





The content

Debt Advice Handbook 15th edition

Description

With living costs and unemployment rising, budgets squeezed and problem debt on the increase, no adviser should be without this essential guide to the practice and process of giving money advice in England and Wales.

Who's this book for?

It is essential for debt advisers, welfare rights advisers, lawyers, local authority and housing association staff, social workers and union official.

What does it do?

The handbook provides the most comprehensive information needed by advisers on the key stages of money advice, including interviewing clients, establishing liability, prioritising debts, preparing a financial statement, negotiating with creditors and dealing with bailiffs. Fully indexed and cross-referenced to law, regulations and official guidance, and to court and tribunal decisions Includes tactical guidance and examples

What's new?

Fully updated to cover all recent changes to legislation, caselaw and court procedure and practice Emphasis is placed on taking due care of vulnerable clients and making sure that any payment arrangements agreed are appropriate. There is a focus on sustainable credit arrangements that do not affect a client's abilities to pay essential living expenses and priority debts.

Properties

Author(s):
CPAG

This content was last updated:
2025-06-26

Print publication date
Feb, 2024

Print ISBN
978 1 915324 11 5

2. Authorising traders

Since 1 April 2014, all businesses must be authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to offer consumer credit (including credit broking) or undertake activities related to debts due under a credit agreement, including debt collection and debt advice. These are all known as 'consumer credit activities'. For further information on authorisation, see [fca.org.uk/publication/finalised-guidance/consumer-credit-being-regulated-guide.pdf](https://www.fca.org.uk/publication/finalised-guidance/consumer-credit-being-regulated-guide.pdf).

You can check whether a firm is authorised at register.fca.org.uk/. In July 2020, the FCA

launched an updated version of the Financial Services Register. Enhancements include clearer design and navigation, together with the use of simpler language and more information on how to use the register. It is a criminal offence to carry out a debt-related activity without the appropriate authorisation. You can report firms that do not have appropriate authorisation or which are not authorised to the FCA Helpline (tel: 0800 111 6768).

An unauthorised firm or individual can become an 'appointed representative' of an authorised business as an alternative to being authorised themselves. ¹ An appointed representative carries out regulated activities under the supervision of the authorised business, which must take full responsibility for ensuring that the appointed representative complies with FCA requirements.

You can find consumer credit rules and guidance in the *Consumer Credit Sourcebook*, which is part of the *FCA Handbook*, at handbook.fca.org.uk/handbook. Clients can complain to the creditor or debt collector about any contraventions, refer them to the Financial Ombudsman Service where appropriate, and report them to the FCA.

Since 21 March 2016, most secured loans are covered by the rules and guidance in the *Mortgages and Home Finance: Conduct of Business Sourcebook*. This is a separate part of the *FCA Handbook* (see [here](#)).

¹ s39 FSMA 2000