ICAEW Accreditation Scheme

Accounts Production Evaluation

Sage (UK) Ltd

Sage Accounts Production Advanced v14.10 Released February 2015

Evaluation carried out by: IT Evaluation Services

Date completed: 09/07/15

Signed:

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Contents

1 Summary

1.1 Introduction

The suitability of accounting software for each particular user will always be dependent upon that user's individual requirements. These requirements should therefore always be fully considered before software is acquired. The quality of the software developers or suppliers should also be considered at the onset.

1.2 Fundamentally good accounts production software should:

- be capable of supporting the account production functions for which it was designed.
- provide facilities to ensure the completeness, accuracy and continued integrity of these account production functions.
- be effectively supported and maintained to the latest standards and legislation.

It is also desirable that good accounts production software should:

- be easy to learn, understand and operate.
- make best practical use of available resources.
- accommodate limited changes to reflect specific practice and client requirements.
- provide a good audit trail.

It is essential, when software is implemented, for appropriate support and training to be available.

2 Approach to evaluation

2.1 Objective

To evaluate Sage Accounts Production advanced v14.10 against a set of criteria developed by the ICAEW to ensure that the software meets the requirements of good accounts production software, as laid down in the summary.

2.2 Approach and Work performed

In order to effectively evaluate Sage Accounts Production advanced v14.10, a product specialist from the Sage (UK) Ltd completed the detailed questionnaire and provided it to the evaluator to examine. The evaluator then visited the Sage (UK) Ltd office in Manchester and in conjunction with the operation of the various aspects of the software assisted by a member of Sage (UK) Ltd's technical staff checked the answers to confirm their validity. The questions were individually reviewed and commented on and the majority of assessments were confirmed.

The evaluator discussed the assessments with a member of Sage (UK) Ltd staff in order to clarify certain points. In the event of disagreement between Sage (UK) Ltd and the evaluator, the evaluator's decision was taken as final and the response changed accordingly.

When the evaluation had been completed, the responses were completed by the evaluator and a draft copy sent to the ICAEW for review before completion of the final report.

2.3 Software/hardware utilised

Sage Accounts Production advanced v14.10, was used throughout the evaluation. The hardware used was an HP Elitebook 847P with an Intel (R) Core (tm) i5-3380m CPU running at 2.9GHz with 8GB RAM, a 465GB hard disk under Windows 7 Enterprise service pack 1 64 bit operating system.

2.4 Report structure

The report has been broken down into its main constituents in the contents page. The evaluation questionnaire was provided by the ICAEW and has been used without alteration or amendment. The evaluation covered the full accounts production features.

3 Matters to consider before purchase

3.1 General overview

Sage Accounts Production Advanced provides a solution for accountants working in practice or industry to prepare and customise monthly management and statutory year-end accounts.

3.2 Supplier background

Headquartered in Newcastle upon Tyne, Sage (UK) Limited is a subsidiary of The Sage Group plc, a leading supplier of business management software and services. Sage has been helping businesses manage their finances, people, customers and suppliers and to plan for future success since 1981.

Around 6.2 million companies around the world use Sage products and services across 100 countries. In the UK and Ireland Sage has over 780,000 customers – Sage claim more than any other company in their market. So, over the years Sage has built up a fair understanding of the issues and concerns that their customers face. As a consequence Sage is a leader in the business software space in many of the countries they operate in.

3.3 Product background and Suitability for user

Sage claim to understand Accountants' needs and work with over 14,000 Accountants in the UK, either in practice or in industry, so they understand the issues businesses face. Sage support clients with over 250 experts in tax, accounts production and practice software and their relationship with HMRC, Companies House, FRC and other standards setters means their advice is insightful and up to date.

Sage claim that Sage Accounts Production Advanced is extremely flexible and is able to meet the needs of those practices with complex requirements and is in use by many of the top 50 UK accounting practices. The system allows for the rapid production of compliant statements with minimum fuss, proving standard formats for a wide range of business types including: Sole Traders, Partnerships, Micro-Entities, Limited Companies, Groups, LLPs, Charities, Pensions, Clubs, Doctors & Farms.

As well as providing year-end accounts the application provides a range of additional reports including full management accounts, analytical reviews, ratio and variance analysis and five-year summaries. It also allows for the production of graphical reports for the appraisal of clients' businesses and for the practice to provide a value added service.

The Companies House web-filing feature saves both time and money over paper filing. It reduces the risk of rejection as there is built in validation checks and automatic email notification keeps the user up to date with the submission progress.

Client data can either be entered directly into the application or populated automatically from Sage 50 Accounts, or other commonly used third party products.

Sage Accounts Production Advanced can be used on its own or as a part of an integrated practice suite. Sage work closely with the industry experts to ensure that the software is always up to date.

The product has very high flexibility in the design of the final account layouts so that it is easy to create a 'house style' that reflects the practice, which can be further, tailored for specific client styles, if required.

3.4 Typical implementation and target market

Typically small to medium sized accounting firms that want to personalise their client reports and provide management information services to their clients.

3.5 Vertical applications

Sage 50 Accounts, Sage Practice Solution, Sage Accounts Production, Sage Taxation and Sage Corporation Tax.

3.6 Software and hardware specifications

3.6.1 Development environment

The Package is developed in C++ and Microsoft .Net.

3.6.2 Server platforms

For computers running 32-bit operating systems:

- Microsoft® Windows® Server 2003 or above.
- Microsoft Windows Terminal Server 2003 or above (with standard configuration).

