# **eReturns**

Significant Third Party Quick Reference Guide



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## The basics

#### **Common icons**

Icon	What it does
3	This is the help icon. If you click on this icon, further information will be displayed.
×	This is the close icon. Clicking on this icon will close the help text that is displayed.
	This is the annotation icon. Where this icon appears, you can record further information. Any information you record in an annotation will be presented on the final return as a footnote.

#### **Useful information**

#### Saving

eReturns automatically saves while you are working. You do not need to remember to click save while working in eReturns.

# **Getting Started**

## Logging in to eReturns

#### **Getting Credentials**

Financial controllers of significant third parties will have a username and password issued to them by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) when they are appointed financial controller, or with their obligation letter. Obligation letters are sent after 1 July each year.

Where a person has become the financial controller of a significant third party and wants to gain access to eReturns, contact Funding and Disclosure on 02 6271 4552 or email <a href="mailto:fad@aec.gov.au">fad@aec.gov.au</a>.

#### Logging in

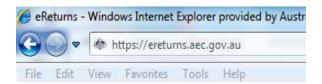
eReturns credentials will appear like this in the obligation letter:

User name: AdminTestParty
Password: 2Pm3im87

eReturns credentials consist of a user name and one-time password. On the first log-in to eReturns you will be prompted to change the password. There is also an option to change the user name. It is important that eReturns credentials are kept secure and not shared with anyone else. Financial controllers who have credentials are responsible for returns lodged via eReturns using those credentials.

#### **Getting Started**

eReturns can be accessed at https://ereturns.aec.gov.au/.





eReturns is a secure website which means you must type 'https://' at the beginning of the URL.

The eReturns webpage displays the following login screen.



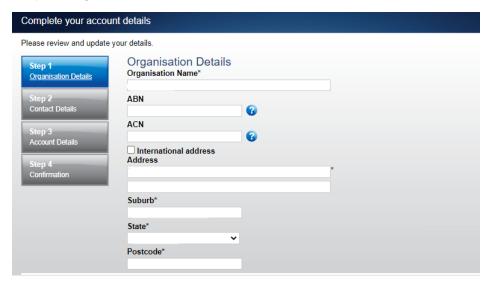
Enter the user name and password provided in the obligation letter and click 'Login'.

#### On first login

The first time you login to eReturns you will be prompted to verify your details. To navigate through the eReturns wizard use the 'Back' and 'Next' buttons at the bottom right of the screen.



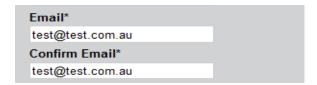
**Step 1: Organisation Details** 



Significant third party details cannot be edited. If the details are not correct you will need to contact Funding and Disclosure on 02 6271 4552 or email <a href="mailto:fad@aec.gov.au">fad@aec.gov.au</a>. Click 'Next' to continue to Contact details.

#### **Step 2: Contact Details**

Please ensure you enter your email address as eReturns uses email for validation and to send you copies of any returns you lodge.



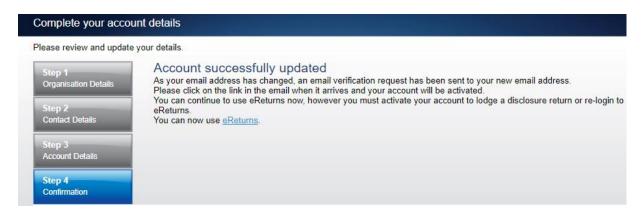
#### **Step 3: Account Details**

On this screen you may update the user name. The first time you login you will be required to enter a new password and provide a secret question and answer and a PIN. The secret information will be used by Funding and Disclosure staff to verify your identity if you need to contact the Help Desk.



Once you have completed the account details screen, click 'Finish'.

#### **Step 4: Confirmation**



eReturns will automatically generate a verification email and send it to your email address. Before your eReturns account can be activated, you will be required to verify your email address. This is done by clicking on the link in the email.

The email account linked to your eReturns account has changed. Please activate your eReturns account by clicking this link <a href="https://ereturnstest.dev.aec.local/RegistrationWizard/ActivateAccount?activationCode=EE8C054585CD0B3C0762107FFD128271">https://ereturnstest.dev.aec.local/RegistrationWizard/ActivateAccount?activationCode=EE8C054585CD0B3C0762107FFD128271</a>. Alternatively copy the link into your browsers address bar.

