



## **Candidate Brief**

### **Appointment of Chief Executive Officer The British Accreditation Council**

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Thank you for your interest in this post. This information pack is designed to help you with your application. Please read it carefully before submitting your application. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this pack then please contact me:

Please download further details of the position from [www.maryleboneassociates.com/jobs](http://www.maryleboneassociates.com/jobs)



## Introduction from Peter Williams CBE - Chair

Dear Applicant

Thank you for expressing an interest in the post of Chief Executive of the British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education (BAC). The Council was founded in 1984 to be the national accrediting body for private (i.e. non-publicly-funded) post-16 education in the UK. We are now embarking on a programme of development and diversification which will allow us to continue to meet our basic purposes while enlarging our professional and charitable activities. We are looking to grow, both internationally and within the UK, and to extend BAC's sphere of influence.

Guided by the Council and its Executive Committee, and supported by a small team, the Chief Executive leads the organisation, promotes BAC externally to a wide variety of stakeholders in the UK and overseas, including education providers, sector organisations, policy makers in Government, and other organisations active in the education sector; ensures the provision of a relevant and rigorous cycle of inspections and accreditation to the independent FE, HE and training sectors; and will develop and oversee consultancy and other income-generating services.

The attached information describes the Chief Executive's role in more detail as well as the qualities we shall be seeking in making this appointment. The job is challenging, the opportunities considerable.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Peter Williams', is positioned below the text 'Yours sincerely'.

December 2014

## Background

The British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education (BAC) is an independent, not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. It was founded in 1984 to be the national accrediting body for private (i.e. non-publicly-funded) post-16 education in the UK. It is a registered charity in England and Wales.

The core business of BAC is the accreditation of private colleges and training providers, both in the UK and internationally, and the provision of consultancy services.

BAC currently accredits more than 230 institutions in the UK. These include independent sixth-form colleges, colleges offering aspects of business studies and computer studies, a growing FE sector, and short-course training providers. There is considerable diversity in the programmes offered by accredited institutions, including, for instance, drama training, audio engineering, complementary therapies, Montessori and Steiner teacher training, and animal osteopathy.

Since 2000, BAC has also operated an accreditation service for overseas colleges. At the moment there are around 30 such accredited overseas colleges based in Greece, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, India, Lebanon, Mauritius, South Africa and Switzerland.

## UK Accreditation

BAC accreditation is awarded subject to an institution meeting periodically-reviewed standards. The initial accreditation process involves a rigorous on-site inspection focusing on four or five areas: premises and health and safety; management, staffing and administration; student welfare; teaching, learning and assessment; and the management of quality.

Once accredited, institutions must submit to a regular monitoring process involving annual data returns, financial analysis, and interim, supplementary and spot check inspections. An essential requirement of BAC accreditation is that all institutions continue to meet their statutory obligations to comply with all relevant laws and regulations.

BAC offers carefully designed bespoke variants of its accreditation method for different clients. The main UK scheme is that for colleges, independent higher education institutions, and independent tutorial colleges. Alongside this, BAC offers two specific schemes for Short Course Providers and for Online, Distance and Blended Learning.

BAC has designed its processes with careful attention to fitness for purpose. The independent privately run institutions that seek accreditation with BAC cover an unusually wide range of academic activity and vary greatly in size and character. Many of them are small organisations with only limited resources. It is important therefore that while achieving its stated aims in external quality assurance, the inspection method used by BAC is efficient and economical and does not involve institutions in undue burdens of time or resources.

## International Accreditation

BA has in place two accreditation schemes for providers outside the UK:

The International Higher Education Scheme, for institutions which have a formal agreement with a UK university or awarding body, or are in common ownership with a UK provider already accredited by BAC;

The International Centre Scheme, for providers who do not meet the above criteria, but are well-established, recognised by their local regulatory body and confident that they can meet BAC standards.

## **BAC Educational Consulting**

BAC also offers a consultancy service, clearly separated from its accreditation activity. A team of experienced consultants, drawing on BAC's experience of setting and maintaining standards in the independent education sector offer hands-on expert advice on all areas of best practice, business development and quality enhancement and improvement.

BAC has recently begun to offer its consultancy services internationally.

