

Application for authorisation

Full consumer credit firm – Notes

Please take time to read these notes carefully. They will help you to fill in the application correctly.

When completing the application form you will need to refer to the Handbook:

www.fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/

If after reading these notes you need more help please:

- check our website
- consult the Handbook: www.fshandbook.info/FS/index.jsp
- call the Customer Contact Centre: 0845 606 9966
- email the Customer Contact Centre: firm.queries@fca.org.uk

These notes, while aiming to help you, do not replace the rules and guidance in the Handbook.

Terms in these notes

These notes use the following terms:

- 'you' refers to the person(s) signing the form on behalf of the Applicant;
- 'the Applicant' refers to the firm applying for authorisation;
- 'the FCA', 'we', 'us' or 'our' refers to the Financial Conduct Authority; and
- FSMA refers to the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000.

Important information

At the point of authorisation we expect the applicant to be ready, willing and organised to start business.

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New authorisation application

We need to know about the business the applicant intends to carry on so we can ensure it is authorised for the correct regulated activities and to assess the adequacy of its resources.

What products does the applicant intend to sell?

For more information about what a consumer credit firm is see our glossary at: <http://fshandbook.info/FS/html/FCA/Glossary>

What type of authorisation is the applicant applying for?

Firms carrying out only one or more relevant credit activity (see Glossary definition) can apply for a limited permission, to which reduced application and annual fees apply and which are subject to revised threshold conditions. Please refer to COND 1.1A for details of the limited permission activities – applicants who select limited permission will only be able to apply for these. All other firms should select that they are applying for full permission.

Has the applicant previously traded?

If the person applying for authorisation has traded at all to date you should answer 'yes' to this question, even if this person has been previously authorised by us or by another financial services regulatory body.

Are you, or will you be, a sole trader?

A sole trader operates as an individual without the use of a company structure or partners and has sole responsibility for the actions of the business. Business finances cannot be separated from personal finances insofar as the sole trader has unlimited personal liability and is personally responsible for any liabilities incurred by the business.

A sole trader generally:

- has the right to make all decisions affecting the business
- owns all the assets of the business
- is responsible for paying income tax on profits of the business
- is responsible for the debts and obligations of the business without any limit

Application contact details

Associated firm

Please enter the contact details of the person we will get in touch with about this application.

This should generally be someone in the UK.

Timings for this application

Is there a date by which you would like this application approved?

This would be where, for example, the authorisation is linked to a company running an advertising campaign or a product launch.

The time taken to determine each application is significantly affected by the quality of the application submitted and whether it is complete.

We are required by law to determine applications within the earlier of: (a) six months of receipt of a completed application; or (b) 12 months of receiving an incomplete application. However, we aim to make a decision about the application as soon as possible and we publish service standards setting out target and actual performance in processing applications. For details of our current performance against these standards please see our website.

Firm details

Firm details

Is the applicant currently authorised/ registered with the FCA/PRA not including an interim permission?

No additional notes.

If yes, give your Firm Reference Number.

No additional notes.

Firm name

No additional notes.

Interim permission details

Does the applicant have an interim permission (IP) for consumer credit? (please note that IP holders are unable to submit an application for authorisation until their application period or 'landing slot' commences but that they are able to use the system to draft their application in advance of this).

No additional notes.

- **If yes, Please provide the applicant's consumer credit interim permission reference number (or its former OFT licence number).**

No additional notes

Please note the next question is only asked if you have previously traded.

Has the applicant completed any credit agreements with consumers before becoming authorised, or completed any credit agreements with consumers that fall outside the scope of a current consumer credit interim permission?

No additional notes.

- **If yes, has the applicant applied (or is the applicant going to apply) for a validation order relating to these agreements? (A validation order also covers an application for compensation / to keep repayments of an unauthorised loan).**

The provisions on enforceability of agreements are highly complex and this brief guidance which merely seeks to give an overview is no substitute for seeking professional advice.

Regulated credit agreements made by a lender carrying on the regulated activity of entering into such agreements by way of business or regulated consumer hire agreements made by an owner carrying on the regulated activity entering in regulated consumer hire

agreements by way of business whilst unauthorised cannot be enforced against the customer. Similarly, agreements made because of something said or done by another person in the course of a regulated activity, either by a person who ought to have been authorised and is not, or in the course of lending or debt collecting by a person who is authorised but without one of those permissions, cannot be enforced against the customer.

In addition, a person who exercises the rights of the lender (as lender or as debt collector) under a credit agreement may not enforce the agreement against the customer where he/she does not have a permission for debt collecting or entering into or exercising the rights or having the right to exercise the rights of a lender under such an agreement.

In addition where a person carries on debt collecting by way of business or takes steps to procure payment of debts as a lender by way of business, an agreement may not be enforced against a customer by a person for the time being exercising the rights of the lender, unless he/she has permission for debt collecting or to exercise the rights of the lender.

A validation order granted by the FCA may, for example, permit agreements that are rendered unenforceable by FSMA to be enforced.

➤ **If yes, does the applicant have their own legal assessment?**

If yes, you must provide such assessment of the position under the unenforceability provisions.

Firm address details

Principal place of business of firm

No additional notes.

About the legal status of the applicant

What type of firm is the applicant?

The applicant must fall into one of the categories listed to apply for authorisation:

Sole trader

A sole trader operates as an individual without the use of a company structure or partners and has sole responsibility for the actions of the business. Business finances cannot be separated from personal finances insofar as the sole trader has unlimited personal liability and is personally responsible for any liabilities incurred by the business.

A sole trader generally:

- has the right to make all decisions affecting the business
- owns all the assets of the business
- is responsible for paying income tax on profits of the business
- is responsible for the debts and obligations of the business without any limit

Public limited company

To be a plc, the company's constitution must state it is a public company, its name must end with 'plc', and it must satisfy requirements about the minimum amount of its share capital.

A plc may apply to have its shares listed on the London Stock Exchange or on the Alternative Investment Market. This means that a price will be quoted at which dealings in the company's shares will take place.

The structure is broadly similar to a private limited company. However, there are subtle technical differences, including, for example, that plcs must have at least two directors whereas private companies only require one.

Differences in practice include the fact that in a plc:

- different people are likely to be shareholders (who are likely to include institutional investors) and directors (who are more likely to be employees)
- shareholders find it a lot easier to sell their shares
- the company must pay dividends to its shareholders

Private limited company

An entity incorporated by registration under the Companies Act 1985 whose members (i.e. shareholders) have a limited liability towards their company. Its name must end with 'Limited' or 'Ltd'. 'Limited liability' means that the members' liability is limited to paying to the company the price they have agreed to pay for their shares – after the shares are fully paid up no further liability exists. The company has its own legal personality so is separate from the individual(s) who formed the company and from directors/shareholders.

Decisions affecting the business, the company or its assets are made either by directors or by shareholders. The division of powers between board meetings (directors' decisions) and general meetings (shareholders' decisions) imposes a more formal regime on companies compared to partnerships and sole traders. In private companies the same people are often the directors and the major shareholders.