If you have any queries, please contact the Funding and Disclosure section by phone on 02 6271 4552 or by email at <a href=fad@aec.gov.au</a>

Disclosure Unit
Funding and Disclosure | National Office
Australian Electoral Commission
T: (02) 6271 4552 | F: (02) 6271 4555

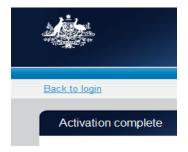
Clicking this link verifies that you have access to the email account.



Once you have verified your email address you are able to use your eReturns account.

#### Login

Click the 'Back to login' button to return to the eReturns login page.

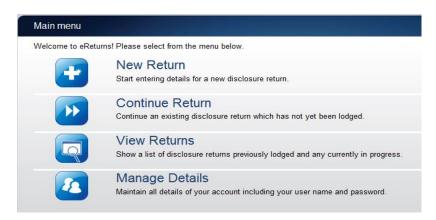


From here, enter your user name and password to login – remember you will have changed your password and may have changed your user name.

# Using eReturns

#### Main Menu

Once you have logged in you will see the eReturns main menu.



From the main menu you can start a **new return**, **continue** a return that is partially complete, **view** historical returns and **manage** your account details.

Your account details are the details that you reviewed and updated when you logged in for the first time.

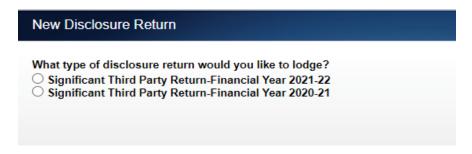
# Completing a return

## **New Return**

Click the 'New Return' button to start completing a new return.



Then choose the return that you would like to complete.



Click 'Continue' to launch the return wizard. You can use the 'Back' and 'Next' buttons to navigate through the screens.

Instructions on how to complete each section of the wizard will appear at the top of each screen.

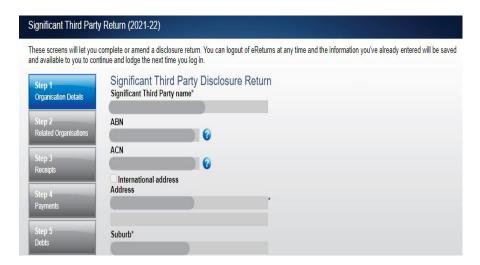
Progress through the wizard is tracked down the left-hand side of the screen.

As you navigate through the wizard, you will be prompted to enter the information that will make up the return.

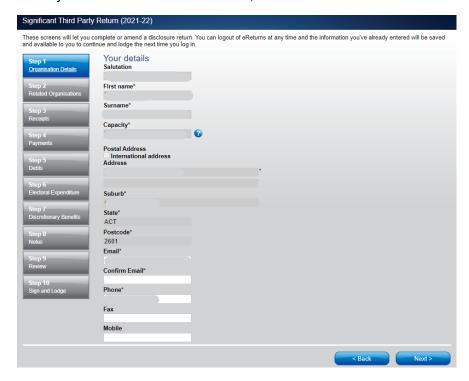


## **Step 1 – Organisation Details**

On this screen you can review the significant third party's details. These details **cannot** be edited. If the details are not correct you will need to contact Funding and Disclosure on 02 6271 4552 or email fad@aec.gov.au.



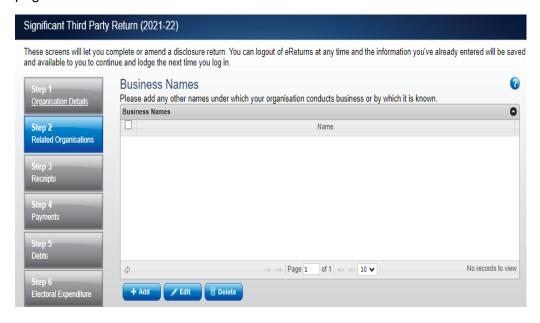
Once you have reviewed the details, click 'Next' to move to the 'Your details' screen.



On this screen you can review the Financial Controller details. The greyed-out boxes **cannot** be edited. **If these details are not correct you will need to contact Funding and Disclosure** on 02 6271 4552 or email <a href="mailto:fad@aec.gov.au">fad@aec.gov.au</a>. Other details on this screen may be edited. Once you have finished editing these details click 'Next' to move to the 'Business Names' page.

