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# Determinations

When you carried out all necessary verifications and recorded the required information on SPM correctly, do this:

1. Run the 'Eligibility Check'.
2. Review result of the 'Eligibility Check' to ensure it gives the expected outcome.

If the result of the 'Eligibility Check' is not what's expected, review the information held on SPM and make any necessary amendments.

## **If the client has not provided the required evidence**

If the client has not provided the required evidence to verify a relevant aspect of their application, such as a Housing Benefit award letter, treat this evidence as 'Not Verified'.

Do this:

1. Log in to SPM.
2. Search for the client record.
3. Go to the BSG application case.
4. Select 'Evidence' from the top menu bar.
5. Select 'Evidence' on the left of the screen.
6. Delete the associated 'Evidence' from SPM. See the SPM 'BSG application case evidence' guide.

You must do this to ensure that SPM makes the correct eligibility decision.

If the client provides potentially false or fake documentary evidence such as a MAT B1 in the wrong format or containing spelling mistakes, treat the evidence as 'Not Verified' also, and update SPM appropriately.

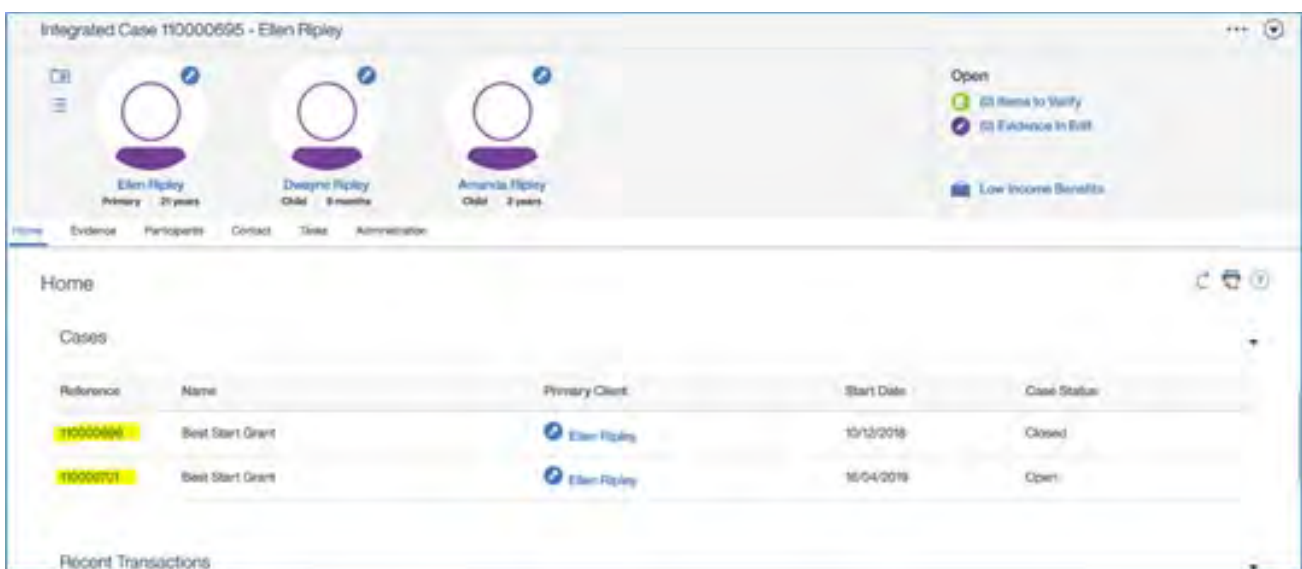
If you receive a potentially fake document, contact the Fraud Team.

## Clients who have previously had a BSG award

Once the eligibility has been checked and the case approved the evidence from the new application needs to be transferred over to the existing Integrated Case as 'Incoming Evidence' which was created during the first application.

This needs to be done before submitting the Product Delivery case for approval.

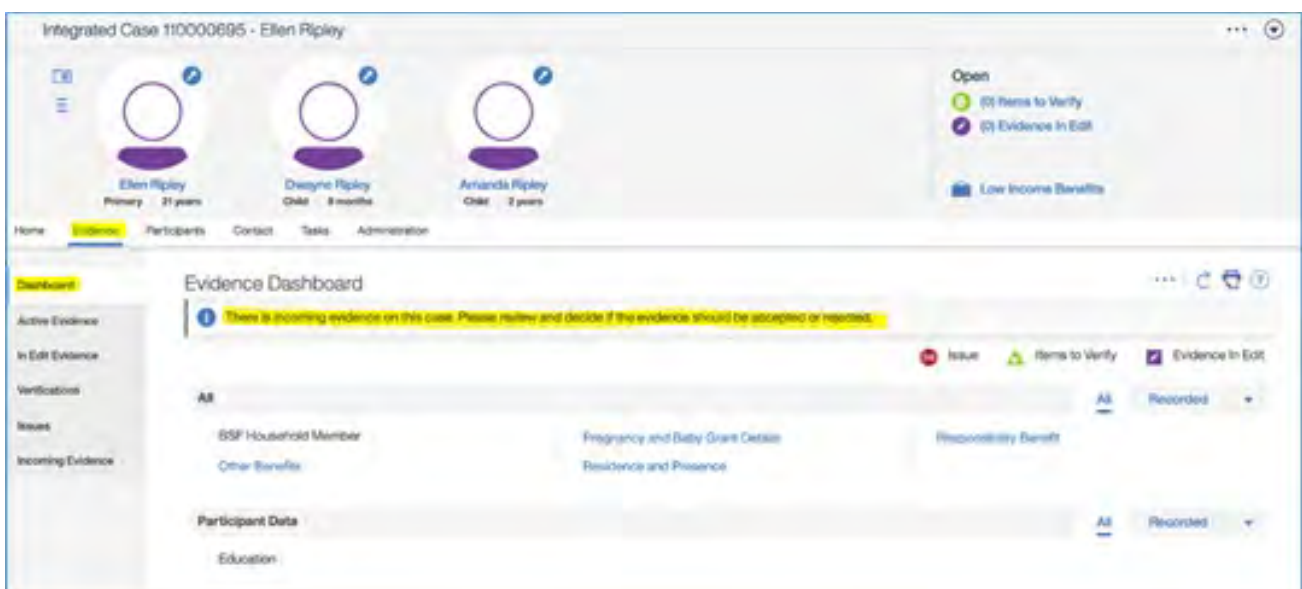
## Incoming evidence on an Integrated Case



