

Guidance

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Does my business need to be authorised?

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Checklist

This checklist is to help you determine if your business requires authorisation.

If you intend to operate a legal services business, you should read this to determine if it needs to be regulated. Certain terms below have specific meanings, and these are explained in our [detailed guidance](https://referral.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/firm-authorisation/) [https://referral.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/firm-authorisation/].

If you are an employee, please see our guidance '[Does my employer need to be authorised by an approved regulator?](https://referral.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/employer-need-authorised-approved-regulator/)' [https://referral.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/employer-need-authorised-approved-regulator/].'

Your business will need to be authorised if it provides, or you provide through it:

1. reserved legal activities for the public unless your business is exempt from requiring authorisation (see below)
2. immigration services, unless your business is regulated by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC)
3. claims management services, unless your business is regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), and/or
4. regulated financial services activities, unless your business is regulated by the FCA.

If your business provides other legal services not detailed above, you may choose to apply for authorisation, but are not required to do so. See '[Can my business be authorised?](https://referral.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/can-my-business-be-authorised/)' [https://referral.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/can-my-business-be-authorised/].'

Exemption from authorisation

You may carry on reserved legal activities for the public without your business needing to be authorised under the Legal Services



Act 2007 (LSA), where:

1. the business is a non-commercial body under section 23(2) of the LSA, ie it is:
 - a charity
 - a not-for-profit body
 - a community interest company, or
 - an independent trade union
2. you are an exempt person under Schedule 3 of the LSA, or
3. you are permitted by a Legal Services Act approved regulator to offer such services on your own account without additional authorisation, for example as an SRA-regulated freelance solicitor.

Further help

If you require further assistance, please contact the [Professional Ethics helpline](https://referral.sra.org.uk/home/contact-us/1) [https://referral.sra.org.uk/home/contact-us/1].