

BS 0:2016



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A standard for standards – Principles of standardization



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Foreword

Publishing information

This British Standard is published by BSI Standards Limited, under licence from The British Standards Institution, and came into effect on 31 December 2016. It was prepared on behalf of the BSI Standards Policy and Strategy Committee.

Supersession

This British Standard supersedes BS 0:2011, which is withdrawn.

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

BS 0, *A standard for standards*, is the main document by which BSI sets out how British Standards and related documents are developed and maintained.

The principal changes introduced in this edition of BS 0 are as follows:

- clarification of roles and responsibilities;
- the addition of information on panels for national standards;
- new details for submitting feedback and comments.

Certain topics regularly arise during any revision of BS 0, and it was decided:

- to retain the “z” spelling usage (e.g. “standardization”) for consistency with the preferred variant listed in the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, noting also that it is the traditional English usage rather than an Americanism;
- to retain the decimal point in preference to the decimal comma, noting that it reflects the overwhelmingly predominant practice in the UK and is inconsistent with many international and European standards that are adopted without change by BSI; and
- to retain the “f” spelling of “sulfur” and its derivatives, noting that it is the agreed variant adopted by the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) and most analogous professional bodies in the UK, and reflects the general usage of most of those in the UK scientific community.

1 Scope

This British Standard sets out the principles of standardization undertaken by the British Standards Institution (BSI) in its role as the UK National Standards Body (NSB).

The principles encompass the development, publication, maintenance and application of British Standards and related standardization documents, together with the UK’s participation in European and international standardization.

The principles set out in this document do not include discussion of BSI’s non-NSB activities, nor detailed discussion of the rules and procedures of the international and European standardization bodies.

2 Normative references

The following documents, in whole or in part, are normatively referenced in this document and are indispensable for its application. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.¹⁾

[N1]ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2:2016, *Rules for the structure and drafting of International Standards* [www.iso.org/directives²⁾]

[N2]CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations, Part 3, *Rules for the structure and drafting of CEN/CENELEC publications* [www.cen.eu/boss²⁾]

[N3]BSI, *Rules for the structure and drafting of UK standards* [www.bsigroup.com²⁾]

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this British Standard, the following terms and definitions apply.

NOTE Additional terms, abbreviations and definitions are given in Annex A.

3.1 amendment

alteration and/or addition to previously agreed technical or editorial content of an existing standard

3.2 British Standard

BS

standard, developed and published by BSI following the principles set out in this standard

3.3 BSI Board

governing body of BSI

3.4 European Committee for Standardization

CEN

European standards body, of which BSI is the UK member, officially recognized by the European Union and the European Free Trade Association

3.5 European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization

CENELEC CLC

European standards body, of which BSI is the UK member, officially recognized by the European Union and the European Free Trade Association for standardization in the area of electrotechnical engineering

3.6 CEN/CENELEC enquiry

stage of the development process at which a draft standard (prEN) is distributed by the CEN/CENELEC Management Centre to CEN or CENELEC national members for public consultation

3.7 chair

formally appointed leader of a committee

¹⁾ This clause, which contains standard wording used for all European and international standards, is intended to identify all other documents to which reference *might* need to be made in the application of this standard. In practice, it might be possible to apply this and many other standards without recourse to all or any such external references.

²⁾ Last viewed 13 December 2016.

3.8 committee

NOTE The term “committee” is used in this standard to refer to both technical committees (3.8.1) and subcommittees (3.8.2). It does not refer to any other administrative or governance committee of BSI.

3.8.1 technical committee

TC

body responsible for a particular area of standards work

3.8.2 subcommittee

SC

subordinate committee of a technical committee

3.8.3 UK mirror committee

national mirror structure to the European/international technical committees, ensuring the formulation of coherent national positions

3.9 committee member

person serving on a BSI committee or panel

3.10 common modification

alteration, addition to or deletion from the content of a reference document, approved by CEN/CENELEC and thus forming part of the EN (and HD for CENELEC)

[CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations, Part 2:2015, definition 2.14] [1]

3.11 compliance

action of a person or body in fulfilling provisions

NOTE See also 3.13.

3.12 conflict of interest

situation in which, because of other activities or relationships, transparent and effective representation of declared interests, or of a mandated brief, is or could be compromised

3.13 conformity

fulfilment of a provision

[BS EN ISO 9000:2005, definition 3.6.1, modified]

NOTE See also 3.11.