## **Step 2 – Related Organisations**

Please add any other business names, otherwise click 'Next' to move to the 'Related Organisations' page.

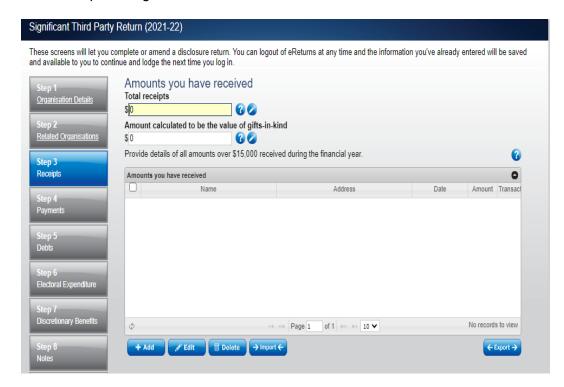


On this screen you can review related organisations, which are organisations that are covered by the disclosure return. You can also review the organisation's status as a union. If these details are not correct you will need to contact Funding and Disclosure on 02 6271 4552 or email <a href="mailto:fad@aec.gov.au">fad@aec.gov.au</a>.

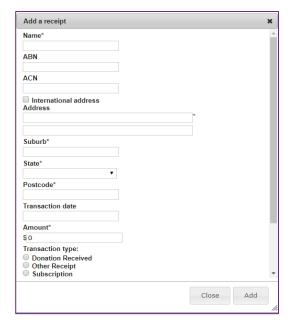


## Step 3 - Receipts

Total receipts and gifts-in-kind are recorded in this screen.



To record details of receipts above the disclosure threshold, click the 'Add' button. That will launch the 'Add a receipt' window.

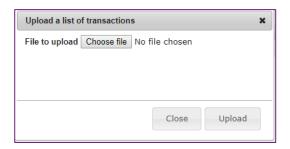


In the 'Add a receipt' window, you can add the details of each receipt above the disclosure threshold. All required fields must be completed. Once the information has been entered, click the 'Add' button to add the receipt. The 'Add a receipt' window will remain open to allow you to enter more receipts. Once you have finished entering receipts click the 'Close' button to return to the receipts screen.

#### Import receipts

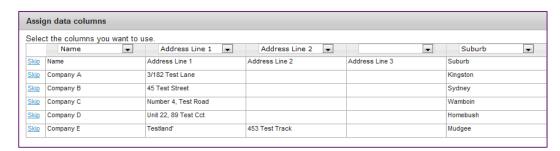
The import function allows you to upload a spreadsheet of transactions into eReturns, eliminating the need to manually enter each transaction. To import receipts, you will need a spreadsheet (either in MSExcel, CSV or XML format) of receipts which contains the required information for each receipt. To start importing receipts click the 'Import' button.

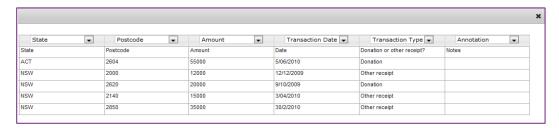
This will launch the import screen. From here you can choose the file you wish to upload.



Once you have selected the file, click 'Upload'.

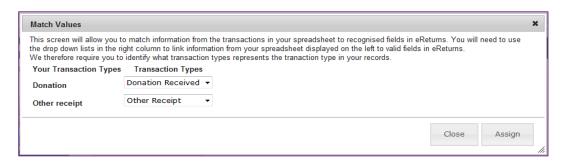
When eReturns has uploaded your spreadsheet, it will ask you to match the columns in your spreadsheet to the columns in eReturns.



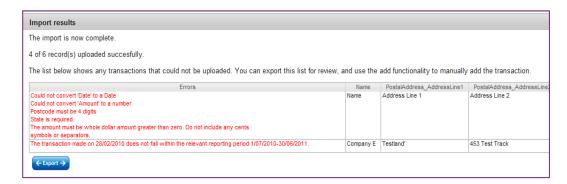


Once you have assigned the columns, click 'Import Data'.

eReturns will ask you to designate some of the values in the columns. You will need to assign values that eReturns recognises to the data in your spreadsheet. See the example below:



Once you have matched the values from your spreadsheet to values that eReturns will recognise, you can click 'Assign'. eReturns will display how many records were successfully imported, and list records that were not successfully imported. To close this window, click 'Close'.

