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BSI Standards Publication

A standard for standards — Principles of standardization

bsi.

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Summary of pages

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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 30 November 2021. It was prepared on behalf of the BSI Standards Policy and Strategy Committee.

Supersession

This British Standard supersedes BS 0:2016, which is withdrawn.

Information about this document

This is a full revision of the standard, and introduces the following principal changes:

- updating of the references to the European Community and European standardization in the light of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union;
- greater emphasis in [4.1.6](#) on the need of all those involved in developing British Standards to adhere not only to BS 0 but to all policies in force at the relevant time;
- expansion of the principles for meetings in [Clause 7](#) to cover conference calls, online meetings and hybrid meetings;
- updating of the roles and responsibilities of committee members and chairs in [Clause 7](#) and [Clause 8](#);
- expansion of the roles and responsibilities pertaining to UK national standards work in [Clause 8](#), including the roles of panel convenor and editorial project manager;
- revision of [9.5.2](#) on intellectual property rights. There is no radical alteration to BSI's position regarding IPR, but it has been restated in a clearer fashion; and
- removal of Annex A, which will become an online resource.

Certain topics regularly arise during any revision of BS 0, and it was decided that the following conventions will be retained in all British Standards of UK origin:

- 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;
- the use of 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
- the use of 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.

BSI might from time to time develop policies or guidance documents to support the application of BS 0.

This publication can be withdrawn, revised, partially superseded or superseded. Information regarding the status of this publication can be found in the Standards Catalogue on the BSI website at bsigroup.com/standards, or by contacting the Customer Services team.

Where websites and webpages have been cited, they are provided for ease of reference and are correct at the time of publication. The location of a webpage or website, or its contents, cannot be guaranteed.

Presentational conventions

The provisions of this standard are presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Its principles are expressed as statements, or in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is “should”.

Commentary, explanation and general informative material is presented in smaller italic type, and does not constitute a normative element.

Where words have alternative spellings, the preferred spelling of the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary is used (e.g. “organization” rather than “organisation”).

Contractual and legal considerations

This publication has been prepared in good faith, however no representation, warranty, assurance or undertaking (express or implied) is or will be made, and no responsibility or liability is or will be accepted by BSI in relation to the adequacy, accuracy, completeness or reasonableness of this publication. All and any such responsibility and liability is expressly disclaimed to the full extent permitted by the law.

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The recipient is advised to consider seeking professional guidance with respect to its use of this publication.

This publication is not intended to constitute a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

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

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, together with the UK's participation in international and European standardization.

The principles set out in this British Standard do not include details of BSI's non-NSB activities, nor the rules and procedures of the international and European standardization bodies.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes provisions of this document¹⁾. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.²⁾

[N1] INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR STANDARDIZATION (ISO). *Principles and rules for the structure and drafting of ISO and IEC documents*. ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2. Geneva: ISO, 2018.³⁾

[N2] EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR STANDARDIZATION (CEN) and EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR ELECTROTECHNICAL STANDARDIZATION (CENELEC). *Organization and structure*. CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations, Part 1. Brussels: CEN/CENELEC, 2018.⁴⁾

[N3] EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR STANDARDIZATION (CEN) and EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR ELECTROTECHNICAL STANDARDIZATION (CENELEC). *Common rules for standards work*. CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations, Part 2. Brussels: CEN/CENELEC, 2020.⁴⁾

[N4] EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR STANDARDIZATION (CEN) and EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR ELECTROTECHNICAL STANDARDIZATION (CENELEC). *Principles and rules for the structure and drafting of CEN and CENELEC documents*. CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations, Part 3. Brussels: CEN/CENELEC, 2019.⁴⁾

[N5] BRITISH STANDARDS INSTITUTION (BSI). *Rules for the structure and drafting of UK standards*. London: BSI, 2017.⁵⁾

3 Terms, definitions and abbreviated terms

3.1 Terms and definitions

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

3.1.1 British Standard (BS)

standard developed by a standing national, European or international committee and published by BSI

3.1.2 British Standard of UK origin

British Standard developed within the UK

¹⁾ Documents that are referred to solely in an informative manner are listed in the Bibliography.

²⁾ This clause, which contains standard wording used for all national, 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.

³⁾ Available at www.iso.org/directives.