The company alone is responsible for the debts and obligations of the business, even in insolvency (with some exceptions). The obligations concerning the publishing of company information are more onerous than for sole traders and partnerships.

Unincorporated association

An unincorporated association is a group of individuals who enter into an agreement as volunteers to form a body (or organization) to accomplish a purpose.

Partnership (other than limited partnership or limited liability partnership)

A partnership consists of two or more people carrying on a business with a view to profit. Unlike a company, a partnership does not have a legal personality of its own and therefore partners are personally liable for the debts of the firm for the period that they were partners – even after leaving the partnership.

Partners generally share:

- the right to take part in making decisions which affect the partnership or the partnership assets, although they may have agreed that this right be limited in some way e.g. they may be sleeping partners who have agreed not to be involved in day-to-day matters
- the ownership of the assets of the partnership
- the net profits of the partnership – not necessarily equally
- responsibility for the debts and obligations of the business without any limit, although if one does not pay then the other partners must pay his share

Limited partnership

A limited partnership is a form of partnership similar to a general partnership, except that in addition to one or more general partners (GPs), there are one or more limited partners (LPs). It is a partnership in which only one partner is required to be a general partner.

Limited liability partnership

An LLP is a recognised legal entity because of the Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2000. LLPs are legal entities that are capable of entering into contracts in their own right, and are correspondingly liable for debts under those contracts. Any two people associated for carrying on a lawful business with a view to profit can set up as an LLP.

A LLP has some features of a limited company and some of a partnership. For example, it can have the organisational flexibility of, and a similar tax regime to, a partnership.

However, although the partners of a partnership are liable personally for the partnership's obligations, an LLP (like a limited company) is a separate legal entity that is owned by its members (equivalent to shareholders). It allows members to protect their personal assets from the liabilities of the LLP.

If the person applying for authorisation is incorporated as an LLP, you should ensure that the LLP agreement (or a draft of this) is included with your application. You should also take note of the required terms for members' capital relevant to the prudential category of the applicant that will need to be included in this agreement. These are set out in the FCA Handbook – refer to CONC 10 for capital requirements for debt management firms, IPRU-INV annex A.

Other legal statuses

You must provide details of the Applicant's constitution and different sources of the Applicant's capital.

Please note the following four questions will not be displayed if you are a sole trader:

What was the date of the incorporation or formation of the applicant?

No additional notes.

In which country was the applicant incorporated or formed?

No additional notes

If not in the UK, Registered Overseas Reference Number

No additional notes.

Companies House Registration Number

No additional notes.

Date of the applicant's financial year end (dd) and date of the applicant's financial year end month (mm)

Once authorised, this is the date that will be used to determine the firm's deadlines for reporting to us.

If the applicant is a limited company the date you enter here must match that in the Companies House Registration.

Other address details

Please note the following two questions will not be displayed if you are a sole trader or a partnership:

Please tick this box if the registered office address is the same as the principal place of business.

If it is not the same as the principal place of business you will be required to enter the registered office address.

Please tick this box if the head office address is the same as the principal place of business / registered office

This address must be in the UK unless the applicant is a branch of an overseas company.

If it is not the same as the registered office or the principal place of business you will be required to enter the head office address.

Website details

If the applicant has a website, provide details below

We may look at this when processing the application. If the applicant is developing a website please provide the name and an approximate launch date.

If the applicant is intending to launch a website, provide the address (above) and launch date if known.

No additional notes.

Companies House confirmation

The applicant must confirm that all relevant details match Companies House records.

This confirmation applies to Applicants who are incorporated firms registered at Companies House. If you are not an incorporated firm (e.g. sole traders and partnerships) you should answer N/A.

Firm contact details

Contact person's details for the Financial Services Register.

You will need to confirm that the person named as the firm's contact person has been informed that their details will be displayed on the Financial Services Register as the firm's contact for complaints.

Tick if the contact person's address details are the same as the principal place of business.

If the contact person's address details are not the same as the applicant's principal place of business you will be required to enter the address.

Details of auditor / reporting accountant

If you are a small firm then you are not legally required to have an auditor / reporting accountant.

Any applicant that falls within the table in SUP 3.1.2 R is required to have an auditor. The table also sets out which sections of SUP will be applicable to the Applicant. You can find the table at:

www.fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/SUP/3.

Auditors can act as a source of information for us in our ongoing supervision of firms. They will report, where required, on the financial resources of the firm, the accuracy of its reports to us and a firm's compliance with particular rules and requirements – for example, the client asset rules.

If this section applies to you, SUP 3 and in particular, SUP 3.3 – Appointment of Auditors will give you guidance on appointing auditors.

Please note in certain circumstances, we may ask you to verify information that you have submitted or need to submit as part of the application. As part of the authorisation process we can require you to provide a report (on any aspect) necessary to the determination of the application and to have it verified, for example, by an auditor, reporting accountant, actuary or other qualified person approved by us. If this is needed during the process, we will discuss it with you at the earliest opportunity.

Details of professional adviser

Please note that while we will copy correspondence to the applicant's professional advisers, we will always deal directly with the applicant when processing the application.

The applicant may decide to use a professional adviser to help them with regulatory returns or ongoing compliance matters. However, the applicant is responsible for ensuring all answers are completed fully and honestly. It is a criminal offence to knowingly or recklessly give FCA false or misleading information.

Locum details

Please note the locum arrangements must cover a broad range of permissions that the applicant will be authorised for.

If your firm is solely dependent on one individual to run the business, you will need to have arrangements in place with another firm who has the same permissions as yourself, to assist help your customers on a temporary basis due to unforeseen circumstances that might befall the individual.

Other trading names

If the applicant intends to use any trading names as well as the registered name, provide details below.

This is important for your ongoing supervision, if authorised, so we can track a firm's activity through any financial promotions, e.g. adverts. It may also help us in the handling of any complaints against the firm.

Permissions and fees

Background

When applying for authorisation you are responsible for ensuring that the regulated activities requested adequately cover the activities the applicant intends to carry on.

You need a Scope of Permission Notice that matches the applicant's needs and covers every aspect of regulated business it wants to carry on.

Getting the applicant's permission notice right at the outset is fundamental. In the event that the applicant is authorised with the wrong permission notice, it will be breaching our rules.

The permission notice shows the range of regulated activities the applicant will be authorised to carry on and if applicable the types of regulated credit agreements the permission covers. It will also contain what we refer to as 'requirements' and 'limitations' for example, whether it is entitled to canvass off trade premises certain types of agreement. In broad terms, limitations are restrictions placed on specific regulated activities (e.g. not to deal with retail customers) and requirements will be placed on the activities of the firm as a whole to take or not to take specified actions (e.g. not to hold client money).

If the applicant carries on a regulated activity that is not set out in its permission notice it could be in breach of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (FSMA) and subject to enforcement action. In addition it could where it carries on lending or debt collecting be committing an offence if it does not have the relevant permission.

