

Introduction to eFiling direct with Companies House

Build 14.01.05 onwards

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1 Introduction

The Company Secretarial software is able to electronically file certain company forms directly with Companies House via the Companies House "XML Gateway". The software handles the electronic submission of these forms and receiving the response (accepted or rejected) from Companies House without the need for any external email software.

Additional system requirements for e-filing

- Companies House *Electronic Filing Service credit account*. An application form can be downloaded from Companies House: <http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk/toolsToHelp/pdf/ofscaa.pdf>

Additional system requirements for use of optional "Authority2File" system

NB. Authority2File allows you to obtain authority (in a paperless fashion) from clients for you to eFile documents on their behalf.

- Internet connection allowing sending of SMTP email (usually on port 25 or alternatively port 587).
- Internet connection allowing receiving of POP3 email (usually on port 110).
- Dedicated POP3 email account (ie. an account that is not used for any other purpose than Authority2File and is only accessed through the e-filing software) - see note below re provision of free POP3 email account.

Free POP3 email account

In order to simplify matters, for the duration of your subscription to the e-Filing module, your software vendor can supply you with a free, dedicated email account, including SMTP email sending facility to be used for the purposes of Authority2File within the software.

2 Entering eFiling Settings within the software

Entering eFiling settings within the software

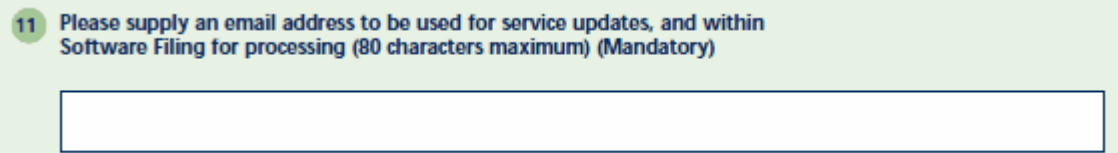
For each "Presenter" within the software that you wish to be able to eFile direct with Companies House, you will need to enter details of the eFiling account at Companies House and your email settings as follows:

- Click on **File > Presenter Details**
- Open the presenter you wish to edit
- Select the **eFiling** tab
- Set "eFiling for this Presenter" to **Enabled**



eFiling for this Presenter: Enabled Disabled

- Fill in details of the email address that you have registered with Companies House when you applied for a "Companies House Electronic Filing Service credit account"



11 Please supply an email address to be used for service updates, and within Software Filing for processing (80 characters maximum) (Mandatory)

- Enter the "Presenter ID" and "Auth Code" as supplied by Companies House when you opened an account.
- Optionally, you can enter a "PIN". If a PIN is entered, it will be requested each time a user attempts to eFile a document. This is an internal security feature and is not registered with Companies House.

General Details	eFiling	Companies with this Presenter	Logo on Forms	Email Footer Text
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eFiling for this Presenter: Enabled Disabled

Companies House eFiling A/c Settings	Authority2file Options	Authority2file Email Settings	Authority2file Wording
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Companies House "Electronic Filing Service Credit Account" details

Registered Email Address:

Presenter ID:

Auth Code:

Other

Optional PIN:

eFiling requires an "Electronic Filing Service Credit Account" with Companies House. Please ensure that you have the correct a/c type.

- The "Authority2File" facility allows you to obtain authority (in a paperless fashion) from clients for you to eFile documents on their behalf. If you wish to use this feature, go to the "Authority2File Options" tab and enable the option.
- You can also specify whether to usually ask for Authority2File before all eFilings.

Companies House eFiling A/c Settings	Authority2file Options	Authority2file Email Settings	Authority2file Wording
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Authority2file for this Presenter: Enabled Disabled

Usually ask for authority before eFiling (this can be changed for each eFiling)

Authority2file™

- Now click on the "Authority2File Email Settings" tab to enter details of the outgoing (SMTP) mail and incoming (POP3) mail settings.
- Please note that the mail account must be a dedicated POP3 email account (ie. an account that is not used for any other purpose than Authority2File and is only accessed through the e-filing software) - see note below re provision of free POP3 email account.
- If you are using your own email account, then select the "Use own email account" and enter the relevant settings.
- Please note that the email address used for Authority2File may be a different email address to that registered with Companies House as it will only used for communication with your clients, however, as stated above, the account must be a dedicated POP3 email account that is not used for any other purpose and is only accessed through the e-filing software.

- If you are using an email mailbox supplied by your software vendor, then select "Supplied by software vendor"
- Then, all you need to do is enter the email address and password that was supplied to you.

- Once all settings have been entered, save the presenter record by clicking the "OK" button.

3 Comms Test with Companies House

Testing communications with Companies House

Once you have entered the eFiling account settings and before you attempt to eFile real documents, you must perform a "Comms Test" with Companies House. This sends a specially formatted communication to Companies House and will test to see that, not only can you communicate with their

servers, but that the "Presenter ID" and "Auth Code" are validated.