The screenshot shows the 'Home' page of an Integrated Case for Ellen Ripley. At the top, there are three client profile cards: Ellen Ripley (Primary, 21 years), Dwayne Ripley (Child, 8 months), and Amanda Ripley (Child, 2 years). To the right, there are status indicators for 'Open' items: 0 Items to Verify and 0 Evidence In Edit. Below this is a 'Cases' table with the following data:

Reference	Name	Primary Client	Start Date	Case Status
110000695	Best Start Grant	Ellen Ripley	10/12/2018	Closed
110000701	Best Start Grant	Ellen Ripley	10/04/2018	Open

Screenshot of Integrated Case home page which shows the PDC for the previous application and the one for the new application.



The screenshot shows the 'Evidence Dashboard' for the Integrated Case. A yellow notification banner at the top states: 'There is incoming evidence on this case. Please review and decide if this evidence should be accepted or rejected.' Below this, there are filters for 'Issue', 'Items to Verify', and 'Evidence In Edit'. The dashboard displays a list of evidence items:

Issue	Recorded
BSP Household Member	Recorded
Other Benefits	Recorded
Participant Data	Recorded
Education	Recorded

Screen shot of Integrated Case evidence dashboard which shows the message letting the user know that there is new incoming evidence.

## To accept the new incoming evidence

### From the Integrated Case

1. Select 'Evidence' from the top menu and then select 'Incoming Evidence' on the left of the screen.

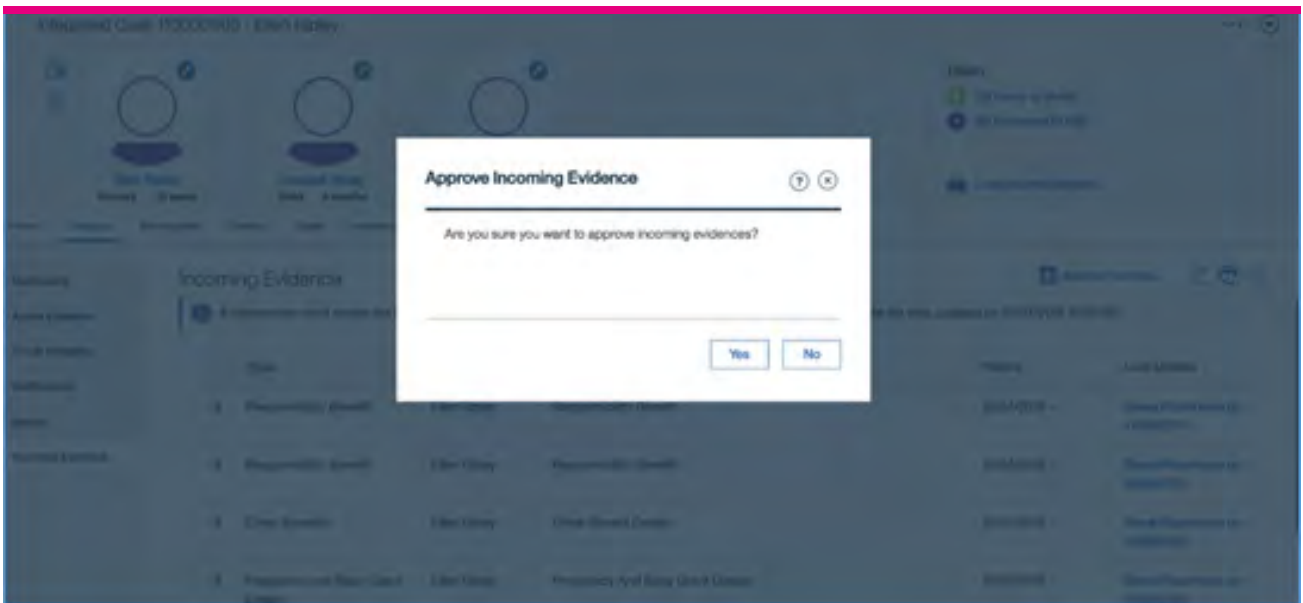
The screenshot shows the 'Integrated Case 110000695 - Ellen Ripley' dashboard. The 'Evidence' menu is highlighted in the top navigation bar. On the left sidebar, 'Incoming Evidence' is selected. The main content area displays a table of incoming evidence records. A notification message at the top of the table states: 'A caseworker must review the following incoming evidence and select an action to resolve each evidence record. The list was updated on 16/04/2019 10:46:36.' The table has columns for Type, Participant, Description, Period, and Last Update. The records are:

