

Submitter User Guide for the National Storage Mechanism (NSM)

Version 9.0

February 2024

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Overview

The National Storage Mechanism (NSM) is an online storage facility for regulated information required to be disclosed under our Listing Rules (LR), Disclosure Guidance and Transparency Rule (DTRs) and Prospectus Regulation Rules. Listed issuers should upload documents such as annual reports and circulars ('regulated information') in order for that information to be displayed on the NSM.

All submitters to the NSM are required to register for an Electronic Submission System (ESS) account and provide evidence they are authorised to file regulated information on behalf of the issuers they represent.

This user guide aims to provide submitters with a step-by-step guide to uploading information to the NSM.

For step-by-step guide for searching on the NSM for regulated information, please refer to $\underline{\mathsf{NSM}}$ User $\underline{\mathsf{Guide}}$

V9.0 updates:

• Section 6: Clarification of naming conventions.

1. Accessing the ESS system

To submit documents to the NSM, first register with the **Electronic Submission System (ESS)** for access.

Registering for system access

Your registration is subject to approval. You can only send documents to the NSM via this system once you have been accepted as an approved user.

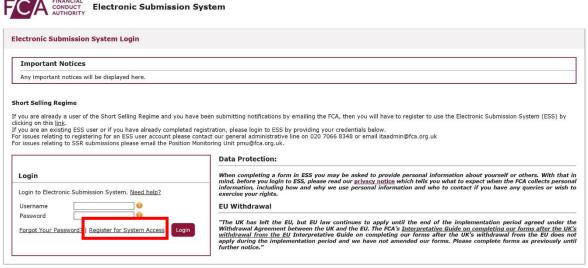


The ESS does not accept group email addresses. All users must register individually for access.

Sharing your username and password with other users is strictly prohibited.

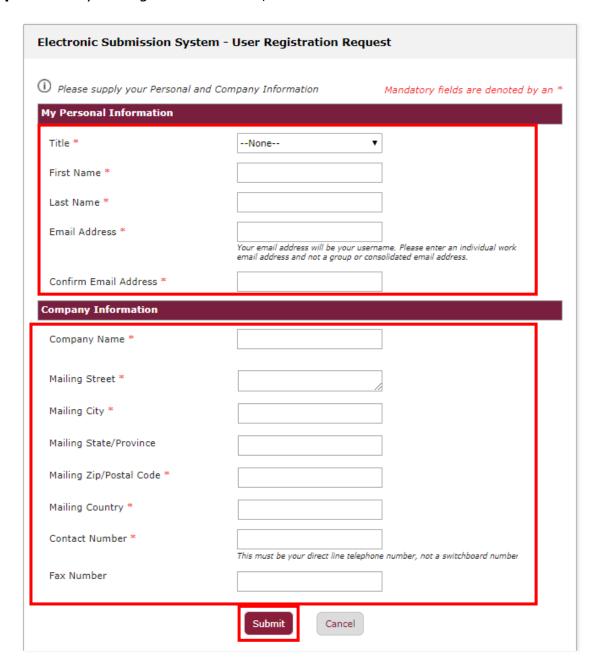
To register for system access, follow these 3 steps.

Step 1: Go to the ESS login page and click on Register for System Access.



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Step 2: Enter your registration details, then **Submit**.



When providing your registration details, please note:

- Your email address must be your **work email address**. We do not accept registrations from public domains such as Gmail.
- Your email address will be used as your ESS username.
- Your contact telephone number must be your direct line, not a switchboard number.
- Your company information (company address, contact number and fax) will be used on all cases where you are the named as the Primary Contact.

Step 3: Click on **I Accept** to accept the terms and conditions.



Statement <u>here</u>.



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When you click I Accept, you will see the Registration confirmation message and an email will be sent to your registered email address. At this point, your request is now with us for approval. Click on **OK** to complete the registration process.



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You will be sent an email once a decision is made.

If you choose **Cancel** in Step 3, the registration request you have created will be void and no further action will be taken.

Activating your ESS registration

Once we have approved your registration, an email will be sent to your registered email address. This email will confirm your username and provide a link to activate your account.

Click on the link in the email and you will be prompted to set a password when you first log in.

Change Your Password

Entors	new password for
	•
	bigcompanyplc.com . Your password must
have a	t least:
0	8 characters
0	1 uppercase letter
0	1 lowercase letter
0	1 number
0	1 special character 🚯
* New	Password
Ī	
* Confi	rm New Password
Б	rd was last changed on 18.04.2018 16:37.

Your password must be at least 8 characters long, with a mix of uppercase, lowercase, numerical and special characters :!#\$%-_=+<>.

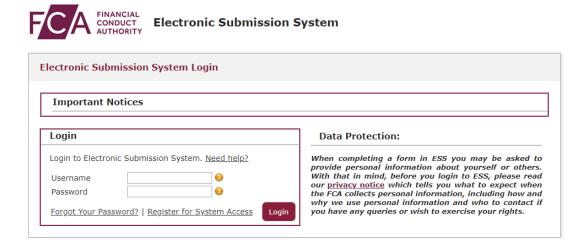
If your ESS registration request is rejected

If your registration has been rejected, an email will be sent to your registered email address. If you have any queries you can call our **General administrative help desk** on the number provided in the email.

Logging in

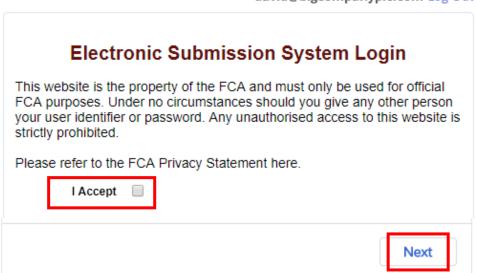
Users will now need to register for multi-factor authentication ("MFA") to be able to log into Electronic Submission System. **PLEASE NOTE** that you do **NOT** need to create a new ESS registration when registering for MFA. Further guidance on MFA registration can be found at https://www.fca.org.uk/firms/multi-factor-authentication-fca-systems.

To log into Electronic Submission System, you will need to enter your username, password, and 6-digit one time passcode from either your authenticator app, SMS text or voice call to authenticate (MFA). Note: enter the username in lowercase.



After 3 unsuccessful login attempts, your account will be locked for 20 minutes. If a further unsuccessful login attempt is made, your account will be locked, and you will need to contact the support team to unlock your account.

Whenever you log in, you will be asked to accept the **FCA Terms and Conditions** for system usage. Tick the box marked **I Accept** and click **Next** to continue.

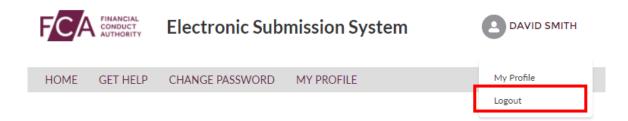


david@bigcompanyplc.com Log Out

You can view the FCA Privacy Statement using the on-screen link, or at https://www.fca.org.uk/privacy.

Logging out

You can log out of the system at any time by clicking on your username in the top right corner of the page and selecting **Logout** from the dropdown.





Please ensure you have saved all information you have entered before you log out.

