

Practical guide to the new identity verification requirements

The Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act 2023 (**ECCTA**) is introducing changes in the way that Companies House operates and the information required to be provided to it. A key aspect of these changes is the new requirement for identity verification (**IDV**) for certain individuals.

This is part of Companies House's objective to ensure that anyone setting up, running, owning or controlling a company in the UK will need to verify their identity to prove they are who they say they are.

Who does this apply to?

ECCTA introduces IDV for all directors, members, general partners, managing officers, persons with significant control (**PSCs**) and individuals who file documents at Companies House (whether on their own behalf or on behalf of another person).

For academy trusts this will be relevant to your Directors/Trustees and to your PSCs.

When will an individual need to verify their identity?

Individuals are currently able to voluntarily verify their identity. From 18 November 2025, IDV will become a compulsory part of incorporations and new appointments of directors and new PSCs. At the same time, a 12-month transitional phase to require all existing directors, LLP Members, PSCs to verify their identity will commence. Compliance for existing directors, LLP Members and PSCs who are also directors will be linked to the annual confirmation statement process. PSCs who are not directors of the same company must have verified their identity within the first 14 days of their birth month. For example, if their date of birth is 22 March, the 14-day period starts on 1 March 2026. Whilst there is a 12-month transition period, some companies may find their directors and PSCs compelled to verify their identity early in this transition period. By spring 2026, it is expected that identity verification of all presenters of information for filing at Companies House will be compulsory.

Identity verification online through GOV.UK

The quickest and cheapest method for an individual to verify their identity is through the GOV.UK One Login portal. This online service is free of charge and usually takes around 10 minutes to complete.

While the specific steps of the process will slightly differ depending on the ID documents the individual has and the devices (such as laptops, smartphones, or tablets) used to access the service, the following top tips apply universally:

1

Preparation

Before starting the IDV process, the individual will need to have to hand one of the following types of photo ID:

- Biometric passport from any country.
- UK photo driving licence.
- UK biometric residence permit (BRP), UK biometric residence card (BRC) or UK Frontier Worker Permit (FWP).

They will also need details of their current address and the year they moved in. If they have lived at the address for less than 12 months they may be required to provide details of previous home addresses. Depending on what ID they have available, they may also be asked some security questions, such as details of their mobile phone contract, bank accounts or credit cards.

2

Accessing the service

Visit the verify your identity for Companies House page on the GOV.UK website (linked [here](#)) and click on the “Verify your identity for Companies House” (green box) halfway down the page.

3

Creating/using a GOV.UK One login

The initial part of the process will guide the individual to either sign into their existing GOV.UK One Login account, or, if they do not have one, provide them with the option to create a new account using a valid email address. This email address should not have been previously used by anyone else who has verified their ID. The email address must be the same as the email address for any existing Companies House account that they have in order to connect them.

4

Completing the ID verification process

The individual will be guided through a simple step-by-step process on screen. It will prompt the individual to confirm what ID they hold and devices (such as laptops, smartphones, or tablets) they have available. Depending on the information provided, the process varies slightly. Overall, the process is straightforward, typically involving a series of simple clicks.

As part of the process, it may direct the individual to download the GOV.UK ID Check app on a smart phone through which they will be asked to take a photo of their passport photo page, scan the biometric chip on their passport and scan their face with their selfie camera. *Top Tip: Ensure the selfie is taken in a well-lit area.*

5

Unique identifiers number

Once the identity verification process is completed, it will confirm the individual's unique identity verification number (also known as personal code) on screen.

Ensure that a note or screen shot of this number is kept safe (as the code is not being sent by email). Retaining this number is imperative, as it will be required to demonstrate that the individual's identity has been successfully verified.





Alternatives

Although we expect most people will be able to verify their identity using the GOV.UK One Login portal, as an alternative, an individual can verify their identity through third party providers that are registered as an Authorised Corporate Service Provider (**ACSP**). This is likely to be the best solution where an individual does not have the ID documents listed above. There are a number of ACSPs that are offering IDV services at a fee. Whilst Browne Jacobson will not be providing IDV, please contact us if you have any queries about using an ACSP to undertake IDV and we can share further information with you.

What do I need to do now?

Although the identify verification process is currently only voluntary, we recommend that the following steps are taken now.

- Identify individuals who will be required to have their identity verified and ascertain what ID they have available.
- Encourage those individuals who can use the GOV.UK One Login portal to do so before the requirements become mandatory.
- Identify those individuals who are unable to use the GOV.UK One Login portal and arrange for their ID verification through an Authorised Corporate Service Provider (**ACSP**).
- Ensure that individuals keep a record of their unique identifier number.

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