Wording of the Scope of Permission Notice

The Scope of Permission Notice will follow the wording in the Perimeter Guidance PERG 2 (Annex 2). You can find this at:

www.fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/PERG/2

Requested permissions

Which regulated activities do I need?

You will need to look at the list of regulated activities and decide which are relevant to the applicant. You will then need to build up each of these activities by selecting requirements and considering whether any limitations are applicable.

You can find a full description of each regulated activity in PERG 2.7 at: <http://www.fshandbook.info/FS/html/FCA/PERG/2/7>

You may also find it useful to look at the FCA Glossary: www.fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/Glossary

Don't be put off by the language. We need to use formal language to mirror how the activities are described in the Regulated Activities Order (Specified

Activities). The Permission profile is a legal document that sets out the scope of your permission for regulatory purposes.

Agreeing to carry on a regulated activity

Under our permissions regime, agreeing to carry on a regulated activity is a regulated activity in its own right. We grant permissions for this regulated activity, as appropriate, to applicants applying for authorisation so this must be selected.

Do I need to limit the scope of any activities?

Limitations are specific to a particular regulated activity and will restrict the way it is carried out, in some way.

A limitation may come about as a result either of a request by you or a decision by us to impose one.

For more details on the limitations of permissions please see COND 1.1A-
<http://fshandbook.info/FS/html/FCA/COND/1/1A>

Requested requirements

Should any requirements apply to the applicant's permission?

Limitations apply to specific regulated activities (see above) whereas requirements apply to the firm's permission as a whole. Requirements aim to ensure a firm takes or does not take a specified action, for example, the firm must not hold or control client money.

As with limitations, a requirement may come about because you request it or we decide to impose one. If it is the latter, we will discuss this with you when processing your application.

There are various standard client money requirements. For further details about these, see Annex 5 of the MiFID Permissions and Notifications Guide.

Debt management services

If debt adjusting or debt counselling is one of your regulated activities then you will be asked the following question:

Will the applicant be carrying out debt management services?

Please see the [glossary](#) for further details.

Client money

In relation to investment business, these rules are in CASS.

Specifically, the Applicant must comply with our minimum requirements for:

- segregating client money into a statutory trust (CASS 5.3)
- segregating client money into a non-statutory trust (CASS 5.4)

Does the applicant intend to hold client money?

The rules and guidance about how applicants hold client money are designed to provide an adequate level of protection for consumers.

If yes, please state for the applicant, if it holds or has held client money, the highest amount in the last calendar year, or if it did not

hold client money in the previous calendar year, the highest amount of client money it projects that it will hold in the current calendar year.

We will use the data supplied in answer to the above question to discuss with the applicant its likely CASS stratification into one of two CASS firm groups (CASS small, debt management firm or CASS, large debt management firm. This in turn drives CASS firms' reporting requirements (the Client Money and Assets Return - CMAR) and the requirement for a CASS large debt management firm to have an approved persons pre-approved for the CASS oversight function (CF10a). The table below confirms the banding and reporting/CF10a requirements.

Applicants are reminded that CASS 1A.2.2R (1) places an obligation on a firm to determine its classification into one of the three categories on an annual basis

CASS firm type	Highest total amount of client money held during the firms last calendar year or that it projects to hold during the current calendar year	Reporting/CF10a Requirements
CASS large debt management firm	An amount equal to or greater than £1m	See form CCR005 in SUP 16 Annex. Annual or half yearly depending annual revenue for credit related regulated activities whether is up to or over £5 million. Must apply for CF10a*
CASS small debt management firm	Less than £1m	See form CCR005 in SUP 16 annex. Annual or half yearly depending annual revenue for credit related regulated activities whether is up to or over £5m.

* We reserve the right to interview the CF10a applicant to establish the competence and ability to adequately perform the role.

Credit repair services

If providing credit information services is one of your regulated activities then you will be asked the following question.

Will the applicant be carrying out credit repair services?

No additional notes.

Professional staff

You will only be asked this question if you are a sole trader.

Does the applicant employ professional staff?

We are referring to any professional staff that are employed for your credit activities.

If yes, how many professional staff does the applicant employ?

No additional notes.

Appointed representatives

Does the applicant intend to appoint any appointed representative?

An appointed representative (AR) acts as an agent for a Principal. The Principal must be a firm that is FCA authorised. The Principal must accept responsibility for the activities of the appointed representative. There must be a written contract between the Principal and the AR documenting this arrangement. See section 39 of FSMA and the regulations under that section and SUP 12 which includes guidance, and requirements including the requirement to complete a form before appointing an appointed representative (see SUP 12.7).

If yes, How many appointed representatives is the applicant presently intending to appoint at the point of authorisation?

No additional notes.

History of applicant

Has the applicant ever been refused – or had revoked – any license, membership, authorisation, registration or permission granted by a financial services regulator or government body in the UK or overseas?

No additional notes

Has the applicant ever, after making an application to a regulatory body for any of the following:

- a licence
 - authorisation
 - registration
 - notification
 - membership
 - other permission granted by a regulatory body
- decided not to proceed with it?**

No additional notes.

Fees and levies

What is the applicant's projected annual income from activities as applied for in the permissions section of this application (in GBP)?

No additional notes.

Confirm number in words.

No additional notes.

Declaration of ongoing FCA fees liability

You must confirm that the applicant understands they are liable and remains liable to pay fees until the FCA cancels their permissions.

No additional notes.

Consumer credit supplement

Regulatory business plan

Please attach the applicant's business plan.

We need to know about the business the applicant intends to carry on so we can ensure it is authorised for the correct regulated activities, and to assess the adequacy of its resources.

We see the regulatory business plan as an important regulatory tool for the applicant and us in measuring the applicant's business risk and control over any regulatory concerns. You can find further information about this in:

www.fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/SYSC/3/2

Bearing in mind the threshold conditions, we need to be satisfied that the applicant can:

- identify all regulated activities and any unregulated activities it intends to carry on
- identify all the likely business and regulatory risk factors
- explain how it will monitor and control these risks
- take into account any intended future developments

Please remember that the applicant's regulatory business plan is an important part of the overall application and integral to our decision-making process. It is important that the regulatory business plan is tailored to the applicant's activities. The amount of detail submitted should be proportionate to the nature of the business the applicant intends to carry on. For example, a small firm seeking to carry on a business with a risk you perceive as low, should have a smaller and less complex business plan than a business plan for a complex high-risk firm. The level of detail should also be appropriate to the risks to the applicant's customers.

Providing an incomplete or non-specific regulatory business plan is likely to result in further questions and the application may take longer to be determined as a result.

You can find further information about our requirements and expectations for business plans at www.fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/COND/2/4

Which sales channels does the applicant intend to use and what will each method of sale be as a percentage of total sales?

If 'other' is selected, please give details below of the channels the applicant intends to use and the approximate percentages.

To assess this application fully, we need as much insight as possible into how the applicant intends to carry on business.

How will the applicant source customers?

No additional notes.

