

1. LEAD RECEIVED / CLIENT ENQUIRY

The process begins when a client enquiry is received through referral, direct marketing, social media, website, existing client relationship, or introducer.

Required actions:

- Record the lead in the CRM
- Assign the lead to the appropriate adviser
- Capture basic client details
- Confirm the type of enquiry:
 - Purchase
 - Remortgage
 - Product Transfer
 - Buy to Let
 - Further Advance
 - Other

Objective: Establish initial contact and determine whether the enquiry is suitable for a mortgage advice appointment.

2. INITIAL CONTACT / FIRST CONVERSATION

The adviser makes first contact with the client to understand the broad nature of the enquiry and book a full appointment.

Required actions:

- Confirm client identity basics
- Understand the purpose of the mortgage enquiry
- Explain the advice process
- Set expectations regarding documents and timescales
- Book a full mortgage appointment

Objective: Move the client from enquiry stage to a structured advice process.

3. INITIAL DISCLOSURE

Before regulated advice proceeds, the client must be given the relevant initial disclosure and explanation of service.

Required actions:

- Provide the Initial Disclosure Document (IDD)
- Explain the nature of the service
- Explain whether advice is independent / whole of market, or otherwise according to firm model
- Explain fees, if applicable
- Confirm client understanding

Objective: Ensure the client understands the service, remuneration basis, and the firm's role before advice progresses further.

4. DOCUMENT REQUEST

The client is asked to provide the documentation required to assess eligibility, affordability, and suitability.

Typical documents:

- Proof of ID
- Proof of address
- Payslips / SA302s / tax calculations
- Bank statements
- Existing mortgage statement
- Credit commitments information

- Deposit evidence
- Property details where available

Objective: Ensure the adviser has enough evidence to proceed with proper fact-finding and affordability assessment.

5. FULL FACT FIND

A full mortgage fact find must be completed before any recommendation is made.

Areas to cover:

- Personal details
- Residency / nationality / visa status where relevant
- Employment and income
- Self-employed details if applicable
- Expenditure and commitments
- Dependants
- Credit history
- Deposit / equity position
- Property details
- Mortgage objectives
- Preferences and priorities
- Protection discussion trigger points

Objective: Build a complete understanding of the client's circumstances, needs, and borrowing position.

6. AFFORDABILITY ASSESSMENT

The adviser assesses what the client can realistically afford, both from a lender perspective and from a practical client-budget perspective.

Required actions:

- Review income and expenditure
- Assess debt-to-income position
- Review committed and basic expenditure
- Consider future affordability risks
- Check whether the client's desired loan amount is realistic

Objective: Avoid unsuitable borrowing and ensure any recommendation is affordable, sustainable, and realistic.

7. CREDIT PROFILE REVIEW

The adviser reviews the client's credit profile to determine product and lender suitability.

Required actions:

- Ask about missed payments, defaults, CCJs, IVAs, bankruptcies, debt management, and arrears
- Review available credit report information where obtained
- Identify lender restrictions and placement risks

Objective: Understand whether the case is standard, near-prime, adverse, or likely to require specialist placement.

8. MORTGAGE REQUIREMENTS DEFINITION

Before sourcing begins, the adviser must clearly define the mortgage requirements.

This includes:

- Transaction type
- Purchase price / property value
- Loan amount
- Deposit amount / equity
- Term
- Repayment basis
- Fixed / tracker / variable preference
- Incentives or fee preferences
- Need for speed / completion deadline
- Property type and construction

- Tenure
- Any lender exclusions

Objective: Create a clear sourcing brief based on the client's actual needs and constraints.

9. SOURCING

The adviser uses an approved sourcing system to identify suitable mortgage options.

Required actions:

- Source products through approved systems
- Apply relevant filters based on client requirements and criteria
- Review product suitability, not just price
- Consider lender criteria, fees, incentives, underwriting appetite, and timescales

Objective: Identify the most suitable mortgage solution, not simply the cheapest headline rate.

10. CRITERIA CHECK

Before a recommendation is given, the adviser must check the case against lender criteria.

Required actions:

- Review lender criteria for:
 - employment type
 - adverse credit
 - property type
 - loan size
 - tenure
 - income evidence
 - nationality / visa
 - repayment type

Confirm the case is realistically placeable

Objective: Avoid recommending products that look suitable on sourcing but are unlikely to be accepted.

