

Eligibility

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For recent changes to this guidance, please see the [bottom of the page](#).

Scheme Eligibility

The Agri-Environment Climate scheme is open to farmers, groups of farmers and other land managers with land in Scotland who are registered with us and have a Business Reference Number (BRN*). The Improving Public Access element of the Scheme will not be open for applications in 2024.

*Not all applicants will be eligible to apply for all options or activities under the scheme. For example, applications for the Organic Conversion and Organic Maintenance options are only open to farmers and crofters.

Find out [how to register your account](#).

You must be able to demonstrate that you are able, and have the legal right, to carry out the management proposed in your application, for the length of the contract and any associated monitoring period. Please see also our [Occupancy of Land page](#).

Funding under this scheme cannot be used to support works that you are required to complete as part of a statutory or legislative obligation. This would include for example, applying for AECS management on land subject to a habitat or environmental management plan as an obligation created as part of a wind farm (or similar) planning approval.

Your application must not include any works which you have already started on (including purchase of associated items or equipment). And, if your application is successful, you must not start on any of the works applied for until you have a signed contract in place and an authority to proceed letter has been issued.

Also, you must not apply for funding for work which has already, partly or fully, secured funding from another source. Please see also the [Double Funding and incompatibility page](#).

Application Eligibility

You will normally be limited to a single AECS application [per business] per year. However, there are some exceptions which are set out below:

- A. if you manage any of the following designated sites: SSSIs and European sites (SACs and SPAs): you can submit one application for the designated site management and another for management on other parts of your land
- B. Land managers who have widely separated areas of land (normally at least five miles apart) where it is more appropriate to apply for each area separately.
- C. Applications for Organic Conversion or Organic Maintenance may be made separately from other AECS applications.
- D. Applications for Slurry Storage must be made separately from any other AECS application in the 2024 round.

The questions which case officers have to answer in 2024 when checking each applicant's eligibility for the scheme, is provided below:



[Application Eligibility Questions \(PDF, Size: 75.1 kB\)](#)

doc_external_url: <https://www.ruralpaymentsandservices.org/media/resources/AECS-Application-Eligibility-Questions-Sept-2023.pdf>

Please ensure you read the AECS homepage and also the relevant guidance pages covering scheme eligibility and application eligibility.

Management options and capital items eligibility

Before submitting an application, you must also carefully check that you meet the specific eligibility requirements for each individual management option and capital item which you wish to apply for. You can find this information using the links below:

[Management Options](#)

[Capital items](#)

Please also refer to the [Double funding and option incompatibility](#) page

Some of the Agri-Environment-Climate Scheme management options have been spatially targeted in order to make them available in the locations where they will deliver the greatest benefit. The other options are available throughout Scotland.

You can apply for an option if it is listed under your holding and you should use the [targeting tool \(MS Excel, Size: 12.2 MB\)](#) to check this. If it is not listed, you may be able to apply for it if you obtain an endorsement **before** submitting your application, using the process explained in the Endorsements page, and the same applies to capital items.

Please note: to use the targeting tool, you must download the file by clicking the link above, then selecting 'download file'.

Some capital items are also spatially targeted. These are listed in the [capital items page](#). The targeting tool will list the targeted capital items available on your holding. (Note that non-targeted capital items are not listed; these are available throughout Scotland.)

Recent changes

Section	Change
Scheme Eligibility	Example provided as to where Funding under AECS cannot be used to support works that you are required to complete as part of a statutory or legislative obligation.
Application Eligibility	Updated application eligibility questions pdf Added text stating: Please ensure you read the AECS homepage and also the relevant guidance pages covering scheme eligibility and application eligibility which are listed here
Management options and capital items eligibility	Added text stating if an option is not listed for your holding on the Targeting Tool you may be able to apply for it if you obtain an endorsement before submitting your application, using the process explained in the Endorsements page, and the same applies to capital items.

Previous versions

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