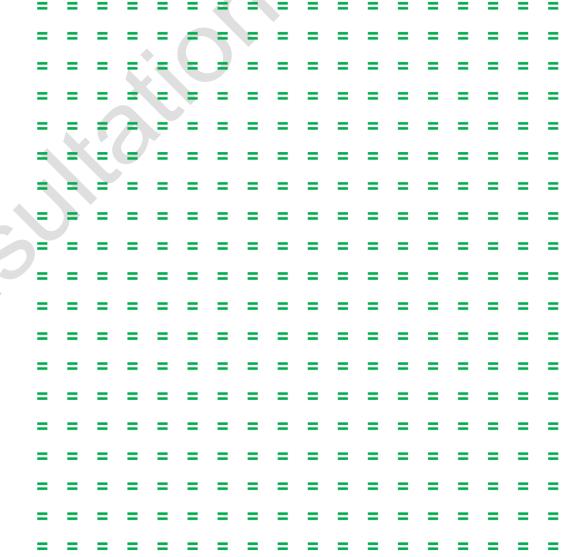


L3 Accounting and the Business Environment

Sample assessment and mark scheme

aat.org.uk



Sample assessment and mark scheme

This mark scheme accompanies the L3 Accounting and the Business Environment sample assessment in ATLAS Cloud which can be accessed via AAT's Lifelong Learning Portal.

Version control

Version no.	Publish date	Key changes	
1.0	September 2024	Consultation draft	

Assessment information

You have **2 hours and 30 minutes** to complete this **Accounting and the Business Environment** sample assessment.

- This assessment contains 8 tasks and you should attempt to complete every task.
- Each task is independent. You will not need to refer to your answers to previous tasks.
- The total number of marks for this assessment is 100.
- Read every task carefully to make sure you understand what is required.
- Where the date is relevant, it is given in the task data.
- Both minus signs and brackets can be used to indicate negative numbers unless task instructions state otherwise.
- You must use a full stop to indicate a decimal point. For example, write 100.57 not 100,57 or 10057.
- You may use a comma to indicate a number in the thousands, but you don't have to. For example, 10000 and 10,000 are both acceptable.
- You will need to double click to enter values into a gapfill or cell within a table.

Task 1 (10 marks)

This task is about types of business and their stakeholders and the regulatory framework.

This task contains parts (a) to (e).

(a) Identify whether the following statements are true or false. (2 marks)

Statement	True	False
Private limited companies can be owned by individual people, trusts, associations and/or other companies.	•	0
A sole trader business operates as a separate legal entity from its owner.	0	•

(LO 1.1.1 AABE)

HTR Limited is a private school for children. The school is owned and run by the Headteacher. The school employs teachers, administrative staff and cleaners.

The school is regulated by Ofsted (a government agency responsible for regulating schools) which undertakes regular inspections and sets guidelines for activities the children should complete daily.

The school has money available to invest.

- O Parents of the children attending the school
- The Headteacher
- Teaching staff
- Ofsted

(LO 1.2.3 AABE)

The money can either be invested in a new gym or computing equipment.

(ii) Identify which ONE of the following stakeholders has the greatest interest in the decision about which option to invest in. (1 mark)

- Teaching staff
- Ofsted
- Cleaners

(LO 1.2.3 AABE)

(c) Complete the following statement. (1 mark)

The role of the board of directors in a large organisation will normally include:

- O Approving all credit terms for customers.
- Setting the strategic objectives for the company.
- O Recruiting all members of staff.

(LO 2.2.2 AABE)

(d) Identify whether the following statements are true or false. (2 marks)

Statement	True	False
The preparation of financial statements is the responsibility of the shareholders.	0	•
Financial statements must be signed by all shareholders.	0	•

(LO 1.2.2 AABE)

(e) Identify whether the following statements are true or false. (3 marks)

Statement	True	False
Tax regulations apply to limited companies and partnerships but not sole traders.	0	•
Sole traders have to prepare accounts using financial reporting standards.	0	•
A limited company must be registered on incorporation.	•	0

(LO 2.2.3 AABE)

Task 2 (16 marks)

This is about professional ethics and financial accounting.

This task contains parts (a) to (d).

Helena is an Assistant Accountant at an accountancy practice.

