



Being an AIM Awards Centre Guidance

for centre staff



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Welcome

AIM Awards is a national and international Awarding Organisation, offering a large number of regulated qualifications at different levels and in a wide range of subject areas. Our qualifications are flexible enough to be delivered in a range of settings, from small providers to large colleges and in the workplace.

We are also licensed by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) to approve and certificate Access to Higher Education Diplomas.

We pride ourselves on offering the best possible customer service, and are always on hand to help if you have any questions. Our organisational structure and business processes enable us to be able to respond quickly to the needs of customers to develop new products that meet their specific needs.

We endeavour to provide you with the best possible service to enable you to cater for the needs of all your learners.

Introduction

This document is intended for centre staff and provides details on everything you will need to know about being an AIM Awards centre, including centre and qualification approval, registering learners, assessing learner's work, and results and certification.

Centre Approval

If you wish to offer AIM Awards qualifications, you will first need to apply to become an approved centre. To do this, please complete the Centre Recognition Application Form available on our website and submit this along with the requested centre documents to enquiries@aimawards.org.uk. We'll set your Head of Organisation or most suitable member of staff up with a login for our website so that they can sign our Centre Agreement online.

The Centre Agreement covers the requirements that your centre must adhere to in order to deliver AIM Awards qualifications. You must ensure that you have sufficient staff to be able to deliver the qualifications you are approved to run, including administration, teaching, assessing, quality assurance and management of the provision. The specific requirements for your Assessors and Internal Verifiers (IVs) can be found in each individual Qualification Handbook which are available to download from our website.

Once you've submitted your documents, our simple process involves a review of your completed form and centre policies along with a telephone call or visit from an experienced External Quality Assurance Manager (EQAM), depending on the nature of your centre. Once the interview is completed, the EQAM will make a recommendation to the Director of Quality and Operations to accept, accept with actions or reject your application.

If the recommendation is to accept your application, the Centre Agreement has been signed and the centre approval fee has been paid, we will write to you to confirm this and provide details of your AIM Awards account team. We will also provide you with a certificate to show you are an AIM Awards approved centre.

Account Team

Your dedicated AIM Awards account team will support you throughout your time with AIM Awards and will include:

Customer Support Officer – responsible for setting up programmes, registering learners, awarding and certificating. They are your first point of contact for administration queries.

Business Development Manager – responsible for helping centres offer the best qualifications for their learners, growing the business and working with stakeholders to develop new qualifications. They are your first point of contact for any qualification queries.

External Quality Assurance Manager – responsible for ensuring centres meet the terms of the Centre Agreement by carrying out qualification approvals and centre quality reviews. They are your first point of contact for any assessment or quality assurance queries.

What we Expect from You

Once approved as an AIM Awards centre, we ask you to work with us to enable us to provide a high quality, effective and efficient service. We ask that you:

- Provide us with as much information as you can when you make an enquiry
- Comply with any requests for information or documents in a timely manner
- Circulate our documentation and information to all appropriate staff and/or learners promptly
- Complete our documentation fully and accurately
- Inform your Customer Support Officer by email of changes to your named contacts, address or delivery sites.

Qualification Approval

Our Qualification Handbooks contain full details of our qualifications, including the qualification title, the rules of combination required to achieve the qualification, the content of the qualification, any specialist information and guidance on how to assess and deliver the qualification. They also include review dates where we will review the content, working with sector representatives to make any changes necessary to meet sector needs and to reflect recent developments. We will post information relating to changes or extensions to qualifications on our website and centres approved to offer the qualification will be kept updated.

Certain qualifications require that centres have specialist resources, or that staff assessing or internally verifying the qualification have certain qualifications or experience. This information is detailed in the Qualification Handbooks and proof of these resources may be required for certain qualifications.

