EQUIFAX®

Business Status Alerts

User guide

Business Status Alerts

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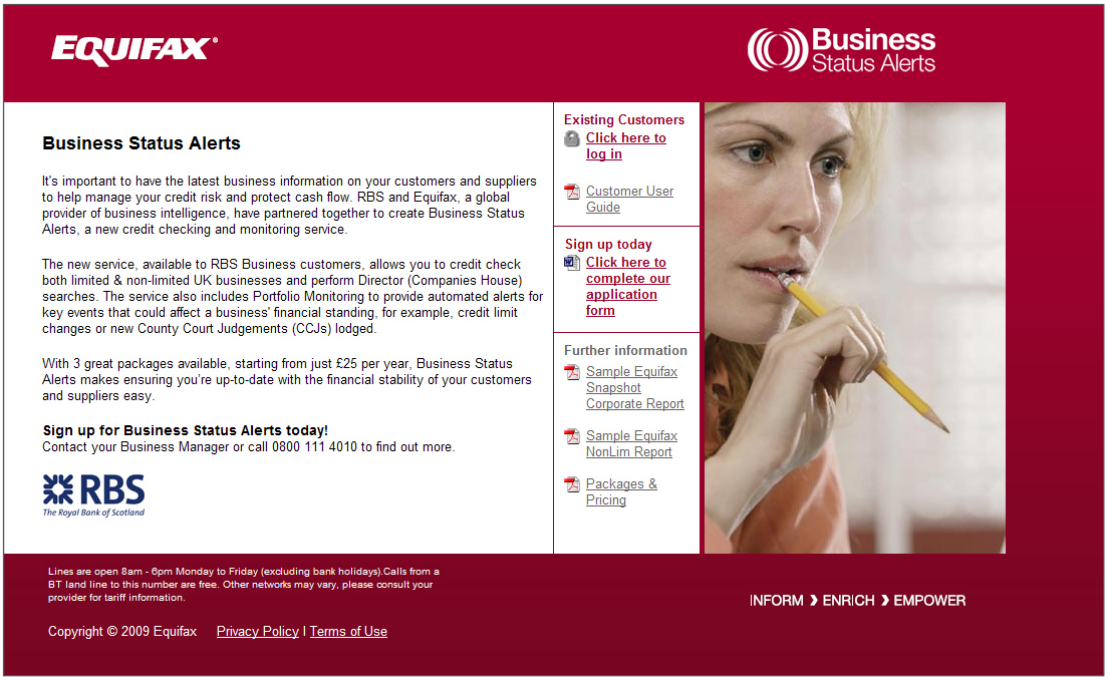
Introduction

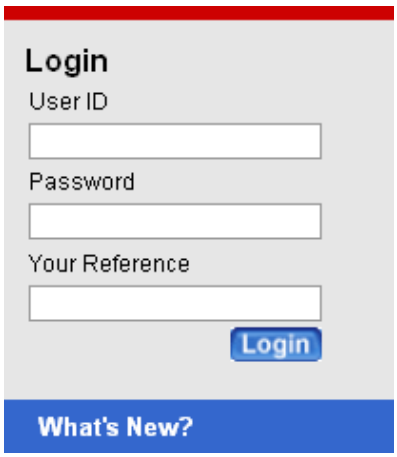
The Business Status Alerts service enables you to obtain credit reports and monitor businesses to ensure you are alerted to key changes that may affect a company's credit risk. This guide will show you how to login, search for a business, select a credit report and set up monitoring.

Visit **www.equifax.co.uk/exclusive-rbs** and you will be taken to the Business Status Alerts landing page. Click on the **Existing customers, click here to log in** link and you will be presented with a new log in screen for our Business Information Services.

We recommend that you create a bookmark for the Business Information Services homepage.

Our website contains online help throughout, which supplements this guide. The help button will be shown when online help is available. If you require further assistance, please contact our Business Customer Services team on **0800 111 4010**.



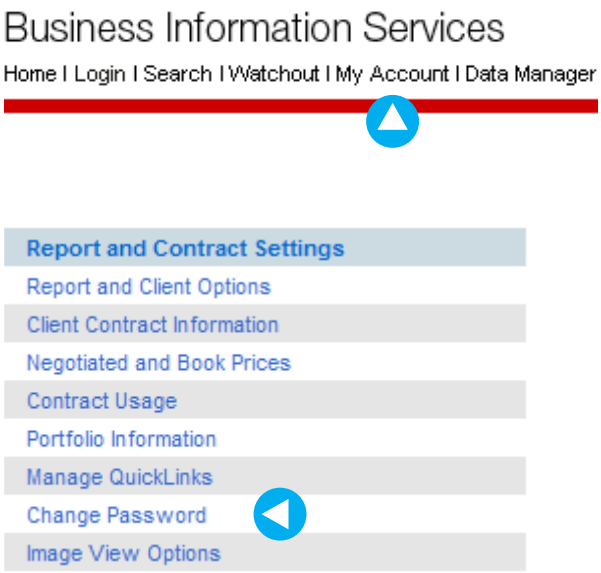


Login

To login enter your account number in the **User ID** field and your password.

The **Your Reference** field can be used to record an internal reference which will appear on your monthly statement.

Click the **Login** button to continue.