She has just started working on a client. Helena has identified a serious tax error which was made in last year's tax return. The error was made by her manager, Andrew, and has led to a large underpayment of tax by the client.

Helena discussed this issue with Andrew. He told her to ignore it as the error relates to last year and nothing can be done about it now. She has since discovered that Andrew has had a large amount of work completed on his house by the client at a heavily discounted price.

(a) (i) Explain TWO ethical issues arising for Helena. (4 marks)

Answer

1 x mark for reference to any of the following points; max 4 marks

- There is a conflict of interest arising due (1) to the discounted services Andrew has received. (1)
- Andrew is facing a self-interest threat to objectivity (1). His response poses an intimidation/familiarity threat to Helena's ethics (1).
- Helena should report the error internally (1) and failure to report internally will breach Helena's ethical principles. (1)

Other relevant points may be awarded marks.

(LO 4.1.1, 4.1.8 and 4.1.11 AABE)

(ii) Identify THREE consequences if no action is taken in relation to this matter. (3 marks)

Answer

1 x mark for reference to any of the following points; max 3 marks

If Helena does not take action there are a number of consequences:

- Helena may face internal disciplinary procedures for not raising this issue. (1)
- Helena may face disciplinary procedures from her professional body for failure to report. (1)
- Company A have underpaid tax and action may be taken against them to recover the tax along with interest and penalties. (1)

 The practice may face claim for professional negligence or breach of contract by Company A for making the error and then failing to disclose or advise of the error.
 (1)

Other relevant points may be awarded marks.

(LO 4.1.7 AABE)

Helena is preparing the financial statements for another client.

Her manager has approached her and tells Helena she needs the accrued and prepaid expenses finalised before the end of the day for the client. If that is not possible, then "you should just leave them out completely."

(b) (i) Explain the purpose of making an adjustment for accrued expenses. (2 marks)

Answer

- 1 x mark for reference to any of the following points; max 2 marks
 - Accurate Financial Reporting: adjusting for accrued expenses helps in presenting a
 more accurate picture of the company's financial position and performance for a
 given period. (1)
 - Matching Principle: accrual accounting follows the matching principle, which
 requires expenses to be recognised in the period they are incurred, regardless of
 when cash payments are made. (1) Adjusting for accrued expenses ensures that
 expenses are properly matched with the revenues they helped generate (1) in the
 same period, providing a more faithful representation of the company's profitability.
 (1)
 - Decision Making: accurate financial statements are crucial for decision-making by management, investors, creditors, and other stakeholders. (1) Adjusting for accrued expenses ensures that decision makers have reliable information when evaluating the company's performance. (1)

Other relevant points may be awarded marks.

(LO 4.1.1, 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 PPFS)

(ii) Explain the purpose of making an adjustment for prepaid expenses. (2 marks)

Answer

- 1 x mark for reference to any of the following points; max 2 marks
 - Accurate Financial Reporting: Adjusting for prepaid expenses helps in presenting a
 more accurate picture of the company's financial position and performance for a
 given period. (1)
 - Matching Principle: Accrual accounting follows the matching principle, which
 requires expenses to be recognised in the period they are incurred, regardless of
 when cash payments are made. (1) Adjusting for prepaid expenses ensures that

expenses are properly matched with the revenues they helped generate (1) in the same period, providing a more faithful representation of the company's profitability. (1)

• Decision Making: Accurate financial statements are crucial for decision-making by management, investors, creditors, and other stakeholders. (1) Adjusting for prepaid expenses ensures that decision makers have reliable information when evaluating the company's performance. (1)

Other relevant points may be awarded marks.

(LO 4.1.1, 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 PPFS)

(iii) Explain ONE potential consequence of not processing the adjustments. (2 marks)

Answer

1 x mark for reference to any of the following points; max 2 marks

- Without these adjustments, expenses might be over or understated, (1) leading to incorrect financial statements. (1)
- Performance appraisal: manager may be held responsible for being under or over budget (1) which could impact the appraisal of their performance. (1)
- Decision Making: without reliable information for evaluating the company's performance (1) the wrong decisions could be made. (1)
- Non-compliance for reporting and tax purposes (1) could result in a fine or other disciplinary actions. (1)

Other relevant points may be awarded marks.

