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Further connections methodologies update

December 2025

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1. Context and Purpose

- 1.1 At the National Energy System Operator (NESO), we recognise the challenges facing our connections customers and the need to fundamentally reform the electricity transmission connections process in order to deliver Clean Power by 2030 and maintain an efficient transition to net zero.
- 1.2 On 15 April 2025 Ofgem approved¹ our ambitious 'TMO4+' proposals to reform the electricity transmission connections process to ensure that the mix of projects in the reformed connections queue best reflects Great Britain's Clean Power needs in 2030, whilst providing an efficient transition and clear investment signal to 2035, so that we maintain efficient progress towards net zero. 'TMO4+' takes the form of a package of changes to industry codes and new 'connections methodologies' that, together with changes to licences, set the regulatory and commercial framework for a reformed connections process.
- 1.3 Following Ofgem's approval, on 30 April 2025 we published "*Connections methodologies update – An overview of final amendments to the connections methodologies*"². Ofgem approved this update on 15 May 2025.³
- 1.4 The three methodologies are: Gate 2 Criteria Methodology⁴, Connections Network Design Methodology (CNDM)⁵, and Project Designation Methodology⁶.
- 1.5 In June 2025 we published the 'EA Timeline', which set out the detailed timeline for implementation of the 'Gate 2 to Whole Queue' (G2TWQ) stage of our connections reform programme. This confirmed that the evidence submission window for transmission-connected projects would be open 8-29 July 2025.
- 1.6 Following issues with the systems used to submit evidence, we extended the evidence submission window so that it closed on 26 August 2025. We then

¹ <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/decision/decision-connections-reform-package-tm04>

² <https://www.neso.energy/document/359806/download>

³ <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-05/Updates%20to%20Connections%20Methodologies%20decision.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.neso.energy/document/359776/download>

⁵ <https://www.neso.energy/document/359781/download>

⁶ <https://www.neso.energy/document/359786/download>

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published a revised 'EA Timeline' which sets out the new, re-baselined timeline for G2TWQ.⁷

- 1.7 Since the closure of the application window we have undertaken initial checks, formed the queue and communicated the outcome, and are in the process of concluding our detailed and duplication checks.
- 1.8 On 13 November 2025 we published a 'Connections methodologies update' alongside a corresponding letter to Ofgem and the response from Ofgem⁸. The purpose of this was to communicate several key process improvements that allow for more efficient implementation of the G2TWQ process, and further process clarifications. These were identified by NESO working with our Transmission Owner and Distribution Network Operator⁹ delivery partners and through our engagement with customers and other stakeholders. These improvements and clarifications were not considered to represent material changes to the connections methodologies.

1.9 The purpose of this document is two-fold:

- 1.10 To support the publication of the accompanying marked-up and clean Connections Network Design Methodology (CNDM) and Gate 2 Criteria Methodology (G2CM)¹⁰ documents to show how the improvements and clarifications in our November 2025 update are reflected within the CNDM and G2CM¹¹; and**
- 1.11 To prepare for the annual connections methodology review and consultation process starting in early 2026.** Related to this we are planning to publish a new set of connections methodology documents showing only the CMP434 future application window content. This document provides an initial overview, and these updates will be published in early January 2026.
- 1.12 It is worth noting that within the documents referred to above, we have also changed the format of these methodologies from PowerPoint to Word, as this more clearly allows us to show changes from previous versions. Except where marked,

⁷ <https://www.neso.energy/industry-information/connections-reform/connections-reform-timeline>

⁸ [Connections Reform design documents and methodologies | National Energy System Operator](#)

⁹ References to DNOs in this document also includes Independent Distribution Network Operators.

¹⁰ As there were no changes to the Project Designation Methodology we have not re-published this document at this time.

¹¹ We are publishing this marked up version of the two connections methodologies in line with Ofgem's in its November 2025 letter.

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content is unchanged in the Word version when compared to the PowerPoint version, and it only text/visual formatting change is not tracked. Some of the formatting is inconsistent, but we have prioritised keeping the page content similar between the PowerPoint and Word versions over fully consistent formatting for now.

