

Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO)

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Applying under the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO)

A step-by-step guide

The Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO) scheme

The NIRO is a government scheme that provides support for renewable electricity installations in Northern Ireland. Renewable certificates (Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation Certificates or NIROCs) are issued to generators that are accredited under the scheme. NIROCs can then be sold to suppliers of electricity.

About this guide

If you are interested in getting support under the scheme, the first step is to become accredited.

This simple guide will help you to submit an application for accreditation under the NIRO scheme for your microgenerating installation. This guide is for solar PV and wind generators only. If you are a hydro generator, please contact us using the details at the end of this guide.

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 available on our website [here](#).

Important Changes to the NIRO Scheme

The NIRO scheme closed to new wind capacity on 30 June 2016. To get support, new stations had to fully commission and submit their NIRO application to us before 30 June 2016. If you want to apply for a new station or add more wind capacity after this, it needs to be eligible for a grace period. Details of the grace periods available for wind are in the [early closure to onshore wind guidance](#).

The NIRO scheme closes to all other technologies on 31 March 2017. To get support, new stations must fully commission and submit their NIRO application to us before 31 March 2017. If you want to apply for a new station or add more capacity to an existing station after this, it needs to be eligible for a grace period. Details of the grace periods available are in the [closure of the NIRO guidance](#).



What you'll need to do

In order to gain accreditation under the scheme, the process below needs to be followed:



Under the scheme you will be eligible to claim support from your 'accreditation date'. This date is the later of:

- The date we receive your completed application, and
- The commissioning date of your installation

Your responsibilities when applying under the NIRO scheme

- Ensure the information provided in your application is complete and correct
- Provide all required documentation
- Complete and submit your application to us in a timely manner
- Ensure the declarations have been made in order to submit your application to us

✓ **TOP TIP: Meter readings**
This is important - we will need generation meter readings from you each year. For your first claim you will need to provide us with a start meter reading from your accreditation date. **You should take a reading from your generation meter on the day you submit your application to us.** The meter reading from the day your installation commissioned should be on your Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) certificate. You should then take meter readings around 31 March each year in order to make annual claims.



Step 1 – Set up an account

The Ofgem 'Renewables and CHP Register User Guide' and 'Renewables and CHP Register Account Guidance' provide more in-depth guidance around using the Register and are available on our website [here](#).

Before applying, you will need to create an account on our [Renewables and CHP Register](#). This will usually take one working day to complete, so it would be sensible to do this well in advance of making an application to us.

 **TOP TIP:**

You must create a Generator account before you can submit an application for accreditation, so do this in a timely manner to give yourself plenty of time to then complete and submit your application to us.

- 1 Go to www.renewablesandchp.ofgem.gov.uk
- 2 From the home page, click on the word 'Register' then click 'Continue'.
- 3 You will be given a choice of four different accounts. Make sure you choose a **'A Generator'** account and click 'Submit'.
You will not be able to make applications if you choose a different type of account.
- 4 The next screen will show 'Generator organisation' options. Make sure you chose the organisation type that is applicable to you.
Choose the 'Individual' option if you are applying under your own name, the 'Company' option if you are applying under a limited company name and the 'Other' option if you are a business but aren't a limited company, e.g. a partnership/charity.

 **TOP TIP:**

Applications must be made by the operator of the installation. In most cases we expect the operator of the installation to also be the owner. You can have other parties assisting you with your application but the account must be set up by the operator of the installation. These other parties can be added as additional users once an account has been registered.

- 5 Once you have filled in all the details, click on 'Add generator organisation'.



Step 1 – Set up an account

6 Enter the details of an authorised signatory for the account. This person will become the “SuperUser” of the account. If you have registered an ‘Individual’ account the SuperUser MUST be you. If the account type registered is a ‘Company’ or ‘Other’ this person must be a suitable representative from within the company/organisation which will operate/own the installation.

✓ TOP TIP: Contact Details
The address and contact details you give when you register your account are how we will contact you about your login details and your application in the future. Please make sure these details are correct.

7 You will also need to choose a username. You will require this to log into the system so choose something memorable.

8 If you are registering as a ‘Company’ or ‘Other’ you must submit a ‘Letter of Authorisation’. The letter must be completed on company headed paper, signed by an authorised signatory for the company and uploaded to the system when registering your account.

✓ TOP TIP: Letter of authorisation template
The letter template is on our website [here](#), or please contact the Renewables team (see details on page 12).

9 Once you have filled in all the details, click on ‘Add authorised signatory contact’.

10 Once you have completed the required details, click ‘Confirm’ and your registration will be complete. You will receive an automated email confirming your username. We aim to approve accounts within one working day, but it might take longer during busy periods. Once your account is approved, you will receive an email containing the password.

✓ TOP TIP: Password confirmation
Please contact the Renewables team (see details on page 12), if you do not receive an email containing your password after two working days.



Step 2 - Complete your application

✓ TOP TIP: Problems accessing your account?