(LO 4.1.1, 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 PPFS)

- (c) Identify which TWO of the following are advantages of a principles-based approach to ethics over a rules-based approach to ethics. (2 marks)
- Easy enforcement.
- More flexible for application in unique situations.
- Clearer instructions for application.
- Less chance of loopholes being found.

(LO 4.1.3 AABE)

(d) Identify in which of the following situations an accountant in practice can disclose confidential information about a client without the client's express permission. (1 mark)

- Disclosure is required by law.
- O Disclosure is required to comply with the practice's internal policy.
- O Disclosure is requested verbally by the relevant tax authority.

(LO 4.1.8 AABE)

Task 3 (12 marks)

This task is about fraud, money laundering and financial accounting.

This task contains parts (a) to (b).

You are an Assistant Accountant at a small accounting practice. You have been asked to explain money laundering to a junior colleague.

(a) (i) Identify the correct definition of money laundering. (1 mark)

- O A regulatory framework designed to combat tax evasion in the financial sector.
- O A legal process of transferring money between international accounts.
- The act of disguising the origins of illegally obtained money.
- O A complex financial scheme aimed at enhancing the value of legal assets.

(LO 2.3.1 AABE)

(ii) Identify whether the following are specific types of money laundering. (4 marks)

Туре	Money laundering	NOT money laundering
Concealing	•	0
Allocation	0	•
Donation	0	•
Acquisition	•	0

(LO 3.3.1 AABE)

(iii) Identify the correct definition of 'layering'. (1 mark)

- O Enhancing the encryption levels of digital wallets to protect against cyber attacks.
- O Illegal proceeds are introduced into the financial system.
- Reintroducing the laundered funds into the legitimate economy in such a way that they appear to be derived from legitimate sources.
- Illegally obtained funds are subjected to a series of complex financial transactions to conceal their origin.

(LO 3.3.1 AABE)

Your colleague has asked some further questions in relation to items included in financial statements.

(b) (i) Identify in which statement the suspense account should appear. (1 mark)

- Statement of profit or loss.
- Statement of financial position.
- Neither of these statements.

(LO 2.3.1 PPFS)

(ii) Identify the correct category for each item. (4 marks)

Item	Asset	Liability	Income	Expense
Prepaid expenses	•	0	0	0
Discounts allowed	0	0	0	•
Trade payables	0	•	0	0
Accrued income	•	0	0	0

(LO 2.2.1 PPFS)

(iii) Identify which of the following is the primary objective of accounting for non-current assets. (1 mark)

- To allocate the cost of non-current assets over their useful lives to accurately reflect their consumption of economic benefits.
- O To determine the present value of non-current assets based on their future expected earnings.
- O To record non-current assets at their current market value to reflect their true worth.
- To predict future cash flows generated by non-current assets to assess their potential profitability.

(LO 3.3.1 PPFS)

Task 4 (12	marks)
This task is	ahout the

This	task is	about the	external	environment,	technology	and risk.

This task contains parts (a) to (f).

(a) Identify which THREE of the following are benefits of cloud accounting software. (3 marks)
□ Secure local backup.
Availability of apps and plug-ins.
Restricted mobile access to information.
☑ Enables remote access.
Data is updated in real-time.
□ One-off investment cost.
(LO 3.3.2 AABE)
(b) Complete each of the following statements. (2 marks)
Cloud accounting software has an impact on the role of the accountant because the processing of
many transactions is now automated - which enables the accountant to focus on analysis and
advisory v work.
(LO 3.3.1 AABE)
(c) Identify which ONE of the following factors would normally be classed as a strategic risk. (1 mark)
One of the business's suppliers imposing stricter credit terms.
 A permanent worldwide shortage of a raw material that the business uses.
O The business's third largest customer transferring its purchases to a competitor.
An error in the valuation of inventory.
(LO 3.2.4 AABE)

The Production Manager for Company G leaves a business to join a competitor.

- (d) Identify which risk this is an example of. (1 mark)
- Financial risk
- Operational risk
- Strategic risk

(LO 3.2.4 AABE)

(e) Identify the appropriate technology that each statement refers to. (4 marks)

Statement	Data analytics	Artificial intelligence	Electronic filing	Block chain
Can add value to the finance function because of the transparency of the transaction record.	0	0	0	•
Will seek patterns and trends in complex and varied data.	•	0	0	0
The use of machines in decision making.	0	•	0	0
Will improve security and compliance for completing VAT returns.	0	0	•	0

(LO 3.3.1 AABE)

(f) Identify which ONE of the following best describes a risk-averse attitude. (1 mark)

- Always seeking out high-risk, high-reward opportunities.
- Preferring safe and predictable options over uncertain ones.
- Remaining indifferent to potential losses or gains.
- O Taking a balanced approach between risk and caution.