2. Managing your ESS profile and password

If you forget your password

If you forget your password, click on the **Forgot Your Password?** link on the login page.



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You'll be asked to provide your email address. This is your registered email address which is also your ESS username.

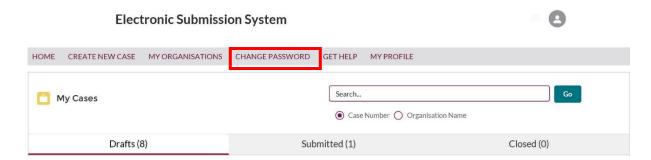
An email will be sent to your registered email address. The email will contain a link which can be used only once – if you forget your password again, you will have to request a new link.

When you click on the link within the email, you'll be asked to provide a new password. When choosing a new password, remember:

- Passwords must be at least 8 characters, a mix of uppercase, lowercase, numerical and special characters:!#\$%-_=+<>.
- The new password you choose cannot be one of the last 12 passwords you have used before.

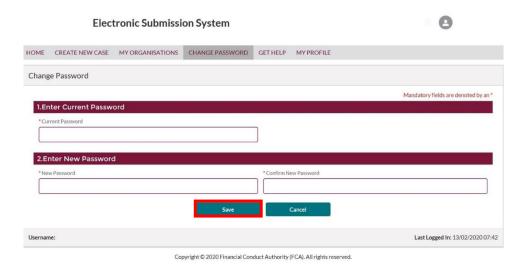
Changing your ESS password

Once you have registered and successfully logged in, you can change your password anytime by choosing **Change Password** on the home page.



You'll then be asked to enter your current password and your new password. When choosing a new password, remember:

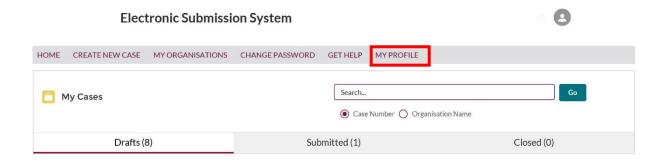
- Passwords must be at least 8 characters, a mix of uppercase, lowercase, numerical and special characters:!#\$%-_=+<>.
- The new password you choose cannot be one of the last 12 passwords you have used before.



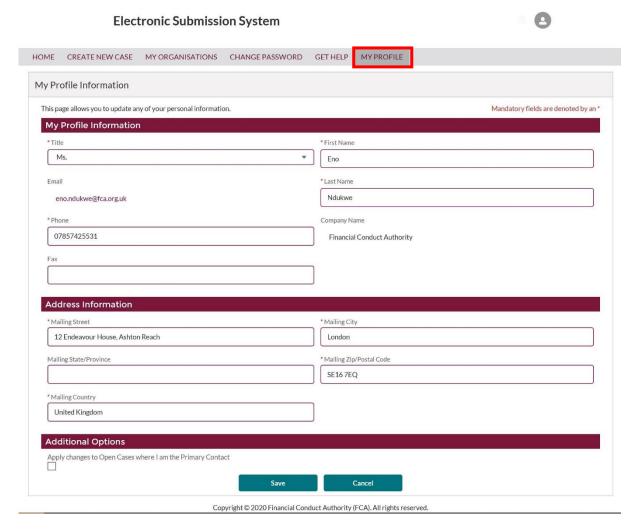
When done, click on the Save button.

Updating your ESS profile

Once your registration is approved and you have logged in, you can view and update your profile details at any time by clicking on the **MY PROFILE** link on the home page.



You will now be able to view and update your profile details.



For security reasons, you cannot change your email address and company name. These fields are displayed but cannot be edited.

Should your email address change while you are working with the same organisation, you must contact our general administrative help desk who will update your profile with your new email address.



Please keep your contact details up to date at all times. These details will be used in our correspondence for all cases where you are the Primary Contact.

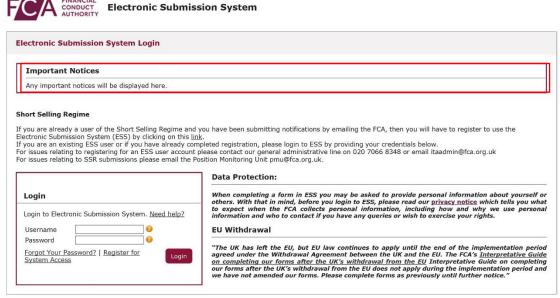
Once you made all the changes required, you can choose to update the contact details on all the cases where you are the named Primary Contact. This can be done by selecting the option to **Apply changes to Open Cases where I am the Primary Contact** in the **Additional Options** section.

Your address on closed (Approved, Withdrawn or Lapsed) cases will not be updated.

3. Understanding the user interface

Important notices

On the login page, you will see a section for **Important Notices**. We update this section regularly to keep you informed about news such as system unavailability or recent changes.

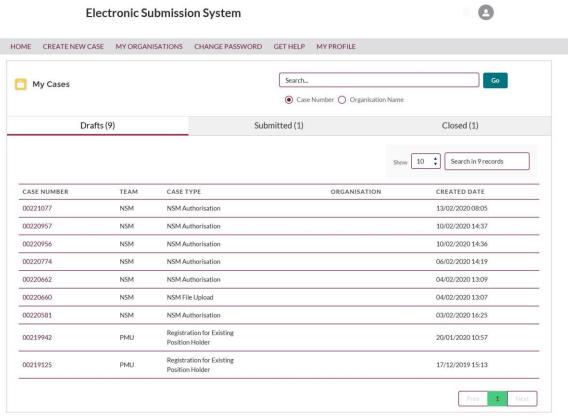


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My Cases page

On successful login, you will be directed to the My Cases home page.

This page displays a list of all cases you have created or where you are a member of the case team. You will see all **Draft** cases by default, however if you want to see a list of all **Submitted** or **Closed** cases, click on the **Submitted** or **Closed** tab respectively.



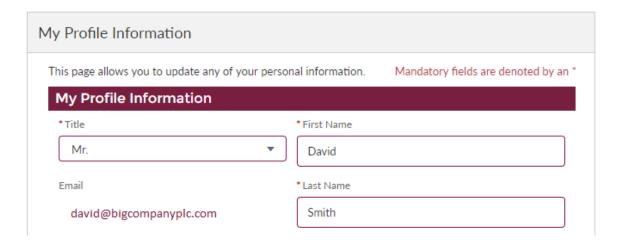
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The **Get Help** option in the top navigation bar takes you to the relevant FCA website where you will find more help on information on documents you need to submit and how to use the system.

The **Home** option will return you to the **My Cases** home page.

Mandatory fields

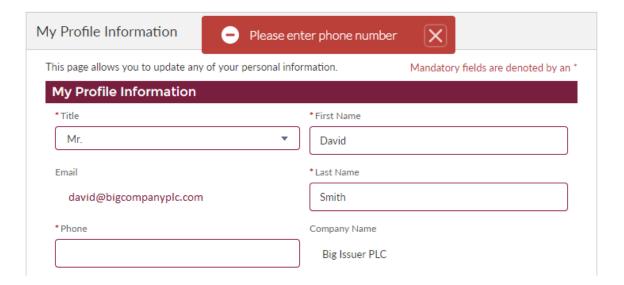
Mandatory fields are marked with a red asterisk (*). You must enter a value in these fields before you proceed to Save or Submit.