The applicant must provide the following:

- **A brief description of the disclosure documents (e.g. SECCI, Terms of business) that the Applicant will give to its customers.**
- **Information on which stage of the sales process the disclosure documents will be provided.**

To assess this application fully, we need as much insight as possible into how the applicant intends to carry on business. And how it intends to comply with the rules in the Consumer Credit Act 1974, for example, concerning pre-contract information and the specified information in agreements and with the Consumer Credit sourcebook.

All business activities

Does the applicant intend to carry on any unregulated business activities?

No additional notes.

Total unregulated activities.

No additional notes.

Description of unregulated business the applicant will be conducting.

No additional notes.

How will the applicant be remunerated?

No additional notes.

If the applicant intends to generate income from any other activities, please provide percentages (where applicable).

No additional notes.

Additional questions

Does the applicant make any use of premium rate numbers?

No additional notes.

If the applicant will be undertaking any distance marketing as part of its regulated credit activities please provide full details (including how this is carried out to comply with CONC 2.7 and 11.1).

No additional notes.

Is the applicant currently taking over the business of any other firm or are there any plans for the applicant to do so? (Or if already trading, has the applicant acquired the business of any other firms in the last five years?)

No additional notes.

Will the applicant be conducting any regulated credit business in the home of a customer (or a prospective customer)?

No additional notes.

Does the applicant have procedures to determine whether to make a loan to a customer?

No additional notes.

Will the applicant be increasing the amount of credit during agreements?

No additional notes.

Does the applicant make use of continuous payment authorities (CPA) when collecting payments?

No additional notes.

Will the applicant be providing high-cost short-term credit?

No additional notes.

Will any of the loan agreements offered under the systems operated by the applicant be high cost short term credit agreements?

No additional notes.

If the applicant is involved in pawn broking please attach a draft of the pre-contract information to be provided.

No additional notes.

Scale of business

How many customers does the applicant expect to have in relation to its regulated activities?

No additional notes.

Business risks

What are the main business risks for the applicant and how does it intend to manage those risks?

Here are some examples then should be considered, depending on the nature of the applicant's business:

External risks:

The applicant should:

- Identify competitors and assess their reaction to the applicant's presence in the market, if applicable.
- Consider critical economic factors that should then be analysed and assessed. For example, it may be useful to explore the effect on the applicant's business if there were large-scale local redundancies, a recession in the economy, low interest rates or limited demand for its products/services.

Internal risks:

The applicant should:

- undertake a sensitivity analysis of various scenarios and the possible outcomes (this could be a reduction in business or an equally large increase in business – for example, towards the end of a tax year)
- consider how the applicant would manage if it lost key staff
- prepare and maintain a contingency plan that deals with the applicant's identified key risks

Branches

Will the applicant have any branches in the UK that intend conducting regulated activities?

No additional notes.

If yes, number of branches and general location of branches.

No additional notes.

Outsourcing with third parties

What functions (if any) will the applicant outsource?

Outsourcing is the act of one firm contracting with another to provide services that might otherwise be performed by in-house employees. You must include details of the parties that the functions will be outsourced to and how the applicant will monitor and control the outsourced functions.

Treating customers fairly

Has the applicant carried out a TCF self-assessment?

No additional notes.

TCF should be a key consideration for all new firms. Please tell us how the fair treatment of customers has been considered in the development of the applicant's business plan.

No additional notes.

How will the applicant's senior management ensure that TCF is embedded in the culture of the firm and that it can demonstrate that the firm is consistently delivering fair outcomes to consumers?

No additional notes.

What have the management of the applicant identified as the key risks to consumers in its model and what action has been taken to mitigate these risks?

No additional notes.

All applicants must provide the following

An opening balance sheet to demonstrate how the applicant will meet its financial resources requirement at the date of authorisation.

This is a balance sheet prepared as at the start of your trading as an authorised firm.

A forecast closing balance sheet for the first 12 months of trading as an authorised firm.

This is a balance sheet showing the financial position of the applicant as it is forecasted to be after 12 months of trading.

A monthly cash flow forecast for the first 12 months of trading as an authorised firm.

The cashflow statement shows how a firm is paying for its operations and future growth, by detailing the 'flow' of cash into and out of the firm.

The cashflow statement is normally similar to the profit and loss statement but shows the actual financial position of a firm at any time. So if a firm starts with share value of £10,000 then this is the starting figure. Include this in your profit and loss to take it forward and for every month you will have income and expenses deducted, showing you the actual financial position of the company at any time.

A monthly profit and loss forecast for the first 12 months of trading. As a minimum, the profit and loss forecast must disclose the following on a monthly basis:

a) gross income, analysed between regulated and un-regulated activities

b) business expenditure, relevant annual expenditure, analysis of the major overheads expenditure

c) profit before taxation

A profit and loss account shows the firm's income and expenditure for a set period. You must send us 12 forecast profit and loss accounts, one for each of the first 12 months of trading as an authorised firm.

Is the applicant currently trading?

No additional notes

If yes, you must provide the applicant's latest end of year accounts and up-to-date management accounts.

No additional notes.

Financial resources

Depending on the answer you gave earlier in the form about the legal status of the firm depends on the questions you will be asked on financial resources.

Public Limited Company or Private Limited Company

You must state the amounts of the different sources of the applicant's capital.

We need to know the sources of the capital in the applicant and how these amounts are made up. Capital is the money or assets in your business. The different types are described briefly below.

- Fully paid-up ordinary shares: These are ordinary shares that the applicant has been paid for in full. Ordinary shares are the most common type of share. They carry full voting and dividend rights and their owners are the owners of the company.
- Share premium account: This is a reserve of money set up in the applicant's accounts to account for the issue of new shares above their par value. i.e. if you issue some shares at £1 each, and you keep some back which you then sell at £1.50 each, you put the extra 50p into the share premium account.
- Preference shares: These are shares that pay a fixed dividend. Holders of preference shares receive their dividend before holders of ordinary shares. For our defined term, please see the Handbook Glossary entry from preference share at: www.fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/Glossary/P.

- Audited reserves: These are past earnings that the applicant has retained, as verified by its auditors. For firms not required to appoint an auditor, under the Companies Act 1985, for their accounts, these will be unaudited.
- Verified interim net profits: These are the net profits made after the applicant's last annual financial statement, as verified by its auditor. For firms not required to appoint an auditor, under the Companies Act 1985, these will be interim profits which have not been verified by an auditor.
- Revaluation reserves: These are reserves kept to allow for the depreciation of any assets.
- Subordinated loans: These are loans that rank below other unsubordinated debt in the queue for repayment should the applicant be wound up. They can only count as part of its capital if they satisfy the conditions laid out in the relevant parts of the Handbook (see for example, CONC 10 for debt management firms).

Where assets are included in the applicant's financial resources and they are subject to depreciation, please take this into account when calculating the value of those assets.

Sole traders

You must provide the following information.

You need to send us a statement of your personal assets and liabilities, together with a statement of your business assets and liabilities. The statement of assets and liabilities should detail all assets, (i.e. anything with a positive value including money, property and investments) and all liabilities (anything with a negative value).

