IFSL
Fund Services

31 December 2021

The Value Assessment Report
IFSL Signia OEIC

Industry knowledge,
service quality
and fund expertise

Value assessment report

This report describes the value assessment we have carried out for the following funds (the Funds):

- IFSL Signia Balanced Fund
- IFSL Signia Conservative Fund
- IFSL Signia Growth Fund
- IFSL Signia Sovereign Fund

1. The Value Assessment Report

Dear Investors,

Investment Fund Services Ltd (IFSL) is the authorised fund management company (AFM) for the Funds covered by this report. As the AFM, we are responsible for operating the Funds in the interests of our investors. Producing this report is an important way in which we discharge that responsibility. We are also accountable to our regulator, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA).

We carry out a value assessment at least yearly for each of our funds. The team who carry out the value assessments includes two independent non-executive directors. A part of this independent challenge is to ensure particular regard is given to investor outcomes. As Chair of our Board of Directors, I have responsibility to ensure we carry out these value assessments.

The purpose of the value assessment is to consider whether the payments that the prospectus allows to be taken from the Funds, are justified in the context of the overall value delivered to investors. After each assessment, we publish this report to provide you with our conclusions and explanations about its key aspects.

When carrying out the value assessment, we have been guided by three key considerations. These are:

- The rules of the FCA.
- Making the report meaningful for investors.
- The importance of measuring value and not just cost. Each are now explained in more detail.

I. The rules of the FCA

These require us to consider certain minimum criteria. There are seven set by the FCA.

FCA Value Assessment Criteria	Summary of FCA Value Assessment Criteria
Performance	**Are the Funds performing against their investment objectives?**
Comparable Market Rates	**Are the Funds priced similarly to competitors?**
Comparable Services	**Are Funds priced reasonably compared to other products with similar investment strategies?**
ACD Costs	**Are fees charged to investors reasonable and appropriate?**
Economies of Scale	**Are economies of scale generated and passed on to investors?**
Quality of Service	**Does the range and quality of service offer value?**
Classes of Units	**Are investors in the cheapest available unit class based on their characteristics?**

Each is considered under its own heading in the following pages.

We are not limited to the seven that are prescribed but to date we have found they are sufficiently broad to allow us to carry out the value assessment. We keep this under review.

II. Making the report meaningful for investors

We aim to provide an assessment that is meaningful for all investors. We recognise individuals will have their own reasons for holding the Funds and their own specific goals. We have been guided by the following considerations for the Funds:

- The specific investment objectives as set out in the prospectus.
- The investment policies and strategies.
- Any relevant benchmarks, including any against which performance is measured.
- The fund's target market (the types of investors who could be expected to consider buying it).

We have considered these factors as at 31 August 2021, not merely across a single year but particularly in relation to performance – across timescales which better reflect the periods over which investors could be expected to hold the Funds.

III. The difference between assessing value and simply measuring cost

We believe that the best value for investors does not necessarily mean simply the lowest costs.

As an example, all the Funds in this report are actively managed. This means the investment manager chooses which investments to make, based on their own research and processes. This approach can be expected to result in higher costs being taken from the Funds than for passive funds. Passive funds are where investments are chosen based on an index or because of the size of the company, for example, and not based on a decision by an investment manager. However, while we consider the higher costs as part of the value assessment, we will also look at other factors, such as the actual returns achieved for investors, which are net of these costs.

Nevertheless, we are clear that any value assessment includes an assessment of the controls over costs borne by the Funds.

IV. The funds' different share classes

Funds typically have more than one share class. Share classes in the Signia Funds differ only in the way that they treat income payments (either by distributing income payments or by accumulating them and reflecting this in the price) or by their currency. There are also some differences in the charges of the share classes, as explained in more detail later in this report.

You can call us free on 0808 178 9322 or see your half yearly statement to find out which share class you hold. You can also ask your adviser or platform.

In closing, I remind you that the value of your Fund can fall or rise in value and it can do so daily. We carried out our assessment with performance figures as at 31 August 2021. You can always find up to date performance figures on our website or from your adviser or platform.

I hope in turn you find this report of value. All of us at IFSL welcome any feedback on how to improve these reports for the future.

With my kind regards,

Guy Sears

Independent non-executive Chair of the Board

2. The characteristics of each of the Funds

When we described our approach above, we said we considered the objectives and investment policies. In this section we summarise these characteristics for each of the Funds. Under each fund name we set out the objective and the benchmark against which you can assess the performance of the Fund.

