

New Company Service Providers Regime: A Practical Overview on Implementation and Application Process

Thursday 15 April 2021



Agenda

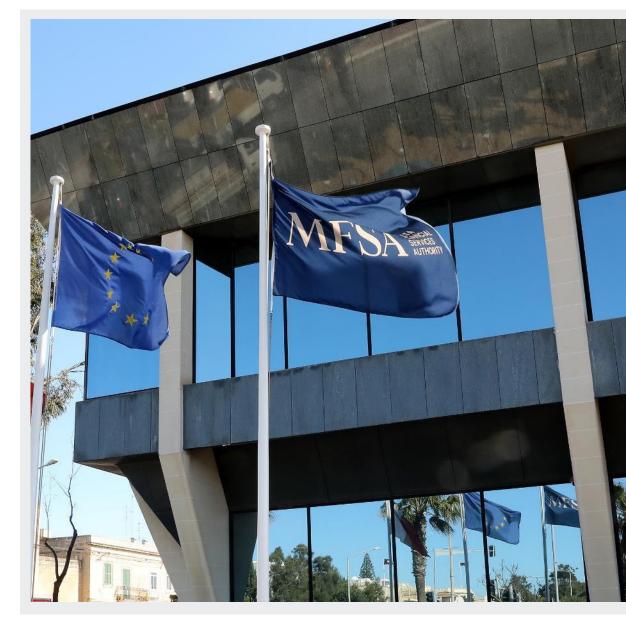
1000hrs	CSP Reform - Building a Compliance Culture Emily Benson - Head, Conduct Supervision, MFSA
1020hrs	Implementation of the CSP Reform Angela Thorns - Senior Analyst, Conduct Supervision, MFSA
1040hrs	Authorisation Process Jessica Agius - Analyst, Conduct Supervision, MFSA
1110hrs	Coffee Break
1110hrs 1120hrs	Q&A Session Alison Cortis - Senior Technical Expert, Conduct Supervision, MFSA Petra Camilleri - Senior Manager, Conduct Supervision, MFSA



Company Service Providers Act Reform Building a Compliance Culture

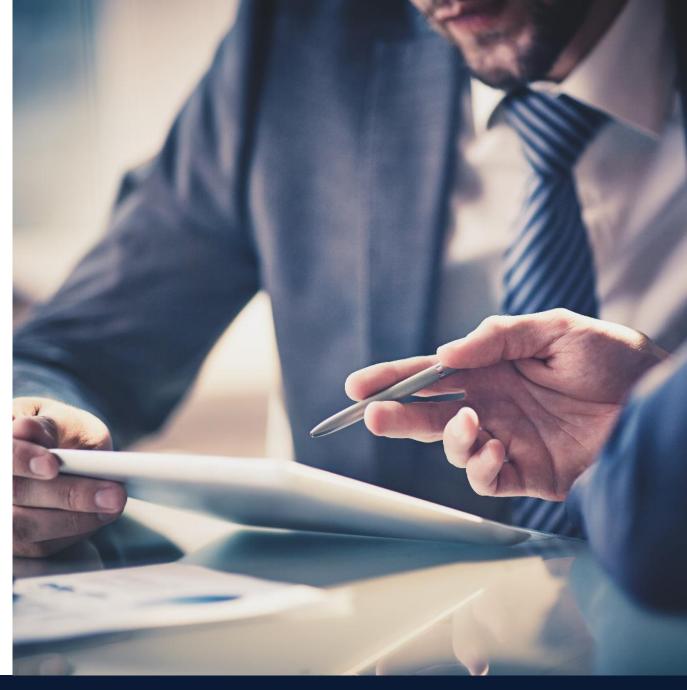
Emily Benson

Head - Conduct Supervision



Objectives of CSP Reform

- Ensuring fit & proper standards
- Ensuring CSPs adhere to applicable legal and AML/CFT requirements on an ongoing basis
- Applying a risk-based and proportionate regulatory approach



Fitness & Propriety

CSP Act introduced a market entry framework and rigorous screening mechanism for persons who previously fell outside the scope of the CSP Act.