Error messages

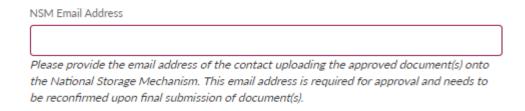
When you click Save or Submit, an error message will be displayed if you have not entered mandatory values or if the data you have entered is invalid.

Error messages are displayed at the top of the screen. They will disappear automatically after a few seconds, or you can close them manually by clicking on the cross.

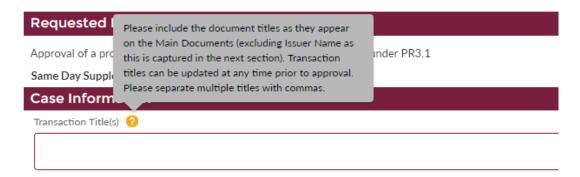


Help text

Help text is provided for all important fields on all pages. Help text may be displayed on the screen.



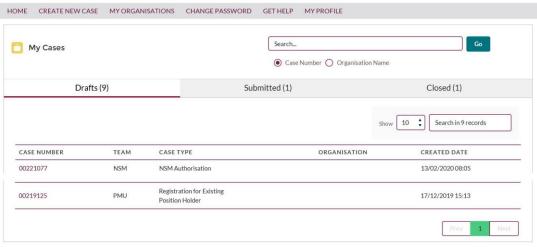
Help text can also be viewed by clicking on the ?? icon next to a field.



Case pagination

By default, the system will display 10 cases at a time, but you can increase the number of cases shown using the dropdown list next to the **Show** button.

To see more cases, use the **Next** or **Previous** buttons. These will only become active when there are more cases than will fit on one page.



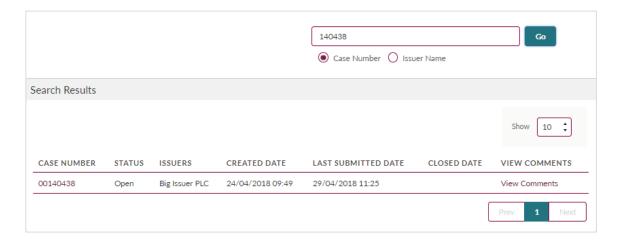
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Search

You can search for cases by entering a case number or issuer name in the search box and clicking ${f Go}$.



You can enter a part of the Issuer Name or the Case Number. The search results will only list relevant cases you have access to.



4. Issuer authorisation

As part of the NSM registration process, all submitters must provide evidence they are authorised to file regulated information on behalf of the issuers they represent.

Authorisation letter template

Submitters to the NSM need an authorisation letter from each issuer they represent and must apply for authorisation by uploading the authorisation letter into the ESS. We have provided a template for the letter.

Completion notes

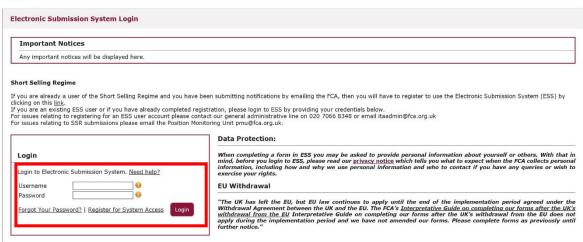
- An authorisation letter is required for all issuers, even if you are an employee of that issuer.
- All fields in square brackets must be completed.
- Two signatories are required. Signatories need to be a Partner, President, Treasurer, Corporate Secretary, or Director of the issuer.
- The authorisation letter should be presented on letterheaded paper from the issuer.
- The authorisation letter must be dated within 1 month of the date of submitting the authorisation request.

Authorisation letter submission

Step 1: Log into ESS

Once you have your authorisation letter ready, <u>log into ESS</u>. You will need to enter your username and password and click on **Login**. Enter the username in lowercase.



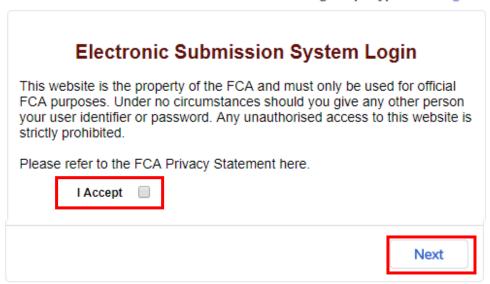


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After 5 unsuccessful login attempts, your account will be locked for 30 minutes.

Whenever you log in, you will be asked to accept the **FCA Terms and Conditions** for system usage. Tick the box marked **I Accept** and click **Next** to continue.

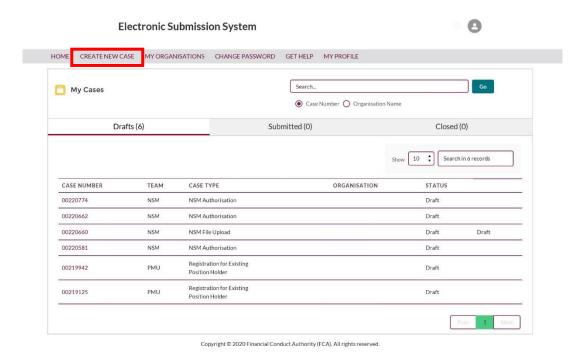
david@bigcompanyplc.com Log Out



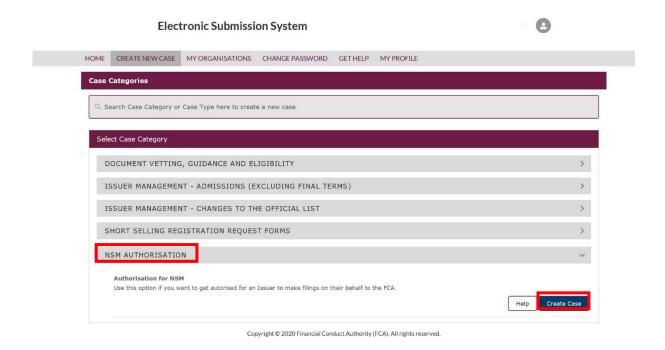
You can view the FCA Privacy Statement using the on-screen link, or at https://www.fca.org.uk/privacy.

Step 2: Create a new case

Select the **CREATE NEW CASE** tab from the bar at the top of the page



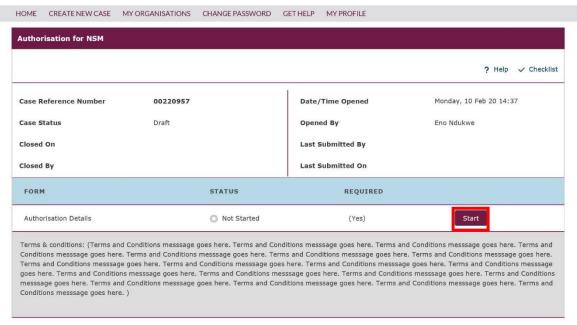
Step 3: Select the NSM AUTHORISATION tab and click Create Case.



