

# Introduction

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## IMPORTANT – changes to key dates for 2015

Some of the dates for the 2015 scheme year, as they apply in Scotland, have changed.

[News release](#)

This follows a regulation raised by the European Commission that extends the deadline for, amongst other things, the submission of the Single Application Form to Monday, 15 June, 2015.

[Revised key dates for 2015](#)

**Date published: 16 March, 2015**

These notes cover the Basic Payment Scheme.

If you intend to take part in the Basic Payment Scheme you must read this guidance carefully and make sure you understand the requirements of the scheme.

We have described the basic rules but cannot cover every situation. If you do not understand anything please contact your local area office. If you need specific guidance, you should contact a professional adviser.

Our aim is to provide you with all the practical information you need but these Notes for Guidance do not provide a definitive statement of the law (which only the Courts can give), nor can they substitute for advice on specific legal questions.

The following pages make up this guidance, please click on each to access each section.

- [Key dates](#)
- [Main features](#)
- [Eligible agricultural land](#)
- [Activating your entitlements](#)
- [Payments](#)
- [Transfer of entitlements](#)
- [Other aspects of the scheme](#)
- [Appeals](#)
- [Complaints](#)
- [Greening](#)

## Registering with Rural Payments and Services

To apply for this scheme, you must be registered with our new system, even if you were previously registered with us.

[You can find out more on how to register here](#)

## Important changes from the Single Farm Payment Scheme

### **Entitlement allocations**

We won't be able to 'rotate' your entitlements by swapping the entitlements you activate from year to year. That means if you've got more entitlements than land, you might lose them.

## Useful reminders and tips

**Look out for the bold text boxes in this guidance. In them, we have listed steps you can take to avoid some of the most common mistakes found which can lead to either delays to payment of claims or penalties. However, these are not exhaustive lists, just some of the more common examples.**

The following steps may seem simple but if you overlook them, they can have a serious effect on your payments.

- if you're submitting your Single Application Form on paper, don't forget to sign it. If you don't sign it, we will not be able to process it and you will not be paid
- it is your responsibility to make sure your Single Application Form reaches us by 15 May. If you are posting it you must remember to put the correct amount of postage on your envelope. The envelope may need more stamps than the usual first- or second-class delivery charge, especially if you are including other forms
- we recommend that you use a form of postage that will provide proof of receipt of your Single Application Form by us. You should keep the proof of postage slip provided by the Post Office and make sure that it clearly identifies beneath their stamp, that the item sent to us is your Single Application Form
- Royal Mail may not deliver the envelope to us in time to meet the 15 May deadline if the postage on the envelope is not correct. If you do not pay enough postage and Royal Mail delivers the application late, we will use the date that it arrives at our office as the lodgement date of that application. This might mean late submission penalties will be applied to your claim if the date of receipt is after 15 May
- read these guidance notes carefully. If you are not sure, ask your local area office or relevant professional adviser for guidance
- if your business structure has changed (for example, it has merged or split or there has been a change in the partners) you need to contact us immediately as the change can affect your entitlements and your Single Application Form

## Legal base

The general rules for the operation of the Basic Payment Scheme are based on Regulation 1307/2013 of the European Parliament and the council of 17 December, 2013, establishing rules for direct support schemes for farmers under the Common Agricultural Policy.

This is supplemented by Commission Delegated Regulation 639/2014 , dated 11 March, 2014 and Commission Implementing Regulation 641/2014, dated 16 June, 2014.

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