

A photograph of a woman with short, wavy grey hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt, looking towards a man whose back is to the camera. The man is wearing a white shirt. They appear to be in a professional setting, possibly an office, with a laptop visible in the foreground. The background is softly blurred, showing indoor plants and a window.

WHY USE AN INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL ADVISER?

Your Abacus adviser's primary motivation is to help you create, manage and protect your wealth

With revolutionary thinking - we can achieve your goals together

The significance of this statement is often overlooked, as is the role of your Independent Financial Adviser. You should think of your Abacus Adviser as a money councillor, or as a conductor who is responsible for orchestrating your financial health and managing your financial plan.

Financial planning is not simply the act of buying financial products like pensions or ISAs, at its best it is a continuing process that will help you to make prudent financial decisions that enable you to achieve your life goals.

A financial planning journey may start with writing appropriate Wills to safeguard your family or property, arranging protection for your family should you find yourself unable to work due to ill health or if you were to die prematurely, or it might involve structuring your capital to provide a sustainable future income or arranging the tax efficient gifting to the generations of your family that follow you.

Whatever your goals, objectives or needs your Abacus adviser will be there to help you navigate the journey.

Our team of financial advisers always work with integrity and vigilance

To ensure your interests are at the heart of everything we do



A PLAN TO SUIT YOUR NEEDS

3 levels of advice to choose from:

Premier - our gold standard complete advice service with full access to your Abacus Adviser, and an annual suitability assessment review which may include 'cashflow planning' at and in retirement.

Classic - a full initial advice service retaining access to your Abacus adviser and an Annual update with valuation. This service provides passive administration and ad-hoc fee-based reviews.

Transactional - a task based advisory service without review or support.

Our Client Agreement explains in more detail about all our levels of service. Ask an Adviser for your copy.

ADVICE WE PROVIDE

There are different types of financial advice available to you. The type of adviser chosen will affect the advice you are given:

Independent (adjective) ;

Free from outside control; not subject to another's authority.

Independent adviser - an Independent Financial Adviser will provide you with Impartial advice and is able to consider all types of retail investment products that could meet your needs and objectives and recommend the most appropriate.

Because an independent adviser will consider products from all firms across the market, and will give unbiased and unrestricted advice based on a fair and comprehensive analysis of the whole of the market without restriction, and because you're protected if things go wrong, we believe independent advice is the premier model of financial advice.

Other professional advisers such as solicitors and accountants are unable to provide regulated financial advice unless they have an advisory arm in their business.



THE ALTERNATIVES

Restricted (adjective) ;

limited in extent, information, number, scope, or action.

Restricted adviser - a restricted adviser can only recommend certain products, product providers, or both. The adviser must be explicit about the nature of the restriction.

Either the adviser works with one product provider and only considers their products or the adviser considers products from several but not all product providers. Also, the adviser can recommend one or some types of products, but not all retail investment products. This means the adviser has chosen to focus on a particular market, such as pensions, and considers products from all providers within that market.

	Independent	Restricted	Guided
Must consider all retail investment products	YES	NO	NO
Must consider products from all product providers	YES	NO	NO
Can focus on a particular market	YES*	YES	NO
Paid for via fees rather than commissions	YES	YES	NO
Protection if things go wrong	YES	YES	NO

* Once that particular market has been identified as suitable

Other types of 'advice' - a service where you are provided with general information only is known as 'guidance' rather than 'advice'. This is sometimes also called an 'information only' or 'non-advised' service and means that nothing has been recommended or advised upon. Typically if you buy an investment product in this way you won't have access to the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) or Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) if things go wrong.





WHY USE ABACUS?

