

asbof

Appointment of

Independent Reviewer,

Advertising Standards Authority

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QBVXA

Saxton Bampfylde



Introduction

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) is the UK's independent regulator overseeing advertising across all media, including social media.

The authority of the ASA to regulate underwrites the consumer's trust in advertising messages being legal, decent, honest, and truthful. It is this trust that helps to make the UK advertising market one of the most successful and dynamic in the world.

The rules ASA administers and enforces are contained in the UK Advertising Codes, written by the industry Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP).

ASA FUNDING

To help maintain ASA's independence from the industry that funds it, it is primarily funded at arm's length by the Advertising Standards Boards of Finance (Asbof). The funding comes primarily from advertisers, through a 0.1% levy on display advertising space and airtime collected by media buying agencies. In the last decade the ongoing disintermediation of media buying, with advertisers buying direct from digital platforms rather than through media agencies, means that direct contributions from digital media owners are also of growing importance.

Together, the ASA, CAP and Asbof make up the ASA system. The ASA system is a mixture of self-regulation for non-broadcast advertising and co-regulation (with Ofcom) for broadcast, video-on-demand, and video-sharing-platform advertising.

ASA BACKGROUND – CURRENT STRATEGY

The ASA is in a process of ongoing dynamic evolution, implementing the second year of the new 2024–2028 strategy: [AI-assisted, collective ad regulation](#).

The reason for change is to deal with the challenges posed by regulating online ads at pace and scale. In recent years, ASA has rebalanced regulation away from reactive complaints casework towards proactive, tech-assisted intelligence-gathering, complaint handling, monitoring and enforcement.

Building in-house data science capability has been key to that. ASA processed three million ads/potential ads through the Active Ad Monitoring system in 2023. As well as providing vital intelligence, that deployment of AI helps ASA's compliance experts identify and swiftly act against irresponsible online ads. The plan is to substantially increase that number, provide more comprehensive reporting on compliance levels in the areas monitored and report on significantly greater numbers of irresponsible online ads amended or withdrawn.

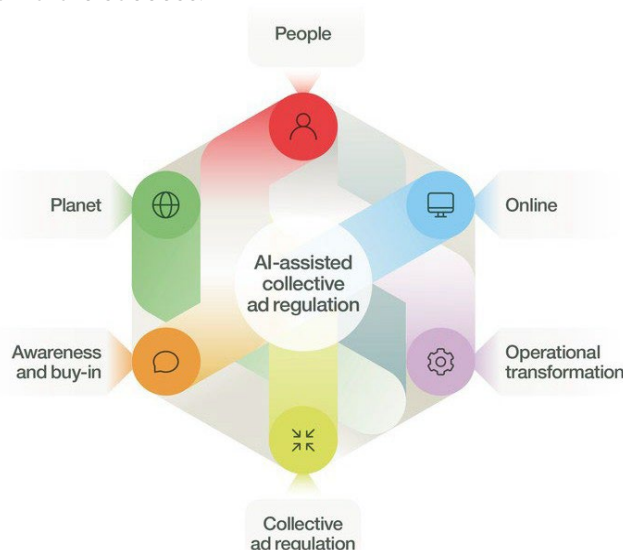
The strategy also covers how this will AI push be complemented by championing significant change in how the regulatory framework should develop to help meet the challenges faced in regulating online ads and bringing greater transparency and broader accountability to the role online platforms and intermediaries play.


The instrument here is the ASA's world-first Intermediary and Platform Principles pilot (IPP), currently in assessment of the 2023 pilot study before expected roll out as IPP 2.0.

In addition, projects in areas like online ad targeting, body image and climate change are at the forefront of our proactive response to vital societal issues.

As the UK's independent frontline regulator of ads, we deliver value both to the public and to responsible businesses. That is why the ASA system is widely respected both here and abroad. There are challenges and opportunities ahead. Trust in advertising is improving very encouragingly, but there is work still to do and the pace of digital change is extremely high, hence the focus of our new strategy.

We are proud of our role protecting people, but we need to do even more. And the Chair of the ASA is fundamental to our future success.





Proactive
We'll use a broad
base of intelligence
to tackle advertising
problems

ASA Purpose, Ambition and Values

Our purpose is to make sure ads are responsible. Our ambition is to make sure every UK ad is a responsible ad.

Our values are to be proactive, collaborative, accountable, transparent, and decisive. We want external stakeholders to find us: independent in administering the Codes; evidence-based, proportionate, targeted and consistent; and reflective of society, not a social engineer.

ASA is passionate about what it does because responsible ads are good for people, good for society and good for business. They entertain and inform us, helping us to choose products and services. They fund the media, sport, and culture we all enjoy. They can be a force for social good, encouraging us to contribute to good causes, make more responsible choices and stay safe. And they help deliver competition and power the economy.

HOW ASA REGULATES

ASA puts people first. Protecting them from irresponsible ads sits at the heart of what it does.

The focus is on online ads. That is because: people, particularly children, spend so much time online; businesses advertise online more than anywhere else; our experience of regulating ads in all media tells us there are relatively more problems with online ads; and the online environment is vast, diverse, often subject to few or no media gatekeepers and is subject to rapid innovation.