(LO 3.2.2 AABE)

Task 5 (14 marks)

This task is about information and data protection.

This task contains parts (a) to (f).

(a) Identify which TWO of t	he following may be a direc	t consequence of a cyber attack on a business.	(2 marks
-----------------------------	-----------------------------	--	----------

- Loss of customer data.
- Failure of IT systems.
- Immediate need for fundamental changes in the business model.
- Inability to raise new finance.

(LO 5.1.5 AABE)

(b) Identify ONE action that should be performed in relation to personal data after a business has finished using it. (1 mark)

- O Pass it on to another data controller.
- Give it back to the data subject.
- Securely delete or destroy it.

(LO 5.1.1 AABE)

(c) Identify whether the following data protection principles are requirements under UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). (3 marks)

Principle	Is a requirement	Is NOT a requirement
Personal data held for any purpose shall be held for a minimum of 12 weeks and not more than six years for any reason.	0	•
Personal data must be processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner.	•	0
Personal data shall be updated on a minimum of an annual basis.	0	•

(LO 5.1.1 AABE)

(d) Complete the following statement. (1 mark)

If a business owner breaches data protection legislation, they will be

fined.	~
--------	---

(LO 5.1.2 AABE)

Company A have decided to encourage customers to set up an account and enter their personal details. An account can be set up either in-store or online. Customers will earn points on purchases which can be exchanged for gifts and they will receive offers and discounts by email.

(e) Identify whether the following statements are true or false. (2 marks)

Statement	True	False
Customers are responsible for setting up their own account so Company A has no responsibility for checking the accuracy of data held.	0	•
Company A plan to sell the data to a marketing company. Prior to doing this, they will only need to update the information policy on their website.	0	•

(LO 5.1.3 AABE)

A large supermarket chain has a range of different store types:

- superstores large stores selling food and household items situated in towns and cities
- convenience stores local stores selling a smaller range of food items and a limited range of household goods
- collection stores stores which offer collection only for an online order using a customer account.

Customers are encouraged to register for a loyalty card to earn points which can be exchanged for discount vouchers.

(f) (i) Identify which ONE of the following is a benefit to the supermarket chain of having the loyalty card scheme. (1 mark)

- Enables the collection of shopping habit data.
- Provides a range of secondary data.
- Simplifies operating systems.
- O Reduces reliance on IT systems.

(LO 6.1.3 AABE)

(ii) Identify the big data characteristic described in each statement below. (4 marks)

Statement	Big data characteristic
It collects data from all different store types as well as the website.	Variety ~
The number of customers visiting the stores on a daily basis means that data is collected, processed and analysed every minute of every day.	Velocity ~
A comprehensive processing system is required to collect, analyse and store all the data.	Volume ~
The data collected from the loyalty card is decided and controlled by the supermarket chain to ensure its accuracy.	Veracity ~

(LO 6.1.2 AABE)

(iii) Identify whether the following statement is true or false. (1 mark)

Statement	True	False
The information derived from the loyalty card scheme is good quality because it is available in real-time.	•	0

(LO 6.1.1 AABE)

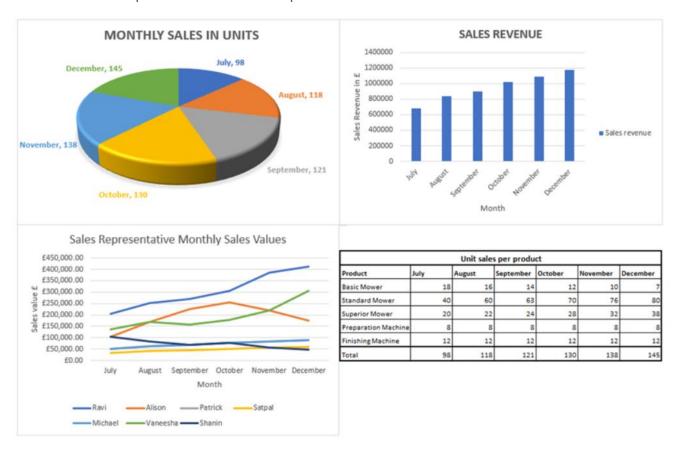
Task 6 (16 marks)

This task is about visualisation, communication and management accounting.

