



Direct Claim Status (DCS) Policy

As an Awarding Organisation regulated by Ofqual in England, Qualification Wales in Wales and CCEA Regulation in Northern Ireland, YMCA Awards is required to meet the Conditions of Recognition set by each of these regulators. In order to support YMCA Awards' compliance with the Conditions of Recognition, YMCA Awards undertakes appropriate and proportionate external quality assurance of all the qualifications we award. This external quality assurance is detailed in YMCA Awards' External Quality Assurance Policy and is underpinned by a commitment to externally verify learner achievement by sampling learner assessment evidence to determine that the evidence is valid, reliable, sufficient and authentic.

Centres are required to seek approval to deliver our qualifications, demonstrating that the centre meets a set of criteria relevant to the qualification(s) and mode of delivery and assessment. Once a centre has been approved and is able to demonstrate ongoing adherence to our policies and procedures with respect to the delivery of YMCA Awards qualifications (including administration of assessments and marking of assessments where appropriate) a centre may apply for Direct Claim Status (DCS) which allows claims for learner certification to be made to YMCA Awards without intervention (sign off) by an External Quality Assurer for the specific cohort. External quality assurance continues at regular intervals, as set out in this Policy below and in the External Quality Assurance Policy, to ensure that claims are valid on an ongoing basis.

Direct Claim Status is granted only by YMCA Awards on demonstration of meeting our quality criteria; it cannot be transferred at the point of centre approval from another awarding organisation.

Direct Claim Status is issued on a per qualification, not per centre basis.

The key mechanisms through which YMCA Awards identifies whether a centre may be eligible for Direct Claim Status and that the centre remains eligible once Direct Claim Status is granted are:

- monitoring through external quality assurance processes
- analysis of achievement rates of learners at the centre
- adherence by the centre to YMCA Awards' policies and procedures and Centre Agreement/Terms and Conditions
- other data or information that is, or becomes, relevant, including learner feedback and complaints.

Minimum quality criteria

Before a centre can be granted Direct Claim Status it must demonstrate continued maintenance of the centre approval criteria, compliance with the Centre Agreement/Terms and Conditions **and** in addition, the following criteria must also be met:

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- at least 18 months continuous delivery of the qualification
- two external quality assurance activity reports with no actions or sanctions, which must be consecutive and be the centre's most recent reports
- no anticipated or planned changes to staffing, resources or governance related to delivery of the specified qualification
- the centre must be operating wholly within the UK or Ireland (if a centre which operates partially outside the UK or Ireland wishes to obtain Direct Claim Status, the centre will only be able to achieve Direct Claim Status for the provision operating in the UK or Ireland).

YMCA Awards reserve the right to apply additional criteria as deemed necessary.

Applying for Direct Claim Status

Centres should ask their allocated YMCA Awards external quality assurer during their external quality assurance activity or contact the Quality and Assessment team by emailing awards.feedback@ymca.co.uk. Please include "DCS request" in the subject line of your email.

YMCA Awards' process for granting Direct Claim Status

Once a request for Direct Claim Status is received from a centre, the external quality assurer allocated to the centre and the Lead External Quality Assurer will review previous external quality assurance reports and discuss whether Direct Claim Status should be granted for one or more qualifications. As part of this review the Lead External Quality Assurer will consider additional information regarding the centre held by YMCA Awards as part of YMCA Awards' centre monitoring strategy. The final decision to grant Direct Claim Status is made by the Lead External Quality Assurer, or in their absence by the Senior Regulatory Compliance Officer.

Direct Claim Status is granted on a yearly basis, from the date of being awarded Direct Claim Status for a period of 12 months.

Maintaining Direct Claim Status

For Direct Claim Status to be maintained – at any time and at the point 12 months approval is due to end - a centre must remain compliant with the initial minimum Direct Claim Status approval criteria (listed above).

The centre must engage with external quality assurance at least once a year, with no actions on the External Quality Assurance Report.

The centre must retain **all** completed learners work for retrospective sampling together with **all** relevant internal quality assurance paperwork. Sampling and review of internal quality assurance documentation will take place at the next scheduled external quality assurance

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activity. The External Quality Assurer will review a sample of certificated work to ensure that the quality of assessment and internal quality assurance continues to meet the necessary standards for Direct Claim Status to continue.

If assessment and internal quality assurance procedures and practices do not meet the specified criteria, sanctions or actions are likely to be imposed which typically result in Direct Claim Status being suspended or removed.

Review arrangements

YMCA Awards review this policy and its associated procedures annually as part of self-evaluation arrangements and revise it when necessary in response to customer or regulatory feedback. If you would like to comment on the process described in this document please contact us via the details provided below.

Understanding this policy

All enquiries relating to this policy and procedure should be addressed to:

Senior Regulatory Compliance Officer
YMCA Awards
112 Great Russell Street
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Telephone: + 44 (0)20 3944 9500

Email: awards.feedback@ymca.co.uk