



# Qualifying your business for the UK rail industry

# Link-up: Your route to qualification in the UK rail sector



Link-up is a Supplier Management Scheme, managed by Achilles. Achilles is one of the world's leading providers of supplier information and provides web-based services to identify, qualify, evaluate and monitor suppliers on behalf of buyers' organisations worldwide. During the last 20 years Achilles has helped more than 700 buying organisations and around 60,000 suppliers worldwide.

Achilles builds communities spanning a range of industry sectors including construction, ICT, mining & cement, oil & gas, service industries, public sector, transport and utilities, so that organisations can manage their supply chains effectively, reduce risk and improve data quality and consistency.

Link-up is the first stage in qualification to the rail industry for all types of business whether your company supplies corporate goods or services, high risk engineering products or services, or even major civil projects.

Qualifying your business to an entire industry sector, or even a specific potential client, can be a resource consuming activity often associated with significant indirect costs as a result of the need to complete many different documents.

Link-up makes qualifying your business simpler, easier and more cost-effective by:

- Enabling your business to qualify for over 110 rail organisations through completion of a single questionnaire
- Giving your business an equal opportunity through a fair, open and transparent qualification process
- Displaying your business capabilities to more than 2,700 buyers and engineers in the rail sector through the Achilles Rail Portal
- Giving your business the opportunity to update your capabilities as often as you like during your subscription - ensuring buyers always have the most up-to-date information
- Membership of Link-up declares your intention to be part of the rail community.

Gaining Link-up qualification is an achievement of which any business should be proud, and one that is recognised throughout the rail industry.

## What is Link-up?

Link-up is the UK Rail Industry's supplier qualification management scheme and is recognised as best practice in qualifying suppliers. Link-up is used extensively by buying organisations such as Network Rail, London Underground, train operators and other large companies working in the UK rail sector.

The Link-up scheme has three clear objectives:

- Single shared qualification process amongst the rail community
- Reduced duplication - recognised as efficient and cost-effective
- Fair, open and transparent process.

Link-up is used as a supplier sourcing and evaluation tool by over 110 of the key organisations undertaking procurement within UK Rail:

- Approximately 2,700 individual users within these organisations have access to Link-up as a source of qualified suppliers, to gather information about existing and potential suppliers, and to aid them in their activities
- Link-up is used by buyers because it enables them to save time and money by delivering validated questionnaire information about current and potential suppliers with state-of-the-art tools to locate, view, filter and compare information across the supply chain
- For those companies that fall under the EU Procurement Directive and the derived UK Legislation, e.g. Network Rail, TOC's, London Underground Limited, etc., Link-up simplifies and can shorten the procurement process
- It is also used to provide support and information source to allow organisations to manage their wider business risks and as part of their overall assurance processes.

Link-up is used extensively by procurement, engineering, safety and quality professionals and rail organisations, where necessary, to comply with the requirements of European Procurement Legislation and Railway Group Standard GM/RT 2450.

# How the Link-up scheme works

“The Link-up Qualification Scheme enables rail industry customers and suppliers to do business in a fair and transparent market place. It is integral to Network Rail’s procurement process and our approach to supply chain risk management.

Link-up supports the commitments set out in the Network Rail Supply Chain Charter and is governed in a manner which is consistent with our values of Determination, Respect, Teamwork and Pride.”

Pete Colley, Head of Supplier Development and Commercial Performance



Qualifying your business on the Link-up scheme is achieved through the completion of the online Link-up Questionnaire. The exact qualification process will depend on the products or services that your business wishes to supply. These are defined by product codes, which are further supported by relevant lifecycle activities to further enhance the detail of your capability. Each available intersection of product code and activity is defined as R, S or A: Registration, Scored Evaluation or Auditable.

The Link-up Questionnaire collects organisational, commercial, operational and technical information regarding your company including financial, quality, health & safety, environmental and insurance details.

## R - Registration

Goods and services with little or no risk to the infrastructure

Registration product groups are designed for suppliers of non-critical goods and services, typically corporate goods and services, which are deemed not to be business-critical or import risk to a Link-up subscriber.