Step 4: Continue to the page below and click Start

Electronic Submission System





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Step 5: You will be presented with the screen below. Enter the Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) number of the issuer you have been authorised to submit on behalf of and click **Search**.



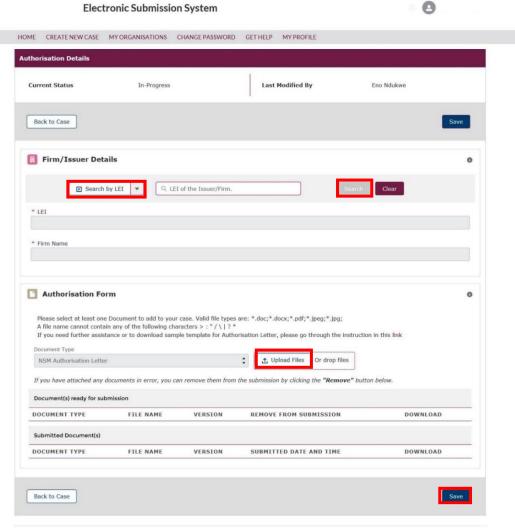
The LEI is a 20-character, unique alpha-numeric code.

You can search for an issuer's LEI on the Global Legal Identifier Foundation (GLEIF) website: https://search.gleif.org/

The search feature will only match the beginning of a word and does not allow for multiple word searches. For example, entering 'Lasa', 'Lasaco', 'Assu', 'Assura', 'Assurance', 'Pl', 'Plc' will return 'Lasaco Assurance Plc' but entering 'Assurance Plc' will not.

Next, in the **Authorisation Form** section, upload the authorisation letter and click **Save**.

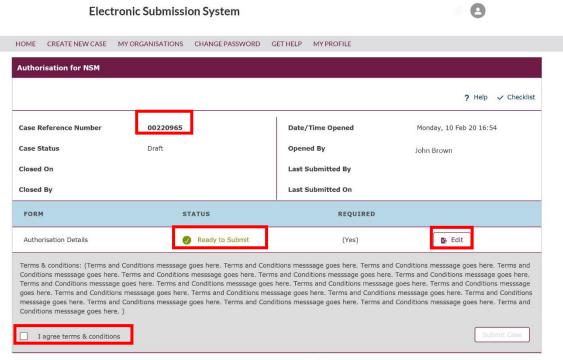
You will need to submit a separate authorisation case for each issuer you want to be able to upload for.



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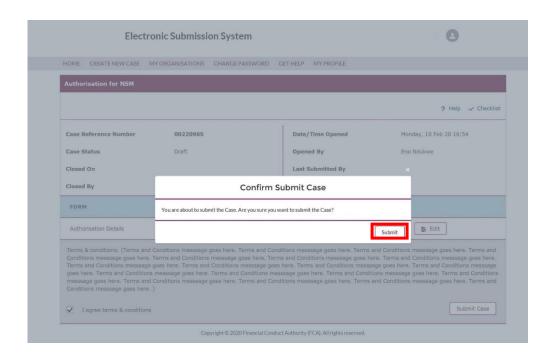
Step 6: On the next screen, you will be presented with a case reference number and confirmation that your authorisation letter was successfully uploaded.

Use the **`Edit**' button to make changes to any information that you have entered or uploaded. Once you are happy with your entries, tick the button to agree to the terms and conditions and click **Submit Case**.

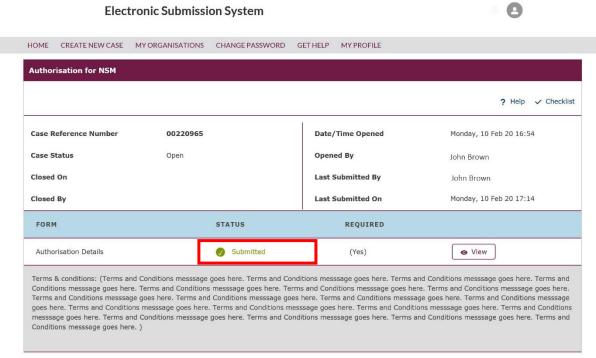


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Step 7: Confirm the submission by clicking **Submit**.



Step 8: A green tick on the next screen confirms that the authorisation letter has been successfully submitted to us for verification.



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You will also receive an email confirming your request has been submitted for processing.

After assessing the authorisation form, we will email you to either confirm your authorisation, or to explain why your request has been rejected and instructions on what to do next.

5. Submitting information to the NSM

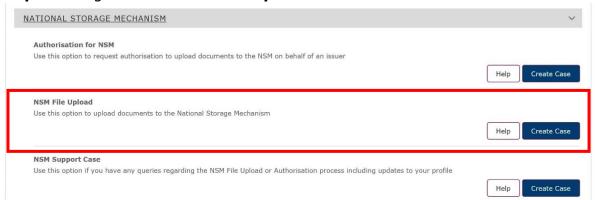


Please note if you are submitting Annual Financial Reports in a structured electronic format such as ESEF you must follow the steps listed below in <u>Submitting annual financial reports in a structured</u> <u>electronic format</u> section of this guide.

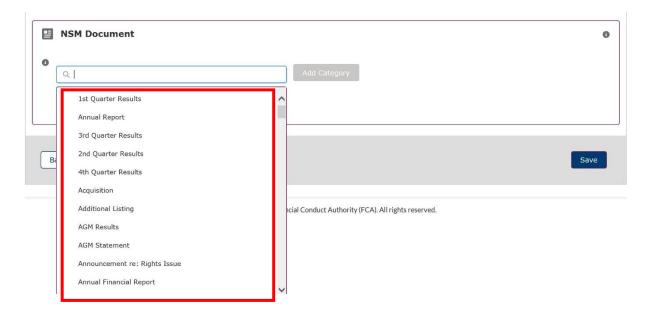
You can only submit to the NSM after we have approved your ESS registration and separately authorised you for each company you want to submit for.

Step 1: Log into ESS following steps 1 – 3 for the Issuer Authorisation process if you haven't done so already.

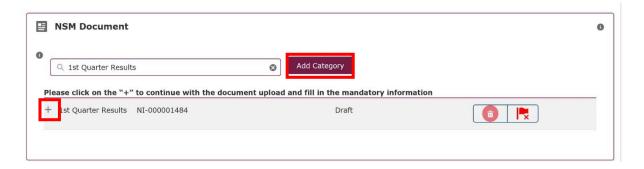
Step 2: Navigate to the NSM file upload tab and click create case



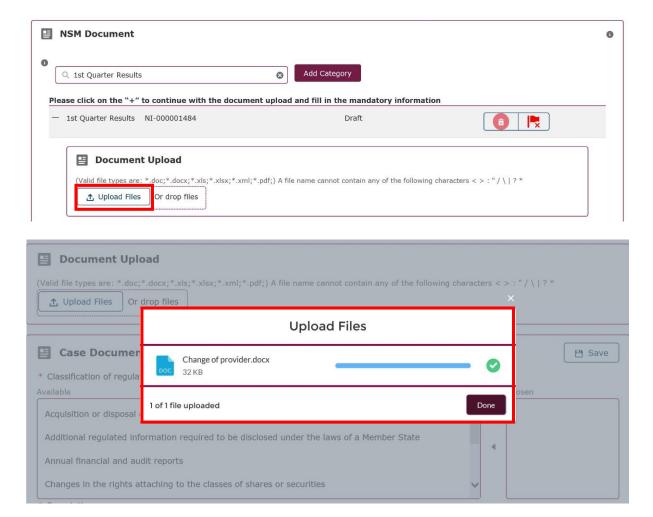
Step 3: Click through to the file upload screen. Clicking within the box titled **Search or select category** will present you with a drop-down list of information categories. Select the category of information you wish to upload to the NSM.