Type	Participant	Description	Period	Last Update
Responsibility Benefit	Ellen Ripley	Responsibility Benefit	16/04/2019 -	Steve Robertson on 110000700
Responsibility Benefit	Ellen Ripley	Responsibility Benefit	16/04/2019 -	Steve Robertson on 110000700
Other Benefits	Ellen Ripley	Other Benefit Details	16/04/2019 -	Steve Robertson on 110000700
Pregnancy and Baby Grant	Ellen Ripley	Pregnancy And Baby Grant Details	16/04/2019 -	Steve Robertson on

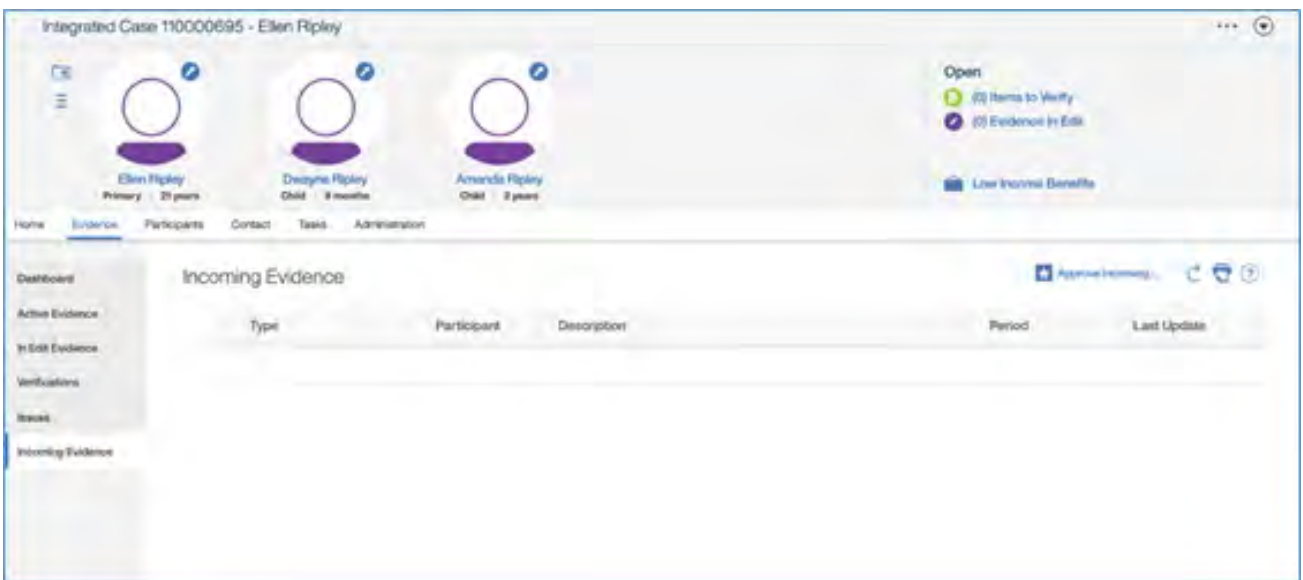
2. Select 'Approve Incoming Evidence'.

This screenshot is identical to the previous one, but the 'Approve Incoming Evidence' button in the top right corner of the main content area is highlighted in yellow.

