Compliance function, ensuring compliance with all relevant external regulation is adhered to and reported appropriately.
- › Lead the inclusion and integration of the Legal and Governance functions, including maintaining AAT's adherence to our charitable objectives, effective company administration policies and processes and adequately reviews internal controls.

## Boards and Council

- To prepare policy proposals and papers for governance bodies, including Board
- To contribute to the preparation and where required be in attendance of the Members Advisory Council
- To attend and participate in Board and other governance body meetings

## Organisation chart



## Accountabilities by team

### Strategy and Planning

- Strategy development and implementation oversight
- Corporate plan development, implementation, and oversight
- Future trend analysis
- Risk strategy and framework
- Risk management for the organisation
- Internal audit programme definition and management

### Reputation, influence, and brand

- Effectively influence a range of stakeholders, including governments and their policies.
- Public affairs and associated public relations – raising AAT's profile.
- Thought leadership.
- Publishable research.
- Brand strategy and guidelines
- Brand campaigns and tracking

### Professional Standards and Regulation

- Developing standards, regulatory policy, and regulatory governance, including anti money laundering (AML) through OPBAS and professional standard.
- Registering and assuring of licensed members
- Investigating and enforcing

### Compliance

- AAT Compliance including but not limited to regulation pertaining to our Awarding Organisation, ensuring compliance across various geographies
- Data Protection adherence and oversight.
- Continual improvement and learning.

### Legal and Governance

- Ensuring effective governance and legal considerations are embedded throughout the organisation and best practice governance is maintained.

Any other relevant duties as assigned.



## Person Specification

### Essential

#### Knowledge and experience:

- Strategic and visionary leader with experience of working within a high performing organisation of comparable scale, scope, and complexity
- Experience of leading strategy development
- Expert influencing skills
- Experience of anticipating and responding to dynamic external events to maximise relevance of activity and business results
- Experience of leading, developing, and motivating teams to elicit strong performance and deliver required commercial outcomes.
- Experience of defining and embedding organisational and cultural change, reflecting changing market conditions and business opportunities
- Able to delegate effectively and achieve accountability and commitment at all levels
- Commercially aware and financially astute with a track record of successful business management gained on at least a similar scale.

### Desirable

- Experience of regulatory compliance within education and or a professional body
- Diversity, and Inclusion champion, with experience of having made tangible progress in the delivery of related agendas, both internally and externally
- Experience of performing role within in a professional membership body, the accountancy profession, an awarding organisation, or educational institution
- Experience of working in complex governance settings
- Experience of performing role within in a professional membership body, the accountancy profession, an awarding organisation, or educational institution
- Experience and understanding of developing and delivering strategies that support Social Mobility and Sustainability
- Understanding of government policy around professional standards and education



## **Education, qualifications and skills:**

- Degree or equivalent experience in a relevant subject
- Excellent written and verbal communications
- Strong presentation skills
- Strong project management skills
- Strong commercial / negotiating skills
- Ability to develop effective working relationships with clients and internal contacts
- Numerate / analytical

## **Aptitude:**

- Visionary, proactive and ambassadorial; operates with gravitas, credibility, and impact
- Change orientated and commercially astute customer champion
- Delivery focussed
- Exceptional relationship builder with excellent interpersonal and communication skills, with emotional intelligence and, empathy
- Confident, inspirational, and collaborative leader, able to motivate, develop and delegate with authority and responsibility
- Politically astute and consultative, with excellent judgement, common sense and diplomacy and willingness to take and implement tough decisions when necessary
- Values driven inclusive leader
- Effective and transparent decision maker, with the ability to prioritise effectively
- Intellectually strong, resilient, and tenacious. Willing and able to take, justify and own
- Performs well in dynamic and complex environments
- Strong personal integrity, able to uphold organisation behaviours in line with good corporate governance

## Terms of Appointment

**Executive team:** Strategy and Compliance

**Reporting to:** CEO

**Responsible for:** Strategy and Planning, Reputation, Influence and Brand, Professional Standards, Compliance, Legal Counsel and Governance, Business Support Manager

**Remuneration:** £155,000 plus benefits

**Location:** AAT has an office in London, and works in an agile hybrid model

### Leadership description:

- Provides visible leadership to AAT and the community we serve.
- Designs and develops the organisation-wide strategies with other Executive Director colleagues. Takes responsibility for organisation-wide outcomes (ongoing design, delivery and monitoring of AATs policies and corporate plan).
- Multi-disciplined, able to manage a range of experts delivering on a broad portfolio.
- Knowledge and understanding of external environment, ability to innovate and balance charitable, compliance and commercial considerations.
- Ability to work with high levels of ambiguity and can translate strategic thinking into business solutions.
- Acts for the greater good of the organisation.
- Creates a culture of commercial awareness and professionalism within the teams, focusing on outcomes, maximising efficiency, and effectiveness, working collaboratively and actively demonstrating AAT's behaviours.

## Our purpose and behaviours

### Our purpose

To open up access to finance careers for everyone. To inspire and develop an inclusive community of accounting professionals equipped with the real-world skills needed to help business meet the challenges of our fast-changing world.

### Our ambition

To gain global recognition for Accounting Technicians, delivered through effective partnerships applying transferable and comparable standards that will increase the capacity for Accounting Technicians to make a difference across the world.

### Our behaviours



## 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 **QBREE1**.

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

- a CV
- cover letter
- complete the online diversity monitoring\* form

The closing date for applications is noon on **Friday 11 July 2025**

\* 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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