Financial Supplier Qualification System Guide

At Hiscox we understand the importance of our supply chain, and how we manage and work with them to deliver our needs. It is also important we meet our regulatory requirements, and can demonstrate that we are working responsibly with our suppliers to minimise risks. In order to enhance our processes around supplier assurance we are implementing a Financial Services Qualification System (FSQS).

FSQS provides a standard and simple mechanism for collecting and managing supplier assurance information across the Group and across the wider Financial Services community. FSQS is an integral part of our sourcing process. Our Sourcing Specialists use the system to find pre-qualified suppliers to be considered for new business. Qualified supplier status gives visibility across our Procurement process and, therefore, creates potential new opportunities.

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Supplier Benefits

Please see the below bullet points as supplier benefits examples.

- A single online process to submit assurance and compliance data with the objective of reducing duplicate requests from Hiscox and other financial services customers who you provide services to.
- Compliance requirements which are proportionate to the products and services being provided.
- An online supplier profile which can be updated throughout the year to demonstrate your ongoing compliance with Hiscox policies.
- Qualification means you won't have to provide assurance information each time you bid for business with Hiscox.

How to gain qualification

Please see the below text as an example of completing FSQS qualification. There are two levels of qualification. Stage 1 Qualification will be sufficient to cover most suppliers. However, some products and services are subject to additional compliance and policy requirements. For example, if a supplier deals directly with Hiscox customer data, then they will be asked to demonstrate how they comply with relevant regulatory requirements.

Stage 1: Qualification Suppliers will receive an email invitation to complete an online questionnaire. The invitation will come from Hellios, an external partner, who has been appointed to collect and administer the data on behalf of Hiscox. The questionnaire should take around one hour to complete. This information will allow us to determine whether your organisation only requires Stage 1 Qualification or is required to also complete Stage 2 Qualification.

Stage 2: Qualification Stage 2 requires the completion of a more detailed online assessment and the provision of evidence to support your application.

This stage typically covers your policies and practice in areas such as: Anti-Bribery, Whistleblowing, Sanctions, Business Continuity, Remuneration, Information Security, Customer Treatment, Cyber Security, Products and Sales, Records Management, Anti-Money Laundering, Diversity and Inclusion, Health and Safety, Environmental and ESG.

For those organisations where Stage 2 of the process is required an annual fee is payable directly to our external partner Hellios. Micro and small organisations are fully subsidised by the community with no fee payable. Medium sized organisations are partially subsidised. Click here for more information.

Following Stage 2 qualification, we may wish to conduct further assurance activities including a Stage 3 assessment or on-site audit.

Timelines for qualification

Typically, we find that it takes between four to eight weeks to attain qualification. For exact timelines, existing suppliers should refer to the deadline dates in the Hellios email communications. If you are being asked to apply as part of a tender process, then please refer to Hiscox who will confirm completion deadlines that need to be adhered to.

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Frequently asked questions

Why has Hiscox introduced a Supplier Qualification System? Suppliers have told us that current processes for collecting compliance and assurance information is time-consuming and complex. The introduction of an online system simplifies the process for suppliers to submit information and prevents suppliers receiving multiple requests from Hiscox for qualification data. It is also important that we (your organisation and Hiscox) can demonstrate to our stakeholders that we are working together responsibly to minimise risk across our supply chain to protect our customers. It is also vital that we have a robust system in place to support the collection and maintenance of Supplier Assurance data, work within regulatory requirements and are able to respond to regulatory changes.

Who are Hellios? Hellios Information Management Ltd is a UK-based company. The team has extensive experience in collecting and maintaining supplier data on behalf of a number of global and UK companies.

What is the role of Hellios? Hiscox has appointed Hellios to collect and administer supplier assurance-related data on behalf of Hiscox. Hellios will collect and check the data provided by suppliers and ensure the data is maintained on FSQS. Hellios is an approved supplier of Hiscox and both they and the FSQS system have been subjected to our due diligence controls. Hellios does not assess a supplier's suitability for qualification or approval. That decision rests with Hiscox.

Do we have to register each of our legal entities separately? Yes, your organisation is required to register any legal entity that submits an invoice to Hiscox.

Will other suppliers have access to the information we provide? No, other suppliers will not have access to the information you provide.

Will assurance information be available to anyone else? Yes, one of the benefits of the FSQS is that suppliers' assurance information will be available to other financial services organisations that have also adopted FSQS. This will reduce requests for duplicate information from the different customers you may provide services to. Hellios will not share any information you provide with any other party or use your information for any other purpose.

Will I be asked to provide pricing information on my company's products and services? No, your organisation will not be asked to provide any commercial information of this nature.

If I'm required to apply for Stage 2 Qualification, how do I pay the fee to Hellios? Hellios will provide full details of the payment options available however we recommend suppliers make an online payment to Hellios for the fastest access to the Stage 2 Qualification process.

How long is qualification valid for? Annually. The renewal date is set at one year after Stage 1 Qualification has been granted, or in the case of Stage 2 Qualification, one year after your Stage 2 questionnaire has been issued. Hellios will issue reminders to suppliers well in advance of their qualification expiry deadline.

How long does it take to complete qualification? Typically, it takes less than one business day to enter the information in the system (if you're asked to complete both stages). However, the time required to collate the information varies depending on the size of an organisation. Larger organisations often have to source the data from several internal departments and therefore we are giving existing suppliers approximately eight weeks to complete qualification.

As an existing supplier, what happens if I fail to complete FSQS within the assigned timelines? Suppliers will be fully supported by Hellios throughout the qualification process, however, failure to complete FSQS will result in a supplier being classified as non-compliant in our internal systems. This will affect future business with Hiscox since FSQS is now our standard qualification and compliance process for suppliers.

Who can I contact for further information?
Hellios Supplier Support team at Email: fsqs@hellios.com or call 01865 959120 Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm, (excluding Public Holidays). For Hiscox please contact supplierriskassurance@hiscox.com.