- Persons providing directorship services under the *de minimis* threshold
- Professionals focusing on this area of regulated business





Compliance Culture (1)

A strong and effective **governance framework**

Setting the tone from the top

Board of Directors responsible to create a culture of compliance & provide the means to embed this culture at all levels of the organisation

Boards are responsible to effectively monitor the development of this culture

Compliance Culture (2)



Accountability and transparency

Tailor-made policies and procedures to support the implementation of the Board's expectations, and clear reporting lines

Work performed by the Compliance and AML/CFT functions documented. These functions report to the Board of Directors on a regular basis in line with the nature, scale and complexity of the CSP's activities

Compliance Culture (3)



Senior management to oversee the operation of control structures

Senior management should have a thorough understanding of the purposes as well as the requirements of the rules applicable to CSPs

Staff should be trained in relation to the CSP's procedures to be able to apply them in practice, one such instance being business continuity protocols and regular testing

Proportionate & Risk Based Regulation (1)

CSP Reform strengthens the regulatory framework and raises standards of compliance for all CSPs

Consultations in October 2019 and December 2020 - Authority received detailed and insightful feedback that reflects a dynamic and forward-looking industry

Resulted in further clarity to the revised Rules and Regulations

Feedback placed the Authority in a position to better understand the industry and provide guidance on specific areas

Proportionate & Risk Based Regulation (2)

Criteria for attributing under or over threshold status are risk based and proportionate

Example: Requirement for Independent Risk Management function in relation to Class C

Authority may grant derogation allowing risk management function not to be independent provided no conflicts of interest & this is appropriate and proportionate in view of the nature, scale and complexity of its business and the nature and range of the CSP services and activities

Proportionate & Risk Based Regulation (3)

Capital and insurance requirements linked to class and threshold allocation

- Capital requirements range from EUR2,500 for Class A under threshold CSPs to EUR25,000 for Class C CSPs
- Insurance requirement applies to Class B over threshold CSPs and Class C CSPs



Proportionate & Risk Based Regulation (4)

Guidance issued on by way of business determination

- Sets out criteria for interpretation of by way of business
- Guidance on factors taken into consideration by Authority
- Gives practical examples as by way of business determination is **factual in nature**

Proportionate & Risk Based Regulation (5)

CSP services being **incidental services** in connection with the services for which a **warranted professional** is retained by a client (such services not being within the definition of CSP services) will not be considered as being conducted by way of business for the purposes of the CSP Act

Incidental services do **not** include ongoing services i.e. acting as director, company secretary nor provision of registered office

Malta's Standing

CSP reform will place the jurisdiction at the forefront of good international practice - protecting the integrity of the financial system and the broader economy from undesired and illegal activity

It is part of a coordinated effort geared towards combatting financial crime on a national and international scale



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Thank you

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Implementation of CSP Act

Angela Thorns

Senior Analyst - Conduct Supervision



CSP Reform

Company Service Providers Act, 2013, amended by

Company Service Providers (Amendment) Act - Act L of 2020

Amending Act came into force on 16 March 2021





Milestones (1)

Raising the Bar for CSPs Consultation - 22 October 2019

Feedback Statement on Consultation - 9 April 2020

Act No. L of 2020 - Enacted by Parliament - 13 November 2020





Milestones (2)

Consultation on CSP Rulebook – 1 December 2020

Publication of draft Rulebook for CSPs and focussed consultation on

- Revenue Threshold Class A
- Risk management derogation
- Categories of persons to be exempted from the CSP Act



Milestones (3)

Company Service Providers (Amendment) Act, 2020, L.N. 96 of 2021 establishing 16 March 2021 as date of coming into force of Act L of 2020

Company Service Providers (Exemption) Regulations, L.N. 105 of 2021

Company Service Providers Act (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations, L.N. 117 of 2021





MFSA Key Resources (1)

- Rulebook for Company Service Providers 16 March 2021
- Guidance on Application of CSP Act 16 March 2021
- Frequently Asked Questions 18 March 2021



MFSA Key Resources (2)