Indeed, more than 75% of total advertising spend in the UK is now online.

But there is also an important focus on the important task of making sure ads are responsible in other media too.

ASA uses technology, including data science, to enhance our effectiveness and efficiency and we invest as much in preventative and proactive regulation as we do in reactive regulation. However, knowing what ads the public and others complain to us about remains important, as does acting on complaints that identify breaches of the Codes.

Knowing you can trust the ads you see?

Priceless.[®]



Advertising Standards Authority
asa.org.uk



Status and Independence

ASA has been responsible for regulating non-broadcast advertising since 1962, when the ASA was established by the advertising industry. Our success led Ofcom to contract-out the regulation of broadcast advertising in 2004. That move was approved by Parliament and created a 'one-stop shop' for advertising regulation. The ASA system expanded again in 2011, when it began to regulate companies' own advertising claims on their own websites and social media channels.

ASA has always worked with the wider advertising industry, which depends on trust in advertising. We strive to make sure advertisers play by the same rules, helping to create trusted media environments in which their responsible ads can flourish. We rely on their arm's-length funding, and the support, buy-in and, in some cases, funding of all parties involved in the preparation and publication of ads. We attach great importance to the benefits of working with the world class UK advertising industry, which supports the self-/co regulation independently administered by the ASA. Indeed, our system is evidence of the considerable commitment by the advertising industry to uphold standards in their profession. All parts of that industry – advertisers, agencies, media, and platforms – coming together to commit to ads being legal, decent, honest and truthful.

But that support is coupled with our robust and independent decision-making to ensure we deliver the best outcomes for people, who remain our priority. We are independent of the businesses who pay for what we do, independent of government and independent of special interest groups.

Our partnering with other regulators is crucial too. Our frontline ad regulation often complements their activities, or even frees them up entirely to concentrate on their other duties. And they are sometimes able to tackle ad-related problems that we cannot.

We call our model of partnering with businesses and other regulators 'collective ad regulation'. Our independence and the buy-in and support we receive through collective ad regulation delivers faster, more flexible, more joined-up and proportionate regulation.

The ASA system is recognised by the Government and the Courts as being the established means for regulating UK ads.

Overview of Independent Review process

The Independent Review process provides the opportunity for decisions of the ASA Council to be considered again, when there is evidence that the ASA did not get the decision/process right.

The Independent Review process is open to advertisers, complainants or broadcasters who have been a party either to a final ruling of the Council or a Council decision not to further investigate a complaint beyond initial assessment.