For computers running 64-bit operating systems:

- Microsoft Windows Server 2008 R2 or above.
- Microsoft Windows Terminal Server 2008 R2 or above (with standard configuration).

3.6.3 Databases

The system uses the Delphi environment with a proprietary database.

3.6.4 Workstation operating system

For computers running 32-bit operating systems:

- Microsoft Windows Vista or above (Professional/Business Edition).
- Microsoft Office 2007 or above.

For computers running 64-bit operating systems:

- Microsoft Windows 7 or above (Professional Edition).
- Microsoft Office® 2010 or above.

3.6.5 Protocols

Standard TCP/IP is utilised to communicate between the clients and the server.

3.6.6 Minimum client PC specification

Recommended Hardware

- An IBM® compatible computer with a 2Ghz processor, at least 2GB RAM, at least 10GB of free hard disk space.

Screen Resolution

- Minimum of 1024 x 768.

3.7 Software installation and support

Sage Accounts Production users can install the application themselves.
An annual licence fee includes legislation and other product updates, the continuing right to use the product and the services of the Sage support team.

To gain efficiency, Sage will help install and support the software.

These include:
- Individual and bespoke training programs
- Webinar sessions
- Group training
- Professional data merges
- Remote and on-site installation services

3.8 Partner network and related accreditation process

Sage Accounts Production Advanced is licensed directly through Sage and they provide all the necessary support and training of users. It is also supplied through one VAR - Datel.

3.9 Points to be considered by potential purchasers

There are a number of limitations in the product, which while not adversely impacting upon this evaluation may be of importance to some organisations. It is important that any business contemplating the purchase of software reviews the functionality described and limitations therein against its detailed requirements. Attention is drawn in particular to the following areas where the product, on its own, may not be suitable for businesses with certain requirements:

- Passwords are optional
- No archiving
- No system log but there is a detailed audit trail of all transactions that have updated the system.
- No specific report provided for changes to parameters or tables but details can be displayed on-screen and a Windows screen print taken, if required
- No web based access
- No VAT capabilities
- No reports on master file changes
- No working papers
- PLCs not supported
- No currency conversion except for subsidiaries during consolidation
- No ESCROW agreement

4 Evaluation conclusion

There were no areas in the evaluation that gave concern. Sage Accounts Production Advanced v14.10 is a well designed package for producing sets of accounts and management information that has been competently written and is supported by Sage (UK) Ltd directly.

In terms of the functionality that is present in the current version and the target markets for the product, the product has been adequately specified. The systems provides facilities to complete accounts for most types of companies except PLCs.

Disclaimer

Any organisation considering the purchase of Sage Accounts Production Advanced v14.10 should consider their requirements in the light of proposals from Sage (UK) Ltd or its resellers and potential suppliers of other similarly specified products. Whilst the contents of this document are presented in good faith, neither ICAEW nor the Evaluator can accept any liability for actions taken as a result of comments made herein.

Functional requirements questionnaire
Product: Sage Accounts Production Advanced Version: v14.10

Question **Supplier Response** **Evaluation confirmation**

5.1 Security and continuity of processing

1	i) Are different levels of passwords provided to control access?	Yes. The user has a range of levels which they can utilize in the product which gives differing levels of access to the product.	Confirmed
	ii) Is this level of security appropriate for the expected size/type of practice using the software?	Yes	Confirmed
2	i) Is each user required to have a personal password?	Optional. Users can be setup without a password if required	Confirmed
	ii) Can a report be produced detailing all current users and their authority levels?	No. It is viewable on screen by for each user with their access level.	Confirmed
3	Do the security features cover:		
	i) System access? ii) Client company access? iii) Menu access? iv) Sub menu access? v) Field access?	Yes Yes - if user groups are used Yes, to all menu items Yes Yes, some such as client/master reference code & chart plus group & last finalised year fields	Confirmed Confirmed Confirmed Confirmed Confirmed
4	Does security allow for read and read/write access to be specified separately?	No	Confirmed
5	Can the menus be tailored by the software house or an educated user so that an individual user can only access those functions they are authorised to access?	Yes - Menu items that a user can't access are automatically greyed out	Confirmed
6	Does the system provide specific levels of password control to authorise master file amendments?	Yes. Full access level control over editing of master settings.	Confirmed

Functional requirements questionnaire
Product: Sage Accounts Production Advanced Version: v14.10

Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
7	Are there specific security procedures (by passwords or warnings) over the:		
	i) Update of report formats?	Yes. User/password access only - also a confirmation prompt on updating.	Confirmed
	ii) Closing of accounting periods?	The action of balancing forward a period or year is controlled by access rights.	Confirmed
	iii) Deletion or archiving of transactions?	Yes, deletion but no archiving by access level but the posting document must still balance after the change. When a backup is taken a PDF report file is created per client.	Confirmed
8	Is there a clear indication in the system or manuals as to how the data is backed-up and recovered?	Yes. Help files detail both backup and restore procedures	Confirmed
9	How is this provided:		
	i) Within the software application?	Yes	Confirmed
	ii) Within the operating system?	No	Confirmed
	iii) Are any of these procedures automatic?	No	Confirmed
	iv) Is the user forced or prompted to back-up at certain intervals?	No	Confirmed
	v) Can the intervals be customised?	N/A	
	vi) Do the recovery procedures work?	Yes	Confirmed
10	Does the system facilitate recovery procedures in the event of system failure, (e.g. Roll back to the last completed transaction)?	No rollback but beyond backup & restore, the system has mechanisms for the customer to rebuild both the client database and individual clients including	Confirmed

