



## 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 Strategy 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 Strategy, 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 DCS and that the centre remains eligible once DCS is granted are:

- monitoring through External Quality Assurance processes
- analysis of centre data on learner achievement rates
- adherence by the centre to YMCA Awards' policies and procedures and the Centre Agreement
- other data or information that is relevant, including learner feedback and complaints.

## Minimum quality criteria

The following criteria must be met before a centre can be granted DCS:

- Typically, 18 months of successful delivery of the qualification.
- Appropriately trained and skilled Internal Quality Assurer(s) (IQAs) and assessors.
- Two consecutive external verification report forms with no actions for the centre.

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DCS is granted by the YMCA Awards Quality and Assessment team who 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](mailto: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 DCS 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 DCS 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 our centre monitoring strategy. The final decision to grant DCS is made by the Lead External Quality Assurer, or in their absence by the Head of Quality and Assessment.

## Maintaining Direct Claim Status

In order to maintain DCS, centres need to continue to maintain appropriately trained and skilled staff (assessors and IQAs).

DCS is granted on a yearly basis from the date of being awarded DCS for 12 months. For DCS to be maintained a centre must meet all the criteria described below and make learner registrations for the qualification(s) given DCS, with a maximum gap of one year.

The centre must have been visited 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 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 DCS to continue.

If assessment and internal quality assurance procedures and practices do not meet the specified criteria, sanctions will be imposed which may result in DCS being suspended or removed.

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## 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:

Head of Quality and Assessment  
YMCA Awards  
112 Great Russell Street  
London  
WC1B 3NQ

Telephone: + 44 (0)20 3944 9500

Email: [awards.feedback@ymca.co.uk](mailto:awards.feedback@ymca.co.uk)