

obsr

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP
WITH ADVISERS

obsr
OLD BROAD STREET RESEARCH LTD

“Old Broad Street Research occupies a unique position in the financial services industry between product providers, fund management groups and intermediaries. We are privately owned and fiercely independent – attributes we feel enable us to provide advisers with robust investment research and related services.”

Richard Downs, Managing Director

HOW WE WORK

At OBSR we do things differently from other research companies. For our business, integrity and independence are absolutely crucial.

Our approach is underpinned by a number of important industry considerations. Firstly, Treating Customers Fairly (TCF) is a fundamental principle for everyone involved in the industry and our research can help ascertain which products are suitable for particular types of client and also support a consistent approach to investment research. Secondly, we all know that past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance, so we believe that in-depth, qualitative research rather than just a quantitative assessment of funds is absolutely vital to deliver robust investment advice.

To support these outcomes OBSR remains committed to producing high quality and totally independent fund research and ratings, as we firmly believe that our products and services built around these are becoming increasingly important to professional advisers and the service they provide to clients. Changes to the regulatory environment will only strengthen this requirement.

We appreciate there are many ways of managing funds. Our research process is designed to highlight different approaches and to identify the best of each when applied to different investor circumstances.

We look at the entire universe of UK domiciled funds, including all multi-manager funds and life and pensions funds, to give impartial, whole of market coverage.

Our coverage has been extended to the offshore fund universe with the OBSR Offshore Ratings Service launching in early 2009 to complement the existing onshore service. The philosophy and approach to reviewing and rating funds is entirely consistent with the existing OBSR methodology and a similar range of advisory and bespoke services will be available using the offshore fund universe.

We have a proprietary approach to categorising funds, as in our view the industry sector definitions are too broadly drawn and allow a range of different approaches to sit together. The UK All Companies sector for example, which contains in excess of 340 funds, is symptomatic of the problem. Instead we subdivide the investment universe into much tighter groupings, which we term OBSR Categories™. In our view this allows more meaningful like-for-like comparisons to be made. Our OBSR Ratings are then given, representing a respected and independent mark of quality.

We don't believe in simply selling off the shelf products. Our business is providing solutions that meet individual needs, no matter the size or scale of the organisation. Through a combination of products and services, as well as consultancy, we're proud of the fact that ultimately all our services help intermediaries provide suitable and fair advice to their clients.

Independent research – the core of OBSR

Our business model ensures we provide unbiased and impartial research as we do not charge fund managers to research their funds; we only charge a license fee to managers wishing to publicise OBSR Fund Ratings.

This independent research is the engine that drives our business. Naturally, all the products and services we have developed for advisers feed off this central resource.

We have a team of investment professionals whose sole job is to analyse funds day in, day out. Their research feeds into a disciplined, forward-looking process that has been in place since 1994. If you would like to find out more about our research approach, please refer to the separate document: "OBSR – Our research philosophy and approach". We also have an experienced team of product researchers and account managers, who are responsible for delivering services to our clients.

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KEY SERVICES FOR ADVISERS

Our growing range of products and services has been developed to support advisers in delivering suitable product and investment advice that is both consistent and robust.

Bespoke Panelling Service

As the name suggests, our panelling service is designed to accurately reflect each individual adviser's requirements and business philosophy, no matter if they are financial planners, whole of market or multi-tied distributors.

There is no one size fits all solution. Fund and Product panels are constructed using criteria set by the adviser or firm. The output from this consultancy process is therefore unique and reflects a blend of the requirements of the adviser and the views of OBSR.

OBSR Selector

Selector is a unique web-based tool that taps into our vast investment and product research database. It provides advisers with the ability to select suitable investments from our Rated universe that match a client's attitude to risk and asset allocation as well as their product needs. Selector gives access to the entire universe of Rated Funds and Factsheets, including Multi-Manager, Life and Pension funds, in addition to Unit Trusts and OEICs, with comprehensive search and filtering facilities.