- Feedback Statement 12 April 2021
- Guidelines to the New CSP Regime Application Process 12
 April 2021
- Various Circulars



MFSA Key Resources (3)

For information and regular updates on CSPs see:

CSP Page on our website



Legal Reform (1)

Legal reform centres around **three** main changes:

- 1. Anyone providing CSP services to third parties by way of business will be required to apply for authorisation to the MFSA.
- Includes warranted professionals and individuals previously operating under the de minimis rule
- Transitory provisions in the CSP Act allow those who will apply for authorisation to prepare for this change gradually



Legal Reform (2)

- 2. The change from registration to **authorisation** for all CSPs, including those already in possession of a Certificate of Registration
- Authority notifying existing CSPs of their classification
- Existing CSPs to take measures to comply with CSP Rulebook within six (6) months from 16 March 2021 i.e. compliance with Rulebook 16 September 2021
- Until then to endeavour to comply with CSP Rulebook on a **best efforts basis** and **continue complying** with the previous version of the Rulebook



Legal Reform (3)

- 3. The introduction of **three** classes of CSPs
- Categorising CSPs by reference to the service they provide
- CSP Rulebook sets out criteria to be applied when considering whether a person is an overthreshold or under threshold CSP



Class A Under Threshold

- Individuals & civil partnerships in possession of a **warrant** to practice as advocate, notary public, legal procurator or certified public accountant
- Formation of legal persons
- Revenue threshold applies 35% of the combined total revenue in a calendar year from the provision of all professional services or EUR100,000 whichever is the higher



Class B Under Threshold

- Individuals
- Acting as director and/or company secretary in a company, a partner in a partnership or in a similar position in relation to other legal persons
- Involvements threshold applies an aggregate of not more than ten (10) involvements
- Involvements of a person within the same group of companies shall only count as one single involvement



Class A Over Threshold

- Individuals and legal persons
- Formation of legal persons
- Provision of registered office, business correspondence or administrative address and other related services for a company or any other legal person



Class B Over Threshold

- Individuals and legal persons
- Acting as director and/or company secretary of a company or similar role in other legal persons
- Arranging for another person to act as director or secretary of a companyor in a similar role in other legal persons



Class C Over Threshold

- Individuals and legal persons
- Formation of legal entities
- Provision of registered office, business correspondence or administrative address & other related services for a company or any other legal entity
- Acting as director and/or company secretary of a company or in a similar role in other legal persons
- Arranging for another person to act as director or secretary of a company or in a similar role in other legal persons

CSP Act – Article 19

Individuals or legal persons **not** currently authorised under the CSP Act and wishing to continue providing CSP services to third parties by way of business to apply for authorisation

Those who do **not** intend to continue providing CSP services to third parties by way of business are to stop providing these services by

16 May 2021



Applications - Timeframe

Timeframe for application to be submitted is 2 months from coming into force of Act L of 2020

LH Portal opened 16 March 2021

closes 16 May 2021



Applications -Timeframe

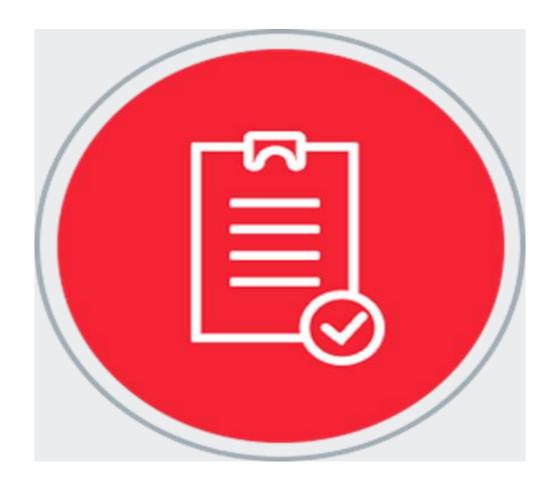
Application form to be downloaded from the dedicated <u>CSP Page</u> on our website

Submission of application and any relevant information through **LH Portal**

Some checks prior to submitting an application

Application is completed in full and correctly

Legal persons to submit a **detailed structure chart** as explained in the application