## **Constitution and organisation**

### **The Council**

BAC is governed by its Council which is comprised of individuals, including one student representative, and nominees of stakeholder organisations which are closely involved in maintaining education standards. Members are required not to have any direct involvement or financial interest in the independent sector of education which could lead to a conflict of interest. The Council meets twice each year, usually in April and November. Any significant changes to BAC's conditions, standards and criteria implemented by the Executive Committee must be ratified by the Council. Membership of the Council has representatives from leading further and higher education bodies in the UK including:

Universities UK

The Council of Validating Universities

GuildHE

The Association of Colleges

Accreditation UK, British Council

UK NARIC (National Recognition Information Centre)

Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)

UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA)

Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB)

The current Chairman of Council is Peter Williams CBE, former Chief Executive of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). Other members of Council have had a leading role in higher education institutions, in international quality assurance bodies, and in business and industry.

Non-voting observers of the Council are nominated by the UK Government's Department for Education, Department for Business, Education and Skills, by UK Visas and Immigration and by Study UK.

### **The Committees of the Council**

For practical purposes, the Council gives delegated authority to two Committees which monitor and implement BAC's work:

The Executive Committee has the same responsibilities as the Board of Directors in a commercial company, providing strategic direction and exercising oversight. Its members are drawn from the Council. The Executive Committee serves as both the Board of Directors of BAC as a company and the Board of Trustees of BAC as a charity. The Committee usually meets four times a year.

The Accreditation Committee (AC), receives the reports of inspections and takes decisions on the award or withdrawal of accreditation, making recommendations to the institutions based on BAC accreditation policy and procedures. It also regularly reviews the criteria used by inspectors in making judgements and recommendations. The AC is appointed by the Executive Committee and consists partly of members drawn from the Council itself and partly of other persons appointed by virtue of their experience and expertise. The current Chairman of the Committee is Mr Richard Lewis, a Board member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). The Committee usually meets four times a year.

### **Recent developments**

BAC has traditionally been a small organisation accrediting a wide range of independent institutions covering many different subject areas. In 2007, the UK Government introduced new regulations requiring institutions that wished to recruit students from outside the EU to be accredited by a recognised accreditation body. BAC was designated one such body. As a result of this new requirement, the number of providers BAC accredited rose from around 200 to a peak of 530 in 2010-11. An abrupt change of policy by the UK Government in 2011 transferred to the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (for HE) and the Independent Schools Inspectorate (for FE) responsibility, through a process of 'Educational Oversight', for accreditation of institutions that recruited international students under Tier 4. One natural consequence of this was that many of the colleges that had sought accreditation from BAC under the previous regime moved to QAA or to the ISI and left BAC. A number remained, however, particularly those that were not dependent on international students or who recruited them on Student Visitor Visas for periods of less than 6 months, as opposed to Tier 4, and at present there are around 230 institutions in accreditation with BAC.

The perturbations of 2011 caused BAC to seek to diversify its activities and income streams. It began to offer consultancy services within the private college sector and is undertaking a contract with the Higher Education Council of Bahrain to develop an accreditation system for private higher education and, subsequently to undertake accreditation visits. The Council wishes to extend and develop this diversity of activities, but not to diminish in any way its core business of institutional accreditation.

### **Staff and Office**

BAC's establishment currently comprises the Chief Executive, Chief Inspector, Operations Manager, Finance Manager, Accreditation Officer, Inspections assistant and General Administrator. Inspections are carried out by a group of about 40 trained self-employed

inspectors with considerable experience of HE and FE regulation and quality assurance processes.

The organisation is based in serviced offices in New Bridge Street in the City of London, near Blackfriars Station. It expects to move to new premises in June 2015.

### **Terms and conditions**

Salary is c£60,000 pa. A pension scheme is available plus other benefits to be discussed on appointment.

## **Job Description**

### **Purpose of Job**

The Chief Executive will be responsible to the Executive Committee (the trustees), through the Chairman, for:

- The effective, efficient and economical leadership, management and administration of BAC and its staff
- Promoting BAC externally to a wide variety of stakeholders in the UK and overseas, including education providers, sector organisations, policy makers in Government, and other organisations active in the education sector
- Ensuring the provision of a relevant and rigorous cycle of inspections and accreditation to the independent FE, HE and training sectors
- Developing and overseeing consultancy and other income-generating services

