

## Guidance

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## Checklist

Where your business must be authorised, or you have chosen to be authorised, this checklist sets out a summary of the eligibility requirements. For fuller guidance on the contents, and an explanation of the terminology, please see [Firm authorisation \[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/firm-authorisation/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/firm-authorisation/).

There is also a checklist to determine whether your business must be authorised: [Does my business need to be authorised? \[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/business-need-authorised/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/business-need-authorised/)

This checklist will help you to quickly check if your business meets all the basic requirements to be authorised. Certain terms below have specific meanings, and these are explained in our [detailed guidance \[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/firm-authorisation/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/firm-authorisation/).

Be aware that meeting these requirements does not guarantee authorisation. All applications must be assessed to ensure the suitability of those involved and any risks to our regulatory objectives.

### **To be eligible for authorisation, your business must meet each of the following requirements:**

1. Intend to deliver legal services (we may, at our discretion, allow exemptions to this requirement for recognised bodies where we consider it is in the public interest).
2. Be one of the following:
  - the sole practice of a solicitor or a registered European lawyer (note that, since 1 January 2021, only a defined group of Swiss lawyers can be registered European lawyers)
  - a legal services body, in which all managers and interest holders are legally qualified, or
  - a licensable body, in which at least one manager is an authorised person (other than another licensed body).



3. Meet the practising address requirements, which are:
  - licensable bodies must have a practising address in England and Wales
  - legal services bodies and sole practices must have a practising address in the United Kingdom.
4. If the business is a company, be incorporated and registered in England and Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland under Parts 1 and 2 of the Companies Act 2006.

**If you apply for authorisation, as part of that application you will need to:**

- provide evidence that you can obtain the required level of qualifying professional indemnity insurance with a participating insurer
- nominate a compliance officer for legal practice (COLP) and a compliance officer for finance and administration (COFA)
- identify all managers and owners of the body
- identify a manager or employee, or other individual you have procured the services of, who has practised as a lawyer for at least three years
- apply for approval of all role holders that require it under the SRA Authorisation of Firms Rules and, where applicable, the MLR 2017.

**Next steps**

If you wish to apply for authorisation, please go to our [Firm-based authorisation](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/firm-based-authorisation/1) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/firm-based-authorisation/1] page where you will find all the necessary application forms, along with details of fees and timescales.

**Further help**

If you require further assistance, please contact the [Professional Ethics helpline](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/contactus/) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/contactus/].