Where assets are included in the applicant's financial resources and they are subject to depreciation, please take this into account when calculating the value of those assets.

Before completing the statement of personal assets and liabilities or the statement of business assets and liabilities please note:

- Only include your share of any assets and liabilities that are jointly owned by another party, such as your husband/wife/civil partner.
- Current market value (not the price paid or nominal value) of quoted investments – only include readily realisable securities, unit trust and other packaged products.
- Where applicable current market value (e.g. property) should be estimated.

Partnership

How many partners are in the partnership?

If you have five or less partners you will be asked to provide a statement of personal assets and liabilities for each partner. The statement of assets and liabilities should detail as assets, (i.e. anything with a positive value including money, property and investments) and all liabilities, (anything with a negative value).

Where assets are included in the applicant's financial resources and they are subject to depreciation, please take this into account when calculating the value of those assets.

If you have over five partners you will be asked to submit this information using a template.

You must provide the following information about the Partnership

Before completing the statement of personal assets and liabilities or the statement of business assets and liabilities please note:

- Only include your share of any assets and liabilities that are jointly owned by another party, such as your husband/wife.
- Current market value (not the price paid or nominal value) of quoted investments – only include readily realisable securities, unit trust and other packaged products.
- Where applicable current market value (e.g. property) should be estimated.

Do you have a partnership deed?

This should be attached where applicable.

Limited Liability Partnership

You must state the amounts of the different sources of the applicant's capital.

A limited liability partnership (LLP) is a vehicle incorporated under the Limited Liability Partnership Act 2000, which limits the liability of each of the partners to their respective capital contributions.

You must tell us how the capital in the partnership is sourced. Capital is the money or property or other assets owned by the business. The different types of sources are described below:

- Member's capital agreement. This is the legal agreement between the members of the LLP which should show the make-up and value of the capital.
- Members' reserves. These are the past earnings of the applicant that have been retained by it on its balance sheet.
- Subordinated loan. These are loans that rank below other unsubordinated debt in the queue for repayment if the applicant is wound up. They can only count as part of your capital if they satisfy the conditions laid down in our Handbook rules (see CONC 10 in relation to debt management firms).

Where assets are included in the applicant's financial resources and they are subject to depreciation, please take this into account when calculating the value of those assets.

You must attach the following:

A copy of the members' capital agreement with this form.

For an example of a members' capital agreement please see the next page.

Members’ Capital Agreement

XYZ LLP

EXAMPLE MEMBERS' CAPITAL AGREEMENT

- MIPRU 4/IPRU (INV) 13 sets out the financial resources requirements.
- **XXX LLP** will meet these requirements as the Members of the LLP will transfer into the LLP the following assets as long-term capital:

£

Cash

Other assets (list)

TOTAL INITIAL CAPITAL

.....

.....

- We confirm that this initial capital is intended as long-term capital (i.e. not to be withdrawn within two years).
- We also confirm that the value of the other assets (listed above) is not less than the market value of those assets.

Signed by the Members:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Date

Please attach a copy of the Limited Liability Partnership Agreement.

No additional notes.

Sources of external funding

Subordinated loans

Does the applicant have any subordinated loans?

You will only be asked this question if your legal status is Public Limited Company, Private Limited Company or Limited Liability Partnership and you were asked about subordinate loans at the start of this Financial Resources section.

A subordinated loan is a loan that ranks below other unsubordinated debt in the queue for repayment should the applicant be wound up.

For further details, see CONC 10 in relation to debt management firms, and IPRU(INV) Chapter 13, as appropriate.

If yes, you need to give the name of the funding provider, the amount, the date of agreement, nature of funding, repayment terms, final payment date, interest payable and interest type.

Other funding

Does the applicant have other external funding?

Examples of external finance would include a bank overdraft or a business loan

If yes, you need to give the name of the loan provider, the amount, nature of loan, repayment terms, Final payment date, interest payable and interest type.

State the estimated peak debts under management in the first 25 months (in £).

No additional notes.

Is the applicant applying for the activity 'operating an electronic system in relation to lending?

If yes, you need to state the estimated peak loan amount in the first 12 months (in £).

Disclosure of significant events

Please note this section will only be displayed if you have previously traded.

Disclosure

Significant events include, but are not limited to:

- any material litigation in the last five years before the date of the application
- any material written complaints made by customer or former customers in the last five years accepted by the applicant or those upheld or awaiting determination by an ombudsman
- any insolvency events in relation to bankruptcy, winding-up company or individual voluntary arrangements, receivership or administration
- any failure to satisfy a judgement debt under a court order in the UK and elsewhere in the last ten years
- any outstanding financial obligations arising from regulated activities the applicant carried on in the past, including any outstanding fees to the Financial Services Authority, Financial Conduct Authority or the Prudential Regulation Authority or any other financial services regulator

Although we may consider that a matter is relevant to its assessment of a firm, we will consider each matter in relation to the regulated activity the applicant has applied for. If necessary, you should discuss relevant matters with us before submitting this application. This will allow us to consider fully how significant the matter is and how it affects the applicant's ability to satisfy, and continue to satisfy, the threshold conditions.

More information on disclosing significant events can be found in COND 1.3.3 G, on our website at: www.fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/COND/1/3

There is also further guidance on our website at:
www.fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/COND

You must answer all the questions in the disclosure of significant events section. If you answer **yes** to any of the questions you must provide a full explanation of the event on a separate sheet(s) of paper. You must then attach this to the form. Any explanations you give must include the question number that the event refers to, the date of the event, any amounts of money involved, the outcome and a full and clear explanation of the circumstances.

Systems and controls

IT systems

Will the applicant be using only commercial off the shelf computer products/packages e.g. Word, Sage accounting software, Lotus notes?

An off-the-shelf package is a simple 'one size fits all' package rather than a system that is tailor made specifically for the business.

If yes, you will be asked to give the names of the packages (see below)

If no, you will be asked to provide the details of any tailor-made (BESPOKE) IT systems that will be used by the applicant.

Commercial off-the-shelf computer products/packages

Give the names of the packages below for the business transaction recording system, the accounting system and other IT systems (e.g. Word, Excel).

Business transaction reporting

We appreciate that different types of firms will have different transactions and ways of recording those transactions, so please be as clear as possible in your explanation. An example of business transaction reporting could be the systems the applicant has in place, or will have in place, for recording a customer's individual transaction details on their file. **Accounting system**

Examples of off-the-shelf accounting packages are SAGE, Quickbooks pro.

Business continuity and disaster recovery

Please tick this box to confirm that the document is created and ready for the FCA/PRA to inspect.

Full business continuity procedures (BCP).

Any agreements and terms of reference agreed with any third party providing compliance or other services to the applicant.

Any outsourcing arrangement for disaster recovery.

We expect the applicant to have an appropriate disaster recovery plan appropriate to the size and nature of its business in place. This should ensure that it can continue to function and meet its regulatory obligations if there is an unforeseen interruption. These arrangements should be regularly updated and tested to ensure their effectiveness.

