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(1) What is the WebFiling service?

The WebFiling Service provides a secure system for presenters to submit company information online.

(2) What forms can be submitted using WebFiling?

The following form types can be submitted via WebFiling:

The Annual Return (Exceptions apply), 225, 287, 288a, 288b, 288c, 353, 353a, 190, 190a, 88(2), 123, DCA (Dormant Company Accounts) and Audit Exempt Abbreviated Accounts.

The Annual Return form has exceptions and is **unavailable** online for the following companies:

- company numbers that begin with a prefix (e.g. FC, AC etc.) except for SC
- companies with more than 80 individual and joint shareholders
- companies where the total current and resigned officers is greater than 120
- companies with a share value of more than 3 decimal places
- companies with an individual share value of more than £9999
- Limited Liability Partnerships
- companies with more than 10 joint shareholders per shareholding
- companies with more than 6 values (currencies) of nominal capital
- dissolved companies
- companies in voluntary liquidation
- companies in compulsory liquidation
- companies in receivership
- companies who have held a return of final meeting
- companies that are converted or closed
- companies that have a first gazette notice of dissolution
- companies required to submit lists of subsidiary and associated undertakings
- companies where more than 255 changes need to be input within a single session
- companies where there are more than 1000 tags per document
- companies with more than 6 classes of share
- companies with a Corporate Voluntary Arrangement in place

(3) What are the operating hours of the service?

The service is available for the submission of data between 7am and midnight Monday – Sunday. However, due to the possible need for manual processing, documents will only be examined during Companies House’s normal working hours.

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(4) How is the service accessed?

WebFiling can be accessed via the WebFiling icon on the Companies House homepage – <http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk> or via the WebFiling URL – <https://ewf.companieshouse.gov.uk>

(5) Is WebFiling suitable for bulk use?

No, each transaction has to be entered individually on the WebFiling service. For bulk use, the Software Filing service is more appropriate. This service requires the use of specialised software to file data with Companies House as a formatted email message. For further information visit the Software Filing page on our website or call our Contact Centre on 0303 1234 500

(6) What are the requirements for use of the service?

You must register to use the WebFiling service. You will need to provide an email address and apply for a security code and company authentication code. To apply for these codes, click the WebFiling icon on our homepage or use the following URL – <https://ewf.companieshouse.gov.uk>

- The security code is sent immediately to your specified email address (normally within 10 minutes).
- The company authentication code is sent by post to the Company's registered office (normally within 5 working days).
- Both codes are required to sign in and submit data using the WebFiling service.

For additional information on system requirements please go to the WebFiling welcome page and click 'HELP'.

(7) Can all companies use the WebFiling service?

No. Data can only be filed online for company numbers that contain all digits e.g. 9000012, or are prefixed with SC e.g. SC123456.

(8) Where can I get help on how to use the service or submit documents?

Each electronic 'document' is filed using a company authentication code known only to Companies House and the company. The authentication code takes the place of a signature on a paper document.

(9) How are documents 'signed'?

Each electronic 'document' is filed using a company authentication code known only to Companies House and the company secretary / presenter. The authentication code takes the place of a signature on a paper document.

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(10) How do I register for WebFiling?

Go to the WebFiling welcome page and select 'CONTINUE' to begin the 3 step registration process. Both the security code and company authentication code are required to sign in and use the service.

- You must provide an email address as part of the registration process – all further WebFiling correspondence will be sent to the email address provided.
- Your security code will be emailed straight back to you, and is permanently linked to this email address.
- The company authentication code will be sent by 1st class post to the company's registered office address – allow 5 working days. (We will not issue a code if one has previously been allocated to the company).
- Once you have both codes you can sign in and use the service.

If you are **only** registering for a security code, a company authentication code will not be issued if one has previously been allocated to the company

If you **do not** have a copy of the company authentication code you can request a reminder.

Sign in and click '[Forgotten your authentication code. Click here](#)'. A reminder will be sent to the company's registered office address – Allow 5 working days.

You can sign in and change your email address, security code & company authentication code at any time. (On the 'My Account Details' and 'Company Registration Details' pages).

(11) Can I have more than one Security Code / What if I have more than one email address?

If you have more than one email address you may apply for additional security code(s) to be linked to the additional address(es).