Today's date is 8 January 20X8. You work for Amberdale, a business selling lawn mowers and garden equipment.

- Amberdale is a sole trader business owned by Amber Brooks.
- The client base is expanding as their products are high quality.
- Amberdale employs eight sales staff. This includes one Sales Manager and seven Sales Representatives who are each responsible for a number of customer accounts.
- Amberdale's customers regularly make purchases. A standard 30-day payment term is given to all customers following credit checks.
- The Sales Representatives have responsibility for negotiating discounts, for up-selling additional or more expensive products to customers, and will recommend credit limits for their customers.
- Amberdale's suppliers allow a 60-day payment term.

Sales data has been provided for the six-month period to 31 December 20X7.



Amber has asked you to help with some performance analysis.

Amber would like to know about:

- the performance of the business over the six months to 31 December 20X7
- the expected performance of the business for the three months to 31 March 20X8
- the information which should be communicated to the Sales Manager to appraise performance of the Sales Representatives.

(a) (i) Discuss the performance of the business over the six months to 31 December 20X7 and the expected performance of the business for the three months to 31 March 20X8. (9 marks)

Answer

Indicative content:

Conclusions

- Sales revenue and units are increasing month on month.
- Revenue for Ravi and Vaneesha is increasing each month.
- Ravi is the highest performing sale representative in terms of revenue.
- Shanin's revenue per month is falling.
- Shanin may be selling the basic mowers which are decreasing in sales volumes over the 6 months.
- Revenue for Michael and Satpal has remained consistent.
- Unit sales of finishing machine and preparation machine have remained constant.
- Unit sales of the basic mower are falling.
- Alison's performance has fallen during the period.
- Unit sales of the standard and superior mowers are increasing.
- Higher volumes of the more expensive products are possibly being sold.

Continuing patterns

- Overall sales revenue could continue to increase in the upward trend which has established over the last 6 months.
- Ravi and Vaneesha could continue their upward trend in sales and continue to be the highest performing salespersons.
- Sales of the standard and superior mowers could continue to increase and increase revenue.

Other relevant points may be awarded marks.

Marks	Descriptor
7-9	An answer which demonstrates a clear understanding of the patterns in the data provided, where there have been upward trends in the data and where there have been steady decreases in performance. A strong answer will link the data between the different sources, for example the increasing sales of a sales representative with increasing sales of a product type.
4-6	An answer which demonstrates a good understanding of the patterns in the data provided, where there have been upward trends in the data and where there have been steady decreases in performance over the six months with an attempt made to link the data from the different sources.
1-3	The answer is not explained, or only states sales have been going up or sales of the standard mower are highest (or basic points similar to this which do not recognise there is a trend/pattern).

0 No response worthy of credit.

(LO 4.2.1 and 4.3.4 PMAC; LO 6.2.4, 6.2.5 and 6.2.6 AABE)

- (ii) Identify which TWO of the following statements are correct. (2 marks)
- The Sales Manager could use information about customer discounts to appraise the sales representatives.
- The Sales Manager would not benefit from detailed information about the product sales for each representative.
- The Sales Representatives have no influence over what customers buy and should not be appraised on their sales across the product range.
- The Sales Representatives should be appraised based on the prices negotiated with their customers.

(LO 6.2.2 AABE)

(iii) Complete the following statement. (1 mark)

When preparing information for a Sales Manager about the performance of their team, it must be clearly presented and accurate.

(LO 6.3.3 AABE)

Amber is considering increasing the payment terms for customers to 45 days and offering a prompt payment discount for those customers who settle their invoice within 15 days.

(iv) Explain the impact on cashflow of each of the changes being introduced. (4 marks)

Answer

1 x mark for reference to any of the following points; max 4 marks

- Increasing payment terms to 45 days will have a negative impact on cashflow (1) due to it being longer until cash is received. (1)
- Introducing a prompt payment discount will have a positive impact on cashflow (1) because the cash will be received sooner from those who take up the discount. (1)
- A discount for prompt payment will have a negative impact on cashflow (1) because less cash will be received, although sooner, it will be a lower amount overall. (1)

Other relevant points may be awarded marks.