Functional requirements questionnaire
Product: Sage Accounts Production Advanced Version: v14.10

Question	Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
	transactional data. Data recovered from last save.	
11 If system failure occurs part way through a manual batch entry or data import, will the operator have to re-input the batch or only the transaction being input at the time of the failure?	The user would need to re-enter the whole batch.	Confirmed
12 Are there any features provided with the software to help track down processing problems?	Yes, trial balance and final report would display an error.	Confirmed
13 Are system messages clear and are user responses properly structured to ensure that erroneous key strikes do not lead to inappropriate actions?	Yes	Confirmed
14 Is there a system log which details: i) User activity? ii) Error messages? iii) Security violations?	 No No No	 Confirmed Confirmed Confirmed
15 What are the procedures for handling dates, (e.g. 2 digit, 4 digit)? i) In the case of two digits what is the break point for the century? ii) Are dates handled consistently throughout the software?	dd/mm/yyyy If the user enters the year as a 2 digit date, the software automatically converts it to a 4 digit date Where 2 digit dates are displayed the current century is assumed. Yes	Confirmed Confirmed Confirmed
16 Web based products. What browsers (version) is the site compatible with?	N/A Sage Final Accounts Online is the only web based accounts production application by Sage.	

Functional requirements questionnaire
Product: Sage Accounts Production Advanced Version: v14.10

Question	Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
17 Web based security	N/A	
i) What methods can be used to authenticate the client computer to the server	N/A	
ii) How is data secured during transmission between the client and server? If encryption is used, please specify encryption strength and type	N/A	
iii) How is data stored securely on the server? If encryption is used, please specify encryption strength and type	N/A	
iv) What session controls are available? e.g. auto-logout after x minutes inactivity	N/A	
v) What logging features are available: a) for security b) for transaction posting	N/A	
vi) How is a web session terminated securely?	N/A	

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Question **Supplier Response** **Evaluation confirmation**

5.2 Input of transactions

It is assumed that data will be imported via electronic means from other packages or manually re-entered from a trial balance generated from another system. Unless otherwise stated, the following relates to both electronic and manual data import/input. Electronic data import is dealt with in more detail in section 10 below.

1 i) Is data input controlled by self-explanatory menu options (and are these menus application-specific)?	Yes, data postings are accessed through the "Documents Postings" section.	Confirmed
ii) What features are available to assist with processing, e.g. short cut keys, incremental posting routines and fast look-ups, tools to enter repetitive data quickly and to locate information in an intuitive way?	Hotkey shortcuts for power users Auto fill on certain fields in posting documents Nominal Code search and lookup tool in posting document	Confirmed
iii) What editing tools are available?	Cut/copy and paste are available as standard. Text and tables can be entered easily without specialised knowledge.	Confirmed
iv) Are wizards available for the set up of a new client, data import, etc?	Yes, data import from Sage 50 & CSV files with data mapping	Confirmed
2 i) Does the system provide input validation checks such as account code validation, reasonableness and validity checks?	Yes. Nominal code validation If the posting document does not balance, the user won't be allowed to save it without correcting the mistake. If the user is uncertain as to what account code to choose, they can search the chart of accounts.	Confirmed
ii) Can the user amend data on an input screen prior to update?	Yes	Confirmed
iii) For manual import, can users abort input at any	Yes	Confirmed

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Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
	stage?		
	iv) Can users return to a previous stage in transactions to make amendments?	Yes	Confirmed
	v) Does the system allow for all transactions to be entered to allow books to be written up manually?	Yes	Confirmed
	vi) Are there features to assist with bank reconciliation?	Yes	Confirmed
	vii) Can the system handle period, month, quarter accounting?	Yes	Confirmed
3	What are the control features that ensure completeness and accuracy of data input (e.g. batch control, matching, review of audit trail)? Are all input transactions (electronic and manual) subject to this control?	Journals must balance or a nominated automatic double-sided control account must be selected. There is also a full Audit Trail.	Confirmed
4	Does the system allow for batch control totals? If so:	No	Confirmed
	i) Are batches automatically numbered?	Yes	Confirmed
	ii) Are batches forced to balance before update?	Yes	Confirmed
	iii) Does the system allow the temporary halting of input of a batch to allow for queries or other activities to take priority (e.g. set up a new account)?	No	Confirmed

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Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
	iv) Is the user forced to confirm batch totals?	No. The user cannot complete the batch unless it balances	Confirmed
5	Are input errors highlighted? Are they:		
	i) Rejected and reported on screen?	Yes	Confirmed
	ii) Rejected and error reports generated?	No	Confirmed
	iii) Accepted and posted to suspense?	No	Confirmed
6	Is a detailed audit trail of all input data generated?	Yes, per client per period	Confirmed
	i) Are transactions allocated a unique reference by the system?	Yes	Confirmed
	ii) Is this trail adequately protected from deletion?	Yes, by user access. User can delete transactions but audit trail shows deleted transactions.	Confirmed
7	i) Is attempted posting of unbalanced journals rejected?	Yes	Confirmed
	ii) Does the system permit multi line journals?	Yes	Confirmed
	iii) can movements in each set of figures (accounts) generated be tracked, e.g. on movements on lead schedules and on profit reconciliation reports	Yes	Confirmed
	iv) Does the system provide for a list of adjustments from the initial input or imported trial balance figure to the final	Yes	Confirmed

Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
	set of accounts?		
8	Can automatic accruals or prepayments be generated?	No, by manual entries.	Confirmed
9	For manual entry, are all transactions adequately identified on screen as to type and as to debit or credit?	Yes	Confirmed
10	i) Can more than one-person use the software at the same time?	Yes. Only one user can work on a specific client at a time unless client set up for multi-user access	Confirmed
	ii) Can the same function be used by more than one person at the same time?	Yes, posting but not editing.	Confirmed
11	Can the software support groups of companies? Describe how this is accommodated.	Yes. Individual companies and holding company can be set-up on system. Pre-consolidation routine used to merge data from nominated subsidiaries into holding company. Inter-company balances adjusted by journal in holding company.	Confirmed
12	Summarise the VAT capabilities of the software. Specifically, does it cover:	N/A This is an accounts production software not a VAT or back office bookkeeping program.	Confirmed
	i) VAT registration number and other standing VAT data	VAT registration details are kept as are some VAT rate information.	Confirmed
	ii) VAT rates, standard, exempt, zero, etc., and to 2 decimal places	Yes	Confirmed
	iii) invoice (standard) accounting	N/A	
	iv) cash accounting	N/A	
	v) an ability to change the basis of accounting, with this being clearly flagged	N/A	

Functional requirements questionnaire
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Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
	vi) sufficient VAT codes to analyse input and output VAT	Codes provided and user can amend and add more	Confirmed
	vii) Describe the types of VAT report available, e.g. VAT return report by period (VAT 100), VAT daybook reports, EC supplies.	Detailed VAT report by VAT period	Confirmed
13	In subsequent years are the previous year's figures automatically transferred and shown as comparatives?	Yes	Confirmed

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Question	Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation

5.3 File maintenance

1	Is the creation or amendment of standing data (e.g. setting up new clients, details of auditor's offices, etc.) controlled by menu options?	Yes	Confirmed
2	Does the system provide input validation checks? (For example client validation by displaying the underlying information relating to the client codes, completeness checks and format checks, i.e. checking that the information has been keyed in correctly).	Validation/error reports produced in generation of accounts to ensure accuracy of posting. Checks depend on type of business and comprise: Ensuring database entries to trial balance i.e. Share capital; Omission errors, such as company registration numbers; Analysis errors such as maturity of debt. All batches must balance.	Confirmed
3	Are input errors highlighted? If so are they:	Yes	Confirmed
	i) Rejected and reported on screen?	Yes	Confirmed
	ii) Rejected and error reports generated?	No	Confirmed
	iii) Accepted and posted to suspense?	No	Confirmed
4	i) Does the system prevent a client record from being deleted whilst it is still active?	Yes. You cannot access the deletion screen while document is in use by any user.	Confirmed
	ii) Are there other constraints over the deletion of client records, (e.g. movement during the year, associated sub-accounts)?	No, only by access rights.	Confirmed
5	What is the format of the client code reference?	This is created by the user. Maximum number of characters is	Confirmed

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Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
		16 characters. Can be alphanumeric which can contain any combination or numbers and letters.	
6	i) Are reports available for users to identify all master file changes (e.g. changes to practice address)?	No. User access levels control changes.	Confirmed
	ii) Can reports be invoked which identify the fields that have been modified?	No	Confirmed
	iii) Would it be possible to show that these reports provide a complete record of all such changes?	No	Confirmed
	iv) Do the reports show how the fields have been modified, (e.g. before and after)?	No	Confirmed
7	If the system uses a lot of standing information that changes frequently or regularly, does the system allow for such changes to be effected through the use of parameters or tables?	Yes. Details of banks, solicitors, auditors, tax & VAT offices, etc are held in the client database.	Confirmed
8	If so, is the use of such parameters or tables adequately reported?	No	Confirmed
9	Is proper control to be exercised over changes to such parameters? If so, how, (for example, through the use of system facilities such as passwords or by inspection of appropriate reports)?	Yes. By user access levels.	Confirmed

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Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
10	i) Does the system allow selective archiving of old data on a user-defined basis?	Yes. Client reports can be permanently saved using PDF. It is also possible to backup clients by year to ensure the data is clearly identifiable and can be restored at a later date - but not an archive.	Confirmed
	ii) Can the report generator still access this data?	No. Once the data has been restored, all the reports can be run again.	Confirmed
	iii) Can archived data be restored?	Yes	Confirmed
	iv) Are there password controls over the handling (retrieval/saving etc.) of archived data?	Yes. By user access levels.	Confirmed
11	How many years/sets of accounts can be maintained for each client?	Unlimited. There is no limit to the number of years which can be kept in the application.	As stated
12	Off site working:		
	i) How does the system control the documentation whilst the user is working off site and then back in the office? ii) Is the backed up version at the office automatically updated on the user reconnecting to the main system?	There is a check in, check out function in the program which facilitates off site working. It locks the client against any amendments while off-site. The off-site client has full control of all input into the client. No. The current version in the office is manually updated when the user checks back in their file.	Confirmed Confirmed
	iii) How does the user know if another user may be working on a version off site?	The system reports who has taken the data offsite if network access is attempted. The system supervisor can manually override the check in/out.	Confirmed

Question	Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
iv) Is the backup version viewable / amendable?	Yes, only when unlocked with access level control.	Confirmed

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Question | **Supplier Response** | **Evaluation confirmation**

