

Standard Life is the only platform provider to hold and retain an A rating from AKG

For the fourth time running, our Wrap platform has achieved an A rating from AKG. We're also pleased to announce that our Elevate platform has also retained an A rating. This means the overall financial strength of our platforms is officially rated as 'Superior' in August 2020.



Who are AKG and what do they do?

AKG is an independent organisation that provides assessment, ratings, information and market assistance to the financial services industry. For over 25 years, AKG's core focus has been assessing financial strength with ratings and reports designed to support adviser due diligence requirements. AKG's ratings are designed to be accessible and allow for a direct comparison between providers.

AKG's reports are also widely used by leading third party intermediary consultancy firms and selection systems, such as the lang cat and Defaqto.

Why is it important for firms to carry out annual due diligence assessments?

Against the backdrop of an ongoing global pandemic, regularly assessing financial strength has never been more important. Advisory firms must have confidence that their chosen provider has the resilience and resources to meet unforeseen challenges and deliver a consistent and reliable client experience.

Deeper evidence of robust platform selection is now required by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) as detailed in the Assessing Suitability: Research and Due Diligence of Products guidance. This regulatory focus highlights the need to conduct an annual due diligence assessment that includes a review of financial strength.

What factors does AKG consider?

AKG assesses a company's ability to sustain their operation and continue to meet the evolving needs of advisers and their clients. A mix of qualitative and quantitative criteria is used when assessing the financial strength of a platform provider. These include:

- Strategic direction and drivers
- Profitability, revenue growth and liquidity position
- Operational, IT and administrative capability
- Risk and governance processes

The value of investments can go down as well as up, and your clients could get back less than was paid in.

Ratings Scale	A	B+	B	B-	C	D
	Superior	Very Strong	Strong	Satisfactory	Weak	Very Weak

What factors secured the A rating for our platforms?

Standard Life Wrap and Elevate platforms both achieved an A rating for these five key reasons.

1. Scale	2. Access to capital	3. Maturity	4. Strategic logic	5. Resilience
Our capability to drive economies of scale by industrialising operational and governance processes	Clear commitment within the Standard Life Aberdeen group to invest in our platforms	A longstanding track record of delivery and support for advisory firms and their clients	A clear vision of the direction and role of platforms within the Standard Life Aberdeen group	Ability to adapt and meet unforeseen challenges posed by global pandemic

We have demonstrated the key ingredients required to achieve an independent assessment of 'Superior' financial strength.



Guy Vanner
Managing Director, AKG

“Standard Life’s Wrap and Elevate platforms have achieved an A rating by demonstrating the core fundamentals of stability, consistency and resilience. This sits alongside the ability to continue to invest in the areas required. These factors are front of mind and important to advisers and their clients at this time.”

How do I access AKG’s financial strength ratings?

AKG’s financial strength ratings can be viewed free of charge by registering for access to the [AKG Rating Portal](#) and the ratings also feature in third party selection systems and resources.

How do I request the Wrap and Elevate AKG reports?

You can request these independent AKG assessment reports through your usual Standard Life contact.