



**OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS**

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You asked for the Committee's advice about taking up an appointment with the Advertising Standards Agency (ASA).

At ASA you would sit on the Advertising Advisory Committee overseeing the Broadcast Code of Practice. The proposed start date for this appointment is 1 January 2016. It is a paid appointment with a time commitment of around 6 days per year.

When considering your application, the Committee noted that you had occasional contact with ASA as a stakeholder through BIS, when carrying out work on payday lending, and at the Government Equalities Office (GEO), where you worked on body image and the portrayal of women in advertising. However, they also took into account that your former departments, BIS and GEO, have no propriety concerns with this application, and that the role will not involve any lobbying of Government.

The Committee sees no reason why you should not take up this appointment, subject to the following conditions:

- that you should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of yourself or the organisation to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to you from your time as a Minister; and
- for two years from your last day in ministerial office, you should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government on behalf of ASA, its partners or its clients.

By 'privileged information' we mean official information to which a Minister has had access as a consequence of his or her office or employment and which has not been made publicly available. Applicants are also reminded that they may be subject to other duties of confidentiality, whether under the Official Secrets Act, the Civil Service Code or otherwise.

Also, it might be helpful if I add that the Business Appointment Rules explain that the restriction on lobbying means that former Ministers "should not engage in communication with Government – including Ministers, special advisers and officials – with a view to influencing a Government decision or policy [including applications for awards or grants] in relation to their own interests, or the interests of the organisation by which they are employed, or to whom they are contracted".

Once the appointment has been publicly announced or taken up, we will publish this letter on the Committee's website and include the main details of the application, together with the Advisory Committee's advice, in the regularly updated consolidated list on our website and in the next annual report.

Baroness Browning

Jo Swinson