

# Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO)

[www.ofgem.gov.uk](http://www.ofgem.gov.uk)

April 2016



## Claiming annual support under the NIRO

Guidance for micro-generators not  
using an agent

---

# The Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO)

The NIRO is a government scheme that provides support for renewable generating stations in Northern Ireland. Renewable certificates (Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation Certificates, or NIROCs) are issued to operators of accredited stations for the electricity their stations generate.

A 'micro' generating station is one that has a capacity  $\leq 50\text{kw}$

## About this guide

This step-by-step guide is for operators who have obtained accreditation for their micro station directly with Ofgem. You should not use this guide if you have appointed an agent to submit your application for accreditation and claim NIROCs on your behalf. The guide will walk you through the annual NIROC claim process, from taking meter readings to submitting data and receiving NIROCs.

This is not a comprehensive guide to the NIRO scheme. For more detailed information and the full eligibility requirements, please see our 'Guidance for Generators' document [here](#).

## 2. Micro NIRO

There are two key parts to the NIRO scheme:

- Applying and gaining accreditation for your generating station
- Submitting data and being issued NIROCs for the electricity you have generated

NIROCs are electronic 'green certificates' which will be issued to you based on how much electricity you have generated in any given year. NIROCs have value, as suppliers need them to redeem as part of their obligation under NIRO legislation.

To make ensure there is no delay in NIROC issue, please follow the data submission process below, and make sure meter reads are accurate and taken on the correct dates.



## 2.1 Applying and gaining accreditation from Ofgem

Under the NIRO, a renewable installation with a capacity of 50kW or less is referred to as a micro-generating station. As the owner of such a station, you can apply for accreditation directly from Ofgem, or you can appoint an agent to do so on your behalf. Remember – your station must be accredited under the scheme before you can be issued with NIROCs.

We have produced an easy step-by-step guide on how to apply directly to Ofgem, [here](#).

General information on the NIRO scheme and the role of Ofgem is [here](#).

The Renewables and CHP Register is available at [www.renewablesandCHP.ofgem.gov.uk](http://www.renewablesandCHP.ofgem.gov.uk)

## 2.2 Claiming NIROCs for your station

For micro stations, NIROCs are largely claimed and issued on an annual basis, for generation within an “Obligation Year” i.e. 1 April to 31 March. To claim NIROCs for this period, you must submit generation meter readings to us through your account on the [Renewables and CHP Register \(the Register\)](#). If this data is submitted on time and passes our validation checks, then NIROCs will be issued into your account the following June.

For example, for eligible generation during the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016, you must submit your data between 1 April 2016 and 31 May 2016 in order to receive NIROCs in June 2016. It will then be up to you to sell these NIROCs to an electricity supplier or other purchaser and transfer the NIROCs from your account to theirs via the Register.

NIRO legislation requires us to only issue NIROCs when we are happy that the data is accurate and reliable. We will therefore check your data and may ask you to confirm aspects of it if we feel that it is inaccurate. Your NIROC issue will be delayed if meter reads are incorrect, were taken on the wrong day or were submitted to us after the 31 May deadline.



## 3. How to calculate your eligible generation

In your first year on the scheme, you will be eligible to claim NIROCs on generation from your 'accreditation date' until the following 31 March. For subsequent years, you will be eligible for the whole Obligation Year. This means there is a slight difference in the data submission requirements for your first year compared to subsequent years.

Your accreditation date is the later of your commissioning date and the date your application is submitted to Ofgem

### 3.1 Your first year of eligibility

To become eligible for support under the NIRO, you must have commissioned your station and an application for accreditation must have been submitted to Ofgem. The later of these two dates is your accreditation date. Your accreditation date marks the start of your 20-year period of support under NIRO and when you are eligible from in your first Obligation Year. There is more information on the application process on our website.

