

Supporting customers with characteristics of vulnerability

Handelsbanken's approach to customer care aligns to the FCA's principle for supporting vulnerable customers as outlined:

The FCA define a vulnerable customer as someone who, due to their personal circumstances, is especially susceptible to harm, particular when a firm is not acting with appropriate levels of care.

[FG21/1: Guidance for firms on the fair treatment of vulnerable customers \(fca.org.uk\)](https://www.fca.org.uk/guidance/fg21-1)

Handelsbanken recognises that all of our existing and prospective customers could, at any time, face personal circumstances which may result in them being susceptible to harm. The handbook of our culture states: 'Our advice must always be what is best for the customer, not what is most profitable for the Bank at the time.' Our treatment of vulnerable customers is guided by relevant sections within that handbook; our expectation is that our vulnerable customers will experience outcomes as good as those for other customers and receive consistently fair treatment.

We follow the general principle that customers shall take responsibility for their choices and decisions, whilst acknowledging that some customers with characteristics of vulnerability, may need additional support in order to achieve this. We understand that characteristics of vulnerability may result in customers having additional or different needs, which may impact their ability and/or willingness to make decisions and choices or to represent their own interests.

Handelsbanken reviews vulnerable customer outcomes and treatments through its internal governance structure, in order to evaluate whether customer outcomes align with our internal policies.

We have tools in place to help identify and then assist in achieving good outcomes for vulnerable customers, including:

- All Handelsbanken employees in the UK are required to complete annual mandatory training as part of our awareness and development programme
- Handelsbanken has a suite of instructions designed to support our staff to make adjustments to meet the needs of our vulnerable customers
- Where customer vulnerability is identified, we will consider how best to accommodate the customer's situation and be flexible with our approach. Each case will be considered individually and solutions will be appropriate to the customer's needs.

As a broker, you must comply with your obligations to treat vulnerable customers fairly in accordance with regulatory expectation and our corporate values set in this document. In order to achieve this and support the Bank during an application, we require you to outline, in a written format, the prospective customer's characteristic(s) of vulnerability, how this impacts them, and what support is needed to help.

Please contact us if you need any further information about how we support the needs of all our customers or need further support regarding an individual customer circumstance.