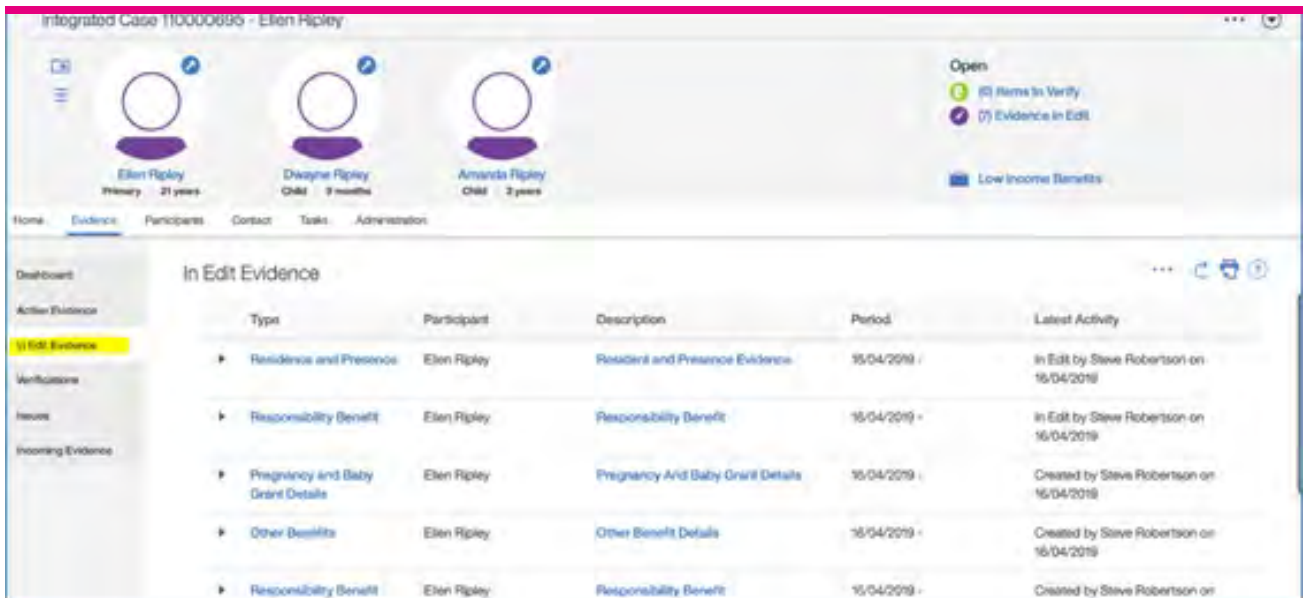
3. The 'Approve Incoming Evidence' box will be displayed. Click 'Yes'.



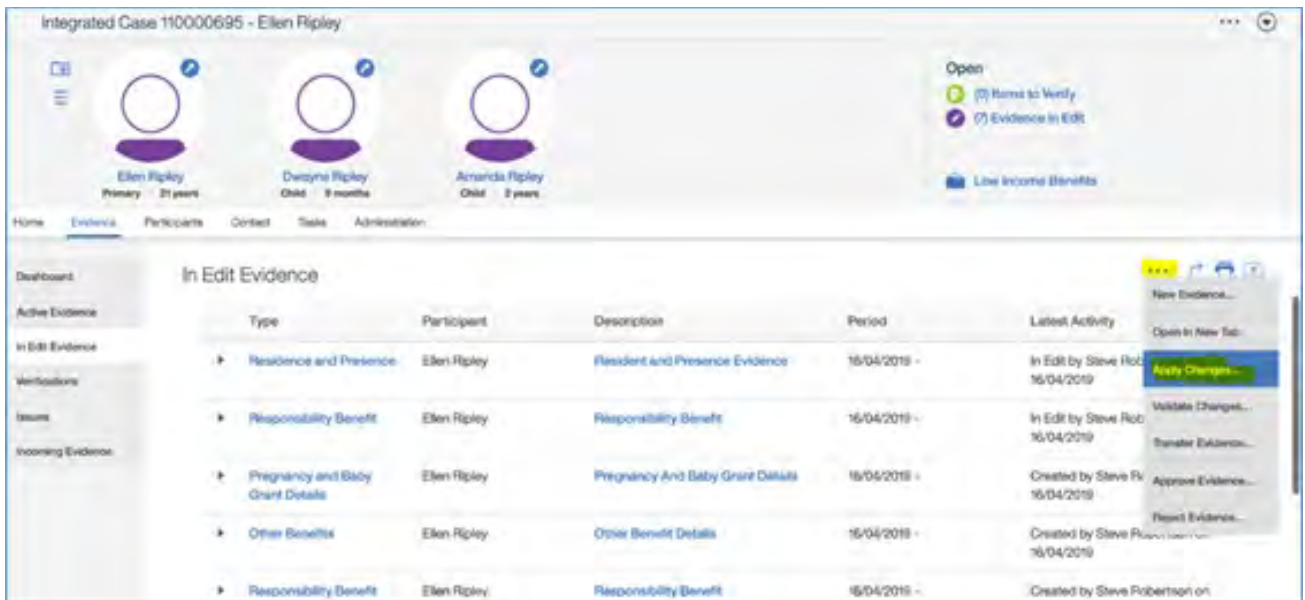
4. The incoming evidence is no longer displayed and has been moved to 'In Edit Evidence'.