5.4 Processing

1	Does the system ensure that menu options or programs are executed in the correct sequence (e.g. ensures outstanding transactions are processed before period end procedures are run)?	No. The application promotes the correct sequence, but the user is free to decide the sequence	Confirmed
2	Is there an audit trail of all changes to transactions that have updated the system?	Yes	Confirmed
3	Does the system provide automatic recalculation, where appropriate, of data input?	Yes	Confirmed
4	i) Does the system warn the user when the system is out of balance?	Yes. The application cannot be out of balance due to document control, only if system crash, then error will be shown on trial balance and any accounts reports.	Confirmed
	ii) Is this check done on switching on or on system update?	No	Confirmed
	iii) What processes are in place to correct this?	The user can view proof balance, nominal balance and document balances. Client rebuild will correct the data.	Confirmed
5	Does the system include routines for recovery from abnormal termination (e.g. power cuts)?	No	Confirmed
	i) Are these automated?	N/A	
	ii) Do they rollback to the last completed transaction?	N/A	

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Question **Supplier Response** **Evaluation confirmation**

5.5 Reports

The following section relates to reports that are supplementary to the production of statutory accounts. Production of statutory accounts is dealt with in section 6 below.

1	i) Are reports/accounts prepared within the system or exported to, say, MS Word? Is this optional?	Yes. Within the application - MS Word and Adobe PDF are optional.	Confirmed
	ii) Are all reports adequately titled and dated, (e.g. report name, client name, data, period, batch, last entry number, period end, pages, numbers etc.)?	Yes	Confirmed
2	i) Do the reports provide totals where applicable?	Yes	Confirmed
	ii) Are these totals calculated or taken from a control file?	Calculated	Confirmed
	iii) Can changes be made to the accounts whilst reviewing them on screen?	No. Drill down allows the user to quickly change content and re-run the reports to see those changes.	Confirmed
	iv) Are drill down features available? If so, are these available throughout the package or only in restricted places?	Yes. Available on all reports throughout the application.	Confirmed
3	Is it clear when the report has ended, (totals or end markers)?	Yes - contents page shows all page numbers. No end of report markers	Confirmed
4	Can reports be saved in electronic format?	Yes, PDF and Word	Confirmed
	ii) Are such files adequately protected from deletion or amendment?	No	Confirmed

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Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
5	i) Is a report generator provided as part of the software or as an option associated with it?	Format editor integrated within the application.	Confirmed
	ii) What level of knowledge is required to use the report generator, (e.g. beginner, regular user, expert)?	Beginner	Confirmed
	iii) Can the report generating facility make use of user-defined fields, (including external fields)?	Yes, mainly text and tables.	Confirmed
6	Does the report generator cover all value fields, (e.g. prior year etc.)?	Not in general, only for expert users.	Confirmed
7	i) Are all the parameters or selection criteria shown on reports generated?	Yes. By period and year.	Confirmed
	ii) Is there an option for reports to exclude nil balances?	Automatically excluded.	Confirmed
8	Can screen layouts, reports and transaction formats be easily adapted to users' requirements?	Yes. Can hide columns in data entry screens and can make some changes to reports. There are many report options to customise the reports.	Confirmed
9	Can a hard copy be produced of all screen enquiries?	Yes	Confirmed
10	Can transaction files for all previous periods of the year be retained in the system to permit enquiries and reports?	Yes	Confirmed

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Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
11	i) Can all reports be reproduced after the period end?	Yes. The user also has the option to amend the reports and these amendments can also be prevented.	Confirmed
	ii) How does the system control change where accounts are reprinted at a later stage?	When final accounts are generated, they are automatically saved as a PDF file.	Confirmed
12	Are reports of all master file changes automatically generated or stored for later printing?	No	Confirmed
13	Can full lists of master file information be produced?	Yes, not tables.	Confirmed
14	i) Are all transactions on all reports individually identifiable?	Yes. This has been included in most reports, where it made sense to.	Confirmed
	ii) Do the reports show whether items are debit or credit, and do they give sufficient narrative and coding to enable cross referencing?	Yes	Confirmed
15	Can the system produce all requisite reports for its stated use, e.g.	Per client, per period.	Confirmed
	i) full audit trail, overall and per individual accounts	Yes, individual accounts through drill-down.	Confirmed
	ii) trial balance	Yes	Confirmed
	iii) management accounts	Yes	Confirmed
	iv) statutory accounts	Yes	Confirmed
	v) sole trader, partnership, charity	Yes	Confirmed
	vi) abbreviated accounts	Yes, except for LLPs	Confirmed
	vii) cash flow reports	Yes	Confirmed
	viii) budget reports	No	Confirmed
	ix) variance reports	Yes	Confirmed
	x) ratio analysis, figures and graphical	Yes	Confirmed

Functional requirements questionnaire
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Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
	xi) journals xii) year end journals xiii) lead schedules xiv) working papers	Yes Yes Yes No	Confirmed Confirmed Confirmed Confirmed
16	Are reports produced marked by version number, so the user can keep track of amendments?	No. Date can be printed on reports.	Confirmed
17	i) Are there standard templates for reports?	Yes	Confirmed
	ii) Can these be amended to user firm standards?	Yes, by an expert user.	Confirmed
	iii) Can these be amended per individual client?	Yes	Confirmed
	iv) How are statutory accounts upgrades handled and how do these affect user made changes?	Auto updates and new installations include the compliance updates required. Changes are made at a master level - can be filtered through to clients that make use of the masters.	Confirmed
	v) Do standard reporting options give sufficient flexibility to tailor individual reports?	Yes	Confirmed
	vi) Do these reporting facilities permit multiple key-sorting, variable report intervals and optional selection parameters?	Yes, but no key-sorting.	Confirmed
18	Are standard reports always produced, even when they are nil returns?	Yes. The user stipulates what reports they wish to run	Confirmed
19	Does the trial balance report show balances carried and brought forward and totals	No	Confirmed

Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
	of posted transactions?		
20	Does the report generator have the facility to scroll up and down when output to screen?	Yes	Confirmed
21	Can all reports be run without the need for period-end procedures to be initiated?	Yes	Confirmed
22	Does the report generator allow print previews of all reports?	Yes. On screen preview of printed reports	Confirmed
23	Can reports be exported for use with other software (e.g. MS Excel or Word)? Can these be sent as an attachment to e-mail?	Yes Word integration, also can be saved as an RTF file and saved to PDF. All can be sent to e-mail or Sage One Collaborate which is a secure messaging service between accountants and their clients.	Confirmed
24	How is cross-referencing handled? Will the cross-reference take the user automatically to a schedule, opening the relevant working paper?	No, shows file reference but no direct link.	Confirmed
25	Does the system link to any other application such as audit and taxation software? If so, is there seamless integration?	Yes Integration with the entire Sage Practice Suite and other 3rd party tax and audit applications.	Confirmed

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Question | **Supplier Response** | **Evaluation confirmation**

5.6 Statutory reporting and accounts production

1	Does the system allow for the production of full and abbreviated statutory accounts?	Yes, user specifies.	Confirmed
2	Does the supplier make statutory account formats available? If so: i) Does the system take into account all FRS and SAAP requirements?	Yes FRS 102 and companies act 2006.	Confirmed Confirmed
	ii) How does the system cater for updates to these requirements on a continual basis, (e.g. as part of an auto update facility over the Internet) or on an occasional basis, (e.g. on disk sent by supplier)?	User sent details of any changes weekly and user decides whether to Auto update or not. New installations include the compliance updates required.	Confirmed
	iii) Will users be notified of changes before an update is applied automatically?	Yes	Confirmed
	iv) Can the user customise/amend the statutory accounts formats?	Yes	Confirmed
3	Can users set up their own statutory accounts formats "from scratch"? How much training is required to enable users to effectively carry out such changes?	Yes Users are advised not to do from scratch unless significant time is taken and the user has the correct expertise. Extensive training from Sage can be provided.	Confirmed
4	How does the system cater for standard company information (e.g. registered office, company name, directors, secretary, auditors)?	All standing data is entered into the client database including practice wide tables.	Confirmed

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Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
	Does the system link this to other related output (e.g. Annual Returns)? Does the system have the facility to link to include all necessary information such as shareholder names and addresses, etc.?	Depending on what information is required for various reports, the relevant information is output.	Confirmed
5	Will the information above be available for incorporation into additional narratives in the notes to the accounts?	No	Confirmed
6	Can each company's accounts requirements be customised on the following bases:		
	i) Type of company e.g. Limited, Sole Trader, Plc	Yes, not PLCs but includes charities, pensions, partnerships, etc.	Confirmed
	ii) Size of company to determine disclosure requirements on: a) Turnover b) Average employees	 Yes, user specifies Yes, user specifies	 Confirmed Confirmed
7	Will the system suggest tailored disclosure based on the information input?	Yes	Confirmed
8	Can the detail of the information in 6 above be retrieved from the nominal ledger balances?	Yes, some.	Confirmed
9	Does the system take into account audit exemption policies?	Yes, user decides.	Confirmed
10	Will the system prepare standard reports, e.g.	Yes	Confirmed

Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
	directors and audit reports, based on the information contained in the system for the company and can these reports be tailored to each company's information?		
11	i) Will the system select the notes to be included in the statutory accounts according to the appropriate disclosure requirements as determined by the company type, (e.g. Plc, medium sized company, etc.)? ii) Are these notes automatically generated? If so, are manual amendments possible?	Yes Yes, with manual amendment possible.	Confirmed Confirmed
12	Does the system take into account variations in accounting policies? If so how are these dealt with?	Yes. Through report pads, where the user can specify their own text.	Confirmed
13	Will the system auto number the pages depending on pages in accounts used?	Yes	Confirmed
14	Will the system generate consolidated accounts and individual company accounts for groups of companies?	Yes, as separate group clients	Confirmed
15	Will the system automatically prepare audit lead schedules?	Lead schedules will be prepared as and when that specific report is generated. Per client, per period.	Confirmed
16	i) Can the system generate both management and statutory accounts?	Yes	Confirmed

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Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
	ii) Can the system deal with varying periods for monthly accounts (e.g. 4/5 weekly, calendar month, etc.)	Yes, up to 19 periods per year	Confirmed
17	What interface / report generator is used to produce the final accounts (e.g. Word, Crystal Reports)?	Proprietary reporting engine built by Sage.	