Step 4: Click **Add category** and it will be displayed beneath with a '+' (plus) sign beside it. **Click on the '+' sign**



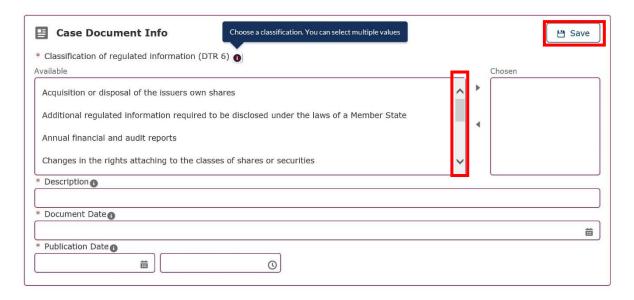
Step 5: Click the **upload files** button to upload documents and you will receive confirmation when your file has been uploaded successfully. Click **Done.**



Step 6: In the **case document section**, select one or more classifications relevant to the uploaded document category and use the right-facing arrow to select them. Use the left-facing arrow to remove any classifications that may have been incorrectly selected.



Enter a document description, a document date and a publication date then click **Save**.

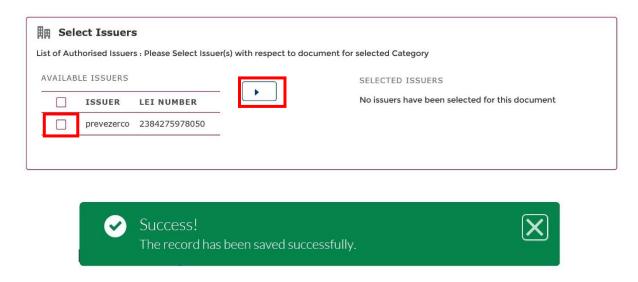


You will receive confirmation that the document has been saved successfully.

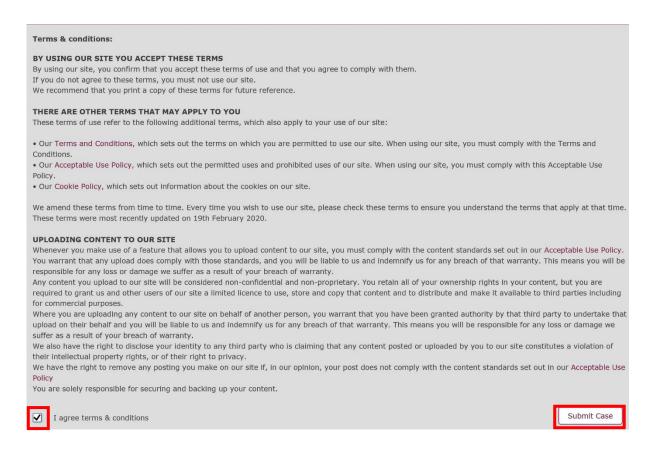


Step 7: The **select issuers section** will automatically list all issuers that you have been authorised to submit regulated information on behalf of. You may select multiple issuers if relevant to the document you are uploading. **When you select the issuer(s) you will need to click next to the issuer and <u>then also click the arrow in the middle to confirm the selection</u>. Then click save**.

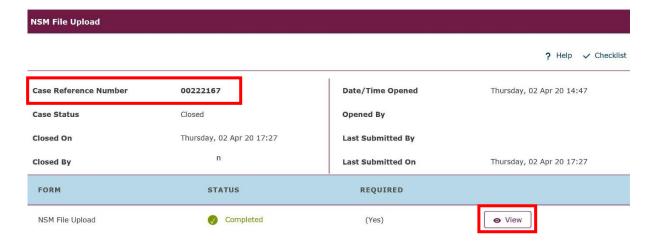
You will receive confirmation that the record has been saved successfully.



Step 8: Read the Terms & Conditions. Ticking the box to agree the Terms & Conditions will allow you to **Submit case**.



Step 9: The confirmation screen will have your reference number which should be quoted in any communication to us. You can also view your submission by clicking on **view**.



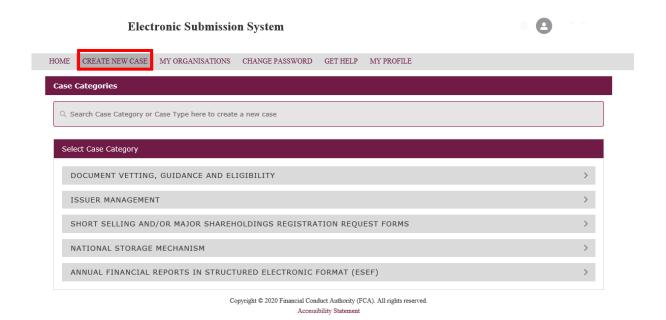
6. Submitting annual financial reports in a structured electronic format



Please note if you are submitting an Annual Financial Report in an unstructured format such as PDF you must follow the steps listed above in <u>Submitting information to the NSM</u> section of this guide.

Please note that we offer a "test" facility for submitting TAGGED annual financial reports. This functionality is only available to registered ESS users authorised to submit on the NSM by an issuer. If you select "test submission only" (see below for more details) then your AFR not be made publicly available on the NSM but you will receive feedback if there are any errors or warnings.¹

Step 1: Select the **CREATE NEW CASE tab** from the bar at the top of the page



Step 2: Select Annual Financial Report in Structured Electronic Format tab

You must not submit any information which may be considered inside information.

We recommend you remove any personal data, but if submitted it will be processed under the GDPR 'public task' basis. Please see https://www.fca.org.uk/privacy for how we use personal data.

We also recommend you remove information that is confidential for the purposes of section 348 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (FSMA).

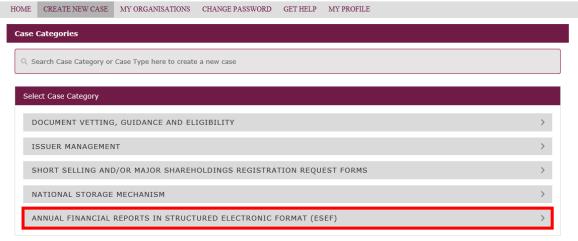
Please note that to process your submission, we send the information (including any personal data or confidential information) to a third party for validation purposes. By selecting a test submission, you give permission for us to do this.

Information uploaded for test submissions will be deleted after two weeks.

¹ This option is voluntary and provides feedback on any validation issues. Submissions using this test facility will not be published on the NSM. To enable a submission to be published, you will need to create a new case on ESS.