To deliver our qualifications, you must complete and submit a Qualification Approval Request on the AIM Awards website for each qualification. This must be completed by someone with suitable authority at your centre (for example a Curriculum Manager):

1. To apply to run a qualification, search for or browse the list of qualifications on our website to find the qualification(s) you'd like to offer.
2. Click on 'Offer this qualification' and then choose the components/units you would like to offer (most of our qualifications have some optional components/units) by ticking the boxes next to your choices. You then click 'Add to Basket' at the bottom of the page.
3. You'll be presented with a confirmation screen and if you've met the Rules of Combination for the qualification, you can click 'Proceed'.
4. You will be required to fill in your centre details on the next page, although if you've already logged onto our website these will be pre-filled and you will just need to confirm them.
5. You may need to prove that your centre has the resources and staff to deliver the chosen qualification; the final page specifies what qualifications and experience your staff will need as well as any physical resource requirements. You need to upload proof of staff qualifications as well as naming those that will be assessing and internally verifying (these people will be given accounts for the AIM Awards Online Portal). It is AIM Awards policy to request evidence of staff requirements for each Qualification Approval Application submitted and all applications will be placed on hold until this information has been received. If you do not supply all of the requested evidence within a reasonable time frame, your application will be withdrawn and you will have to re-submit.
6. Once you've submitted your application for each qualification you wish to deliver, it will be considered by your AIM Awards account team and we'll get back to you with any queries or a decision within 10 working days.
7. Once the approval process is complete, you will be able to register your learners against this qualification on the Online Portal.

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Approval to deliver qualifications is valid until they are withdrawn either by the centre or by AIM Awards. Changes to your course can be made over the academic year free of charge by submitting a Course Amendment Form. Centres will be notified annually of the courses that are currently approved via their nominated internal Administration and Centre contacts.

Please note we have separate processes for the approval and administration of Access to Higher Education qualifications. Please refer to the Being an AIM Access Centre Guidance for further information on the AIM Awards website (www.aimawards.org.uk).

Product Development

If you have specific qualification requirements that are not currently met by the AIM Awards portfolio of qualifications, please contact your Business Development Manager to discuss developing qualifications where there is sufficient demand.

We also offer an Excellence Mark product, Investing in Your Future (IF), that gives recognition that you are an Excellence Focused Organisation. Investing in Your Future gives you the freedom to develop courses to suit the needs of different employers, learners and government objectives. It also gives your centre the flexibility to tailor these courses to niche markets. Information on our Investing in Your Future product, including how to apply to become an AIM Awards IF Centre, is available on our website www.aimawards.org.uk.

Advertising Qualifications/Courses

You are required to ensure the correct titles of all AIM Awards qualifications are used in your advertising (as per the Qualification Handbooks) and that qualifications/courses are not promoted in a manner that could be misleading to learners or potential learners.

You are prohibited from uploading or making copies of AIM Awards Qualification Handbooks, policies or assessment resources on your website as these may be changed and updated. We suggest including links to the relevant sections of the AIM Awards website.

Full details can be found in our Public Information Policy found on the AIM Awards website (www.aimawards.org.uk).

Registering Learners

Confirming Identity

Once you have been approved to deliver qualifications, you can enrol learners onto your course at the centre. It is essential that upon enrolling learners, their identity is confirmed so that we can be assured that qualifications are being awarded appropriately. In most cases, learners have to complete an enrolment form and at enrolment, the centre checks their identity via a passport, driving licence or other documentation.

Unique Learner Numbers (ULN) and the Privacy Notice

At the enrolment stage, a range of information about each learner must be obtained in order that they can be registered with us correctly. As a minimum: first name, surname, date of birth, postcode and ULN.

You are responsible for obtaining a ULN for each learner and ensuring learners are issued with a Privacy Notice, explaining that their personal information will be shared with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and other education related organisations.

Standard text is available for this on the Learning Records Service website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lrs-privacy-notices>. If a learner chooses not to have their public information shared, they must inform the Learner Records Service.

