



CEO RECRUITMENT PACK



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A LETTER FROM THE CAVA CHAIR

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at the Cambridge Access Validating Agency (CAVA).

CAVA was founded in partnership between eight further education providers and three higher education institutions more than 20 years ago, united around their central passion for supporting social mobility and lifelong learning. That same passion drives us today to help adults achieve their aspirations through education.

Our original members have stayed with us on this journey, and our membership community has grown to over 30 further education providers and six higher education institutions across England. As an Access Validating Agency (AVA) licensed by the QAA, we design, validate, quality assure, and award the Access to Higher Education (HE) Diplomas. We also work in partnership with the NOCN Group to offer Pre-Access qualifications. We have thousands of adult students studying our courses at our members nationwide every year.

We have a close-knit and friendly team of seven staff members (including the CEO), who are supported by a wide network of subject and Access to HE experts that serve as our external moderators and validation panel members.

We are now seeking a new CEO to take CAVA forward to its next stage of development. We are looking for a leader who shares our passion, possesses excellent strategic and operational skills, and has a proven track record of inspiring positive change.

We are aiming to have the new CEO in post by Summer 2024, with a supported handover period with the outgoing CEO.

Please find detailed information about CAVA, the role, and application process below. If you have any questions or would like an initial information conversation, please feel free to contact the outgoing CEO Flóra Raffai via f.raffai@cava.ac.uk or myself, Chair of CAVA, via g.tash@uea.ac.uk.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Gavin Tash
Chair of CAVA



ABOUT CAVA

Our Mission

CAVA exists to help adults achieve their aspirations through education.

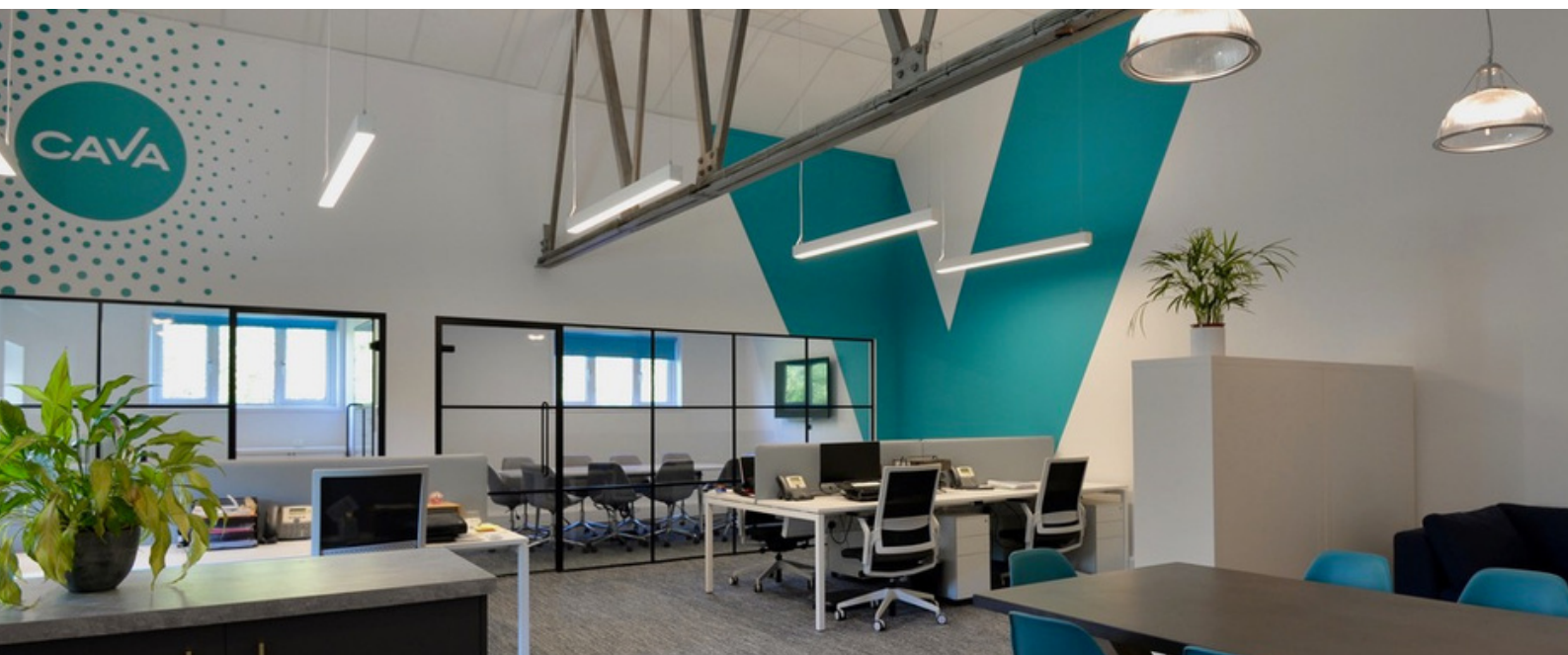
CAVA assures the quality of our Access to Higher Education Diplomas in England, in partnership with our further education and higher education members.