- Open the required presenter
- Go to the eFiling tab
- Click on the "Companies House eFiling A/c Settings" sub-tab
- Click on the "Perform "Comms Test" with Companies House" button. This will result in a message on screen as to whether the test was successful.



Perform "Comms Test" with Companies House

- You can only do a Comms Test once your Presenter ID and Auth Code are correctly entered
- You must do a Comms Test before you eFile real document
- A Comms Test can be done at any time if you wish to test communications with Companies House.

Firewall / Proxy Server issues

You may need to adjust settings in your firewall or proxy server. For your information, communication with Companies House performs an "HTTPS POST" to <https://xmlgw.companieshouse.gov.uk/v1-0/xmlgw/Gateway> using the usual "Port 443".

4 Testing email communication is working

Testing email communication is working (for the purposes of Authority2File)

- Open the required presenter
- Go to the eFiling tab
- Click on the "Authority2File Email Settings" sub-tab
- Click on the "Send Test Email to Authority2file Email Address" button.



Send Test Email to Authority2file Email Address

- A window will open saying it is sending an email, followed by a message either saying that it has been sent successfully or reporting an error.
- Assuming that the email was sent successfully, you can now go to the "eFiling Log" from the Company List screen, and click "Send & Receive" to retrieve emails. Within a few minutes of sending your test email, it should be available to be received and you should find a new "Other Email" received into the eFiling log - in which case you now know that sending and receiving is working from this workstation.

SMTP Port 25 or 587

Usually, outgoing emails are sent using "Port 25", however, some Internet providers block port 25. If you are having trouble sending emails and are using one of our supplied dedicated email accounts, then you can tick the box "Use Outgoing Port 587" to force emails to be sent on "Port 587" instead. In many cases, Internet providers that block port 25, allow port 587.

5 Authority2File

Authority2file technology works in conjunction with our Companies House eFiling module to fully automate obtaining authority from your client to electronically file forms at Companies House.

Once you have specified the form data and ticked the "Request Authority from Client" box, the software handles the rest automatically and will only release the eFiling instruction for filing once the client has emailed their authority.

The fully automated *Authority2file* process:

1. Prepare form data
2. Tick "Request Authority from Client" box
3. An email is automatically sent to your client with attached PDF of equivalent completed paper form to be eFiled, requesting authority to eFile the information
4. eFiling instruction automatically added to eFiling queue and placed on hold, "Awaiting Authorisation"
5. Client replies I AGREE to the email, signifying their authority for you to eFile the information
6. The email reply is automatically retrieved by the software and, if authorised, the on hold eFiling instruction is released and sent to Companies House
7. Email automatically sent to client confirming that form has been eFiled

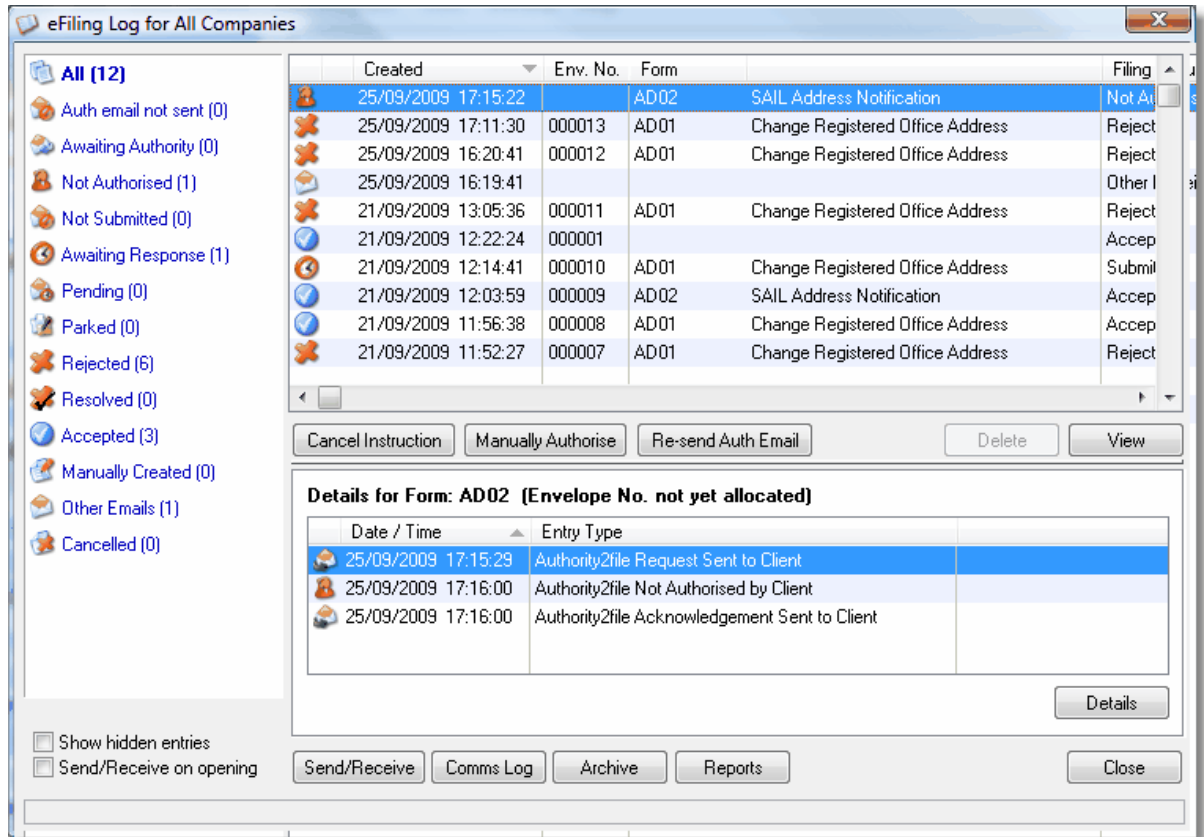
You can set parameters re *Authority2file*, including the standard wording used in emails to clients, for each presenter in the presenter parameters screen. Click File>Presenters and select presenter, then click on *Authority2file* tabs within eFiling.

