

eReturns Guide for Referendum Entities

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Common icons and useful information

Common icons

| Icon | What it does |
|---|--|
|  | 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.


Required information and fields

All required fields are marked with an asterisk (*).

Creating an eReturns account

Accessing eReturns

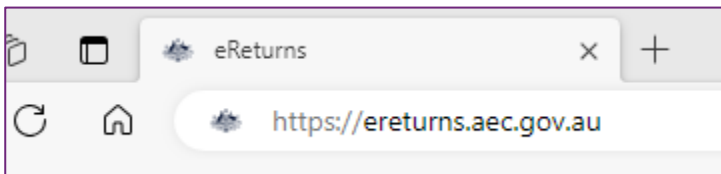
All referendum entities will need to create an eReturns account to lodge a referendum return.



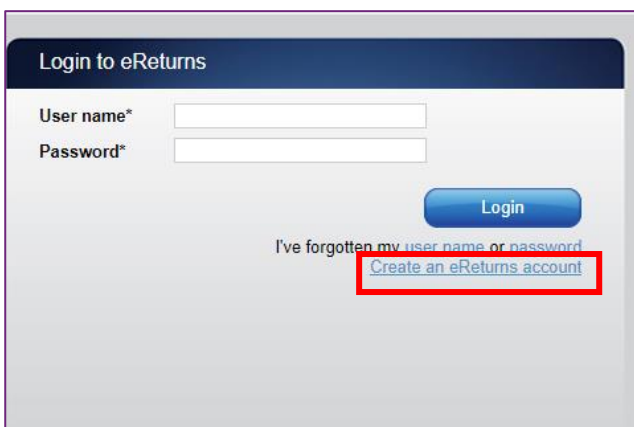
A [financial disclosure entity](#) will *not* be able to use their existing eReturns account - a new eReturns account must be created for referendum returns.

Getting started

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



The eReturns webpage displays the following login screen. Click 'Create an eReturns account'. This will take you through a wizard to create your account.



Create an eReturns account

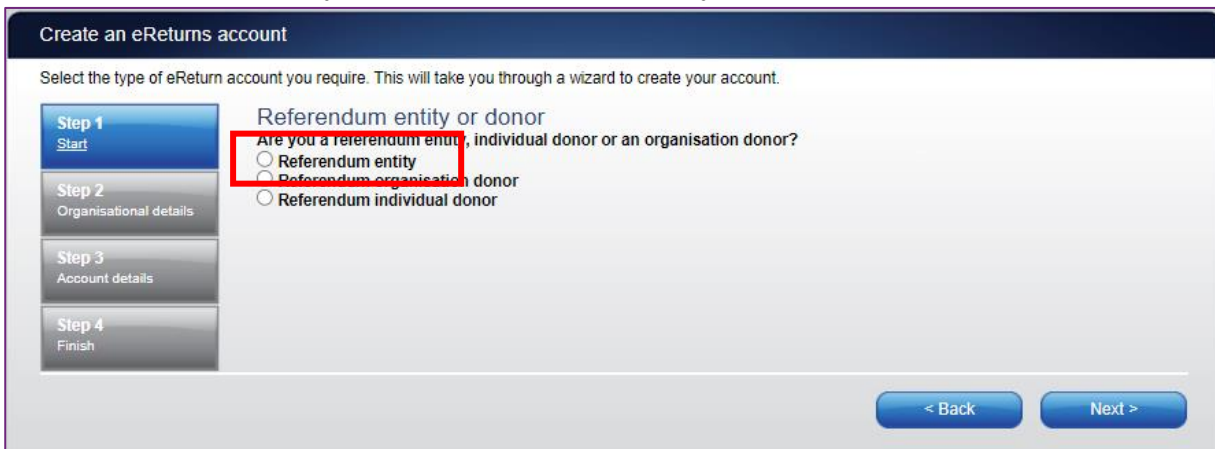
The first screen requires you to select the type of return you need to complete. Select 'Referendum entity or donor'. The next screen you will be able to select 'Referendum entity'.

Step 1: Start



To navigate through the eReturns wizard use the 'Back' and 'Next' buttons at the bottom right of the screen.

Select 'Referendum entity' from the eReturn account types:



Use the 'Next' button to provide information on the referendum entity and update the lodging officer details.

Step 2: Organisation details

On this screen you can provide relevant information regarding the referendum entity.

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

Once you have completed all required fields, click 'Next' to move to the 'Your details' screen.

Create an eReturns account

Select the type of eReturn account you require. This will take you through a wizard to create your account.

Step 1
Start

Step 2
Organisational details

Step 3
Account details

Step 4
Finish

Organisation details

Organisation Name*

ABN
 ?

ACN
 ?

International address

Address
*

Suburb*

State*

Postcode*

Step 3: Account details

On this screen you need to provide details for the contact person responsible for the referendum entity, or lodging officer. Some details, such as the address will be pre-filled based on the previous screen.

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

Create an eReturns account

Select the type of eReturn account you require. This will take you through a wizard to create your account.

Step 1
Start

Step 2
Organisational details

Step 3
Account details

Step 4
Finish

Your details

Salutation

First name*

Surname*

Capacity*
 ?

Postal Address
 International address
 Address
 88 Eight Street *

Suburb*
EIGHT MILE CREEK

State*
QLD ▼

Postcode*
4807

Email*

Confirm Email

Phone*

Fax

Mobile

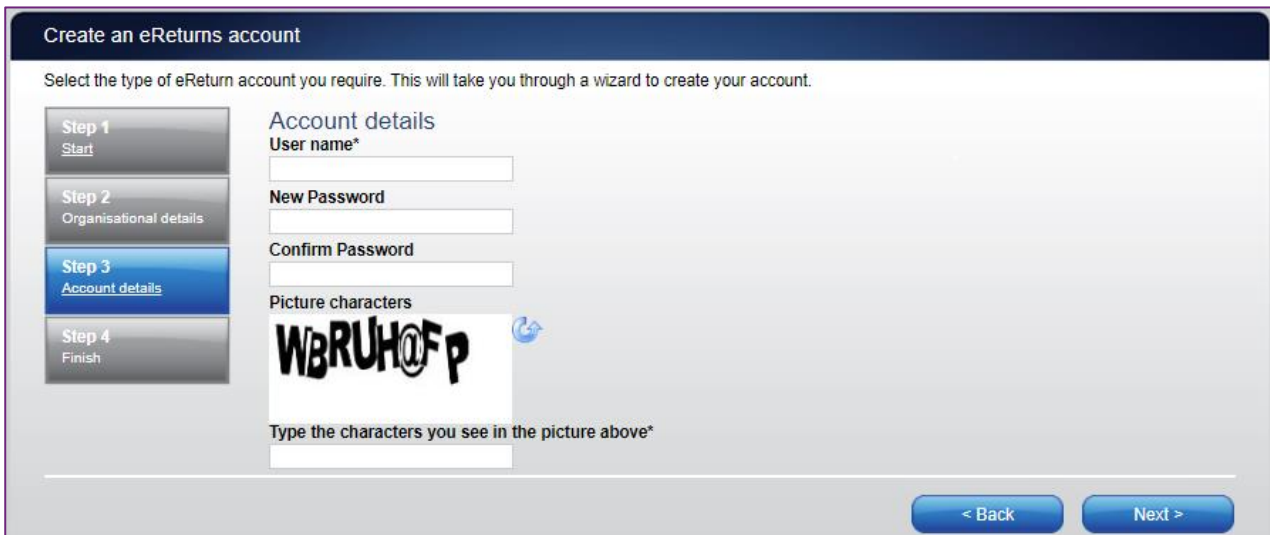
Please note: The address provided here will be made publicly available once the submitted return is published on the Transparency Register.

After you have completed the 'Your details' screen, click 'Next'.

Step 3: Account Details

On this screen you will need to set a user name and password.