Our Aims

- Support the development, quality assurance, validation, and award of high-quality Pre-Access and Access to Higher Education Diplomas that enable our students to progress into higher education.
- Build a collaborative network of further education and higher education members to achieve the best attainment outcomes for our students.
- Promote the value of Access to Higher Education Diplomas as a valuable option in life planning and educational policy.

Our Values

- CAVA is a critical friend: we are supportive, encouraging, and collaborative.
- CAVA is personal: we make personal connections, we are not a faceless organisation.
- CAVA is passionate: Access to Higher Education Diplomas are our passion, not our product.
- CAVA is learning: we believe in lifelong learning for our students, members, team, and organisation.
- CAVA is an expert: we are Access to Higher Education Diploma experts, it is our sole focus as an organisation.
- CAVA is a champion: we champion social mobility and enable adults to access the best opportunities in life through education.



STRATEGIC VISION FOR CAVA

It is CAVA's strategic vision to be seen as the best AVA by 2030. To achieve that vision, we operate three year strategic cycles. The CAVA Board and members have set the following vision for our upcoming 2024-27 strategic period:

By 2027, CAVA will distinguish itself through rigorous and effective quality assurance, academic development, and continuous enhancement activities, ensuring a unique and unparalleled standard in the delivery of our qualifications.

We commit to surpassing QAA's AVA requirements, viewing the regulatory framework as a benchmark, not the target. Our strength lies in collaboration with our members, aligning our activities with their needs and those of our students.

CAVA aims for sustainable growth in membership, revenue, and staff, enabling expanded activities without compromising quality or integrity. Our approach prioritises long-term favourability, ensuring stability and positive impact.

We aspire to be a prominent thought leader in adult qualifications, garnering national and international recognition and respect for CAVA and the Access to HE Diploma. This strategic aim positions us as a leading influence in shaping the future of adult education.



ROLE PARTICULARS

Location:

Hybrid working
(Two days per week in Cambridge office)

Contract term:

Permanent

Salary band:

£61,350-£72,550

Hours:

37.5 hours per week, Monday to Friday
(Open to discussion around part time)

Reporting to:

CAVA Chair
CAVA Board

Line management of:

Deputy CEO
Quality and Operations Officer
Communications and Events Officer

Additional benefits:

- Auto-enrolled pension scheme with Scottish Widows (15% employer contribution and up to additional 5% match), employee contribution decided by each employee annually)
- 28 days annual leave plus bank holidays
- Group Life Assurance Plan including access to Smart Health, bereavement counselling, probate helpline
- Group Cash Plan including reimbursement of health expenses, counselling and support healthline, virtual GP, health assessments, and perks discounts
- Generous sick pay and parental pay schemes, dependent on period of continuous service
- Employee Assistance Programme helpline
- National Cycle to Work Scheme
- Annual training and development budget
- Biannual team building events

Please note, this is a UK based role and you must have the right to live and work in the UK.

JOB DESCRIPTION

The CEO's key roles are to lead, develop, and direct CAVA as an Access Validating Agency licensed by the QAA.

