# NCI PROGRAMME LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT (PLM)

# Programme Major Change Request Form (PCRF)

## Section 1: Background information and guidelines

## 1.0 Programme Change Request Form (PCRF) and Approval process

**Requests to make a “material” change (described hereafter in this document as a “Major” change) to a validated programme are normally made as a result of the cyclical QQI revalidation process, or the NCI Annual Programme Monitoring [[1]](#footnote-2)process, subject to QQI approval. NCI’s commitment to annual programme monitoring is set out in Chapter 3**￼ **of the 2018-approved QA handbook and**

Programme Directors are asked to complete a Programme Change Request form for proposals to make a major change a programme, or a module on a QQI-validated programme in the NCI portfolio. The Programme Lifecycle Management (PLM) Executive Sub-Group (ESG), chaired by the Vice-President, will consider all PCRF forms within two weeks of submission to the Quality and Institutional Effectiveness Office (QIE), to ensure all proposals are considered in a timely manner.

Programme Directors should not use this form to capture details of minor modifications to modules or programmes.

## 1.1 Major (“Material”) and Minor modifications to a programme

This form should be used to propose major modifications only, as per point 1, below.

1. A major modification: [[2]](#footnote-3)including but not limited to:
   1. the addition of a new elective stream/learning pathway for students;
   2. the addition of new modules/replacement of modules on a validated programme;
   3. a change to entry requirements for admission to a programme;
   4. a change to existing or the introduction of new collaborative provision
   5. the introduction of a new mode of delivery and learning, such as blended or online learning
   6. the removal/replacement/addition of a new Programme Learning Outcome (MIPLO);
   7. a major change to the programme assessment strategy (e.g. weighting of assessment-types across the programme or introduction of a new assessment type for more than one module)
   8. A new delivery location (off-campus)

The PCRF Form should be counter-signed by the Dean/Director of CELL/Director of ELI (as appropriate), to confirm support for the proposal at a School/Centre level. Programme proposers will be invited to attend the respective PLM ESG discussion to answer any questions on the proposed change. The role of the PLM ESG is to recommend whether the major change can proceed, subject to approval by QQI and noting by the Academic Council.

A major modification will normally take place in sync with the scheduled cyclical (five-yearly) QQI revalidation but it can arise out of sync with revalidation through the Annual Monitoring Process (APM). A major change may result in the need for a Differential QQI validation[[3]](#endnote-2). The decision on whether a DV is required rest with QQI, in consultation with the Director of QIE.

1. Minor modifications: changes of less than 20% to a module’s content are deemed to be of a minor nature. They do not require the approval of QQI to be brought into effect and they do not require the approval of the PLM-ESG and the Executive Group and Academic Council. However, Programme Directors are required to keep a record of record of proposed minor modifications, which are agreed by local programme Committees, with the approval of the dean/Vice-Dean. These should be documented in APM reports, which are managed centrally by the QIE office. The PLM-ESG will be updated on minor changes annually. It is important to keep track of such minor changes, locally and centrally, so that the curriculum remains up to date both on AKARI Coursebuilder and on NCI’s marketing webpages.

Minor modifications would normally comprise:

* 1. The introduction of new topics into a module syllabus and the removal of outdated material or less important topics
  2. Change in assessment techniques within a specific module e.g., the introduction of an essay or assignment instead of a time-controlled class test
  3. The balance as between lectures, tutorials and practicals
  4. Increase or decrease in class contact hours for a subject or module not exceeding 20% of annual class contact hours
  5. Changes to reading lists.

## 2.0 Programme Major Change Request Form (PCRF) Form

### 2.1 Proposer

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| --- | --- |
| **Proposer[[4]](#footnote-4)** | |
| **Name[[5]](#footnote-5)** |  |
| **School/Centre** |  |
| **Email address** |  |
| **Contact tel:** |  |

### 2.2 Programme

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| **Programme information** | |
| **Programme Award and Title:** |  |
| **Embedded Awards** if the embedded award is exit-only (i.e., no direct student recruitment into the programme)- please state**:** |  |
| **Micro-credentials** |  |
| **Programme Code/s (QIE to populate)** |  |
| **Location of delivery** |  |

# 2.3 Type of Major Change

*Please indicate the course of action you are seeking approval for (tick multiple boxes as appropriate). Note that the QIE office is required to seek QQI guidance/decision on whether a Differential Validation is required.*

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|  | Change to over 20% of validated content of a module(s) |
|  | Change of entry requirements to the programme or to the Award type |
|  | New modules/replacement of modules/new elective stream on a programme |
|  | New collaborative provision/change to existing collaborative provision |
|  | New professional/regulatory/statutory accreditation or withdrawal of existing such accreditation(s) |
|  | Change to teaching and learning mode (change to fully online or blended, from originally validated face-delivery OR change to fully online, from originally validated blended delivery) |
|  | Change to Programme Learning Outcomes (MIPLOs) |
|  | Major change to programme assessment strategy |
|  | Change of physical delivery location for the programme (external to NCI campus) |

# 2.4 Essential Programme Information

**(QIE to populate)**

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| Award Class[[6]](#footnote-6) | Programme Title(s) | NFQ Level | Total  ECTS | FT/PT/ both | Domestic/EU/non-EU/all |
| Major[[7]](#footnote-7)  (Master/ PGDip/ Bachelor/ Ordinary degree/HDip) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Minor[[8]](#footnote-8)  (e.g., Higher Certificate, Diploma) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Special Purpose or Supplementary award[[9]](#footnote-9) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Micro-credential[[10]](#footnote-10) |  |  |  |  |  |

# 2.5 Strategic Case for approval

Please complete sections 1-6 below, limiting each section to no more than 300 words.