When we receive your application for accreditation, we'll send you a receipt email, stating that you needed to record the reading on your generation meter on your accreditation date, the later of your commissioning date and your application date. This start meter read therefore will be used to establish the start of the generation which you are eligible to receive support for. **If you apply to us after your station has commissioned, please ensure you take a generation meter reading on the day you apply and keep it in a safe place for when you make your first annual claim.**

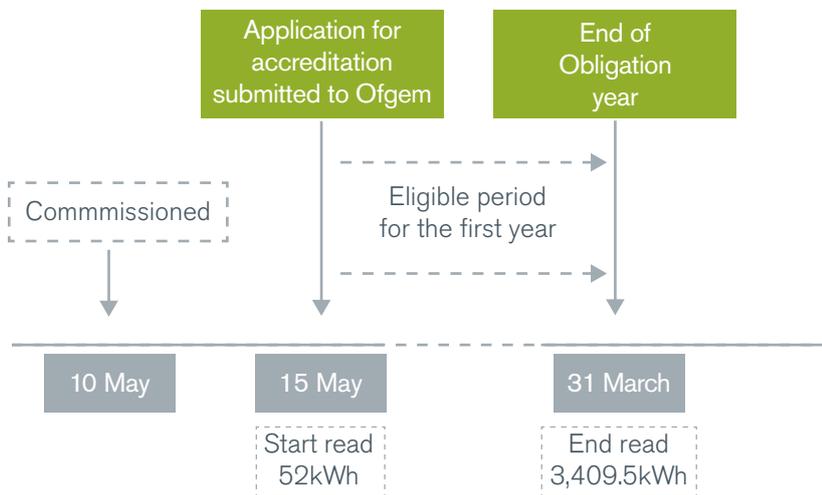


You must also take a generation meter read on 31 March, which is known as your end meter read. **For your first claim, the generation accrued between your start meter read on your accreditation date and the end meter read on 31 March is what you will be submitting to Ofgem to claim NIROCs on.**

The following is an example of a data submission for a 6.5kW solar PV station in its first year of eligibility under NIRO:

- Accreditation date: 15/05/14
- Meter read on 15/05/14 (start read) = 52 kWh
- Meter read on 31/03/15 (end read) = 3,409.5 kWh
- Total eligible claim for 14/15 = 3,357.5kWh (i.e. 3,409.5 minus 52)

Below is an illustration of how the eligible period for a first year station is established.



## 3.2 Your subsequent years of eligibility

For each subsequent year of eligibility, as you will then be eligible for the whole Obligation Year, you will need an end read on 31 March each year. Your end read from one Obligation Year will become the start read for the next Obligation Year. This ensures continuity between Obligation Years.

Here is an example of a submission for the same 6.5kW solar PV station in its second year of eligibility under NIRO. Here, the end read of 3,409.5 kWh for the 14/15 claim therefore becomes the start read for the 15/16 claim:

- Accreditation date: 15/05/14
- Meter read on 31/03/15 (14/15 end read, and 15/16 start read) = 3,409.5 kWh
- Meter read on 31/03/16 (15/16 end read, and 16/17 start read) = 7,964.7 kWh
- Total eligible claim for 15/16 = 4,555.2 kWh (i.e. 7,964.7 minus 3,409.5)

Submitting data, issuing NIROCs and transferring those NIROCs to a supplier is done electronically through your account on the Register.



## 4. How to submit your meter reads to Ofgem

Once an Obligation Year comes to an end on 31 March, you will have until 31 May to submit your annual NIROC data to us through your account on the Register. For your generating station, you must submit:

What to submit	Format	Comments
Start meter read	Kilowatt hours (kWh)	This should be taken from your <b>generation meter</b> , sometimes known as your 'ROC meter', <b>not</b> your export meter. For second year claims and after, this must match with the previous year's end read.
Date of start meter read	DD/MM/YYYY	For first year stations, the start read must be on your accreditation date. For stations in subsequent years' claims, as the read must match the previous year's end read, you can state this was taken on 1 April.
End meter read	kWh	This should be taken from your <b>generation meter</b> , sometimes known as your 'ROC meter', <b>not</b> your export meter. This will then form the start read to the following year's claim.
Date of end meter read	DD/MM/YYYY	This must be 31 March
Resulting generation claim	kWh	This is the difference between your start and end read, and is the figure you are submitting to claim NIROCs on.



