

AIM Programme Readiness 2025

Please see the questions asked over the recent training sessions. The responses below have been provided by the subject matter experts (SME's) on this topic.

This document includes information from the following programmes:

AIM Programme Readiness: Session 1, 07 May 2025, 10 am

Q1.	Does the type of service need to be updated or is the completed one ok?
A1.	An AIM Service Profile only needs to be updated where changes have occurred.
Q2.	So can we set the standard to AM 9-12 and the next session to Plus 12-15, or does the system overlap?
A2.	This is correct, an AIM Standard session can be from 9-12pm and the AIM Plus session can be from 12-3pm. The end time of AIM Standard session and start time of AIM Plus session can be the same.
Q3.	Must extended hours in same room be named differently?
A3.	Yes. The sessions would need a differentiation between the AM and PM session, Standard, Plus and Non-Term.
Q4.	We are offering an extra half hour to our ECCE session; do we include it the session time?
A4.	AIM Plus and AIM Non-term can only be applied for a minimum of one hour per day.
Q5.	Can an ECCE age eligible child be on a NCS sponsor CHICK for an AIM Level 7 application?
A5.	Once the child is ECCE eligible, with an ECCE registration a child can avail of AIM Level 7 Standard, Plus and Non-Term.
Q6.	Why can't an NCS child apply for AIM Level 7?
A6.	Once a child is ECCE eligible, they can apply for AIM Level 7 Standard. AIM Plus and AIM Non-term applications have a dependency on an active NCS claim, where standard applications do not.
Q7.	Can a service make a new application for AIM Non-term time for summer 2025?
A7.	If an AIM Non-term application has already been submitted and you wish to add dates for over the summer period, please submit a 'Change of Circumstance' (COC) review. Please note, reviews may take up to 6 weeks to process. The link to the resource on reviews can be accessed here: https://earlyyearshive.ncs.gov.ie/how-to-guides/better-start-aim/better-start-aim7/
Q8.	Most sessional services finish in June, all submission applications should be available to complete now before we finish our programme year, can this be implemented now?
A8.	The 2025 Programme call for standard applications opened on 06/05/2025, however, AIM Plus and AIM Non-term applications will not be available until mid-summer. We will take this feedback on board and keep it in mind for the future.

Q9.	Do we have to inform Pobal if children go on a weeks holidays during the summer?
A9.	Please note, a service provider must adhere to the rules for absence or under attendance as set out in Section 10 of the AIM Programme Rules.
Q10.	Do we have to set up the NCS calendar for the year 2025/2026 before adding the dates for AIM Non-term?
A10.	Yes, the 2025/26 calendar would need to be created prior to the submission of AIM Non-term applications. The HIVE will only allow you to submit an AIM Non-term application on non-payable ECCE weeks marked on your calendar.
Q11.	What is the latest end date an AIM Non-term application can be created for 2025/2026?
A11.	The end date for Plus and Non-term applications for 2025/2026 is 21/08/2026.
Q12.	Can a child avail of Aim 3 days one week and 2 days the next week?
A12.	Yes. A child can avail of AIM supports for 3 days one week and 2 days another week.
Q13.	If we are applying for 3hrs for a child and they under attend on these, will this be captured in the NCS returns or do we also need to notify AIM?
A13.	Please note, a service provider must adhere to the rules for absence or under attendance as set out in Section 10 of the AIM Programme Rules.
Q14.	Can funding be back dated for a Non-term application?
A14.	AIM Non-term applications are not backdated.
Q15.	Can you please explain difference between Standard and Plus - it both said for 3 hours?
A15.	AIM Standard is available during the ECCE session for 3 hours. AIM Plus is available outside of the ECCE session for 3 hours a day on ECCE payable weeks.
Q16.	Can this recording be emailed?
A16.	A pre-recorded webinar is available on the Hive and can be accessed here: Recorded training webinars - Service Provider Portal
Q17.	I don't see the 2025 programme available on the Hive.
A17.	The 2025 Programme call for Standard applications opened on 06/05/2025, however AIM Plus and AIM Non-term applications will not be available until mid-summer.
Q18.	For summer care for AIM children – Non-term is there a limit of 6 hours per day?
A18.	Yes, AIM Non-term is available for 6 hours per day during ECCE non-payable weeks.
Q19.	The child is not eligible for ECCE until September 2026, but wants to start in September. Not eligible for AIM Level 7 as will be on NCS. Why?
A19.	To receive AIM supports a child must be ECCE age eligible and be registered on an ECCE programme in an ECCE registered ELC service.
Q20.	I can't currently add a new Level 4 or 7 application for 2025?
A20.	If you have had AIM funding for 2024, you will be prompted to carry out a Review and Confirm application for 2025. If you have not availed of any AIM support