Registering Learners using the AIM Awards Online Portal

Once you have approval to offer a qualification, an email inviting you to register learners via the AIM Awards Online Portal will be sent. You will need to set up accounts in order to use the Portal to carry out administration of your centre. Your AIM Awards Customer Support Officer can do this for you once you provide us with details of the staff that require accounts. We will send you a Portal Guidance document which provides full details about using the Portal and we can provide training if required. The AIM Awards Online Portal allows you to:

- Register learners
- Submit documentation, including Course Amendment Forms
- Review learners and Runs
- Upload completed Recommendation for the Award of Credit (ERAC) forms
- Authorise ERAC claims for certification

Please ensure that learners are registered onto the correct programme on the Portal (a programme is your chosen set of components/units from your approved qualification) and check that the correct components/units are listed. You must check all learner registrations carefully in order to avoid maladministration and malpractice.

Once learners are registered, you will be able to generate and download your ERAC forms from the Portal instantly, however in some cases your registration may need to be processed by AIM Awards. This will be done within two weeks of receipt and you will be notified once complete.

The ERAC is used to claim the learners' achievements at the end of the course so the details must be checked carefully as these will appear on any certificates issued. ERACs are allocated a Run Number which is used to identify them in communications.

Please inform us within 14 days of receipt of any changes that need to be made to the details on the ERAC. We reserve the right to charge for replacement certificates issued as a result of inaccurate information provided by centres.

Late Registration Fees

Timely registration of learners allows us to certificate in a timely fashion as per our service standards below, and is a condition of the Centre Agreement. A late registration charge per learner will be charged for registrations submitted after the deadlines specified below in addition to the normal registration charge. Charges are detailed in our Fees and Charges Catalogue on our website (www.aimawards.org.uk).

- For courses of 15 weeks or less, the Learner Registrations should be submitted within 25 working days of the start date
- For all other courses, the Learner Registrations should be submitted within 60 working days of the start date

If, when you come to register your learners you are over the above deadlines, the Portal will notify you that you will incur late registration fees.

Maladministration

Maladministration is any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in non-compliance with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications. Examples of potential maladministration include:

- A learner being registered against different components/units or with different dates of birth (e.g. due to a typo or administration error) which could lead to learners not receiving the correct certificates
- Assessor ticking the wrong boxes on the ERAC which could lead to learners receiving credit for components/units they have not completed

Assessing Learner's Work

Setting Assessments

Please refer to the Guide to Assessing AIM Awards Qualifications on the AIM Awards website (www.aimawards.org.uk).

You need to be very clear about what will be assessed on the course. In order to ensure that learners achieve the qualification(s) they are registered on, they must provide evidence that they have achieved all components/units specified in the Rules of Combination for that qualification. These are described in the Qualification Handbooks.

Initial assessments may be put in place before the start of the course to establish the level each learner is working at in order that you register them onto the correct level of qualification.

Formative assessments should be planned at various points throughout the course to establish how well each learner is progressing and to provide each learner with developmental feedback to help them improve.

Summative assessments are the tasks that you plan to gather the evidence for each learner for each component/unit.

These summative tasks should be devised to ensure that each learner provides evidence that they have achieved all assessment requirements for all standards for each of the components/units. All assessment tasks and methods should comply with the principles of assessment in that they should be:

- Open, Transparent, Fair and Inclusive
- Continuous
- Reliable, Consistent and Rigorous
- Relevant and Valid
- Sufficient
- And allow learners to produce work that is Authentic

You must ensure that all learners are assessed in:

- English in England
- English in Wales (unless otherwise stated in the Qualification Handbook)
- English in Northern Ireland (unless otherwise stated in the Qualification Handbook)

unless they are being assessed in a qualification specifically about learning a foreign language.

Where an assessment is required to be completed under specified conditions, for example an examination, learners must complete the assessment under those conditions other than where any Reasonable Adjustments or Special Consideration require alternative conditions.

Please note for some qualifications, for example Functional Skills, assessments are devised, issued to centres and may be marked by AIM Awards. Full details on registration, assessment, invigilation and quality assurance is provided in the Qualification Handbook for all qualifications.