There can be three types of benchmark and these are explained below.

The benchmarks

A 'target' benchmark is used to define the fund's target performance (or to trigger a payment from scheme property such as a performance fee).

A 'comparator' benchmark is used as a performance comparator for the fund ('performance benchmark').

A 'constraint' benchmark restricts the composition of a portfolio

The latest version of the above information can always be read by looking at the Key Investor Information Document. These are available on our website at www.ifslfunds.com. They also set out the investment policy, which explains in more detail how each Fund aims to achieve its objective.

IFSL Signia Balanced Fund

Investment objective

The aim of the Fund is to increase the value of your investment in excess of 5% a year, net of fees, over any 5 year period, however, there is no certainty this will be achieved. This is through a combination of capital growth, which is profit on investments held and income, which is money paid out of investments such as dividends from shares and interest from bonds.

Benchmarks

Comparator – IA Mixed Investment 20-60% Shares Sector

Constraint – N/A

Target – 5% per annum over 5 years

IFSL Signia Conservative Fund

Investment objective

The aim of the Fund is to increase the value of your investment in excess of 3% a year, net of fees, over any 5 year period, however, there is no certainty this will be achieved. This is through a combination of capital growth, which is profit on investments held and income, which is money paid out of investments such as dividends from shares and interest from bonds.

Benchmarks

Comparator – IA Mixed Investment 0-35% Shares Sector

Constraint – N/A

Target – 3% per annum over 5 years

IFSL Signia Growth Fund

Investment objective

The aim of the Fund is to increase the value of your investment in excess of 7% a year, net of fees, over any 5 year period, however, there is no certainty this will be achieved. This is through a combination of capital growth, which is profit on investments held and income, which is money paid out of investments such as dividends from shares and interest from bonds.

Benchmarks

Comparator – IA Mixed Investment 40-85% Shares Sector

Constraint – N/A

Target – 7% per annum over 5 years

IFSL Signia Sovereign Fund

Investment objective

The aim of the Fund is to increase the value of your investment by more than 1% above cash a year, net of fees, over any 3 year period. Cash is measured by the Bank of England's interest rate benchmark, SONIA.

The increased value comes from a combination of income, which is money paid out of investments such as interest from bonds and dividends from ETFs, and capital growth, which is profit on investments held.

There is no certainty that the aim of the Fund will be achieved.

Benchmarks

Comparator – N/A

Constraint – N/A

Target – SONIA + 1% per annum over 3 years

3. Range and quality of services

What have we considered?

In this section we have considered the first area of the value assessment. This covers the quality of service we provide and the quality of service provided by any person to which any aspect of the Funds' management has been delegated or who provides services to us.

How have we made our assessment?

We have reviewed and given consideration to the services delivered and how they affect investors and the delivery of each fund objective. We also give consideration to the quality of the service delivered by IFSL and each external provider.

We have considered, as we do for all value assessments, whether they have been managed within their investment restrictions and if there have been any operational errors or complaints. This is reviewed by Fund and by Share Class if more than one Share Class exists. There are no material issues which we consider affect our conclusions about quality of service in this assessment period.

We have reported under three subsections:

Services in relation to the required independent third parties – Depositary, Custodian, Hedging Agent and Auditor.

Other third parties – The Investment Manager and the Sponsor

In-house functions – Our own provision of services to the Funds

In this part of our assessment, if there are any material distinctions between the Funds or the share classes within the Funds, we will specify this.

Services in relation to required independent third parties

The following section considers the required independent third-party service providers: the Depositary, the Custodian and the Auditor.

The Depositary

The Depositary is an independent entity charged with various regulatory responsibilities to a fund. It is a key part of the oversight of these Funds.

The Depositary is paid from the fund it oversees directly under the terms of the prospectus. Its fees are shown in the statutory accounts.

As AFM we are responsible for selecting the Depositary, negotiating its fees and other commercial terms and for monitoring its performance and suitability on an ongoing basis.

In order to ensure we receive a good level of service we only work with a limited number of Depositaries at any one time. There are presently two across the entire range of funds for which we, and our associated companies, are the AFM. The Depositary for these Funds is NatWest Trustee and Depositary Services Limited (NatWest).

We have assessed the Depositary based on a mix of criteria including but not limited to:

- size and reputation within the industry
- geographical relevance for the Funds' strategies and investors
- service levels
- history of interactions
- resource and expertise
- costs and charges

Our interactions with them lead to constructive dialogue and challenge as we at IFSL work in collaboration with them to prioritise good outcomes for our fund investors.

