

How to apply

This is an old version of the page

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

To apply for this scheme and to claim your entitlements, you must submit a Single Application Form.

The primary route to complete the Single Application Form is online. To do this, you must be [registered with Rural Payments and Services](#) .

You can find out more about the Single Application Form below.

[Single Application Form](#)

The closing date for the Single Application Form is 15 May or, if that date is a Saturday, Sunday, Bank Holiday or other public holiday, the next working day. If we receive your form after 15 May, we will apply late claim penalties and your payment will be reduced by three per cent for each working day it is late, up to 25 calendar days after the closing date.

If we receive your claim over 25 calendar days late, all payments for this and future years will be lost.

If your claim is late due to force majeure or exceptional circumstances, we may accept your claim. However, you must write to your area office with the relevant evidence within 10 working days of your knowledge of the incident.

It is your responsibility to submit a Single Application Form on or before 15 May each year.

The easiest way to submit a Single Application Forms is online by registering with Rural Payments and Services. If you submit your form online, you'll be able to:

- get access to a pre-populated application form with your permanent land, last year's claimed
- seasonal land and any approved scheme contracts
- get your Greening requirement checked and instant initial validation
- create your own tailored form based on your scheme selection – our system will automatically fill in parts of your form
- check your form for errors – our system will notify these to you before you can go on to the next stage
- access up-to-date map and boundary information
- store all your communications, from us to you and from you to us, in one place
- view and manage your own information – for example, changing your bank account details
- get 24-hour access, seven days a week

For help and assistance to register online, please visit our [Customer services](#) section.

Usage rules

All Basic Payment Scheme payment entitlements, including entitlements allocated from the National Reserve, are subject to a two-year usage rule.

The rule has changed, compared to the two-year usage rule that was in place for the Single Farm Payment Scheme. From 2015, over any two-year period you must activate (use) all of your Basic Payment Scheme payment entitlements in at least one year.

Therefore it will not be possible to rotate entitlements using some in year one and the remainder in year two.

If you lease your Basic Payment Scheme entitlements out, you will be relying on that farmer to ensure the two-year usage rule is met. If leased-in Basic Payment Scheme entitlements are not activated during the rolling two-year period they will revert to the National Reserve.

For example:

In the case of a farmer who had 50 Basic Payment Scheme entitlements allocated (and activated) in 2015, who then activates 30 Basic Payment Scheme entitlements in 2016 and 50 Basic Payment Scheme entitlements in 2017, they will have activated all 50 entitlements at least once in the two-year period.

However, if they had activated only 40 entitlements in 2017, they have not activated all 50 entitlements once in the two year period and the 10 entitlements not used will be withdrawn and revert to the National Reserve.

If you have entitlements in more than one region then usage will be considered within each region allocation. Where you have entitlements within the same region which have different values then the lowest value entitlements (owned or leased-in) will revert to the National Reserve first.

You may be exempt from the two-year usage rule if you can prove that you (or your business) were subject to exceptional circumstances or a force majeure event, which prevented you from activating the entitlements for the relevant Basic Payment Scheme year.

Remember:

Submit your application in plenty of time – don't leave it until the last minute. Make sure that you get an acknowledgement letter and that the details are correct. If you don't, it means we did not receive your application.

[Recent changes](#)

Section	Change
Using your entitlements changed to Usage rules	Text updated to provide more clarity on the guidance

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