2. Accompanying marked-up Connections Network Design Methodology (CNDM) and Gate 2 Criteria Methodology (G2CM) documents

2.1 The sections below should be read in conjunction with our “*Connections methodologies update, November 2025*”¹² which sets out the nature of, and reasons for, the changes.

Transmission Owner’ (TO) and Distribution Network Operator (DNO) ‘advancement checks’

2.2 In respect of TO and DNO advancement checks:

2.2.1 We have removed ‘Step 5’ from Figure 10 (within Paragraph 5.7.1) on Page 31 of the CNDM and replaced it with Step 0. There is a minor difference between the marked and clean version of Figure 10 to keep the figure numbering consistent.

2.2.2 In Paragraph 5.7.6 and 5.7.7 on Page 32 of the CNDM we have changed the reference from Step 5 to Step 0.

2.2.3 In Paragraph 5.8.3 on Page 34 of the CNDM we have changed the reference from Step 5 to Step 0 and amended the concept of maximum advancement to reflect where a project cannot be advanced from a 2031+ connection date into Phase 1.

¹² <https://www.neso.energy/document/371986/download>

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2.2.4 We have not made amendments to Paragraph 5.25.5 on Page 53 of the CNDM as we do not feel this is required once the above changes have been made.

'Reactive Compensation'

- 2.3 In respect of 'reactive compensation': we have added a row to Figure 8 on Page 26 in the CNDM, and rows to the tables in Section 6.3 on Page 45 and 46 in the G2CM to include the technology type i.e. Reactive Compensation, along with a description.
- 2.4 We have done the same in the context of CMP434 in Figure 20 on Page 67 of the CNDM.

Phase 2 permitted capacities calculation

- 2.5 In respect of the 'Phase 2 permitted capacities calculation': we have amended Paragraph 5.4.12 on Page 27 in the CNDM to set out the clarified calculation for permitted capacity in Phase 2.
- 2.6 We have done the same in respect of CMP434 in Paragraph 7.2.11 on Page 68 in the CNDM. We have also adjusted Figure 9 and Figure 21 to better illustrate this clarification.

0MW Onshore wind transmission zones in Phase 1

- 2.7 In respect of '0MW Onshore wind transmission zones': we have added Paragraph 5.4.18 on Page 28 of the CNDM to include clarity on the approach to calculation of permitted capacity where there are built projects.

Import / export only storage systems

- 2.8 In respect of 'Import / export only storage systems': we have amended Paragraph 5.11.1 on Page 36 (and Paragraph 7.8.1 on Page 75 in the context of CMP434) of the CNDM to more clearly set out that import only energy storage systems are also covered by these arrangements.

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Queue ordering for Technologies Out of Scope of the CP30 Plan

2.9 In respect of 'Queue ordering for Technologies Out of Scope of the CP30 Plan': we have clarified Paragraph 5.10.1 on Page 36 of the CNDM to indicate that the approach in Figure 10 also applies to such projects.

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3. Preparation for the annual connections methodology review and consultation process starting in early 2026

- 3.1 The connections methodologies cover both the CMP435 (i.e. the one-off Gate 2 to the Whole Queue) process, as well as the first application window under CMP434.
- 3.2 In line with the obligations in our licence, we are required to review and consult on any potential changes to the connections methodologies, at least once annually from April 2025. As such, in early 2026 we intend to:
 - 3.2.1 publish information on minor amendments we intend to make to the connections methodologies to support implementation of the first CMP434 window later in 2026; and
 - 3.2.2 consult on more material changes that could be made to the connections methodologies.
- 3.3 Ahead of the first CMP434 application window and ahead of the annual review and consultation referred to above, we plan to publish marked and clean versions of the connections methodologies that focus only on the unchanged arrangements for the first CMP434 application window. We will do this in early January 2026, and we are doing this in advance of 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 above in order to provide clarity to customers on what a 'CMP434 only' version of the methodologies looks like before we start our annual review and consultation in early 2026. These new versions will be provided for presentational purposes only, and will not be 'live'.
- 3.4 In order to do this, we will remove all arrangements from those documents that only relate to CMP435. The methodology versions containing CMP435 content will all however remain available and published on our website, for reference.