The costs chargeable to the Funds by NatWest were reviewed by us prior to the launch of the Funds. We regularly check the fees paid to our service providers to ensure they deliver value when considered against the service we receive. Our next review has commenced and we expect this to conclude in Q1 2022.

The Custodian

The Custodian is an independent entity responsible for holding the assets of a fund. Again, this role is key in ensuring good outcomes for investors.

The Custodian is paid from these Funds directly under the terms of the prospectus. Its fees are shown in the statutory accounts. It is appointed by the Depositary but will be selected, and commercial terms will be negotiated and agreed, by us as the AFM.

Along with the Depositary, we review and monitor the performance of the Custodian and review the charges made to the Funds.

In order to ensure we receive a good level of service we only work with a very limited number of Custodians at any one time. There are presently three across the entire range of funds for which we, and our associated companies, are the AFM. The Custodian for these Funds is HSBC Bank PLC.

We have assessed the Custodian based on a mix of criteria including but not limited to:

- size and reputation within the industry
- geographical relevance for the Funds' strategies and investors
- service levels
- history of interactions
- resource and expertise
- costs and charges

We at IFSL work in collaboration with them to prioritise good outcomes for our investors.

We regularly check the fees paid and compare these against our other service providers to ensure they deliver value when considered against the service we receive and the fees achieved by other funds for which we are AFM.

We last carried out this review of the costs chargeable to the Funds by the Custodian during the second quarter of this year. This resulted in a lower ad-valorem fee being applied to the funds under management with IFSL.

The Hedging Agent

The Hedging Agent is a third party responsible for providing currency hedging services in relation to the hedged share classes.

As AFM we are entitled to charge a fee for the additional administration of these share classes under the terms of the prospectus. We then use this fee to pay for the services of the Hedging Agent. These fees are shown in the statutory accounts.

It is selected and appointed by us, as AFM, and we are responsible for negotiating the commercial terms, including the fees, charges and expenses to the Funds share classes.

The Hedging Agent for these Funds is HSBC Bank plc.

We have assessed the agent based on a mix of criteria including but not limited to:

- size and reputation within the industry
- expertise, scale and involvement with regulatory and industry change
- appropriateness to overall business scale
- appropriateness for the range of funds for which we are AFM

We check the fees paid and compare these against our other service providers to ensure they deliver value when considered against the service we receive and the fees achieved by other funds for which we are AFM.

The Auditor

The Auditor is an independent entity responsible for auditing the financial statements of the Funds.

The Auditor is paid from these Funds directly under the terms of the prospectus. Its fees are shown in the statutory accounts.

It is selected and appointed by us, as AFM, and we are responsible for negotiating the commercial terms, including the audit fees they charge.

We have assessed the auditors based on a mix of criteria including but not limited to:

- size and reputation within the industry
- expertise, scale and involvement with regulatory and industry change
- appropriateness to overall business scale
- appropriateness for the range of funds for which we are AFM

We undertook a review of the Auditor during the first quarter of 2019. The review, which took into account each of the factors above (in addition to the costs to be borne by the funds) resulted in us continuing to utilise the services of Ernst & Young.

Other third parties – appointments and outsourcing

This section refers to the delegation of certain functions to, or the appointment of, an external entity. Such arrangements are not required by regulation but may be entered into at our discretion.

The Investment Manager and Sponsor

We have appointed Signia Wealth Limited (Signia) to manage the investments within the Funds. Signia are also the Sponsor and are responsible for the promotion and distribution of the Funds. Signia receives a share of the annual management charge payable to us under the terms of the prospectus.

We have assessed the services of the Investment Manager and Sponsor based on a mix of criteria including but not limited to:

- resource and expertise
- adherence to the Fund's investment objective and policy and the way that the Investment Manager invested the Fund's assets to achieve them
- investment research, which is funded by Signia themselves and is not an additional charge to the Funds
- its control of transaction costs (which the Funds pay) and how trades are executed
- whether they have been managed within their investment restrictions
- a review of any operational errors or complaints
- the timeliness with which complete and accurate data is provided to us
- how the Funds are distributed

Having regard to these factors and our oversight and governance more generally, we conclude that the charges taken for these services, were justified based on the overall value delivered to investors.