11. DIP / AIP STAGE

Where appropriate, a Decision in Principle or Agreement in Principle is obtained.

Possible outcomes:

- Approved
- Referred
- Declined

Required actions:

- Record the lender used
- Record the DIP outcome
- Record any reference number
- Note any issues arising

Objective: Strengthen confidence that the case is acceptable before progressing to full application.

12. RECOMMENDATION

Once the adviser has completed fact find, affordability review, sourcing, and criteria checks, a recommendation is made.

The adviser must explain:

- Why this lender was selected
- Why this product was selected
- Why the recommendation meets the client's needs
- Key features, benefits, and risks
- Monthly cost
- Fees and total cost considerations
- Early repayment charges and relevant limitations

Objective: Deliver personalised advice that is clearly linked to the client's circumstances and objectives.

13. SUITABILITY LETTER

A suitability letter or equivalent recommendation document must be issued.

It should include:

- Client circumstances
- Needs and objectives
- Recommended mortgage
- Reasons for suitability
- Main risks
- Costs and fees
- Repayment basis
- Any relevant limitations or warnings

Objective: *Create a clear audit trail showing that the recommendation was suitable and properly explained.*

14. CLIENT AGREEMENT TO PROCEED

The client confirms they wish to proceed with the recommendation.

Required actions:

- Confirm client understanding
- Confirm consent to proceed
- Resolve any final questions
- Confirm fee basis again if needed

Objective: *Ensure the client is making an informed decision before application submission.*

15. PRE-APPLICATION CHECK

Before submission, the adviser or case handler checks that everything is complete and consistent.

Required checks:

- Fact find complete
- Documents complete
- Application data matches evidence
- Deposit source clear
- Credit issues addressed
- Property details confirmed
- Recommendation documented
- Suitability letter issued
- Fees disclosed

Objective: *Reduce avoidable declines, delays, and compliance issues.*

16. FULL APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The full mortgage application is submitted to the lender.

Required actions:

- Submit accurate and complete information
- Upload supporting documents
- Record submission date
- Record lender and product details in the CRM

Objective: *Move the case into formal underwriting with a complete and accurate application.*

17. UNDERWRITING STAGE

The lender reviews the application and may request additional information.

Required actions:

- Monitor outstanding requirements
- Liaise with the client promptly
- Liaise with the lender, BDM, solicitor, and any relevant third parties
- Keep notes of all material updates

Objective: *Progress the case efficiently while maintaining good communication and audit trail.*

18. VALUATION / PROPERTY ASSESSMENT

Where required, the lender arranges a valuation or property assessment.

Possible outcomes:

- Satisfactory
- Down valuation
- Retention
- Further investigation needed

Objective: Ensure the property provides suitable security for the loan and identify any issues affecting the case.

19. MORTGAGE OFFER

If underwriting is successful, the lender issues a mortgage offer.

Required actions:

- Review the offer carefully
- Check product, loan amount, term, names, repayment basis, and conditions
- Explain the offer to the client
- Confirm any special conditions

Objective: Ensure the offer matches expectations and that the client understands the next stage.

20. LEGAL / CONVEYANCING STAGE

The legal process progresses through solicitors or conveyancers.

Required actions:

- Maintain contact with relevant parties
- Monitor progress
- Support the client if issues arise
- Record expected completion timeline

Objective: Help keep the transaction moving and reduce fallout caused by silence or poor coordination.

21. COMPLETION

The mortgage completes and funds are released according to the transaction type.

Required actions:

- Confirm completion date
- Confirm mortgage is live
- Update CRM status
- Record final lender and product details

Objective: Close the mortgage journey accurately and transition into aftercare.

22. PROTECTION REVIEW

A protection discussion should be built into the process where appropriate.

Areas to consider:

- Life cover
- Critical illness cover
- Income protection
- Family protection needs
- Home insurance where relevant

Objective: Ensure clients are given the opportunity to protect their mortgage and family circumstances.

23. POST-SALE / AFTERCARE

After completion, the client should enter the aftercare process.

Required actions:

- Thank the client
- Confirm ongoing support
- Request feedback / referral where appropriate
- Set review reminders

- Record future rate expiry or review date

Objective: *Maintain long-term client relationship and improve retention, referrals, and future opportunities.*

Document Review:

This process guide will be reviewed annually or following significant changes to regulatory requirements, advice processes, or firm operations.