



## **AAT and Human Rights**

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## Responsible business vision statement

AAT aims to lead by example on responsible, sustainable business models, embedding exemplary standards of best practice into our own organization and which can inspire and influence our members, students, colleagues and stakeholders.

## AAT policy statement on human rights

As a signatory to the UN Global Compact, AAT is committed to respecting the human rights as described in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Our commitment to the UN Global Compact requires us to promote these principles through our spheres of influence: our staff, our members, training providers, suppliers and other partners.

AAT's commitment to responsible business and human rights is embodied in our organisational mission of helping people to realise their full potential through learning.

AAT's mission is underpinned by a belief that every individual has the right to economic empowerment achieved through work and this is at the core of our learning programmes. We aim to bring greater individual opportunity by helping people to gain the necessary skills which will ultimately lead to an enhanced opportunity to gain employment or develop their careers.

In pursuing our mission, we have adopted a wide range of policies, practices and programmes across a number of areas that are important to human rights, including: privacy, security, free expression, labour rights, equality, diversity, and access to education.

We approach our activities with an understanding that whilst our efforts do not stand on their own we can make a difference. We aim to uphold our own values on equality, access and freedom of choice.

## Principles outlining AAT position on conducting business internationally

A number of basic principles underpin AAT's international business

### 1. The right to education & qualifications:

All interventions in a country with a challenging past or poor Human Rights records can be used for good or ill – to promote human rights or to restrict them. AAT believe that we have a clear opportunity, and in fact a responsibility, to enable the economic empowerment of individuals through education to enable people to achieve their full potential in accordance with fundamental human rights.

### 2. Empowering civil society:

Each society has the power to shape its future through deliberate efforts to utilize the power of education for good. We believe that AAT has a responsibility to participate in these efforts to help shape the human rights agendas of emerging economies and to help empower civil society.

### 3. Universal rights:

AAT believes that human rights should be based on internationally recognized standards, especially the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

### 4. Engagement:

AAT can most effectively respect human rights through our presence in, rather than an absence from, countries that present significant human rights risks. We believe this is justified because we focus on engaging and enabling individuals who seek to better themselves by learning and gaining skills which have a direct impact on their future. AAT does not impact on a country's natural resources, no resources are taken from the country and the AAT has no political influence.

### International business decision making process:

AAT undertake a defined process to evaluate the opportunities and risks associated with entering an international market which in turn informs a final decision. The process contains the following component parts:

- Initial fact finding / desk top research
- Phase one business case which, as well as commercial considerations, also considers:
  - Risk analysis:
    - FCO guidance
    - UN guidance
    - Any guidance available from potential third part partners / stakeholders (e.g. government, educational training providers)
    - Background of training providers (political links, suspicion of complicity in human rights abuses etc.)
  - Benefit analysis:
    - What value / benefit can AAT bring to a country?
    - What harm can AAT potentially cause through involvement in a country?
  - Compliance:
    - What regulatory and compliance issues (UK and in local market) are relevant?
- Final business case including clear risk identification and appropriate mitigation

The process is managed by the Director of Marketing and Commercial with the final business case being ratified and signed off by the AAT Executive.