The plan should include an assessment of the disruptions to which the firm is particularly susceptible (and the likely timescale of those disruptions). These might include:

- loss or failure of internal and external resources such as people (either through illness or leaving the firm), systems and other assets
- the loss or corruption of information (e.g. computer breakdown and loss of customer files)
- external events (such as vandalism, terrorism and adverse weather)

It should cover ways in which both the likelihood and impact of a disruption can be reduced, e.g. by succession planning and contingency arrangements.

It should show the strategy for:

- maintaining continuity of operations
- communicating to the staff
- regularly testing the adequacy and effectiveness of this strategy

The questions listed below should help you with this:

- What arrangements do you have in place to reduce the impact of a short, medium or long-term disruption to the following:
 - people, systems and other assets
 - the recovery priorities for the firm's operations
 - communication arrangements for internal and external concerned parties (e.g. the FCA and/or the PRA, customers and the press)?
- How would the applicant set in motion its disaster recovery and business continuity plans?
- Does it have any processes in place to check and validate the integrity of information affected by the disruption?
- How will the applicant review, test and update its disaster recovery plan operations?

For further guidance see: www.fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/SYSC

Regulatory returns – Gathering Better Regulatory Information Electronically (GABRIEL)

You must confirm the three statements with regards to GABRIEL.

The supervision manual sets out the reporting requirements applicable to credit related regulated activities in rule SUP 16.12.29B.

IT self-assessment

Nature of applicant's operations

You will only be asked the following three questions if you indicated earlier in this section that you will be using tailor-made (bespoke) IT systems.

Is the nature of the applicant's business such that it requires its IT systems to conduct regulated business?

No additional notes.

Will there be financial consumer detriment if the IT system the applicant is relying on becomes unavailable?

No additional notes

Will the applicant's customers be able to transact business over the internet or through some other remote electronic medium?

No additional notes

You will only be asked the following three questions if your selected permissions include 'Operating an electronic system relating to lending' and you indicated earlier in this section that you will be using tailor-made (bespoke) IT systems.

What is the estimated annual volume of loans?

You will also be asked to complete the Detailed IT Controls Form

What is the estimated annual number of loans?

You will also be asked to complete the Detailed IT Controls Form

What is the estimated annual total value of loans?

You will also be asked to complete the Detailed IT Controls Form

You will only be asked the following question if your selected permissions include 'Entering into high-cost short-term credit as lender' and you indicated earlier in this section that you will be using tailor-made (bespoke) IT systems.

What percentage of this market does the applicant's business cover?

You may also be asked to complete the Detailed IT Controls Form if you answered yes to any of the nature of applicant's operations questions.

You will only be asked the following question if your selected permissions include 'Providing credit references'.

How many credit firms does the applicant expect to use its service?

You will also be asked to complete the Detailed IT Controls Form

Compliance arrangements

Compliance procedures

Please tick to confirm that the applicant has documented compliance procedures in place.

When assessing this application we need to be satisfied that the applicant has the appropriate compliance arrangements in place to meet its regulatory obligations, both when we authorise it and on an ongoing basis.

Set out below are the areas we would expect to be covered, as a minimum, in your compliance procedures:

- (a) the scope of the applicant's business
- (b) complaints handling
- (c) financial crime
- (d) skills, knowledge and expertise
- (e) business continuity
- (f) the fit and proper criteria for approved persons
- (g) communication with customers
- (h) record keeping
- (i) notifications to the FCA
- (j) reporting requirements
- (k) compliance with conduct of business rules in CONC and in the Consumer Credit Act 1974
- (l) scope of service provided
- (m) status disclosure
- (n) conflicts of interest
- (o) reliance on others
- (p) exclusion of liability
- (q) protecting customers' interests

As well as the subjects above, your compliance manual may need to cover the subjects below depending on your type of business:

- (a) charges and commission
- (b) claims handling
- (c) general provisions related to distance marketing
- (d) financial promotion
- (e) where applicable rules on personal account transactions in relation to overdrafts
- (f) appointed representatives
- (g) the Statement of Principles and Code of Practice for Approved Persons
- (h) where applicable (i.e. where a firm is covered by the Money Laundering Regulations 2007) systems and controls (SYSC 6.3) in relation to financial crime and money laundering

- (i) where applicable, the employees' responsibilities under the money laundering regime, including:
 - (i) internal reporting duties
 - (ii) customer identification procedures
 - (iii) the use and availability of the know your business information
- (j) in relation to debt management firms client assets

There may be **other** compliance procedures and policies, which the applicant will need to include in its compliance manual depending on the type of business it intends to carry on. If you are unsure whether you need to include anything else, please take professional advice.

The compliance procedures must be ready for inspection at any time. They will also need to be in place so that you can prepare the Compliance Monitoring Programme (see the next question).

Remember this manual should be designed so it is specifically tailored to the business, easy to use, easy to amend and easy to keep up-to-date. If you are in doubt about what you need to include you should seek professional advice.

Compliance monitoring programme

Please attach a copy of your compliance monitoring programme document.

An example of a compliance monitoring programme can be found below.

Example of the contents of a compliance monitoring programme

Business risks and regulatory requirements	Action to be taken by firm	Action to be undertaken by whom?	Frequency
New business records are maintained.			
Financial promotions undertaken are up to date and correct. This includes stationery and terms of business letter.			
Status disclosed on all stationery relating to regulated business.			
Affordability assessment procedures,			
Adequate complaints records are kept			
Adequate recruitment records are kept for new advisers.			
Where applicable overdraft procedures are maintained.			
The fitness and propriety of individuals are established and the applicant ensures this is maintained.			
Approved persons are approved by the FCA and recorded under the correct controlled functions.			
Conflict of interest records are kept.			
Financial requirements are maintained.			
The FCA are immediately notified of any material breaches of FCA principles/rules and material breaches of the Consumer Credit Act 1974.			
FCA approval is required for changes in the controlled function of director etc.(SUP 10A) Firms must notify FCA of changes to the firm's accounting date (SUP 16.3.17R); A firm which seeks to change its permitted regulated activities must seek a variation of permission.			
Adequate management information maintained and provided to senior management.			
Documented compliance procedures maintained, used in conjunction with an up-to-date copy of the Handbook			
Anti-money laundering regulations are complied with.			

Financial crime

You must briefly describe the procedures the applicant has put in place to counter the risks that it might be used by third parties to further financial crime (this includes any offence involving a) fraud or dishonesty, b) misconduct in, or misuse of information relating to, financial markets or c) handling the proceeds of crime (SYSC 3.2.6 and 6.3) of the Handbook.

This should be a summary of the applicant's money laundering procedures including the following:

Anti-money laundering controls

SYSC 3.2.6 and 6.3 details the scope and application of the financial crime and anti-money laundering regime.