WebFiling confirmations will be sent to the email address you sign into the service with. However, you can supply a temporary address on the submission contact details page at the end of the filing process. Email confirmations would be sent to the temporary address for that filing only.

To request additional security codes, simply complete the 'New Customer' registration process. We will email the security code straight to you. We will not issue another company authentication code if one has already been allocated.

(12) What if I can't find / remember my security code

You can request a reminder by selecting '[Forgotten your security code? Click here](#)' from the 'WebFiling Welcome' page. Simply enter your email address and we will email you a reminder of your security code.

If a security code has not been allocated yet, please apply for one by completing the registration process.

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(13) I have applied for a security code but not received one.

It is possible that the email address entered during registration was not valid. Please apply again ensuring that the email address is entered correctly: the security code is then sent to the email address you provide.

(14) If I have more than one company to register, do I need more than one security code?

No. You only need one security code for each email address. If you want to use the same email address for filing documents for multiple companies, you should use the same security code for all the companies; all email confirmations will be sent to this address.

However, you do need a separate authentication code for each company, unless you have previously set up a bulk filing authentication code with us; see (34) for further details.

(15) How are company authentication codes allocated?

The company authentication code is generated as part of the WebFiling process. They are sent by 1st class post addressed to the company's registered office address (as held in Companies House's records), normally within 5 working days.

This is the only paper based part of the process, but it is necessary to do this by written communication between Companies House and the company to ensure that the company is aware that the code has been set up

(16) Why does it say a company authentication code has already been allocated to the company on the registration page?

The company authentication code has previously been requested for the company and sent to the company's registered office address.

If your company has been purchased from a third party (e.g. an incorporation or formation agent) a company authentication code may have been requested when the company was initially incorporated.

If you would like to re-order the company authentication code complete the registration process, once you have received your security code via email:

- Return to the WebFiling 'sign in' screen and enter your email address and security code.
- On the next screen select 'Forgotten your authentication code. Click here and enter the company number (you are requesting the authentication code for)
- Once confirmed, a reminder of the company authentication code will be sent to the company's registered office address – allow 5 working days.

If you wish to change the allocated company authentication code, you can do so on the 'My account details' page; the new code should be valid the next working day.

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(17) Can we use the same authentication code for multiple companies / Bulk company authentication code requests?

Yes, we can arrange for presenters filing for 20 or more companies to use the same authentication code. Please see (34) for further information on the requirements to set this up (this applies to both Software filing & WebFiling customers)

(18) I have received a letter with a company authentication code but I have not requested one

- It is likely that you are an agent or a person who has authority to file documents on behalf of a company and your address is the company's registered office address. If the company has registered to use the service, you will have received the letters because you are acting as the company's secretary, an agent or person who has the authority to file documents on behalf of the company and your address is the company's registered office address. You should contact the company (your client) in this instance.
- Companies House has automatically allocated a company authentication code to your company if your annual return date is approaching. In this case, if you would like to use the service all you need to do is go to the WebFiling welcome page and register for a security code. See (11) for 'How do I register for WebFiling.

(19) I have not received / I Can't find / remember a company Authentication code

Not received – If you have registered for WebFiling and not received a company authentication code, please check that the registered office address is correct, as this is where the company authentication code is posted. You can check your registered office address free of charge with our WebCheck service – <http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk/webcheck>

Forgotten – If you have forgotten your authentication code, a reminder can be requested. Sign in to the WebFiling service (enter your email address & security code), to request confirmation select 'Forgotten your authentication code. Click here and enter the company number for which you wish to file.

A reminder letter will be sent by 1st class post to the company's registered office address - allow 5 working days. If a code has not been allocated, apply for one by completing the registration process.

(20) I have changed my company authentication code but the new code isn't valid.

Your new code will overwrite the current one at the end of the working day. In the meantime, the old code should still be valid.

(21) Does each company need a separate authentication code?

Yes, each company should have its own company authentication code. However, it is possible to allocate the same code to multiple companies; to do this a bulk filing authentication code would need to be set up with us; see (34) for further information.

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(22) I wish to cancel a company authentication code immediately.

You can cancel your company authentication code on the company registration details page. The code can be cancelled from the next working day or from a specified date in the future.

(23) How long does it take to acknowledge electronic filings?

Our aim is to register 90% of electronically filed documents within 24 hours of receipt, though if manual intervention is required the processing time can take longer.