## S - Scored Evaluation

Goods and services which do not offer a significant risk to the infrastructure

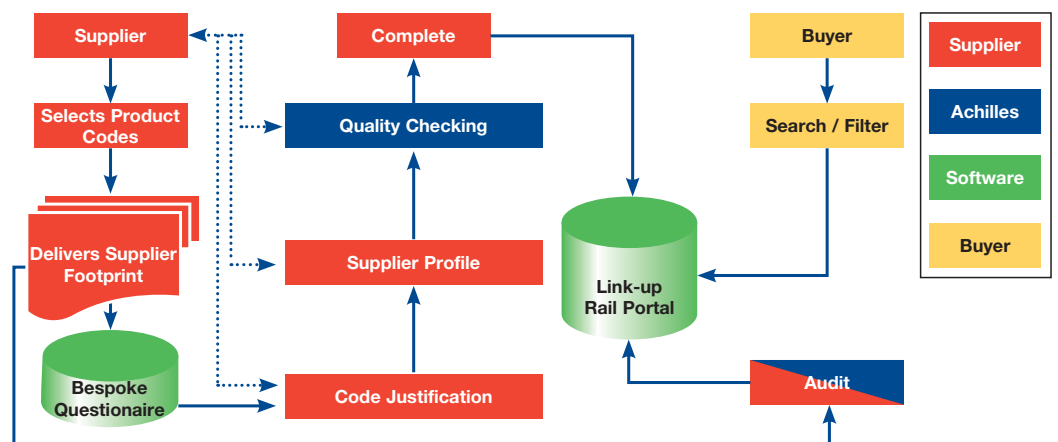
Scored evaluation product groups are designed for suppliers of business-critical goods and services that import a risk to a Link-up subscriber. Additional information on your business will be collated by your questionnaire which will be evaluated and scored.

## A - Auditable

Auditable product groups are designed for suppliers of products and services which relate to works undertaken on the railway infrastructure. In addition to completion of the Link-up Questionnaire, your business capabilities will be assessed via an on-site audit under the Link-up Audit scheme.

Online there is the Link-up Supplier Guide. This will help you to more effectively complete your questionnaire.

The process for both suppliers and buyers is as follows:



# Your Link-up Membership



On successful completion of the questionnaire, as well as going live and your company's details being available to view by the Link-up buying community, you are able to:

- View your questionnaire and check your supplier status - in this section you are able to complete or update your product code selection and questionnaire information. You can also view any expired date sensitive information
- Find a document or resource – find a wide range of additional material to support your registration
- View your current and previous audits (if applicable) and print if required
- Access the Link-up qualification marks as appropriate to your subscription - use these tools in your promotional material and campaigns.

There are also service options available that you can purchase to enhance your membership:

- Supplier Patron - an entry level of access to Link-up supplier information. This optional addition provides a tool that can help you to manage your own suppliers, may help to identify business opportunities and to better understand the rail marketplace
- NOTICE - allows you to expand your business opportunities through having access to contract opportunities from throughout Europe via email specific to your account information
- MARKIT - a marketing tool which allows you to showcase your latest products and services in an area dedicated to the UK Rail Sector.

“Not only does Link-up allow us to be more effective in complying with internal and statutory requirements, but it has lowered supplier risk and makes the information validation process more effective. Consequently, suppliers benefit from fewer audits, which means less disruption for both parties. It's a win-win situation for all.”

John Green  
Subcontractor and Risk  
Manager

**Birse**  
Rail

## Link-up: Application Process

**Step 1:** Select your Link-up subscription package and complete the application process, by any of the following:

- Calling the Link-up Team on 01235 861118 - the quickest method
- Visiting [www.achilles.com/joinlink-up](http://www.achilles.com/joinlink-up)
- Completing and sending in the form on the back page.

Upon receipt you will be provided with details to access the online Link-up Questionnaire.

**Step 2:** Enter product codes/activities and complete the code justification and supplier profile questionnaires which are submitted to the Link-up team for validating.

**Step 3:** The Link-up team will quality check and evaluate your questionnaires and send notification of your results.

**Step 4:** Your qualification status is uploaded to the Rail Portal for all Link-up subscribers to access. A Link-up Certificate will be available to download to mark your achievement and you can also request the Link-up logo to include on your marketing literature.

**To register and pay by credit card, please visit [www.achilles.com/joinlink-up](http://www.achilles.com/joinlink-up)**

## 1. Company Details Please print your details clearly using capital letters.

Title	First Name	Surname
Job Title		
Company Name		
Address		
Postcode		
Telephone	Fax	
Email		
Website	Link-up Registration Number (If applicable)	
VAT Number	Company Registration Number <small>(UK and N.Ireland only)</small>	