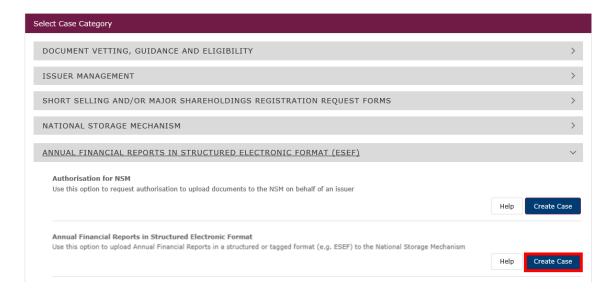
Electronic Submission System



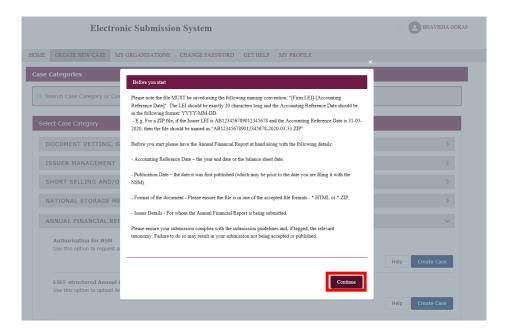


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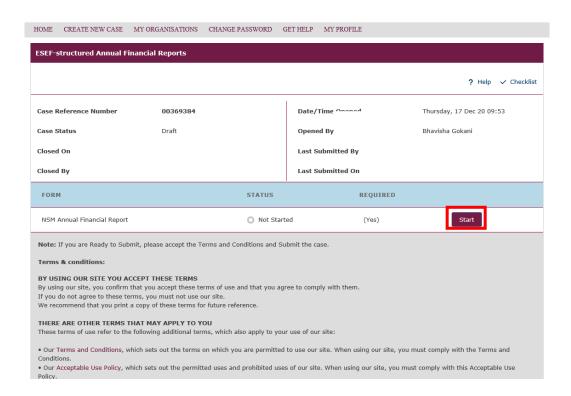
Step 3: Navigate to the **Annual Financial Report in Structured Electronic Format** tab and click **create case**



Step 4: Read the Before you start pop-up box carefully and click Continue



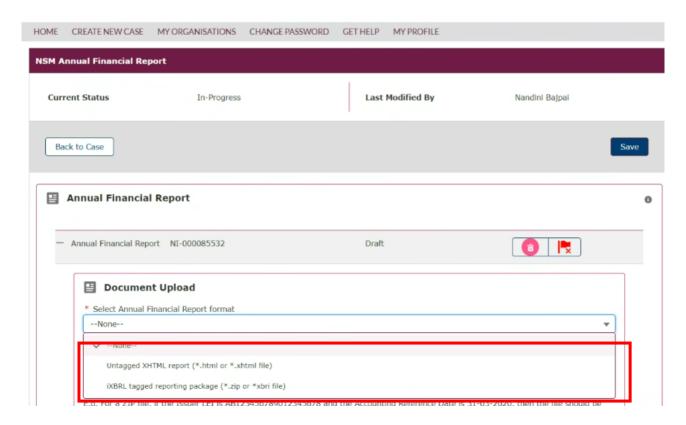
Step 5: Continue to the page below and click Start



Step 6: Click on **Annual Financial Report Format** drop down box and select the format of the Annual Financial Report you wish submit (tagged or untagged).

Important - File Size Limit for Structured Annual Financial Reports

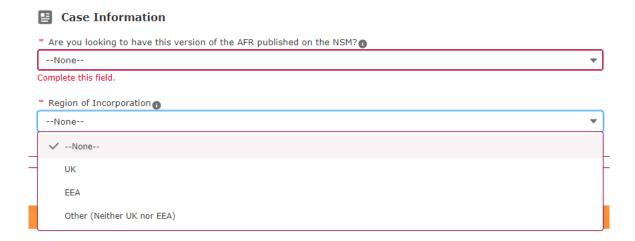
PLEASE NOTE that the system is only able to process files up to a size of **100MB**. Any files larger than this may remain 'in progress' and will not constitute a filing. Please ensure the size of any submission is less than this limit prior to uploading.



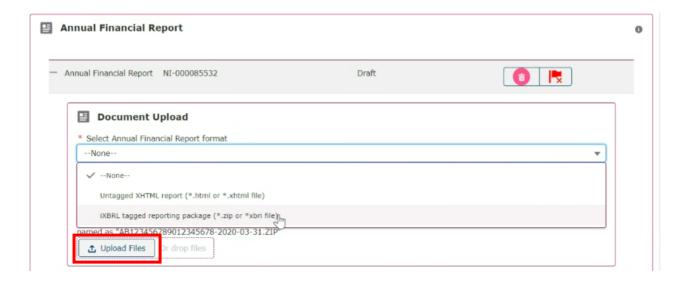
Step 7: FOR TAGGED REPORTING PACKAGE SUBMISSIONS ONLY Select whether this is a submission for **filing** or a **test submission only.** If you select **test**, the AFR will not be made publicly available but you will receive feedback on any errors or warnings. If you do not select **test** and your package passes all the validations, it will be made publicly available on the NSM.



Step 8: FOR TAGGED REPORTING PACKAGE SUBMISSIONS ONLY Select the region where the issuer is incorporated (i.e. UK, EEA or another region).



Step 9: Click the **upload files** button to upload the Annual Financial Report. Please ensure the file you upload follows the naming convention stated in the <u>Technical</u> <u>Guidelines for the Preparation and Submission of Structured Annual Financial Reports to the FCA</u>



Important - Naming convention for Structured Annual Financial Reports

The FCA requires issuers to adopt a specific naming convention for the uploaded file or package. It needs to be in the format {LEI}-{date}.zip or .html or .xhtml or .xbri, whereby:

- The {LEI} component of the filename should be the 20-character LEI of the issuer
- The {date} component of the filename should indicate the accounting reference date / balance sheet year-end date. The {date} component should follow the YYYY-MM-DD format.

For example -

213800YWQOYL4VQODV50-2020-08-01.html or

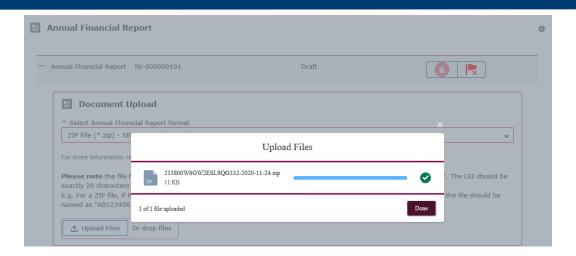
213800YWQOYL4VQODV50-2020-08-01.xhtml or

213800YWQOYL4VQODV50-2020-08-01.zip or

213800YWQOYL4VQODV50-2020-08-01.xbri

depending on the whether the submission is tagged or untagged.

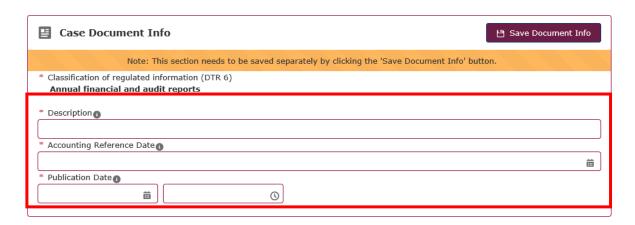
Please consult our <u>Technical Guidelines for the Preparation and Submission of</u> Structured Annual Financial Reports to the FCA



You will receive confirmation that the document has been saved successfully.