3.14 consensus

general agreement, characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests and by a process that involves seeking to take into account the views of all parties concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments

NOTE Consensus need not imply unanimity.

[ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004, definition 1.7] [2]

3.15 consumer

individual member of the general public purchasing or using property, products or services for private purposes

[BS ISO 26000:2010, definition 2.2]

3.16 corrigendum

alteration and/or addition to a standard that corrects one or more errors or ambiguities inadvertently introduced in either drafting or production and which could lead to incorrect or unsafe application of the publication

3.17 decision-making process

transactions of a committee or panel directly related to establishing whether consensus has been reached on any particular matter requiring a decision

3.18 delegate

representative of a national standards body to a committee of an international or European standards body

NOTE The representative is usually a committee member.

3.19 draft for public comment**DPC**

stage in the development of a British Standard at which wider consultation is sought

3.20 draft

standard or other deliverable under development

3.21 European standard**EN**

standard adopted by CEN/CENELEC and carrying with it an obligation of implementation as an identical national standard and withdrawal of conflicting national standards

[CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations, Part 2:2015, definition 2.5] [1]

NOTE A European Standard produced by ETSI carries with it the same obligations.

3.22 essential intellectual property rights**essential IPR**

intellectual property rights that have been included within a standard such that it would be impossible to implement the standard without making use of those rights, and the only way to avoid an infringement of the rights in respect of implementation of the standard is therefore to request a licence from the owner

3.23 European Telecommunications Standards Institute**ETSI**

European standards body officially recognized by the European Union and the European Free Trade Association for standardization in the area of telecommunications

3.24 expert

person nominated from a national committee to contribute to the detailed work of a working group (or similar body) in ISO, IEC, CEN or CENELEC

3.25 formal vote

stage of the development process at which the final text of a prEN (FprEN) is circulated by the CEN/CENELEC Management Centre to national members for approval by weighted voting

3.26 International Electrotechnical Commission**IEC**

international standards body for standardization in the area of electrical and electronic technology and engineering, of which BSI is the UK member

- 3.27 IEC Conformity Assessment Board
IEC/CAB**
body responsible for setting the IEC's conformity assessment policy, reporting to the IEC Council Board
- 3.28 informative**
characteristic of material in a standard that supplements normative material by offering advice, information and guidance
- 3.29 international standard**
ISO or IEC standard
- 3.30 intellectual property rights
IPR**
rights having no tangible form, but representing the product of creative work or invention
NOTE Such rights include:
- *copyright and related rights, rights in designs;*
 - *patents, rights to inventions, whether registered or unregistered.*
- 3.31 Internal Regulations (of CEN/CENELEC)
IR**
rules of the European standards bodies
- 3.32 International Organization for Standardization
ISO**
international standards body, of which BSI is the UK member
- 3.33 ISO Conformity Assessment Committee
ISO/CASCO**
ISO's policy development committee on conformity assessment, reporting to the ISO Council
- 3.34 normative**
characteristic of material in a standard that is essential to the application of the standard in the manner intended, and against which it is possible to demonstrate and claim conformity to the standard
- 3.35 normative reference**
document to which reference is made in a standard in such a way as to make it indispensable for the application of the standard
- 3.36 panel**
subordinate group of a BSI technical committee or subcommittee, responsible for specific delegated tasks, broadly equivalent to an international or European Working Group
NOTE Panels are led by a convenor, who does not have the authority of a formally appointed chair.
- 3.37 provision**
normative element of a standard
- 3.38 regulation**
document providing binding legislative rules, that is adopted by an authority
[ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004, definition 3.6] [2]

3.39 Standards Policy and Strategy Committee**SPSC**

policy committee established by the BSI Board to advise it as appropriate on matters of standardization policy and strategy and to oversee all work undertaken in BSI committees

3.40 standard

document, established by consensus and approved by a recognized body, that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context

NOTE Standards should be based on the consolidated results of science, technology and experience, and aimed at the promotion of optimum community benefits.

[ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004, definition 3.2] [2]

3.41 standardization

activity of establishing, with regard to actual or potential problems, provisions for common and repeated use, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context

NOTE 1 In particular, the activity consists of the processes of formulating, issuing and implementing standards.

NOTE 2 Important benefits of standardization are improvement of the suitability of products (including services) and processes for their intended purposes, prevention of barriers to trade and facilitation of technological co-operation.

[ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004, definition 1.1] [2]

3.42 standard of UK origin

British Standard developed within the UK

3.43 standstill

obligation accepted by the members of CEN/CENELEC/ETSI not to take any action, either during the preparation of a European standard or after its approval, which could prejudice the intended harmonization or endanger the progress of work at European level and, in particular, not to publish a new or revised conflicting national standard

3.44 Technical Report**TR**

document published by ISO, IEC, CEN or CENELEC containing informative material not suitable to be published as a standard or a Technical Specification

NOTE A TR may include, for example, data obtained from a survey carried out among the national members, data on work in other organizations, or data on the state of the art in relation to national standards on a particular subject.

3.45 Technical Specification**TS**

document published by ISO, IEC, CEN or CENELEC about which there is the possibility of future approval as a standard, but for which at present there are reasons precluding immediate publication as a standard

NOTE Typically the reasons for this would be that the required support for such approval cannot be obtained; there is doubt on whether consensus has been achieved or the subject matter is still under technical development.

3.46 vote ballot

process of approval undertaken for specific purposes by international and European standards bodies

3.47 working group**WG**

group of experts, appointed by an international or European technical committee or subcommittee, responsible for drafting documents

3.48 work item**WI**

standards project

3.49 work programme

detailed list of all subjects (work items) to be developed within the scope of a technical committee, forming a group of interrelated standards projects which together achieve a common purpose in support of the strategic aims of a technical committee

4 Principles of standardization

4.1 Context and purpose

4.1.1 Context

Standards exist principally to provide a reliable basis on which common expectations can be shared regarding specific characteristics of a product, service or process.

4.1.2 Purposes

The purposes of British Standards include:

- a) facilitating trade, particularly in reducing technical barriers and artificial obstacles to international trade;
- b) providing a framework for achieving economies, efficiencies and interoperability;
- c) enhancing consumer protection and confidence; and
- d) supporting public policy objectives and, where appropriate, offering effective alternatives to regulation.

4.1.3 British Standards

All British Standards have the defining characteristics of:

- a) representing good practice as defined by experts;
- b) development by balanced and broadly representative standing committees that retain responsibility for them indefinitely, and that reach agreement by consensus;
- c) being made subject to unrestricted open consultation; and,
- d) remaining subject to systematic periodic review as to their continuing validity.

4.1.4 Voluntary status

British Standards are voluntary in that there is no obligation to apply them or comply with them, except in those few cases where their application is directly demanded by regulatory instruments. They are tools devised for the convenience of those who wish to use them. In certain circumstances the actions of third parties might have the effect of making the application of a standard a commercial necessity, e.g. in a contract, but BSI has no control over these actions and is not a party to them.

4.1.5 Authority and reliability

For a British Standard to be a useful and attractive tool for conducting business or supporting public policy, it has to command the trust and respect of all those who are likely to be affected by it.

The reliability of a British Standard rests not just on its technical accuracy and the sound judgement of those responsible for its text. There needs also to be a widely held confidence that:

- a) it is desirable, practical and authoritative;
- b) it offers no particular nor exclusive advantage to any party;
- c) it serves the needs of the wider community;
- d) in application it will be consistent with regulations and legal principles established at the time of publication.

The measures that are necessary to underpin this confidence are set out in Clause 5. It is the responsibility of all parties involved in the development of a standard to ensure that these are not compromised.

4.1.6 Adherence to BS 0

Adherence to the principles set out in BS 0 is a condition of participating in any capacity in the development of British Standards.

4.2 The National Standards Body

4.2.1 Standards development

BSI has a role as the UK National Standards Body (NSB). This is established under its Royal Charter and codified in the *Memorandum of Understanding between the United Kingdom Government and the British Standards Institution* (the MoU). The role includes co-ordinating and facilitating the development of standards of UK origin, as well as being the UK focus for participation in European and international standardization. This is through the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), together with regional (i.e. European) standards produced by the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) and the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (CENELEC).

BSI is also responsible for co-ordinating and facilitating the development of other types of standardization document, notably Technical Specifications (TSs) and Technical Reports (TRs). These do not share all the same defining characteristics, and they are therefore not to be regarded as British Standards (see 9.4.2).

NOTE BSI is appointed as the National Standards Organization (NSO) for ETSI activities in the UK. Specific details of BSI involvement in this work can be found in the *Memorandum of Understanding between ETSI and the NSOs* (see http://portal.etsi.org/Inso/revised_nov02.asp³⁾).

