

BRITISH STANDARD

A standard for standards –

Part 2: Structure and drafting – Requirements and guidance

ICS 01.120



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Contents

Foreword *ii*

Introduction *1*

1 Scope *2*

2 Normative references *2*

3 Terms and definitions *2*

4 Principles *5*

5 Requirements specific to different types of standard *10*

6 Structure, divisions and elements *12*

7 Drafting *14*

8 Verbal forms used in standards *20*

9 Spelling and presentation *20*

Bibliography *22*

Table 1 Verbal forms *20*

Summary of pages

This document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, pages i and ii, pages 1 to 22, an inside back cover and a back cover.

Foreword

Publishing information

This part of BS 0 is published by the British Standards Institution (BSI) and comes in effect on 1 January 2006.

Supersession

This part of BS 0 supersedes BS 0-3:1997, which will be withdrawn on 31 December 2005.

Relationship with other publications

BS 0 is intended primarily for the use of BSI committee members and staff, and those providing first drafts of standards and related British Standards publications. It was last published in 1997 in three parts and subsequently amended in 2002. The standard is issued in two parts:

- *Part 1: Development of standards – Specification;*
- *Part 2: Structure and drafting – Requirements and guidance.*

Information about this document

This edition has been fully revised and follows the principle adopted for Part 1 in that it is confined to matters of fundamental policy and principle. Details of style and presentation appear in *The BSI guide to standardization – Section 2: Rules for the structure, drafting and presentation of British Standards*. It is envisaged that the latter document might regularly be updated to reflect changing requirements both in BSI's market and in its own production systems.

Details of significant changes introduced in this edition of BS 0-2 are discussed in the introduction.

Presentational conventions

The provisions (see **3.2.1**) of this standard are presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Its requirements are expressed in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is “shall”.

Commentary, explanation and general informative material are presented in smaller italic type, and do not constitute normative elements (see 3.2.2).

Contractual and legal considerations

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

Introduction

This edition of BS 0-2 has been developed so as to provide a concise exposition of the principles governing the drafting of standards of national (i.e. UK) origin. Many details concerning editorial practice and policy are now to be found in *The BSI guide to standardization – Section 2: Rules for the structure, drafting and presentation of British Standards*. That document also contains instructions for the implementation in the UK of European and international standards.

This edition of BS 0-2 takes the form of a specification and guide. The principles it encapsulates are presented as requirements that are binding on all types of formal standard of national origin. However, these requirements have been drafted so as to allow a reasonable degree of latitude in order to accommodate the developing needs of the standardization community. It is also recognized that this community (both users and producers of standards) are in most cases used to working with standards of international and European origin and it has been the intention to maintain the high degree of consistency in drafting practice that has already been achieved amongst the organizations concerned.

This edition introduces a major innovation concerning the presentation of informative guidance and commentary. It has been developed from the principle adopted for some years in a category of standard known informally as “practice specifications”, and allows the provisions of the standard (see **3.2.1**) to be supplemented by informative material that is presented distinctly, but in parallel with them. This allows the standard to maintain the rigour and authority of a specification whilst offering the user a large amount of explanatory guidance that would previously have been difficult to accommodate.

BS 0 is to be used as an exemplar for all other standards of national origin, which therefore allows the commentary and guidance feature to be adopted for them if it is thought to be of value. There is, of course, no compulsion to use this approach, and it is likely that many traditional product specifications will continue to be drafted much as previously. However, it does allow technical committees to introduce text in a prominent position that can be used to:

- offer guidance on the application or implementation of the provisions of a standard; or
- explain the context or background of a particular provision; or
- explain the committee’s reasoning in respect of provisions that might otherwise be thought to be obscure or contentious.

Examples of this feature have been selectively introduced into the text of this document, particularly in Clause **4**, where it has been thought helpful to offer an explanation and rationale for some basic principles that might otherwise be thought to be arbitrary.

Amongst other provisions to which the user’s attention is drawn, is new text to be introduced in the foreword to codes of practice (see **5.2**), in order to strengthen the ability of this type of standard to support conformity assessment principles.

1 Scope

COMMENTARY ON CLAUSE 1
Detail concerning the adoption of European and international documents as British Standards documents can be found in BS 0-1:2005, 5.7, and in The BSI guide to standardization – Section 2.

This part of BS 0 specifies requirements, and gives guidance, in respect of the structure and drafting of those documents of national (i.e. UK) origin that are published as British Standards or Drafts for Development.

It does not explicitly include requirements for BSI publications that are not regarded as being part of its formal standardization programme.

This part of BS 0 is concerned principally with matters of policy and principle. Further detailed prescriptions concerning the presentation of British Standards are to be found in *The BSI guide to standardization – Section 2*.

2 Normative references

COMMENTARY ON CLAUSE 2
Normative references are deemed to be indispensable insofar as reference to the cited document would have to be made in order fully to comply with the provision in which the reference appears. It should be possible to take the accuracy and appropriateness of such citations on trust.