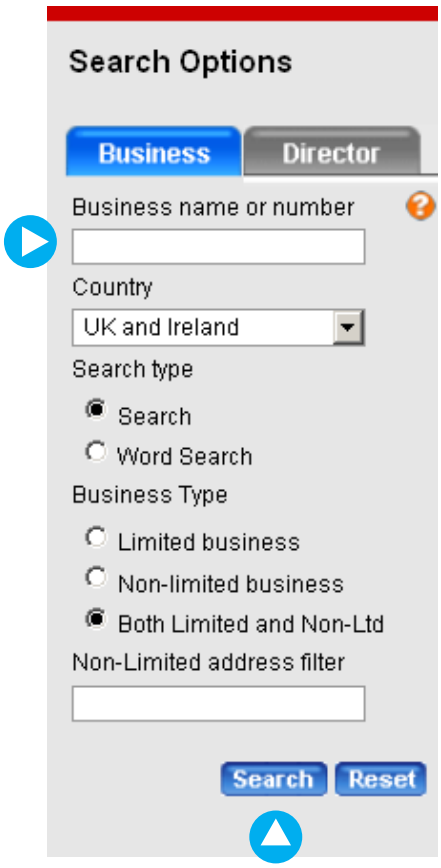


Changing your password

To change your password select **My Account** from the top navigation bar followed by **Change Password** on the next screen.

Your password needs to conform to the following criteria:

- your current and new password cannot be the same
- your new password must be between 6 and 20 characters long and contain a capital letter and a number.



Searching for a business or director

Once you have logged in you will be able to search for reports on businesses and directors by using the **Search Options** panel on the left of the screen.

Business searches

Select the **Business** tab and enter the company's name, either in part or in full, or the company's registered number.

Country: this field will be hidden if your account does not have access to our international reports.

Search Type: using **Search** will return all businesses with names which *start with* the words you have entered. Selecting **Word Search** will present results for businesses that contain *all* of the words entered, regardless of the order the words have been entered.

To speed up the Word Search it is advisable to exclude common words that appear in business names, for example, British.

Business Type: this option allows you to limit your results to either limited companies, non-limited business or to search for both.

Non-limited address filter: if a large number of results are returned, this field can help to refine them by allowing you to filter the non-limited company results by address. Simply enter part of the address, for example, the partial or full postcode.

Once you have selected your options, click **Search**.

Note: press the help button for additional assistance on searching.

Search results

A list of businesses matching your search criteria will be displayed. Select the business you wish to view by clicking the blue **Identification** number.

Search Options | Business Search

Identification	Name	Status
34567890	MERONEY (EUROPE) PLC	Full Data
IR123456	MERONEY (IRELAND) LTD	Full Dissolved
12345678	MERONEY HIRE LIMITED	Full Data
23456789	MERONEY SOFTWARE LIMITED	Full Previous

Back | Next Page

You will then be presented with a screen confirming the company's address details, so you can be sure you have selected the correct business. The report types available are shown in the panel on the left.

EQUIFAX Business Information Services

Home | Login | Search | Watchout | My Account | Data Manager | Portfolio | Insurance

Service Options

- **Equifax Reports**
  - Optima Blended Report
  - Optima Report
  - Full Report
  - Snapshot Report
  - Credit Profile
  - Connections Report
  - Connections Report Plus
  - Foresight Report
  - Group Report
  - Directors Report
  - AML Profile
  - AML Advance
  - Comp. Essentials (Full)
  - Comp. Essentials (Sum)
- **Images & Offline Services**
- **Monitoring**
- **Other Equifax Services**

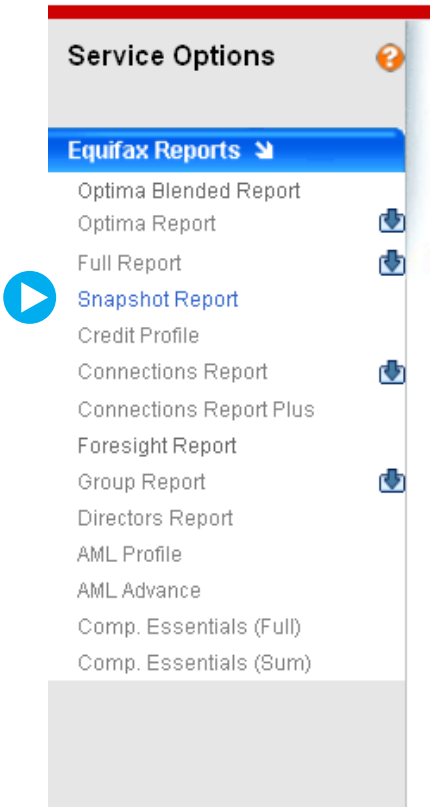
Search Options | Business Search | Service Options

Link to Provide Credit Communities data

Selected Company

Your Reference

Name	MERONEY HIRE LIMITED
Number	12345678
Registered Office	24 ROWLANDS BARNTON MILLS IV44 8TZ
Incorporated	25/09/1989
Latest Accounts	31/12/2008
Annual Returns	23/10/2008
Company Status	Full Data



Selecting a report

Upon selecting either a corporate or non-limited business, the relevant report types available will be displayed automatically.

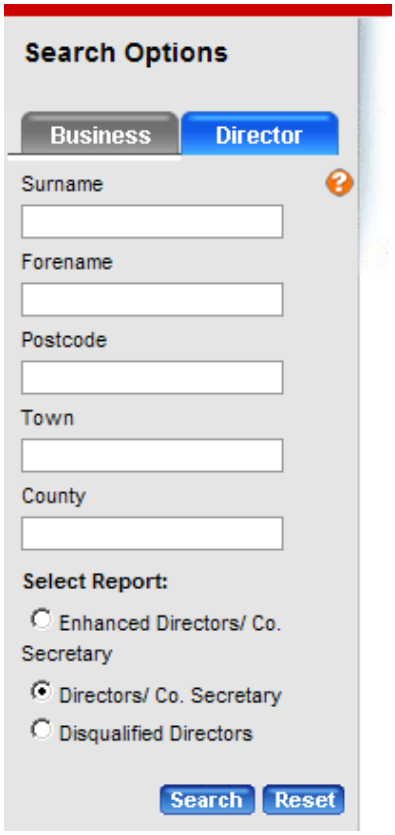
The reports that are available are displayed in blue. Their availability is dependent on the business selected and your account configuration.

