

# A Guide to Nationwide Supplier Qualification

Simplifying how we work with our suppliers





Nationwide Building Society is committed to business practices that make it easier for our suppliers to work with us.

To support this, Nationwide Building Society is a member of the Financial Services Qualification System (FSQS), which is a community of financial institutions working together to agree a standard set of questions that can be used to collect and maintain information on a supplier's policies and controls.

Suppliers access the questions online, complete once and the responses are shared with all community members. Therefore suppliers providing services to more than one financial institution will only need to provide their information once, rather than separately to each individual organisation.

## Benefits for Suppliers



### **A simpler/quicker approach**

A single online process, reducing duplicate requests from Nationwide Building Society and other financial institutions.

Once qualified, a supplier won't have to provide assurance information every time they are part of a sourcing activity.



### **Resource & time efficient**

One set of questions with response options, which are proportionate to the goods/service being supplied.



### **Increased opportunity to gain further business**

The system is used by Nationwide Building Society and other community members to find pre-qualified suppliers to be considered for new business.

# How it Works



Suppliers will receive an email invitation to FSQS, which includes a link to an online portal where the qualification questionnaire can be accessed. The invite will come from Hellios Information Ltd, who manage FSQS on behalf of Nationwide Building Society and other organisations.

If a supplier is already a member of FSQS no further action is required, other than ensuring up to date information is held in the system.

There are 2 stages to the questionnaire:

## Stage 1

Stage 1 includes questions to capture high level company information and the nature of the goods/services being supplied. The questionnaire should take around an hour to complete. Depending on the information provided, the supplier may be asked to complete stage 2.

## Stage 2

Stage 2 includes more detailed questions and provides the option to upload evidence to support the application. This stage covers policies and practices in areas such as (where relevant to the service):

- ✓ Anti-Bribery
- ✓ Business Continuity
- ✓ Customer Treatment
- ✓ Cyber Security
- ✓ Diversity Inclusion
- ✓ Environment
- ✓ Health & Safety
- ✓ Information Security
- ✓ Physical & People Security
- ✓ Records Management
- ✓ Responsible Business
- ✓ Technology

## Costs

All members, including Nationwide Building Society, contribute towards the operational costs of administering FSQS. For those organisations where stage 2 of the questionnaire is required, an annual fee may be applicable depending on the size of the company. Large suppliers (revenue above £40m, or greater than 250 employees) are required to pay an annual fee of £1975 (plus VAT) directly to Hellios. Medium sized suppliers (revenue between £10m – £40m, or greater than 50 employees\*) are required to pay £825 (plus VAT) and micro / small organisations (revenue below £10m\*), are fully subsidised with no fee payable.

## Timelines for Qualification

Hellios will advise the deadline dates for Stage 1 and if required, Stage 2 completion in the FSQS email communications issued.

It typically takes no more than 6 weeks to attain qualification, however timescales may be expedited in accordance with procurement timescales. Nationwide's Procurement specialist will advise if this is the case.

\* The definition of a small and medium sized enterprise is based on the EU recommendation 2003/361 and considers any consolidated figures, should the enterprise belong to a group of companies.

# Frequently Asked Questions



## Why is Nationwide Building Society using FSQS?

FSQS makes it simpler for suppliers to share policy and control information with Nationwide Building Society and in turn, makes it more efficient for us to assess and manage this information.

Once a supplier has joined FSQS and completed the questionnaire, this will prevent duplicate requests for information from Nationwide Building Society, as the data will already be available in FSQS for us to access.

Furthermore, we will use the FSQS data in the first instance, when carrying out a control test (undertaken periodically throughout the duration of the contract for key services), which reduces the demand on the supplier to provide the evidence needed during testing.

It is also important that Nationwide Building Society and its suppliers can demonstrate to our members, that we are working together responsibly and efficiently to minimise risk across our supply chain.

## Who are Hellios?

Hellios Information 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.

Hellios is an approved supplier of Nationwide Building Society and both they and the FSQS system have been subjected to our due diligence controls.

## What is the role of Hellios?

In joining FSQS, Nationwide Building Society has appointed Hellios to collect and check the data provided by suppliers and ensure the data is maintained in the online portal.

Hellios do not pass/fail or score suppliers. The information gathered through FSQS is used to support our own evaluation of a supplier.

Hellios do validate the information on our behalf, so that we can be confident in the information used in our assessment.

