

Adapting cash handling machines to accept polymer banknotes

1. What are cash handling machines?

Cash handling machines need to be adapted for new notes. These include self-service check-outs, desktop counters, ATMs, ticket machines, and any other machine that weighs, counts, checks, sorts, accepts, dispenses or recycles notes.

2. My business uses cash handling machines. What action do I need to take?

- Ensure you know which cash handling machines are being operated by your business.
- Contact the manufacturer or supplier of your machines to discuss what adaptations will be required, and when they will be available. For most machines, a software update will be needed.
- Before purchasing any new machines, check if any adaptations will be needed for forthcoming polymer notes.
- Aim to implement adaptations to your machines before any new note is issued and consider the changes required to your machines once a note is withdrawn from circulation.

3. Who should I contact to find out what I need to do to adapt my cash handling machines?

You should engage directly with the machine manufacturer or supplier. Most cash handling machines will need a software update so that they are able to recognise and authenticate the new note design. Some machines may also need a hardware adaptation.

4. I use weighing scales to count banknotes. Will they need to be adapted?

Yes. Polymer notes are slightly lighter than paper notes. So you will need to separate the polymer and paper notes before you weigh them; and the scales will need to be calibrated for the weight of polymer notes. Check how to do this with the machine manufacturer or supplier.

5. How do I load an ATM cassette with polymer banknotes?

Each ATM Manufacturer will have a set of procedures for cash cassette loading. You should contact your ATM manufacturer to get a copy of these procedures.

There are some basic guidance steps you should always follow when filling a cassette to reduce the risk of note jams:

1. Poor quality notes and foreign objects are to be removed and not used
2. All note bundles must be fanned
3. Note bundles must be inserted in alternate orientations
4. When refilling cassettes the new note bundles must be placed in front of the existing cash

Due to the design of the £10, £20 and future £50 polymer note including a tactile feature, it is important that notes are placed into cassettes in different orientations. If the note orientation is constant and not mixed the tactile feature can cause an increased thickness on one side of the cassette which may lead to dispense related faults.

6. My business has an ATM that is filled with takings from the till. What will I have to do to change over to dispensing the new notes?

Your ATM may need to be adapted to dispense the new notes because they are a smaller size and a different design from the current notes. You can continue to fill your ATM with paper banknotes until your ATM is converted to dispense polymer notes only. Your ATM supplier will be in touch with you to schedule the adaptation.

7. My business hosts an ATM that is filled by a Cash in Transit company. What will I have to do to change over to dispensing the new notes?

You do not need to do anything. The ATM operator and Cash in Transit company will take responsibility for switching over to the new notes. If in doubt, check with your ATM operator.

8. My business uses self-service tills. What will I need to do to prepare?

You should engage directly with the machine manufacturer or supplier. In general:

To accept payment with any new note, self-service tills need a software update. This should be done before the issue date. The till will then be able to accept payment with both the old and new notes.

To dispense change with the new polymer notes, the dispense cassette will need to be adjusted for the new note size. You will not be able to dispense a mix of paper and polymer notes of the same denomination from a single cassette.