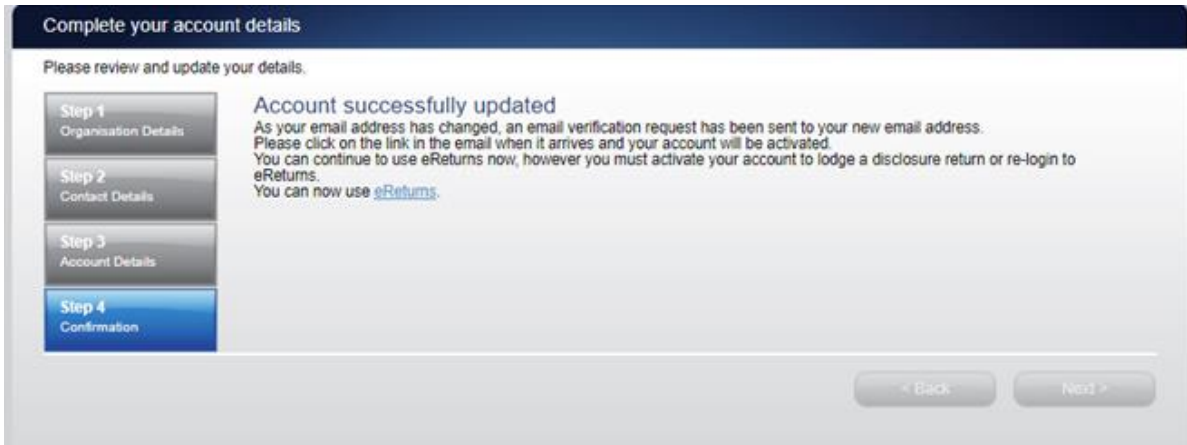
If you have received your eReturns credentials via an obligation letter please go to page 11 for information on how to setup your account.



The screenshot shows a web interface for creating an eReturns account. The title is "Create an eReturns account". Below the title, it says "Select the type of eReturn account you require. This will take you through a wizard to create your account." On the left, there is a vertical navigation menu with four steps: "Step 1 Start", "Step 2 Organisational details", "Step 3 Account details" (which is highlighted in blue), and "Step 4 Finish". The main content area is titled "Account details" and contains the following fields: "User name*" with an empty text input box, "New Password" with an empty text input box, "Confirm Password" with an empty text input box, and "Picture characters" with a small image showing the characters "WBRUH@FP" and a blue refresh icon. Below the image is a text input box with the label "Type the characters you see in the picture above*". At the bottom right of the form, there are two blue buttons: "< Back" and "Next >".

Note your new password, as you will need this to lodge a return. Once you have completed the Account details screen, click 'Next'.

Step 4: Confirmation



Please note: the 'Confirmation' step above, details that your 'email address has changed', this is simply directing you to the verification email to 'Activate' your account.

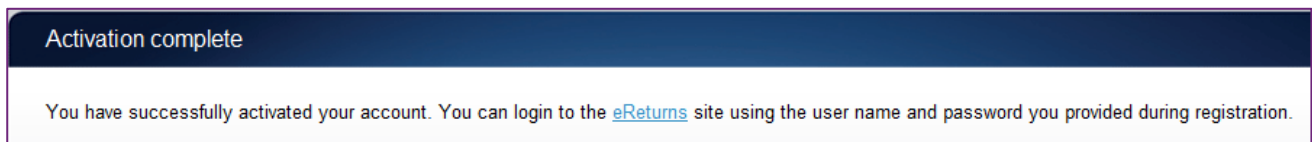
Email activation and verification

eReturns will automatically generate an activation email and send it to your email address so you can verify the email associated with the account.

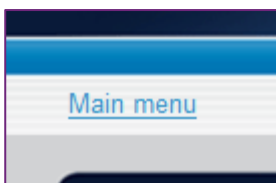
Your eReturns account **needs to be activated** by using the link emailed to you. The below is an example of the email content.

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

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



Once you have verified your email address you are able to start using your eReturns account, please click the 'Main menu' button to return to the eReturns main menu.



Using AEC issued credentials to access eReturns

Note: An existing eReturns account **cannot be used for referendum returns** - the new eReturns account provided must be used.

The AEC may issue you with eReturns credentials. eReturns credentials will look like this:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| User name: | AdminReferendumEntity |
| Password: | P2U22A2P |

eReturns credentials are made up of a user name and one-time password. On the first log-in to eReturns you will need to confirm and update details.

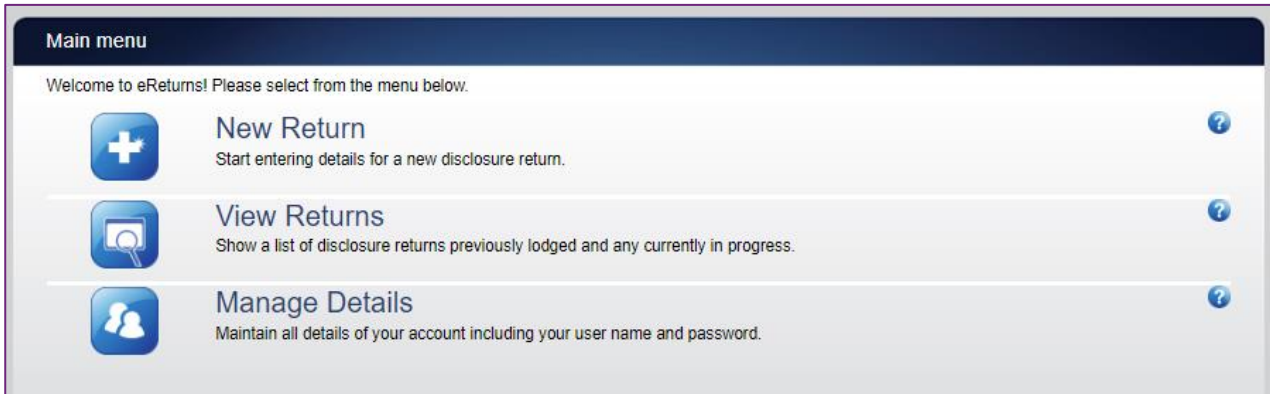
Follow Steps 1 through 4 to update your account and verify your email address.

Once your account is verified, you will be able to commence a new return.

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**. The next sections in the guide explain a new return for referendum entities.

If you have commenced a return you will also have the option to **continue** a return.

From the main menu you can also **view** historical returns and **manage** your account details. The 'View Returns' option will only appear once you have commenced or submitted a return.

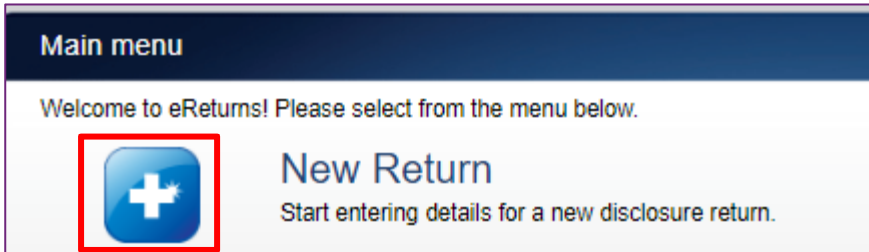
NOTE: Your account details are the details that you reviewed and updated when you logged in for the first time.

Completing a return

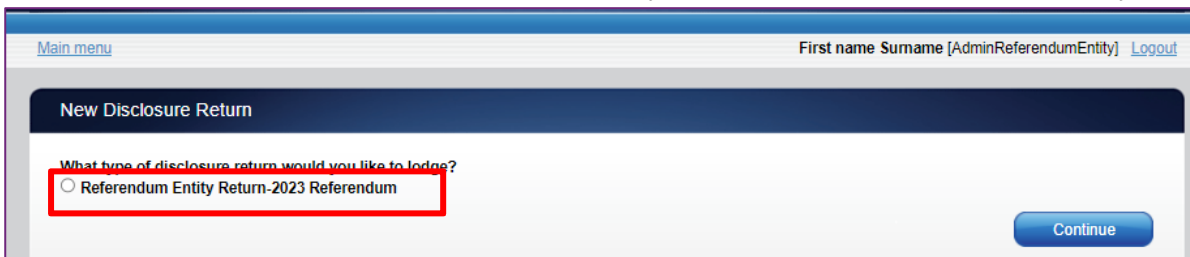
To complete a Referendum Entity return for the 2023 Referendum use the 'New Return' button on the main menu.

New return

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

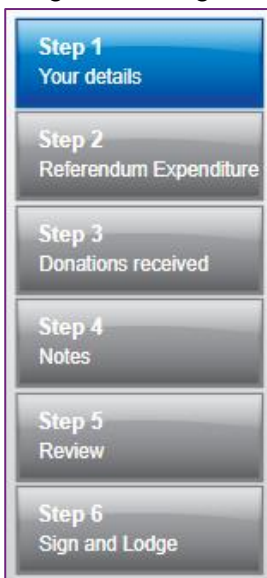


You will then need to choose the referendum entity return for the relevant referendum year:



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 the wizard will appear at the top of each screen. Progress through the wizard is tracked down the left-hand side.

