



# Balance-rite Business Services

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## Ten Questions To Ask When Hiring A BAS Agent

If you've had enough of dealing with a shoebox full of receipts, a mess of paperwork, or spending excessive time sorting accounts, it may be time you considered hiring a BAS Agent (bookkeeper). Here are ten questions to ask, to help you choose the right one.

### 1. What Qualifications And Professional Memberships Do They Have?

The Tax Agent Services Bill 2008 (effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2010) requires anyone providing BAS services for a fee to be a registered BAS Agent with the [Tax Practitioners Board](#), and to work under a Professional Code of Conduct. If your BAS Agent is making any GST coding decisions and preparing subsequent BAS documents for lodgement, then this is the registration they require to protect your interests.

At a minimum, your BAS Agent should have qualifications such as a Certificate IV Financial Services. Look for someone who is a member of one of the various professional bookkeeping associations in Australia, such as [The Institute of Certified Bookkeepers](#), [Australian Bookkeepers Network](#), or the [Association of Accounting Technicians](#).

*Balance-rite Business Services are registered BAS Agents with the Tax Practitioners Board and work under the Professional Code of Conduct. We also hold membership with The Institute of Certified Bookkeepers.*

### 2. What Insurances Do They Have?

A registered BAS Agent (or Tax Agent) requires professional indemnity insurance, and they should be able to provide a certificate of currency upon request. Your BAS Agent should also hold either work injury insurance cover (WorkCover) or personal accident insurance, along with a public liability policy – especially if they are attending your offices.

*Balance-rite Business Services holds professional indemnity insurance to a limit compliant with the Tax Practitioners Board, is registered with [ReturnToWorkSA](#) (WorkCover), and maintains a public liability policy.*

### 3. Who Will Undertake Data Entry And BAS Preparation?

Establish whether the work will be consistently undertaken by the same Accountant/BAS Agent or by members of a team, and whether the work will be reviewed. Check what quality assurance procedures are in place. Confirm if any portion of the work will be outsourced to third-parties, which potentially may not be based in Australia, may not hold the necessary registrations, and/or may not adhere to legal requirements.

*Based on discussion about your business's requirements and preferences, Balance-rite Business Services would recommend which team member is able to provide you with the best service and expertise for your specific requirements. All BAS lodgements are checked and processed via our quality assurance program, and signed off on by a Registered BAS Agent prior to lodgement.*

### 4. What Experience / References Do They Have?

References may not always be reliable, but it is worth taking the effort to do a little research before hiring a BAS Agent.

*Balance-rite Business Services are happy to provide references from current clients and/or referees.*

## **5. If The Work Is Done In An Accounting Package, Who Retains Ownership Of The Data File?**

Many accounting organisations will process your work using their software, and save the work as a data file. This saves you the expense of purchasing the bookkeeping software upfront, but, if you wish to bring bookkeeping in-house at a future date, transfer of ownership of the data file (and thereby previous work) may not be possible or may incur a nominal fee.

*At Balance-rite Business Services, all source documentation and your accounting data file is generally available to you upon request – it is your data, we only expect to be paid for the work required to organise it. Please discuss with us if you have any concerns.*

## **6. Where Will The Work Be Done?**

Will the BAS Agent work onsite at your premises, offsite at their premises, or log-in remotely to your server?

*Balance-rite Business Services are delivered as a flexible arrangement. At our initial interview, we will discuss your exact or preferred requirements, and how we can best support your business. Our services are entirely bespoke, and can be adapted as the needs of your business change.*

## **7. Who Will Be Responsible For Rectification Work?**

Mistakes may date back years; corrections can be costly exercises, involving re-keying data, reworking BAS, and reviewing end-of-year financial statements. Will the bookkeeping work be redone free of charge, or will the charges be reimbursed?

*Upon our commencement of service as your BAS Agent service provider, we will take responsibility for the validity of data. In the event that a mistake is made and identified as solely ours, we will rectify it at the earliest convenience, and at our own cost.*

## **8. What Do They Require To Process The Work?**

Upon hiring a BAS Agent, establish what they will need from you on a regular basis. Who will sort receipts? Who will write account codes and receipt explanations? It is beneficial to decide the level of service that you would like to employ prior to hiring, and to organise clear documentation for the BAS Agent to process. More comprehensive support services can usually be provided as preferred or required.

*Balance-rite Business Services have weekly, monthly, and quarterly checklists available to assist you with organising the required documents for processing. We never assume anything, and will always communicate with you regarding any documents we are unsure about.*

## **9. How Will They Communicate With Other Service Providers?**

Ideally, your BAS Agent and other professionals (such as your Tax Agent) should work as a team to achieve the best outcome for your business. Each have important roles to play, and the facilitation of clear and constructive communication will enhance this process. Where accounting records have been prepared by a BAS Agent registered with the Tax Practitioners Board, this should significantly reduce the amount of time required by your Tax Agent in reviewing the transaction history, reconciling GST transactions, verifying values, and resolving enquiries.

*With your authority, we will make contact with your professional service providers as required to discuss how they would like end of fiscal year accounts and/or quarterly accounts presented, and any other preferences they have in relation to your business. Our aim is to support you and to save you time and costs.*

## **10. What Will It Cost?**

The benefits of a high quality BAS Agent and bookkeeping service extend beyond financial gain. Knowing that you have a reliable and trustworthy provider who is focused on the best outcomes for you allows you to concentrate on the main parts of your business, decreases stress, and lets your business work on what it is good at.

*Balance-rite Business Services currently charge between \$70 and \$150 per hour, depending on the level of complexity and experience required. With our fee structure and staff, we are able to provide a thorough and comprehensive service that we are proud to call ours.*