Our regulator, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), suggests asking a number of questions of your chosen adviser:

Suggested questions:	ABACUS
Are all the firms Independent Financial Advisers regulated by the FCA?	YES
Are all the firms Independent Financial Advisers qualified to QCF Level 4 standard?	YES
Do all the firms Independent Financial Advisers have a Statement of Professional Standing?	YES
Are all the firms Independent Financial Advisers paid via fees?*	YES
Do all the firms Independent Financial Advisers offer several methods of fee payment?	YES
Do all the firms Independent Financial Advisers undertake an assessment of financial needs?	YES
Do all the firms Independent Financial Advisers evaluate individual risk tolerances?	YES
Do all the firms Independent Financial Advisers offer a face-to-face service?	YES
Do all the firms Independent Financial Advisers offer an ongoing review service?	YES
Is the advice given by the firms Independent Financial Advisers protected by FOS and FSCS?	YES
Is the advice given by the firms Independent Financial Advisers safeguarded by PI insurance?	YES
Do all the firms Independent Financial Advisers have locum arrangements in place?	YES

*Some protection products may offer a commission option.

We continually strive in the pursuit of excellence in everything we do to provide a first class service, which is evidenced by our client satisfaction levels and the volume of onward referrals to family, friends and colleagues of our clients. Your best interests are at the core of everything that we do, and your allocated adviser does on your behalf, and we believe it's the ability of our advisers to build strong relationships with clients that is key to our success.

ABACUS ADVISERS

All our advisers are highly trained and experienced.

Each Abacus Independent Financial Adviser is qualified to the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) Level 4 as a minimum standard. This means that they have undertaken professional qualifications equivalent to that of the first year of a university degree. In addition, each adviser undergoes an ongoing assessment of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) which provides them with an annual Statement of Professional Standing (SPS).

Furthermore, a number of Abacus advisers hold additional qualifications in subjects such as Taxation and Trusts, Pension Transfers, Equity Release and Long Term Care Planning. Abacus is committed to increase the professional standing of its advisers through regular training and further professional examinations.

Your Abacus adviser is duty bound to treat customer fairly, indeed all our advisers are subject to continuous monitoring to ensure they excel in respect of this duty of care.



TECHNOLOGY

All our advisers use sophisticated technology to manage your personal information in a secure and efficient manner. Much of this information can be shared with you and we can allow you secure access to valuable material regarding your personal financial plans.

FEES

You will pay for our advisory services on the basis of:
**an initial advice fee, an implementation fee, or
a fee for an ongoing service.**

The cost of our fees and the method of payment*, regardless of your preferred system of payment, will always be agreed before we commence any work on your behalf, and agreed in writing using clear and concise language, which is not misleading.

Fees may be paid for as follows*:	Option
Via a cheque or direct payment	YES
Via a deduction from the amount you invest, paid by the provider	YES
Via a combination of the methods outlined above	YES

* For a limited number of contracts, such as life protection, the provider will pay Abacus a commission.

In our experience, clients prefer to pay a direct fee for initial advice and implementation, but prefer fees for ongoing advice to be taken from their investment. We've also found that some clients prefer paying fixed fees for more complex advice or for large investment values.





WHAT DOES AN ABACUS ADVISER DO?

The key role for your Abacus adviser is one of relationship management - they will build and nurture a relationship with you over many years. This will give you the best chance to identify and realise your goals. Your Abacus adviser can help you make important decisions about your finances but you will benefit more if you are prepared and you've thought about what you are trying to achieve.

Where are you now?

The starting point of your relationship with your Abacus adviser will involve the gathering of information about your finances – your adviser will need to understand your current financial position and scrutinise the financial products you already own. This is because your adviser will need to build a picture of where you currently are.