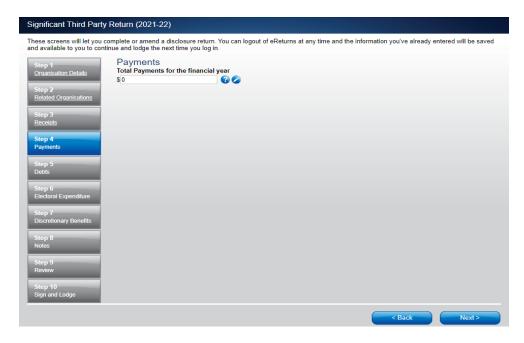


If you choose to export the list of transactions which were not successfully imported, you can fix the problems in the data which eReturns has identified and re-import that list. Alternatively, you can use the '+ Add' button to add those transactions manually.

eReturns will now upload the transactions from the spreadsheet into the return wizard. Once it is complete you will be able to see the transactions in the list on the screen. Once you have finished on the receipts screen click 'Next' to move to the payments screen.

## Step 4 - Payments

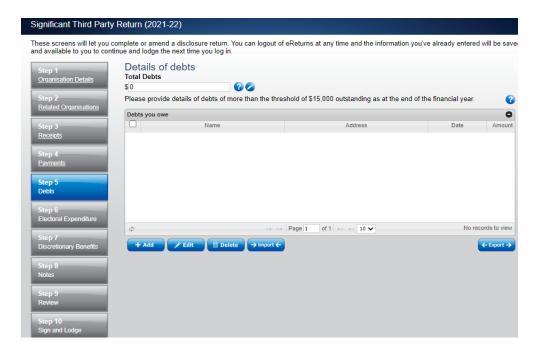
Total payments are recorded in this screen.



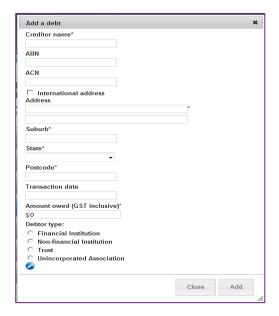
**Note**: Significant third parties are only required to provide the total payments, no further details are required in relation to payments.

## Step 5 - Debts

Total debts and details of individual debts greater than the disclosure threshold are recorded in this screen.



To record individual debts that are greater than the disclosure threshold, use the '+ Add' button and the 'Add a debt' window will appear.

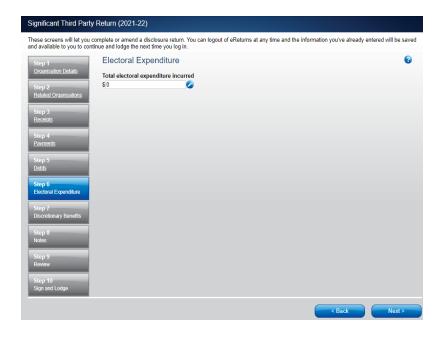


In the 'Add a debt' window, you can add the details of each debt above the disclosure threshold. All required fields must be completed. Once the information has been entered, click the 'Add' button to add the debt. The 'Add a debt' window will remain open to allow you to enter more debts. Once you have finished entering debts click the 'Close' button to return to the debts screen.

If you have a number of debts to record you may wish to import a spreadsheet. For step-by-step instructions on importing a spreadsheet, refer to the <u>Import receipts</u> section of this guide. Once you have recorded your total debts and all detailed debts click 'Next'.

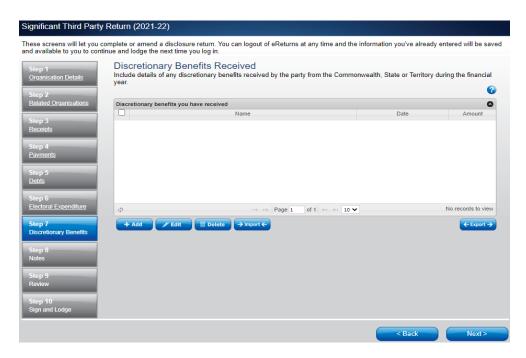
## Step 6 - Electoral Expenditure

Total electoral expenditure incurred during the financial year is recorded in this screen.

