



**The
Nottingham**
Building Society

Financial Supplier Qualification System (FSQS)



HELLIOS



**Simplifying our approach to due diligence with our
important third-parties**

Introduction

Nottingham Building Society is committed to introducing responsible sourcing practices that make it easier for our suppliers to do business with us. To support this commitment, we use the Financial Supplier Qualification System (FSQS) provided by Hellios. It is designed to standardise and manage our requests for compliance and assurance data, along with other major financial services organisations within the UK that have adopted FSQS.

As the Regulatory environment becomes more complex, it is important that we can demonstrate to our stakeholders that we're working responsibly with our suppliers to minimise risk and protect our Members. FSQS provides a standard and simple mechanism for collecting and managing supplier assurance information across the Society and across the wider Financial Services community. FSQS is an integral part of our sourcing process and is the Society's single approach to supplier due diligence.

Our Procurement team also 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 You, Our Suppliers

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

How to gain qualification

There are two levels of qualification. **Stage 1 Qualification** collects basic information about your organisation and is used to determine whether **Stage 2 Qualification** is necessary, based on the nature of the goods or services being supplied. For example, if a supplier deals directly with our Members' data, then they will be asked to demonstrate how they comply with relevant regulatory requirements.

A simple, integrated 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 Nottingham Building Society. 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 Posture

Following Stage 2 qualification, we may wish to conduct further assurance activities including an on-site audit.

Funding

Funding of FSQS is shared by Nottingham Building Society and the other Financial Services organisations that use the system, and also by larger suppliers. Larger suppliers are asked to contribute a modest annual fee of £1,975 (exc. VAT), but this is only payable once irrespective of how many clients/customers you have on the platform; once you are qualified for one buyer, you are qualified for them all.

Timelines for qualification

Typically, we find that it takes between four to eight weeks to attain qualification. However, we expect most suppliers will be capable of completing qualification in significantly less time. Suppliers bidding for new business with the Society who are not already on FSQS may need to complete qualification much more quickly in accordance with procurement timescales. Hellios will advise the deadline dates for Stage 1 and, if required, Stage 2 completion in the FSQS email communications issued.

Frequently asked questions

Why has Nottingham Building Society 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 the Society for qualification data. It is also important that we (your organisation and the Society) can demonstrate to our stakeholders that we are working together responsibly to minimise risk across our supply chain to protect our Members. 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 changes.

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?

Nottingham Building Society has appointed Hellios to collect and administer supplier assurance-related data on behalf of Nottingham Building Society. Hellios will collect and check the data provided by suppliers and ensure the data is maintained on FSQS. Hellios is an approved supplier of Nottingham Building Society 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 Nottingham Building Society.

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 Nottingham Building Society.

Can any supplier apply for qualification?

No, qualification is by invitation only.

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 tend to allow eight weeks to complete qualification. Although you may be expected to qualify faster to meet procurement timelines in the case of new business.

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 noncompliant in our internal systems. This will affect future business with Nottingham Building Society since FSQS is now our standard qualification and compliance process for suppliers.

Who can I contact for further information?

Hellios Supplier Support team fsqs@hellios.com 01865 959120 Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm, (excluding Public Holidays). For Nottingham Building Society please contact the Third Party Management team on: tpm@thenottingham.com