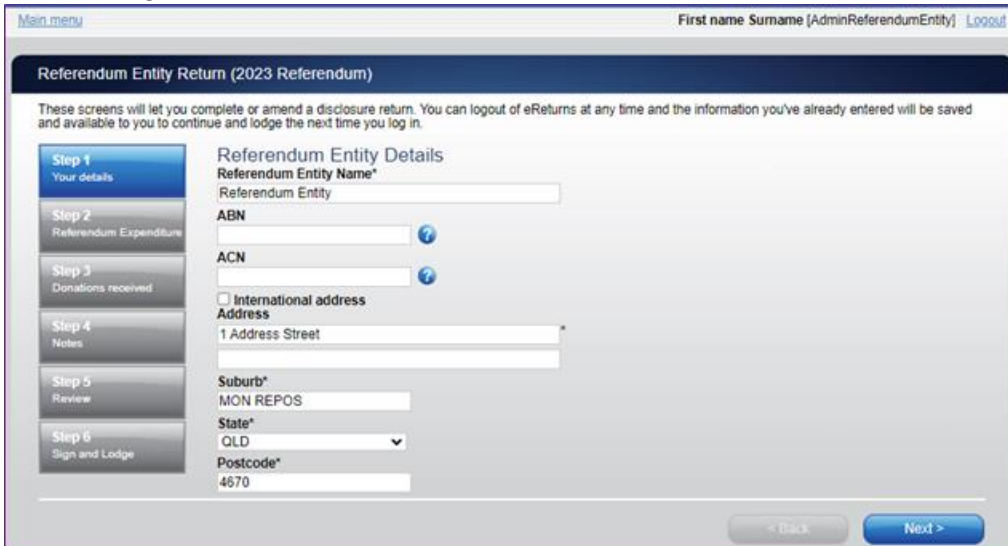


As you navigate through the wizard, you will be prompted to enter the information which will make up the return.

Step 1 – Your details

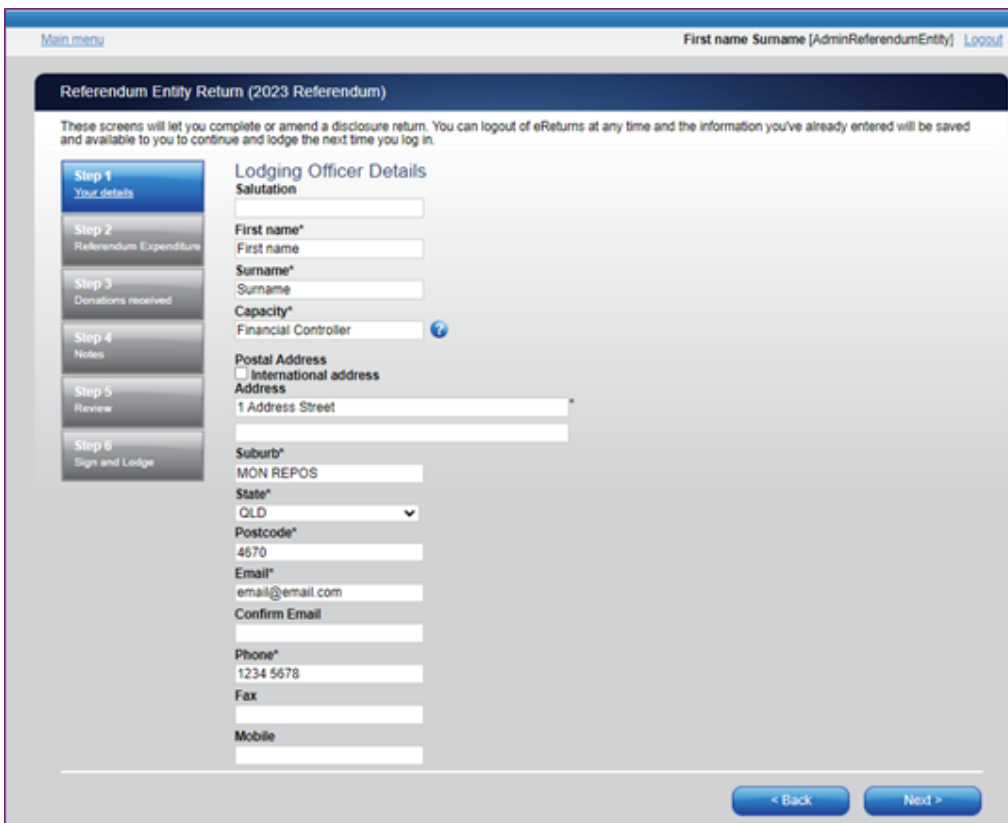
On this screen you can update the Referendum Entity details.

NOTE: These details have been automatically pre-filled from the information you provided in your account registration.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Referendum Entity Return (2023 Referendum)". On the left is a vertical navigation menu with six steps: Step 1 (Your details), Step 2 (Referendum Expenditure), Step 3 (Donations received), Step 4 (Notes), Step 5 (Review), and Step 6 (Sign and Lodge). The main content area is titled "Referendum Entity Details" and contains the following fields: "Referendum Entity Name*", "Referendum Entity", "ABN", "ACN", "International address" (checkbox), "Address" (with "1 Address Street" pre-filled), "Suburb*" (MON REPOS), "State*" (QLD), and "Postcode*" (4670). At the bottom right are "< Back" and "Next >" buttons.

Once you have reviewed or updated the entity's details click 'Next' to move to the Lodging Officer details screen.

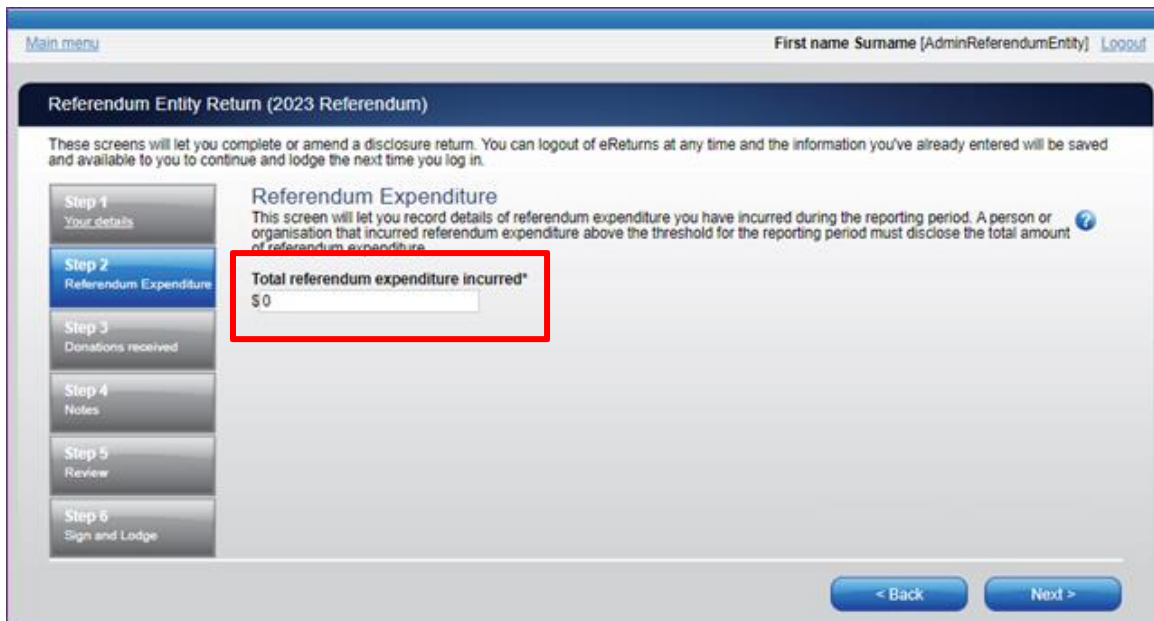


The screenshot shows the same web form, but the main content area is titled "Lodging Officer Details". The left navigation menu remains the same. The main content area contains the following fields: "Salutation", "First name*", "First name", "Surname*", "Surname", "Capacity*" (Financial Controller), "Postal Address" (checkbox), "International address" (checkbox), "Address" (with "1 Address Street" pre-filled), "Suburb*" (MON REPOS), "State*" (QLD), "Postcode*" (4670), "Email*" (email@email.com), "Confirm Email", "Phone*" (1234 5678), "Fax", and "Mobile". At the bottom right are "< Back" and "Next >" buttons.

On this screen you can review and update your details. Once you have reviewed your details, click 'Next' to move to the Donations you have made screen.