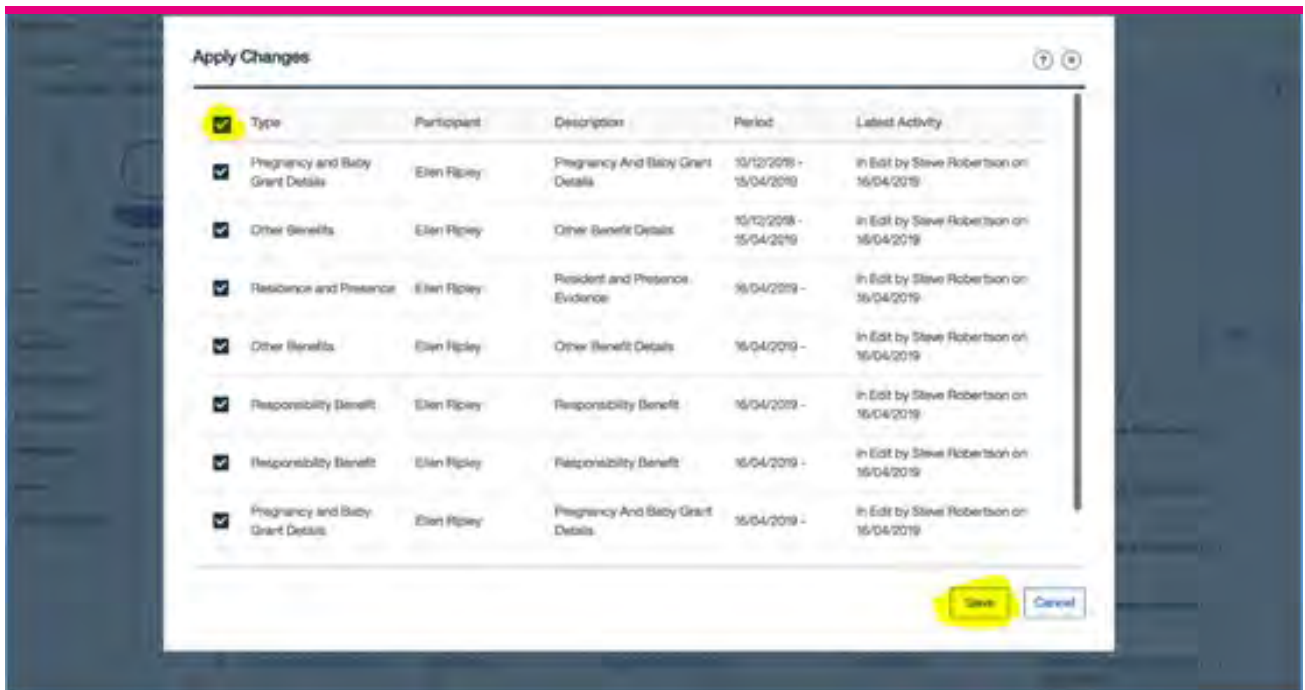
5. Click on 'In Edit Evidence' from the column on the left. All the evidence which was just approved is displayed.



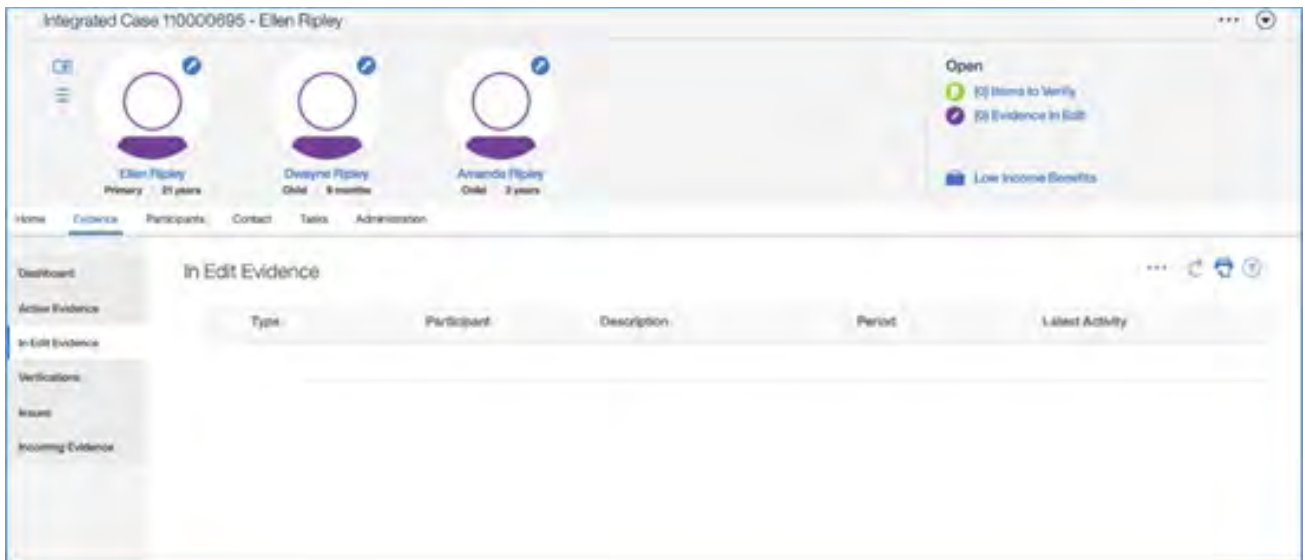
6. Click on the action button and select 'Apply Changes'.