6 eFiling Log

Whenever you eFile a form, the instruction is allocated a unique Companies House "Envelope Number" and an entry is made in the eFiling log.

By highlighting an instruction in the top section, the details of that instruction are displayed in the bottom section. You can also filter which instructions are displayed by clicking the relevant status type in the top left frame.

If the eFiling log is opened from within the Company Info screen of a company, then the details shown will relate only to that company (plus all "Other Emails" - see below). If opened from the Company List screen, the log will display all entries for all companies.



Not Submitted

When an e-Filing instruction is produced by the software it is allocated a unique "Envelope Number" and an entry placed in the eFiling log with a status of "Not Submitted".

Submitted - Awaiting response

When the instruction is submitted to Companies House (either from the originating workstation or by another workstation or eFiling server), the header entry in the top right hand section of the screen will change to "Submitted - Awaiting response" a "Submitted" entry will appear in the details section below.

Document Processing Pending

The first response from Companies House will be a "Document processing pending" response which indicates that the eFiling instruction has been received by them and is pending processing. The status of the header will change accordingly and a new detail entry will appear. If processing by Companies House is delayed you may receive subsequent pending responses.

Parked - pending supply of further information

If Companies House receive an eFiling instruction that requires you to submit further information, you will receive a "Parked - pending supply of further information" response which will also give you information as to the further information required. The instruction will remain at this status level until the information is supplied to and processed by Companies House.

Accepted or Rejected

Once Companies House have processed the eFiling you will receive a response indicating either that it is Accepted or Rejected. If "Rejected" then you can read the reasons for the rejection by highlighting the Rejected detail entry and clicking the "Details" button. Once an eFiling is rejected it will remain rejected and a brand new instruction must be sent in due course once you have put right the reason for the rejection. In case of query regarding a rejection, Companies House will have indicated their contact details and preferred method of communication in the rejection response.

Rejected - Resolved

Once you have resolved the reason for the rejection, you can highlight the rejected entry and click the resolved button which merely marks the entry as "Rejected - Resolved". Marking it in this way does not

actually resolve the problem but is intended as a way of removing entries from the list of "Rejected" items once you have resolved them and submitted a new instruction.

Other Emails

From time to time emails may be received into the email account being used for eFiling that are not responses from Companies House relating to eFiling instructions. Any such emails received will be saved (excluding any attached files). These emails will not be attributable to any particular company and will be described as "Other Emails". Such emails can be highlighted and deleted.

Actions:

- **Send/Receive**

- (1) Performs XML communication with Companies House servers to send any instructions "not submitted", and receive any waiting responses from Companies House
- (2) Sends any outstanding Authority2file emails, and receives any Authority2file emails that are waiting to be retrieved in the POP mailbox.

- **Comms Log**

Displays a log of recent "Send & receive" activity since the software was started.

- **Archive**

Allows you to delete historic entries from the eFiling log, and store them in the "archive" file (this process can be reversed). Archiving old entries allows you to see the current situation more easily, and can also improve performance if the eFiling log has become very large.

- **Reports**

Allows you to print a summary of displayed entries, or full details of the highlighted entry.

7 eFiling Server

The eFiling log can be run as a separate server application that will automatically communicate with Companies House servers and send & receive emails at preset intervals. Running the software in "server mode" (`sharereg.exe /SERVERMODE`) also allows workstations that do not have an Internet connection or have firewall restrictions, to "queue" instructions for later sending by the eFiling server.

The eFiling server will always display entries for all companies and works exactly the same as the eFiling log, subject to some additional features - see below.

Additional eFiling Server Actions:

- **Settings**

Master Password - allows you to enter a "Master Password". If entered, the password will be required in order to start the eFiling server and also to return the server from a "Locked" state.

Send/Receive Interval - allows you to set the interval for the eFiling server to automatically send/receive.

- **Lock eFile Server** - Blanks the eFiling server screen but leaves the server running. The "Master Password" will be required to return the server from a "Locked" state. This option is only visible if a Master Password has previously been created.