Click on your chosen report type to proceed.

Note: the availability of some limited report types is dependent on accounts filed at Companies House being available. For non-limited businesses, there is generally less information available than for limited companies. Consequently we have less non-limited report types available.

Sample reports

Sample reports are available where the **download icon** is shown next to the report name. To view a sample report simply click on the icon.



Director searches

Select the **Director** tab and enter the director's name and address. Some names are very common so try to enter as much information as possible about the director you are searching for.

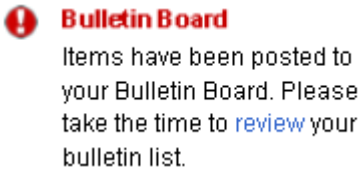
Wildcard searches can be performed by entering the first few letters of a name followed by *.
For example, Smi*. Wildcard searches can be performed on the Surname, Forename, Postcode and Town fields.

Select your report type, press **Search** and your results will be displayed. Select the director you wish to view by by clicking on their **Surname**.

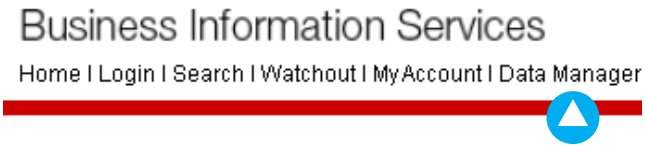
Bulletin Board

The majority of our business reports are available instantly online. However sometimes we need do further investigation or analysis before we can deliver your report to you. Data Manager graphical and data analysis also require a small amount of processing time (usually not more than 5 minutes) for us to create them.

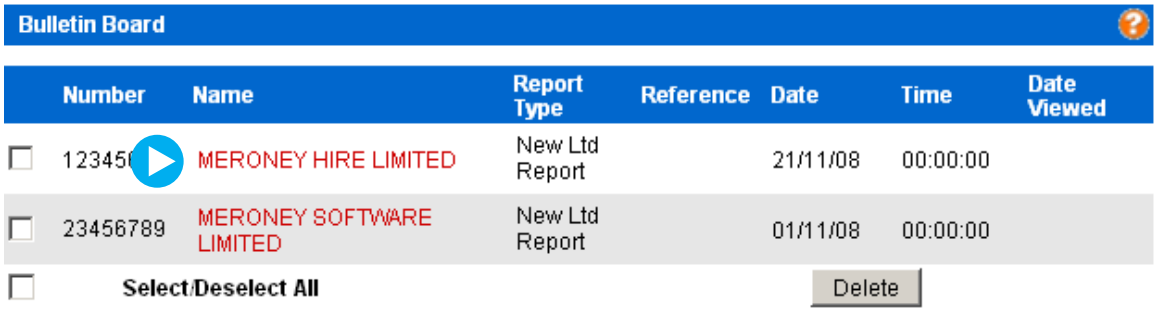
Once your report is available a Bulletin Board alert message will appear on the search screen.



Bulletins can be accessed by clicking on the 'new alert message' on the home screen, or by selecting **Data Manager** from the top navigation bar and choosing **Bulletin Board** from Data Manager Options in the left hand menu.

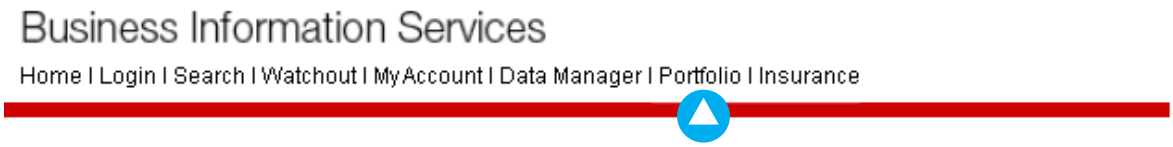


To view a report, click on the company name. Once you have viewed the bulletin, you can delete it by ticking the box on the left clicking on the **Delete** button.



Portfolio Monitoring

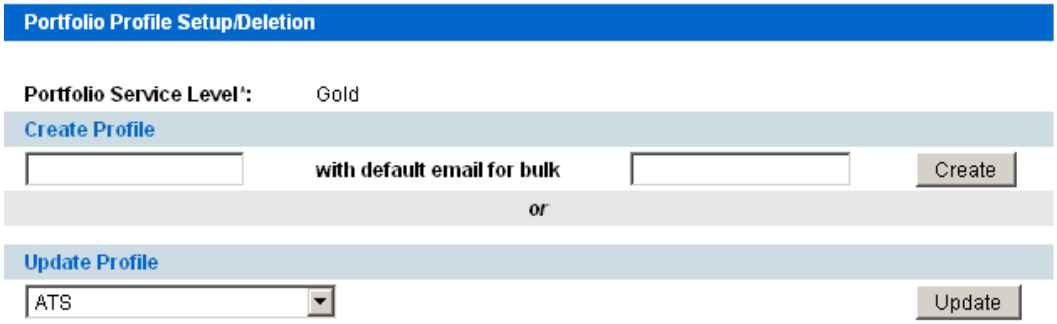
Portfolio Monitoring allows you to monitor businesses, such as your customers and suppliers, and will alert you to key changes that could affect their credit risk. Businesses are assigned to profiles within Portfolio Monitoring. To enable you to customise your alerts, multiple profiles can be created with different event trigger settings. Select **Portfolio** from the top navigation bar to open the Portfolio options screen.