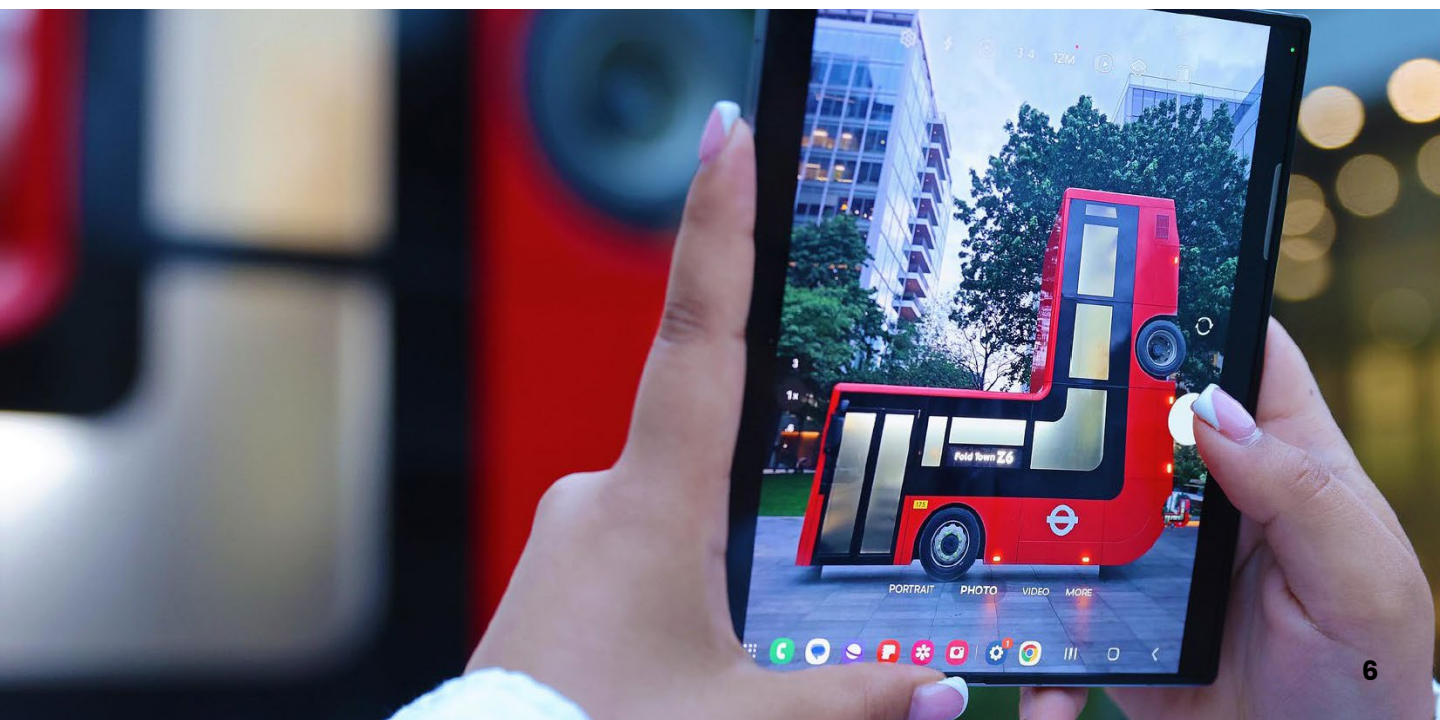
The Independent Reviewer

The Independent Reviewer is not part of the ASA Executive or the ASA Council. He/she is recruited and remunerated by, and his/her performance is overseen by, Asbof/Basbof.

He/she will have access to office space at the Asbof offices in central London, but will likely routinely work from home.

He/she is entitled and encouraged to sit as an observer at ASA Council meetings (up to 11 a year, roughly half conducted remotely) to ensure there is transparency in Council decision-making and to understand better how Council makes its decisions. However, he/she takes no part in discussions and nor does he/she discuss cases with the Council or Executive that have not been referred to him/her for review.

Please see [here](#) for more information on the Independent Reviewer.



More on the Independent Review process

The Independent Reviewer will only accept a legitimately submitted request for review if one or more of the following grounds is established:

1. if additional relevant evidence becomes available, which could not reasonably have been shared during the course of the investigation; and/or
2. where it is alleged that there is a substantial flaw in the Council's ruling/decision not to further investigate; and/or
3. where it is alleged that there is a substantial flaw in the process by which that ruling/decision not to further investigate was made.

If the Independent Reviewer decides that a ruling (in whole or in part) merits reconsideration by the Council he/she will undertake, either independently or with assistance from the ASA Executive or any other source of help or advice, such further investigation as he/she thinks appropriate.

At the end of his/her investigation, the Independent Reviewer will make a recommendation to the ASA Council.

Or if the Independent Reviewer decides that a Council decision that a complaint which has been closed on the basis that it requires no additional investigation merits reconsideration by Council, the Independent Reviewer will recommend to Council that it asks the ASA Executive to conduct a formal investigation and / or other work concerning the complaint.

Or if the Independent Reviewer decides that a ruling (in whole or in part) merits reconsideration by the Council and he/she believes that it would be desirable for the ASA Executive to re-open its investigation, he/she will notify all parties to the review of that decision and invite the other parties' comments on the submission made by the party requesting the review. When the ASA Executive makes its recommendation to the Council at the conclusion of the re-opened investigation, the Independent Reviewer will advise the Council whether he/she considers all the relevant issues raised in the review request have been satisfactorily considered by the ASA on re-investigation.

If a request for a review results in the Independent Reviewer inviting Council to reconsider its ruling, the Council must consider the Independent Reviewer's recommendation but is not obliged to accept it; the Council's ruling on reviewed cases is final.

In all cases, the Independent Reviewer will inform the parties to the review of the outcome of his/her work.

The Independent Reviewer's report of his/her activities is included in the ASA's Annual Reports.

See paragraphs 43–59 of the ASA's [Non-broadcast Complaint Handling Procedures](#) for more detail. Materially the same detail is contained in paragraphs 46–63 of the ASA's [Broadcast Complaints Handling Procedures](#).

In past UK Court decisions, justices have held that ordinarily parties to ASA cases should exhaust the ASA's Independent Review process before applying for judicial review. Decisions of the Independent Reviewer are then amenable to, and have indeed been subject to, judicial review (so far, unsuccessfully). The Independent reviewer has access to legal advice.

Person specification

Knowledge and Experience

- Individual of stature with a record of achievement in UK public life, demonstrably independent of the advertising industry.
- Political experience is no barrier to candidacy, but candidates will need to be mindful of prominent involvement in day-to-day party politics, specialist interest or campaign groups that might be seen to prejudice independent judgement.
- Former legal experience is not essential but an understanding of the importance of fair and due process being followed and clarity of thought and communication is important.

Skills and Personal Qualities

- Capable of commanding the confidence and respect of the public, civil society and the advertising industry, with genuine independence of mind and approach.
- A critical approach to arguments and evidence and excellent judgement, with the ability to process extensive and complicated arguments and evidence, whilst retaining a sense of the bigger picture.
- Excellent communication, diplomatic and collaboration skills.
- Interested in advertisements in all media and the role advertising plays in UK society, as well as the work of the ASA, as opposed to generalised public service.
- An ability to act swiftly and generally be available at relatively short notice.

Terms of Appointment

Asbof will have an expectation that this person will do at least one term of 5 years.

The Independent Reviewer is expected to commit 12 hours a week to the role, and receives remuneration currently set at £80,000 per year.



How to apply

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

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **QBVXA**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Wednesday 24 September 2025**.

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

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.

Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.

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