BSI's NSB role also entails responsibility for publishing and promoting the standards that it develops. It maintains an infrastructure such that:

- a) each of its standards is routinely reviewed; and
- b) concerns about the content of a standard can be investigated and acted upon.

³⁾ Last viewed 13 December 2016.

4.2.2 Resourcing

Standardization projects impose considerable demands on the resources of all those involved in them. It is BSI's responsibility to apply its resources taking into account the benefits that are likely to accrue from each project in the context of its overall work programme.

It is also necessary to be conscious of the resources of others involved in the work, particularly in terms of travel and attendance at meetings.

Face-to-face meetings of committees should be convened only for those purposes that are difficult to achieve by other means, e.g. web conference, teleconference, correspondence.

4.3 Application of standards

4.3.1 Principles of application

Responsibility for selecting and applying a standard lies with its user. In general, BSI is not able to assist in this (nor take any responsibility for it) other than to try to provide an indication of the scope and content of a standard. In some circumstances, BSI might develop formally published guidance documents on the application of a particular standard or set of standards.

Standards are drafted in the expectation that those who use them will be appropriately experienced, qualified and equipped to do so, that they will apply them conscientiously and, where necessary, take sound advice by others qualified to provide it.

4.3.2 Interpretation

Responsibility for interpreting a standard rests with its user, informed where necessary by appropriate expert advice. Ultimately, the only body with the power to give a definitive interpretation is a court of law.

To avoid undermining the basis for common expectations set out in 4.1.1, BSI does not offer individual interpretations of standards.

However, any ambiguities, inconsistencies or possible errors notified to BSI will be referred for consideration by the committee responsible for the standard, as will any proposals for changes or improvements. These notifications are actively encouraged as a contribution to the maintenance of a document (see also 6.2.1).

4.3.3 Declarations of compliance and conformity

4.3.3.1 Principles

Declarations that an individual or organization has complied with the provisions of a standard, or that a product or service conforms to a standard (otherwise termed "conformity attestation"), are entirely the responsibility of those making such declarations (see also 4.3.4).

Not all standards can support such claims in a meaningful way (see 9.4). Those that can (or do), however, have to be drafted such that a valid claim can be made. Further information on conformity assessment is given in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2:2016 [N1], Clause 33.

BSI committees should refer conformity assessment issues to the Conformity Assessment Policy Committee in the first instance, which can refer an issue to ISO/CASCO or IEC/CAB if necessary.

4.3.3.2 Third-party conformity assessment

As a long-standing principle of public policy, it is generally not acceptable for a standard to state that a legitimate claim of compliance is dependent on third-party conformity assessment. There are certain established derogations from this principle, and if, exceptionally, it is believed that a circumstance has arisen where a standard will need to include a requirement for third-party conformity assessment, the approval of SPSC is required.

Standards may be developed to support an identified market need for third-party conformity assessment. In these cases:

- a) the existence of, or the feasibility of, third-party conformity assessment should be established before the project is approved;
- b) the standard may not be explicitly linked to any individual conformity assessment scheme; and
- c) advice from at least one conformity assessment provider should be sought during the drafting process.

Beyond its NSB role, BSI provides commercial conformity assessment services. It is therefore imperative that all procedures and transactions surrounding the development of standards that might be used to support third-party assessment schemes are demonstrably independent of any commercial interest that BSI might have.

4.3.4 Market surveillance

BSI is not empowered, nor resourced, nor qualified to conduct market surveillance or to examine allegations of false claims of compliance with a standard. Such cases should usually be referred in the first instance to the relevant market surveillance authority (MSA) for the matter in question. In the case of most consumer goods this is the trading standards unit of the local authority in which the allegation arose.

4.4 Transparency

As part of BSI's commitment to the transparency and accountability of the standardization process, the principal documents associated with the work programme of the committee, including notes of decisions made at committee meetings, will be made available on request with the exception of documents that are potentially sensitive, such as briefing papers, or of potential commercial value, or that are subject to restrictions by their originating organizations. The identities of the organizations represented on a committee are in the public domain. To protect against lobbying or media attention, the identities of individuals are confidential.

5 Development of British Standards

5.1 Principles

The principles underpinning the development of British Standards are set out in 4.1 and 4.2 and are discussed in further detail in Clause 7.

The majority of documents published as British Standards have their origin in international standards (developed by ISO and IEC) or European standards (developed by CEN and CENELEC, often in partnership with their international counterparts). The remainder are developed exclusively by BSI to meet particular needs in the UK.