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| 1. ***List of Changes (refer to section 2.3 for the type of Major Change)***   *Please elaborate on the major change(s) being proposed, clarifying the type (see section 2.3) and including as much detail as possible in table format listing the new changes versus the old.* |
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| 1. **Rationale & Strategic case for the change**   *What is the rationale for the request to modify this programme? E.g., changes in patterns of demand from prospective students, a strategic realignment of the portfolio, major organisational change.*  *How does the programme's modification fit with the school/centre’s ongoing strategic aims and plans?* |
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| 1. **Impact on wider School/College portfolio (if any)**   *Will this change(s) have an impact on the wider School programme portfolio/student profile***,** *or the wider College profile?* |
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| 1. **Anticipated implications – students, resources etc.**   *Use this section to outline specific, anticipated implications such as:*   1. *Changing entry requirements – will this result in more enrolments ad what will be the implications for staff resources (academic and professional administration/Library etc.)* 2. *Impact of changing delivery mode – are additional physical/online resources required?* 3. *New elective stream- will current students be allowed to transfer to the new stream?* 4. *Changes in assessment techniques/resources – will lecturers have everything they need?* |
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| 1. **Internal and External Discussion and Agreement**   *Please provide details of the following.*   * 1. *Internal: Has this been discussed with the school/centre concerned and with wider NCI Support Units?*   2. *External Discussions: Has this been discussed with any third parties such as PRSBs, Articulation agreements etc.* |
| **Internal Discussions:**  *School/Programme Committee*  *Admissions*  *Marketing/Student Recruitment*  *Central timetabling*  *Library*  *Other*  *Please include any comments below:* |
| **External Discussions:**  *PRSBs*  *Articulation Agreements*  *Other*  *Please include any comments below:* |

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Please include any further information you would like to bring to the attention of the PLM -ESG decision (no more than 500 words please).

**APPROVAL TO SUBMIT TO PLM ESG**

Once completed, this PRF should be emailed to: [QIE@NCI.ie](mailto:QIE@NCI.ie)

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| School/CELL approval for submission granted by: | Submitted to QIE by: |
| Date submitted to QIE: |

1. see section 3.9 of the QA Handbook, published here: [Policy Template (ncirl.ie)](https://www.ncirl.ie/Portals/0/QA/Handbook/NCIQAH-3.%20Programme%20Development%20Valdiation%20and%20Evaluation.pdf?ver=2019-07-30-153744-887) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. See QAES policy – Chapter 3 of the QA Handbook (ibid) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. # Appendices

   **Include proposed, draft amended programme document (Including amended programme schedules) where relevant.** [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
4. This will normally be the existing Programme Director. Where this is not the case, the Dean of the School or Director of CELL will be named as the Proposer. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Please note that only Faculty members can retire a programme. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. For further information, please see: [NFQ (qqi.ie)](https://nfq.qqi.ie/index.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. A major award is an award that recognises the learner’s achievement of a broad range of programme-level learning outcomes, through the successful completion of a programme of study that a learner can use for a range of purposes. These outcomes may be at NFQ level 10 (doctoral award); 9 (Master’s/PGDip award); 8 (Bachelor’s degree or Higher Diploma award); 7 (Ordinary degree award). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. A Minor Award is linked to a Major Award. Through the successful completion of a minor award, the learner has achieved some of the programme learning outcomes of the linked Major Award, and there will always be a progression opportunity from a minor to a major award e.g. The learner achieves a Diploma at NFQ level 7, which is a minor award, from which they can progress to a programme that leads to a Bachelor’s degree. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. A Special Purpose Award recognises learners’ achievement of a specific and relatively narrow set of programme learning outcomes. There is no requirement for a progression pathway to a minor or major award. A Supplementary Award exists to recognise learners’ achievement of a set of learning outcomes that supplement, or are additional to, a Major Award. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. QQI has not yet formally designated Micro-Credential as an award class of its own. For the purposes of validation, in April 2021, QQI defined a micro-credential as a programme with an ECTS (learner effort hours) range of 5-30 credits and which leads to a Special Purpose Award at NFQ levels 6-9. It is not yet clear whether learners with multiple, small micro-credentials can “trade-in” these credentials if they wish to receive a minor award from a Higher Education Institution (e.g., three MC’s worth 10-ECTS each at Level 9 = 30-ECTS postgraduate certificate (minor award with progression pathway to a PG Diploma and Master’s award). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)