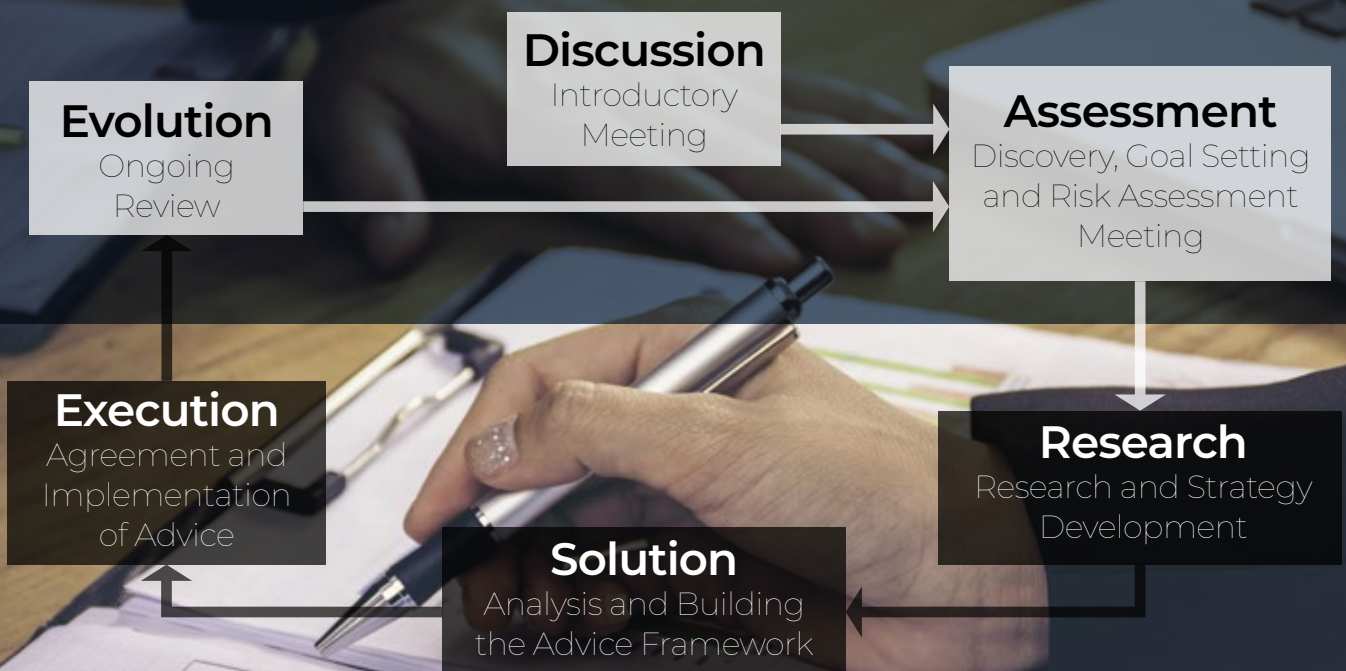
Where do you want to be?

The next stage is to identify your goals and objectives, analyse how you feel about taking risks with your money, and quantify the level of investment risk you'll need to consider. This is where your adviser might model the future using assumptions and a cash flow simulation - the purpose of this approach is to measure the likelihood of achieving your goals and tweaking your expectations or approach to risk accordingly.

How are you going to get there?

This is what your Abacus adviser does – they will help you to understand your objectives and formulate a plan detailing how you could meet those objectives. It is more likely that you will reach your goals if you have a clear plan, if you measure your progress against your plan, and if you perform regular finetuning as time passes and your plan evolves.

The Abacus advice process:





YOUR ABACUS ADVISER:

- is an Independent Financial Adviser
- is highly regulated, highly qualified and highly skilled
- is bound to rigorous ethical standards
- has access to cutting edge financial technology
- will agree your fees in a clear and transparent manner before any work is started is committed to creating, managing and protecting your wealth

What does this mean for you?

- You will receive advice without restrictions to advice area, product or provider
- You will benefit from your adviser's skill and training
- You are in the safe hands of a professional with high ethical principles
- Your personal information is safe and secure
- You will know what type of service to expect, and the level of fees that you will pay for that service
- You will benefit from the attention of your Abacus adviser and, if you have opted for our ongoing service, from regular structured reviews of your finances



OUR SECOND OPINION SERVICE

In addition to our principal advisory services we also provide a second opinion service (SOS) - we'll check your existing plans.

Volatility in financial markets due to many outside influences - such as political change and terrorism - has left many investors worried, so the SOS has been designed to determine whether the level of investment risk you're taking is appropriate, whether your financial plan and investment strategy are/and will remain suitable, and even whether your existing advisers seem to be engaged, aligned and working with you towards your unique goals.



 **abacus**

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