Please note our anti-money laundering rules do not apply to business in relation to any of the following:

- general insurance
- pure protection contracts
- reinsurance business involving the above contracts
- home finance mediation activity
- In relation to credit related regulated activities only firms that fall within the Money Laundering Regulations 2007 are covered by the specific rules concerning financial crime in SYSC 6.3 (see paragraph 1.4 and 1.6 and paragraph 2.11 of Annex 1 to SYSC)

Fraud

You should also describe the procedures the applicant has put into place for notifying us if the firm identifies any irregularities in its accounting records, regardless of whether there is evidence of fraud (SUP 15.3).

Please tick this box to confirm that the Applicant has procedures in place to comply with the disclosure requirement in CONC 4, <http://fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/CONC>, applicable to the intended business of the applicant and that these (including any template documents) are available for inspection.

No additional notes.

Does the applicant have procedures to deal with arrears of debt?

If yes, you will be asked for details.

Will the applicant be a home collected lender or broker?

If yes, Please provide full details of your procedures to verify and record the identity of your customers and to carry out affordability assessments, including how these are monitored.

No additional notes.

If yes, please provide details of the procedures for handling cash loans and repayments.

No additional notes.

Will the applicant be providing high-cost short-term credit?

No additional notes.

Please confirm that the applicant has procedures to comply with the requirements in CONC 3.4 in relation to risk warnings in financial proportions.

No additional notes.

Please confirm that the applicant has procedures to comply with the requirements in CONC 4.2 in relation to required pre-contract information for short-term high-cost loans.

No additional notes.

Please confirm that the applicant has procedures to comply with the requirements in CONC 4.2, <http://fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/CONC> in relation to require pre-contract information for bill of sales loans.

No additional notes.

You must confirm that the peer to peer agreements offered by the Applicant include terms which comply with CONC 11.2 <http://fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/CONC>.

No additional notes.

Will the applicant be charging any up front fees for its credit broking services?

If yes, please provide full details of these fees, how they are communicated to customers and the applicant's policy in relation to refunds of these fees.

No additional notes.

Personnel information

Personnel

Staff organisational structure chart

Is the applicant either a sole trader or a sole director limited company with no employees?

Unless the applicant is a sole trader director limited company, attach a staff organisation structure chart, clearly indicating senior management and decision makers.

The structure chart should tell us about the applicant's 'mind and management' – in other words, the key officers and directors and their responsibilities within the structure of the firm. It should clearly show:

- the names of significant staff (e.g. directors, chief executive, managers)
- the controlled functions for each individual
- direct reporting lines into the board including board committees, where applicable. If these change while we are considering this application, please tell us immediately

For further guidance see SYSC:

www.fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/SYSC or the Handbook:
www.fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/.

Owners and influencers application

Please note this section will not be displayed if you are a sole trader

Number of controllers

This information will help us understand who owns the applicant and has control or influence over its business.

Our approval is required before a person can acquire or increase control of an authorised firm (see the tests set out in Part 12 of FSMA). The controllers of the applicant will include the ultimate beneficial owners, who may be individuals or firms with an indirect shareholding in the applicant– for example, through their controlling interest in a parent of the applicant.

The controller(s) will also need to complete the appropriate appendix providing their own details. This is a requirement of the Act (Part XII Control over authorised persons). You will be asked to do this elsewhere in the form.

Chapter 11 of the Supervision Manual (SUP) in the Handbook gives further information about controllers. In particular, SUP 11.3 sets out the information which a controller or proposed controller must provide to us before becoming a controller.

You can use this link to access it:

www.fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/SUP/11.

For these purposes, a controller is, broadly speaking, an individual or firm that:

- (1) holds 20% or more of the shares in the applicant or its parent
- (2) is able to exercise significant influence over the management of the applicant through a controlling interest in the applicant or its parent
- (3) is entitled to control or exercise control of 20% or more of the voting power in the applicant or its parent
- (4) is able to exercise significant influence over the management of the applicant through their voting power in it or its parent

Controllers of Partnerships

- (1) Partnership applicants should note that some (or sometimes all) individual partners may be controllers of the partnership. Usually this will depend on the number of partners and the terms of the partnership agreement, especially regarding voting power or significant influence. For example, in a five-person partnership where each partner has equal voting power, each partner will have 20% of the voting power and so will be a controller.
- (2) In a five-person partnership where two senior partners each have 40% of the voting power (and the same level of significant influence) and the remaining 20% is equally split between the other three partners (meaning that each of them has less than 10% of the voting power and significant influence), only the two senior partners would be deemed controllers.
- (3) In a ten-person partnership where each partner has equal voting power, each partner will have 10% of the voting power and will be a controller.

- (4) In an eleven-person partnership where all have equal voting power it might appear that none of the partners will be a controller (as no individual partner will have 10% or more of the voting power). However, one of the partners can still exercise significant influence - if the partnership agreement required significant decisions to be taken unanimously by the partners, a dissenting partner could exercise significant influence over the firm's management despite having less than 10% of the voting power. Applicants should have this in mind when considering whether a partner with less than 10% voting power could exercise significant influence over the firm's management.

Please remember that this information will probably be set out in your partnership agreement.

How many controllers do you have?

If you have 20 or fewer controllers, you must complete the information we ask for in the spaces provided. If you have more than 20 controllers you will need to provide a batch controllers form so we can determine who the applicant's controllers are.

Close links

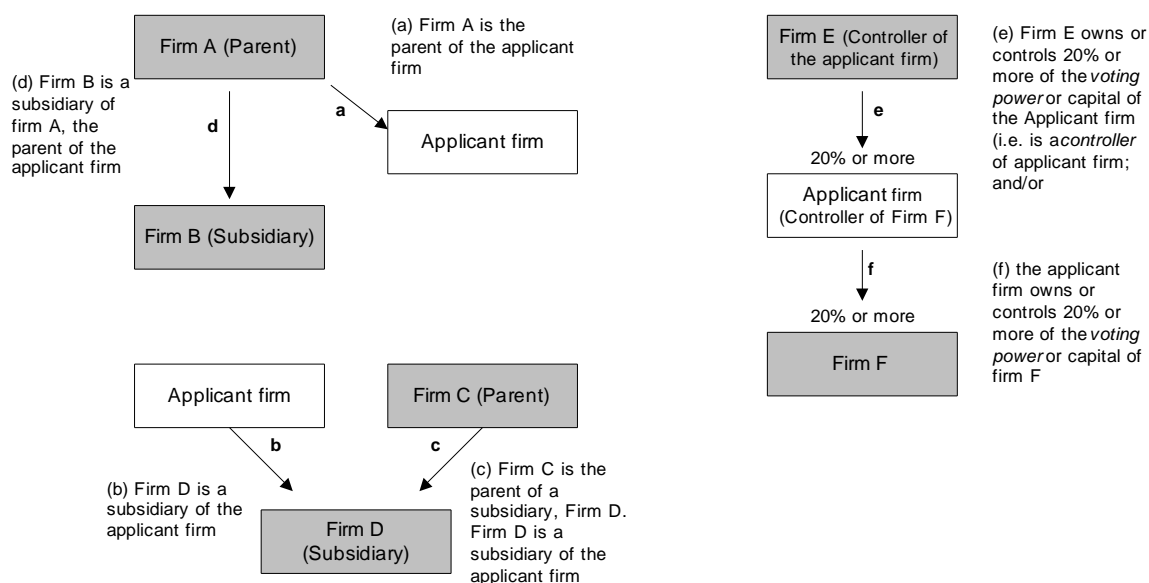
This section is likely to affect only a small minority of firms.