Setting up a Portfolio profile

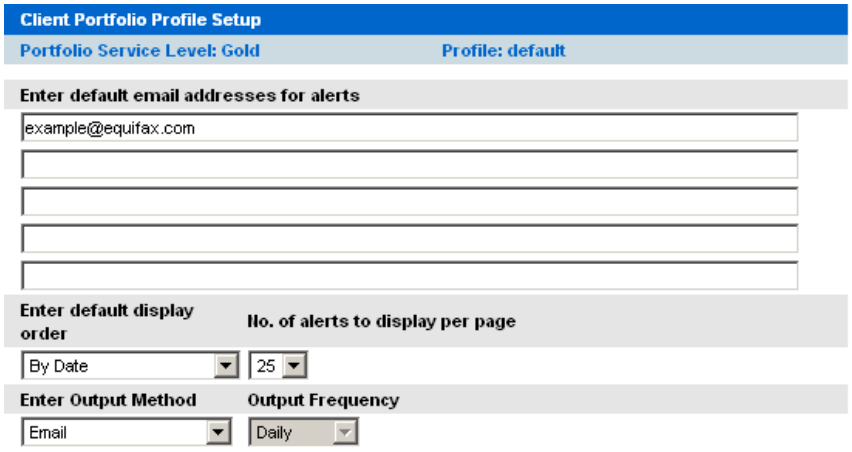
Select **Profile Setup/Deletion** from the left hand menu on the Portfolio options screen. To create a new profile, enter name of your new profile and the email address for bulk reports to be sent to within the **Create Profile** section, and press the **Create** button.

Note: a profile called 'default' is created when your account is set up. This profile can be configured by using the **Update Profile** option.



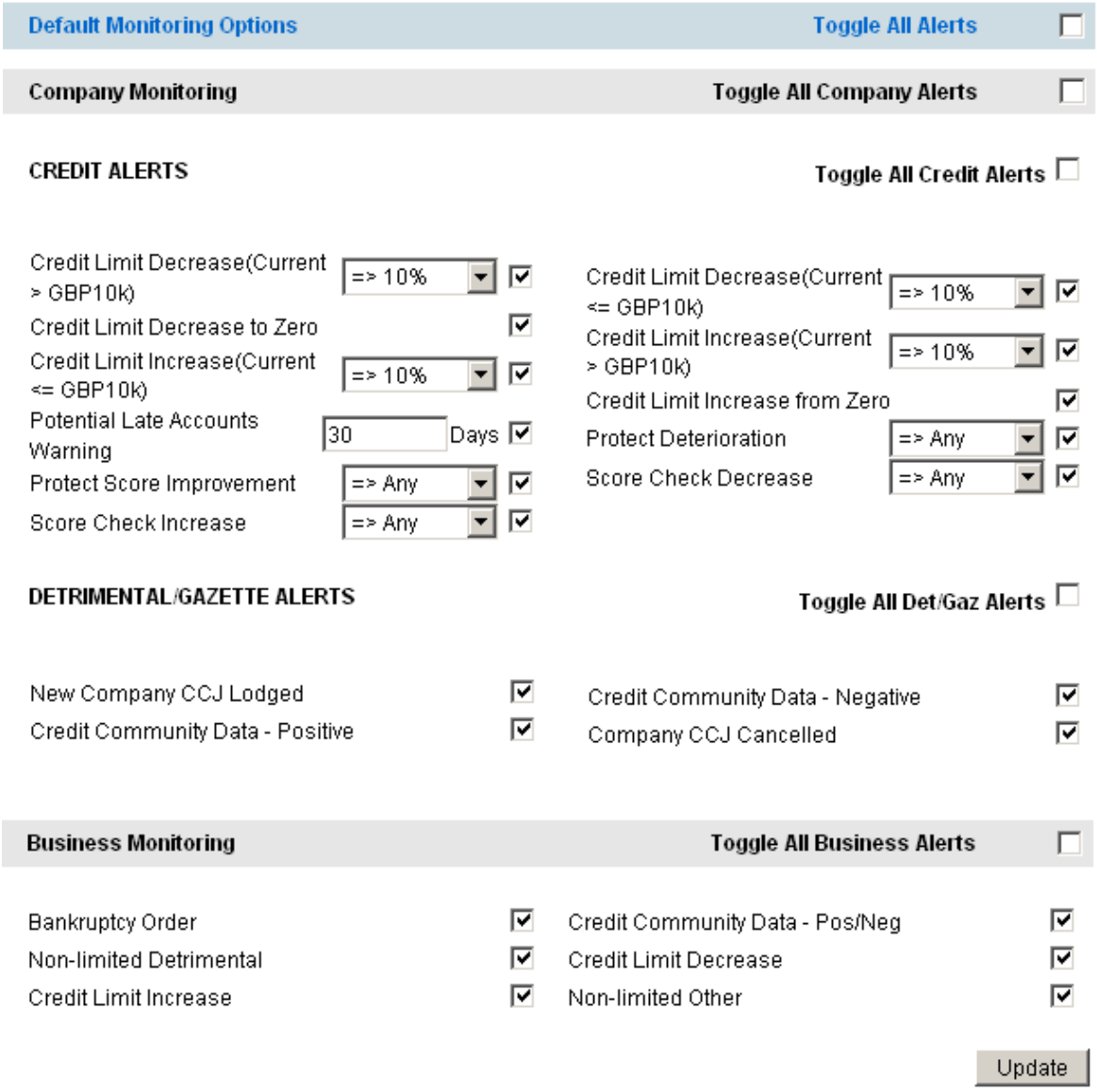
Next you will be presented with a blank profile to configure your alerts. Enter the email address for the alerts to be sent to. Up to 5 email addresses can be selected. You can choose how often you wish to receive your alerts, the format they are delivered in and the order in which they are displayed. Alert information can delivered in an email message or within a spreadsheet (.csv format) sent to your email address.

