

Meeting: Standards Board

Location: Zoom call

Date: 23 February 2021, 15.15 – 17:00

PRESENT:

The Chair (Richard Cooper), Alastair Cannon, Hilary Mundella and Ronnie Paton.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Director – Professional Conduct (Joe Johnson), Director – Regulatory Relations (Sundeeep Takwani), Standards Manager (Laura Murphy), Director – Professional Insights (Mike Suffield) – item 7 only and Regulation Officer (Jo Burns).

1. MINUTES

The Board approved the minutes from the meeting held on 8 September 2020.

The Board reviewed the Actions Log and noted that:

- In respect of Item 7, the Board were updated that the ACCA team in Zimbabwe had been advised that PAAB had not approved the changes to Annex 3 to the GPRs, which align practising certificate and audit qualification (PCAQ) requirements for Zimbabwe with those territories where ACCA is recognised to award the audit qualification (eg UK and Ireland). Therefore amendments may come back to the Standards Board for their approval at a later date.
- The Board noted that an update on the effectiveness review will be brought to the Standards Board meeting being held in May 2021.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

3. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Each member of the Board confirmed that they had no conflict of interest.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

4. CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Board noted the update from the Chair on recent developments.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE, OTHER BOARD ARRANGEMENTS AND WORK PLAN FOR 2020-2021 COUNCIL YEAR

The Board discussed and noted the revised Terms of Reference (TOR). The Board discussed in particular TOR 4 in relation to the promulgation of the Rulebook and agreed that the Chair of Standards Board should have a discussion with ACCA offline on this matter and report back to the Board, prior to the Standards Board meeting in May 2021.

The Board approved the Work Plan for the 2020-2021 Council year, subject to the outcome of the discussion on the Terms of Reference.

[Post meeting note: Meeting between The Chair of Standards Board and ACCA Executive took place on 26 March 2021]

6. PROMULGATION OF RULEBOOK

The Board discussed its responsibility under the TOR to monitor ACCA's arrangements for the promulgation of the ACCA Rulebook and how it could most effectively discharge this responsibility.

The Board agreed that the Chair of Standards Board have a discussion with ACCA offline on this subject and to report back to the Board, prior to the Standards Board meeting in May 2021.

[Post meeting note: Meeting between The Chair of Standards Board and ACCA Executive took place on 26 March 2021]

7. PRESENTATION ON PROFESSIONAL INSIGHTS

The Board noted a presentation from the Director of Professional Insights on the range of areas that Professional Insights (PI) cover.

ITEMS FOR ACTION – RULEBOOK CHANGES TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY 1 APRIL 2021

8. MEMBERSHIP REGULATIONS

The Board approved the proposed amendments to the Membership Regulations (Regulation 3) to reflect the impact of the UK's exit from the EU on the recognition of EEA professional qualifications. The proposed amendments are designed to preserve this direct membership route.

The Board noted that the policy to preserve this direct membership route is subject to Council approval at its March 2021 meeting.

[Post meeting note: ACCA Council approved the policy relating to Membership Regulation 3 at its meeting on 13 March 2021 and delegated such arrangements to the Council Board.]

ITEMS FOR ACTION – RULEBOOK CHANGES TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY 1 JULY 2021

9. GLOBAL PRACTISING REGULATIONS

The Board approved the proposed amendments to the Global Practising Regulations, Annex 1, Appendix 4 (Legal Activities Regulations) to reflect ACCA's withdrawal from probate regulation and the transfer of authorised persons to CILEx Regulation.

ITEMS FOR ACTION – RULEBOOK CHANGES TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY 1 JANUARY 2022

10. REGULATORY BOARD AND COMMITTEE REGULATIONS

The Board approved the proposed amendments to the Regulatory Board and Committee Regulations to:

- address anomalies in the Incompatibility (conflict of interest) provisions and extend the cooling-off period from three to six years – regulation 4(6). The amendments were proposed by the Appointments Board and have been approved by the Regulatory Board.

and

- delete references to regulations that no longer exist – regulation 2(1) of Appendix 1.

The Board discussed the appropriateness of extending the cooling-off period from three years to six years and noted that the Regulatory Board had already approved this change.

ITEMS FOR NOTE

11. CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT

The Board approved the changes to the Code of Ethics and Conduct which reflect IESBA revisions to the International Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including International Independence Standards) to better promote the role and mindset

expected of all professional accountants. The Board noted that ACCA's policy is to incorporate changes to the IESBA Code in their entirety and unaltered.

12. SCHEDULE OF POTENTIAL RULEBOOK CHANGES IN 2021

The Board noted the schedule of potential rulebook changes in 2021 and the schedule of previously approved changes to be implemented in 2021.

13. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Board noted the dates of Standards Board meetings in the Council year 2020-21. The Board welcomed the opportunity to conduct meetings remotely using video conferencing facilities under the current Covid-19 restrictions and that a blended model could be adopted at the appropriate time. The Board also noted that further consideration will be given to whether four meetings per annum was sufficient for the Board to carry out its work.