Step 2 – Referendum expenditure

This screen requires you to provide a whole dollar amount for referendum expenditure incurred:

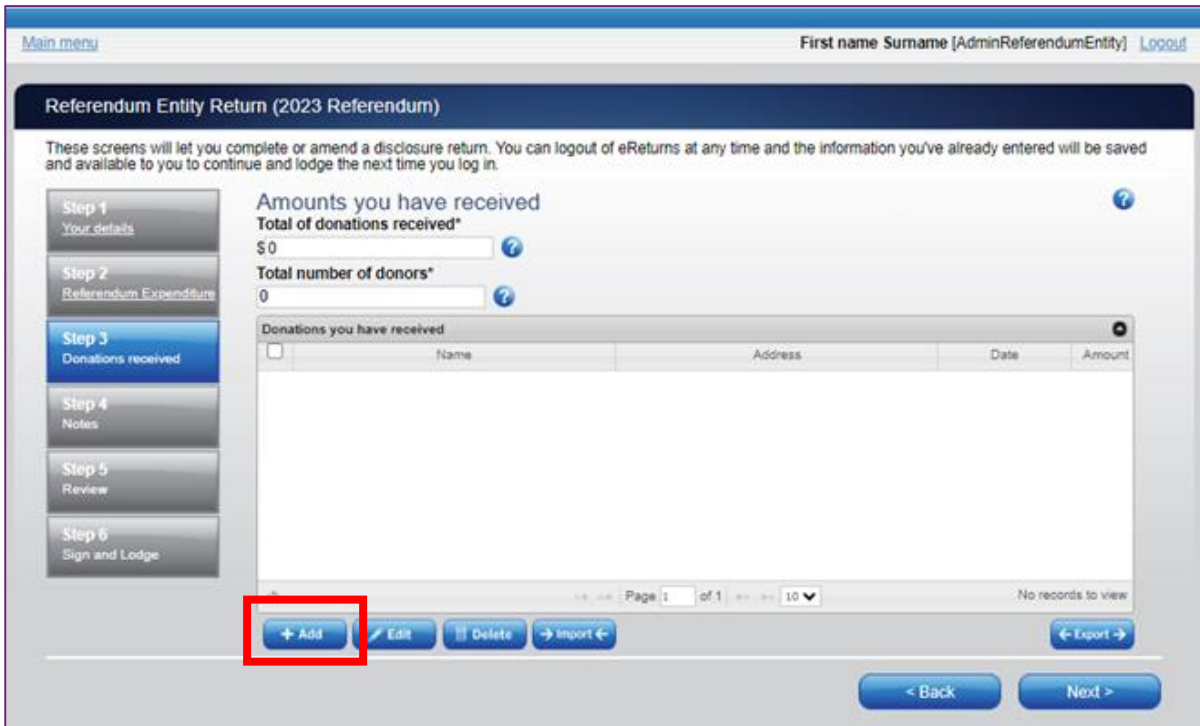


The screenshot shows a web application interface for the 'Referendum Entity Return (2023 Referendum)'. At the top, there is a 'Main menu' link and a user profile section with 'First name Surname [AdminReferendumEntity]' and a 'Logout' link. The main heading is 'Referendum Entity Return (2023 Referendum)'. Below this, a message states: 'These screens will let you complete or amend a disclosure return. You can logout of eReturns at any time and the information you've already entered will be saved and available to you to continue and lodge the next time you log in.' A sidebar on the left contains six steps: Step 1 (Your details), Step 2 (Referendum Expenditure), Step 3 (Donations received), Step 4 (Notes), Step 5 (Review), and Step 6 (Sign and Lodge). Step 2 is currently selected. The main content area is titled 'Referendum Expenditure' and includes a help icon and a note: 'This screen will let you record details of referendum expenditure you have incurred during the reporting period. A person or organisation that incurred referendum expenditure above the threshold for the reporting period must disclose the total amount of referendum expenditure.' A red box highlights the 'Total referendum expenditure incurred*' label and the text input field containing '\$0'. At the bottom right, there are '< Back' and 'Next >' buttons.

Click Next to progress Donations received.

Step 3 – Donations received

Total donations and number of donors can be recorded directly into this screen. To add donation details click the 'Add' button at the bottom of the table on the screen. That will launch the 'Add a donation received' window.



Referendum Entity Return (2023 Referendum)

These screens will let you complete or amend a disclosure return. You can logout of eReturns at any time and the information you've already entered will be saved and available to you to continue and lodge the next time you log in.

Step 1 Your details
Step 2 Referendum Expenditure
Step 3 Donations received
Step 4 Notes
Step 5 Review
Step 6 Sign and Lodge

Amounts you have received

Total of donations received*
\$0

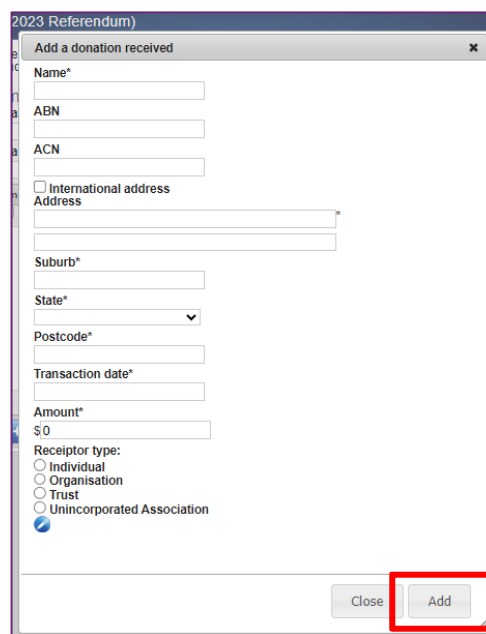
Total number of donors*
0

| <input type="checkbox"/> | Name | Address | Date | Amount |
|--------------------------|------|---------|------|--------|
| No records to view | | | | |

Page 1 of 1

+ Add Edit Delete Import Export

< Back Next >



2023 Referendum)

Add a donation received

Name*

ABN

ACN

International address
Address

Suburb*

State*

Postcode*

Transaction date*

Amount*
\$0

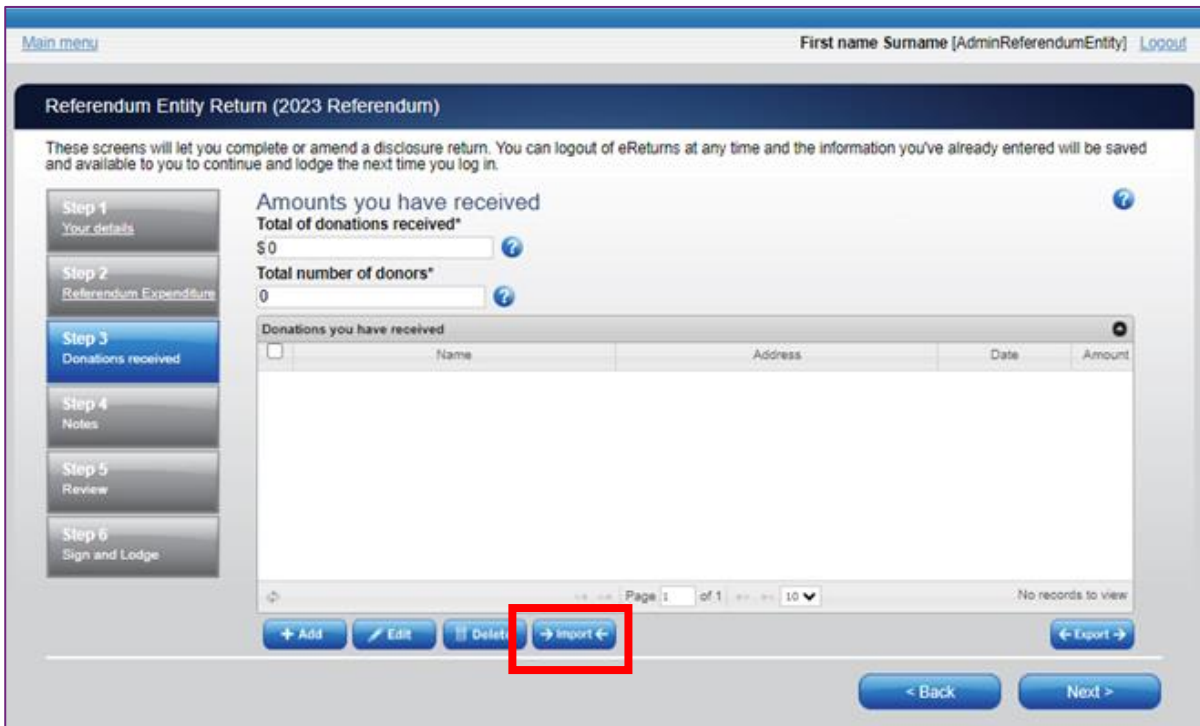
Receiptor type:
 Individual
 Organisation
 Trust
 Unincorporated Association

Close Add

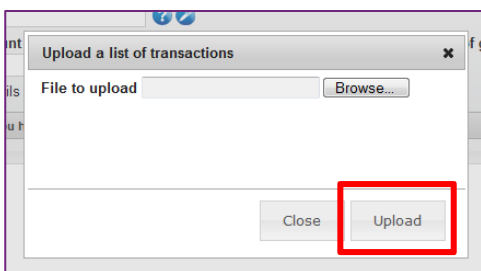
In the 'Add a donation received' window you can fill in the details of each detailed donation. All required fields must be completed. Once all the information has been entered click the 'Add' button to add the receipt to the list. The 'Add a donation received' window will remain open to allow you to enter more receipts. Once you have finished entering receipts click the 'Close' button to return to the receipts screen.

