



# Fair Tax

At the heart of society



## Be a fair tax leader

Too often, tax makes the headlines for all the wrong reasons. We read about scandals and aggressive avoidance which distort our economy and destroy the opportunity for businesses to compete fairly.

Polls of consumers and the public consistently reveal one of their biggest concerns to be whether companies are paying their fair share of tax. And that's why the Fair Tax Mark exists: to support and celebrate those companies doing the right thing.

We know that not all companies are playing the system. There are thousands who are quietly paying their fair share while others hit the headlines for doing the opposite. The Fair Tax Mark redresses that balance, helping your business show its leadership on responsible tax to everyone.

“ Corporate tax avoidance remains the top public concern about business behaviour

Institute of Business Ethics

“ Just a third of British adults believe big companies pay their fair share of tax

Institute of Chartered Accountants of England & Wales

# The change starts with you

Tax may be seen as a complex issue but the public demand for companies to do the right thing is easy to comprehend. This issue is not going to go away; to move the debate on, business has to get involved and show leadership.

## Why win the Fair Tax Mark?

- > Stand out in your sector
- > Be a leading voice on the most important corporate responsibility issue of our time
- > Get the edge when bidding for contracts
- > Instil pride in employees and give customers confidence
- > Reassure investors that you're at the leading edge of risk management
- > Win public and media attention for your commitment
- > Be part of a growing UK-wide network of businesses who want to lead on responsible practice
- > Get ahead of the curve of new tax regulations and legislation
- > Be a crucial part of changing our tax landscape for good

“ The Fair Tax Mark will boost consumer confidence

Institute of Chartered Accountants

“ We use the Fair Tax Mark when presenting to potential customers – it's an important tool for setting ourselves apart from the rest

Andy Hogarth, CEO Staffline Group



SSE: the first FTSE 100 Fair Tax Mark business



Lush Cosmetics: an international high street chain and winner of the Fair Tax Mark

# Join other leading businesses



There has been an erosion of trust between big businesses and the customers they serve.

That's why it's so important to have a third party accredit us for tax disclosure.

**Gregor Alexander, Finance Director, SSE**



We believe fair tax is vital for society to thrive.

**Richard Wilcox, Former MD, Unity Trust Bank**



*Go Ahead*

Our accreditation reassures stakeholders, investors, employees and customers that we are a responsible organisation.

**David Brown, CEO, Go Ahead Group**



We believe we should pay a fair tax in each of the countries in which we operate. Lush wants our customers to have a safe living environment, to have access to good education and efficient healthcare services – and we know that taxes are needed for this.

**Hilary Jones, Ethics Director, Lush**



The Fair Tax Mark is a way for small businesses to show that they care about the UK, and aren't simply driven by profit.

**Tom Stanley, Director, Urban IT Support**



People understand that a socially responsible approach to paying corporation tax is the most sizeable community investment a business is ever likely to make.

**Ben Reid, CEO, Midcounties Co-operative**



Fair tax is the new fair trade.

**Ed Mayo, Secretary General, Co-operatives UK**



# Make your mark on fair tax

The Fair Tax Mark provides you with confidence that your business is doing the right thing on tax, no matter its size or sector. It helps your stakeholders know you can be trusted on this crucial issue – and gives you a credible way to communicate this.

Businesses with the Fair Tax Mark seek to:

**1. Pay the right amount of tax (but not more), at the right time, in the right place**

By following the spirit and not just the letter of the law; using only legitimate reductions; and not abusing tax havens or avoidance schemes

**2. Set the standard for transparency**

By publishing full accounts even if you're not required to by law; reporting profits and taxes in different countries; and explaining your tax charges clearly

**3. Lead the pack on responsibility**

By committing publicly to responsible tax practices and disclosing the information required

“ I’m glad to have driven these commitments from our company – as a result we’ll spend less time on tax planning and more time on growing our business.

