

# Adjournment of Disciplinary Hearings Policy

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## Document properties

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## Change control

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Version No.	Page	Changes made	Date
V1.1	4	Removing reference to training providers from paragraph 2.	08/09/2021
V1.1	5	Inclusion of Chair of the <i>Appeals Committee</i> in paragraph 11.	08/09/2021

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## Associated regulations and policies

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*Code of Professional Ethics*  
*AAT Regulations 2021*  
*Disciplinary Regulations*  
*Licensing Regulations*  
*Insolvency Policy*  
*Criminal Convictions Policy*  
*Civil Sanctions Policy*  
*Disciplinary Sanctions Policy*  
*Disclosure Policy*  
*Health and Disability Policy*  
*Indicative Sanctions Guidance*  
*Appeals Regulations*  
*Instruction of Experts Policy*  
*Witness Care and Expenses Policy*

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## Introduction

1. The Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) upholds high standards of competence and professional conduct. Accountancy is a trusted and respected profession and AAT aims to ensure that *members*:
  - a) behave professionally and ethically
  - b) comply with *AAT Regulations* and relevant legislation
  - c) keep their skills and competence up to date.

## Scope and applicability

2. In pursuit of that aim, AAT investigates *complaints* and *misconduct* allegations against AAT *members*. Depending on the circumstances, AAT may resolve these *complaints* informally or take disciplinary action.

## Purpose and objectives

3. AAT endeavours to ensure that all *applicants* and *members* are treated fairly and consistently in accordance with the compliance framework agreed by the *Council* so that users of *members'* services are protected and that the reputation of the profession is maintained. In developing its policies AAT has had regard to the principles of good regulation:
  - a) Proportionality
  - b) Accountability
  - c) Consistency
  - d) Transparency
  - e) Targeting
4. The compliance framework of AAT is governed by the AAT *Articles of Association* and sets out the following *Regulations* and guidance with which all *members* must comply:
  - a) *Code of Professional Ethics*
  - b) *AAT Regulations*
  - c) *Disciplinary Regulations*
  - d) *Licensing Regulations*

5. The *Regulations* and guidance are underpinned by publications covering specific areas of compliance policy and related procedures which include (as well as this policy):
  - a) *Professional Standards Investigations Policy*
  - b) *Health and Disability Policy*
  - c) *Indicative Sanctions Guidance*
  - d) *Appeals Regulations*
  - e) *Disclosure Policy*
  - f) *Instruction of Experts Policy*
  - g) *Witness Care and Expenses Policy*
6. These publications explain the processes by which our compliance policy is put into practice. All *members* and *applicants* for membership must be aware of and follow this guidance. Further information on the compliance framework is available at [aat.org.uk](http://aat.org.uk) including the purpose of each publication and how they relate to each other.
7. The website is the definitive guide to all policies currently in force.

## Terms and definitions

8. In these *Regulations* all words and phrases in italics, save titles of publications, shall have the meaning set out in the *AAT Glossary*.

## Policy detail

### Adjournment

9. AAT aims to resolve issues about the conduct of *members* expeditiously. This is in the interests of the public, the complainant, the *member* and AAT.
10. Once a disciplinary or oral appeals hearing has been arranged, an adjournment will not be granted as a matter of course. Good reasons must be provided to justify any delay. An adjournment will not be granted on the basis of unsupported assertions.
11. A copy of the request must be sent to all parties to the proceedings. A minimum of two days will be allowed for representations to be sent, via *Professional Standards*, to the Chair of the *Disciplinary Tribunal* or Chair of the *Appeals Committee* scheduled to hear the case.

12. In deciding whether to grant an application for adjournment, the following factors will be considered:
  - a) the stated reasons for the application and supporting evidence
  - b) the likely impact of an adjournment on all parties
  - c) the interests of the public in the prompt disposal of cases
  - d) the potential benefits of an adjournment, for example because it may make it possible to hear evidence which would not otherwise be available
  - e) whether alternative arrangements can be made, for example for legal representation
  - f) observations on the application by or on behalf of any party
  - g) whether those seeking an adjournment have made appropriate attempts to prepare for the case
  - h) the length of the adjournment sought.
13. Where an application for an adjournment is refused, the hearing will proceed on the date scheduled. Where an application is granted, a new date for the oral hearing will be set with agreement of the parties.

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