



ASA COUNCIL MEMBER

Candidate Pack

Dear candidate

This is an exciting time to be joining our Council as we implement our 2019-2023 strategy: *More Impact Online*.

Our collective self-regulatory approach has worked in advertising. It has demonstrated the capacity to evolve and adapt to the changing landscape, first by taking on broadcast advertising from Ofcom and then by moving wholeheartedly into the online space. Our Advertising Codes have adapted in the light of evidence to changing industry practices and societal attitudes, faster than would be possible with statutory regulation. The system has not got bogged down in endless and expensive litigation, unlike some other areas. And we've delivered outcomes that help protect people, again faster than could be achieved through statutory regulation.

There are challenges and opportunities ahead. Trust in advertising is low. The pace of digital change is extremely high. And Government initiatives in the form of the Online Harms White Paper and the DCMS Online Advertising Review provide the opportunity for us to make the case for our collective self-regulatory approach, a case that we think is strengthened by our progress implementing our strategy.

We are proud of our role protecting people from misleading, harmful, offensive and otherwise irresponsible advertising. But we need to do even more. And a strong, dynamic and diverse ASA Council is fundamental to our future success.

If you have the passion and drive to help us achieve our goal of **making every UK ad a responsible ad**, please do consider applying. I very much look forward to hearing from you.

Yours,

David Currie
Lord Currie of Marylebone
Chair, ASA



About the Advertising Standards Authority

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) is the UK's independent regulator of advertising across all media. Our purpose is to make ads responsible and our ambition is to make every UK ad a responsible ad. We do that by administering the UK Advertising Codes, which are written by the Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP). Together, the ASA and CAP make up the UK's advertising regulatory system (hereafter referred to as the ASA system).

The ASA system is a mixture of self-regulation for non-broadcast advertising and co-regulation for broadcast advertising. We're funded by the industry, which also writes the rules through CAP, but those rules are independently administered by the ASA. We regulate TV and radio advertising under a contract from Ofcom.

The system is funded by advertisers, primarily through a 0.1% levy on display advertising space and airtime and a 0.2% levy on direct mail. The levies are collected by two arms-length industry funding bodies: the Advertising Standards Boards of Finance.

Our system is a sign of the considerable commitment by the advertising industry to uphold standards in their profession. All parts of that industry – advertisers, agencies, media and platforms – have come together to commit to being legal, decent, honest and truthful in their ads.

We've been responsible for regulating non-broadcast advertising since 1962, when the ASA was established by the industry. Our success led Ofcom to contract-out to us the regulation of broadcast advertising (TV and radio) in 2004. That move was approved by Parliament and created a 'one-stop shop' for all advertising complaints. Our system expanded again in 2011, when we began regulating companies' own advertising claims on their own websites and social media channels.

The ASA is widely recognised as being responsible for controlling ads in all media in the UK and we work closely with statutory regulatory partners such as Ofcom, the National Trading Standards Board and in co-operation with other regulatory bodies. We're independent of Government.

The Advertising Codes cover the following:

- Print and press ads
- Poster ads
- Direct mail ads
- Television and radio ads
- Sales promotions, e.g. competitions and special offers
- Direct marketing email and text messages
- Internet ads (e.g. video ads, banners, pop-ups, virals and paid/sponsored search)

- Companies' own ads on their own websites and in social media channels they control
- Teleshopping ads/output
- Cinema commercials

Based in Shoreditch, London, the ASA employs approximately 110 people working across the following functions:

- Complaints and investigations
- Compliance and monitoring
- Copy Advice
- Regulatory Policy
- Communications, public affairs, marketing and research
- Corporate Services.

Further information about the ASA and the work we do can be found at www.asa.org.uk.



ASA purpose, ambition and strategy

Our purpose and ambition

Our purpose is to make advertisements responsible and our ambition is to make every UK ad a responsible ad.

What we do is important

We're passionate about what we do because responsible advertisements are good for people, society and businesses.

How we regulate

We regulate ads wherever they appear. It's right for us to focus on online ads, but we won't take our eye off the important task of making sure ads are responsible in offline media too. Resolving public complaints will continue to be vital to our work, but so will continuing our proactive regulation.