After submitting data you should receive two emails, one to confirm receipt of the data and a second to confirm if the data has been accepted or rejected. If you have paid the £15 annual return filing fee by payment card you will receive a third email from our payment provider 'Netbanx' confirming the amount and receipt of payment.

- The confirmation of receipt email is normally received within 3 hours of the data being submitted. (If you do not receive confirmation you can call our contact centre for help, quoting your envelope reference number)
- Statement requests of the submitted annual return data will be sent as an attachment in a separate email normally sent within 3 hours of submission.
- All electronically filed documents are acknowledged by an acceptance or rejection email, normally received within 3 working days (once the document has been processed). However, most documents are processed within 24 hours. If your data is rejected the reasons will be included in the email.

(24) Do I need to submit all my other directorships?

Yes, you are required by law to submit all your other directorships, although the law may change in the future. The information is not used to update or validate the records of the companies to which these directorships apply.

(25) How does a new director consent to act? (Relates to form 288a)

In addition to the company authentication code, forms 288a filed electronically must also contain 3 items of personal information (chosen from a list of 7) relating to the director being appointed.

On appointment, under the Companies Act, directors must sign to confirm their 'consent to act'. To provide an electronic equivalent of this signature, electronic appointment documents must contain three items of personal information provided by the appointee, which may include:

Place of birth

Eye colour

Telephone number

Father's first forename

National insurance number

Passport number

Mother's maiden name

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(26) How do I print copies of the WebFiling screens?

To print any of the WebFiling pages, select the 'control' and 'P' keys to display the print window, then select 'OK' to print the screen.

Alternatively use the 'print page' button within the annual return section. The contents of the screen and your print window are displayed; from the print window select 'OK' to print the screen.

(27) How do I view the data submitted?

From the WebFiling Main Menu the 'View Data Submitted' screen lists the documents submitted by a presenter via WebFiling during the last 10 days. This screen displays the submission date, company number, document type and submission number (envelope number)

Note: The documents in the download areas are linked to the presenter's email address and security code, not the company number.

When a presenter has signed in, the documents available are those submitted by the individual presenter.

The documents are in PDF format, and can be easily downloaded by clicking the relevant PDF link and following the on screen instructions.

These documents are only available for 10 days from the original submission.

Documents submitted during a session can be accessed, by selecting 'REFRESH' to update the screen.

(28) How do I file my accounts?

- Firstly, you are obliged to prepare accounts, get them approved by the board of directors and signed on behalf of the board by a director of the company.
- From the Menu screen choose Dormant Company Accounts (DCA) or audit exempt abbreviated accounts.
- Ensure that your company meets the criteria provided to submit these accounts
- Download the Adobe Acrobat reader
- From the template screen click 'continue' to download your accounts template
- The template will be downloaded to your PC
- Complete the template, save and upload the accounts to Companies House.

You will receive an email to confirm that Companies House has received the accounts.

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(29) Where can I find more information on accounts?

For general information on accounts visit the Companies House Website home page and select 'Guidance Booklets'. Our Guidance notes will now be listed, select 'Accounts and Accounting Reference Dates'.

For further Information on how to web file your accounts visit the Companies House website home page and select 'more WebFiling information here'. Select any of the 'Quicklinks' on the left hand side of the page including WebFiling Accounts Demo and WebFiling Accounts User Guide

(30) How do I file my Annual Return?

- The Annual Return is the snapshot of certain company information at the made-up-date. It is separate from the company's annual accounts
- From the menu screen select Complete an Annual Return (£15 charge)
- Click on the 'confirm' button to continue
- Scroll through the following pre-populated screens making amendments where required. Click 'confirm' at the end of each screen.

(31) How can I pay for my Annual Return?

At the 'Payment screen' select your method of payment and click 'Submit'.

Methods of payment:

1: Credit / Debit payment card

If 'credit/debit card' is selected the 'WebFiling Credit Card Payment' screen is displayed.

Note: Before proceeding to the Credit Card Payment screen, please make a note of the Company Name, Company Number and Submission number as it may be required by the helpdesk should your credit card payment fail.

Click 'Continue'. You will now be taken to the Netbanx secure server and prompted to enter your payment details.

2: Online Credit Account – available to presenters filing 10 or more Annual Returns per annum

If 'by account' is selected enter your 'Presenter ID' and 'Presenter Authentication code' and click 'submit'. The 'Payment confirmation' screen is now displayed.