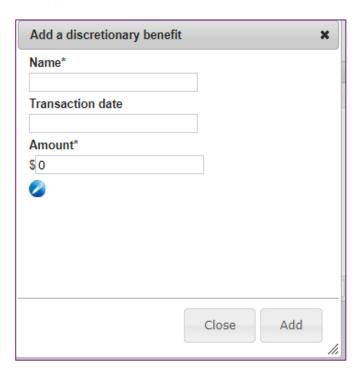


# **Step 7 – Discretionary Benefits**

Discretionary benefits received from the Commonwealth, a state or a territory during the financial year are recorded in this screen.



To record discretionary benefits use the '+ Add' button and the 'Add a discretionary benefit' window will appear.



Once you have recorded your discretionary benefits, click 'Next' to move to the Notes screen.

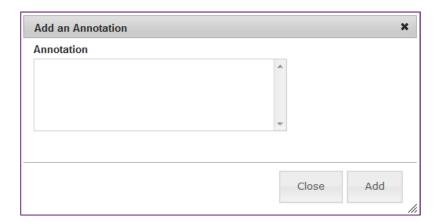
## Step 8 - Notes

The notes screen allows you to record annotations against the return.



These annotations will be presented as footnotes on the return.

To add an annotation, click the 'Add' button. This will launch the 'Add an Annotation' window.

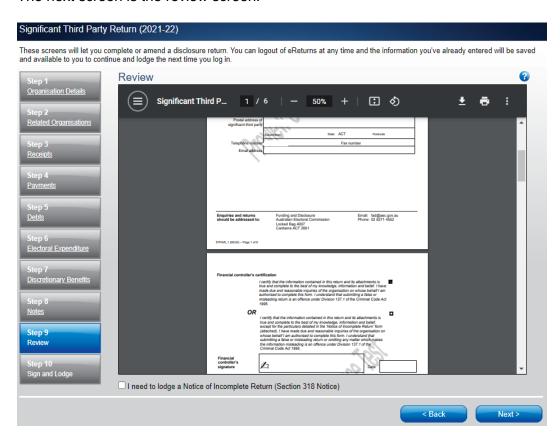


Enter the text of your annotation and click 'Add' to save it. Click 'Close' once you have entered all your annotations.

When you have finished recording annotations, click 'Next'.

## Step 9 - Review

The next screen is the review screen.



You will be presented with an image of what the return will look like.

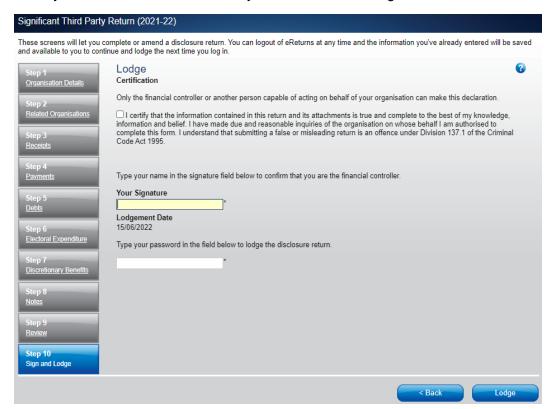
You'll notice that there is nothing in the signature or date fields on the return. These fields will populate when you lodge the return and will appear on the final version of the return

If you need to change the return, click 'Back'. Once you have reviewed the image of the return, click 'Next'. This will take you to the Sign and Lodge screen.

**NOTE:** At the bottom of this screen, above the 'Back' and 'Next' buttons is a checkbox. Selecting this box will allow you to lodge a Notice of Incomplete Return. For more details, go to the <u>Lodging a Notice of Incomplete Return</u> section of this guide.

## Step 10 – Sign and Lodge

Once you have reviewed the return you will be able to lodge it.

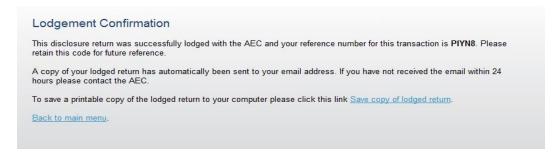


On this screen, you will need to select the certification box.

