



FREE GUIDE FROM ELECTROSMITHS

SERMI Readiness Pack **for UK independent garages**

What the scheme is, whether you need it, what it costs, the paperwork, and how to apply — on a few pages you can work through at the bench.

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What SERMI is

SERMI is the scheme that decides who can unlock a car's security functions through the manufacturer, and it went live in the UK on 1 April 2026.

- **Full name:** Security-related Repair and Maintenance Information.
- **Who runs it:** RMI Standards and Certification (RMISC) approves garages. Digidentity issues the digital certificates and access tokens.
- **Where it applies:** the EU, plus the UK, the first country outside the EU to implement it in full.
- **Which brands:** manufacturers join voluntarily. 22 brands have committed in the UK, including Jaguar Land Rover, Ford, Peugeot, Mercedes-Benz, Nissan and Toyota. Volkswagen Group brands had not signed up at launch. Brands typically give six weeks to three months' notice before SERMI becomes mandatory for their cars.

Jobs that need SERMI where the brand has switched it on

- Key and all-keys-lost programming
- Immobiliser reset or replacement
- Anti-theft system diagnosis
- Security-related ECU software updates and remote coding that needs authentication

Jobs it does not touch: fault codes, live data and service resets carry on as normal with your existing tools.

Do you need it? A two-minute self-check

If you tick any box below, plan to apply. The longer you wait, the more jobs you turn away when a brand switches SERMI on.

- ☐ You program keys or handle all-keys-lost jobs
- ☐ You replace or reset immobilisers, BCMs or ECUs
- ☐ You use manufacturer portals for security coding
- ☐ You regularly work on Jaguar Land Rover, Ford, Peugeot, Mercedes-Benz, Nissan or Toyota vehicles
- ☐ Customers or insurers ask whether you are approved for security work

None ticked? Service, diagnostics and mechanical work are not affected. Keep this pack for when you add security work.

Costs at a glance

A one-person garage should budget about £1,850 up front, or £30 a month plus DBS checks, for five years of approval.

ITEM	COST (GBP)	WHO NEEDS IT
SERMI approval + 5-year authorisation	£1,800 once, or £30/month over 5 years	The business
Basic DBS check	£21.50 each	Owner/legal representative + every technician
Public liability insurance	Must exceed £1 million cover; price varies	The business

Fees are set by the scheme and RMISC and can change. Confirm the current figure when you apply.

Document checklist

Gather everything below before you start the application. Missing paperwork is the most common delay.

For the business

- ☐ Evidence that you own the business (Companies House record, or sole-trader proof)
- ☐ Public liability insurance certificate showing more than £1 million cover
- ☐ Evidence and a declaration that it is a legitimate business (trading address, VAT or HMRC registration, invoices)
- ☐ Evidence that you work in the automotive trade
- ☐ Basic DBS certificate for the owner or person with significant control

For each technician you want approved

- ☐ Completed and signed application form
- ☐ Basic DBS certificate, issued within the last 3–6 months (check the current window with RMISC)
- ☐ Self-declaration of any spent convictions
- ☐ Employment contract with your business
- ☐ UK proof of identity: driving licence, passport or ID card
- ☐ Automotive qualification that included a practical assessment and an OBD/diagnostics part, dated at least 2 years before applying

Step by step

The route runs in six steps, and the DBS checks set the pace, so order them first.

1. **Order Basic DBS checks** for yourself and every technician. They must be recent when you apply, so don't order them months early.
2. **Collect the paperwork** on the checklist above into one folder, scanned as PDFs.
3. **Apply to RMISC** as an Independent Operator, adding each technician you want authorised.
4. **Assessment:** RMISC checks your documents and background. Answer any questions quickly, because an unanswered query stalls the file.
5. **Approval and certificate:** Digidentity issues your digital certificate, valid for 5 years, and access tokens for manufacturer portals.
6. **Stay compliant:** expect at least two audits in the 5 years. Keep DBS, insurance and staff records current, and add or remove technicians as staff change.

RMISC doesn't publish a turnaround time. Ask when you apply, and start before a brand you rely on switches SERMI on.

Why applications stall

Most delays come from avoidable paperwork gaps, not from failing the checks.

- **Stale DBS certificates:** ordered too early and out of date by the time the file is reviewed.
- **No employment contract:** self-employed or cash-paid technicians have no contract to show. Put one in place first.
- **Insurance below £1 million:** many small garages carry less. Raise the cover before applying.
- **Qualification proof missing or too recent:** the certificate is lost, has no practical or OBD element, or is dated within the last 2 years.
- **Unanswered queries:** RMISC asks a question and the file sits until someone replies.

The skills gap SERMI exposes

SERMI proves you are trustworthy and legitimate. It does not prove you can do the electronics work, and that is the gap Electrosmiths fills.

Many experienced technicians learned key programming and ECU work on the job. Their paperwork rarely shows it. SERMI checks identity, background and a formal qualification. It doesn't test whether someone can recover an immobiliser or read an EEPROM.

Electrosmiths — electrosmiths.com

An independent certification for automotive-electronics technicians. The first exam is online, so you can sit it from the UK. Pass it and you become eligible for the sit-in, where you demonstrate the work on a bench in front of assessors.

- **Proof of skill** you can show customers, insurers and employers alongside your SERMI approval
- **Free founding-exam place** for technicians with 5 or more years' experience. Under 5 years joins the waitlist.
- **A way to stand out** as more UK garages become approved and "SERMI approved" stops being a differentiator

Be clear on what it is not. Electrosmiths is not part of SERMI and does not replace the qualification RMISC asks for. If you lack a formal qualification, ask RMISC what they accept before you apply.

Your next three moves

1. **This week:** tick the self-check, order DBS checks, and email RMISC at sermi@rmisc.co.uk (01788 538 301) to confirm fees and the accepted qualifications.
2. **This month:** complete the document checklist and submit your application.
3. **Alongside it:** register for a free Electrosmiths founding-exam place at electrosmiths.com if you have 5+ years' experience, so your skills are on record before the market gets crowded.

Sources

Checked 30 September 2026. Fees and rules can change, so always confirm with RMISC.

- AM Online — SERMI scheme goes live in the UK: am-online.com/news/sermi-scheme-goes-live-in-the-uk
- MOTester — SERMI scheme goes live in UK: motester.co.uk
- Motor Trader — Accredited UK independent garages gain greater access to vehicle data (1 April 2026): motortrader.com
- Independent Garage Association — SERMI: independentgarageassociation.co.uk/trade-topics/sermi
- Core Diagnostics — SERMI Independent Operator registration guide (fees, technician documents): corediagnostics.co.uk
- Maverick Diagnostics — SERMI UK explained: maverickdiagnostics.com
- Digidentity — SERMI launches in the UK: digidentity.eu

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