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# Overview of class actions in the English courts

## Handy Client Guide to Class Actions in England and Wales

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Class actions are an increasing area of risk for corporate clients in the UK, with growth fuelled in part by the increasing activity of claimant firms and litigation funders in this area.

Unlike the well-known class action regimes in the US and Australia, most class or collective actions in the English courts proceed on an opt-in basis, meaning that individual claimants must take positive steps to join the action.

The key procedural mechanism is the group litigation order (GLO), but others are available, including a collective proceedings order (CPO) in the Competition Appeal Tribunal which can be either opt-in or opt-out.

For more information see these links:

[Available class action procedures](#)

[Types of claim](#)

[Funding of class actions](#)

[History of class action reform](#)

“The new procedures should... achieve a balance between the normal rights of claimants and defendants, to pursue and defend cases individually, and the interests of a group of parties to litigate the action as a whole in an effective manner.”

*Lord Woolf, Access to Justice Final Report, July 2006*

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### *Class Actions in England and Wales*

For an in-depth discussion of how class actions are litigated in the English courts, see our new textbook ***Class Actions in England and Wales***, written by leading lawyers from Herbert Smith Freehills and published by Sweet & Maxwell in June 2018.

