

aat

Suitability for membership

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Introduction

Why does AAT assess suitability?

AAT expects its *members* to act with the highest levels of professionalism, both in and outside of their professional lives. Clients and employers rely on AAT to take ongoing steps to consider whether a *member* is, and continues to be, a *fit and proper* person to be a *member*. This guidance is intended to support the AAT in meeting that obligation.

Disclosure

What do I need to disclose?

You will be asked, on your *application, renewal* or annual declaration, to provide certain information on subject areas such as:

- Bankruptcy
- Debt relief orders
- Arrangements with creditors
- Criminal convictions not spent under *The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act*
- Civil sanctions
- County Court Judgments
- Disciplinary sanctions made by another professional body.

What am I not required to disclose?

You do not need to declare:

- spent *criminal convictions*
- any road traffic offence which was dealt with by way of fixed penalty notice
- credit agreements you have entered into (for example, student loans, mortgages, car finance agreements).

Failure to disclose

If you fail to disclose relevant information on your *application, renewal* or annual declaration and the matter subsequently becomes known, AAT may investigate in accordance with the *Disciplinary Regulations*.

What information do I need to provide?

Bankruptcy

- Details of the circumstances leading to your bankruptcy.
- The date you were declared bankrupt.
- The amount of debt you owed when adjudged bankrupt.
- The date your bankruptcy was or is due to be discharged.
- A copy of your Bankruptcy Order and/or Certificate of Discharge.
- If applicable, any mitigating circumstances; this must be supported by evidence.

Debt relief order (DRO)

- Details of the circumstances leading to your DRO.
- The date you entered into your DRO.
- The amount of debt you owed on entry into your DRO.
- When the moratorium period of the DRO will expire.
- A copy of your Order and/or Certificate of Discharge.
- If applicable, any mitigating circumstances; this must be supported by evidence.

Arrangement with creditors

- Details of the circumstances leading to your arrangement.
- The start date of your arrangement.
- A breakdown of the debt on entry into your arrangement.
- The outstanding balance to your creditors.
- The date your arrangement ended or is due to end.
- Evidence of 12 months of payments to creditors.
- If applicable, any mitigating circumstances; this must be supported by evidence.

County Court Judgments (CCJ)

- Details of the circumstances leading to your CCJ .
- The date of the judgment.
- The amount of debt you owed at the point of judgment.
- Evidence that the CCJ has been satisfied; alternatively the date when the CCJ is due to be satisfied.
- If applicable, any mitigating circumstances; this must be supported by evidence.

Criminal conviction

- An explanation of the circumstances leading to your criminal conviction.
- A copy of your Certificate of Conviction (Crown Court) or a Memorandum of Conviction (Magistrates Court); this is the official document from the court that convicted you confirming the conviction and the sentence you received.
- Two character references that that meet the requirements of AAT's *Criminal Convictions* policy.
- If applicable, any mitigating circumstances; this must be supported by evidence.

Civil sanction

- The nature of the civil sanction.
- Details of the circumstances leading to your civil sanction.
- The date the sanction was imposed.
- The date the sanction was or is due to expire.
- Two character references that meet the requirements of AAT's *Civil Sanctions* policy.
- If applicable, any mitigating circumstances; this must be supported by evidence.

Disciplinary sanction with another professional body

- Details of the underlying conduct on which the finding was made.
- The nature of the finding of the professional body.
- The date the sanction was imposed.
- Whether the sanction is current, or has expired.
- Any remedial action taken by you since the sanction was imposed.
- Two character references that meet the requirements of AAT's *Disciplinary Sanctions* policy.
- If applicable, any mitigating circumstances; this must be supported by evidence.

Requirements for character references

Who can provide a character reference?

- A teacher or tutor who has taught the *applicant* for a minimum of six months.
- The *applicant's* employer, if they have known the *applicant* for a minimum of 12 months.
- A parole officer.
- A solicitor or barrister.
- Someone who has supervised the *applicant's* work experience for a minimum of six months.
- A member of parliament.

Who is unable to provide a character reference?

- A friend of the *applicant*, unless they also meet one of the criteria outlined above.
- A relative of the *applicant*.
- Any person known by the *applicant* solely on a social basis.
- Anyone who has known the *applicant* for less than six months.

Criteria to be met

- It must be on letter-headed paper.
- It must make clear the capacity in which the referee knows the *applicant*, and the length of time they have known each other.
- It must explain why they consider themselves qualified to give the professional character reference.
- It must demonstrate awareness of the nature of the *applicant's* disclosure.
- It must provide an explanation as to why the referee considers the *applicant* suitable to join AAT.

Where should I send supporting information?

Please email it to us at aatstandards@aat.org.uk

Alternatively, you may send the form to the following address:

Professional Standards
AAT
140 Aldersgate Street
London
EC1A 4HY

What happens next?

We will carry out an assessment on your suitability for membership. This assessment may involve making further enquiries directly with you or any third parties where applicable.

Once the assessment is concluded, we will either:

- admit you to membership
- refuse membership
- refuse membership and debar from you reapplying for a period of five years.

We will notify you of the outcome in writing as soon as a decision has been made.