

How to Guide - Advanced Actuals Spreadsheet



This guide is only relevant to projects that are on the Advanced Actuals process. If you are unsure, please check your offer letter under special conditions (if any).

1 Introduction

This How to Guide will help you complete the Advanced Actuals Excel spreadsheet. If you are selected to work on the Advanced Actuals process, you will be provided with a separate spreadsheet which you should complete and submit with every advance claim.

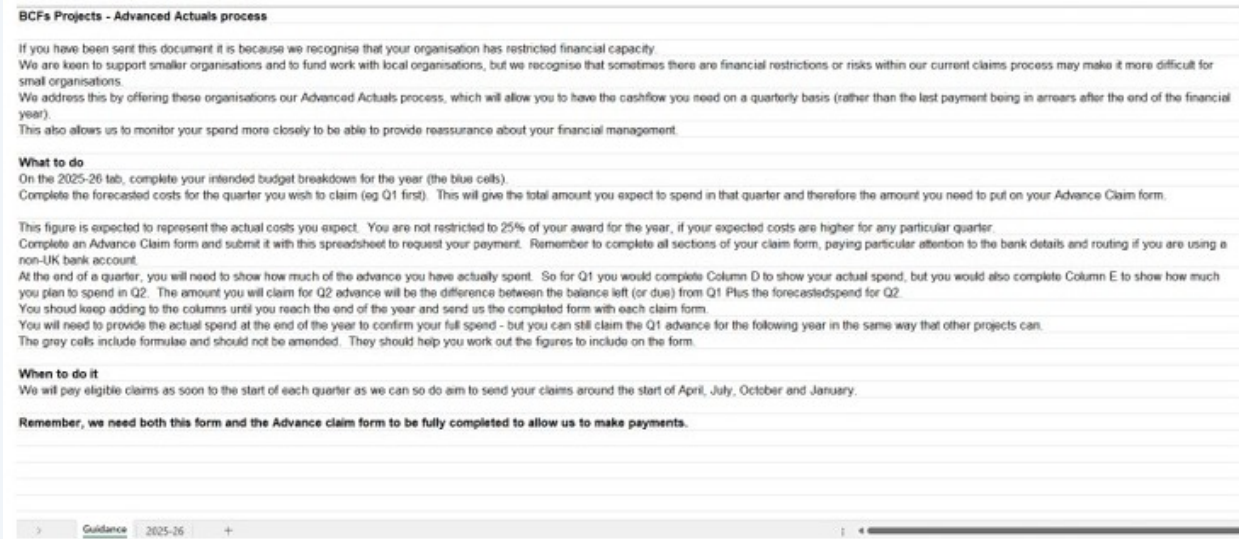
It is expected that you have already read the related guidance available in the Resources section of the relevant Biodiversity Challenge Funds (BCFs) website for your project. The Finance Guidance is the same for all BCFs projects. This can be found on the 'Finance Guidance and Claims Templates' page in the Resources section on the respective webpages :

- [Darwin Initiative](#)
- [IWT Challenge Fund](#)
- [Darwin Plus](#)

Please see section 5.3 Payment Schedules and section 5.4 Conditions for Payment of the Finance Guidance for deadlines and reporting requirements for each claim.

2

Guidance: On the Advanced Actuals Excel spreadsheet, there is a guidance tab that will also help you complete this form.



Projects on the Advanced Actuals process are able to submit a Q4 Advance Claim.

3

Budget Tab - Project Details: Enter your Project Reference at the start of the form ensuring you enter your Project Reference and **not** your application reference. You can find this in your award paperwork.

You should also include the current agreed budget for the financial year (blue cells).

Quarterly accounting for budget for 2025-26					
Project Ref:		(April-June)		(July - September)	
		Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2
	2025-26 award	Forecast	actual	Forecast	actual
Staff Costs					
Consultancy costs					
Overhead costs					
Travel & Subsistence					
Operating costs					
Capital Equipment					
Other costs					
Total	£ -	-	-	-	-
		Total = Q1 advance		Total = Q2 advance - any balance from Q1	

4

Q1 Forecast: Enter your expected forecast for the current quarter for each budget line. The total amount (£25,000 in the example below) should match the figure provided on your Advance claim form.

Quarterly accounting for budget for 2025-26					
Project Ref:		32-001 (example)			
		(April-June)		(July - September)	
		Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2
		Forecast	actual	Forecast	actual
	2025-26 award				
Staff Costs	£ 20,000	£ 5,000.00			
Consultancy costs	£ 10,000	£ 2,500.00			
Overhead costs	£ 20,000	£ 5,000.00			
Travel & Subsistence	£ 20,000	£ 5,000.00			
Operating costs	£ 10,000	£ 2,500.00			
Capital Equipment	£ 10,000	£ 2,500.00			
Other costs	£ 10,000	£ 2,500.00			
Total	£ 100,000	25,000.00	-	-	-
		Total = Q1 advance		Total = Q2 advance - any balance from Q1	
Forecast/Actual spend		25,000.00	-	-	-
Minus any overclaim*	* please complete				
Plus any underclaim*	* please complete				
Total claim		25,000.00		-	
Over/underclaimed amount			- 25,000.00		-



If your project did not start until Q2, please leave Q1 forecast and actual blank.