## Why does a supplier have to pay?

FSQS is a community. Suppliers benefit through reducing their due diligence burden and making pre-qualified information available to a range of potential customers and member financial institutions benefit from sharing the resource in collecting the data. The cost of the system is shared – all members pay a contribution: large suppliers (revenue above £40m, or greater than 250 employees) are required to pay an annual fee of £1975 (plus VAT) directly to Hellios. Medium sized suppliers (revenue between £10m – £40m, or greater than 50 employees) are required to pay £825 (plus VAT) and micro / small organisations (revenue below £10m\*), are fully subsidised with no fee payable.

The supplier fee is proportionately much smaller than the cost paid by Nationwide Building Society and the other member financial organisations.

## Why is a supplier being asked to complete Stage 2 Qualification?

Some of the questions within Stage 1 of the questionnaire identify specific risks or areas that require further information, which then trigger the relevant questions within Stage 2. Therefore a supplier will only complete the sections/questions that are relevant to the service they provide and not the whole set of questions within Stage 2.

# Frequently Asked Questions



## **If a supplier is required to apply for Stage 2 Qualification, how do they 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.

## **Can any supplier apply for qualification?**

No, qualification is by invitation only.

## **What communication do suppliers receive?**

Hellios send a welcome email containing a link and username for accessing the portal and completing the questionnaire. The Hellios Supplier Support Team are then on hand to guide suppliers and answer any questions throughout the qualification process.

## **What happens if the supplier can't answer a question/can't provide a document requested?**

Nationwide Building Society uses the information from FSQS to assess the risks associated with a supplier relationship, therefore suppliers should provide whatever documentation they are able to. Any residual risks / gaps in data requirements will be managed by the Nationwide Relationship Manager.

## **Does a supplier have to register each of their legal entities separately?**

Yes, an organisation is required to register any legal entity that submits, or will submit an invoice to Nationwide Building Society.

## **Can suppliers see each other's information?**

No, suppliers will not have access to the information provided by another supplier.

## **Will assurance information be available to other organisations?**

Yes, one of the benefits of FSQS is that suppliers' assurance information will be available to other financial organisations that are members of FSQS. This will reduce requests for duplicate information from the different customers a supplier may provide services to. Hellios will not share any information provided by a supplier with any other party outside of the FSQS Community, or use the information for any other purpose.

## **How does Hellios protect the data provide by a supplier?**

The FSQS application, infrastructure and data storage is hosted exclusively in the UK in data centres that are SSAE18 SOC2 and ISO27001 certified. Encryption to the latest industry standards is employed, along with cyber security measures such as weekly scans and penetration testing. Hellios ensures the limited amount of personal data collected is fully compliant with the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. Hellios is certified to ISO27001 and Cyber Essentials Plus, the National Cyber Security Centre standard backed by the UK Government.

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## **Will a supplier be asked to provide pricing information on their company's products and services?**

No, an organisation will not be asked to provide any pricing information.

## **How long is qualification valid for?**

Qualification is valid for 1 year and renewed annually. The renewal date is set at 1 year after Stage 1 Qualification has been granted. Or in the case of Stage 2 Qualification, one year after the Stage 2 questionnaire has been issued. Hellios will send reminders to suppliers well in advance of the qualification expiry deadline.

Nationwide needs to hold accurate and up to date information on suppliers and therefore it is important that suppliers review their information annually. Suppliers will not need to complete the questions again at renewal, as the responses are pre-populated and will just need reviewing to ensure they remain accurate, therefore significantly reducing the workload.

## **How long does it take to complete qualification?**

Once a supplier has compiled the data required for the submission, completion of the questionnaires will take less than a business day. For exact timelines, suppliers should refer and adhere to the deadline dates in the FSQS communications issued by Hellios.

It is beneficial for the supplier to complete the FSQS questionnaire promptly, as failure to do so may delay contract signature.

## **What happens if a prospective supplier to Nationwide Building Society does not agree to join FSQS?**

FSQS is our standard qualification and compliance process for suppliers and is a requirement in order to be considered for new business.

An exception may be granted in particular circumstances. A dispensation request would need to go through Nationwide's internal governance process and if approved, the supplier would need to provide the same information but through an alternative manual mechanism, which will be more resource and time consuming.

## **What happens if an existing supplier fails to join FSQS within the agreed timescales?**

Suppliers will be fully supported by Hellios throughout the qualification process, however failure to complete the FSQS questionnaire will result in a supplier being classed as non-compliant against our internal policy. This will affect future business with Nationwide Building Society, since FSQS is now our standard qualification and compliance process for suppliers.

**The Hellios Supplier Support Team are there to guide suppliers and answer any questions throughout the qualification process, their contact details are as follows:**

- Email: [fsqs@hellios.com](mailto:fsqs@hellios.com)
- Phone: 01865 959120