	before, a how to guide on how to submit an AIM application can be accessed through this link Better Start / AIM - Service Provider Portal . If you are still unable to add a new application, please contact the Early Years Service Provider center who can offer support to your query.
Q21.	Does a COC need to be submitted if a child is out sick for a week during Non-term over the summer?
A21.	A service provider must adhere to the rules for absence or under attendance as set out in Section 10 of the AIM Programme Rules.
Q22.	So if the child takes a week off for holiday purposes do we not get paid for that week?
A22.	Please note, a service provider must adhere to the rules for absence or under attendance as set out in Section 10 of the AIM Programme Rules.
Q23.	How do we submit a COC for a week holiday and service will lose funding? Makes things very difficult to be accommodating.
A23.	Please note, a service provider must adhere to the rules for absence or under attendance as set out in Section 10 of the AIM Programme Rules.
Q24.	Is there any way we can apply for AIMs support for the extra half hour in our ECCE session?
A24.	AIM Plus and AIM Non-term can only be applied for a minimum of one hour.
Q25.	So can we apply for AIM Standard without doing our Calendar? As calendar isn't open till end of June?
A25.	Yes, AIM Standard applications can be submitted prior to your ECCE calendar being created.
Q26.	My first time working on HIVE with AIM. Do I need to add my ECCE, NCS 25/26 calendar before submitting AIM Standard?
A26.	An AIM Standard application can be submitted prior to the creation of 2025/26 calendar. The 2025/26 Programme call for standard applications opened on 06/05/2025. AIM Plus and Non-term applications will require your Calanders to be completed and the opening date for these applications will be mid-summer.
Q27.	If a child is claiming standard AIM and takes a week holiday/sick, do we need to notify AIM?
A27.	Please note, a service provider must adhere to the rules for absence or under attendance as set out in Section 10 of the AIM Programme Rules.
Q28.	Do they have to be on NCS hours to avail of the AIM Non-term?
A28.	Yes, a child must have a confirmed NCS claim in place for any hours payable under AIM additional hours i.e. AIM Plus and AIM Non-term.
Q29.	Do I have to have current AIMS children ended before I can add a new child for 25/26? EG: One child's parent hasn't decided if the child is coming back next year.
A29.	No. A new AIM application can be made throughout the programme call. The 2025/26 programme call opened on 06/05/2025, therefore you can submit an AIM Standard application now.

Q30.	We have a new child starting in September that needs specialised equipment that we need to organise now, can we start this process yet?
A30.	Yes, an AIM Level 5 application can be submitted once the AIM Level 5 programme is activated. To activate the AIM Level 5 programme on the Early Years Hive, select 'Programmes', 'All programme applications' and 'Available programme applications', select 'AIM Level 5 Programme' and complete the activation. Please note, all relevant documents are required when submitting an AIM Level 5 application, the document required is outlined in question 2 of the AIM 5 FAQ which can be accessed here: Better Start / AIM FAQ - Service Provider Portal
Q31.	Under attending is supposed to be 4 weeks plus?
A31.	Standard and AIM Plus applications align with the ECCE attendance rules. AIM Non-term applications align with NCS attendance rules.
Q32.	Where do we find COC if ratios are changing in a room?
A32.	Guidance documents on reviews can be found on the Hive under Resources > AIM Level 7 > Overview of AIM Level 7 Reviews. The link to the resource on reviews can be accessed here: https://earlyyearshive.ncs.gov.ie/how-to-guides/better-start-aim/better-start-aim7/
Q33.	I have a child that attends ECCE 5 days a week and gets Level 7 for those 15 hrs and the child stays 2 long days only and gets AIM Plus. Going forward can we apply for AIM 5 days and Plus 2 days?
A33.	Yes, a service can apply for AIM Level 7 Standard, Plus and Non-term for the days they require the support.
Q34.	We have applied and been approved for L7 support, however it is asking us to review and confirm, but not letting us due to the calendar not being created yet - do we just wait until June to review and confirm? We received a notification on the Hive yesterday to say it required immediate action, so I just want to be sure.
A34.	Prior to completing a Review & Confirm application please ensure AIM 2025/26 sessions are created. Additionally, please ensure there is no open review for the 2024/25 AIM application. If you are still experiencing difficulty submitting the Review & Confirm please raise a case via the Early Years Hive.
Q35.	Where is the COC document on the HIVE?
A35.	The 'Change of Circumstances' how-to guide is available on the Early Years Hive here AIM Level 7 - Service Provider Portal under 'Overview of AIM Level 7 Reviews'.
Q36.	Thank you for the training really informative, I would like to see it passed along to powers that be it makes it more difficult to be completely inclusive working in the realms of tight programme rules and support families who are in absolute turmoil.
A36.	Thank you for your feedback and taking the time to provide suggestions to enhance the programme. We appreciate your input and will carefully consider it as we plan for the future of the programme.
Q37.	Again, new to AIMS, where do I find safeguarding policy to attach to AIMS service profile?