Step 10: In the case document section, please complete the following mandatory fields: **Description**, **Accounting Reference Date** and **Publication Date**. Please note that the publication date is when the structured AFR was published (rather than the date when a PDF version was published). If this is the first time the structured AFR has been published, or it is a test case, please enter the current date/time.





Hover your mouse over the help text icon to get helpful descriptions for each field.

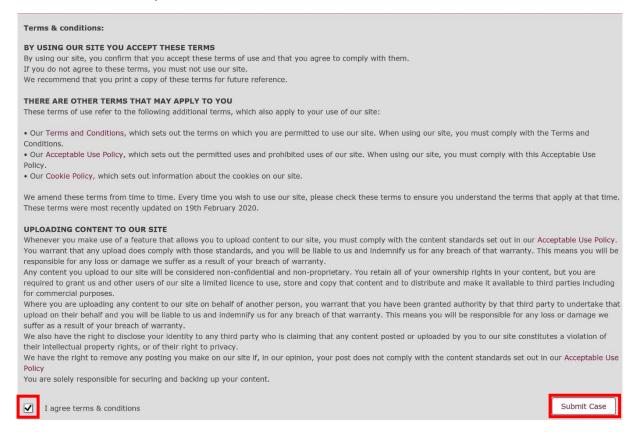
Step 11: The select issuers section will automatically list all issuers that you have been authorised to submit regulated information on behalf of. Please select **one** issuer.

When you select the issuer, you will need to click next to the issuer and then also click the arrow in the middle to confirm the selection.

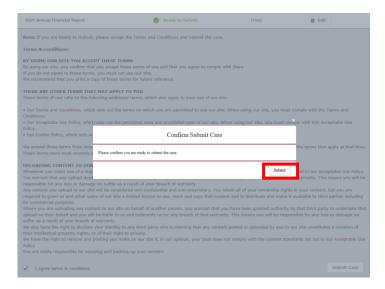




Step 12: Read the Terms & Conditions. Ticking the box to agree the Terms & Conditions will allow you to **Submit case.**



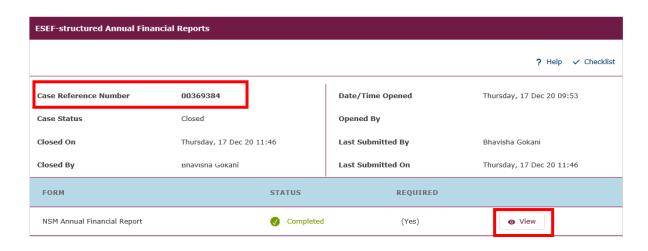
Step 13: Confirm that you are ready to submit the case and click on **submit**



On submission, the date/time is recorded to create an NSM filing date, which will be displayed publicly.

After clicking 'submit', you may receive an error saying that the name of the uploaded file is incorrect. If so, verify that the LEI and date in the filename are correct and that you have correctly completed the accounting reference date (step 10) and selected an issuer (step 11 – including clicking the blue arrow button in the middle).

Step 14: The confirmation screen will have your reference number which should be quoted in any communication to us. You can also view your submission by clicking on **view.**



Annual financial reports in electronic format submitted to the NSM will be subject to additional validation checks after submission. If validation is passed, the submission will be accepted and made publicly available.

If there are only minor issues, the submission will be accepted and filed. However, these issues (referred to as "warnings"), should be investigated by issuers and their advisors. If you have investigated a warning and concluded there is no underlying issue to address, no further action is required.

If errors are identified, the submission will be rejected and will not be filed on the NSM. Once the errors are corrected, the submitter will need to resubmit a new case by following **steps 1 to 14**.

Please note that if you select Test submission and the submission passes the validations, you will still need to create another ESS AFR case to submit the package to the NSM. It is not possible to use the test case again for publication.

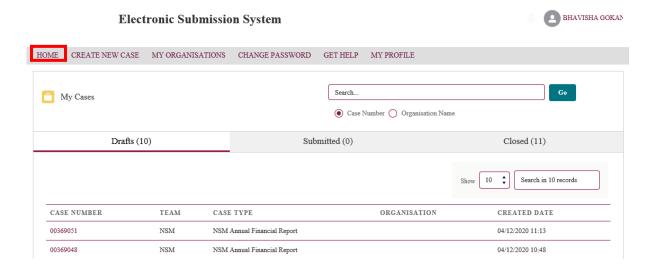
7. Accessing warnings and errors related to the submission of structured annual financial reports

If your submission has errors and/or warnings, the submitter will be notified via email with a link to these errors and/or warnings. This link is also accessible via the ESS portal.

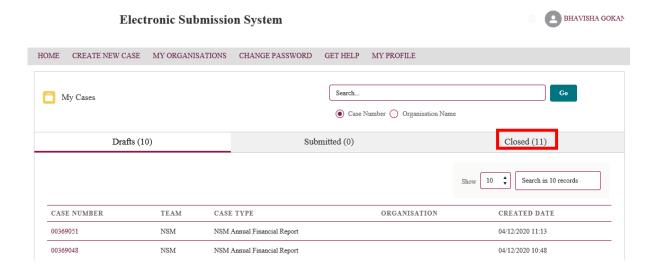


In addition to errors and/or warnings, you may also receive "information" messages. These messages are just to inform you of any validation checks which have not been performed by our system. No action is required on these.

Step 1: Click on **HOME** tab to take you to **My Cases**.

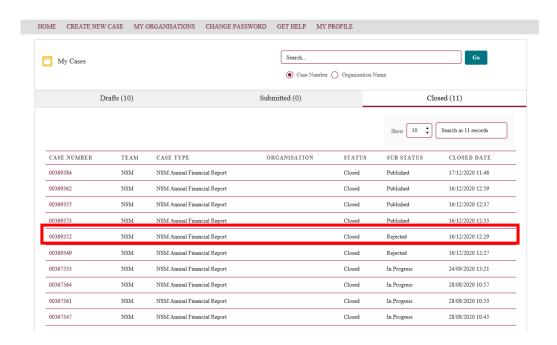


Step 2: Click on Closed cases tab.

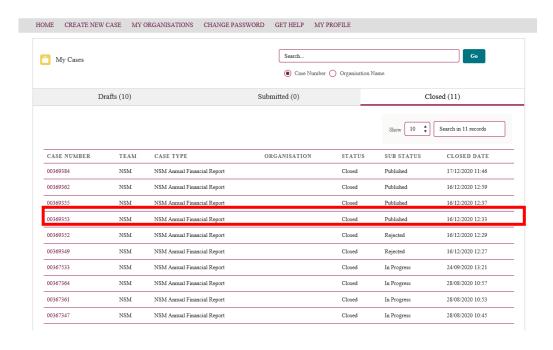


Step 3: Select the case number for the Annual Financial Report you wish to check.