The key functions of the role are to:

- Lead, develop, and manage CAVA in line with QAA licensing requirements and business best practice;
- Annual operational, financial, and strategic planning through Board and Committees;
- Responsibility for business operations, including HR; Health and Safety; data protection; cyber security; legal matters; corporate social responsibility; and sustainability;
- Lead on three-year strategic planning and translating strategic aims into annual operational plans;
- Oversee effective management of all resources and financial operations, including preparing and monitoring annual budgets; managing CAVA's investment portfolio; and overseeing annual accounts and audit;
- Support and facilitate Deputy CEO to monitor quality systems in CAVA, and lead on annual reporting to QAA;
- Manage the Communications and Events Officer to deliver CAVA's communications strategy;
- Provide effective line management of direct reports; oversee management of the entire CAVA team; and build inclusive and collaborative workplace culture;
- Lead on identifying and building new development and business opportunities;
- Maintain and develop relationships with other AVAs, QAA, and relevant national organisations;
- Represent CAVA at national conferences/events;
- Lobby external stakeholders on Access to HE Diploma and lifelong learning matters.

The CEO will also be expected to:

- Promote and adhere to CAVA's organisational values;
- Promote and implement all CAVA policies, particularly those which refer to employment law; health and safety; equality, diversity, and inclusion; and corporate social responsibility;
- Participate in CAVA programmes of staff appraisal and continuing professional development;
- Comply with the requirements for the UK General Data Protection Regulations;
- Any other duties appropriate to the role and deemed necessary for the effective operation of CAVA.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

	Essential	Desirable
Qualification:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good undergraduate degree (2:1 or above) • Record of continuous professional development and commitment to self-development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postgraduate degree
Experience of:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UK education sector • Senior management • Quality assurance systems and processes • Developing and implementing effective strategic and business plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK Further education and/or higher education sector • Transnational education sector • Education technology (EdTech) • Improving the student experience • Leading and growing a membership organisation • Furthering social mobility agendas
Skills and abilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven strategic leadership • Ability to establish and maintain positive working relationships internally and externally, motivating staff and stakeholders • Strong financial literacy, and ability to manage resources effectively • Excellent communication and people management skills • Excellent team building and networking skills • Strong decision making skills • Advanced administrative organisational skills • Digitally savvy and IT literate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training, coaching, and delegating • Managing and supporting a Governance Board • Developing a communications and marketing strategy • Public speaking • Lobbying and political astuteness

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential

Desirable

Behaviour:

- Compassionate, inspiring, and self-motivating
 - Student-centred
 - A strong commitment to widening participation and social mobility
 - Highly motivated to lead an organisation and build stakeholder loyalty and commitment to CAVA's aims
 - Collaborative working in a no-blame culture
 - Inclusive style of decision making
 - High personal integrity, supportive, and reliable
 - Act as the face of CAVA; its principal ambassador
- Innovative thinking



APPLICATION PROCESS

If you share our values and passion for social mobility through lifelong learning, we would love to hear from you. Please email ceorecruitment@cava.ac.uk to receive the application form for the vacancy.

Closing date for applications: 20 March 2024 by 5pm - applications received after this time may not be considered for the role.

Psychometric testing window: 28 March 2024 - 14 April 2024 (virtual)

Initial interview: 15 April 2024 (virtual)

Final panel interviews: 30 April 2024 (in person - Cambridge)

CAVA is committed to nurturing a staff team and CAVA community that is equal, diverse, and inclusive. We welcome applications from candidates of all backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. We do not discriminate on the grounds of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, race, ethnicity, disability, marital status, pregnancy, parental status, religion, or belief.

As a Disability Confident Employer, CAVA will shortlist applicants who meet the minimum criteria for roles and who live with a disability (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) for interview.

If you require any reasonable adjustment during the application, interview, or psychometric testing process, please contact us at ceorecruitment@cava.ac.uk to discuss your requirements. Please let us know if you require any of the documentation in an alternative format.

CAVA is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. The successful candidate will be subject to an enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references before any final offer can be made.