Note: the spreadsheet option will incur additional charges.



Next, select which events you wish to receive alerts for. Company alerts monitor registered companies, for example, limited companies, PLCs. Business alerts monitor non-limited businesses.

The **Toggle All** boxes can be used to select all alert events or whole categories of alert events.



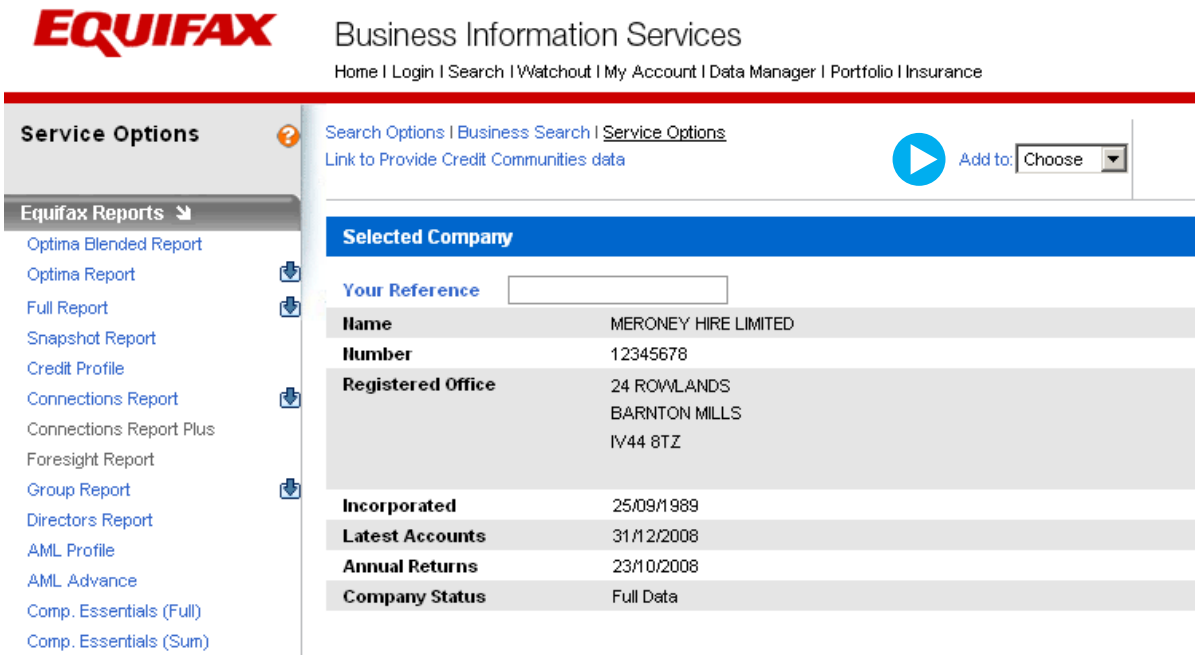
Finally, select the **Update** button to complete setting up your profile.

Note: if you try to create a to create a profile with a name that already exists, an error message will appear.

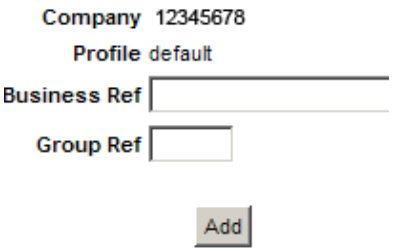
This service has encountered an error: (330) Profile chrissie already exists
Click here to return to the previous page.

Adding an individual company to Portfolio Monitoring

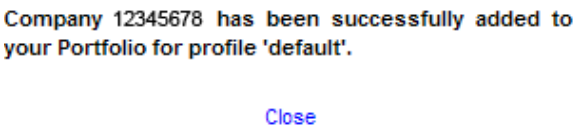
To add a company to Portfolio Monitoring, first use our search screen to select the company. On the address confirmation screen the option to add the company to a monitoring profile will be shown. If a company has already been added to a profile, an option to delete it from the relevant profile will also be shown.



Simply select which profile you wish to add the company to from the **Add to** menu box. The screen will refresh and give you the option of adding an internal business reference and/or group reference. Click **Add** to proceed.



A confirmation message will be shown once the company has been successfully added to monitoring.



Companies can also be added and deleted from profiles from within a credit report. The same options will appear in the top right of the screen.

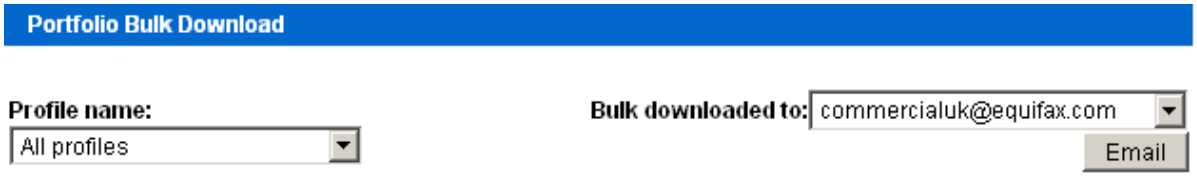
Multiple companies can be added in one update by using Portfolio Bulk Upload.