(LO 5.2.3 PMAC)

Task 7 (12 marks)

This task is about sustainability and management accounting.

This task contains parts (a) to (d).

(a) (i) Complete the following statement. (1 mark)

A sustainable business meets the needs of the present time without

impacting the resources of future generations.

~

(LO 3.1.2 AABE)

(ii) Identify ONE type of sustainability that each of the following organisational policies relates to. (3 marks)

Organisational policy	Social sustainability	Environmental sustainability	Financial sustainability
Company A has a policy to consult with wildlife protection groups on any new housing developments before finalising plans.	0	•	0
Company B Ltd supports community welfare projects.	•	0	0
Company C has clearly defined strategic plans and all new projects must be capable of achieving a minimum level of profit within three years to be accepted.	0	0	•

(LO 3.1.1 AABE)

An organisation has the following stakeholders:

- 1. customers
- 2. shareholders
- 3. employees
- 4. local community.

(iii) Identify which of the stakeholders has/have an interest in the organisation's sustainability plans. (1 mark)

- O 1 and 3
- 3 and 4
- 1 only
- 1, 2, 3 and 4

(LO 3.1.5 AABE)

You work for a business which produces kitchen accessories. Your manager has asked to to help with the year end variance analysis and reporting.
An adverse variance has been reported for Material A.
(b) Identify which TWO of the following could cause this variance. (2 marks)
Reduced wastage of Material A due to staff training.
✓ Switching to a more expensive but more sustainable supplier.
✓ Less efficient machinery due to maintenance being required.
Reduction in requirement of Material A due to a product redesign.
(LO 3.3.1 PMAC)
(c) Identify which TWO of the following might be used by management to forecast the volume of materials required for production. (2 marks)
☐ Discussions with experts in the Human Resources department in the business.

(LO 3.1.2 PMAC)

Competitors product usage.

Wastage in the production process report.

(d) Identify whether the following statements are true or false. (3 marks)

Discussions with experts in the Sales department of the business.

Statement	True	False
A budget helps an organisation to co-ordinate the allocation of resources.	•	0
A fixed budget is a budget prepared for all possible sales volumes.	0	•
Reducing usage of resources is an important consideration to improve sustainability.	•	0

(LO3.1.4 AABE; 3.1.3 PMAC)

Task 8 (8 marks)

This task is about diversity, cultural awareness and continuing professional development.

This task contains parts (a) to (d).

(a) Identify which ONE of the following statements best describes the role of an individual in creating an inclusive work environment. (1 mark)

- O Creating an inclusive working environment is the responsibility of management. Individuals have no role to play.
- The only way an individual can create an inclusive working environment is by meeting diversity quotas when recruiting new staff.
- An individual can help create an inclusive working environment by promoting diversity and inclusion in their interactions and behaviour.
- An individual can help create an inclusive working environment by enforcing their own cultural norms on others.

(LO 6.4.4 AABE)

(b) Identify ONE reason it is important for businesses to respect and accept differences in the workforce. (1 mark)

- To maximise profits.
- To promote harmony and understanding among employees.
- To enforce strict conformity to company policies.

(LO 6.4.2 AABE)

(c) Identify whether the following statements are true or false. (4 marks)

Statement	True	False
In a global business, awareness of cultural differences is important to ensure that local culture is prioritised.	0	•
Diversity and inclusion in businesses can lead to greater innovation and creativity.	•	0
Resilience is important in the context of business and team dynamics to enable effective recovery from setbacks or adversity.	•	0
Promoting a growth mindset can restrict the ability of individuals to adapt to changing circumstances.	0	•

(LO 4.2.4, 4.2.5, 6.4.1 and 6.4.3 AABE)

A recent change in tax legislation will impact all limited companies.

(d) Identify TWO suitable sources of continuing professional development to ensure you remain technically competent. (2 marks)

- $\hfill \square$ A discussion after class with your college tutor.
- A government training course.
- An online course with an accredited training provider.
- $\hfill \square$ A video on social media explaining the new tax rules.

(LO 2.6.3 AABE)



AAT 30 Churchill Place London E14 5RE

aat.org.uk