Our *More Impact Online* strategy:



The six strands of our strategy:

1. **People:** We will put people first, which means everyone not just people who complain to us. We'll be open to listening in new ways and we'll continue to improve our engagement with the UK nations and regions.
2. **Online:** We will improve our regulation of online advertising. We'll continue to focus on misleading content and inappropriate targeting, but we'll also be open to thinking beyond that, for example seeking to collaborate further with the large online platforms so we help each other to protect people from irresponsible ads. We'll develop our thought-leadership in online ad regulation.
3. **Effectiveness:** We will deliver high quality proactive regulatory projects on ads that cause the most detriment to people. We will prioritise better, explore using machine learning to improve our regulation, look to act more nimbly and simplify our regulation where we can.
4. **Buy-in:** We'll seek greater buy-in from online-only advertisers, retailers, brands, micro- and SME businesses and the social influencer community, by highlighting the benefits of our regulation and being open to regulating differently.

5. **Enforcement:** We will improve how we proactively identify and remove irresponsible ads (particularly online) and our sanctioning of non-compliant advertisers.
6. **Independence:** We will continue to regulate without fear or favour, taking account of the evidence-base at all times. We'll continue to demonstrate the effectiveness of our regulation – including in response to challenges to TV and online ad regulation - through our actions and our communication, but we'll be open-minded to change that strengthens the ASA system.

To find out more, please read our [strategy document](#).

How we regulate

We regulate ads wherever they appear. It's right for us to focus on online ads, because businesses increasingly advertise online, people are spending more time online and the pace of change online contributes to concerns, but we won't take our eye off the important task of making sure ads are responsible in other media too. Resolving complaints will continue to be vital to our work, but so will continuing our proactive regulation.

Our shared values are:

- Proactive
- Collaborative
- Accountable
- Decisive

External stakeholders will also find us

- Independent in administering the Advertising Codes
- Evidence-based, targeted and consistent
- Reflective of society, not a social engineer

Our commitment to good regulation

It's important that those we regulate understand what standards they can expect from us as a regulator.

Together, the ASA and CAP are committed to regulating in a way that is transparent, proportionate, targeted, evidence-based, consistent and accountable.

In Our Commitment to Good Regulation we have set out six commitments – modelled on the Regulators' Code - and some of the practical ways in which we make these commitments a reality through our day-to-day work.

Like the Regulators' Code, our commitments do not take away from our main purpose to ensure that all UK ads are responsible. It remains important for us to continue to strike the right balance between those we regulate and those we protect.

Our six commitments

1. We'll keep regulatory burdens to a minimum
2. We'll engage with you
3. We'll be targeted
4. We'll share information
5. We'll provide advice and training support
6. We'll be transparent

To find out more, please read [Our Commitment to Good Regulation](#).

Vacant positions

We have **three Independent Member vacancies** from April 2020, arising from existing Council members finishing their second three-year terms. The successful applicants will serve on both the Non-broadcast and Broadcast Councils (see immediately below).

To qualify as an Independent Member, you will not have engaged in the business of marketing communications by virtue of current or previous employment by, or directorship of, or the provision of services to, an advertiser, agency or media company in marketing communications' work.

We are particularly interested in candidates with experience of living and/or working in Wales.

Council set-up

The ASA Council is, in fact, two Councils: one for non-broadcast advertising serving the Advertising Standards Authority Ltd; and one for broadcast advertising serving the Advertising Standards Authority (Broadcast) Ltd. Each Council is chaired by the ASA Chair and has 12 additional members. Members fulfil two roles: they are the jury who decide whether ads breach the Advertising Codes and they are the Board of the ASA Ltd and/or ASA (Broadcast) Ltd.

Eight of the members are Independent Members and four are Industry Background Members. The Industry Background Members have experience of the advertising and media businesses but serve in an individual capacity.

The eight Independent Members sit on both Councils. Three Industry Background Members, two from an advertiser background and one from an agency background, sit on both Councils. The remaining position on each Council is taken up by an Industry Background Member from either the non-broadcast or broadcast media, as appropriate.

The adjudicatory role

The core role involves a weekly online task of reviewing, commenting and ruling on recommendations from the ASA Executive about cases. Once established, a Council Member might typically spend two to three hours a week on this task.

In addition, the Council meets monthly (except in August, when there is no meeting), mainly at our London office, but occasionally at other locations in the UK. Council meetings usually take place on a Friday with dates notified at least six months ahead. Proceedings usually begin at 10:30am and are completed by around 3pm.