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Approval of Assessment Tasks

Once suitable assessment tasks have been devised, they must be approved by the Internal Verifier (IV) before being given to learners. The IV will ensure that the tasks meet the principles of assessment, and that they allow learners to provide sufficient authentic evidence to meet the requirements of the qualification.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest is where an individual or organisation has competing interests or loyalties. Conflicts of interest can arise in a variety of circumstances and it is likely that people working with or for us may encounter potential conflicts of interest from time to time. In these circumstances we ask that:

- You take all reasonable steps to avoid any part of the assessment and verification of a learner's work being undertaken by any person who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment
- In the event that a conflict of interest is identified, the parties involved need to inform us immediately by completing a Conflict of Interest Declaration form and emailing it to enquires@aimawards.org.uk
- In the event that the conflict of interest is identified after it has taken place, you must inform us immediately by completing a Conflict of Interest Change in Circumstance form to enquires@aimawards.org.uk
- If there is a connection between any of your learners and your allocated External Verifier (EV), you must let us know so that we can avoid a conflict of interest (using the Conflict of Interest Declaration form). If the EV identifies such a conflict of interest once they are externally verifying your learners work, we will arrange for another member of the team to verify that learner's work.

Marking

You must ensure that evidence generated by individual learners in an assessment is generated by that learner, i.e. that plagiarism does not occur.

Once learners have completed their work the Assessor must mark the work to ensure that it is sufficient, appropriate, authentic and at the correct level for the component/unit. It is good practice to check work in progress and give learners developmental feedback to help them improve.

Assessors must make it clear to the IV and EV where the requirements of the qualification have been evidenced. Once the work has been marked and signed off as meeting the requirements by the Assessor, final feedback should be provided to the learner. The Assessor must tick the ERAC to indicate which component/unit(s) each learner has achieved and then sign to confirm the certification.

The completed marked work should be presented to the IV for sampling according to the internal verification plan. Once this process has been completed the IV must sign the ERAC.

The work, completed assessment and IV documentation and completed ERAC should be presented to the EV or Approved Internal Verifier (AIV) (if the centre has Direct Claims Status for the completed qualification).

Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and transfer of credit exist to enable learners to avoid duplication of learning and assessment. Learners may claim RPL or transfer of credit against a whole component/unit or several components/units. The potential for a learner to undertake RPL or credit transfer relies on the Course Tutor or Assessor carrying out effective interview and initial assessment of learners to establish their previous qualifications and experience. A maximum of 70% of a qualification can normally be achieved through equivalency (credit transfer). At least 30% should be gained through new learning. Your funding may be affected if a learner achieves more than 50% of the assessment through RPL.

Credit Transfer allows for previously accredited achievement to count towards another qualification, where it is allowed as an equivalency within the new qualification, or where the learner has already achieved component/unit(s) belonging to that qualification. This is possible when the Rules of Combination for the qualification allow for equivalency or the learner has completed components/units from within the qualification previously. Eligibility will be checked by the Course Tutor/Assessor. Credit Transfer will be identified on the ERAC and the learner certificate.

- The learner will provide evidence of qualifications and components/units achieved (not required where previous credit achievement was from AIM Awards)
- The Course Tutor/Assessor must complete an RPL and Credit Transfer Form, have it countersigned by the IV and submit it to their AIM Awards Customer Support Officer
- Verified signed copies of the certificates should be presented alongside the ERAC as evidence to the EV or Approved Internal Verifier (AIV) for final approval

Recognition of Prior Learning is a process of assessing and validating learning or achievement that has not been certificated or accredited previously towards the qualification being studied. RPL is a negotiated process between learner and Assessor and the learner must provide evidence of prior work, learning or achievement to fully satisfy the assessment criteria.