PQs – Individual applicants

PQs must be submitted by **all** individual applicants through LH Portal

If **outsourcing** Compliance function this should be stated in Application and proposed Compliance Officer to submit PQ

Individual applicants **not** required to complete an Entity Assessment Form



PQs – Applicants Legal Persons

Anyone holding an **approved position** such as Directors, Partners, MLRO, Compliance Officer, Senior Managers to submit PQ through LH Portal

Entity Assessment Form will be required in respect of each individual holding an approved position

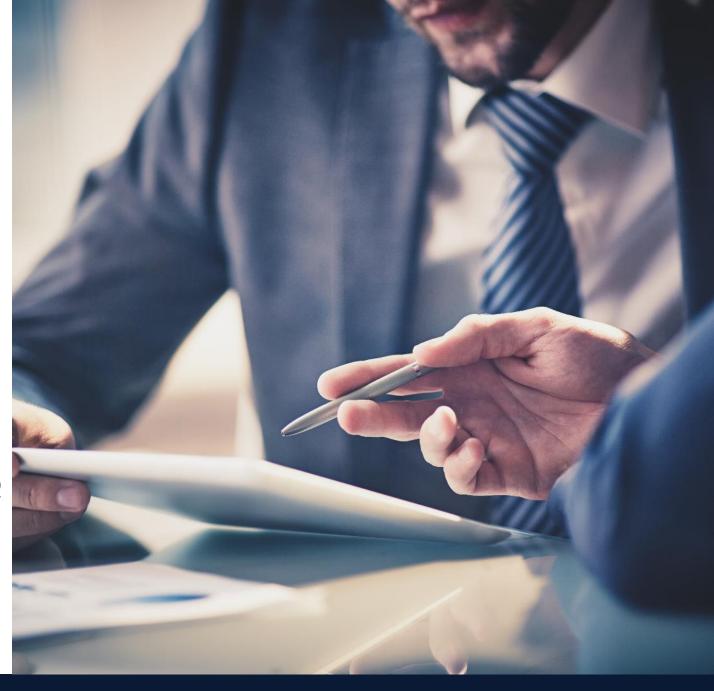


PQs – General

Specific documents to be uploaded with PQ

Some to be sent to Authority in the manner stated in Section 5 of the PQ (e.g. Police Conduct Certificate)

For further information see MFSA website here



Classification



CSP Act introduced classes and thresholds

All applicants who have submitted a **complete application** will be classified by the Authority

A notification in writing will be sent advising of applicants of their classification and threshold

Classification



Where an applicant disagrees with class and/or threshold attributed, the applicant is to inform the Authority in writing by accepting or rejecting the classification allocated through the LH Portal within **7 working days**

Where in disagreement with allocation to provide supporting information



Under Thresholds

Persons who have applied and been allocated an under threshold classification will have their application authorised or declined by 16 November 2021

Applicants will be corresponding with the Authority using the messaging system on the LH Portal

Any requests for further information or clarifications will also be received through the messaging system

Regular contact will be maintained

Class C and Over Thresholds

These persons will have their application provisionally authorised or declined by 16 November 2021

Once provisionally authorised these persons will be able to continue operating as CSPs for a further period of **one year** from when their application is provisionally authorised

The Authority will issue a final determination for all those provisionally authorised by 16 November 2022



Provisional Authorisation

Provisionally authorised CSPs are to **comply** with the provisions of the CSP Act until 16 November 2022 or until such time as their application is approved or declined, whichever is the earlier

Provisional authorisation is a temporary concession and privilege

Additional documents and information will be requested

Regular contact will be maintained



Thank you

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Should you have any queries on the CSP reform send an email to the Authority on

cspframeworkqueries@mfsa.mt



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The New Company Service Providers Regime: A Practical Overview on Implementation and Application Process

The Application Process

Dr Jessica Agius Analyst, Conduct Supervision



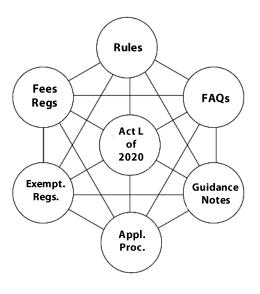
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Procedures relating to the Application Process
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Submission of PQs
Consolidation of Business

Introduction

MFSA authorisation to provide **CSP services** has been extended to:

- Warranted Professionals;
- 2. Persons operating under the **De Minimis Rule**.



