

CASE STUDY



The signatureless Letter of Authority

How Pension Lab used Criterion
standards to turn LoA requests into
a provider-ready digital workflow.



The signatureless Letter of Authority

Letters of Authority (LoAs) have long been one of the advice market's most persistent sources of friction.

For advisers, LoAs can mean repeated paperwork, wet signatures, scanning, post and manual chasing – creating delays at critical points in the client relationship, from onboarding through to reviews.

For providers, LoAs can mean incomplete requests, mismatched data, avoidable queries and operational effort – particularly when assessing whether the request is valid before the real work can even begin.

The challenge: process complexity and variation

The traditional LoA process is shaped by different request formats, data requirements and provider rules. Paper, email and provider-specific forms all add variation, creating unnecessary friction for advisers and providers and increasing the risk of delays, rework, avoidable queries and frustration.

Pension Lab's ambition: moving LoAs beyond paper

The ambition was clear: create a provider-focused digital LoA request service that advisers could use to submit the right information, in the right format, first time – with the potential for instant validation and faster progression into provider workflows.

To achieve this, Pension Lab used Criterion's LoA Request Standard as the foundation.

Why Pension Lab chose Criterion Standards

Pension Lab already had deep experience in the LoA market. Its leading digital LoA platform helps hundreds of advice firms send, track, receive and manage LoAs across pensions, investments and protection. Through this work, Pension Lab has seen first-hand how much friction sits in the process – from adviser administration and provider validation through to signatures, chasing and returned information.



Through its work with Criterion and FLAG (Fix LoA Action Group), Pension Lab recognised how standards could help reduce variation and create a common foundation for provider-ready digital LoA requests.

The solution: a standards-based instant LoA request

Using Criterion's LoA Request Standard, Pension Lab developed a provider-dedicated digital LoA service that enables advisers to complete requests using a standardised form built around the minimum information providers need.

When integrated with provider systems, the request can be validated instantly and placed directly into the provider's workflow, reducing the friction caused by incomplete, inconsistent or manually submitted LoAs.

Crucially, the solution also enabled instant verification through secure authentication and integration – **reducing reliance on wet signatures as the primary proof point and opening the door to a more modern LoA model.**

By building on Criterion standards, Pension Lab created a consistent data structure that can support wider market adoption and interoperability between providers, platforms, advisers and technology firms.

A standards-based digital LoA request helps advisers:

- use a consistent digital process
- provide the information providers need first time
- reduce paperwork, wet signatures and manual chasing
- avoid repeated provider-specific forms
- navigate fewer provider-specific requirements
- move client work forward faster

A standards-based digital request can help providers:

- receive complete and consistent LoA requests
- reduce manual validation and rework
- improve data quality from the start
- support faster triage and workflow routing
- reduce avoidable queries
- scale digital servicing for adviser firms

Innovation and interoperability

By building to Criterion standards, the solution supports interoperability from the outset. Providers are not locked into one closed approach or a single technology route. Instead, the same standardised foundation can support a wider ecosystem of technology partners and digital LoA services.

The outcome: standards enabling practical innovation

Pension Lab's instant LoA request service is now being piloted with several providers.

The same standards-based approach is also helping inform further innovation, including Pension Lab's LoA tracking and response engine, which is being piloted with large consumer and adviser platforms.

By creating a common structure for LoA requests, Criterion standards helped Pension Lab develop a provider-ready service that can support faster requests today, while laying the foundation for more connected LoA journeys in the future.

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“Pension Lab’s instant LoA request service shows the practical value of standards. By using Criterion’s LoA Request Standard as the foundation, Pension Lab has created a provider-ready service that helps reduce complexity and variation today, while supporting a more scalable and interoperable LoA model for the future.”

Nick Green

Strategy and Proposition Director,
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integration, innovation,
transfers and insight.**

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