- The learner and Assessor agree what previous learning/experience can be evidenced towards an RPL claim and complete an RPL and Credit Transfer Form
- The learner will provide evidence of prior learning (eg work experience records, employer statements, essays, portfolios, certificates of achievement) and map it to the assessment being claimed

The following evidence is required when applying for RPL and/or Credit Transfer:

The following evidence is required when applying for RPL and/or Credit Transfer:

Evidence: Portfolio of evidence

The Assessor and IV will follow their usual centre processes for marking, quality assuring and approving the submitted RPL evidence ensuring it meets the requirements of the component/unit(s).

Evidence: Assessment records, IV records, RPL and Credit Transfer Form, ERAC

The RPL and Credit Transfer Form and RPL evidence must be presented alongside the ERAC to the EV or Approved Internal Verifier for final approval.

We reserve the right to exclude the use of RPL in cases such as:

- Licence to practice qualifications
- Health and safety qualifications
- Regulated professions
- Work placements

Please note that where Credit Transfer or RPL is used towards achievement of a qualification, you will still be charged the full fee for the qualification being claimed.

The AIM Awards website has a set of sample forms that you can use for setting and recording of assessment activity, and for internal verification of the task and marked work.

Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable Adjustments are adjustments made to the way a learner is assessed or the assessment itself for a qualification so that a learner can demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding. The nature of any reasonable adjustments depends on the particular requirements as well as on the qualification and assessment methods. Reasonable adjustments are generally not appropriate where the learner's particular difficulty directly effects performance in the actual attributes to be assessed.

Most of our qualifications are assessed through internally set and internally assessed assessments. For this type of assessment, the IV may give permission for reasonable adjustments for a learner without having to apply to AIM Awards for approval, provided that such arrangements are the learners normal way of working and do not mean an unfair advantage to that learner. Examples of reasonable adjustments include:

Low vision aids, overlays	Use of a Practical Assistant
Brailing of non-secure assessment material	Use of a Communicator
Amplification, taped questions and responses	Transcription of a learner's written responses
Supervised rest breaks	Word processor
Use of a Reader	Use of a Prompter
Use of a Writer/Typist/Scribe	Use of Sign Language

The Internal Verifier must approve and record the details of all reasonable adjustments made at the discretion of the centre and must make this available for External Verification.

Strict regulations apply to the implementation of externally set and externally marked assessments taken under examination conditions. If reasonable adjustments are required for any learners taking a qualification assessed in this manner you must consult with and get approval from your allocated External Quality Assurance Manager (EQAM). Full details can be found in our Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy found on our website (www.aimawards.org.uk).

Special Considerations

Special consideration is a post-examination adjustment that can be applied to learners who have suffered a temporary illness or condition that affects them on the day of the examination.

You should note that it may not be possible to apply special consideration where an assessment requires the learner to demonstrate practical competence. In some circumstances it may be more appropriate to offer the learner an opportunity to take the assessment at a later date rather than apply special considerations.

If you feel any of your learners have been affected in this way, please complete and submit a Request for Special Consideration form for each learner requesting special consideration with supporting evidence, which may include medical/psychological evidence or a statement from the Invigilator/Verifier.

Quality Assurance

Internal Verification

Internal Verification is the process by which you regularly sample and evaluate assessment practices and decisions and act on the findings to ensure adherence to the principles of assessment. It involves two key processes; Verification and Standardisation and is carried out by one or more Internal Verifiers. Systems will vary between centres according to what is appropriate.

An Internal Verification Plan must be developed before the assessment cycle begins to indicate what will happen, when, who is involved and how it will be recorded. When planning internal verification activity, the IV must take into account delivery sites, number of Assessors, range of components/units, levels, assessment methods, borderline cases, reasonable adjustments and any issues arising from previous IVs or EVs. The IV should specify the sample of assessed work from each Assessor that they want to see and when and it is important that the sample is sufficient to form a view on the consistency and validity of the assessment. The sample size should be sufficient to ensure that any issues have been considered and should not be decided by a rule of thumb. It must cover all components/units and should be increased for new qualifications or Assessors new to components/units and qualifications. IV of the assessment task should take place before tasks are distributed to learners

