



FSC and Publishers

Are you a publisher? Do you produce print publications in-house or contract external printers to produce your materials? This factsheet outlines the ways in which you can use FSC certified materials and the FSC trademarks.

What is FSC?

FSC provides global standards for forest management, which cover environmental, social and economic aspects. The well-being of forest communities and ecosystems is as important as replacing trees, and FSC is the only wood certification scheme endorsed by WWF, Greenpeace and The Woodland Trust. Thousands of paper sector companies world-wide now have FSC certification.

The FSC system provides a way of tracking forest products through independently verified Chain of Custody certification. This has to cover every stage of commercial processing before the final product can carry the FSC label. If the chain is broken, no claims can be made.

How to ensure that your product is FSC certified...

Products can only carry an FSC label if they are produced and labelled by a company with a valid FSC Chain of Custody certificate. You can use the FSC certificate database to search for FSC certified printers and to verify that a company holds a valid certificate. To ensure your printed materials are FSC certified:

- Use an FSC certified printer
- Specify FSC certified materials
- Request that the printer applies the FSC label

Using the FSC Trademarks

Only companies that hold FSC certification or an FSC Trademark Licence can use the FSC logo and promote their products as being FSC certified. So, what is the difference between the two?

Chain of Custody Certification

Companies that hold FSC Chain of Custody certification have their own FSC licence number and are able to label products and pass on the FSC claim to their customers. An FSC product can only carry an FSC label if each company in the supply chain holds Chain of Custody certification. This ensures that products have been checked at every stage of processing. Publishers holding Chain of Custody certification have the advantage of being able to use their own FSC licence number in-house and are free to source their own FSC board with any printer (certified or uncertified) under an outsourcing policy.

Trademark Licences

Trademark Licences are aimed at companies that are selling-on finished, FSC-labelled products to end users. The licence allows the use of off-product FSC trademarks in promotional materials, both digital and print.

The trademark Licence does not allow you to label products or pass on FSC claims to your customers.

Obtaining a Trademark Licence

Please email trademark@fsc-uk.org for an application form. Further information on Trademark Licences can be found [here](#).

Do I need Chain of Custody certification or a Trademark Licence?

Many publishers are certified as it enables them to use their own licence number on materials. If this is not a priority and you are not looking to pass on the FSC claim (re-sellers such as bookshops are unlikely to request this), a Trademark Licence might be more suitable.



Look out for the FSC logo on the next book you buy or borrow.

Benefits - allowed to...	FSC Chain of Custody Certification	FSC Trademark Licence
Label your products (with your own licence code).	✓	✗
Use any printer (certified or uncertified) or print in-house.	✓	✗
Source your own board.	✓	✗
Pass on claims to your customers.	✓	✗
Use the FSC trademarks in brochures, point of sale materials, on websites and in press releases.	✓	✓



The FSC Labels

The FSC label is in most cases directly printed onto the publication and is available in several colour formats. Custom colour variations will require special approval via your printer's certification body.

The use of the smaller "mini label" may be approved for paper items A5 or smaller. Further information can be found here

FAQs

Q: Do I have to hold FSC certification to publish FSC labelled materials?

A: No, but your printer must be FSC certified and must source the board on your behalf.

Q: Can I make a text claim instead of using a label?

A: No. The FSC trademark standards do not permit the use of text-only claims such as 'printed on FSC certified paper'.

Q: We do not hold FSC certification and neither does our printer but, as they are printing on FSC paper, can I just state 'Printed on FSC certified paper'?

A: No, the acronym FSC and the name Forest Stewardship Council are registered trademarks and such text-only claims are not allowed.

Q: Will every design have to be submitted to the certification body for approval?

A: The approvals process is managed by the FSC certificate holder. A generic format may be approved for use on all your publications as long as an approved FSC label is being properly used and the printer is considered by its certification body to have good track record.

Q: Does my finishing company need to be FSC certified?

A: No, by this time the products have already been printed with the label.

Q: Can I use the FSC trademarks on my website or in a catalogue?

A: Yes, as long as you hold either FSC certification or a Trademark Licence. Contact FSC UK for further details: trademark@fsc-uk.org.

The four largest UK book publishers, Hachette, Penguin Random House, HarperCollins and Pan Macmillan all hold FSC Chain of Custody certification.



Getting FSC Certified

1. Contact an FSC accredited certification body or small business group scheme (bear in mind that charges may vary so it's worth shopping around).
2. Select a body or scheme and arrange for them to audit your company.