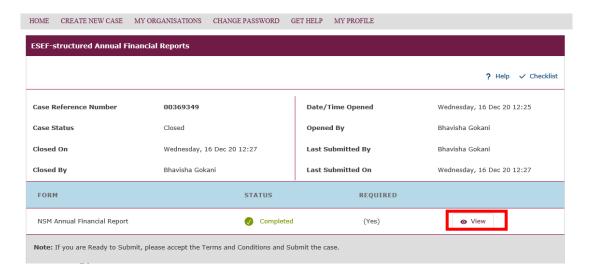
Note - If the NSM Annual Financial Report you have submitted is rejected you will see the word **`Rejected'** on the **SUB STATUS**.



Note If the report is published with warnings you will see the word **'Published'** on the **SUB STATUS**.



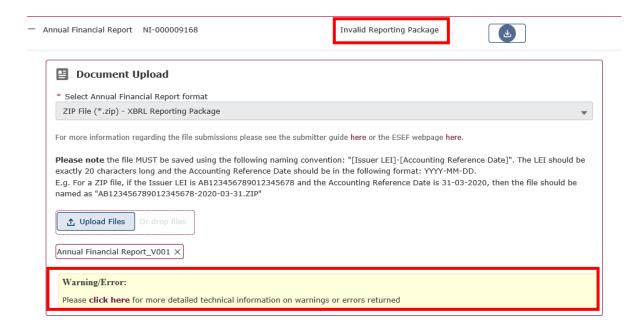
Step 4: Click on the **view** button to see your submission.

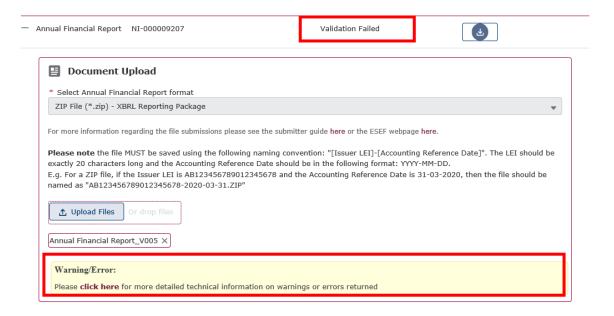


Rejected Structured Annual Financial Reports

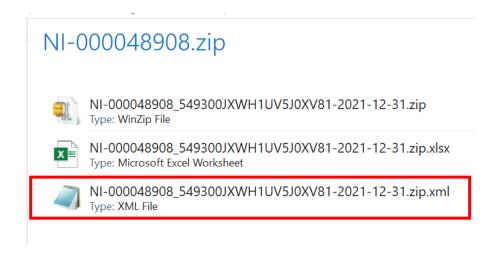
If your submission is rejected you will get a description on the top right-hand side to explain why it's been rejected. This status could either be an 'Invalid Reporting Package' or 'Validation Failed'.

To access the errors, see underneath the Annual Financial Report submitted, click on **click here** to access the link explaining the warnings and errors.





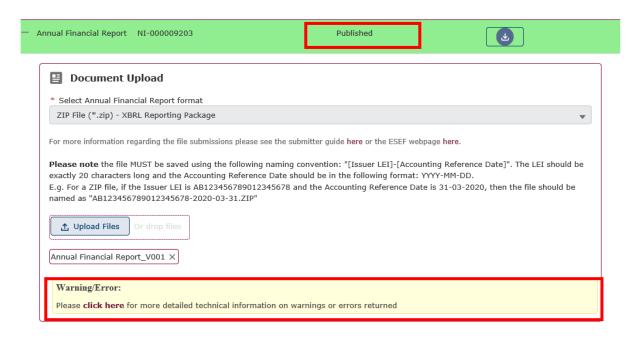
This will download a zip file containing the list of errors and warnings in xml format, which can be opened in Notepad or a similar tool.



Published with warnings Structured Annual Financial Reports

If your submission is published with warnings please note the description on the topright hand side will show status as published.

To access the warnings, see underneath the Annual Financial Report submitted, click on **click here** to access the link explaining the warnings.



Please note the information provided in the Warning/Error link is intended for technical audiences and assumes that the reader has working knowledge of relevant technical issues. Issuers may need to seek professional advice and support where necessary.

For further information regarding validation results please refer to <u>Technical</u>
<u>Guidelines for the Preparation and Submission of Structured Annual Financial</u>
Reports to the FCA

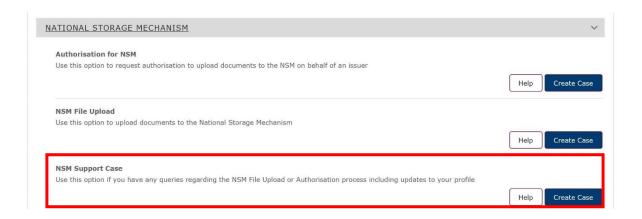
8. Raising a support ticket

You can raise a support ticket for issues you might encounter or administrative tasks you wish carried out on the NSM such as:

- A request to withdraw a person's authorisation to upload for an issuer.
- Resolution of a problem with a document on the NSM.
- Uploaded documents not appearing on the NSM website (although please wait 24 hours before contacting us as sometimes documents won't appear immediately).

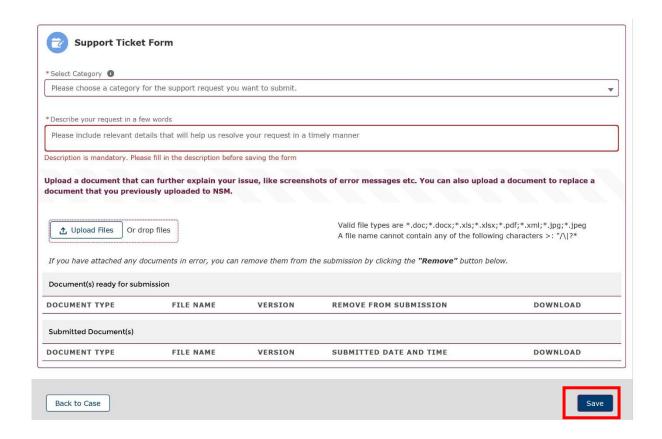
Step 1: Log into ESS following steps 1 – 3 for the Issuer Authorisation process above.

Step 2: Navigate to the NSM support case tab and click create case



Step 3: Click through to the support ticket form. Add a description of the issue you are experiencing or the administrative task you wish to be carried out.

Upload files such as screenshots to provide additional information to explain the problem and **click save.**



Step 4: The confirmation screen will have your reference number which should be quoted in any communication to us. You can also view your submission by clicking on **view**.



Further help

- For further information on the NSM please refer to <u>NSM Webpage</u>.
- For information on structured reporting please refer to <u>Structured Reporting</u> Webpage.
- For information on filing Structured Annual Financial Reports please refer to our <u>Filing Webpage</u>
- For technical guidance please refer to <u>Technical Guidelines for preparation and</u> submission of Structured Annual Financial Reports to the FCA
- For more support and FAQs please refer to NSM: Support & FAQs
- For step by step guide to searching the NSM for regulated information, please refer to NSM User Guide