Import donations

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



This will launch the import screen.



From here you can use the browse button to select the spread sheet you wish to upload from your computer. Once you have selected the spread sheet, click 'Upload'.

Once eReturns has uploaded your spread sheet it will ask you to match the columns in your spread sheet to the columns in eReturns. For example:

Assign data columns

Select the columns you want to use.

| | Name | Address Line 1 | Address Line 2 | | Suburb |
|----------------------|-----------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------|
| Skip | Name | Address Line 1 | Address Line 2 | Address Line 3 | Suburb |
| Skip | Company A | 3/182 Test Lane | | | Kingston |
| Skip | Company B | 45 Test Street | | | Sydney |
| Skip | Company C | Number 4, Test Road | | | Wamboin |
| Skip | Company D | Unit 22, 89 Test Cct | | | Homebush |
| Skip | Company E | Testland' | 453 Test Track | | Mudgee |

Now eReturns will ask you to designate some of the values in some of the columns. You will need to assign values that eReturns recognises to some of the data in your spread sheet. Once you have assigned all the columns, click 'Import Data'.

Once you have matched the values from your spread sheet to values that eReturns will recognise you can click 'Assign'. eReturns will tell you how many records were successfully imported, and list those which were not successful. You can also export the list of transactions which were not successfully imported from here. To close this window, click 'Close'.

Import results

The import is now complete.

4 of 6 record(s) uploaded successfully.

The list below shows any transactions that could not be uploaded. You can export this list for review, and use the add functionality to manually add the transaction.

| Errors | Name | PostalAddress_AddressLine1 | PostalAddress_AddressLine2 |
|--|-----------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Name | Address Line 1 | Address Line 2 |
| <p>Could not convert 'Date' to a Date</p> <p>Could not convert 'Amount' to a number</p> <p>Postcode must be 4 digits</p> <p>State is required.</p> <p>The amount must be whole dollar amount greater than zero. Do not include any cents symbols or separators.</p> <p>The transaction made on 28/02/2010 does not fall within the relevant reporting period 1/07/2010-30/06/2011.</p> | Company E | Testland' | 453 Test Track |

[← Export →](#)

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 spread sheet into the return wizard. Once it is complete you will be able to see the transactions in the list on the screen.

Main menu First name Surname [AdminReferendumEntity] Logout

Referendum Entity Return (2023 Referendum)

These screens will let you complete or amend a disclosure return. You can logout of eReturns at any time and the information you've already entered will be saved and available to you to continue and lodge the next time you log in.

Step 1
Your details

Step 2
Referendum Expenditure

Step 3
Donations received

Step 4
Notes

Step 5
Review

Step 6
Sign and Lodge

Amounts you have received

Total of donations received*
\$40000

Total number of donors*
5

| Donations you have received | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Name | Address | Date | Amount |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Referendum donor 2 | 13 Test Place CONARA TAS 7211 | 05/05/2023 | 15100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Referendum donor 1 | Test Street WELLINGTON SA 5250 | 01/08/2023 | 20000 |

Page 1 of 1 | 10 | View 1 - 2 of 2

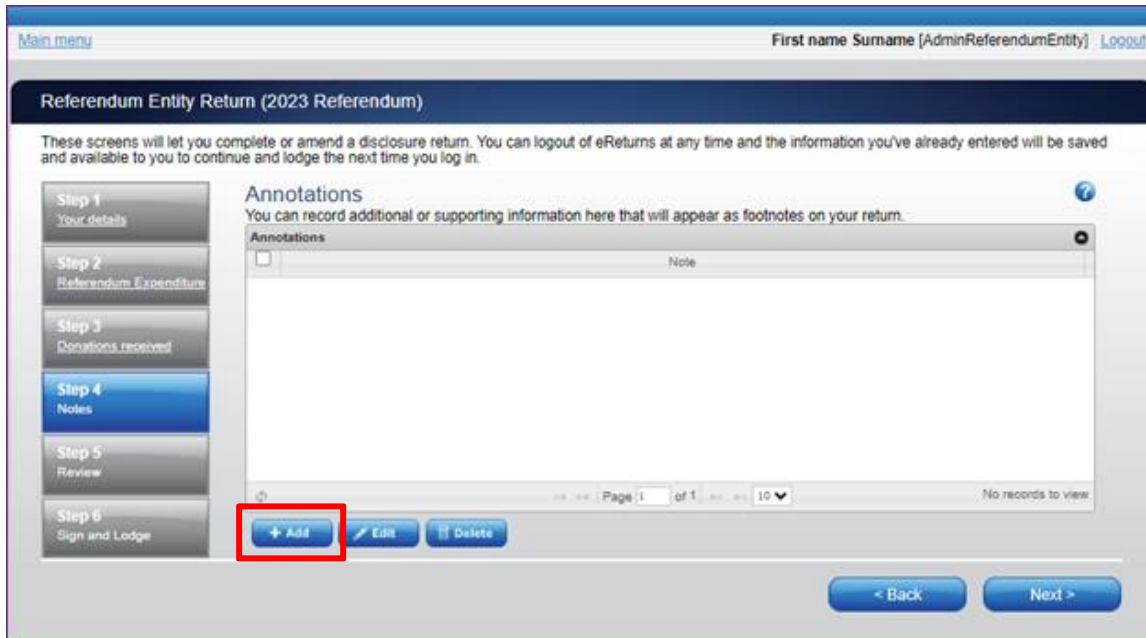
+ Add Edit Delete Import Export

< Back Next >

Once you have recorded all donations above the threshold, click 'Next' to move to the Notes screen.

Step 4 – Notes

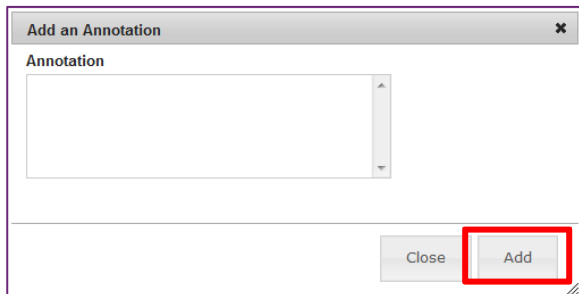
The Notes screen allows you to record annotations against the return. Please note that the annotation will be made publicly available once the submitted return is published on the Transparency Register.



The screenshot shows the 'Referendum Entity Return (2023 Referendum)' interface. On the left, a navigation menu lists steps from 'Your details' to 'Sign and Lodge'. The main area is titled 'Annotations' and includes a text input field for a note. Below the input field, there are buttons for '+ Add', 'Edit', and 'Delete'. The '+ Add' button is highlighted with a red box. At the bottom right, there are '< Back' and 'Next >' buttons.

The annotations will be presented on the return as footnotes.