### **Specific Duties and Responsibilities**

Strategy, leadership and development

- To develop a Strategic Plan for consideration by the Executive Committee
- To develop policy and business proposals for the Executive Committee regarding the strategic direction of BAC
- To implement actions and policies agreed by the Executive Committee, monitoring and evaluating their success
- To review and update the Strategic Plan when appropriate
- To guide BAC towards the achievement of its objectives and targets and to ensure an appropriate financial strategy is in place to facilitate this
- To ensure that the organisation has the resources (human, material and financial) to operate as effectively as possible

### **Governance**

- In consultation with the Chairman, to ensure that the governance of BAC reflects current good practice
- To ensure that the Executive Committee has at its disposal sufficient resources, guidance and professional advice on matters to ensure compliance with its governing instrument and relevant legislation
- To ensure that all legal submissions to regulatory bodies are completed accurately and submitted on time
- To ensure appropriate presentation and reporting to the Executive Committee and Council on the progress of BAC and on all matters relevant to the discharge of its responsibilities

### **Financial management**

- To be responsible to the Executive Committee for the overall financial health of the organisation, ensuring appropriate financial planning, efficient and effective use of

resources, and making sure that expenditure is controlled in line with budgets as approved by the Executive Committee

- To liaise with BAC's staff and the Executive Committee to compile an annual budget
- To ensure that risks to the organisation are identified and managed effectively, and that regular consideration of risks is undertaken by the Executive Committee
- To ensure compliance with all relevant financial legislation

### **Promotion of BAC**

- To maintain effective networks and relationships with stakeholders
- To seek opportunities to expand and promote BAC's activities, in accordance with its governing instrument
- To ensure that BAC is represented in an appropriate and professional manner using all available methods of communication
- To promote with Government and other bodies initiatives relevant to BAC and the sector's interests
- To respond to initiatives relevant to BAC and the sector's interests from Government or other bodies
- To keep abreast of developments in the independent and maintained sectors of FE, HE and training, and to brief Council, through its committees, on relevant issues

### **Staff management**

- To manage office resources and staff in order to meet the organisation's key objectives
- To maintain an HR system which aligns with good practice and maximises the potential of staff
- To provide leadership to the staff, ensuring all have the opportunity to contribute to BAC's activities
- To keep under review and appraise the work of staff reporting directly to the Chief Executive
- To ensure compliance with all relevant employment legislation

### **Business activities**

- To maintain an overview of BAC's accreditation schemes and inspection criteria
- To identify and develop new business opportunities, including consultancies
- To ensure that, in consultation with its clients, additional services provided to accredited providers remain relevant and valued

### **Other activities**

- Any other reasonable duties that may be determined in agreement with the Chairman of the Executive Committee.

### **Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive post is the senior position in the organisation. The holder will be educated to postgraduate or equivalent level and will have considerable experience of organisational management, preferably, though not necessarily, in an educational context. The post requires good administrative and staff management skills, the ability to develop and implement strategy and policy at a high level, financial management knowledge and experience, the ability to exercise authority in a diplomatic manner, and a forward-looking approach to challenges and opportunities. The successful candidate will be an inspirational leader and manager who can demonstrate evidence of vision, adaptability, entrepreneurship, energy, stamina and resilience.



## Person Specification

- Experience in of organisational management, preferably, though not necessarily, in an educational context
- Educated to postgraduate degree level or equivalent
- The ability to develop and implement strategy and policy at a high level
- Commitment to a consultative, inclusive way of working with a small team
- The ability to exercise authority in a diplomatic manner
- Excellent administrative, IT and staff management skills
- Sound financial management & contract negotiation knowledge and experience
- Forward-looking approach to challenges and opportunities
- Demonstrate evidence of vision, adaptability, entrepreneurship, energy, stamina and resilience
- The capacity to expand the activities of BAC and realise development opportunities on a standalone basis or in partnership with other organisations.
- A good communicator at every level with ability to persuade and facilitate change.
- Willingness to travel within the UK and overseas

## Recruitment Process

You should make your application online at [www.maryleboneassociates.com/jobs](http://www.maryleboneassociates.com/jobs)  
When applying online please submit a letter of application, including a personal statement demonstrating how you meet the attached person specification.

For an informal confidential discussion call **Richard Evans** on **07958 984161** or **020 3126 4858**

Closing date for applications: 25 January 2015  
Long List interviews: 30 January – 12 February 2015  
Final Panel Interviews: 20 February 2015

To find out more visit [www.the-bac.org](http://www.the-bac.org)