

Introduction

STAR is the cross-industry initiative, galvanising and driving market participants to define and shape recognised, industry-wide standards to promote good practice in transfers.

Leading investment and pension trade associations established the Transfers and Re-registration Industry Group (TRIG) to provide a solution. STAR was created as a partnership between Criterion and TeX to implement and deliver the TRIG framework, which is to define and shape recognised, industry-wide standards to promote good practice in transfers.

Part of the STAR remit is to define principles for (end) customer communications. This paper sets out these communications points.

Customer expectation

TRIG outlined the importance of acquiring providers (APs) setting appropriate customer expectations regarding the transfer process. Every effort should be made to reflect the impact of complex investments, the method of transfer and the varying response times of ceding providers (CPs) and third parties.

STAR recommends that “good practice” pre-sale/ transfer communications to the customer should provide:

1. An indication of potential timeframe of the transfer including an indication of the factors that can make the journey more complex;
2. Suggestions of any ways in which the customer can help the process;
3. The appropriate contact details should the customer have questions or wishes to complain.

Minimum good practice transfer journey communications

STAR Members have reviewed the customer communications that participating organisations currently issue throughout the transfer journey, as reflected in the STAR Step Breakdown document, and identified three steps where they felt that it was good practice for the customer to be informed.

Customer Communications			
Process Step	Who	Purpose	Examples
1 - Acquiring party receives, validates, and processes customer's transfer/ re-registration request	Acquiring party	To provide the customer or their adviser with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receipt of the request to transfer in; • An indication of potential timeframe of the transfer including an indication of the factors that can make the journey more complex. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A letter issued to let them know that the transfer has been requested from the ceding provider, quoting a 30-day transfer SLA and advising that they'll be sent a contract note when complete. • A platform update is made to confirm the transfer in has been requested.
6 - Ceding party confirms sales/ re-registrations are complete and initiates any payment to acquiring party	Ceding party	To provide the customer or their adviser with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of receipt of the request to transfer out; • Any contract note required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For a stock transfer out customers, a transfer confirmation letter is issued. • For cash transfer out customers, a contract note is issued with the transfer confirmation letter when the transfer is complete.

Customer Communications			
Process Step	Who	Purpose	Examples
7 - Acquiring party allocates any monies to customer account and confirms completion of transfer / re-registration	Acquiring party	To provide the customer or their adviser with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation that the transfer has been completed and assets are now allocated. A contract note for the new plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A confirmation letter is issued to confirm that the transfer has been completed. A contract note is issued at when the transfer is complete. A platform triggered alert notifies the adviser the transfer has completed.

STAR Members are expected to meet these minimum good practice communications.

STAR Accreditation

The STAR Accreditation Group will take each STAR Members adherence to these good principles into account when setting accreditation levels. This process will be managed by the STAR Accreditation Group. More details can be obtained from STAR.

Further information

More details on STAR can be found on our website: www.joinstar.co.uk.

Any queries on the process or any other aspect of STAR, please contact enquiries@joinstar.co.uk.