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



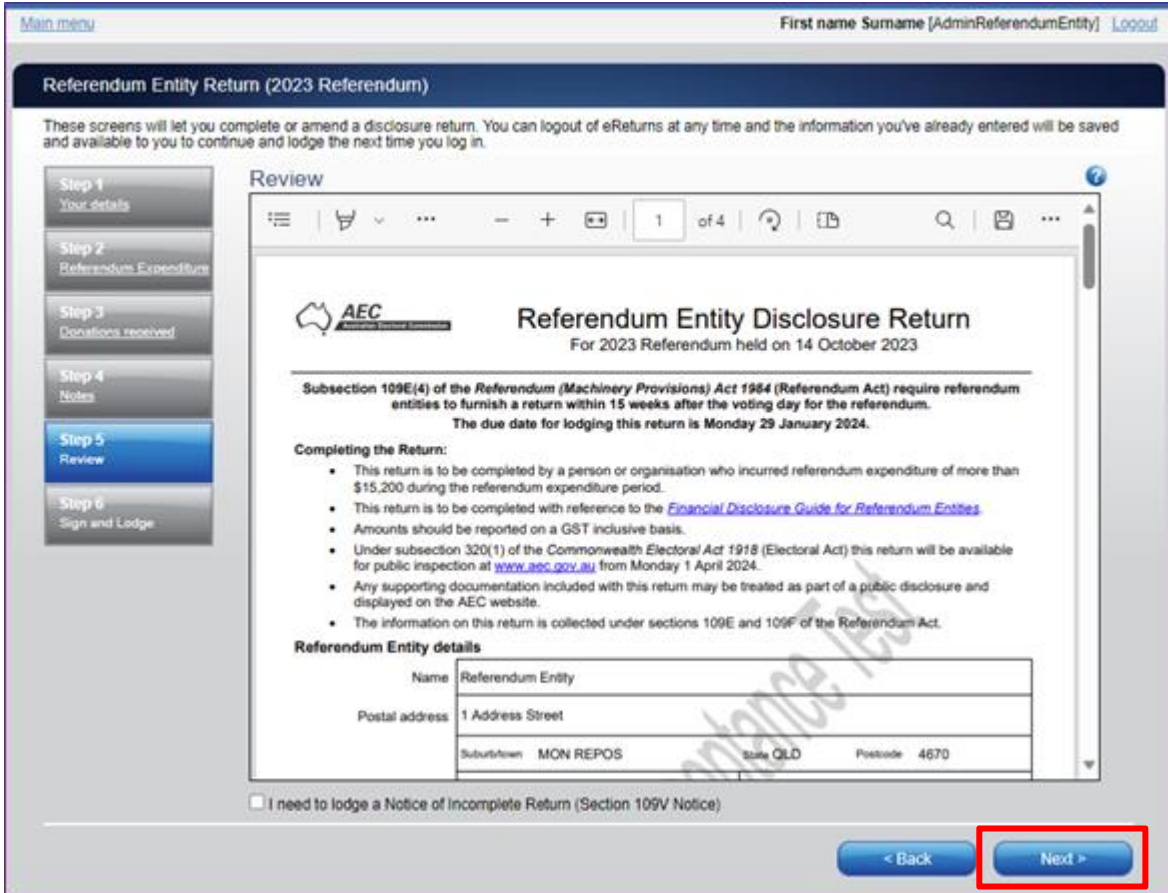
The 'Add an Annotation' dialog box features a text area for entering the annotation. At the bottom right, there are 'Close' and 'Add' buttons. The 'Add' button is highlighted with a red box.

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 5 – Review

From this screen, you may view the draft return.

Here you will be presented with a PDF preview of what the data in your return will look like. Use the scroll bar on the right of the screen to view all of the pages of the return.



The screenshot displays the 'Review' step of the 'Referendum Entity Return (2023 Referendum)' process. On the left, a sidebar lists steps: Step 1 (Your details), Step 2 (Referendum Expenditure), Step 3 (Donations received), Step 4 (Notes), Step 5 (Review), and Step 6 (Sign and Lodge). The main area shows a PDF preview of the 'Referendum Entity Disclosure Return' for the 2023 referendum held on 14 October 2023. The preview includes the AEC logo, the title, and introductory text: 'Subsection 109E(4) of the Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984 (Referendum Act) require referendum entities to furnish a return within 15 weeks after the voting day for the referendum. The due date for lodging this return is Monday 29 January 2024.' It also lists 'Completing the Return' instructions and 'Referendum Entity details' with a form containing fields for Name (Referendum Entity), Postal address (1 Address Street), Suburb/town (MON REPOS), State (QLD), and Postcode (4670). At the bottom, there is a checkbox for 'I need to lodge a Notice of Incomplete Return (Section 109V Notice)'. Navigation buttons '< Back' and 'Next >' are visible, with the 'Next >' button highlighted in red.

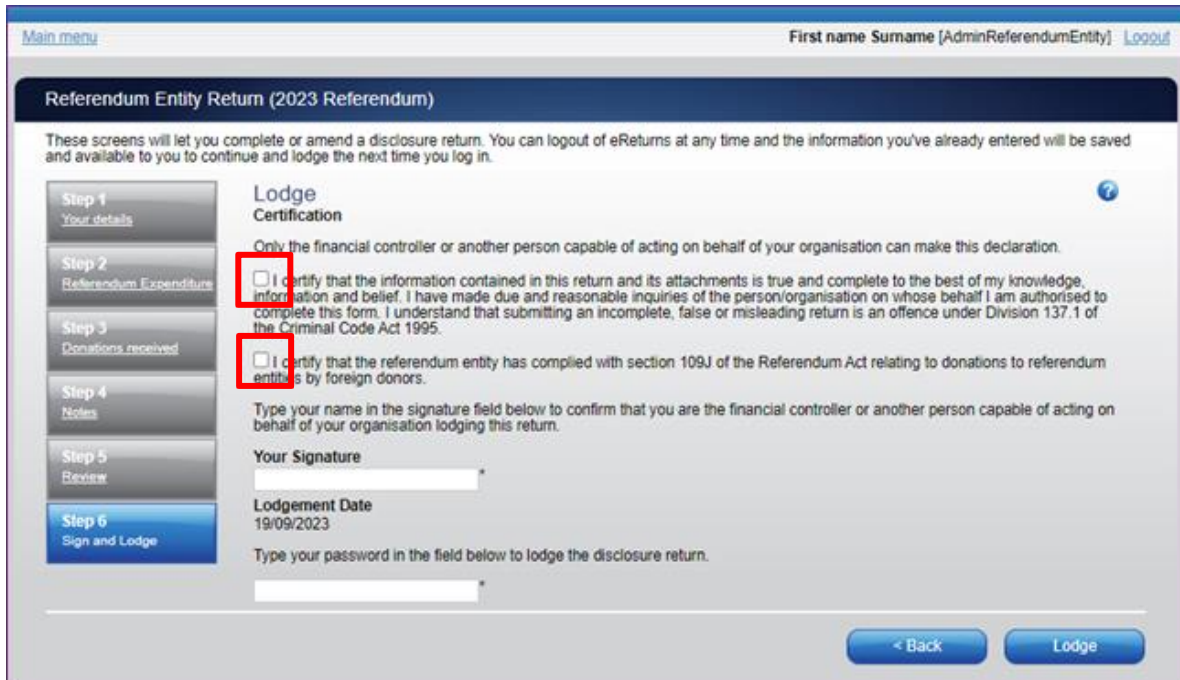
You'll notice that there is nothing in the signature or date fields on the front of the return. These fields will only be populated once you have completed the lodgement screen and will appear on the final version of your return.

If you need to make changes to the data in the return, click 'Back'. Once you have reviewed the image of your return and all data is correct, click 'Next'. This will take you to Step 6, 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 detail on this, go to the [Lodging a Notice of Incomplete Return](#) section of this guide.

Step 6 – Sign and Lodge

The final step to lodging the return is to certify that the information is correct and to electronically sign. If you are sure that the information contained within the returns is correct, click **both** check boxes. You will then need to type your name in the following box to act as an electronic signature.



Referendum Entity Return (2023 Referendum)

These screens will let you complete or amend a disclosure return. You can logout of eReturns at any time and the information you've already entered will be saved and available to you to continue and lodge the next time you log in.

Step 1 Your details
Step 2 Referendum Expenditure
Step 3 Donations received
Step 4 Notes
Step 5 Review
Step 6 Sign and Lodge

Lodge Certification

Only the financial controller or another person capable of acting on behalf of your organisation can make this declaration.

I certify that the information contained in this return and its attachments is true and complete to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I have made due and reasonable inquiries of the person/organisation on whose behalf I am authorised to complete this form. I understand that submitting an incomplete, false or misleading return is an offence under Division 137.1 of the Criminal Code Act 1995.

I certify that the referendum entity has complied with section 109J of the Referendum Act relating to donations to referendum entities by foreign donors.

Type your name in the signature field below to confirm that you are the financial controller or another person capable of acting on behalf of your organisation lodging this return.