1. A sample of work in progress should be internally verified in year to ensure that assessment is being carried out effectively and that the assessment tasks are fit for purpose
2. A final sample of completed marked learner work should be verified at the end of the course

Standardisation

Standardisation ensures that the assessment for a qualification and component/unit are applied consistently by Assessors and Verifiers. You must retain a minimum of two samples of assessed learner work for each component/unit for one year which should represent every Assessor (photocopies or scans are acceptable). These samples should be used for internal standardisation and retained for AIM Awards standardisation. You must:

- Plan and undertake standardisation of internally set tasks and the outcomes of internal assessment
- Contribute assessed material to AIM Awards standardisation activity

Internal Standardisation is the standardisation of assessment practice where there is more than one Tutor/Assessor delivering the same or similar courses and making assessment decisions for learners.

AIM Awards standardisation is where as an Awarding Organisation we monitor the assessment and quality assurance of specific qualifications across our centres. To do this, we collect retained samples from centres, either by asking for you to submit them (post or email) or by the External Verifier (EV) collecting samples when visiting the centre.

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External Verification

Once your learners work has been completed, assessed and verified internally according to your IV plan, it should be presented for external verification. Each year you will be able to attend EV Roadshows at a range of venues across the country. AIM Awards has adopted a regionalised approach and this means that Roadshows will be held in your area. Details of all Roadshows can be found on our website.

If you deliver a qualification that requires a specialist External Verifier (EV) you can either attend a Roadshow, arrange for an EV to visit your centre or ask for your learners work to be externally verified remotely.

Our EV will expect to be able to look at all completed and assessed learner work that is being claimed for on the ERAC(s). You will need to make records of assessment, IV documentation, feedback to learners, any reasonable adjustments applied and the completed ERACs available for the EV to review. If the EV is satisfied with the standards of assessment and verification, they will verify the claim on the portal. The EV will give verbal feedback and complete a report for each qualification that has been reviewed which will be emailed to the centre within 10 working days. These EV reports and a summary centre EV report will be sent to your named Quality Contact within 20 working days. You can request additional chargeable EV visits in addition to those allocated.

Quality Review Visits/Interactions

In addition to EV visits, we carry out a cycle of external quality assurance in the form of Quality Reviews, thematic reviews and interactions. All quality assurance visits/ interactions will be carried out by your External Quality Assurance Manager (EQAM). A quality review visit will be a visit to your centre and will look at all of your internal quality assurance procedures and policies. Thematic reviews and interactions will range from a keep in touch telephone call to a desktop review of your Quality Improvement Plan.

The frequency of these interactions will be decided on a risk based basis. You are assessed against a set of criteria which create an overall risk rating of Green, Amber or Red.

A Quality Review or thematic review report will be sent to your named quality contact within 20 working days and any areas for improvement are noted, action planned and monitored.

Malpractice

Malpractice is any deliberate activity, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the integrity of the assessment process and /or validity of certification.

There are two categories of Malpractice:

- Learner
- Centre/staff

Examples of learner Malpractice:

- Plagiarism: This is when a learner has copied information that they then claim as their own work. For example, a learner does some research and copies the information found and does not indicate that it was found on the internet.
- Identity fraud: This is when an individual claims to be someone else for example a learner completing an assessment using someone else's identity.

Examples of centre/staff Malpractice:

- Assessors providing answers for the learners to meet specific assessments.
- Non-individualised witness statements or using as evidence copy and paste statements.
- Deliberately claiming certification for a higher level than the learner has achieved.
- Tutor/Assessor completing work for the learner.

Any significant malpractice, other than learner plagiarism, should be reported to AIM Awards who will advise what action to take. AIM Awards will usually request that an internal investigation be carried out and a report submitted. If the Malpractice is severe enough to warrant an AIM Awards investigation the centre will be notified.

As a regulated Awarding Organisation we are required to report any incidents of malpractice to our regulators, should it be deemed to cause or likely to cause an adverse effect. Our regulators are Ofqual, Qualifications Wales and CCEA. AIM Awards will also report serious malpractice to other Awarding Organisations.

