

AIM Expansion with Services

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. The responses have been divided based on the programme type.

This document includes information from the following programmes:

- AIM: Access and Inclusion Model

General	
Q1.	What age does a child need to be in order to avail of AIM Plus and AIM Non-Term?
A1.	A child must be ECCE age eligible in order to avail of AIM Standard, AIM Plus and AIM Non-Term.
Q2.	What are the maximum hours of funding available under AIM Standard, AIM Plus and AIM Non-Term?
A2.	<p>Below are the maximum hours of funding available to services. The hours available are based of the ECCE service model for AIM Plus and AIM Non-Term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>AIM Standard:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3 hours of support per day during ECCE hours for 38 week services. ○ 3.5 hours per day during ECCE hours for 41 week services. • <u>AIM Plus:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Additional 3 hours of support per day outside of ECCE hours, during ECCE term time for 38 and 41 week services. • <u>AIM Non-Term:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 6 hours of support per day during ECCE non-term time for 38 week services. ○ 6.5 hours of support per day during ECCE non-term time for 41 week services. <p>Please note, AIM Plus and AIM Non-Term is available for service open all year round.</p>
Q3.	What are the ratio requirements for AIM Plus and AIM Non-Term?
A3.	In accordance the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016, room ratio should be followed e.g. a ratio of 1:8 must be maintained for children aged between 3 - 6 years old.
Q4.	What is a multi-service model?
A4.	A multi-service model is where a child avails of AIM Standard, AIM Plus and AIM Non-Term in more than one service e.g. a child avails of AIM Standard is service A and avails of AIM Plus and AIM Non-Term in Service B.

Q5.	When should the additional employee commence employment?
A5.	An AIM additional employee should be available to provide support from the date of approval.
Q6.	If a child is availing of AIM Standard and AIM plus does the AIM additional employee have to be the same person?
A6.	No, the additional employee does not need to be the same person. However, where possible we would recommend that the same person provides AIM support through AIM Standard and AIM Plus.
Q7.	If an AIM additional employee is working for 6 hours a day, who is responsible for paying for their breaks? What is the rate of pay for an AIM additional employee?
A7.	In the case of staff funded by AIM Level 7, the service provider is the employer and are responsible to ensure that they meet their legal responsibilities for an employees pay and working conditions.
Q8.	Do I need to submit a separate Service Profile for my AIM Plus and AIM Non Term applications?
A8.	No, a service is only required to have one AIM Service Profile. This only needs to be submitted once when a service wishes to apply for AIM for the first time.
Q9.	If I have already submitted my AIM Consent, do I need to resubmit this for my AIM plus and AIM Non Term application?
A9.	AIM Consent is now referred to as the AIM Application Acknowledgement. This does not have to be resubmitted where AIM Consent was previously provided.
Q10.	What do I have to have completed before submitting an AIM Plus or AIM Non Term application?
A10.	<p>Prior to submitting an AIM Plus or AIM Non-Term, the following must be completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure the AIM Service Profile has been submitted (please note this must only be done once when a service wishes to apply for AIM for the first time). • Next create AIM Plus and AIM non-Term sessions. <p><u>Single service (where child avails of AIM Standard, Plus and/or Non-term in a single service)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An AIM Level 4 application and AIM Standard must be submitted <p><u>Multi-service (where a child avails of AIM Standard, Plus and/or Non-term in a single service)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An AIM Level 4 application in the service where AIM Plus or Non-Term is being applied for.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An AIM Standard application must be submitted in a service. This does not have to be the same service where AIM Plus or AIM Non-Term are being applied for.
Q11.	What are the minimum hours a child must attend in order to avail of AIM Plus or AIM Non-Term?
A11.	A minimum of 1 hour must be required in order to avail of AIM Plus or AIM Non-Term.
Q12.	Do I need to submit an AIM Plus and AIM Non-Term application for all children availing of AIM Standard in my service?
A12.	A service provider should submit an application for each child who requires additional hours under AIM Plus or AIM Non-Term.
Q13.	Where a child is attends a service for the full day, all year round, what applications should I submit?
A13.	An AIM Standard and AIM Plus application can be submitted to request support during the ECCE programme call and AIM Non-Term should be submitted where support is required outside of the ECCE programme e.g ECCE non-payable weeks and summer months.
Q14.	If a child requires AIM Plus and AIM Non Term, do I need to submit 2 separate applications?
A14.	Yes, an application for both AIM Plus and AIM Non-Term must be submitted.
Q15.	Can I use the funding for AIM Plus or Non Term for maintenance of reduced ratio?
A15.	No, AIM Plus and AIM Non-Term will only be awarded to employ and additional person.
Q16.	Can I apply for part weeks for AIM Plus or Non Term?
A16.	Yes, you can apply and add a child to the days they will attend e.g. if a child is only attending AIM Non—Term for Monday and Tuesday, you should add the child to a session for Monday and Tuesday only. You must then remove the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday session lines.
Q17.	If a child that is availing of AIM Plus or Non Term has an NCS claim that becomes invalid at some point during the year, will this impact funding?
A17.	Yes, where an NCS confirmed claim status moves to invalid during the year, AIM Plus or AIM Non-Term funding already paid and future payments will not be processed until there is a valid confirmed NCS claim week available.