A37.	The safeguarding policy can be found on the resource section under Home > Programme documents > Better start/ AIM – Documents > Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults 2024
Q38.	Can you apply for AIM Plus for 2 days only and put 0 hours the other 3 days?
A38.	Yes, you can leave the days you do not require AIM Plus for blank on the application.
Q39.	With regard to COC, relating to AIM, is there an area that applies to this only?
A39.	Yes, a 'Change of Circumstance' Review must be completed where there is a change(s) to the ELC service or child information you submitted as part of the AIM Level 7 application process including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of days a child is attending pre school • A child has changed their preschool session • There has been a change in the adult to child ratio in a preschool session • A child has been awarded additional assistance from other sources i.e. Enable Ireland Support • A child is in receipt of home tuition • A child is attending a specialised pre school
Q40.	If the relevant Programme Call Dates are for the ECCE Programme call then what happens with the weeks outside of this Programme Call (i.e. July and first few weeks of August). Can the children get AIM Non-term for those weeks if the service is open?
A40.	Yes. AIM Non-term is available for 6 hours per day during ECCE Non-payable weeks.

AIM Programme Readiness: Session 2, 07 May 2025, 2:30 pm

Q41.	Does the October back date date cut off apply to Level 7 Standard?
A41.	The October cut of date is for AIM Level 1 applications only.
Q42.	We are going to open a second room in September. We still have to go through Tusla formalities. We have about 6 children for whom we would need to apply for AIM. We would prefer to divide the children between 2 rooms so that we could support all children. Not sure how to create sessions as we have not yet finalised the second preschool class details.
A42.	You can apply for AIM supports for 2025 as the programme call has opened since 06/05/2025. When completing the application you can divide the applications into two separate rooms through the sessions which you pick.
Q43.	I have Non-term AIM 7 for a child who will be leaving for school at the end of the summer. The ECCE calendar doesn't allow me to claim past August 17th, can I claim for him for his last two weeks?
A43.	AIM Non-term funding is based on ECCE non-payable weeks and on the date the service outlined in their ECCE Calander. A service can receive AIM Non-term funding until their last ECCE non payable week.
Q44.	I have 3 children in the one session needing to apply for AIM Level 7 do I need to do 3 separate applications and can I apply in July / Aug?

A44.	Yes, an AIM Level 4 and Level 7 application will need to be submitted for each child. If you wish to apply for AIM support during the summer months, an AIM Non-term application must also be submitted.
Q45.	I tried to do the confirm and review for the children in my school. I have 3 children currently obtaining AIM Level 7 but only 2 of the children were visible on the screen to review?
A45.	Please ensure there is no open review for the 2024/25 AIM application. If you are still experiencing difficulty, please raise a case via the Early Years Hive.
Q46.	Is it possible to apply now and update it later? It might be too late if we wait until details are finalised. Hi. Sorry it was in relation to the new room as I mentioned in the previous chat.
A46.	Yes. You can submit your AIM application for 2025 now as the programme call has opened. If changes are required, you can do a review. The link to the resource section on different types of reviews can be accessed here: https://earlyyearshive.ncs.gov.ie/how-to-guides/better-start-aim/better-start-aim7/
Q47.	We have a child who is currently availing of Level 7 AIM and has been granted an Over Age Exemption for Sept 2025, does this require a new application for Sept?
A47.	Yes, AIM requires a new application to be submitted at the start of each programme call. As this child has previously received AIM support you will be able to do a review and confirm for their standard application.
Q48.	So I would need to apply for Level 4 first and then 7, can I begin this process before September?
A48.	Yes, an AIM Level 4 application is required to submit an AIM Level 7 application. The 2025/26 Programme call for Standard applications opened on 06/05/2025, therefore you can submit your application now.
Q49.	I have approved AIM Level 7 for one girl and she is going to continue now in September, so I understand I need to review and confirm that everything is going to be the same and we can continue with the support. But what I am kind of confused is because Standard and Plus would be the same because they are in the time of ECCE? Or Standard is just the hours of ECCE? And also right now I just need to review and confirm the standard and then I will create Plus and Non-term?
A49.	Where a child wishes to avail of a second year of AIM Level 7 standard support, the Review & Confirm application must be completed. A new AIM Plus and AIM Non-term application will also be required, applications for AIM Plus and Non-term will open mid-summer. AIM Standard is available during the ECCE session for 3 hours. AIM Plus is available outside of the ECCE session for 3 hours a day on ECCE payable weeks and AIM Non-term is for up to 6 hours on non-ECCE payable weeks.
Q50.	To Review and Confirm Level 7 does the service profile need to be reviewed first? What is closing date for review and confirm Level 7 application 2025?
A50.	Prior to submitting Review & Confirm for the 2025/26 programme call, AIM sessions must be created. Review & Confirm will close on 13/12/25.
Q51.	I have tried to Review and Confirm 3 children who are progressing to another year but will not allow me to do so, would there be a reason for that?

