

Claims and payments

This is an old version of the page

Date published: 8 March, 2023

Date superseded: 13 September, 2023

The version of this page applicable to the AECS 2021 restricted round can be found in the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme full guidance archive.

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

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Making a claim

Claims for payment can be made either by you as the scheme beneficiary or an accountable person acting on your behalf.

This accountable person will need to be mandated on the [PF05 - Business mandate form](#) before we can accept a claim from them on your behalf.

Although an accountable person can claim on your behalf, any errors on the claim which may result in us seeking to recover payments or impose a financial penalty will be applied against you as the holder of the contract. So it is in your interests to make sure that any claim submitted is correct.

You can only claim for the items set out in your contract once your work has been completed. Any difference between your claimed amount and the amount scheduled on your contract could result in a delay to your payment and / or penalties being applied.

If, once you receive authority to start work, you find that you are unable to keep to the expected timetable of capital works, the areas or lengths needed are slightly different to what was expected and /or you are unable to manage a particular area as planned in your original application, you must request a variation before making your claim. [Please refer to the Variations guidance](#)

The types of claims available are:

- Claims for Management Options.
- Claims for Capital Items.
- Claims for Farm Environment Assessments and Management Plans.

Further details on each are provided below.

Management options (for existing scheme participants)

To make a claim for annual management options in your contract you must declare the land on which you undertake these options on the Single Application Form (SAF) using the Permanent Land Data Sheets (IACS3).

The primary route to complete and submit your SAF23 application is via our online application system. To do this, you must be registered with [Rural Payments and Services](#). Your local office can offer assistance in getting online, applying online and can help answer any questions or concerns you may have.

A hand written paper SAF23 will only be considered by RPID in a very limited range of exceptional circumstances. To request a blank form you must write to your local area office stating your exceptional circumstances that prevent you or a mandated representative from submitting an online application in 2023.

Further information is provided in the [Single Application Form 2023 guidance](#).

The deadline for the receipt of a Single Application Form will be 15 May, 2023.

We will still accept your form up to 25 calendar days after the closing date but will reduce your payments for all schemes covered by the Single Application Form unless you had force majeure /exceptional circumstances that prevented you from submitting your SAF. For AECS this will be by one per cent for each working day your form is late during the 25 calendar day period. We cannot accept your form if we receive it after midnight 9 June 2023 and no payments will be made.

If you fail to declare your management options on your Single Application Form you will not receive payment for your management options for the year in question.

You should not assume that because you have a contract that you are under no obligation to claim. Your contract is not a claim for payment.

You should refer to your schedule of works when completing your Single Application Form but you should only claim for work that has been completed.

It is your responsibility to complete the Single Application Form correctly with your management options declared even if you employ an accountable person to act on your behalf.

Capital items (for existing scheme participants)

Capital investments are available to support environmental objectives such as fencing, hedges and habitat creation.

Capital items can be supported on either a standard cost or actual cost basis.

For both, you can only claim for the area / length / quantity actually completed and you cannot exceed the amounts indicated in your contract or exceed what is on the ground. If you or your accountable person claim for work that has not been completed we will consider this as an overclaim and breach penalties may apply.

For example, if you have a LPID in your contract for a scheme year for 600 metres of fencing then you must claim all of the 600 metres in one claim.

You cannot claim for 400 metres on one claim and 200 metres on another claim at different dates. You must wait until the entire length / area of an item in a LPID is complete before you submit a capital claim

Any capital expenditure incurred before your application to join the scheme has been submitted will not be eligible for payment.

All capital claims will be paid in full.

You do not need to submit invoices with standard cost items but you do need to submit further evidence for actual cost items providing the following details - either as hard copy or electronically as scanned documents or photographs.

- Suppliers name and address and VAT registration number if appropriate.
- Claimant's name and address which should be the business name in the approved contract who is the scheme beneficiary.
- Detailed description of services provided or goods supplied, separately costed, to include serial numbers for any equipment purchased.
- Date on which the services or goods were supplied.
- Total amount due for payment by the customer with the VAT element clearly detailed.
- Amount paid with details of any discount awarded which fully explains the difference between the amount due and the amount paid.
- Date paid.
- Method of payment used.

In addition, when you submit an original invoice either as hard copy or electronically as scanned documents or photographs you must also back it up with other evidence of payment, such as:

- The original bank or credit card statement.
- The original bank giro credit transfer slip.
- An accountant's report.
- A certified extract from the business accounts.
- If your invoices are paid by electronic banking we require a copy of the bank statements showing the defrayed expenditure and also copies of the electronic transaction between businesses.