## 4. How to submit your meter reads to Ofgem

You must then follow these steps:

1. Log into your account on the Register ([here](#))
2. At the menu at the top of the screen, click "Output Data"
3. On the left hand menu, click "Submit Output Data"
4. On the resulting drop down menu, select your generating station and click "Continue"
5. On the following dropdown, select to submit data for the recently ended Obligation Year eg: 2015-2016
6. As a micro station, you must then click "Enter non-half hourly or estimated data". You'll then see the following screen:

Then, you'll need to fill in the fields as shown below:

Field	Explanation
<b>Source</b>	You will have taken manual meter reads, so change the dropdown to "Manual Reading"
<b>Meter</b>	Use the dropdown to select the serial number of the gross meter you are making NIROC claims and taking meter reads from
<b>Start date</b>	For first year stations, this must be the date of your start read, taken on your accreditation date. For stations in subsequent years' claims, this should be 1 April
<b>End date</b>	For all stations this will be 31 March
<b>Start figure</b>	This is the meter reading (kWh) from your start read in this Obligation Year. For subsequent years' claims, this should match the end read from the previous year.
<b>End figure</b>	This is the meter reading (kWh) from your end read in this Obligation Year
<b>Multiplier</b>	Please ensure this shows "1"



- When you have completed this table and clicked “submit”, you will be taken back to the following screen:

back to home page

- Fuel Maintenance
- Submit Output Data
- Submit Output Spreadsheet
- Edit Submitted Output Data
- Apply For Estimates Of Output Data
- View Output History
- Answer Ofgem Queries On Output
- Log out

### Output data for period: 2014 - 2015

Please complete all the relevant fields. Instructions are available on our website: [www.ofgem.gov.uk](http://www.ofgem.gov.uk)  
\* fields are mandatory

Enter non-half hourly or estimated data

Generating Station Details		
Generating Station Name	youngKW15	
RD Accreditation ID	RD0478LZNI	
REGO Accreditation ID	G00476NWNJ	

Electricity produced		
	kWh generated	MPAN/Meter serial number
Total quantity of electricity produced *	<input type="text"/>	A13M00876

Output		
Type of eligible output	kWh generated	MPAN/Meter serial number
Gross output	<input type="text"/>	

Here, you should change the “Type of eligible output” dropdown to “Gross Output”, and ensure both “kWh generated” fields reflect the final generation figure you are claiming NIROCs on.

- Scroll down on this screen and check the tick box in the Declarations box, then click “submit”.
- You will then be presented with a confirmation page that summarises your submission. If you are happy with it, click “submit”.



## 5. What will happen after I submit my data claim?

You have until the 31 May of each year to submit your annual data to Ofgem. We will then assess the data for its accuracy. For example, we assess if the generation figure submitted is feasible given the technology of your station, its size and its period of eligibility in that Obligation Year. At the end of this guide, there are some useful tips on your claim.

If your data passes our checks and we have no queries, you will be issued your NIROCs for the Obligation Year in the following submission June.

### 5.1 Responding to queries about my data

When we review your data, we may ask you some questions that you'll need to answer. We'll do this through the Register. It is worth opting in to receiving email notifications from your Register account, so that you can quickly attend to things as they come up, such as responding to data queries.