Sanctions

If you follow our policies and procedures and address actions set by our External Verifiers and EQAMs then it is unlikely that sanctions will be applied. However, we do know that things can go wrong and we urge you to get in touch with any problems, as soon as possible, so that we can help you get things right.

Sometimes problems can occur that mean we need to apply sanctions in order to ensure that your centre returns to compliance within the terms of our centre agreement, to ensure the integrity of our qualifications and certification and maintain our compliance with our regulators. Our Sanctions Policy details the levels of sanction we can apply and what those sanctions are.

Withdrawal of Centres

If you wish to withdraw as an AIM Awards approved centre, please notify us in writing by post or via email to enquiries@aimawards.org.uk.

One of our Customer Support Officers will call you and ask you a series of question to make sure all learners can complete their qualifications and offer you any support you may need.

We will ask that:

- Any outstanding claims for learners who have achieved their qualification(s) are submitted and their evidence externally quality assured by your External Quality Assurance Manager/External Verifier
- Your centre recognition certificate is returned to AIM Awards
- Any AIM Awards certificates you have been unable to issue to learners are returned to AIM Awards
- Our logos and/or references to being an AIM Awards centre are removed from your website, social media platforms and all resources

AIM Awards reserves the right to cease working with a centre if:

- A centre fails to pay monies owing to AIM Awards within the standard payment period outlined in our Invoicing Policy
- Quality assurance measures are not adhered to.

Direct Claims Status (DCS)

Direct Claims Status (DCS) is where we recognise named individuals at your centre as Approved Internal Verifiers (AIVs) authorise the ERAC instead of an EV for specific qualifications/courses. Where DCS is granted, the AIV takes on the responsibility of the EV for those qualifications and therefore the AIV must only approve the ERAC when they are satisfied with the standards of assessment and verification that have taken place.

DCS relates only to an individual AIV within a particular centre and is not transferable, either between Verifiers or between centres. DCS can be withdrawn at any time if either the practice of the AIV or centre falls below the expected standard.

You can nominate appropriate staff to become AIVs by completing and returning the Direct Claims Application Form to enquiries@aimawards.org.uk. The applicant will then be sent details of how to log on and complete an online test. Once this is complete, the application will be considered by the Quality Team and either approved, approved with conditions or rejected. In order to be considered for DCS the following criteria must be met:

- You have at least two EV reports with no actions set, showing excellence or continuous improvement in internal quality assurance
- You have appropriately qualified and/or experienced staff nominated to be Approved Internal Verifiers (AIVs)

Centre staff nominated to be an AIV must meet the following criteria:

- Have at least 2 years current experience of Internal Verification
- Have successfully completed the online test
- Ideally AIVs will hold a recognised Internal Verification or Internal Quality Assurance qualification (such as IQA, D34, V1)

Once you have DCS for a qualification/course, then those courses will not require External Verification. Once the AIV has approved the ERAC, it must be returned to your Customer Support Officer who will process it assuming that the AIV has authority to approve that ERAC. However, unless you have DCS for all approved qualifications, then you will still require EV visits for those qualifications that you do not have DCS for.

Direct Claims Status can be extended to additional qualifications/courses by submitting another DCS application form.

All Approved Internal Verifiers must attend a minimum of one AIM Awards DCS Standardisation event per academic year. If not, DCS will be removed until the AIV has attended. At these events AIVs must bring a sample of internally verified assessed work to be scrutinised by our EVs and EQAMs, along with evidence of your internal quality assurance activity. At the same time your AIVs will undertake some training, updating and sharing of practice with the other AIVs in attendance. We will provide details of these events annually to your AIVs.

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Results and Certificates

Recommendation for the Award of Credit (ERAC)

ERACs are issued for each Run of learner registrations per qualification/course. The ERAC will contain the course code, title, learners' names and registration numbers as well as the component/unit names and codes for the components/units identified on the 'Units on Run' section of the Portal. The ERAC must be checked on receipt to ensure the details are correct in terms of the spelling of learners' names, the required components/units and Unique Learner Numbers. Please be advised that the exact names on both the learner registration and ERAC are those used on certificates.

