

Retiring software from the CCP4 suite.

Please contact Charles Ballard in the core team to recommend software removal.

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Software component may be removed from CCP4 suite in one of the following cases:

1. when functionality is superseded by other software components;
2. when maintaining it presents CCP4 with a significant maintenance burden;
3. when made technically unsuitable for distribution and support by the natural evolution of computing systems;
4. when the IPR holder objects to further distribution as part of CCP4 suite.

The process for consideration of removal is as follows:

- Removals on grounds of functional redundancy or irrelevance due to newer software (case 1) are requested by WG2.
- Removals on grounds of technical unsuitability (cases 2+3) are requested by the CCP4 core group.
- Removals on request of the IPR holder (case 4) by direct request to Exec.

For all cases, we will consult with the programme author, listing reasons for their software being flagged for removal, and give authors the opportunity to respond to these concerns, possibly with remediation of specific issues; the author may also agree to removal. The Core group will give an evaluation, e.g. on contingency for replacing a functionality, and look at dependencies to retain the functionality of the suite. WG2 and Core will give a joint recommendation to CCP4 Exec. The final decision lies with the CCP4-Executive Committee. This process is to be followed for all CCP4 software components.

Phased retirement:

Phase 0: A decision is made to retire a software in consultation with the developer. Following that:

Phase 1: The “deprecation and consultation” period: software is moved to the deprecated folder but is distributed with the suite; a user can source the files but there is no support. We keep the source that can be made available for download. Time scale: major release. Published on release notes.

Phase 2: The “retired” period: downloads are archived with previous CCP4 distributions.

Important considerations include:

- WG2 will base its recommendation on the scientific value and estimated demand for the software component in question, if known or can be assessed.
- The CCP4 core group will base their recommendation on the basis of technical suitability for further distribution and prospective estimate of the associated burden.
- The exclusion process should be initiated in good time before the actual exclusion to give CCP4 users early warning of the plans (typically one release ahead).
- The CCP4 Executive Committee will discuss recommendations, while seeking to balance the functional, technical and cost aspects in order to satisfy best community interests.
- Any removals must be clearly itemised with reasons for exclusion and advertise publicly on CCP4 BB and CCP4 web-site while in planning, after Exec approval and after the actual exclusion.