Bulk Download

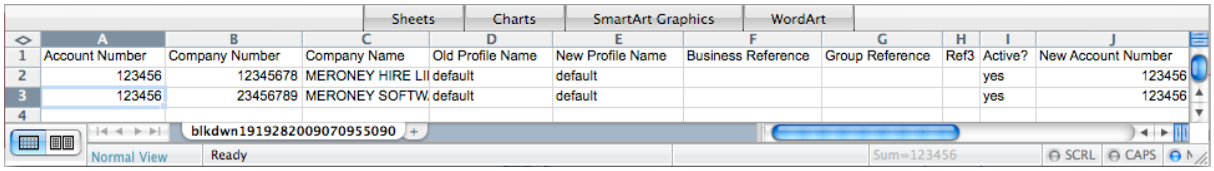
Bulk Download allows you to export a list of all of the businesses you are monitoring in a spreadsheet (.csv format).

Select **Bulk Download** from the left hand menu on the Portfolio options screen.

Next select your chosen profile, or all profiles, select your email address and press the Email button.



Your Bulk Download export will be emailed to you within a few minutes. The spreadsheet file can also be used to make changes to your monitoring by using our Bulk Upload service.



Account Number	Company Number	Company Name	Old Profile Name	New Profile Name	Business Reference	Group Reference	Ref3	Active?	New Account Number
123456	12345678	MERONEY HIRE LI	default	default				yes	123456
123456	23456789	MERONEY SOFTW	default	default				yes	123456

Bulk Upload

Our Bulk Upload service makes setting up and modifying monitoring on multiple customers quick and easy.

Simply create a list of the companies that you wish to set up or modify your monitoring for in our specified spreadsheet format. Once the supplied file has been matched to our database, a simple batch process will amend the monitoring records for each business identified.

Note: we recommend you use Bulk Download before carrying out any Bulk Upload tasks. Bulk Download will provide the spreadsheet format required for Bulk Upload and list any companies currently being monitored.

How to manage your monitoring

Bulk Upload makes it easy to manage your Portfolio monitoring. Simply modify the .csv spreadsheet file obtained via Bulk Download as indicated below.

Adding companies to monitoring

Simply fill out the fields below, using an existing Portfolio profile name to add companies to monitoring:

- **Company Number** – enter the company number
- **New Profile Name** – enter the Portfolio profile name for the company to be added to
- **Active?** – enter **yes**
- **New Account Number** – enter your 6 digit account number.

Removing companies from monitoring

Simply update the **Active?** field with **no** instead of **yes**.

Changing Business or Group References

Update the **Business Reference** or **Group Reference** field with the new value.

Moving monitored companies from one Portfolio profile to another

Update the **New Profile Name** field with an existing profile name. Please ensure the old profile name is present in the **Old Profile Name** field.

Moving monitored companies from one account login to another

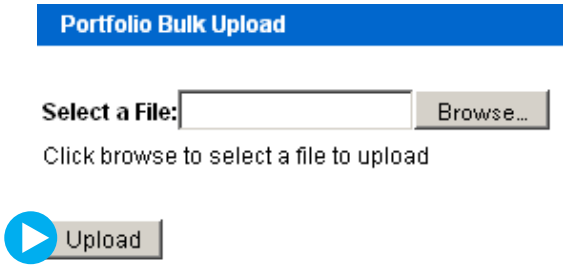
This option is useful for larger organisations with multiple accounts and logins. Enter the existing 6 digit account number in the **Account Number** field and the new account number into the **New Account Number** field. Please ensure you perform the upload while logged into the existing account, not the new account you are moving the companies to.

Note: To add or move companies to new profile, the new profile must be created in Portfolio before performing the Bulk Upload. Profile names are case-sensitive and need to match exactly.

Once you have amended your spreadsheet, save it as a .csv format file on your computer.

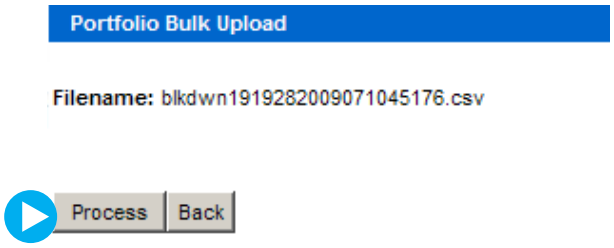
Uploading your file

Select **Bulk Upload** from the left hand menu on the Portfolio options screen. Next select the **Browse** button to choose the .csv format spreadsheet file from your computer. Press **Upload**.

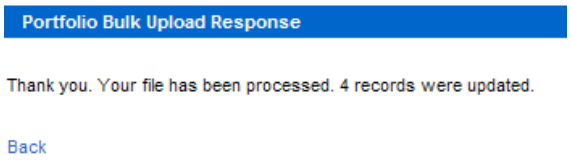


We will run a validation check against the file and highlight any errors found. If any errors are reported, you will need to correct these in the .csv file and repeat the upload process.

Once your file has passed validation, select the **Process** button.



A confirmation message showing the number of records updated will be shown once the upload is complete.



Portfolio alert messages

After logging in, if there are any outstanding alerts, the you will see the following Portfolio alert message flashing.

Portfolio Alert
Event(s) you have requested to be on Portfolio have occurred. Please take the time to view your alerts.

In addition an email will be sent notifying you that a new alert is available.