The results of our review of the services provided and the manner in which they were delivered, are discussed in more detail under the 'Performance' section below.

In-house functions – the quality of our own services

Governance and oversight

We dedicate senior manager and board level resource to our governance structures, including Product Governance, Investment, Risk and other operational committees. Combined with our model of running most services in-house, we believe that this level of governance helps us to safeguard the best interests of investors.

As AFM, we are responsible for overseeing any party that provides services to our funds and agreeing commercial terms for those services. We continuously review our service providers to ensure they continue to meet the high standards we expect for our investors.

Administration

In the UK fund industry, it is not uncommon for an AFM to use third parties to carry out fund administration services. This may include dealing and settling purchases and sales of units in the Funds, calculating the Funds' dealing prices and maintaining the register of unit-holders in the Funds.

We maintain our own systems and resources in order to carry these activities out ourselves. We do this so that we are able to retain specialist operational expertise and maintain transparency in our processes. This also means we can direct investment into our people and our technology in a cost effective manner, which we feel brings benefits to investors.

Investor communications and relations with investors

We have a dedicated investor support team and, with the exception of some printing and publication work, all communication with investors is conducted by in-house staff, who provide support and information to end investors and their intermediaries. Working alongside our fund administration staff, this team benefit from technical training and specialist knowledge, enabling them to provide an efficient and responsive service for our investors.

Additional competencies

In addition to our in-house expertise we maintain close relationships with recognised specialist law firms, accountants, trade bodies and training providers to maintain an up-to-date understanding of legal and regulatory expectations and best practice.

Conclusion

Overall, we are satisfied with the quality of services provided to the Funds by third parties or in-house.

4. Performance

When assessing the value represented by the performance achieved for these Funds we have considered an in depth package of information. This allows us to consider the performance having regard to the investment objective (and policy) of each Fund. A fund's objective may envisage that success is to be measured over a period greater than a year. For example, it may say that the fund aims to grow your investment over a 5 year period. We bear such timescales in mind in forming our assessments of performance.

Within the above context, for each Fund, we consider the:

- comparative outcome relative to their benchmark
- volatility (a measure that considers how often, and by how much, the value of an investment goes up and down relative to its average or to a benchmark)
- performance relative to a range of industry standard risk adjusted measures of performance
- The investment management activities and strategies undertaken by the investment manager

The objectives for these Funds are set out in Section 2, full information including the Funds objective and investment policy can be found in the Key Investor Information Document. These are available on our website at www.ifslfunds.com.

IFSL Signia Balanced Fund

Fund	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years
IFSL Signia Balanced A GBP Inc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Balanced A GBP Acc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Balanced EUR Hedged Acc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Balanced USD Hedged Acc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Balanced X GBP Inc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Balanced X GBP Acc*	–	–	–
IA Mixed Investment 20-60% Shares	12.12%	15.52%	26.69%

*Data Cumulative Returns as at 31.08.2021 *Share class less than 5 years old.*

Conclusion

The IFSL Signia Balanced Fund is a new fund that launched in October 2020. As the Fund has less than 12 months performance, it is too early to make a meaningful assessment in respect of its performance versus the stated objectives.

IFSL Signia Conservative Fund

Fund	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years
IFSL Signia Conservative A GBP Inc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Conservative A GBP Acc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Conservative USD Hedged Acc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Conservative EUR Hedged Acc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Conservative X GBP Inc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Conservative X GBP Acc*	–	–	–
IA Mixed Investment 0-35% Shares	7.10%	12.32%	18.18%

Data Cumulative Returns as at 31.08.2021
**Share class less than 5 years old.*

Conclusion

The IFSL Signia Conservative Fund is a new fund that launched in October 2020. As the Fund has less than 12 months performance, it is too early to make a meaningful assessment in respect of its performance versus the stated objectives.

IFSL Signia Growth Fund

Fund	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years
IFSL Signia Growth Fund X GBP Acc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Growth Fund X GBP Inc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Growth Fund EUR Hedged Acc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Growth Fund USD Hedged Acc*	–	–	–
IA Mixed Investment 40-85% Shares	17.93%	22.96%	42.95%

Data Cumulative Returns as at 31.08.2021
**Share class less than 5 years old.*

Conclusion

The IFSL Signia Growth Fund is a new fund that launched in May 2021. As the Fund has less than 12 months performance, it is too early to make a meaningful assessment in respect of its performance versus the stated objectives.