As the financial controller of the significant third party, you will need to type your name into the 'Your Signature' box and type your password into the Password box.

Once you have done this, click 'Lodge' to lodge the return.

Upon lodging the return, you will be presented with a confirmation screen.

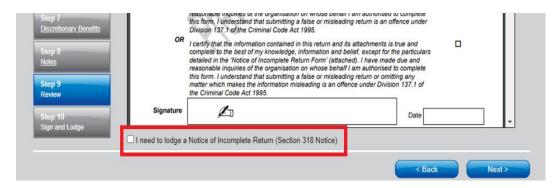


From this screen you may save a PDF copy of the return. The AEC recommends that you save a copy of the return. eReturns will email you a copy of your lodged return automatically. The unique reference number presented on this screen is recorded on the bottom right-hand corner of the lodged return.

## **Lodging a Notice of Incomplete Return**

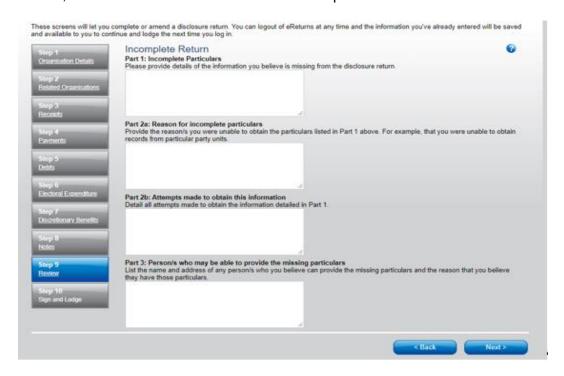
eReturns allows you to lodge a Notice of Incomplete Return. For more information about when it is appropriate to lodge a Notice of Incomplete Return, please consult the <u>Financial Disclosure Guide for Significant Third Parties</u>.

To lodge a Notice of Incomplete Return, select the checkbox at the bottom of the review screen.



Selecting this box will take you to the Notice of Incomplete Return screen.

In this screen you are required to provide details of the information that is missing from the return, the reason why you were unable to obtain the information, who you believe may have the information, and why you believe that person has the information. Once you have completed all the fields on the screen, click 'Next' to review the Notice of Incomplete Return.



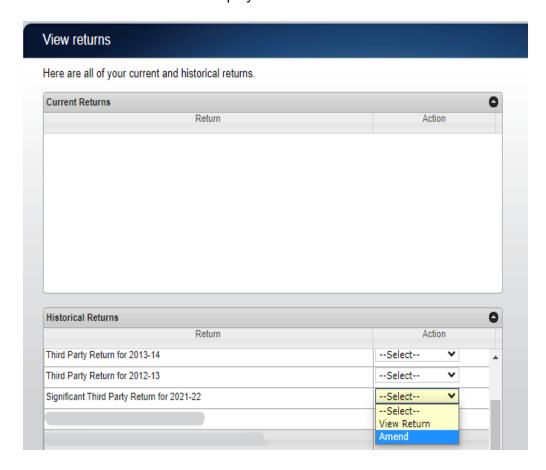
Once you have reviewed the Notice of Incomplete Return click 'Next' to go to the Sign and Lodge screen. To lodge the return and Notice of Incomplete Return follow the instructions at <a href="Step10 - Sign">Step10 - Sign</a> and Lodge.

## **Amending a Return**

Returns lodged using eReturns can also be amended. To amend a return click the 'View Returns' button on the main menu.



The view returns screen will display.



In the 'Action' column, select 'Amend' in the drop-down list next to the return you wish to amend.

This will launch the amendment wizard. The amendment wizard is the same as the return wizard, except it contains the data from the original return. To amend a return, simply add, edit or delete as appropriate. Once you have finished working your way through the wizard, eReturns will generate an amendment form for you to review. This amendment form can be lodged in the same way as the original return.

# **Troubleshooting**

# **Forgotten Password or Username**

If you have forgotten your password or username, contact Funding and Disclosure on 02 6271 4552 or email <a href="mailto:fad@aec.gov.au">fad@aec.gov.au</a>.

# Other problems

If you experience difficulties while using eReturns, contact Funding and Disclosure on 02 6271 4552 or email <a href="mailto:fad@aec.gov.au">fad@aec.gov.au</a>.