The evidence of payment can be submitted in hard copy or electronically as scanned documents or photographs. You must ensure that all the required information is provided whatever submission method is used, where submitted evidence is missing the required detail your claim may be rejected.

Claims for capital items must be submitted by the end of February of the following calendar year, of the year stipulated in your contract.

So, if you have a claim year of 2023 in your contract, your claim must be submitted during 1 January 2023 to 29 February 2024. Additionally, all the capital works claimed must be completed by 31 December 2023.

The financial amounts in your contract for the year in question cannot be transferred to another financial year.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you submit your claim by the deadline set-out in this guidance. We will not write to you in advance of the closing date to remind you.

If you submit a claim after that period it will not be accepted unless there are extenuating circumstances which prevented your claim being submitted. If you receive notification that we will not accept a late claim for payment you can contact your area office to discuss.

You will not be able to submit a request to review this decision under the Rural Payments (Appeals) (Scotland) Regulations 2015 as the regulations do not apply in these circumstances.

If you are unable to undertake the work in the year designated in your contract then you must write to us requesting a variation. Please see further guidance in the variation section.

To make a claim for capital items, use [PF16 - AECS capital items claim form](#). Guidance on completing the form is also available.

Farm Environment Assessment and Management Plans

You must use the [PF15](#) specialist plan claim form to claim payment for a Farm Environment Assessment or Moorland or Lowland Bog management plan. Claims must be submitted to your local RPID office by 29 February 2024.

Payment is not dependent on the success of your application; however, we will only reimburse you where your Farm Environment Assessment, Moorland Management plan and Lowland Bog plan is fit for purpose.

For **Farm Environment Assessment** claims, please also note:

- Payment is **not** available if you are reapplying for the same land / holding as in a previously submitted AECS application related to agri-environmental management.
- However, you may claim payment if you are applying to AECS in 2023 for a holding, under the same BRN, which has not had any previous AECS applications.
- You may also claim payment if you are applying for a holding previously applied for through AECS, but which now has additional land. In such case you can only claim for the hectareage of the additional land.

Payment is **not** available if you have had an Integrated Land Management Plan (ILMP) produced for your farm funded through the Farm Advisory Service. This would constitute double funding.

The payment rates are as follows:

Area (ha)	Rate (£) per application
Less than 50ha	200

50ha up to 200ha	400
Greater than 200ha	600

For **Moorland Management Plans** your claim should be based on the area covered by the Plan as below:

Area (ha)	Rate (£) per application
Less than 50ha	100
50ha up to 100ha	200
Greater than 100ha and up to 200ha	400
Greater than 200ha	600

For **Lowland Bog Plans** your claim should be based on the area covered by the Plan as below:

Area (ha)	Rate (£) per application
10 ha or greater	300

For Moorland and Lowland Bog Management Plans please note:

You cannot claim a plan payment if you received a free site assessment report from a source such as NatureScot and if the report was sufficiently detailed that you or your agent did not need to carry out a site assessment when preparing the Management Plan.

In this situation, claiming the Moorland or Lowland Bog Management Plan payment would constitute double funding.

Payments for management options and capital items

Payments will be made as follows:

- Management options – these are paid annually in the spring of the year following submission of your Single Application Form. For example, if you submit a claim in 2023, your management payment will be paid in the spring of 2024 once all the inspections for annual management measures have been completed.
- Capital items – these will be paid upon receipt of a valid claim with any relevant supporting documentation. A valid claim is a claim that is wholly completed and signed and encloses all supporting documentation as required.

Payments will only be made once all administrative checks have been carried out on the claim to ensure that the work claimed is suitable, matches what is in your approved contract and that the claim has been completed correctly.

If your claim has been selected for inspection, your claim will only be paid once the inspection has been carried out and the inspection result is satisfactory.

It is a condition of the scheme that you must allow us to inspect your holding to check that the scheme rules are being met.

[You can find out more about inspections here](#)

You will receive payment by BACS into your nominated bank account. All payments will be made in sterling. We aim to have your payment into your bank account within 10 days from the date we authorise the payment.

If you change your bank account you must inform us as soon as possible by completing [PF03 - Register your bank details - sterling](#) form to avoid payments being issued to your closed account. Alternatively, you can do this online at <https://www.ruralpayments.org>

Payments for Farm Environment Assessments and Management Plans

Payments for Farm Environment Assessments, Moorland Management Plans and Lowland Bog Management Plans will be made after we have received your PF15 Claim Form and assessed the eligibility of your claim.

This is subject to your claim form being received by the 29 February 2024 deadline referred to at the Farm Environment Assessments and Management Plans section above.

[Recent changes](#)

Section	Change
Whole page	Updated information on claims and payments for management options, capital items, Farm Environment Assessments and Management Plans.

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