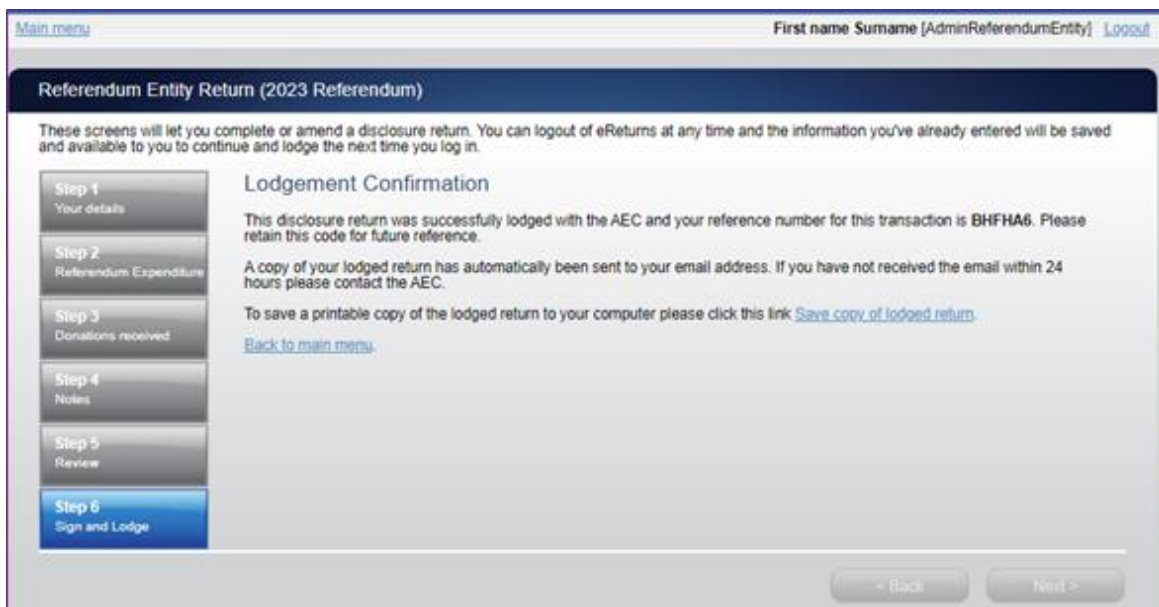
Your Signature

Lodgement Date
19/09/2023

Type your password in the field below to lodge the disclosure return.

< Back Lodge

Finally, type your password into the final box. This step is to verify that the candidate agent is lodging the return. Once you have completed these steps, click the 'Lodge' button and the return will be submitted.



Referendum Entity Return (2023 Referendum)

These screens will let you complete or amend a disclosure return. You can logout of eReturns at any time and the information you've already entered will be saved and available to you to continue and lodge the next time you log in.

Step 1 Your details
Step 2 Referendum Expenditure
Step 3 Donations received
Step 4 Notes
Step 5 Review
Step 6 Sign and Lodge

Lodgement Confirmation

This disclosure return was successfully lodged with the AEC and your reference number for this transaction is BHFHA6. Please retain this code for future reference.

A copy of your lodged return has automatically been sent to your email address. If you have not received the email within 24 hours please contact the AEC.

To save a printable copy of the lodged return to your computer please click this link [Save copy of lodged return](#).

[Back to main menu](#)

< Back Next >

From this screen you may save a PDF copy of your return. The AEC recommends that you save a copy of your return in case you need to print or refer to it later. The unique reference number

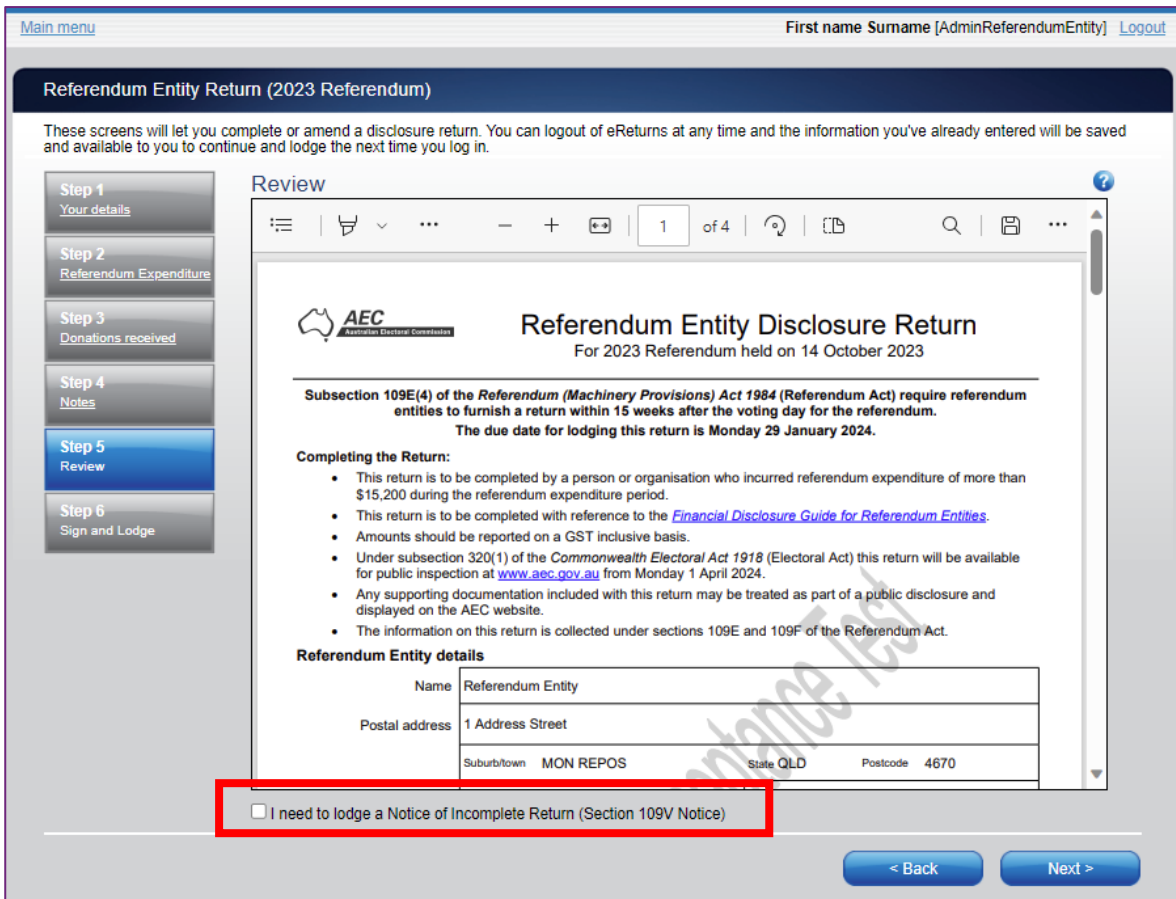
presented on this screen is also recorded on the return form in the bottom right hand corner. eReturns will also email you a copy of your lodged return by default.

Use the 'Main Menu' button in the top left corner to return to the Main Menu.

Lodging a Notice of Incomplete Return

eReturns will allow you to lodge a Notice of Incomplete Return online. For more information about when it is appropriate to lodge a Notice of Incomplete Return please consult the [Financial Disclosure guide for Referendum Entities](#) available on the AEC’s website at www.aec.gov.au.

To lodge a Notice of Incomplete Return in eReturns you will need to select the checkbox at the bottom of the “Step 5 – Review” screen.



The screenshot shows the 'Review' screen for a 'Referendum Entity Return (2023 Referendum)'. The sidebar on the left lists steps: Step 1 (Your details), Step 2 (Referendum Expenditure), Step 3 (Donations received), Step 4 (Notes), Step 5 (Review), and Step 6 (Sign and Lodge). The main content area is titled 'Review' and contains a document preview for a 'Referendum Entity Disclosure Return' for the 2023 Referendum held on 14 October 2023. The document text includes: 'Subsection 109E(4) of the Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984 (Referendum Act) require referendum entities to furnish a return within 15 weeks after the voting day for the referendum. The due date for lodging this return is Monday 29 January 2024.' It also lists 'Completing the Return' instructions and 'Referendum Entity details' (Name: Referendum Entity, Postal address: 1 Address Street, Suburb/town: MON REPOS, State: QLD, Postcode: 4670). At the bottom of the document preview, there is a checkbox labeled 'I need to lodge a Notice of Incomplete Return (Section 109V Notice)' which is highlighted with a red box. Navigation buttons for '< Back' and 'Next >' are visible at the bottom right.

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

Main menu First name Surname [AdminReferendumEntity] Logout

Referendum Entity Return (2020 Referendum)

These screens will let you complete or amend a disclosure return. You can logout of eReturns at any time and the information you've already entered will be saved and available to you to continue and lodge the next time you log in.

Step 1
Your details

Step 2
Referendum Expenditure

Step 3
Donations received

Step 4
Notes

Step 5
Review

Step 6
Sign and Lodge

Incomplete Return

Part 1: Incomplete Particulars
Please provide details of the information you believe is missing from the disclosure return.

Part 2a: Reason for incomplete particulars
Provide the reason/s you were unable to obtain the particulars listed in Part 1 above. For example, that you were unable to obtain records from particular branches or persons.

Part 2b: Attempts made to obtain this information
Detail all attempts made to obtain the information detailed in Part 1.

Part 3: Person/s who may be able to provide the missing particulars
List the name and address of any person/s who you believe can provide the missing particulars and the reason that you believe they have those particulars.

