

FAQs for startups

Below are some of the questions we are regularly asked by startups, covering a range of topic areas.

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Below are some of the questions we are regularly asked by startups. They cover a range of topic areas, to see the answer simply click on the question.

If you have a question and cannot find the answer below, [email us here](#) and a member of our team will be in touch.

Convertible instruments

What types of convertible instruments are there?	+
What is a convertible loan?	+
What is an ASA?	+
What are the benefits of ASAs and convertible loans?	+

Shareholders' agreements

Do all startups need a shareholders' agreement?	+
Why is a shareholders' agreement useful?	+
When should I put a shareholders' agreement in place?	+
What should be included in a shareholders' agreement?	+
What are investor consents?	+

Brand and IP protection

What is copyright?	+
What kind of work qualifies for automatic copyright?	+
How will others know if my work has copyright protection?	+
How long does copyright last?	+
Who owns the copyright?	+
What is a trademark?	+
How do I register a trademark?	+
How long does the process of registering a trademark take?	+
How long does trademark protection last?	+
Who owns the registered trademark?	+

Taking on employees - from outside of the UK

Do I/my staff need a visa to come to the UK?	+
How do I know which type of visa I/my staff will need?	+
As an employer, what do I need to do to help an individual obtain a visa?	+
Why does my organisation need to apply for a sponsor licence?	+
How do I apply for a Sponsor Licence?	+
What are the general requirements and what should I do to prepare the application?	+
What are my obligations to the UKVI as a Sponsor?	+
How do I check my duties?	+
How much does it cost to apply for a Licence to Sponsor and how long does it take to get one?	+
How much does it cost for a Tier 2 visa and how long does it take to get one?	+

Tax efficient incentives

I want to incentivise some of my key staff. Can I just offer them some shares for no consideration?	+
How can I make a staff incentive more tax efficient?	+
Are there any tax implications for staff incentives at the point of granting the EMI options?	+
Can I offer some shares for free under an EMI Scheme?	+
Can I get the EMI share valuation agreed in advance with the Revenue?	+
What kind of situations can EMIs be used for?	+
How do I know the company is eligible for an EMI?	+
If the company isn't eligible for an EMI, what should I look at next?	+
Are there any alternatives to HMRC approved share options to incentivise some of my key staff?	+

FCA regulation

Can I provide financial services through my business?	+
How do I get authorisation to provide financial services to my customers?	+
Will applying to the FCA for authorisation to provide financial services to my customers affect my business plan?	+
Why should I bother to get authorisation from the FCA to provide financial services to my customers?	+
How do I find out if my business needs to be FCA authorised?	+

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