A Guide to the

Financial Supplier Qualification System

Improving the way we do
business with our suppliers

Bank of Ireland

Bank of Ireland Group is committed to introducing responsible business practices that make it easier for our suppliers to do business with us.

To support this commitment, we are part of the Financial Supplier Qualification System (FSQS) Community. It is designed to standardise and manage our requests from multiple Financial Services Companies for compliance and assurance data.

As the regulatory environment becomes more complex, it's important that we can demonstrate to our stakeholders that we're working responsibly with our suppliers to minimise risk and protect customers. FSQS provides a standard and simple mechanism for collecting and managing supplier assurance information across the Group and across the wider Financial Services community.

The 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 business opportunities.

Benefits for suppliers

- A single online process to submit assurance and compliance data – reducing duplicate requests from the Group and other financial services companies.
- 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 key policy requirements.
- Qualification means you won't have to provide assurance information each time you bid for business with the Group or other members of the FSQS Community.

How to gain qualification

There are two levels of qualification. Stage 1 Qualification covers high level company information and Stage 2 looks in more detail at additional compliance and policy requirements.

A simple two-stage process

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 the Group and the FSQS Community. 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 complete the Stage 2 assessment.

Stage 2 Qualification

Stage 2 requires the completion of a more detailed online assessment and has the options for you to upload evidence to support your application. This stage typically covers your policies and practice in areas such as:

- Anti-Bribery
- Sanctions
- Remuneration
- Customer Treatment
- Information Security
- Cyber Security
- Records Management
- Anti-Money Laundering
- Health & Safety
- Whistleblowing
- Business Continuity
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Environmental

The process uses clear, selectable answer options and does not require proprietary, pricing, or contractual information.

Following Stage 2, Bank of Ireland may request further assessment - such as a Stage 3 review or an onsite audit - depending on the nature of the relationship and the associated risk.

FSQS is jointly funded by participating buying organisations and larger suppliers. SMEs (small or micro enterprises) are fully subsidised and pay no registration fee.

For full details, please refer to the FSQS Fees Page [FSQS Fees Page.]

Timelines or qualiication

Typically, we ind that it takes between our to six weeks to attain qualiication. 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 your Bank of Ireland Group Procurement Category Manager who will conirm completion deadlines.

FAQs

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Why does the Bank of Ireland Group use the Financial Supplier Qualification System?

Suppliers told us that our process for collecting compliance and assurance information was complex and time consuming. An online system simplifies the process for suppliers to submit information and prevents suppliers receiving multiple requests from the Group, and other financial services companies, who are part of the FSQS for qualification data. It is also important that we (your organisation and the Group) can demonstrate to our stakeholders that we are working together responsibly to minimise risk across our supply chain to protect our customers. As the regulatory environment we operate in becomes more complex, it is vital that we have a robust system in place to support the collection and maintenance of Supplier Assurance data and respond to regulatory change.

Who is 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?

Bank of Ireland Group subscribe to the FSQS, which Hellios use to collect and administer Supplier Assurance related data. Hellios collect and check the data provided by suppliers and ensure the data is maintained on the Financial Supplier Qualification System. Hellios is an approved supplier of the Bank of Ireland Group.

Hellios does not assess a supplier's suitability for qualification. That decision rests with Bank of Ireland.

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 Bank of Ireland Group.

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 across Bank of Ireland Group?

Yes, one of the benefits of the FSQS is that suppliers' assurance information will be available to other areas in the Bank of Ireland Group. This will reduce requests for duplicate information from the Group.

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 immediate access to the Stage 2 assessment.

How long is qualification valid for?

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 payment has been made to apply for qualification. Hellios will issue reminders to suppliers in advance of their qualification expiry deadline.

How long does it take to complete qualification?

Typically, we find 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 dependent on the size of an organisation. Larger organisations often have to source the data from a number of internal departments and therefore we’re giving existing suppliers approximately six weeks to complete qualification.

As an existing supplier, what happens if I fail to apply for qualification within the assigned timelines?

Suppliers will be fully supported by Hellios throughout the qualification process. However failure to complete qualification will result in a supplier being classified as non-compliant in our internal systems.

Who can I contact for further information?

Please contact Hellios Supplier Support: email: fsqs@hellios.com or telephone 01865 959120 - 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, except Bank Holidays.

Where can I find more inormation on the FSQS Community?

For more information about the FSQS Community please see the Hellios website: http://www.hellios.com/

FSQS
SUPPLIER QUALIFICATION SYSTEM