BEFORE YOU APPLY · NOVEMBER 2026

What a lender will ask for, *and how to have it ready.*

Most business lenders look at the same things: your documents, your numbers and what the money is for. Having them ready, and being able to explain anything unusual in them, cuts down the back and forth once an application is in. Every lender sets its own criteria, so use this as a starting list, not a guarantee.

The documents

FINANCIAL

- ☐ **Financial statements, last 2 years**
  Profit and loss and balance sheet, ideally prepared by your accountant
- ☐ **Business tax returns, last 2 years**
  Company, trust or partnership
- ☐ **Bank statements, last 6 months**
  Every business account
- ☐ **ATO statement of account**
  Shows what is owed and any payment plan. If there is a plan, have the plan and your payment record ready.
- ☐ **Aged receivables and payables**
  Who owes you, who you owe, and how old each amount is

BUSINESS

- ☐ **A one-page summary**
  What the business does, how long it has traded, and what the money is for
- ☐ **Cash flow forecast, 13 weeks or more**
  With the new repayment included, so the lender can see it is covered
- ☐ **ASIC company extract**
  Current details and directors
- ☐ **Trust deed, if a trust**
  The full signed deed
- ☐ **Major contracts**
  Key customer and supplier agreements
- ☐ **Asset details**
  Titles, valuations or equipment lists for anything offered as security

DIRECTORS AND GUARANTORS

- ☐ **Identification**
  Usually a driver licence or passport
- ☐ **Personal tax returns, last 2 years**
  For each director giving a guarantee
- ☐ **Statement of assets and liabilities**
  What each guarantor owns and owes
- ☐ **Property valuations**
  Only if property is offered as security

What the lender is weighing up

AREA	WHAT THEY LOOK AT	WHAT YOU CAN DO BEFORE YOU APPLY
Character	Credit history of the business and directors, how long you have traded	Get your own credit reports and correct any errors. Be ready to explain past issues.
Capacity	Whether cash coming in covers the new repayment on top of existing ones	Show it in a forecast with the new repayment in it.
Capital	How much of your own money is in the business	Know what you have put in and be ready to say so.
Collateral	What security is available and what it is worth	List the assets you could offer and roughly what each is worth.
Conditions	What the money is for, and how your industry is travelling	Name the use, the amount and how it gets repaid.

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Seven common reasons a lender says no

1. **ATO debt with no plan to pay it.** Talk to the ATO or your accountant about a payment plan the cash flow can carry, then keep to it. A business debt over $100,000, more than 90 days overdue, with no plan in place can be reported to credit reporting agencies. A plan you keep to stops that.
2. **A director's personal credit history.** Lenders often check directors as well as the business. Check your own report first and explain anything on it before they ask.
3. **Missing or incomplete documents.** Use the list on page 1 and send everything at once.
4. **Money in and out that nobody explained.** Note any large one-off deposits or withdrawals in your bank statements and what each one was.
5. **Falling revenue with no plan to fix it.** Say why it fell and what has changed since.
6. **Ownership or structure changes in the last 12 months.** Explain the change and have the new documents ready.
7. **"Working capital" with no clear purpose.** Say exactly what the money pays for, how much each part costs, and where the repayments come from.

Numbers a lender may work out

Each lender sets its own benchmarks, and they vary by lender, industry and type of finance. Work these out from your own figures first so none of them surprise you.

Debt service cover

Cash available for repayments ÷ total repayments

Can the business meet all its loan repayments, including the new one, from what it earns?

Current ratio

Current assets ÷ current liabilities

Can the business cover what falls due in the next 12 months?

Debt to equity

Total debt ÷ owners' equity

How much of the business is funded by borrowing compared with the owners' money.

Interest cover

Earnings before interest and tax ÷ interest

How many times over profit covers the interest bill.

Your next step

Build the forecast a lender will ask for with our free 13-week cash flow template: **infin8finance.com.au/resources/13-week-cash-flow-template.xlsx**.

Want a second pair of eyes before you apply? As a finance broker we can match the application to lenders whose criteria fit and package it properly. Start with the complimentary Baseline Assessment at **infin8finance.com.au**.

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