The Board Director role

Council Members are also Company Directors of the ASA Ltd and ASA (Broadcast) Ltd (as appropriate) and therefore oversee the strategy and performance of those companies.

Other responsibilities

Council Members will also be asked to serve on one of the Council's sub-committees (e.g. the Risk and Audit Committee, the Appointments, Remuneration and People Committee or the Performance Review Committee) and/or attend meetings of CAP's advisory panels (the Industry Advisory Panel or the Promotional Marketing and Direct Response Panel). The Council committees generally meet on two occasions in the year and the CAP panels on perhaps three or four occasions.

On occasion, members will also be expected: to assist the Chair in entertaining visitors to the ASA; to take part in strategy conferences (either at the ASA's office or a location readily accessible from London); to attend one or two Council meetings or events a year in the nations and regions of the UK; and to take part in training.

Register of Interests

The Council maintains a Register of Interests, which can be inspected on application to the Company Secretary.

Timings

The successful candidates will be appointed to serve from **24 April 2020**. Members of the ASA Council typically serve a maximum of two terms of three years each.

Training

There is initial induction training for new Council Members and Council is kept updated at their monthly meetings on developments in policy and regulation.

Remuneration

Members are paid an honorarium of up to £19,000 per annum (the maximum being for those living at a distance from London), plus the reimbursement of reasonable expenses.

Diversity

It is important that the ASA Council is widely representative. We welcome well qualified candidates who are able to devote the necessary time to the work. In particular, we welcome: candidates of any age, race, gender, sexual orientation or religion/belief; candidates with disabilities; candidates who live and/or work in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, with experience of living and/or working in Wales particularly desirable at present.

Recruitment process and power of appointment

Candidates are appointed only after a thorough process that assesses them against the requirements of the role. That process involves short-listing and interviews and is undertaken by the Chair, supported by the ASA Chief Executive (for the short-listing) and

Council Members and an independent person (who participate in the interviews).
Appointments to the Council are made by the Chair, ratified by the appropriate Council.

In choosing Council Members, the Chair aims for complementarity of skills and background. There is no stereotype. All members of the Council are different and bring differing experience, knowledge and abilities.

The Chair's decision on appointments is final and no correspondence will be entered into once the decision is made.

Requirements of the role

Judgement and analysis of complex material

Candidates should be able to demonstrate analytical skills and sound judgement. A study of the ASA's published rulings shows that Council has to deal with complex issues and a mass of detail. So far as possible, Council has to maintain a consistent approach to similar cases.

Independence

Whilst we seek Council Members from different backgrounds, we look for someone who is able to show a genuine independence of mind and approach. Candidates should, if possible, not be too prominently involved in day-to-day party politics (although political experience is not a barrier), nor in special interest or campaign groups that might prejudice their independent judgement in Council business.

Experience/knowledge

All-round experience and knowledge is better than narrow specialism. The most important quality is a critical approach to arguments and evidence. Council obtains external expert advice when it needs it, to assist all the members. That includes legal advice so legal qualifications are neither an advantage nor a disadvantage for Council membership.

Communication and listening skills

Candidates should be able to work effectively as a member of a deliberative Council. That means being able to put a case persuasively in a small meeting, while taking on board the perspective of others.

Engagement with Society

Council Members should have reasonable day-to-day contact with the public or parts of it. Anyone too withdrawn from the community would be unlikely to reflect wider opinion.

Media literacy

Candidates should be typical consumers of TV, radio, non-broadcast and online media. They should be interested in ads in all media.

Advertising awareness

Candidates should be interested specifically in the work of the ASA, as opposed to generalised public service. Candidates should be able to demonstrate awareness and understanding of advertising self-regulation and its purpose, provide some insight into current trends in the world of advertising and have a sense of the challenges facing the industry in the future.

IT literacy

Candidates should be online-literate. Council's weekly work is conducted online, rather than being paper-based. Successful applicants will have regular and reliable access to good-quality IT equipment, with a superfast broadband connection.

Availability/commitments

Candidates should have the time to devote to the task. Candidates must be able to commit to the weekly obligation of reading, listening to or viewing advertisements online, considering complaints, consulting the Codes and any guidance material, assessing recommendations and comparing similar cases.

Health/resilience

Candidates should be likely to be able to serve for at least one three-year term.