The legislative framework set in place is well-supplemented with the **Exemption Regulations, Fees Regulations, Rules, Guidance Notes, Application Procedures** to support the sector in understanding its regulatory obligations under the new CSP regime, in ensuring that the regime is sufficiently robust and to equip the applicant with the necessary information in relation to the application process.



What is the Licence Holder ('LH') Portal?

The **LH Portal** is a **web-based application** which enables candidates for licensing by the MFSA, and entities already licensed by the MFSA to:

- submit Applications, Personal Questionnaires ('PQ') and the relevant attachments to the PQ, upload regulatory returns, supplementary documentation; and
- access the licensee's details through the **Corporate Profile**.



Previously exempt CSPs now requiring authorisation are to apply through the LH Portal.

The Application Process

- i. Application Fee
- ii. The Authorisation Process
- iii. The Process of Provisional Authorisation
- iv. Allocation of Class
- v. Refusal of Applications



i. Application Fee

- The application fee shall <u>remain the same</u>, i.e.,
 €250.
- An application fee is to be paid with **each** application form submitted and must be settled concurrently with the submission of the application.
- Fees are to be paid **electronically**.
- Unless the fee is duly received, the Authority <u>will</u> not process the application form.





ii. The Authorisation Process

The Authority will:

- Conduct preliminary checks and risk rate applicants;
- Determine whether to process applications for the purpose of issuing a full/provisional authorisation; and
- Concurrently determine the Class to be allocated to the applicant.

iii. The Process of Provisional Authorisation

For Over Threshold Class A, Over Threshold Class B, Class C:

The Authority may **provisionally authorise** the applicant subject to meeting of further conditions and/or provision of documentation to be provided **by not later than six (6) months** from the date of the closing of the LH Portal.

The Authority shall inform all provisionally authorised persons of its final decision to grant/refuse authorisation, within twelve (12) months from the date of provisional authorisation.

iv. Allocation of Class



The classification of the applicant rests solely with the Authority.

Following the allocation of a class, the user may approve or reject the class allocated by the Authority, by sending a message through the messaging system, giving reasons why the user deems that the applicant does not fall within the stipulated class. The reply is to be provided within seven (7) working days from the notification of the allocated class by the Authority.



Email message re Allocation of Class

New Message

Application ID: 438

Dear

You have a new message regarding your application 438

MESSAGE:

You have been assigned the following class: Class B over Threshold. Kindly approve/reject your class assignment.

You can reply to the message by logging in to your portal account.

Thank you & Regards



LH Portal Application Log



Messaging system on LH Portal



v. Refusal of Applications

The Authority may refuse authorisation in Phase 1

BUT

The Authority may refuse authorisation following the provisional authorisation period, if the information provided by the applicant is not deemed satisfactory.



The Authority retains the right to refuse applications if necessary.



How to create an Account

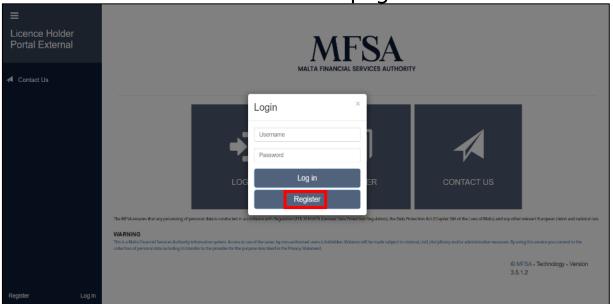
- i. Log In
- ii. Creating an LH Portal User Account
- iii. Activation of Account





i. Log In

LH Portal webpage



Menu Page



The web address is https://lhportal.mfsa.mt/.

