

Circular 21/2016

25 November 2016

To: GLAS Advisors

Re: **Commonage Eligibility for GLAS 3**

Dear Advisor

The commonage requirements for eligible GLAS applicants are set out in Circular 8/2015 as follows:

Eligible Applicants

- Must be an active farmer;
- Must have submitted an SPS claim for his or her commonage share in 2014 and continue to do so for each year of the GLAS contract. Rented land is eligible if it was declared in the applicant's name in 2014;
- With the exception of new entrants to farming, the acquisition or declaration of a share in subsequent years will not confer Tier 1 access, and it not eligible for payment under GLAS;
- Must have submitted a GLAS application on their green-land by the Scheme closing date.

Your attention is particularly drawn to the provision in the circular that acquisition of commonage in years subsequent to 2014 would not confer priority access or payment entitlement under GLAS.

In respect of the third tranche of GLAS (GLAS 3) and in recognition of the fact that 2015 was the baseline year for the establishment of entitlements under Pillar 1 the provisions of Circular 8/2015 shall also apply to commonage land declared under the herd number in BPS 2015 whether declared in previous years or not.

In addition farmers with commonage who have been issued with a new herd number and who submitted a Basic Payment Scheme application for the first time in 2016 (2016 new entrants) will also be regarded as eligible commonage applicants for the purposes of GLAS 3. The Department has identified a small number of 2016 new entrants, numbering less than 150, who may qualify under this provision. The Department is aware that the commonage Tab for GLAS 3 applicants in this category is currently not presenting on the online system for some of these cases. The Department is currently updating the commonage container data for these cases and once updated and verified over the coming days this issue will be resolved. If the GLAS 3 application has been created already it will need to be deleted and re-created.

For clarity please note that farmers who submitted a Basic Payment Scheme/Single Payment Scheme application in 2015 and/or 2014 but only declared commonage for the first time in 2016 will not be considered eligible under the commonage eligibility provisions for GLAS 3. The

Page 1 of 2

commonage tab will not be presented on the GLAS 3 online application system in these circumstances.

This circular is to be read in conjunction with circular 8/2015.

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