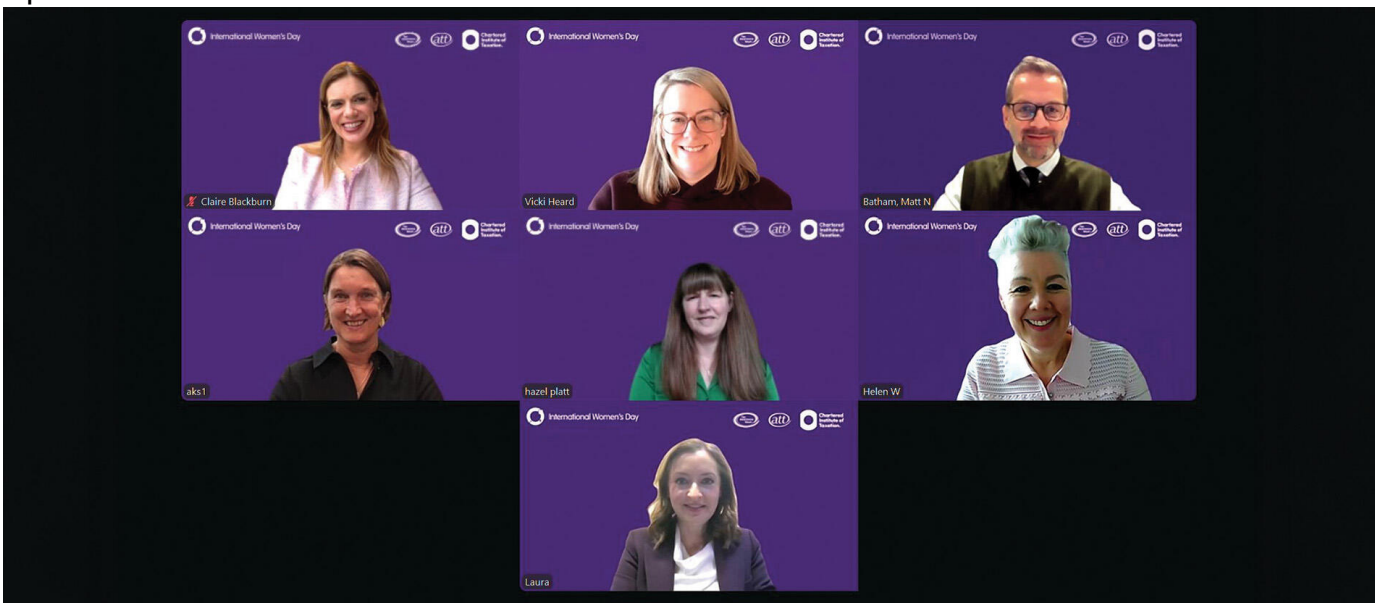
Webinar : Leaders in Tax: careers, confidence and mentoring

Briefings

April 2026



25 March 2026

CIOT and ATT marked International Women's Day 2026 and Tax Awareness Week with a Leaders in Tax webinar, bringing together senior figures from across the profession to share reflections on their careers and leadership journeys.

Chaired by Helen Whiteman, CEO of the CIOT, the panel featured Ali Sapsford (RSM), Claire Blackburn (PwC), Hazel Platt (Grant Thornton), Laura Mair (EY), Matt Batham (Deloitte) and Vicki Heard (KPMG). Drawing on their own experiences, the speakers discussed pivotal moments that shaped their careers, as well as the people and opportunities that supported their progression.

A central theme of the discussion was the concept of 'give to gain' – the importance of investing time in others, building professional relationships and contributing to the wider profession. Several speakers reflected on the role that mentors and sponsors had played in their development, encouraging attendees to seek out

honest feedback and guidance. The panel also highlighted that mentoring can be mutually rewarding, with mentors often gaining just as much from the relationship as mentees.

The importance of confidence and self-belief was another key takeaway. Panel members spoke about the value of being open about career ambitions and asking for opportunities, even when feeling uncertain. Reframing self-doubt – moving from ‘I can’t do that’ to ‘I can’t do that yet’ – was highlighted as an important mindset shift in supporting long-term career growth.

Panellists also reflected on the importance of running your own race rather than comparing career progress with others. Building strong professional relationships, investing in people and supporting colleagues were identified as critical factors in both career success and effective leadership.

Throughout the session, speakers emphasised the importance of kindness, generosity and ‘cheerleading’ others. Leadership in the tax profession, they noted, extends beyond technical expertise and includes creating opportunities for others to develop and flourish.

By bringing together senior leaders to share their experiences, the webinar offered valuable insights for professionals at all stages of their careers and reinforced the role that mentorship, openness and community play in shaping the future of the tax profession.