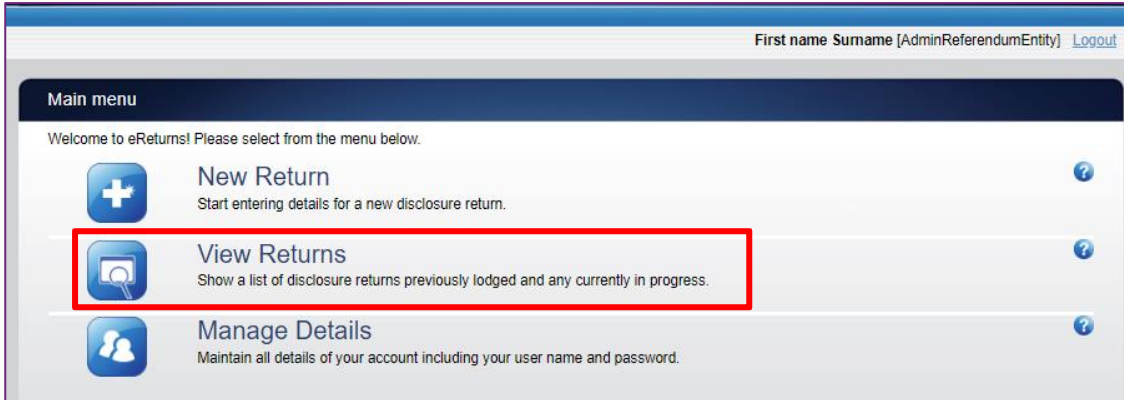
< Back
Next >

You are required to fill in all fields, detailing the information that is missing from your return, the reason why you were unable to obtain that information, who you believe may have the information which is missing, and why you believe that person has it. Once you have completed all the fields on the screen, click 'Next' to review the Notice of Incomplete Return.

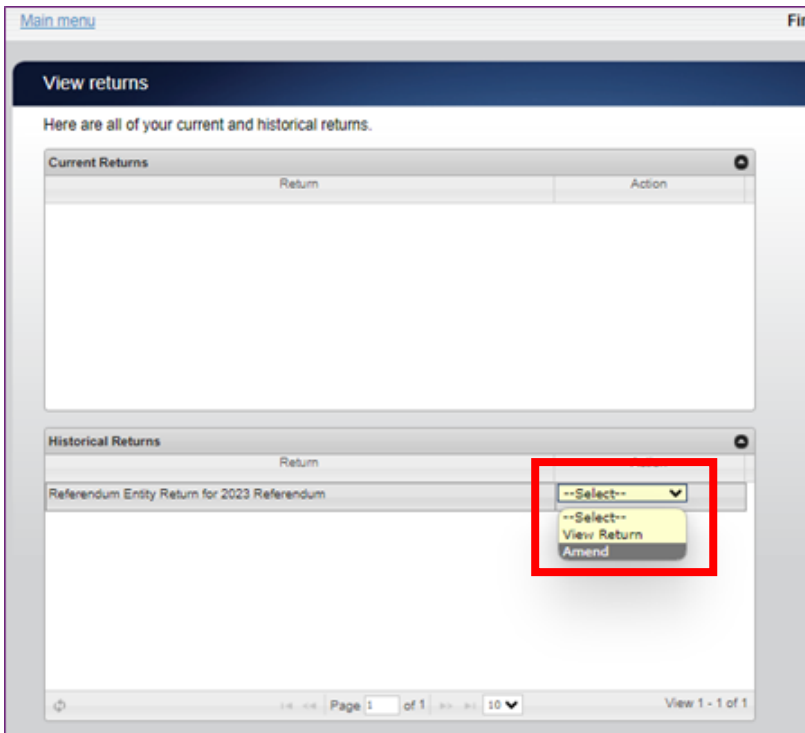
Once you have reviewed your Notice of Incomplete Return click 'Next' to go to the Sign and Lodge screen. To lodge your return and Notice of Incomplete Return follow the instructions at Step 7 – Sign and Lodge of this guide.

Amending a Return

If you need to amend your return, log into eReturns and Click on “View” returns.



A return can only be amended once it has been processed by the AEC. If you cannot see the option to ‘Amend’, please contact Disclosure & Compliance on 02 6271 4552 or by email at fad@aec.gov.au.



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.

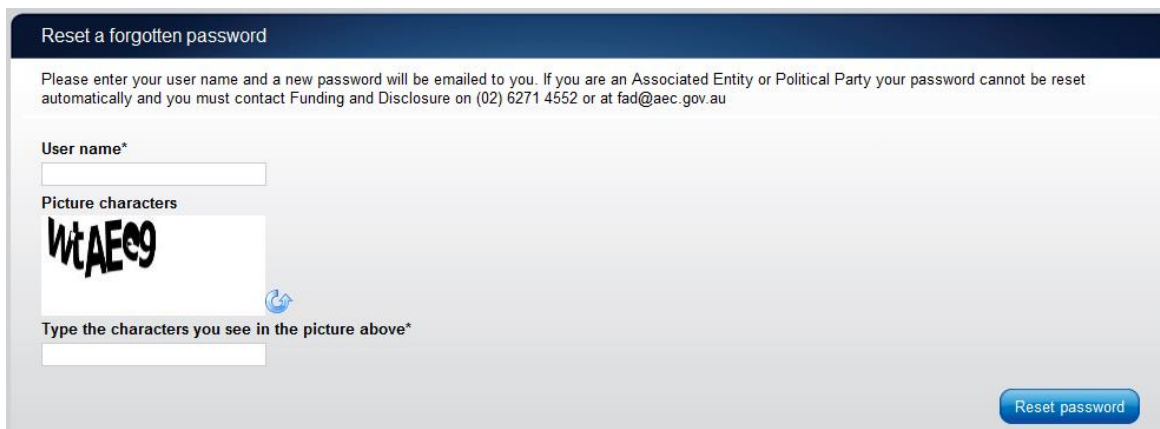
Troubleshooting

Forgotten Password

If you have forgotten your password, you can reset it online. This can be done using the forgotten password link on the eReturns front page. eReturns will send you an email with a new single use password in it.



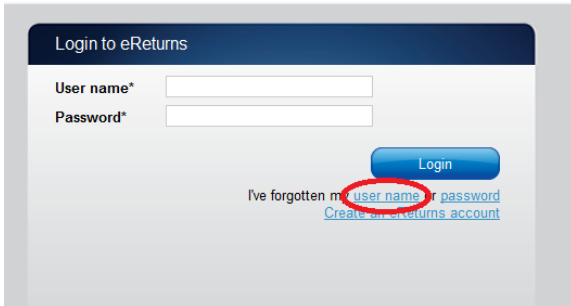
Clicking forgotten password will take you to the password reset screen where you will need to enter your user name the 'Picture characters' text on screen.



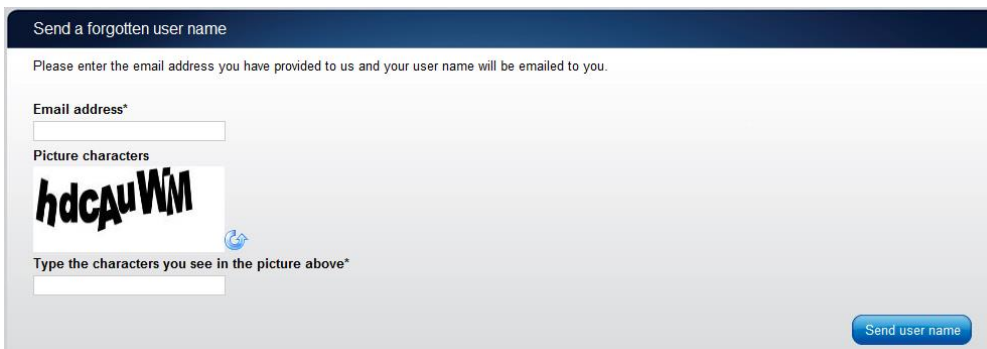
Alternatively, you can contact the Disclosure team on 02 6271 4552 or email at fad@aec.gov.au.

Forgotten User name

If you have forgotten your user name, you can retrieve it online. This can be done using the forgotten user name link of the eReturns front page. eReturns will send you an email containing your user name.



Clicking forgotten user name will take you to the user name retrieval screen where you will need to enter your email address and the CAPTCHA text on screen.



Alternatively, you can contact the Disclosure team on 02 6271 4552 or email fad@aec.gov.au.

Other problems

If you experience any difficulties while using eReturns, please contact the Disclosure team on 02 6271 4552 or email fad@aec.gov.au.