Matthew Bloch, Managing Director and Co-Founder of Bytemark



Matthew Bloch and Peter Taphouse, co-founders of Fair Tax Mark accredited business Bytemark



Delegate at the Fair Tax Mark's annual conference

“ The review process was clearly defined and we were impressed with how quickly the whole process was concluded.

Andy Hogarth, CEO, Staffline

# How does it work?

We keep the process simple to make your Fair Tax Mark experience smooth and hassle-free.

You can opt to have only the Fair Tax Assessment, in which case we'll assess your accounts and supplementary material to provide you with step-by-step guidance on how to lead on tax.

Or you can go the whole way, having your Fair Tax Assessment and gaining Accreditation.

Yes, we're ready to become leaders on fair tax.



Whether you want only the Assessment, or the full package, we'll sign a letter of agreement with full non-disclosure clause – your business's tax practices will never be made public by us.



You receive your Assessment Report with step-by-step guidance on how to improve your tax responsibility.



We undertake your Fair Tax Assessment.



At your discretion, you implement the changes needed to be eligible for the Fair Tax Mark – we'll provide you with examples and template copy.



You're awarded the Fair Tax Mark and it's yours to use for one year – time to announce it and celebrate!



# Who are we?

The Fair Tax Mark is an independent, not-for-profit community benefit society. We're registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act (Registration: 32308R).

The Fair Tax criteria we use to undertake company assessments and accreditations were developed, and remain overseen, by an expert technical committee in consultation with a broad range of stakeholders, including business representatives, NGOs and industry practitioners.

You can read the full criteria and learn more about us at [www.fairtaxmark.net](http://www.fairtaxmark.net)

## Get in touch

If you're interested in learning more about the Fair Tax Mark and how it can work for your business, drop us a line or give us a call.

**0161 769 0427** | [info@fairtaxmark.net](mailto:info@fairtaxmark.net)



# FAQs

## 1. Is Fair Tax Mark just for big business?

No. The Fair Tax Mark is for all UK businesses from large multinationals to the smallest limited company. Whilst it has predominantly been larger businesses hitting the headlines with their tax affairs, tax is an issue that affects us all and smaller businesses can and do also benefit from the improved transparency and disclosure that helps create a fair and level playing field for all.

## 2. How much does it cost?

| Annual Turnover £ | Fees £ (+VAT)      |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| less than 250k    | <b>250</b>         |
| 250k – 1m         | <b>500</b>         |
| 1m – 6m           | <b>1000</b>        |
| 6m – 25m          | <b>2000</b>        |
| 25m and above*    | <b>4000 –12000</b> |

\*Fee varies depending on the nature and complexity of your business

Please note: For businesses with a turnover greater than £1m, fees are charged in two instalments, the first half, upon engagement, covers the assessment process, the second half is charged on completion of the accreditation and covers the licence to use the Fair Tax Mark. Fees are the same for every year in which accreditation takes place.

## 3. How long does the process take?

This depends on the size and complexity of the business. However, we aim to have the initial assessment completed within 4–6 weeks and then the second stage through to completion depends on the capacity of the business to carry out the recommendations. We endeavour to reach completion within a timeframe suggested by you.

## 4. What if my business pays little or no tax?

There are many legitimate reasons why a business may pay no tax in one or more years. This could be due to using a particular relief, paying into a pension fund or making a loss. The Fair Tax Mark takes this into account and won't penalise the business if it works to explain fully and clearly why it is paying less tax than expected.

## 5. How often will the Criteria change?

The Criteria are agreed by our Technical Committee and are based on the direction of travel in the wider regulatory environment. Substantive changes to the Criteria will only be made if there is a significant change in the legislation affecting how business must report their tax affairs and all holders of the Fair Tax Mark will be notified and consulted in advance, with a 12 month courtesy period and full support for changes to be made. We do not currently envisage updating the Criteria until 2018 at the earliest.





Call 0161 769 0427

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