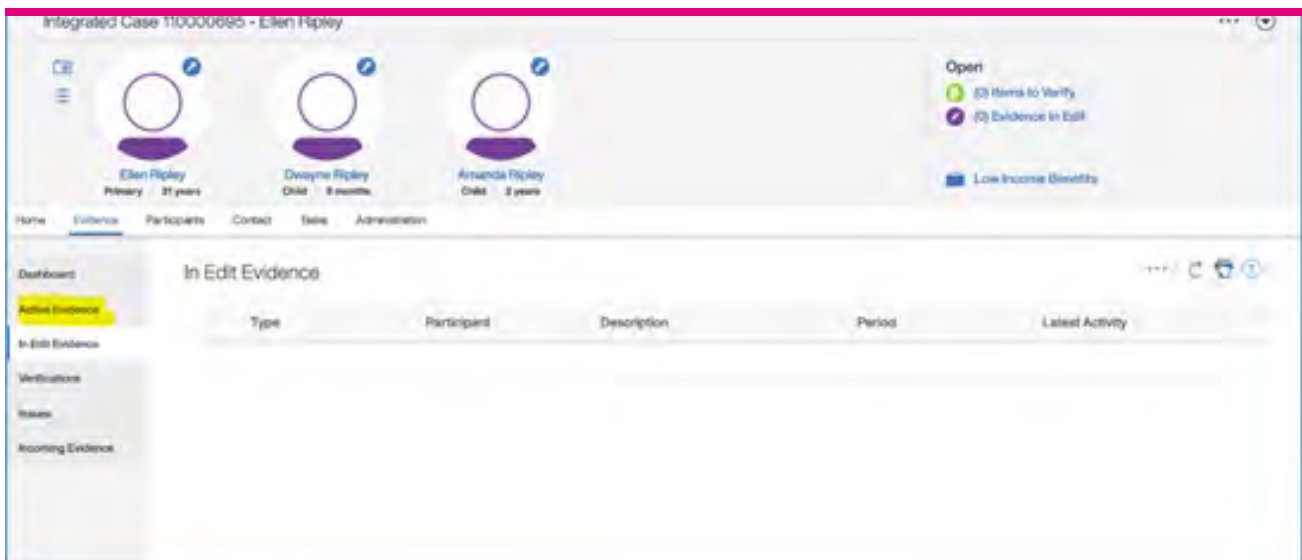
7. The 'Apply Changes' box will be displayed. Check the tick box next to 'type' and click 'Save'.



8. The 'In Edit Evidence' clears as it is moved to 'Active Evidence'.



9. To view the evidence select 'Active' evidence.



0. The evidence from all applications is displayed. Any old evidence that has been superseded by the latest evidence has been end dated.

Type	Participant	Description	Period		Latest Activity
Responsibility Benefit	Ellen Ripley	Responsibility Benefit	16/04/2019 -	2	16/04/2019 14:39
Other Benefits	Ellen Ripley	Other Benefit Details	16/04/2019 -	1	Steve Robertson on 16/04/2019 14:39
Responsibility Benefit	Ellen Ripley	Responsibility Benefit	16/04/2019 -	1	Steve Robertson on 16/04/2019 14:39
Pregnancy And Baby Grant Details	Ellen Ripley	Pregnancy And Baby Grant Details	16/04/2019 -	1	Steve Robertson on 16/04/2019 14:39
Pregnancy And Baby Grant Details	Ellen Ripley	Pregnancy And Baby Grant Details	10/12/2018 - 16/04/2019	1	Steve Robertson on 16/04/2019 14:39
Other Benefits	Ellen Ripley	Other Benefit Details	10/12/2018 - 16/04/2019	1	Steve Robertson on 16/04/2019 14:39

## Availability of redetermination

If the client provides the required evidence after a determination has been made, a new determination can be undertaken as part of the 'Redeterminations process'.

## Finalise a determination

If the determination is correct, follow the 'Supervisor check' guidance to submit the application for a Team Leader review and finalisation.





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# Evidence verification

If you need to ask the client to provide evidence of something, the below list is a guide of what pieces of evidence can be accepted, split by data field.

Ask the client to provide a copy of one of the documents below.

**We do not need original documents.**

You can accept various types of evidence, depending on the field.

You can also check the [Evidence Matrix](#).

## Ask for evidence

Fill in the request evidence template and send it to the client.

Look for a template titled 'BSG\_RequestEvidence' in the shared drive:

The client should post in copies of their evidence, not the originals.

## Types of evidence accepted by field

### General identity documents

- Valid signed passport - UK, EEA & Non - EEA
- EEA National Identity card
- Valid photocard full driving licence - UK, EEA & Non-EEA
- Valid photocard provisional driving licence - UK/EEA
- Valid Young Scott Card with PASS logo
- Valid identity photocard with PASS logo
- Valid Biometric Residence Permit
- Valid Application Registration Card (Age not disputed)
- Valid UK Armed Forces ID card
- National Entitlement card
- Full oldstyle UK driving licence (non-photocard)
- UK Birth certificate

## **REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002 (FOISA)**

Thank you for your request dated 9<sup>th</sup> May 2019 under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA).

### Your request

You asked for the Best Start Grant guidance supplied to Social Security Scotland staff for the purposes of processing application.

### Response to your request

I enclose a copy of all of the information you requested.

Please note: The guidance topics are held on intranet pages so that decision makers can easily access the pages they need. The content is being refined as we launch Best Start Foods and gather feedback from users. It is correct as at the date of request.

### Your right to request a review

If you are unhappy with this response to your FOI request, you may ask us to carry out an internal review of the response, by writing to Stephen Kerr, Social Security Director, Atlantic Quay, 150 Broomielaw, Glasgow, G2 8LU, [stephen.kerr@gov.scot](mailto:stephen.kerr@gov.scot).

Your review request should explain why you are dissatisfied with this response, and should be made within 40 working days from the date when you received this letter. We will complete the review and tell you the result, within 20 working days from the date when we receive your review request.