If you have problems accessing your account, you can ask for a new password using your username and email address via the 'forgotten details' link on the [Register homepage](#). Please contact the Renewables team if you require assistance (see details on page 12).

✓ TOP TIP: Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) certificate information

It is your responsibility to check the information you are submitting is correct. If you notice incorrect information/errors on your MCS certificate, please contact your installer to get this corrected before submitting the certificate to us. Incorrect information will delay the accreditation process so it is important to get it right first time.



To make an application, go to the Accreditation tab in your account and select 'Apply For New Accreditation'.

The table below outlines the key questions asked in the application form and a description of what we require.

Question Reference Number	Question in application form	Description
QA100	Please provide a name for the generating station.	We refer to your installation as a 'generating station'. So we need you to provide a unique name that will identify your generating station going forward. You can name your installation anything you wish, but make sure it's memorable. Once you have chosen a name it can't be changed.
QA201	Please enter the date on which the generating station was commissioned, using the format dd/mm/yyyy.	The commissioned date is, generally speaking, the date your installation will be first capable of operation once all commissioning tests are complete. An indication of this will be recorded by the installer and can be found on your MCS certificate.
QA301	What is the total installed capacity (TIC) of the generating station (kW)?	TIC is, generally speaking, the maximum capacity that the installation could operate at for a sustained period without damaging it i.e the electrical rating of the wind turbine or the electrical rating of the solar panels multiplied by the number of solar panels. An indication of this can be found on your MCS certificate. The TIC stated in the application must be the TIC that the installation is capable of operating at on the commissioned date, it must not be the intended TIC if capacity is to be added later.
QA401	What is the declared net capacity (DNC) at the generating station (kW)?	DNC is, generally speaking, the maximum capacity that the installation could operate at, minus any electricity needed to operate the installation. An indication of this can be found on your MCS certificate.
QB100	In which country is the generating station located?	Please select Northern Ireland.

Step 2 - Complete your application

Question Reference Number	Question in application form	Description
Address details	Address (including postcode or equivalent) of the generating station:	Add the address details for the location of your installation. This can be found on your MCS certificate.
QB310	Ordnance survey (OS) grid reference or its equivalent.	The OS grid reference must refer to the location of the installation. You may wish to use online websites to find the grid reference.
QC100	Do you wish to apply for any of the following schemes?	Please select Renewables Obligation.
QC110	Under which Renewable Obligation Order does the generator wish to apply?	Please select NIRO.
QC20	How do you wish to claim ROCs?	To claim ROCs you will need to provide us with your generation data. You have the choice to claim ROCs monthly or annually. We usually expect applicants with installations of this size to claim annually.
QC230	Technology used at the generating station under the NIRO:	Make sure you choose the correct option for your installation (PV or wind).
QC232	Please provide a copy of an MCS Certificate which confirms that the plant or apparatus have been installed in compliance with and meet the requirements of MCS criteria.	We require a copy of your MCS certificate to accredit your generating station. We encourage you to apply once you have received your certificate. You can upload your certificate here, email it to us at renewable@ofgem.gov.uk or send via post or fax (address details on page 12).
QC233	Please provide the MCS Installation Certificate Number.	The MCS installation certificate number is at the top of your MCS certificate.
QC237	Capacity details.	This will already be filled in based on your previous answers. Please check the information in the table is correct. Then select 'Update' on the right hand side of the table to continue.
QC257	Grace Period question (wind).	If you are applying or adding capacity with a commissioning date on or after 1 July 2016, you will be asked if you are applying for a grace period. You will have to select 'yes' to be able to continue. You will need to submit the relevant evidence to us, by email or post.
QC258	Grace Period question (solar).	If you are applying or adding capacity with a commissioning date on or after 1 April 2017, you will be asked if you are applying for a grace period. You will have to select 'yes' to be able to continue. You will need to submit the relevant evidence to us, by email or post.

✓ TOP TIP: Don't have the information to hand?
It is important you submit accurate information. However, if you don't have some information to hand, don't let this prevent you from applying as this information can be added after you have applied.

✓ TOP TIP: MCS Certificate
If you don't yet have your MCS certificate, you can still apply. You will need to select the post or fax option to progress. If you submit your application to us without your certificate we will not be able to process your application until it is provided.

✓ TOP TIP: MCS certificate number
If you do not have an MCS certificate yet please enter **MCS-01234567-X**, to allow you to proceed. When we see this number we will contact you to ask you to send us your certificate as soon as possible. We will not be able to process your application without it.



Step 2 - Complete your application

✓ **TOP TIP: Answering QD10**
 An example for a PV installation:
 “20 x 250W Renesola
 JC250M-24/Bb panels”.
 An example for a wind
 installation: “11kW Gaia-Wind
 133 turbine”.