Q18.	If a child is availing of AIM Plus or AIM Non-Term is there a limit on the number of hours I can claim on NCS?
A18.	Yes, where an NCS confirmed claim status moves to invalid during the year, AIM Plus or AIM Non-Term funding already paid and future payments will not be processed until there is a valid confirmed NCS claim week available.
Q19.	If I already have an AIM standard application will my AIM Plus and /or AIM Non-Term be automatically approved?
A19.	No, AIM Plus and AIM Non-Term applications will continue to go through the current appraisal process whereby Better Start provide a recommendation based of the child and service needs and then Pobal complete the final appraisal and communicate the decision to the Service Provider via the Early Years Hive.

AIM Level 7 Plus

Q20.	Is there a closing date for AIM Plus?
A20.	AIM Plus applications will remain open during the ECCE programme call. The ECCE 2024 programme call will close on the 11/07/2025.
Q21.	When will payments be made for AIM Plus?
A21.	The first payments for AIM Plus will begin to issue the week commencing the 30 September. Applications must be approved and meet the NCS confirmed claim requirements in order to receive payment.
Q22.	If I have a shared capitation and only one child wants to avail of AIM plus, what do I do?
A22.	You should only submit an AIM Plus application for the child who requires AIM Plus hours. If more than one child in the capitation requires AIM Plus then you must submit an application for each child.
Q23.	When creating AIM Plus session I cannot create a session for 2 hours?
A23.	AIM Plus sessions must be created for a three hour period. Where a child only requires 2 hours of support, this should be entered on the child session information on the AIM Plus application.
Q24.	I have received the error message saying “The child is already registered for standard session”, what does this mean?
A24.	A child cannot be added to the same session for AIM Standard and AIM Plus.
Q25.	Where a child attends a service from 8:00 – 2:00 and attends an ECCE session from 9:00 – 12:00 and requires AIM Plus support how do I apply for this?

A25.	Where a child requires AIM Plus between 8-9am and 12-2pm, you should add the child to the session that they attend the majority of their AIM Plus hours. In this example on the AIM Plus application, the child should be added to the 12-2pm session and request 3 hours of support.
Q26.	Do I have to use AIM Plus hours during the hours of 9:00am – 3:00pm?
A26.	No, any hours outside a child's ECCE hours can be applied for under AIM Plus. Please note, on the AIM Plus application, you should add the child to the session they attend the majority of their AIM Plus hours.
Q27.	Where a child attends ECCE for 15 hours per week and has a confirmed NCS claim for 20 hours per week, what is the maximum hours I can apply for under AIM Plus?
A27.	In this scenario, the maximum that can be applied for under AIM Plus is 3 hours per day, up to a maximum total of 15 hours per week.
Q28.	If a child has a confirmed NCS claim for 20 hours per week but the child attends outside of ECCE for 21 hours per week, can I use AIM Non Term to make up for the extra hour?
A28.	No, AIM Non-Term can only be applied for outside of the ECCE term e.g. non-payable weeks (Halloween mid-term, Christmas, Easter mid-term, Summer etc. The maximum hours available under AIM Plus is 3 hours per day for 5 days per week.

AIM Level 7 Non-Term	
Q29.	Can I apply for AIM Non-Term during the summer months?
A29.	Yes, AIM Non-Term can be applied for during a service's ECCE non-payable weeks and during the summer months e.g. Halloween mid-term, Christmas, Easter mid-term, Summer etc.
Q30.	Can AIM Non-Term applications be submitted at any point through the year?
A30.	Yes, an AIM Non-Term application can be submitted at any point during the year. We would advise that applications are submitted at the earliest point to allow the application to be processed and funding to be in place.
Q31.	If I have a shared capitation for AIM Standard, do I have to apply for AIM Non Term for both children availing of AIM?
A31.	Yes, where one or more children are sharing support for AIM standard, an AIM Non-Term application should be submitted for all children who wish to apply for AIM Non-Term hours.
Q32.	Where a child only attends a service for ECCE during term time and 15 hours outside of the ECCE term, can they avail of AIM Non-Term?

A32.	Yes, the child can avail of AIM Non-Term once they have a confirmed NCS claim. Please see https://www.ncs.gov.ie/en/ for more information on applying for NCS.
Q33.	What do I do if I am submitting a Non Term application, and I don't know when the child will be on holiday during the summer months?
A33.	We would advise you to submit all weeks the child will require for AIM Non-Term as soon as possible. Where you need to add or amend weeks to an AIM Non-Term application you can submit a Change of Circumstance review. Please note, reviews are not available to make changes to AIM Plus and AIM Non-Term applications at present. An announcement will be posted when they can be submitted.
Q34.	When Creating an AIM Non-Term session, I cannot create a session for 5 hours?
A34.	AIM Non-Term session must be created for 6 hours. Where a child requires less than 6 hours, the hours entered on the AIM Non-Term application should reflect the hours required e.g. 5 hours.
Q35.	Can I apply for AIM Non-Term if my service is closed for the Christmas period?
A35.	No, services will only be paid for AIM Non-Term for the days they are open and providing AIM support.