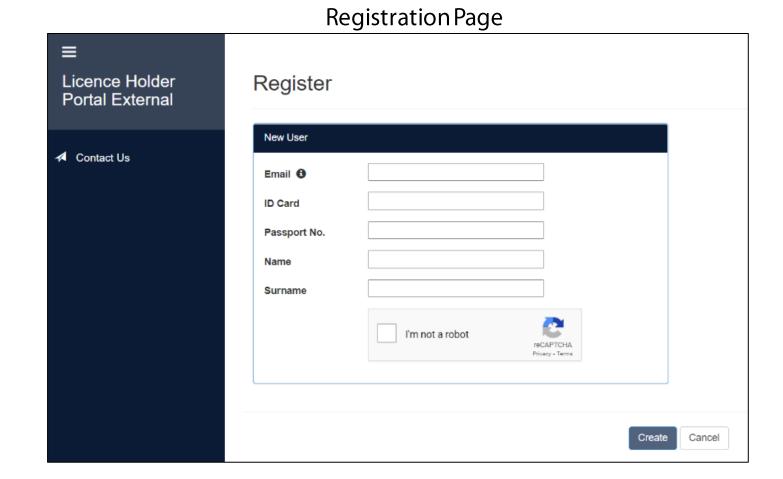
ii. Creating an LH Portal User Account

The user is requested to register and create an account on the LH Portal.

The user will be requested to include the following information:

Email*,
ID Card Number*,
Passport Number,
Name*,
Surname,*
and click on 'Create'.

Fields marked with an * are mandatory.



ii. Creating an LH Portal User Account cont.

The following message will be displayed on the screen and an email will be sent to the email address included in the registration details:

'New user has been successfully created. Password has been sent to the email address provided',

This email will include the email address utilised and a password granted by the portal administrator.

sent to the email address provided.

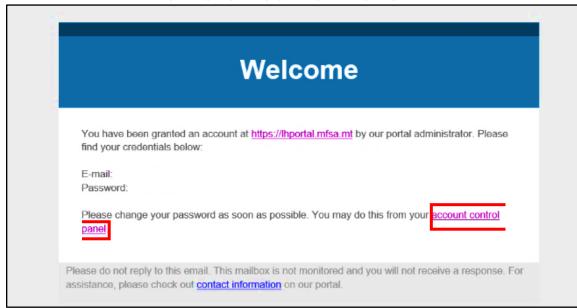
New user has been successfully created. Password has been



iii. Activation of Account

The user is to access the portal through a link as per below, with the original email address and using password received in the email sent by the portal administrator and click on 'Log In'.

Email for account activation



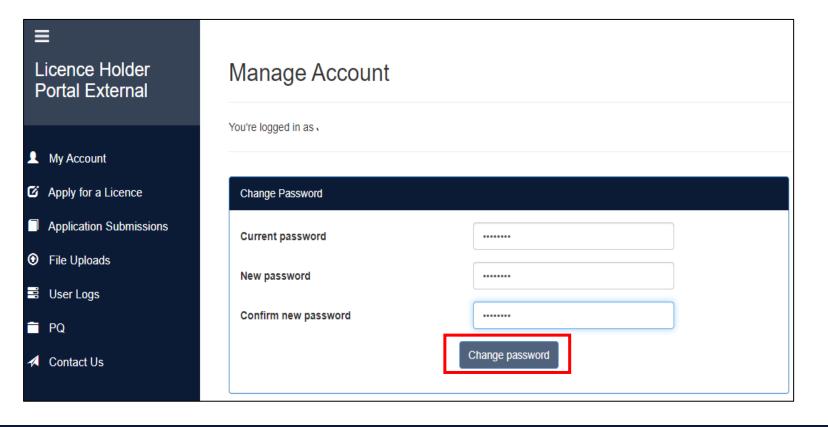
Log in Page

≡ Licence Holder Portal External	Log in
✓ Contact Us	Enter your credentials below
	Password Log in Register



ii. Activation of Account

The user is to include the current password as well as a new password of choice. The user is to then click on 'change password'.