A51.	Prior to completing a Review & Confirm application please ensure AIM 2025/26 sessions are created. Additionally, please ensure there is no open review for the 2024/25 AIM application. If you are still experiencing difficulty submitting the Review & Confirm please raise a case via the Early Years Hive.
Q52.	For Review and Confirm for 25/26, if the child is staying for a second year but moving class, do I need to record these changes while doing the review and confirm for next year?
A52.	Yes, when completing the Review & Confirm application for the 2025/26 programme call, such changes must be indicated on the application.
Q53.	Did you just say that a child availing of Level 7 for 2024 needs another Level 7 application for 2025 or just a Review and Confirm for 2025?
A53.	No, where a child has availed of AIM Level 7 supports for the 2024/25 programme call please complete the Review & Confirm application for AIM Standard. A new AIM Plus and AIM Non-term application is required for the 2025/26 programme call.
Q54.	What is AIM Plus?
A54.	If a child is registered on the ECCE programme in an ECCE registered ELC service, they can avail of AIM outside of ECCE hours once they have a confirmed NCS claim in place. AIM Plus is available for 3 hours per day during ECCE payable weeks.
Q55.	With AIM Plus, is it done on an initial application?
A55.	You need an AIM standard application to create a plus application.
Q56.	Is AIM still only for ECCE eligible children? Is there any options for younger children/toddlers?
A56.	AIM support is available for children who are ECCE age eligible only.
Q57.	AIM Plus does not apply to sessional services?
A57.	As a sessional service operates for 3.5 hours maximum, AIM Plus funding would not be available.
Q58.	The Non-term that would be open would be for this July and August 2025 or that needs to be done already?
A58.	AIM Non-term is available for 6 hours per day during ECCE non-payable weeks. If an AIM Non-term application has already been submitted please submit a 'Change of Circumstances' review to add dates for the summer months. Please note, reviews may take up to 6 weeks to process, additionally an initial Non-term application can take up to 12 weeks to process.
Q59.	To Review and Confirm for 25 do you have to create a new ECCE 25 program session?
A59.	Yes, prior to completing a Review & Confirm application please ensure AIM 2025/26 sessions are created.
Q60.	Did you say that the application process for Plus and Non-term is end June/July. Is this just relevant to new applications? Or is this the same for Review and Confirm for 2025?

A60.	The 2025/26 Programme call for Standard initial applications and Review & Confirm opened on 06/05/2025. AIM Plus and AIM Non-term applications will open mid-summer.
Q61.	If an AIM child is out for a week or more do we still receive the funding?
A61.	Please note, a service provider must adhere to the rules for absence or under attendance as set out in Section 10 of the AIM Programme Rules.
Q62.	When I try to review and confirm for Sep 25 the system tells me to create AIM sessions?
A62.	Prior to completing a Review & Confirm application please ensure AIM 2025/26 sessions are created.
Q63.	A child coming/moving from one setting to another setting for the coming year availing of AIM – a brand new application?
A63.	Yes, a new AIM Level 4 and AIM Level 7 application must be submitted in order to receive AIM funding.
Q64.	Regarding Review and Confirm, the system wants me to create sessions to allow me Review and Confirm?
A64.	Prior to completing Review & Confirm application please ensure AIM 2025/26 sessions are created.