Does the applicant have close links other than the controllers stated above?

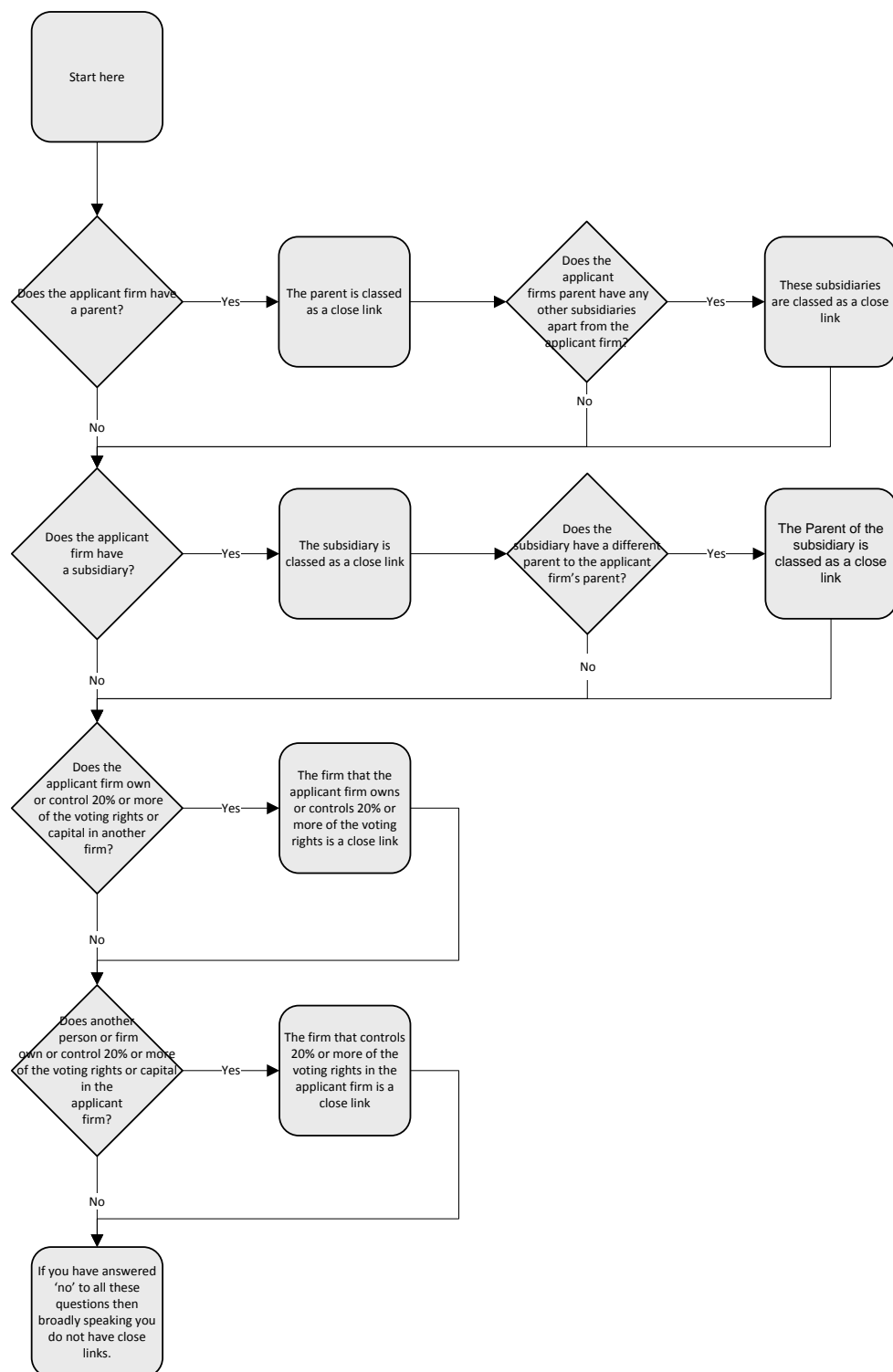
You must notify us about any other firms or individuals that an applicant may have close links with – whether directly, or through a parent or a subsidiary – so we can be sure that we can supervise you effectively. You will find below:

- a diagram (1) that sets out the types of relationships between firms and individuals that we consider to be close links
- a flowchart (2) that will help you in deciding if you have close links

(1)



(2)



For further guidance on close links please see:

- SUP 11 www.fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/SUP/11
- Handbook Glossary www.fshandbook.info/FS/html/handbook/Glossary

Overlap between controllers and close links (this applies to Applicants completing both owners and influencers and controllers appendices)

There is often an overlap between an applicant's controllers and its close links. For example, an organisation that owns 20% of the voting power or capital of the applicant is both a controller and a close link. If you are asked

to provide a structure chart for controllers and for close links, you can provide a single structure chart showing both.

The structure chart should show clearly:

- (i) the close link(s)'s name(s)
- (ii) the close link(s)'s address(es)
- (iii) the category of each close link – a, b, c, d, e or f (please see diagram (1) above)
- (iv) the details of any regulatory body that regulates each close link – please include the address, telephone number, email address and a contact name at the regulator. (If a close link is regulated by us, please provide the firm's reference number wherever possible)

Please note you will need to complete the appropriate Controller Appendix for any close links falling into category e (please see diagram (1)).

Are you aware of any information to suggest that any close link is likely to prevent our effective supervision of the applicant?

Possible examples of the kind of issues that might impinge on our effective supervision include anything that might:

- affect your ability to provide adequate information to us at any time;
- hinder the flow of information from the applicant or the applicant's close link(s) to us at any time; or
- prevent us from being able to assess the overall financial position of the Applicant or your close link(s) at any time.

Please consider in particular if such issues arise because the close link is subject to the laws of a state outside the EEA. A list of EEA member states is provided at the beginning of this section.

Do the controllers intend to increase or reduce their level of control in the foreseeable future?

No additional notes.

Supporting documents

Documents

Please include any other documents you want to provide.

You must attach any other documents you have included that you consider to be relevant to your application.

Other information

Is there anything else the applicant would like to tell us about this application please give details below?

No additional notes.

Firm declaration

Declaration

It is a criminal offence under section 398 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 to knowingly or recklessly provide the FCA with false or misleading information.

This declaration must be signed by the person who is responsible for making this application on behalf of the applicant. There can be one or two required signatures depending on the number of directors / partners in the firm.

The signature boxes are for you to use when you print out the application for your records.

A permanent copy of the application should be signed and retained for an appropriate period of time, for inspection at the FCA's/PRA's request.