The Application

- i. Completing the Application
- ii. Signatures on the Application





i. Completion of the Application

The application includes notes in each section to guide the user accordingly.

The application is to be completed in its entirety.

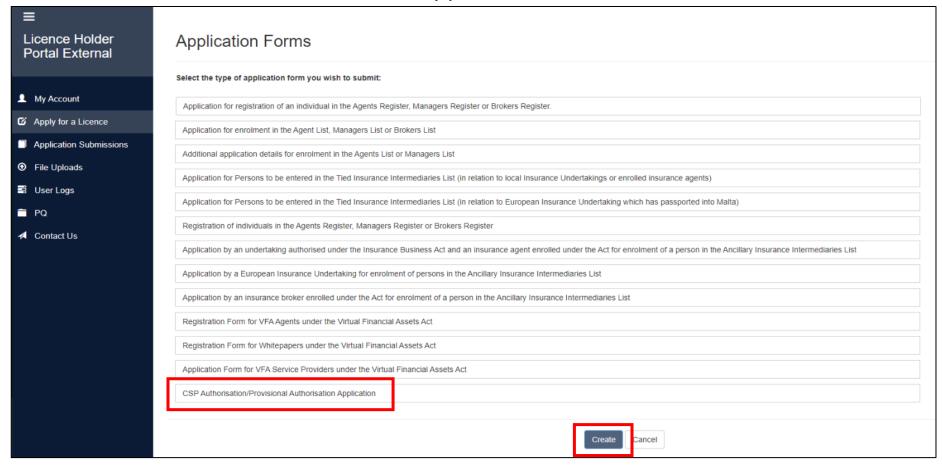
This applies also to the **PQs** submitted in conjunction with the application, as well as the submission of any **supplementary documentation**.

The user/applicant can go to 'Apply for a Licence'.





Selection of Application Forms



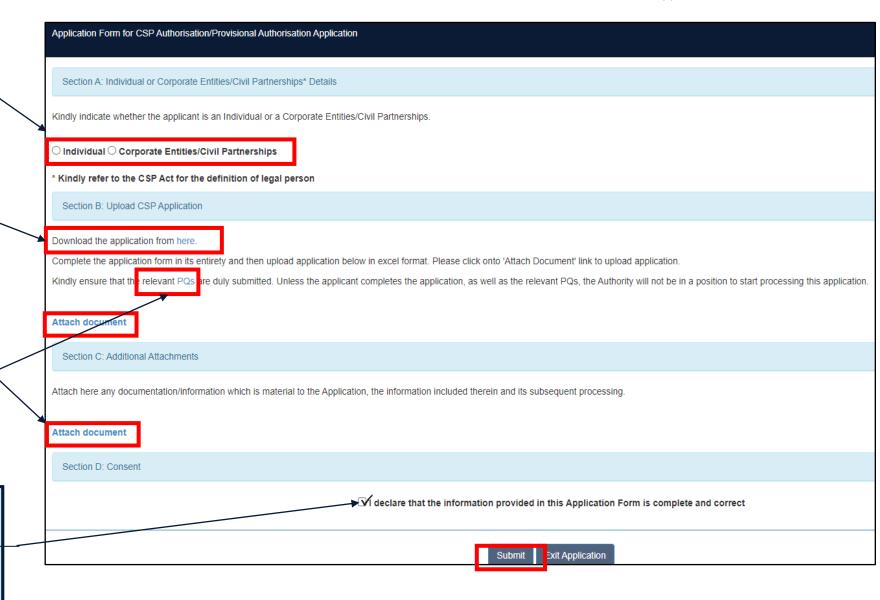
Section A: The user will be requested to select whether the applicant is:

i) an individual, or ii) a corporate entity/civil partnership

Section B: The user will be able to download the application to be completed. The Application can be found on the regime webpage

Section C: The user will need to submit the relevant PQs that supplement the application, as well as any additional documentation as required. The user can then upload the application, the PQ/s under 'Attach document'. Any supplementary documentation is to be uploaded under Section C.