See 7.8.2 for the criteria for normative references to be dated or otherwise.

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

BS 0-1:2005, *A standard for standards – Part 1: Development of standards – Specification*

BS 7998-3 (IEC 60027-3), *Letter symbols to be used in electrical technology – Logarithmic and related quantities, and their units*

BS ISO 31 (all parts), *Quantities and units*

BS ISO 999, *Information and documentation – Guidelines for the content, organization and presentation of indexes*

ISO 10241, *International terminology standards – Preparation and layout*

The BSI guide to standardization – Section 2, Rules for the structure, drafting and presentation of British Standards
 (<http://www.bsi-global.com/NSB/Governance>)

Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, 5th edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002

Chambers Dictionary of Science and Technology. Edinburgh: Chambers Harrap, 1999

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this part of BS 0, the terms and definitions given in BS 0-1:2005, together with the following apply.

3.1 types of standard (and related documents)

COMMENTARY ON 3.1
Requirements for individual types of standard are given in Clause 5.

3.1.1 specification

standard that sets out detailed requirements, to be satisfied by a product, material, process, service or system, and the procedures for checking conformity to these requirements

3.1.2 method

standard that gives a complete account of the way in which an activity is performed (and, where appropriate, of the equipment or tools required to perform it) and conclusions are reached, to a degree of precision appropriate to the stated purpose

3.1.3 vocabulary

standard listing definitions of terms used in a particular sector, field or discipline

3.1.4 code of practice

standard comprising recommendations for accepted good practice as followed by competent and conscientious practitioners, and which brings together the results of practical experience and acquired knowledge for ease of access and use of the information

3.1.5 guide

standard that gives broad and general information about a subject, with background information where appropriate

3.1.6 classification

standard comprising designations and descriptions of different grades of a product and that identifies and arranges data in hierarchical order

3.1.7 draft for development**DD**

provisional document, developed under broadly the same processes as a formal standard and published when standardization of a particular subject is urgently required, but further research or development is required before it can be published as a British Standard

3.2 elements of a standard**3.2.1 provision**

expression that takes the form of a statement, an instruction, a recommendation or a requirement

COMMENTARY ON 3.2.1

“Provision” is the generic term used for those fundamental elements of text that convey criteria necessary in order to be able to claim compliance with a standard. Note that they are not always requirements; in documents such as codes of practice they are recommendations. Further detail is given in Clause 5.

3.2.2 **normative element**
 element that describes the scope of the document, and which sets out provisions
 [ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2, 2004, **3.8**]

COMMENTARY ON 3.2.2
“Normative” is a frequently misunderstood term referring to a very simple concept. It is applied to those elements that “set the standard”, and without which there would be no standard, and no possibility of claiming compliance with it. It therefore cannot be applied to text, such as in this commentary, that conveys supplementary information or that is essentially discursive.

3.2.3 **informative element**
 element that provides additional useful information

COMMENTARY ON 3.2.3
Material such as that presented in this column is deemed to be “informative”.

3.2.4 **required element**
 element, the presence of which in a document is obligatory
 [ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2, 2004, **3.10**]

COMMENTARY ON 3.2.4
See 6.1.3 for the list of required elements.

3.2.5 **clause**
 basic component in the subdivision of text

3.2.6 **annex**
 optional element, integral to a standard but containing material more appropriately presented separately from its main provisions

COMMENTARY ON 3.2.6
In some older British Standards the term “appendix” has been used.

3.3 **caution**
 instruction that draws attention to the risk of damage to the product, process or surroundings
 [BS 4884-1:1992, **2.1**]

3.4 **warning**
 information that draws attention to the risk of injury or death
 [BS 4884-3:1992, **3.24**]

3.5 **figure**
 illustration in the form of a diagram, sketch, perspective drawing, graph, chart, nomogram, photograph or one of a variety of engineering drawings, e.g. dimensional, detail, assembly

4 Principles

4.1 General

COMMENTARY ON 4.1

In very simple terms, a standard is an agreed way of doing something. Standards serve a wide variety of needs and purposes, and are applied to commodities, technologies, services and processes in order to promote their safety, compatibility and ease of use.

More specifically standards may be used to:

- *streamline business processes and facilitate national and international trade and communication;*
- *act as effective tools for the implementation of public policy both in support of legislation and outside a legislative framework;*
- *codify good practice in support of broader societal, consumer and environmental interests.*

A standard shall:

- a) be complete within the limits given in its scope clause;
- b) be consistent, accurate and unambiguous;
- c) take full account of the current state of technical development;
- d) provide a framework in which innovation can be accommodated and supported; and
- e) be readily comprehensible to those who might reasonably be expected to use it (i.e. its target audience).

The type of standard used shall be selected as being the most appropriate for its purpose from amongst those defined in **3.1**.

Irrespective of its target audience, the provisions of a standard shall be drafted with due regard to the legitimate needs of the whole community, and, in particular, to those of the end users of its subject matter.