New portfolio alerts are available for profile 'chrissie'. Please log on to the website:
https://www.equifax.co.uk/equifax/commercial/index.html

Portfolio Alert Viewer screen

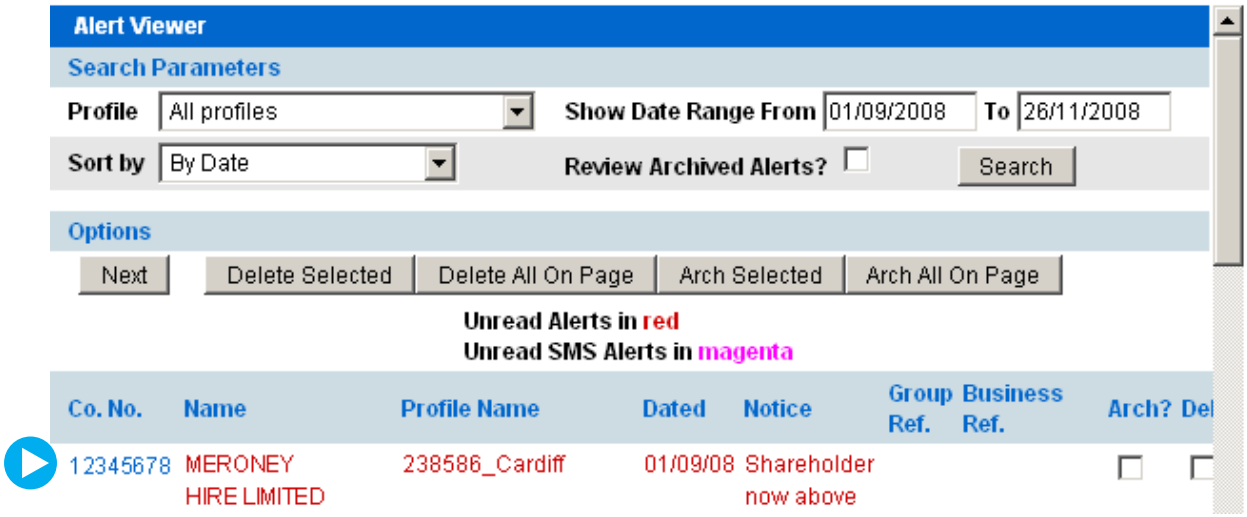
The Portfolio Alert Viewer enables you to view the details of new alerts and alerts that have been saved in the past.

The viewer screen can be accessed by clicking on the 'new alert message' on the search screen, or by selecting **Alert Viewer** from the left hand menu of the Portfolio options screen.

Alerts can be searched for by Portfolio profile name and date. Results can be displayed by date, company name, company number, business reference or group reference.

Alerts that have already been viewed are shown in black. Unread alerts are shown in red or magenta.

To view an alert click on the blue **Company Number**. Alerts can also be deleted or archived from this screen.



The Alert Detail screen shows further information about the alert and the event that triggered it.

Previously archived alerts for the company can be viewed by selecting **View Alert History** button. Alerts can also be deleted or archived from this screen.

Client Portfolio Alert - Alert Detail

Co. No.	12345678
Company Name	MERONEY HIRE LIMITED
Address	24 ROWLANDS BARNTON MILLS IV44 8TZ

Business Ref.	**Group Ref.**
Profile 238586_Cardiff	

Click here to link to the Report Options Page

Shareholder now above monitor **Dated** 04/09/08

Major shareholder R Tamdy of Barnton Mills, IV44 8TZ has increased shareholdings from 0% to 100%

Archive Delete

View Alert History Back

Help Desk support

If you require any help using our Business Information Service, please call our Business Customer Services on 0800 111 4010.

Equifax ScoreCheck

The **Equifax Predictive Risk Indicator** has been developed using a wide sample of two distinct data sets: a collection of companies known to have failed, and a group of companies known to still be trading. The basis of the method used in the indicator was to establish common characteristics for bankrupt companies and to compare these to the wider trading database. The analysis consisted of the measurement of a series of ratios, and a comparison with industrial averages.

The resultant model, **Equifax ScoreCheck**, is a generic knowledge based system. It uses information from the latest filed accounts and calculates a series of ratios depending upon the size of accounts available. These ratios are used as performance indicators of financial strength which when appropriately weighted and scored combine into a single measure. The number of ratios used in the analysis is dependent upon the volume of financial information available.

The score is made up of financial score components and non-financial score components. For financial score components the ratios employed include the following:

- trading performance
- profitability
- working capital
- gearing.

Non financial scoring components are also included in the model, for example:

- County Court Judgements
- records of insolvency proceedings
- Gazette/legal actions, such as winding up petitions
- aged accounts.

The final score is presented as a points value (1-100) and a grade (A-F) which is evaluated and updated in real time as information on the database is updated from either accounting information or legal data. The model is regularly tested and its performance evaluated.

Equifax ScoreCheck categories

A. Excellent.

B. Very good.

C. Above average.

D. Average.

E. Below average/poor.

F. Very poor.

G. Serious Gazette code present.

I. The company is technically insolvent.

O. The company is late in filing its latest accounts at Companies House.

NT. The company's accounts state that the company does not trade.

N. Companies House classifies the company's accounts as 'dormant company accounts'.

NA. The company has not filed accounts yet.

Within the categories A to F there will also be a + and - aspect depending on the actual points scored. The groupings will be as follows:

Actual score	Category
0 – 4	F-
5 – 14	F
15 – 19	F+
20 – 24	E-
25 – 29	E
30 – 34	E+
35 – 39	D-
40 – 44	D
45 – 49	D+
50 – 54	C-
55 – 59	C
60 – 64	C+
65 – 69	B-
70 – 74	B
75 – 79	B+
80 – 84	A-
85 – 94	A
95 – 100	A+

Traffic light categories

A+, A, A-	Excellent risk.
B+, B, B-	Very good.
C+, C, C-	Above average.
D+, D , D-	Average risk.
E+, E, E-	Below average.
F+, F, F-	Very high risk.
G	Gazette data filed.
I	Insolvent code.
O	Out of date accounts.
NA	No accounts have been filed.