To review and alter the email notifications you receive:

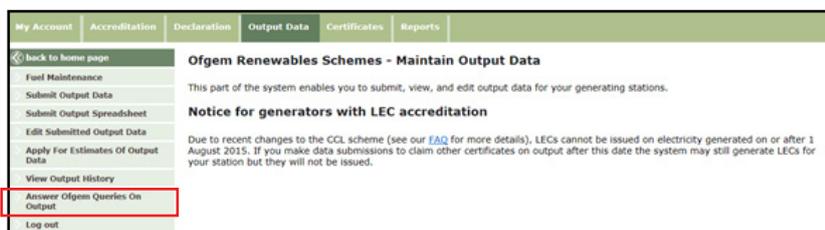
1. Log into your account on the Register ([here](#))
2. At the menu at the top of the screen, click "My Account"
3. On the left hand menu, click "Edit My Details"
4. Scroll to the bottom of the page and click "Email Notifications"
5. This will take you to the 'Email Notification Management' page where you can review and opt in or out of receiving notifications by email.



My Account	Accreditation	Declaration	Output Data	Certificates	Reports										
back to home page															
<b>Email Notification Management</b>															
Edit My Details															
Change Password															
Edit My Organisation Details															
Add New Contact															
Edit Contact Detail															
Submit Authorisation Letter															
Log out															
Please select the area that you wish to set up email notification.															
<table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Email Notification Category</th><th>View</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Certificates</td><td><a href="#">View</a></td></tr><tr><td>Declaration</td><td><a href="#">View</a></td></tr><tr><td>Output Data</td><td><a href="#">View</a></td></tr><tr><td>Accreditation</td><td><a href="#">View</a></td></tr></tbody></table>						Email Notification Category	View	Certificates	<a href="#">View</a>	Declaration	<a href="#">View</a>	Output Data	<a href="#">View</a>	Accreditation	<a href="#">View</a>
Email Notification Category	View														
Certificates	<a href="#">View</a>														
Declaration	<a href="#">View</a>														
Output Data	<a href="#">View</a>														
Accreditation	<a href="#">View</a>														

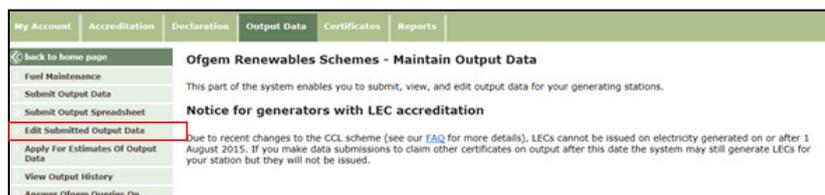
By clicking “View” on the “Output Data” field shown above, you can then opt in to receiving emails when “Queries Raised by Ofgem”.

Otherwise, to view and respond to these queries, please click on “Answer Ofgem Queries on Output”, as shown here:



## 5.2 Amending my data submission

After we've assessed the data, and your answer to the queries, we may need you to amend your data submission. You can do this by clicking on the “Edit Submitted Output Data” menu, shown here:



Don't amend data without good reason, as it will mean the data is suspended and we will have to review it further before your NIROCs can be issued.



## 6. Receiving NIROCs into my account

As outlined above, your NIROCs for each annual claim will be issued into your generator account. To view these certificates once they have been issued:

1. Log into your account on the Register ([here](#))
2. At the menu at the top of the screen, click “Certificates”
3. On the left hand menu, click “ROCs”
4. Then click “View” next to “View my ROC Certificates”

You will then see this search page, which you must filter in order to view any NIROCs issued into your account

Output Period	Generator	Sub-Scheme	Start	End	Certificates
2014 - 2015	youngKW15	NIRO	#00479N2N2000000414WV	#00479N2N2000000414WV	17

To view any NIROCs in your account, use the filters as follows:

- Generating station – Provide the name of your generating station
- SubScheme – Change this to NIRO
- Output Period Start date – Change this to the April that marks the start of the relevant Obligation Year e.g. April 2015
- Output Period End date – Change this to the March that marks the end of the relevant Obligation Year e.g. March 2016
- Certificate No. Like – Leave this blank
- Annual data – Tick this box

Clicking “Apply Filter” will show you the number and details of any NIROCs in your account.



## 7. Transferring NIROCS to someone else

You will realise a financial value for your NIROCs when you sell and transfer them to an electricity supply company or other NIROC purchaser. Some generators choose to sell to an intermediary or via an [NFPA](#) auction. We have no role in selling your NIROCs so it is up to you to identify and secure a buyer. Once you have entered into an agreement for your NIROCs, you will need to transfer them from your account to the recipient's account on the Register.