Selector is evolving to keep pace with the increasing complexities of investment advice and regulation. It enables advisers to access our independent investment research on specific funds, profile funds by type and even construct portfolios. There are also extensive facilities to review and download product information, presented in a consistent format which can include the universe of Rated Funds specific to each product.

Whether advising clients on protection or insured products, fund or wrap platforms, or even SIPPs – Selector can support an adviser's recommendations and be tailored to reflect different business models. In addition, all searches and recommendations can be stored to ensure that compliance and consistency issues are taken care of.

Selector is totally secure and easy to use. There is no complicated software to install. All you need is broadband internet access and we also offer support and training to get you started.

For more information on how Selector can enhance your advice process please visit www.obsr.co.uk/selector.

Bespoke consultancy services

Our bespoke consultancy services involve working closely with clients to develop solutions to their investment needs, primarily in the areas of fund and manager selection. We are also able to advise on governance issues, provide regular fund reporting, undertake specific analysis and provide strategic planning advice and recommendations.

Model portfolios

Many advisers now use some form of asset allocation tool. Although the output from these tools is helpful, populating them to produce a coherent solution for the client can be difficult.

OBSR can help by using its detailed knowledge of funds to construct and maintain portfolios that match a required risk quotient by blending funds with complimentary investment styles. OBSR is happy to work with whatever asset allocation tools the adviser uses.

Panels are constructed using criteria set by the adviser or firm, often with a strategic and commercial overlay.

FUND RATING SERVICE

Our Fund Rating Service provides advisers with a free to use, independent fund research service based on our proven methodology.

Onshore Fund Rating Service

The Fund Rating Service focuses on UK authorised unit trusts, UK OEICs and 'UK friendly' offshore funds. At the current time around 10% of the entire fund universe has been awarded an OBSR A, AA or AAA Rating.

These Ratings are a mark of quality and indicate a fund that is, for its type, consistently producing the returns it set out to deliver.

There are over 1,600 intermediary firms and in excess of 3,500 IFAs registered to use our Rating Services. Once logged into the website, advisers can access factsheets and commentary on rated funds, get the latest news and perform a variety of searches to find suitable funds. For more information and to register please visit www.obsrfundratings.co.uk



OBSR Advisory Services

OBSR Advisory Services is a separate business regulated by the FSA that exists to help advisers build and launch their own funds – typically in a Multi-Manager or Fund-of-Funds structure.

OBSR Advisory Services works with advisers wishing to establish their own investment funds. We work collaboratively with our adviser clients during every step of the process. Firstly we help to establish the aims, parameters and target market for the fund. Using our in-house research, we then consider the best mix of providers and funds which when blended together will achieve the stated objectives. We are then able to populate the fund, using our fund manager selection process and provide dynamic, proactive fund recommendations on an ongoing basis. If needed, we can provide training and education for staff members.

OBSR Advisory Services also has very strong relationships with a range of partners, who can provide all the support services needed when launching a fund, from Authorised Corporate Director and trustee appointment to asset allocation.

Very often our services are retained as an independent, integral part of the clients' ongoing investment governance process.

Our OBSR Fund Ratings are given as a respected and independent mark of quality.

ABOUT OLD BROAD STREET RESEARCH

OBSR's research is respected by fund managers, product providers and professional intermediaries alike, with OBSR Fund Ratings widely acknowledged as an independent mark of quality.

Established in 1999 by Richard Downs and Richard Romer-Lee, the OBSR Executive Directors have since been joined by Nigel Whittingham. Between them they have over 75 years of directly relevant experience and are all well known and respected in their fields of expertise.

There is a wider team which has been built through the recruitment of highly motivated and respected individuals from all areas of the financial services industry. Between them there is a broad mix of expertise including Asset Management, Multi-Manager, Private Client stock broking, IFAs, Research and Product Provider backgrounds. All bring relevant experience to boost the research and consultancy capability of OBSR for the different types of client.

OBSR works for many of the best known firms in the industry, offering products and services to fund managers, product providers, wraps and platforms, large distribution firms as well as individual advisers.

Contact us

To find out more about any of our products or services for advisers please visit www.obsr.co.uk, call on 020 7029 3660 or email us using one of the addresses below.

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