



Solicitors
Regulation
Authority

Firm Based Authorisation

Firm Authorisation guidance notes - FA1

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1. Introduction

Firm Authorisation Application Form (FA1) should be completed by all applicant firms to obtain authorisation as one of the following,

- licensable bodies (also known as alternative business structures (ABSs))
- prospective recognised bodies
- prospective recognised sole practices

This form can be used for all sizes of firm, including complex multi-layered structures.

2. Getting Started

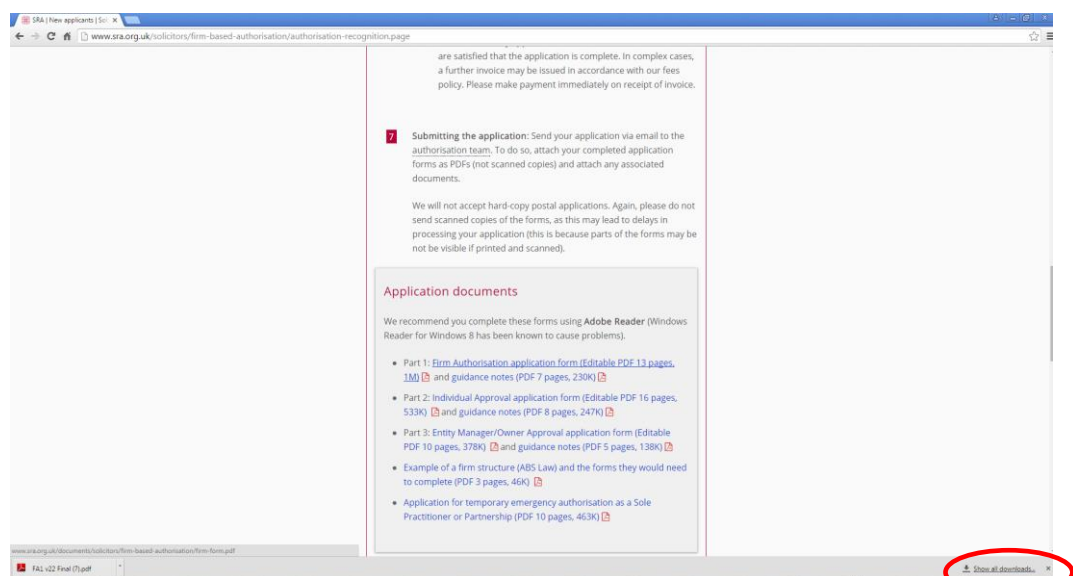
2.1 How to use the form

The form is an editable Portable Document Format File (PDF) and should be completed electronically. You will need version 9 or later of Adobe.

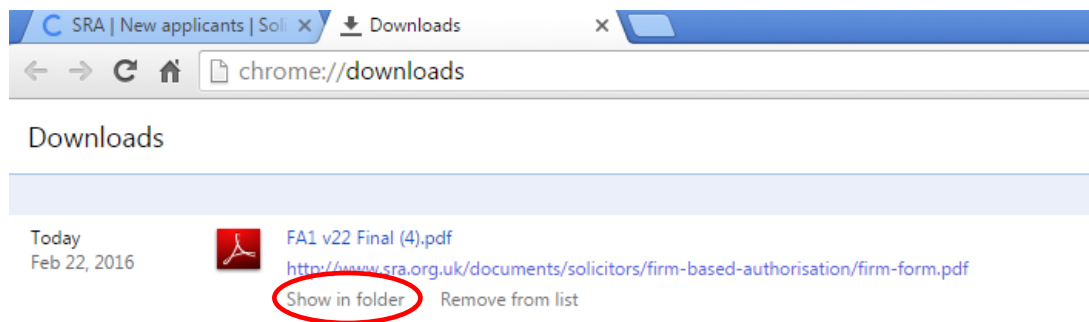
Are you having problems opening the FA1 in Google Chrome?

If yes, please follow the steps below:

1. Select the form and then click on 'show all downloads' in the bottom right hand corner.



2. Click on 'Show in folder' and you will be able to open the form from your downloads folder.



Answer all questions and complete all the relevant boxes. If a question is not applicable please state so.

The text fields will expand once you have clicked out of the relevant field.

The application form will automatically expand.

If you are providing any additional information in separate sheets or documents, please provide a list of the enclosures and mark each document clearly with the section of the form to which it relates.

The declaration must be signed before submitting the form, this can be done electronically.

Please note: we will not process your application until we have a completed application.

3. The Form

Section 1 - Applicant Details and Contact Person

Provide details of the following:

- name under which the applicant will be providing legal services.
- type of authorisation required.
- details of the individual acting as the designated contact for the application.
- type of entity
- if applicable, details of authorisation by any other regulator.
- head office and office addresses
- estimated turnover for the applicant

Section 2 - Post and Role Holder Details

Provide details of all individuals who are to be authorised post and role holders within the applicant.

For licensable bodies - This includes any individual owner who holds a material interest in an owner which is a parent of the applicant.

To check if a person meets the deeming criteria:

- For compliance officers, please refer to [Rule 13.3 of the SRA Authorisation Rules 2011](#).
- For other managers and owners, please refer to [Rule 13.2 of the SRA Authorisation Rules 2011](#).

Section 3 - Organisation Information

Provide details of the following:

- business structure.
- separate business details
- sources of funding
- attach any additional documents relating to the above to your application

Section 4 - Areas of Work

Provide details of the following:

- the reserved legal activities the applicant wishes to be authorised for
- breakdown of areas of work
- percentage of work undertaken which will be funded by legal aid
- if the applicant is to be a multi-disciplinary practice (MDP), please provide details of the services which are expected to be provided outside of SRA regulation and whether the firm has another regulator of those services
- if the applicant will be carrying out work which falls within the exemptions contained within Part XX of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 please list the areas of work

Section 5 - Insurance

Confirm insurance details for the applicant.

Section 6 - Client Money

Confirm if the applicant intends to hold client money and how it will be held.

Section 7 - Licensed Bodies (ABSs)

This section must be completed by applicant firms seeking authorisation as a licensed body.

If applying for recognised body or recognised sole practice status please continue to section 8.

For further details on these questions please refer to the SRA website - [Does your interest in an ABS require SRA approval?](#)

Section 8 - Fees

For recognised bodies and recognised sole practices:

Fees are paid on submission of the application, so please complete the [method of payment form](#) and send your payment when you send your application to us.

For applications to become a licensed body:

We will issue an initial invoice once we are satisfied that the application is complete. In complex cases, a further invoice may be issued in accordance with our fees policy. Fees are required to be paid on immediate receipt of invoice.

For further details about fees, please refer to the [SRA Fee Structure](#).

Section 9 - Declaration

Authorised individual manager: The firm's authorised individual manager must be an individual lawyer manager, who is authorised by the firm and its managers, to make declarations on its behalf. In a sole practitioner firm, the authorised individual manager must be the solicitor or REL sole practitioner.

We would usually expect the authorised individual manager to be the firm's designated 'Authorised Signatory' as registered against the organisation. However, where the firm does not have an Authorised Signatory, any lawyer manager in the firm who meets the requirements can complete the form, including the candidate themselves.

4. Where to send the form

The form is an editable PDF and should be completed electronically and submitted via email to authorisation@sra.org.uk.