IFSL Signia Sovereign Fund

Fund	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years
IFSL Signia Sovereign A GBP Inc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Sovereign A GBP Acc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Sovereign USD Hedged Acc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Sovereign EUR Hedged Acc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Sovereign X GBP Inc*	–	–	–
IFSL Signia Sovereign X GBP Acc*	–	–	–
SONIA + 1%	1.05%	4.25%	7.05%

Data Cumulative Returns as at 31.08.2021
**Share class less than 5 years old.*

Conclusion

The IFSL Signia Sovereign Fund is a new fund that launched in October 2020. As the Fund has less than 12 months performance, it is too early to make a meaningful assessment in respect of its performance versus the stated objectives.

Important Information

Past performance is not a guide to the future performance. Investments can go down as well as up and investors may not get back the amount originally invested. This can be as a result of market movements and exchange rates between currencies.

The Funds invest a large part of their assets in other funds for which investment decisions are made independently of the Fund. If these investment managers perform poorly, the value of your investment is likely to be adversely affected. Investment in other funds may also lead to duplication of fees and commissions.

The Funds are exposed to stock markets and market conditions can change rapidly. Prices can move irrationally and be affected unpredictably by diverse factors, including political and economic events.

The Funds have exposure to bonds, the prices of which will be impacted by factors including; changes in interest rates, inflation expectations and perceived credit quality. When interest rates rise, bond values generally fall. This risk is generally greater for longer term bonds and for bonds with lower credit quality.

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The Funds invest in assets denominated in various currencies and will usually hedge the majority of this currency risk back into the currency denomination of the share class. Changes in exchange rates will however affect the value of your investment.

In certain market conditions some assets may be less predictable than usual. This may make it harder to sell at a desired price and/or in a timely manner. In extreme market conditions redemptions in underlying funds or the Funds may be deferred or suspended.

A more detailed description of the risks that apply to the Funds can be found in the prospectus. You are required to read the Key Investor Information Document (KIID) before making an investment. The KIID and prospectus for all Funds are available free of charge at www.ifslfunds.com or by calling 0808 145 2500.

5. ACD costs in general

What have we considered?

We have considered the following components of the ongoing charges figure (OCF).

The components are as follows:

Annual management charge
This is a percentage fee paid from the Funds to the Investment Manager.

Depositary fee
This is a percentage fee paid from the Funds to the Depositary.

Custody fee
This is a combination of a percentage fee and fixed, transaction-based fees paid from the Funds to the Custodian.

Audit fee
This is a fixed annual fee paid from the Funds to the Auditor.

Registrar Fee
This is a small fixed annual fee per shareholder account, paid to the AFM for maintaining the register of shareholders.

Hedging Fee
This is a percentage fee paid to HSBC Bank plc for currency hedging services. Fees will be paid by the Funds and the non-GBP share classes for currency hedging services which are utilised.

KIID update fee
This is a fixed annual fee paid to cover the cost of reviewing and updating the Key Investor Information Document (KIID) for the Funds.

PRIIPs KID update fee
This is a fixed annual fee paid to cover the cost of reviewing and updating the Key Investor Document (KID) required under the Packaged Retail and Insurance-based Investment Products (PRIIPs) regulation.

FCA fees
This is a fixed annual fee paid to the FCA for its role as regulator of IFSL and the Funds.

Ongoing charges figures per fund

Fund	Share Class	Ongoing Charges Figure (OCF)
IFSL Signia Balanced	A Class	1.32%
IFSL Signia Balanced	EUR Hedged Acc	1.37%
IFSL Signia Balanced	USD Hedged Acc	1.37%
IFSL Signia Balanced	X Class	1.15%
IFSL Signia Conservative	A Class	1.27%
IFSL Signia Conservative	EUR Hedged Acc	1.32%
IFSL Signia Conservative	USD Hedged Acc	1.32%
IFSL Signia Conservative	X Class	1.09%
IFSL Signia Sovereign	A Class	0.61%
IFSL Signia Sovereign	EUR Hedged Acc	0.66%
IFSL Signia Sovereign	USD Hedged Acc	0.66%
IFSL Signia Sovereign	X Class	0.49%
IFSL Signia Growth	X Class	1.18%
IFSL Signia Growth	EUR Hedged Acc	1.41%
IFSL Signia Growth	USD Hedged Acc	1.41%

The ongoing charge figures above are based on actual expenses for the year ending 31 August 2021. They cover all aspects of operating the Funds during the year, including the fees paid and described at the start of this section 5. It does not include payments to your financial adviser and/or any other firm through which you invest. You pay for their services directly. The Funds invest in other collective investment schemes, or funds. We have not directly considered the costs of these underlying funds, but their selection and suitability are part of our assessment of the quality of service provided by the Investment Manager and of the performance of the Funds. The OCF figures above, and the performance of the Funds, all take account of the underlying costs of these investments (i.e. performance is reviewed net of all charges). We take this into consideration when comparing with other funds in the peer group, which may not have this if they do not invest in other funds.