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Q1 Actual: Before you submit your next advance claim, you should complete the 'actual' spend for the quarter. From this example, you can see the actual spend is less than the forecast amount, meaning you have £500 in hand. If you spent more than forecast, this will show as a positive figure.

Quarterly accounting for budget for 2025-26					
Project Ref:		32-001 (example)			
		(April-June)		(July - September)	
		Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2
		Forecast	actual	Forecast	actual
	2025-26 award				
Staff Costs	£ 20,000	£ 5,000.00	£ 6,000.00		
Consultancy costs	£ 10,000	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00		
Overhead costs	£ 20,000	£ 5,000.00	£ 4,000.00		
Travel & Subsistence	£ 20,000	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,500.00		
Operating costs	£ 10,000	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00		
Capital Equipment	£ 10,000	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,000.00		
Other costs	£ 10,000	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,000.00		
Total	£ 100,000	25,000.00	24,500.00	-	-
		Total = Q1 advance		Total = Q2 advance - any balance from Q1	
Forecast/Actual spend		25,000.00	24,500.00	-	-
Minus any overclaim*	* please complete				
Plus any underclaim*	* please complete				
Total claim		25,000.00		-	
Over/underclaimed amount			- 500.00		-

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Q2 Forecast: For the next quarter, please repeat the stage above and provide your expected forecast for the current quarter for each budget line. If you overclaimed or underclaimed, please add this figure where relevant. This will effect your advance claim amount.

From this example, you can see the actual spend is less than the forecast amount, meaning you have £500 in hand which should be deducted from your next advance claim. If you spent more than forecast, this should be added to the next advance claim amount.

You should continue this process for Q3 and Q4.

Quarterly accounting for budget for 2025-26					
Project Ref:		32-001 (example)			
		(April-June)		(July - September)	
		Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2
2025-26 award		Forecast	actual	Forecast	actual
Staff Costs	£ 20,000	£ 5,000.00	£ 6,000.00	£ 5,000.00	
Consultancy costs	£ 10,000	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	
Overhead costs	£ 20,000	£ 5,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 5,000.00	
Travel & Subsistence	£ 20,000	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,500.00	£ 5,000.00	
Operating costs	£ 10,000	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	
Capital Equipment	£ 10,000	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,000.00	£ -	
Other costs	£ 10,000	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,500.00	
Total	£ 100,000	25,000.00	24,500.00	22,500.00	-
		Total = Q1 advance		Total = Q2 advance - any balance from Q1	
Forecast/Actual spend		25,000.00	24,500.00	22,500.00	-
Minus any overclaim*	* please complete			500	
Plus any underclaim*	* please complete				
Total claim		25,000.00		22,000.00	
Over/underclaimed amount			- 500.00		- 22,000.00

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Q4 Actual Claim: At the end of the financial year, you should have a completed spreadsheet which will help you complete your actual claim form and Excel spreadsheet.

From the example below, you can see the total budget was £100,000 but the actual spend is £98,500.

However, this also shows that you overclaimed by £500. This must be returned to Defra or used as part of the next advance claim. If you have any balance left to claim, this will be paid with your Q4 Actual Claim.

Quarterly accounting for budget for 2025-26												
Project Ref:		32-001 (example)		(April - June)		(July - September)		(October - December)		(January - March)		
		Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2	Q3	Q3	Q4	Q4			
	2025-26 award	Forecast	actual	Forecast	actual	Forecast	actual	Forecast	actual	2025-26 Forecast	2025-26 Actual	
Staff Costs	£ 20,000	£ 5,000.00	£ 8,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 8,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 6,000.00	£ 20,000.00	£ 23,000.00	
Consultancy costs	£ 10,000	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00	
Overhead costs	£ 20,000	£ 5,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 20,000.00	£ 17,000.00	
Travel & Subsistence	£ 20,000	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,500.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,500.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,500.00	£ 20,000.00	£ 21,500.00	
Operating costs	£ 10,000	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00	
Capital Equipment	£ 10,000	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,000.00	£ -	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 8,500.00	
Other costs	£ 10,000	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 8,500.00	
Total	£ 100,000	25,000.00	24,500.00	22,500.00	25,000.00	25,000.00	24,500.00	27,500.00	24,500.00	100,000.00	98,500.00	
		Total = Q1 advance		Total = Q2 advance - any balance from Q1		Total = Q3 advance - any balance from Q2		Total = Q4 advance - any balance from Q3			Total = Q4 Actual claim and any +/- balance	
Forecast/Actual spend		25,000.00	24,500.00	22,500.00	25,000.00	25,000.00	24,500.00	27,500.00	24,500.00			
Minus any overclaim*	* please complete			500				3500				
Plus any underclaim*	* please complete					3000						
Total claim		25,000.00		22,000.00		28,000.00		24,000.00				
Over/underclaimed amount			- 500.00		3,000.00		- 3,500.00		500.00			



You should submit your completed Advanced Actuals Spreadsheet with your Q4 Actual Claim.

Please contact BCF-Finance@niras.com if you have any questions on how to complete any part of the claim form.