After submission you will be sent two emails. One to confirm receipt of the data, and a second to confirm if the data has been accepted or rejected

If payment was made by credit/debit card a third email will be sent from our payment provider 'NetBanx' to confirm the amount paid.

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(32) How do I get a credit account for WebFiling?

This is available for presenters filing 10 or more Annual Returns per annum. To apply complete an online credit account application form, available to complete online or download from our website. [Click here to access online credit account application form.](#)

The completed and signed application form must be returned to:

Companies House Finance Section, Companies House, Crown Way, Cardiff. CF14 3UZ.

Allow 10 working days for your account to be set up. Once the form has been processed you will then be sent your payment account Presenter ID and Presenter Authentication Code, both of which must be entered to authorize payment on the WebFiling payment details page.

Once set up, this account can **only** be used to pay for information presented via the Companies House WebFiling and Electronic Filing services.

(33) What is the legal basis for WebFiling?

Under section 707B of the Companies Act 1985, the Registrar has the power to approve the form and manner of delivery of documents by electronic communication and the way in which they are authenticated in place of being signed. The approval is issued in the form of a direction signed by the Registrar setting out the relevant requirements.

(34) WebFiling bulk companies authentication code requests / Using the same authentication code for multiple companies. (This applies to both Electronic and WebFiling customers.)

To arrange this we would require the following:

If less than 20 companies are involved

- A letter from the presenter listing the company numbers and the authentication code to be allocated against these companies (please see 'format' below).
- A letter of authority from an officer of each company – signed and dated authorizing the use of the specified authentication code. A sample copy of this letter is available below.

This would not be required if the presenter is an officer of all the companies – in this case a single letter of authority from the presenter would be sufficient, detailing the chosen authentication code and the list of company numbers.

If more than 20 companies are involved

- A covering letter from the presenter
- Letter(s) of authorization from the company officer(s), each letter should be signed and dated authorizing the use of the specified authentication code. A sample copy of this letter is available below.

This would not be required if the presenter is an officer of all the companies - in this case a single letter of authority from the presenter would be sufficient, accompanied with the chosen authentication code and the list of company numbers on floppy disk or CD Rom.

- The authentication code data which should be submitted in a text format (suffix.txt) on floppy disk or CD Rom (please see 'Format' below).

Format:

Authentication code followed by a comma followed by the company registration number - one company per line.

For instance – to notify that authentication code ABCDEF should be used for companies 98954, 654876 and 2098987, send:

ABCDEF,98954

ABCDEF,654876

ABCDEF,2098987

The company number may be zero filled to make it up to eight characters long, but this is not necessary for processing, e.g. ABCDEF, 00098954.

NOTE:

All the required information should be sent to Companies House together and the information provided on floppy disk/CD Rom must be supported by suitably signed paper copies of notification(s) from the companies you are presenting on behalf of. Each company must provide a signed and dated letter authorizing the use of the authentication code; however, this is not required if the presenter's address is the registered office and is an officer of all the companies.

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This letter is an example of how a bulk filing authorisation letter (from a company officer) for WebFiling and Electronic Filing should look. The following information is required and should be included:

- Company letter-headed paper should be used (when possible); if not the company name and registered office address should be provided.
- Include the company name and number.
- Include the company authentication code to be allocated (against the company number).
- Include the Presenters details (the person responsible for filing on behalf of the company).
- Add a signature, full name and email address of an officer of the company (the officer authorising the use of the specified authentication code).

Company Name
Company's Registered Office Address

EF Administration
Companies House
Crown Way
Cardiff
CF14 3UZ

Date

Dear Sir/Madam,

Online Filing Services – Company Authentication Code

Would you please record the code specified below as the 'Company Authentication Code' for ***the company name***, registered number ***the company number*** for the purpose of filing information online with Companies House.

Company Authentication Code: _ _ _ _ _

The presenter authorised to submit information on the company's behalf is:

Name of organisation _____
/ company

Company address _____

Contact email address _____

Signed by a serving officer of: **** the company name ****

Signature _____
Director/Secretary (delete as applicable)

Full name _____
Please print in capitals

Contact email address: _____

*Registered in (England/Wales or Scotland as appropriate) registered number * * * * **
If notification relates to a Scottish company please include the prefix SC to the company number.