PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION

Your Advance Assurance application pack

A practical guide to gathering your information, checking the details and preparing an application to HMRC.

Make a clear start

Use this pack to organise your preparation for SEIS or EIS Advance Assurance. It will help you identify missing information and the questions to discuss with your adviser or Oriel.

Your preparation in six steps

01 **Understand what you are applying for**
Be clear about the scheme and proposed investment.

02 **Gather the documents**
Bring your business, financial and company information together.

03 **Check the scheme conditions**
Record the evidence and any questions that need advice.

04 **Make the information consistent**
Check that the plan, forecasts and application agree.

05 **Prepare and track your submission**
Keep a record of what you send and any HMRC questions.

06 **Plan what happens afterwards**
Understand the next steps and ongoing responsibilities.

Use it as a working pack

Tick completed items, note what still needs checking and agree who will do each task. This pack supports preparation; it is not the HMRC application form or a full eligibility assessment.

STEP 01 / UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE

What Advance Assurance means

A clearer starting point for preparing your proposed investment and explaining its scheme position.

What it tells you

Advance Assurance is HMRC's view on whether a proposed investment is likely to meet certain SEIS or EIS conditions, based on the facts supplied. It applies to the proposed share issue described in the application.

What still needs checking

It is optional. It does not approve the business as an investment, confirm an individual investor's tax eligibility or guarantee relief. The company must continue to meet the scheme conditions after investment.

Before you begin

- [ ] Identify the intended scheme and proposed share issue.
- [ ] Have the company details and HMRC tax reference available.
- [ ] Set out how much you plan to raise and how it will be spent.
- [ ] Prepare your commercial business plan and financial forecasts.
- [ ] Check the relevant company, trade and investment conditions.
- [ ] List uncertainties and disclose facts that may affect eligibility.

Prepare evidence of genuine investor interest

First-time scheme applicants need credible fundraising evidence. For a direct raise, gather prospective investors' names, addresses and intended amounts. If using a promoter, fund manager or platform, check the evidence of engagement needed; simply approaching one is not enough.

SEIS = Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme. EIS = Enterprise Investment Scheme. An HMRC tax reference is also called a Unique Taxpayer Reference (UTR).

STEP 02 / GATHER YOUR DOCUMENTS

What to bring together

Use this as a preparation checklist. Check the current form and scheme guidance for your particular application.

Your business and funding plan

- [ ] Business plan and financial forecasts; latest accounts if available.
- [ ] The amount to raise, spending plans and expected business growth.
- [ ] All trading and other activities, including who will use the investment.
- [ ] The latest pitch or other documents used to explain the raise to investors.

Your company and ownership

- [ ] Current company structure and details of subsidiaries or related companies.
- [ ] Memorandum, company rules (articles) and proposed changes.
- [ ] Current register of members: the company's formal shareholder record.
- [ ] Current and proposed ownership summary, including options or future share rights.

Investment history and agreements

- [ ] Shareholder agreements and proposed share or investment terms.
- [ ] Previous scheme investments, grants and other public support, where relevant.
- [ ] Side agreements or other arrangements linked to the investment.

Investor evidence and authority

- [ ] Prospective investor information or evidence for your fundraising route.
- [ ] A signed authority letter if an agent will apply for you.

Use the plan you share with investors

Your business plan should be the commercial plan used, or intended to be used, with prospective investors. You can improve its structure and clarity, but it must accurately reflect the business and its plans.

STEP 03 / CHECK THE CONDITIONS

Know what needs reviewing

Record the evidence for each point and who has checked it. These prompts do not cover every rule or exception.

Area to check	Evidence / checked by / question to resolve
UK business presence	
Business activities and any excluded trades	
Trading history and first commercial sale	
Assets, employee numbers and scheme limits	
Company ownership, control and independence	
Group structure and subsidiaries	
Growth plans and genuine risk to investors' capital	
How and when the investment will be spent	
Previous scheme funding and public support	
Share rights and any investor arrangements	

What does risk to capital mean?

The business must intend to grow and develop over the long term, and the investment must genuinely put the investor's money at risk. Arrangements designed to protect capital can affect eligibility. Ask for specialist review where needed.

Check current rules for the intended scheme and share issue. SEIS and EIS have different conditions, and special rules or exceptions may apply.

STEP 04 / CHECK YOUR BUSINESS PLAN

Make the details agree

Your plan, forecasts, investor material and application should describe the same business and proposed investment.

- [ ] The summary, products, services and way the business earns money are current.
- [ ] Market claims have evidence, and past financial results match the records.
- [ ] Forecast assumptions are clear and can be explained.
- [ ] The planned spending adds up to the amount you want to raise.
- [ ] Spending is linked to eligible activity and a clear plan for growth.
- [ ] Likely future funding needs are explained in the plan.

Detail to compare	Where it is explained	Checked?
Amount to raise		
Share type and proposed terms		
Trading dates and history		
Planned use of the money		
Growth and development plans		
Evidence of investor interest		

Explain changes openly

If the figures or plans change, update the relevant documents and explain why. Do not leave conflicting dates, funding amounts or share terms for HMRC to untangle.

STEP 05 / SUBMIT AND FOLLOW UP

Keep the application on track

Use the online HMRC service. Keep a complete copy of the application, attachments, reference and correspondence.

Before you submit

- [ ] The applicant is a director, company secretary or properly authorised agent.
- [ ] If using an agent, the signed authority is dated within the last three months.
- [ ] The documents open correctly and use clear, meaningful file names.
- [ ] Dates, figures and ownership information agree across the documents.
- [ ] Relevant facts and areas of doubt have been fully disclosed.
- [ ] Someone is responsible for checking and responding to HMRC correspondence.

Your submission and question log

Date	Item or HMRC question	Who?	Due / sent

Keep each response traceable

Record the question, answer, documents supplied and date sent. Note any deadline in HMRC's correspondence. If an agent is applying, confirm the company's authority for each new application.

STEP 06 / AFTER THE DECISION

What happens next?

Advance Assurance is one stage in the process. Keep the company's next responsibilities clear.

1. Read the decision and check the facts

Check the scheme, share issue and information covered by the letter. If plans, terms or other important facts change, check with HMRC or your adviser before relying on it; a new application may be needed.

2. Complete the investment carefully

If the investment proceeds, issue shares on terms that meet the relevant scheme rules. Keep accurate records and continue monitoring the company's compliance.

3. Complete the post-investment process

When eligible under the scheme's timing rules, submit SEIS1 or EIS1: the company's compliance statement. Disclose changes since the application. After HMRC authorises it, the company can issue SEIS3 or EIS3 certificates for investors to use when claiming relief, subject to their own eligibility.

Support from Oriel

Oriel can support business plan preparation, application documents, submission and HMRC queries within an agreed scope. The company remains responsible for full and accurate information and ongoing compliance. Agree separately who will handle post-investment forms and certificates.

Official guidance | checked 28 October 2026

Apply for Advance Assurance

Using SEIS: company conditions and compliance

Using EIS: company conditions and compliance

HMRC manual: application evidence and business plans

HMRC manual: evidence of prospective investors

General preparation guidance, not legal, tax or investment advice. This is not an exhaustive checklist. Obtain appropriate advice for your circumstances. HMRC decides whether to give assurance; no outcome is guaranteed. Scheme rules and tax treatment can change.