Conclusion

We have reviewed the cost of the services provided and concluded these represent reasonable value to investors.

We consider the different share classes and their charges later in this report in section 9.

6. Comparable market rates

Periodically we review the fees we pay to third parties.

The comparable market rates for depositories, custodians and auditors are subject to a degree of commercial confidentiality. Nevertheless experience of past fees, the tender or review processes we use and our own awareness of the market mean that we believe our approach secures the best value for money when these contracts are reviewed or re-tendered; and that we review and re-tender with a reasonable frequency given the nature of the relationships and different costs of moving suppliers.

Depositaries commonly structure their fees on an ad-valorem basis, which means fees are based on the size of the fund. We keep these fees under review to ensure that they remain competitive and that they represent good value for investors.

We have considered the fees which are paid to the Investment Manager and Sponsor against those of similar services provided to other funds for which we are AFM.

The market rates for independent AFMs are also subject to a degree of commercial confidentiality and will vary depending on the size and type of fund. Contracts are commercially negotiated and reflect the competitive nature of the independent AFM market. Fund sponsors typically conduct full tendering processes and can move the Funds to other independent AFMs. This ensures that IFSL remains competitive and offers value for investors. In making our assessment of the overall costs, we have also compared the OCF for the Funds with other similar funds in the market.

Conclusion

We are satisfied that the costs are reasonable and appropriate compared to other similar funds.

7. Comparable services

With regard to AFM services, IFSL provides comparable services to other fund ranges.

While the charging structure will vary depending on the size, nature and risks involved with particular funds, the fees paid by these Funds are similar to those paid by other comparable funds within our range.

We also consider comparable services offered by the third party providers to the Funds, such as the Investment Manager. Where providers do offer comparable services we ask them to outline the key differences in charging and service, so that we can ensure good value is delivered to fund investors when compared against alternative products and services available elsewhere from the same provider.

Conclusion

We are satisfied that the costs are reasonable and appropriate compared to other similar funds.

8. Economies of scale

What have we considered?

We have considered two different types of economies of scale relating to:

The size and scale of the funds

Larger funds are more profitable to us, in some cases we are charging a minimum fee to a fund until it grows in size.

Certain services have fixed or minimum fees. This means that as funds grow they benefit from their increase in scale as the effect of those fees on costs and charges reduces. We seek to ensure that each fund offers value to investors and is commercially viable in its own right taking in to account the impact of any fixed or minimum fees.

The size and scale of IFSL as AFM

The second area of economies of scale is where we can negotiate terms for the large number of different funds for which we act as AFM. IFSL is AFM to over 70 funds with more than £10 billion under management. We use this scale to negotiate fees wherever we think it is in the interests of all the funds affected. We discuss with our suppliers the need to ensure that fees are fairly and transparently spread across all the funds.

Depositary relationships are negotiated across multiple funds to achieve the best possible rates. IFSL negotiate Depositary fees on an appropriate sliding scale, with lower percentage fees applying as the fund reaches certain thresholds, ensuring economies of scale apply directly to the benefit of a fund and the investors.

Conclusion

We are satisfied that economies of scale are being passed onto investors where these are being achieved.

9. Share classes

The share classes in the Funds differ in the level of Annual Management Charge (AMC) applied to them or because they offer currency hedging.

When the Funds launched, the X Class was offered for a limited period of time at a reduced AMC. Shares in the X Class are no longer available for investment but existing investors will benefit from the reduction for a period of 5 years. This discount was offered to incentivise investors into the Fund at launch and help the Fund grow in its early stages.

Investors in the EUR Hedged or USD Hedged share classes typically have chosen these for exposure to these currencies.

Having reviewed the different charging levels across all the share classes, we conclude that the justification for the range of charges is reasonable and that the different charges are justified.

10. Our conclusion

Overall, we are satisfied that the charges taken from the Funds are justified in the context of the overall value delivered to investors.