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Question | **Supplier Response** | **Evaluation confirmation**

5.7 Performance of requisite functions

1	Can data from all accounting periods be accessed at any given moment (i.e. without the need to restore backups)?	Yes	Confirmed
2	i) Does the system allow posting to more than one accounting period at a time?	No	Confirmed
	ii) Is it possible to allocate transactions to:		
	a) future periods?	Yes	Confirmed
	b) a previously closed period or year?	Yes. Periods are not closed but can be blocked off and reopened under access controls.	Confirmed
	iii) If the system allows posting to previous or future accounting periods or years, does it:		
	a) Flag/warn the user that it is occurring?	No	Confirmed
	b) Revise subsequent periods accordingly?	Yes. The user would need to roll period forward.	Confirmed
	c) Will transactions outside the current period be adequately reported and accounted for?	Yes	Confirmed
3	i) What is the maximum value of transactions and of totals that can be handled by the system?	Up to £99,999,999,999 can be entered as a single transaction, no limit to total reported value as accounts can be rounded to millions, thousands and exact pence, if required.	As stated

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	Question	Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
	ii) What is the maximum number of transactions that can be handled by the system?	Per client – 999 transactions per document and 999 documents per period. Therefore for 1 period per year the limit is 998,001.	As stated
4	Are the control features provided by the software adequate to support effective user controls?	Yes	Confirmed
	i) Automatic dating of posting transactions?	Yes. Can be overridden by the user.	Confirmed
	ii) Identification of user id or program generating (i.e. the source) the transactions?	Yes, including document type. The last user to edit the document is held.	Confirmed
5	What drill down features are available on the system?	Drill down is available throughout and will settle either on transactional information or balance information depending on what data there is. Trial balance drill down in to the balances Format drill down in to the reporting engine Error message drilldown to directly take the user to the places to resolve any issues with the accounts.	Confirmed

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Question **Supplier Response** **Evaluation confirmation**

5.8 Currency facilities

1	Is multi-currency processing available? Is conversion to sterling automatic?	No, conversion only applies to subsidiaries during consolidation.	Confirmed
2	What are the currency capacities?		
	i) What are the maximum and minimum exchange rates?	No practical limit.	As stated
	ii) What is the maximum number of currencies?	No practical limit.	As stated
3	What currency information is held?		
	i) Currency code / description	None, enter currency symbol.	Confirmed
	ii) Country	None	Confirmed
	iii) Currency rate table	None	Confirmed
	iv) Date rates effective	None	Confirmed
	v) Previous rates held	None	Confirmed
4	Currency processing	Only single currency per client.	Confirmed
	i) Can the user manually over ride the currency calculation?	N/A	
	ii) Are gains or losses on currency calculations automatically processed?	N/A	
	iii) Can the user override the calculation /processing of currency gains and losses?	N/A	

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Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
	iv) Can the user define the treatment of foreign exchange gains/losses (e.g. the nominal code to write to)?	Yes	Confirmed
	v) Can varying daily rates per currency be maintained in the system?	N/A	
5	User controls		
	i) Can the base currency be selected? Can any currency other than £ sterling be the base currency?	Yes. Any single currency per client.	Confirmed
	ii) Can the user override the exchange rates when entering data?	N/A	
	iii) Can the user change the exchange rates per company entered?	N/A	
	iv) Is there a restriction on a company's accounts to a single selected currency?	Yes. Except for subsidiaries which are converted to base currency during consolidation.	Confirmed
	v) How does the software treat currency revaluations relating to:	Manually posted through a journal.	Confirmed
	- Ledgers (debtors/creditors) - Monetary assets / liabilities - Nominal ledger accounts	See above.	Confirmed
6	Currency input		
	i) Does the system prevent the deletion of an active currency?	N/A	

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Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
	ii) Does the system prevent use of duplicate currency codes?	N/A	
7	How does the system handle exchange differences?	Manual postings	Confirmed
8	Will the system handle and print the € sign?	Yes	Confirmed
9	Economic and Monetary Union:		
	What approach will the supplier take towards handling the EURO?	The application can handle EURO today.	Confirmed
	Consider requirements: - before the UK joins the EMU; - transition period, i.e. dual currency in the UK; - post the transition period.	As always, Sage will work with the standard setters to ensure they correctly understand the legislation and work with their customers to design a simple to use solution.	Noted

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Question **Supplier Response** **Evaluation confirmation**

5.9 User documentation

The following questions relate to systems with both hard copy manuals and on-screen systems.

No printed manuals, guides supplied on disc or user can download videos and newsletters.

1	Is the manual clearly laid out and understandable?	Yes	Confirmed
2	Is the manual comprehensive and accurate?	Yes	Confirmed
3	Is there an index to the manual?	PDF files have table of contents and help has index and search facilities.	Confirmed
4	Is it easy to locate specific topics in the manual when required?	Yes	Confirmed
5	Is it easy to follow through all procedures in the manual?	Yes	Confirmed
6	i) Does the manual include:		
	a) a tutorial section?	No, but system supplied with demo data.	Confirmed
	b) a guide to basic functions?	Yes	Confirmed
	c) pictures of screens?	Yes	Confirmed
	d) completed examples included in the manual?	Yes, with demo data.	Confirmed
	e) specific “error correction” procedures?	No	Confirmed
7	Does the documentation clearly specify the actions to be taken by users at each important stage of processing?	Yes	Confirmed

Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
8	i) Are help screens available relating to the task in hand? (i.e. context sensitive help).	Yes, context sensitive help in some areas.	Confirmed
	ii) Do these provide on-line instructions on how to use particular features of the software?	Yes	Confirmed
	iii) Can they be edited or prepared by the user?	No	Confirmed
9	Will the software supplier make the detailed program documentation (e.g. file definitions for third party links) available to the user, either directly or by deposit with a third party?	No	Confirmed

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Question **Supplier Response** **Evaluation confirmation**