## 2. Service options (Please select your annual package from the list below and complete the TOTAL PACKAGE COST box)

Service	Annual Subscription Fee (non-refundable)
Link-up Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> £585 per year (£702 incl. VAT)
Link-up and Supplier Patron	<input type="checkbox"/> £1335 per year (£1602 incl. VAT)
Link-up and MARKIT	<input type="checkbox"/> £760 per year (£912 incl. VAT)
Link-up and NOTiCE	<input type="checkbox"/> £1010 per year (£1210 incl. VAT)
Link-up, MARKiT and NOTiCE	<input type="checkbox"/> £1135 per year (£1362 incl. VAT)
Supplier Patron option for existing customers*	<input type="checkbox"/> £750 per year (£900 incl. VAT)
<b>TOTAL PACKAGE COST (Incl. VAT)</b>	£

\* This option is available to add to your Link-up annual subscription

## 3. Payment Details

**To register and pay by credit card, please visit [www.achilles.com/joinlink-up](http://www.achilles.com/joinlink-up)**

Please invoice me at the address above  Please invoice me at the following address:

Title	First Name	Surname
Company Name		
Address		
Postcode		

Alternatively, please tick your payment method.

- I have transferred by BACS/CHAPS (UK only) \*\*
- I have transferred by SWIFT to LOYDGB2LCTY (Non-UK only) \*\*
- I have attached the remittance advice (Note: Failure to include your remittance advice will delay payment processing)
- I have transferred by IBAN bank transfer (Non-UK only) \*\*\*

\*\*Achilles Banking Details  
 Account No.: 00476418 Sort Code: 30-00-02  
 Lloyds TSB Bank Plc, City Office, PO Box 72, Bailey Drive, Gillingham Business Park, Kent, ME8 OLS.  
 \*\*\*IBAN no. (for European countries only) - GB54LOYD30000200476418

A VAT invoice will be sent upon receipt of payment.

**Once the form is complete, please fax back to:  
 +44 (0)1235 838156 or send to: Achilles Customer  
 Payments, PO Box 501, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 9AG,  
 United Kingdom**

---

# Link-up Subscription Options

---

“Link-up provides our procurement professionals with access to a source of validated information. This reduces the time taken to select, assess and monitor suppliers both pre-tender and post contract award.”

Les Rawlins, Senior Procurement Manager (Engineering)  
Chiltern Railways and DB Regio UK

**Chiltern Railways**

---

## Link-up Standard

Link-up Standard is the standard subscription enabling your business to qualify on the Link-up scheme. There are upgrade packages available, designed to increase your business opportunities through the Link-up scheme:

## Link-up Supplier Patron

Start to manage your business risks from suppliers and customers with Link-up Supplier Patron. This additional option is open to all qualified Link-up suppliers and helps to:

- Save time and resource finding potential qualified suppliers - locate competent suppliers by having access to view who is qualified in any product code and if they are an NCCA sponsor or Licence Holder
- Save on duplication and help cut down on your own auditing - view basic audit information about these companies
- Provide enhanced security of any enquiry - access to contact and basic company information.

It gives you visibility of basic information on all suppliers registered on the Link-up portal, and means that you can see whether suppliers, who are also potential buyers, meet your requirements. If you feel your organisation could benefit from working with, or for, other validated companies, this additional option gives you extra proactive functionality along with the capability to assist in managing your own risks. This means that you could help to drive further improvements within and for your business.

## Link-up and MARKiT – increase your Link-up profile

Link-up and MARKiT enables your business to increase its profile further on the Achilles Rail Portal by including your own marketing information via a pre-formatted template. Your business can differentiate itself from its competitors by including your own text and images, and you can update this information at any time, e.g. to include a new product or service you want to showcase to the UK rail industry.

Increase your Link-up profile to over 2,700 users of Achilles Rail Portal

- Differentiate your business in your own text and images
- Display marketing information on your latest products and services
- Deliver key information on your products and services through the right channel.

## Link-up and NOTiCE – be informed of contract opportunities

Link-up and NOTiCE gives your business the facility to be emailed relevant contract opportunities occurring in the UK and across Europe within all industry sectors, as published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU). Emails are delivered daily as soon as notices are published in the OJEU, giving your business immediate market intelligence. Access to the entire OJEU database containing thousands of business opportunities is included.

- Relevant contract opportunities emailed direct to your business
- Find details of contracts that have been awarded and to whom they were awarded
- Include up to ten people on the email distribution list
- Select particular countries or contracts of interest to your business, or match against your Link-up registered product group.

## Link-up MARKiT and NOTiCE

A Link-up MARKiT and NOTiCE package is available at a discounted rate.



**Achilles Information Limited**

30 Park Gate, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4SH, UK

**T:** +44 (0) 1235 820813 **F:** +44 (0) 1235 821093 **E:** enquiries@achilles.com **W:** www.achilles.com