Gazette codes used in Equifax reports

ALM	Annual liquidators meeting.
AO	Administration order.
AOD	Administrative order discharged.
ARA	Administrative receiver appointed.
ARC	Administrative receiver ceasing.
BKO	Bankruptcy order.
CVA	Corporate Voluntary Arrangement.
DIS	Company dissolved.
FM	Final meeting.
HCW	High court writ.
IRC	Business ceased.
JAA	Joint administrative receiver.
LA	Liquidator appointed.
LR	Liquidator released.
LRA	Receiver appointed to land/property.
MOC	Meeting of creditors.
PDS	Petition dismissed.
PET	Petition to wind up.
PNA	Petition adjourned.
PNW	Petition withdrawn.
RES	Company restored to the register.
RMA	Receiver manager appointed.
RMC	Receiver manager ceasing.
RNC	Company restored and wound up.
SEQ	Sequestration order.
SOD	Striking off notice discontinued.
SOJ	Petition stood over.
STR	Striking off notice.
UPP	Unpublished petition to wind up.
VAC	Voluntary action discontinued.
VAD	Voluntary arrangement in default.
VWO	Voluntary winding up.
WOR	Winding up order rescinded.
WUO	Winding up order.

Insolvency procedures explained

Creditors' Voluntary Liquidation

When a company is insolvent, that is:

- its liabilities exceed its assets and/or
- it cannot pay its debts when they fall due and
- there is no prospect of the company continuing to trade.

It may be appropriate to place the company in Creditors' Voluntary Liquidation (CVL). A licensed insolvency practitioner must be called on to take the appointment.

The directors and shareholders place the company into liquidation by passing appropriate resolutions at specific meetings. However the liquidation is effectively under the control of the creditors, who are able to choose the liquidator and the liquidation committee.

In a CVL the liquidator has a duty to report to the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) on the conduct of the directors of the insolvent company. Therefore directors should be aware of the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986.

Members Voluntary Liquidation

This form of winding up is designed for companies that are solvent. A majority of the directors of the solvent company must swear a declaration of solvency which is a document showing the company's assets and liabilities.

Again the company is placed into liquidation following the appropriate resolutions being passed by the directors and shareholders of the company.

In this form of insolvency the creditors are to be paid in full and any surplus, after the indebtedness of the creditors has been discharged, is paid to the company shareholders in the form of a dividend.

There is no obligation on the liquidator to report to the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills on the conduct of the directors.

Company Voluntary Arrangement

A Company Voluntary Arrangement (CVA) or Creditors' Voluntary Arrangement is a formal legally binding agreement with the insolvent company's creditors. The arrangement is designed to provide a better return to creditors than liquidation would, and usually allows the company to continue to trade.

An insolvency practitioner assists the company to prepare a proposal, which all creditors are then asked to vote on.

CVAs are best suited to companies who have fallen on hard times however do have the ability to return to profitability, as arrangements usually make a provision for a monthly payment to the supervisor for the benefit of creditors.

Compulsory Liquidations

This is a court directed method of winding a company up. There are several grounds on which a winding up order may be made.

- The company has resolved that it should be wound up.
- The company fails to commence trading within a year of its incorporation or suspends its business for a whole year.
- The company is unable to pay its debts, total liabilities exceed total assets in value, a statutory demand greater than £750 remains unpaid for 21 days or the company is subject to an unsatisfied judgement execution.

An application to wind a company up must be made via a petition, which can be presented, by the company, its directors, its shareholders or any creditors of the company.

The official receiver becomes the liquidator and is granted considerable powers of investigation into the company's affairs. However the official receiver is unable to pay a dividend to creditors and therefore an independent insolvency practitioner is appointed as liquidator should a dividend become payable.

Administration

An administration order is granted by the court to provide for one of the following:

- the survival of the company, and the whole or any part of its undertaking, as a going concern
- the approval of a CVA
- the sanctioning of a Section 425 scheme of arrangement
- a more advantageous realisation of the company's assets than would be effected on a winding up.

The order is made as a result of a petition presented to the court usually by the director(s) of a company or a creditor.

The administrator takes control of the company's business and assets. The administrator is unable to pay a dividend to unsecured creditors, therefore the company needs to be placed in another form of insolvency should a dividend become payable.

Administrative Receivership

The purpose of Administrative Receivership is to recover monies owed to a secured creditor. The creditor will appoint a receiver who will have the power to manage the affairs of the company (the insolvency practitioner dealing with the case is referred to as 'The Receiver'). This is to ensure that the company continues to trade with the aim that receivership is just a temporary stage. However, receivership could also mean the first step to ending the company's life.

Final meetings

When the company's affairs are fully wound up, an account is presented by the liquidator to the members and creditors. The account and final meetings must be sent to the registrar within the week of the meeting taking place.

Bankruptcy

A bankruptcy petition is served on a debtor by one of its creditors, if this remains unsatisfied the court issues a bankruptcy order. The debtor is also able to apply for his or her own bankruptcy.

The bankrupt's assets vest with their trustee in bankruptcy who has to take all appropriate steps to realise them. The bankrupt has a duty to assist the trustee with their enquiries and the financial conduct prior to bankruptcy can be examined.

Bankruptcy resolves financial affairs in that liabilities are satisfied after a period of normally three years.

Individual Voluntary Arrangements

An Individual Voluntary Arrangement (IVA) is a formal legally binding agreement with a debtors' creditors. The arrangement is designed to provide a better return to creditors than bankruptcy would.

An insolvency practitioner assists the debtor to prepare a proposal, which all creditors are then asked to vote on, during this period the insolvency practitioner is known as a nominee. The proposal usually provides that a monthly sum is paid to the supervisor for the benefit of the debtor's creditors.

An IVA gives the debtor an opportunity to choose which assets can be included within the proposal, this may provide the debtor with an opportunity to continue to trade.

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