Question Reference Number	Question in application form	Description
QC600	Does the operator wish to apply for the Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) scheme?	Please indicate here whether you would also like to apply for the REGO scheme. We would usually expect applicants to also apply for this scheme alongside the NIRO scheme. For more information on the REGO scheme please see our website here .
QC700	Technology used at the generating station under the REGO scheme:	If you are applying for the REGO scheme you will be asked to confirm the technology. Please select the relevant option.
QD10	Please give the make and model of your generating equipment (e.g. Any turbines, PV panels, incinerator, etc.)	Please provide details of your generating equipment including the manufacturer, the model and the electrical rating. Details of the installed equipment can be found on your MCS certificate.
QF10	Do you use any of the electricity that you are generating in your own property or on-site?	If you use any electricity generated by your installation on site (i.e. at your address) we would expect your answer to be 'yes'. But if all the electricity generated is exported straight to the grid then please select 'no'.
QF20	Does the generating station export ALL of the electricity generated to "the grid" i.e. no generation is used in your own property or on site?	If you use any of the electricity generated by your installation on-site please select 'no' to continue. If all of the electricity is exported to the grid then please select 'yes'.
QF30	Does the generating station export electricity to a third party, but not through "the grid" i.e. export through a licence exempt distribution network?	In most instances you will answer 'no' to this question but if you are connected to a private wire network, please select 'yes'.
QF400	Does the generating station meter the gross renewable electricity produced?	We'd usually expect there to be a meter installed that measures the gross generation. If this is the case for you please select 'yes'. Information about your gross generation meter will be included on your MCS certificate. However, if your installed meter is not measuring gross generation, please select 'no' and you will be asked further questions about this.
QF410	How many meters are installed to measure gross renewable output?	Please select the number of meters installed to measure the gross generation.
Meter details	Please give details of the meter to measure gross renewable output.	Please provide details of the meter(s) here. The meter details will be on your MCS certificate.

Step 3 - Submit your application and agree declarations

Once you have completed all of the questions in the application form you will see the following screen:

My Account Accreditation Declaration Output Data Certificates Reports

back to home page

Apply For New Accreditation

Resume A Partially Completed Accreditation Application

Meter Maintenance

Respond To Queries From Ofgem On Your Accreditation Application

View/Edit Existing Accreditation Details For A Generating Station

Convert Preliminary Accreditation To Full Accreditation

View Submitted Accreditation Applications

Accreditation Registration

This application is now partially complete and the declarations will need to be signed by the SuperUser before submission.

Clicking the send button below will generate a task prompting the super user to sign the required declarations.

Send Cancel application

List all questions Go to question Print my questions

At this point you will also be reminded of the documentation you need to provide if not attached to the application form.

To complete your application, select 'Send'.

Once the application is complete, declarations are generated which the SuperUser must agree before the application can be treated as submitted to us. All declarations are in the 'Agree Declarations' section of the SuperUser's account on the Renewables and CHP Register. To agree the declarations, the SuperUser of the account should:

- 1 Go to the Declarations tab in your account and select 'Agree Declarations' from the list on the left hand side of the page
- 2 Usually two declarations will have been generated – an **“Information” declaration** and a **NIRO: “Permitted Ways” declaration**
- 3 For **each** declaration select 'View'
- 4 Once you have read the declaration, agree this by scrolling to the bottom of the page and selecting the 'Accept' tick box for your generating station application.
- 5 You will then need to select the 'Submit ticked Declarations' button and you will be asked for your account password to complete the declaration submission.
- 6 **Please ensure you then go back and agree all declarations.**

 **TOP TIP: Meter reading**
Don't forget to take that initial meter reading as soon as you have agreed your declarations. Keep it in a safe place!



Step 4 – We review your application

Once an application has been submitted, the SuperUser will receive an email confirming receipt. This is usually sent within one working day of the declarations being agreed. If the SuperUser does not receive this, please contact the Renewables team (see details at the end of this document).

Your application will then be reviewed by members of our team. Please note that we will contact you if we need more information.

Step 5 – Granting accreditation

If your application is successful, we will send confirmation via email to the SuperUser. This will provide you with an accreditation number and details of how to claim NIROCs.

Application Checklist

Please complete the below points to ensure that we receive your application.

- Have you registered an account on the Renewables and CHP Register? We advise that you do this well in advance so that you are able to apply for accreditation as soon as you would like to.**
- Do you have all the required information to complete the application (detailed in the table in step 2)?**
- Are all questions in the application form complete and correct?**
- After clicking 'Send', has the account SuperUser agreed the online declarations? An application isn't submitted to us until all declarations are agreed.**
- Have you received an email from us confirming receipt of your application (likely to be one working day after the SuperUser agreed the declarations)?**



Contact the Renewables team

By email: Renewable@ofgem.gov.uk

By telephone: **0207 901 7310**

By fax: **0207 901 7387**

By post: **Renewables Team
Ofgem, 9 Millbank
London SW1P 3GE**

We can advise you on completing the application form but we cannot provide technical or legal advice. We are also unable to provide guidance on proposed installations if no application has been submitted.