To transfer the NIROCs via the Register, you must get the Register account ID of the organisation you want to transfer certificates to. The ID will be in one of these formats:

**AGE00XX** - for an agent account

**SUP00XX** - for a supplier account

**PAR00XX** - for a participant account

**GEN00XX** - for a generator account

To transfer your NIROCs:

1. Log into the Register ([here](#))
2. At the menu at the top of the screen, click "Certificates"
3. On the left hand menu, click "ROCs"
4. Then click "View" next to "Transfer my ROC Certificates" as shown below



5. To specify the total number of NIROCs to transfer, you should then choose "Transfer by Number of Certificates (Standard)".



You will then be presented with this screen.

To display your NIROCs, you should use the filters as follows:

- Generating station - Provide the name of your generating station
- SubScheme – Change this to NIRO
- Technology – This can be left blank
- Issue date – This does not need to be changed
- Output Period Start date – Change this to the April that marks the start of the relevant Obligation Year, e.g. April 2015
- Output Period End date – Change this to the March that marks the end of the relevant Obligation Year, e.g. March 2016
- Certificate No. like – This can be left blank
- Annual data – Tick this box

Clicking “Apply Filter” will show you the number and details of any NIROCs in your account.

6. Enter the unique ID of the organisation you want to transfer certificates to.



7. In the "Transfer" box, enter the amount of NIROCs you wish to transfer, put a tick in the "select" box, then click "Update Figures".

If the Unique ID you have entered is valid, and you have NIROCs available to transfer, then the "submit transfer request" button will now be available.

8. Click the "Submit transfer Request" button. Then, if you are happy with the details presented on the following "Transfer details confirmation" page, click "Proceed with the transfer request".

It is for the recipient of the NIROCs to accept them into their account. It is therefore important that you have entered into a purchase agreement for those NIROCs, so that they know to expect them and they can match them up to your specific details.

The NIRO legislation does not provide a framework or requirements for cash or other payments resulting from the sale of NIROCs, so we have no role in this area. It is up to you to enter into a purchase agreement for your NIROCs and agree any terms and conditions as necessary.

On your NIRO application, if you also applied for REGO accreditation (Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin) you will also be issued with REGO certificates. These should be transferred from your account in the same way as NIROCs, but you should select REGOs on the certificates menu and the subsequent filters.



## 8. Potential problems with the data

You are responsible for the accuracy of the data you submit to us. As we cannot issue NIROCs on data that isn't accurate and reliable, it is crucial that you submit data that meets this standard – otherwise issuing NIROCs will be delayed.

If there are errors, incorrect dates, late submissions, or instances where the generation submitted is unfeasibly high, we will query the data with you, and this will delay issuing NIROCs.

Here are some reminders to help avoid the mistakes that can delay issuing NIROCs:

- Ensure all declarations are agreed.
- You **must** record and submit an end read for **31 March** each year.
- On the “Output data for period” page, ensure both “kWh generated” fields are filled out with the final generation figure you are claiming NIROCs on.
- Also ensure the “Non-half hourly meter read” page is filled out, with all the information required.
- For non-first year stations, ensure the start read matches up with the end read from the previous year's submission.
- Meter reads should be taken from the gross generation meter, sometimes called the ‘ROC meter’. Note, this is different from your ‘export meter’, if you have one.
- In case we query your data submission, you should take a timestamped photo of your meter on 31 March. If we query your submission, we may ask for this evidence.
- Set up email notifications in your account so that you are alerted to any queries.

If you have major problems with your data submission, such as if you had a meter failure and needed to replace it, please contact the MicroNIRO team **well before the submission deadline** on [MicroNIRO@Ofgem.gov.uk](mailto:MicroNIRO@Ofgem.gov.uk).

A more in-depth User Guide to our Register is available [here](#).