5.10 Efficiency

1	Are the various functions of the system menu-driven, or otherwise easy to initiate? Is there a good response time in the initiation of functions?	Yes, menu driven, quick links and short key accessible.	Confirmed
2	Is data entry easily repeated if similar to previous entry?	Yes	Confirmed
3	i) Does the system prevent access to a record while it is being updated? Is the locking at file or record level?	Yes, locking on the client at transaction level.	Confirmed
	ii) Does the system allow for the running of reports whilst records are being updated?	Yes	Confirmed
4	Does the system retain a log of file updates until the next occasion on which the relevant information is reported or the relevant file used in a regular control procedure?	No	Confirmed
5	Can regular reports be easily duplicated if required?	Yes, unless data has been changed.	Confirmed
6	Does the system warn the user when space is becoming short?	No	
7	Does the system automatically download updates for system, e.g. internet?	Yes. The user has the choice to allow it to do so. Mainly for legislative format changes.	Confirmed

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Question	Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation

5.11 Integration facilities

1 i) What accounting packages interface into the system?	Sage 50 Accounts, Excel or CSV files.	Confirmed
ii) Is this on a trial balance or full transaction basis?	Both, TB only from CSV files.	Confirmed
iii) Can multi departments and periods be imported?	Yes to periods, not automatically to departments, can allocate to cost centres.	Confirmed
2 Will the system allow for the mapping of a client's nominal code structure, so the reports produced will have their codes on it?	Yes	Confirmed
3 Is the software compatible with XML standards? If so in what respect (input / output / other)? What other input / output (e.g. Excel, Word) is possible?	Yes to iXBL Input / output with Excel Output with Word	Confirmed
4 XBRL i) Can the software output tagged accounts in iXBRL (inline XBRL) format?	Yes	Confirmed
ii) Can the product hold multiple taxonomies?	Yes	Confirmed
If YES: Please specify which taxonomies are held e.g. - UK GAAP, - IFRS, - Any industry-specific taxonomy extensions.	* Limited company (UK Companies Act individual accounts) ◆ Micro-Entity ◆ FRSSE 2008 ◆ FRSSE 2015 ◆ Current UK GAAP ◆ New FRS 102 * Limited company (UK Companies Act group accounts) ◆ Current UK GAAP * LLPs	Confirmed

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Question	Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
	◆ SORP 2010 * Charities ◆ UK Companies Act 2006 / SORP 2005 * Pensions Schemes ◆ UK Pensions Act 2004 / SORP 2007 * Clubs ◆ UK registered ◆ UK unregistered * Doctors * Farms ◆ UK Unincorporated ◆ UK Incorporated Sage state they regularly update the supported compliance in line with the latest legislation and reporting standards.	
5 What controls exist over the interface routines?	User access levels	Confirmed
6 Can definable links to spreadsheets be created?	No	Confirmed
7 Can external programs connect to the tables through an ODBC driver?	Yes, using Excel	Confirmed
8 Can the software be linked to other reporting packages (e.g. word processing, graphics, financial modelling) to provide alternative display and reporting facilities?	Yes, Word	Confirmed
9 With which other business application software will the system link? e.g.		
▪ payroll ▪ time/fees ▪ fixed assets ▪ document management systems	Integrating with the complete Sage Practice Suite: Sage Corporation Tax Sage Taxation Sage Practice Solution	Confirmed

Question	Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
▪ Audit ▪ Taxation	Plus some other 3rd party Taxation products	

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Question	Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation

5.12 Support and maintenance

1	How is the software sold / supported, i.e. direct from suppliers, via value added resellers (VARs) or both.	Direct from Sage and VAR - Datel	Confirmed
2	Do suppliers / VARs go through an accreditation process? If so, please describe, including the time periods between re-accreditation.	Yes, VAR - Datel who offer support have regular and comprehensive training.	Confirmed
3	In the intervening period, how are suppliers / VARs monitored?	Yes, supplied with documentation.	Confirmed
4	Will the supplier or dealer provide corrections to the software? Are bug fixes free of charge - for how long?	Sage continue to develop compliance and application enhancements. Updates / bug fixes are included during the life of the licence period	Confirmed
5	i) will the supplier or dealer provide general enhancements to the software? ii) Will these be provided automatically? iii) Are they provided free of charge?	Yes. Sage provide all enhancements. Yes – permanently provided user has a service level agreement. Yes – permanently provided user has a service level agreement.	Confirmed Confirmed Confirmed
6	Will the supplier, dealer provide "hot line" support to assist with immediate problem solving? If so, at what cost? At what times is this support be available?	Customer support is provided through Sage and VAR - Datel. Usually normal office hours. As part of the licence 9am-6pm Monday-Friday	Confirmed
7	Will the supplier provide technical updates when statutory requirements change?	Yes	Confirmed

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Question		Supplier Response	Evaluation confirmation
8	Describe the education, training and related support available to the user with this product.	To maintain efficiency, Sage's on and offline Training and Professional Services will help install and support a client's software. These include: Individual and bespoke training programs • Webinar sessions • Group training • Professional data merges • Remote and on-site installation services Unlimited telephone, email and online support is included in the subscription to the software	Confirmed
9	Can the supplier, dealer or some other organisation provide all the hardware, software and maintenance requirements of the user?	Third party. Sage provides the software and no hardware.	Confirmed
10	Is there nationwide support: ▪ telephone ▪ modem link/WWW ▪ local dealers/support	 Yes Yes Yes, Sage have professional services	 Confirmed Confirmed Confirmed
11	Is a warranty offered in respect of specification of the system?	No	Confirmed
12	Will the software supplier/dealer make the program source code available to the user, either directly or by deposit with a third party (Escrow)?	No	Confirmed
13	Are there any unduly restrictive conditions in the licence for the software?	No	Confirmed