

A selfless approach to duty

Welcomes

26 September 2022

Welcome to the Deputy President's page for October. Deadlines and publication dates being what they are, I am writing this a few days after we learned the sad news of the death of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. It's often said that you don't miss things until they are gone and for me that seems to be particularly true. One begins to realise that the way she dedicated her life to serving her people, and her selfless approach to that duty, providing the United Kingdom and many other nations with a stability that I now realise I have taken for granted. Over the past few years, we have lived through challenging times, but the Queen has been the one constant, and in some small way that has been a reassurance.

One also begins to realise the enormity of a 70 year reign, particularly when reflecting on how things have changed. When she became Queen in 1952 the NHS was in its infancy, the country was still living with rationing after the end of the Second World War, and to put things into a tax context, the basic rate of income tax was 'nine shillings and sixpence in the pound'. For those of you that are lucky enough not to remember pre-decimal currency, that equates to 47.5%, with a top rate of 97.5%!

Timing also dictates that at the time of writing we are eagerly(?) anticipating the first budget, or 'fiscal event', under the new Prime Minister and Chancellor. As usual, speculation abounds as to what it will contain but if the headlines are to be believed there could well be some significant policy announcements. By the time you read this, we will all be getting to grips with what that means for us and clients.

You might remember from last month's page that I have a particular interest in education, and I was therefore delighted to attend a lunch recently where the ATT was able to honour those who had won prizes in our examinations. Having sat several professional examinations myself I know how challenging they can be, particularly when the candidates have to combine studying at the same time as starting to build their career. To pass the examinations is a great achievement, but I am in awe of those who manage to win a prize, or two.

This was our first Prizewinners lunch for almost three and a half years, the one planned for March 2020 being one of the first casualties of the pandemic, and it was another sign of our long road back to normality. Seven of our prizes are named after the first seven Presidents of the Association and it was pleasing that we were able to welcome three of those Presidents, Peter Gravestock, Frank Collingwood and Trevor Johnson, to award their prizes in person. These occasions are amongst the highlights of our calendar, and an opportunity to celebrate with those that have achieved excellence in our examinations.

I'd also like to remind you of our upcoming series of courses entitled 'Sharpen your Tax Skills' run in conjunction with the AAT. The courses will be held on 7, 9 and 25 November featuring Rebecca Bennyworth and the ATT Tax Technical team. During three live online sessions, Rebecca will take delegates through basis period reform: what you need to know; the cost of living crisis, employee expenses, cars, home working, trivial benefits; and cash basis for traders and landlords – yes or no? In the fourth and final session, Rebecca, together with the ATT technical team, will build on the morning's topics with practical scenarios and case studies to illustrate their significance for your clients and your work. The session will also pick up the implications of any tax changes announced by the new Chancellor. We expect this to be a lively session with a lot of audience participation. This is an excellent opportunity to gain some CPD and the sessions are always very well received.

When I next write, we'll know exactly what was in the upcoming 'fiscal event' and perhaps have a clearer picture of the direction of travel with regards to taxation and national insurance. Until then, I would like to add my own warmest wishes to our new Sovereign, King Charles III.

Message of condolence on the passing of HM Queen Elizabeth II from the ATT

On behalf of the Association of Taxation Technicians, we are deeply saddened at the death of her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The ATT would like to offer our sincere condolences to the entire Royal Family as they come to terms with the loss of such a magnificent figurehead. The Queen selflessly dedicated her life to her country, the Commonwealth and her subjects and was an example to us all. As with much of the rest of the public, the ATT has been in a period of mourning and then reflection on the long reign of the Queen and how our country has changed, evolved and progressed.

David Bradshaw, ATT President