Once the learner work has been assessed, the Assessor must mark 'achieved' against each component/unit that has been successfully achieved by each learner. The Assessor and IV and EV or AIV must verify the ERAC once they are satisfied that the work, assessment and verification meets the required standard. All completed ERACS must be submitted via the Portal.

Issue of Results

To ensure prompt certification, all ERACs must be completed, approved by an External Verifier or Approved Internal Verifier and submitted to AIM Awards within 3 months of the end date of the course. Once a correctly completed ERAC has been submitted and verified by the IV, certificates and a summary of achievement will be produced and issued within 10 working days by post to your internal Centre Administration Contact who must check against your internal records for accuracy before you distribute the certificates to your learners. Certificates will be sent to the main centre. Please be advised we reserve the right to withhold certificates if fees are outstanding at the time of dispatch.

Ordering Replacement Certificates

In certain circumstances, you are able to request replacement certificates or amended certificates on behalf of your learners. In the event that a learners certificate has been lost or stolen, a replacement can be provided but will be clearly labelled as such.

If we have made an error, for example we have spelt a learner's name incorrectly, we will re-issue the certificate. We do ask that the original certificates are sent to us to be destroyed first.

A record of replacement certificates issued is kept.

You can request amended certificates for the following:

- Spelling error in learner name
- Transposed names (i.e surname and forename wrong way around)

In order to request amended or replacement certificates, you must complete a Replacement Certificate Form and pay our replacement certificate fee (detailed in our Fees and Charges Catalogue). We will issue replacement certificates within 10 working days of receipt of a valid claim. If the error is ours we do not charge.

Reinstatement of Centres

If for any reason you choose not to work with us, then we will archive your account.

Of course we'd love for you to come back and use our qualifications. The procedure for doing so is described below. When you contact us to register learners, we will check when you stopped working with us and depending on that date we'll advise you of your next steps. Please note you must not deliver any courses without confirming your centre status.

Stopped working with us within the last 18 months

1. A Customer Support Officer will confirm with you whether the contact details we hold for your centre are up to date and update those that have changed, including the person that signed the Centre Agreement
2. We will allocate your centre to an Account Management Team
3. Your allocated External Quality Assurance Manager (EQAM) will check that we have your up to date policies and procedures, will telephone you to confirm that our requirements can still be met, and arrange a visit if required
4. We will invoice you for our annual Centre Recognition Fee
5. You can go ahead and register learners according to the processes described in this document

Stopped working with us more than 18 months ago

1. You will need to complete the Centre Application Form available on our website and return it along with your Centre Policies as requested to enquiries@aimawards.org.uk.
2. We will send an email to your Head of Organisation asking them to sign our Centre Agreement online
3. You will need to complete and submit a Qualification Approval on our website for the qualifications you plan to offer, along with any required supporting evidence such as staff qualifications
4. We will review your completed form and policies and get back to you with any queries
5. Once these are approved, we'll carry out a telephone meeting or visit from an EQAM, depending on the nature of your centre
6. Once you have been approved and have paid the annual Centre Recognition Fee, we will send you a certificate to show that you are an AIM Awards approved centre and allocate your centre to an Account Management Team

Complaints

If you feel you need to make a complaint about any aspect of our service, please contact your External Quality Assurance Manager (EQAM) in the first instance to discuss. If you feel your complaint has not been resolved, please send details to enquires@aimawards.org.uk marking it for the attention of Director of Quality and Operations (DoQO). In most cases we will seek to resolve your complaint informally.

Contact Us

We've tried to provide as much information as possible but if we've missed anything or you need to get in touch please:

Call the office on 01332 341822, or

Email: enquiries@aimawards.org.uk



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01332 341822



enquiries@aimawards.org.uk



www.aimawards.org.uk

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