If you are not satisfied with the result of the review, you then have the right to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner. More detailed information on your appeal rights is available on the Commissioner's website at:

<http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/YourRights/Unhappywiththeresponse/AppealingtoCommissioner.aspx>.

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# HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) enquiries

You may need to contact HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) to get information on a Client which is not held on e-SEF.

To do this:

1. Call the HMRC dedicated BIT team:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

2. HMRC will ask for your name and check your identity using the Social Security Scotland Nominated Contacts spreadsheet.
3. HMRC will ask you to send an email containing your name, and the name of the HMRC recipient, from your individual account to their generic account

[REDACTED]

The subject heading should be 'SG BSG'.

4. HMRC will then verify that the information you sent is held on the Social Security Scotland Nominated Contacts spreadsheet.
5. You should say why you are calling and what information you need.
6. HMRC will attempt to resolve the request during the call.
7. If the enquiry cannot be resolved over the phone the HMRC call handler will end the call, resolve the enquiry and then call Social Security Scotland back.

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## **If you cannot find the client on e-SEF**

Contact DWP to check if the client's record exists.

If the record does not exist, follow the 'No National Insurance Number' guidance to search for the client on e-SEF.

## **If the client's details do not match SPM**

Ask the client to send in evidence of the information they submitted in their application.

For example, if the client's address does not match, ask them to send a copy of proof of address.

See the list of acceptable BSG evidence.

## **If you get a 'You are not authorised to access this case' message**

This might be because, for example, the client's case is a 'clerical case' – this means there's no digital record of it.

Follow these steps:

1. Download the template.

2. Fill it in and send it to 

You do not need to do anything else.

## **Check if the client has a partner**

A partner is someone living at the same address as the client. You'll see the client's partner in the BSG application case.

To search for the client's partner in e-SEF:

1. Log in to e-SEF.

2. Search for a client's record.

3. Select 'Relationship' from the top menu. The partner's details will be listed there.

4. Check the following information:

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## Late award of qualifying benefit

### Late award of qualifying benefit

If the client is denied Best Start Grant (BSG) because they did not apply in time, you may consider the late award of qualifying benefit.

The late award of qualifying benefit may apply to clients who:

- became aware of BSG near the end of the relevant BSG 'application window'
- met the eligibility for a qualifying benefit at that time
- have not yet applied for a qualifying benefit or their qualifying benefit application has not been yet decided

### Verify client's eligibility

To be eligible for the late award of qualifying benefit, the client must have:

- applied for a qualifying benefit within 20 working days of the end of the relevant BSG application window
- been awarded a qualifying benefit for at least 1 day within the relevant BSG application window
- applied for BSG within 3 months of being notified of the qualifying benefit award

To verify client's eligibility, do this:

1. Check if a qualifying benefit was awarded during the 'application window'. See the 'Qualifying benefits' guidance on how to do this.
2. Go to the 'Interests History' on e-SEF to check if a qualifying benefit interest started within 20 working days of the end of the 'application window'.
3. Check if the application has been made within 3 months of the qualifying benefit award start date, or date the award was made.

### If the client is not eligible

The late award of qualifying benefit will not apply.

1. Log in to SPM.

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2. [Search for the client's record.](#)
  3. [Go to the BSG application case.](#)
  4. [Add a note with:](#)
    - reasons the client is not eligible
    - date and time of the e-SEF check

## If the client is eligible

If the client meets all eligibility conditions, do this:

1. [Log in to SPM.](#)
2. [Search for the client's record.](#)
3. [Go to the BSG application case.](#)
4. [Add a note to the application case with:](#)
  - reasons why the late award of qualifying benefit should be applied
  - date and time of the e-SEF check

## Change the client's application date

You'll apply the late award of qualifying benefit by changing the BSG application date to a date within the 'application window'. This must be a date on which there was an award of a qualifying benefit.

Decide the date on the following conditions:

- if there's a qualifying benefit award on the last day of the 'application window' - use the last day of the 'application window'
- if there's no qualifying benefit award on the last day of the 'application window' - use the last day of the qualifying benefit award. This must be within the 'application window'

## Update SPM

To do this, see the SPM ['Best Start Grant \(BSG\) Application Case: Amending an application date'](#) guidance.

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If you're not sure about the correct use of the late award of qualifying benefit, speak to your Team Manager.

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# Mistake on application made by client

## If a client reports a mistake before we make a decision

The client can give us different or additional information. They must do this **before** we make a decision (known as determination).

See the 'Ask a client for more information or evidence' guide.

The client must either:

- provide documentary evidence
- confirm required changes verbally (when on the call)

This process applies only if the client makes a mistake or forgets to include certain information – not when their circumstances have changed.

### Update SPM

Once you've received necessary evidence or additional information, update SPM. To do this:

1. Log in to SPM.
2. Search for the client's record.
3. Go to the BSG application case.
4. Follow the appropriate process in the SPM 'Change client's details' guidance.
5. Add a note to the application case, including full details of, and reasons for the change.

## If a client reports a mistake after we've made a decision

You must treat the client's call as a request for a re-determination. To make changes to their application, follow the usual re-determination process.





