International Tax Compliance – Questions and Answers

We need to establish your tax residency. Below are some questions that our customers ask us about this, which you may find helpful.

**Why have you asked me to fill in a self-certification form?**
We are asking you to complete this as we’re unsure of your tax residency. Please make sure you fully complete the self-certification form as this will reduce the need to ask you further questions. It is your responsibility to let us know if your tax residency changes.

**How long do I have to complete the form?**
Please complete and return the form as soon as you can, even if you don’t think this applies to you. Unless we told you differently in the covering letter, if we don’t hear from you in 30 calendar days from when we sent you the form, this will mean we have to report you to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

**I’m a UK resident who pays UK tax, do I still have to fill in a form?**
Yes, we still need you to confirm your tax status even if you are a UK taxpayer.

**Why do Sterling ISA Managers need this information?**
We are required by UK law to ask for this information. This is linked to international agreements that provide a means of sharing tax information and a global strategy to avoid tax evasion. This information is shared under the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)’s Common Reporting Standard (CRS) in order to provide for the automatic exchange of information. As part of CRS, countries obtain financial information from local financial institutions and automatically exchange this information with other tax authorities annually.

**How can I validate this is not a scam?**
We quote our registered office address on the covering letter and on the last page of this factsheet. The reply paid envelope enclosed is also addressed to our offices in Cheltenham. You can check these addresses are valid by looking www.sterling-assurance.co.uk where these addresses are listed under the ‘Contact us’ section. If you do not have internet access, you can check by calling directory enquiries, or by looking us up in the phonebook, our switchboard telephone number is 0370 909 6010.

**I’ve already filled out one of these forms, why are you asking me to do it again?**
We have to make sure the information we hold about you is up to date, so in some cases we may need to ask you to fill in an updated form.

**What will you do with my information?**
Depending on the information you give us, we may have to share it with HMRC, for example if you are tax resident in the United States of America or in a Crown Dependency.

HMRC will only disclose this information to the relevant tax authorities if and when they need to by law. We are using the approach recommended by the Association of British Insurers.

**What will happen if I don’t fill in a self-certification?**
If you don’t complete a self-certification form, we will have to inform HMRC. HMRC will then share this information with overseas tax authorities.
Can I fill in the form online, via email or over the phone?
No, unfortunately we require you to confirm and sign for your tax residency in writing. Please return this to us as soon as possible, using the reply paid envelope provided.

I was born in the USA but currently live outside the US or I hold a US green card. Am I considered a US tax resident?
Yes, you would be considered a US tax resident unless you have renounced your US citizenship or your green card has expired. You will need to provide the relevant evidence to confirm this.

I'm a tax resident of more than one country, what do I need to do?
Please fill in the details of all your tax residencies on the self-certification.

Which countries are subject to these agreements?
For a full list of countries currently participating in these agreements please see our website www.sterling-assurance.co.uk/itc-countries

Please list all the countries in which you are a tax resident, this will reduce the need for us to contact you about your tax residency.

I don't understand what information you need from me.
If you're having difficulty understanding what information you need to provide, please contact us on the telephone number in the attached letter.

You may also wish to seek professional advice to understand these requirements, for example from a tax specialist or a regulated financial adviser.

Additionally, the form is available in large print, braille or on audiotape or CD. If you would like us to send you another format, please let us know.

For the latest questions and answers from our customers, please see our website www.sterling-assurance.co.uk/itc-questions