Section D: The user needs to tick the declaration that the information provided in the Application is complete and correct. The system will not accept any submissions unless Sections A, B and D are completed



MFSA The Application Process

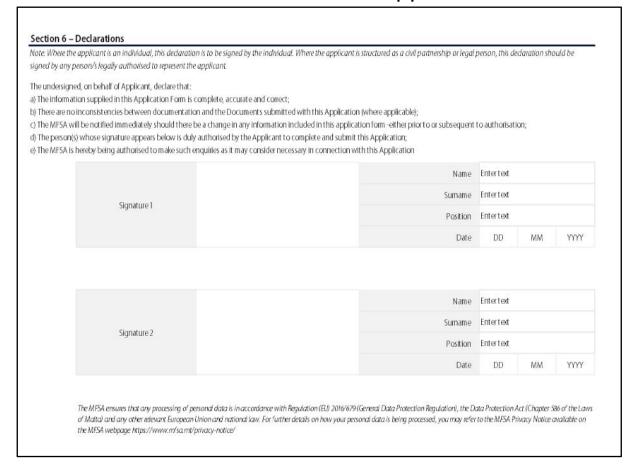
ii. Signatures on the Application

Once the application is completed the user/applicant must ensure that the **declarations** in **sections a**) – **e**) are read and agreed upon.

If applicant is an **individual** – declaration to be signed by the same individual.

If applicant is a **legal person/partnership** declaration to be signed **two (2) individuals** who are **legally authorised to represent the applicant**.

Declarations section in Application



ii. Signatures on the Application



The user has to submit the **final section of the application** which includes the **declaration** and the **signatures in original** to the Authority **within two(2) weeks of the electronic submission.**



Submission of the Relevant POs

- i. PQs submitted in Phase 1
- ii. PQs submitted in Phase 2
- iii. Supporting DocumentationRequired with PQs



Phase 1

i. PQs to be submitted in Phase 1

Legal Persons/Partnerships

- Directors*,
- MLRO,* and
- -Compliance Officer*

Individuals

- PQ in his/her name.
- Risk Management Function (Class C only) /Compliance Function if functions outsourced.
- Applicants are to note that the **Money Laundering Reporting Officer** ('MLRO') function **cannot be outsourced**.

Phase 2

ii. PQs to be submitted in Phase 2

Legal Persons/Partnerships

- Ultimate beneficial owners ('UBO') of the entity,
- Risk Management Officer,
- Senior management,
- Committee members if applicable.

ii. Supporting Documentation Required

- a) Business Risk Assessment;
- b) Customer risk assessment;
- c) Draft copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association; and
- d) Draft copy of the Client Services Agreement that the Company intends to use.

Any **additional documentation supporting the application** is to be submitted by **not later than 15 July 2021**.



The Authority holds the right to request any further documentation as necessary in order to complete the assessment being conducted.



Consolidation of Business

Civil partnerships, individuals...etc having an **existing CSP business**, and previously exempt from authorisation may be opting to **consolidate** their business with another entity or create a **separate legal entity**.

Two (2) distinct application forms need to be submitted:

- 1. Transitory application form in the name of the persons currently providing CSP business [necessary to continue to operate];
- 2. Application form which is submitted by any new CSP who would like to start providing such services [Standard application form] for the new entity.



Submission of PQs with Transitory Application

- For **CSPs currently operating as Individuals**: the PQ of that individual needs to be submitted;
- For **Legal Persons**: PQs of the individuals who will hold the positions of **Directors**, **MLRO** and **Compliance Officer** in the new legal entity.



Submission of PQs with the New Legal entity Application

- PQs of qualifying shareholders,
- Qualifying ultimate beneficial owners,
- Risk Officer,
- Senior Management,
- Committee Members if applicable.
- Once the application of the new legal entity is allocated an *in principle approval*, the PQs submitted with the transitory application will be grandfathered to the new legal entity.
- Once the legal entity is fully authorised all business can be transferred and the transitory application can be withdrawn.



Conclusion

In the case of any queries, these are to be sent via the email address set for the purpose of queries vis-à-vis the CSP regime:

cspframeworkqueries@mfsa.mt.



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