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## No access to public funds

### Background

This allows payment of the Best Start Grant to people under 18 who are pregnant or have a child aged 0-6 months and don't have access to public funds.

You will ask the client for evidence that they are legally allowed to live in the UK instead of asking them for proof that they have a right to access public funds.

### Checking for a National Insurance number

#### If the client has a National Insurance number

Check the application as normal. You still need to assess their ordinary and habitual residency unless they are:

- a refugee
- someone with humanitarian leave
- someone with discretionary leave to remain

Once a client has given proof they are legally allowed to reside in the UK, check the 'Access to public funds' checkbox on the Residence and Presence screen. Then go on to authorise the payment as normal.

Leave a note on the application case in SPM saying that you have seen the evidence of the client's legal status e.g indefinite leave to remain.

#### If the client doesn't have a National Insurance number

Try to trace their National Insurance number on Searchlight.

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If you can't find them then you need to contact them and explain what evidence they need to give us.

If the client says they:

- are a British or EEA/Swiss National
- have the right of abode
- have indefinite leave to remain

but have never had a National Insurance number, then follow the process to get them a National Insurance number.

## **Legal right to stay in the UK**

By checking a person's legal right to stay in the UK, you want to understand why they are legally allowed to be in the UK.

This could be because:

- they have a work or study visa
- they may have indefinite leave to remain
- they may have another piece of evidence to prove this

For information on the possible legal status types use the [legal status checker](#).

When you ask for evidence of their legal right to stay in the UK, do the following:

1. for British or EEA/Swiss Nationals, ask them to give evidence of their nationality
2. for Third Country Nationals ask them for evidence of their legal right to reside in the UK
3. for Refugees, ask them for a copy of their Biometric Residence Permit
4. for Asylum Seekers, ask them to give evidence that they are seeking asylum in the UK

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## **If the client is an Asylum Seeker**

They may not have a National Insurance number or bank account. This means you won't be able to process the application on SPM.

You will need to ask for copies of all the evidence from the client using the manual request for evidence letter.

In the letter, ask the client to give us copies of their:

- identity
- proof of legal status in the UK
- proof of address in Scotland
- proof of pregnancy or child birth certificate

Make a note on the application case on SPM to say that you have sent this letter.

Just like refugees, Asylum Seekers are exempt from the ordinary and habitual residence checks but they do need to give proof of an address in Scotland.

They may have an Application Registration Card from the Home Office which can be used to prove their identity and their legal status in the UK.

## **If the client's age is disputed**

You won't be able to verify that they are under 18 and so can't process their application.

If the client gets their age verified by an agency such as a Local Authority, they will receive a letter confirming their age or that they are under 18 years of age.

You should contact the client and ask them to send in this evidence.

Sometimes it can take several months for the Home Office to verify a person's age which means by the time their age is confirmed they are no longer eligible. If this happens and the result is they agree the person is under 18, provided the client sends in the proof, assess the claim based on the date of application.

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## Making a clerical decision

If the client doesn't have a National Insurance number, you won't be able to check their eligibility or pay into a bank account via SPM.

You will need to use the manual eligibility checker in order to make the decision.

## Make a note in SPM

As the client has no National Insurance number, you won't be able to close the case in the usual way. Instead you will need to record that a manual decision was made in the notes section.

Make a note of this on the application case in SPM using the following template:

1. Manual eligibility check conducted on client who is aged x years old and [insert legal status here e.g.an Asylum seeker]
2. Proof of address in Scotland provided- YES/NO
3. Proof of pregnancy/birth certificate/parental order provided – YES/NO
4. Proof of identity provided – YES/NO
5. Proof of legal status provided – YES/NO
6. 'Eligibility met as currently x weeks pregnant/child is x months old., award amount (e.g £600)' or 'Eligibility not met – no award'
7. Case passed to exceptions team to make manual payment to client. (if applicable)
8. Manual Award or No Award letter sent to client.
9. No further action required.

## Making a clerical payment

In some cases, clients will receive benefits without having a National Insurance number e.g. someone with no recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) who is in the process of applying for a refugee status.

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If they don't have a National Insurance number, payment instructions can't be automatically generated by SPM for onwards transfer to DWP for payment.

When this happens, follow the steps below.

## **As a client adviser**

You should:

- follow the current operational process for awarding a benefit claim
- populate the payment details of the client on a spreadsheet
- email the spreadsheet to your supervisor for approval

## **As a supervisor**

You should:

- ensure that if the payment details provided are incorrect, they are rectified before you approve them
- email a copy of the spreadsheet to [email@gov.scot](mailto:email@gov.scot) when the payment has been approved
- raise a task on SPM and send it to Agency Finance.
- notify operational finance of an i-Movo payment where needed while raising the task in SPM

## **As a finance officer**

You should:

- access SPM task workflow to retrieve payment request
- access location for the payment details
- follow the [contingency payment procedure](#)

## **As an assistant finance manager**

You should:

- access and review the email copy sent by the Supervisor before final approval for payment
- update the task in SPM with action(s) taken

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Where an i-movo payment is required, i-movo payment process will be followed as appropriate.

The responsible Finance Officer must complete the SEAS Journal Template where required and then upload it into SEAS.