⁴⁾ Available at www.cen.eu/boss.

⁵⁾ Available at www.bsigroup.com.

3.1.3 BSI Board

board of The British Standards Institution

3.1.4 chair

formally appointed leader of a committee

3.1.5 committee

NOTE The term “committee” is used in this standard to refer to both BSI technical committees (3.1.5.1) and BSI subcommittees (3.1.5.2). It does not refer to any other administrative or governance committee of BSI.

3.1.5.1 technical committee (TC)

body, established and managed by BSI, responsible for a particular area of standards work

3.1.5.2 subcommittee (SC)

subordinate committee, established and managed by BSI, of a technical committee

3.1.6 committee member

person serving on a BSI committee

3.1.7 common modification

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

[SOURCE: CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations, Part 2:2020 [N2], 2.14]

3.1.8 compliance

action of a person or body in fulfilling provisions

3.1.9 conflict of interest

situation in which good faith, diligent, transparent and effective participation in the standards-making process free from commercial bias and consistent with standardization principles is or could be compromised owing to other activities, relationships or personal interests

NOTE It is understood that committee members (other than those who are co-opted or act as individuals) represent the interests, aspirations and concerns of their respective nominating organizations.

3.1.10 conflicting national standard

national standard, with the same scope as an EN (and HD for CENELEC) including requirements which conflict with the requirements of the EN (and HD for CENELEC)

NOTE Conflicting national standards have to be withdrawn irrespective of whether their content differs from the European standard.

[SOURCE: CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations, Part 2:2020 [N2], 2.13, modified – note added]

3.1.11 conformity

fulfilment of a provision

[SOURCE: BS EN ISO 9000:2015, 3.6.11, modified – “requirement” changed to “provision”, notes deleted]

3.1.12 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.

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

3.1.13 consumer

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

[SOURCE: BS ISO 26000:2010, 2.2]

3.1.14 decision making process

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

3.1.15 delegate (n.)

person appointed by a national standards body to represent the national interest at international or European standards meetings

NOTE The representative is usually a committee member.

3.1.16 draft

standard or other deliverable under development

3.1.17 draft for public comment (DPC)

stage in the development of a standard at which wider consultation is sought from the public at large

3.1.18 enquiry

stage of the development process at which a draft European or international standard is distributed for public consultation

3.1.19 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

NOTE 1 "Harmonized Standard" is a term used in Regulation (EU) No. 1025/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council [1], meaning a European standard adopted on the basis of a request made by the Commission for the application of Union harmonization legislation.

NOTE 2 A European standard produced by the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) carries with it the same obligations.

NOTE 3 European standards are adopted in the UK as BS ENs.

[SOURCE: CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations, Part 2:2020 [N2], 2.5, modified – Note 2 and Note 3 added]

3.1.20 expert

<in European/international standardization> person nominated by a national committee to contribute to the detailed work of a working group (or similar body) in ISO, IEC, CEN or CENELEC

<in UK national standardization> person selected for their particular technical or other relevant knowledge to contribute to the detailed work of a panel

3.1.21 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

3.1.22 informative

characteristic of material in a standard that supplements normative material by offering advice, information and guidance

3.1.23 international standard

ISO or IEC standard

3.1.24 intellectual property rights (IPR)

patents, rights to inventions, copyright, trade marks, domain names, designs, database rights, confidential information and similar rights anywhere in the world whether registered or unregistered along with the right to apply for protection of such rights

3.1.25 nominating organization

organization or body that exists to serve and/or represent a defined group of stakeholders

3.1.26 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

3.1.27 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

3.1.28 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.

3.1.29 panel member

person serving on a BSI panel

3.1.30 provision

normative element of a standard

3.1.31 regulation

document providing binding legislative rules, that is adopted by an authority

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004, 3.6]

3.1.32 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 are based on the consolidated results of science, technology and experience, and aimed at the promotion of optimum community benefits.

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

3.1.33 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 cooperation.

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

3.1.34 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

3.1.35 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 might 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.

3.1.36 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.

3.1.37 vote

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

3.1.38 working group (WG)

group established by an international or European technical committee or subcommittee, responsible for drafting documents with experts nominated by national bodies

3.1.39 work item (WI)

standards project

3.1.40 work programme

detailed list of all projects (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 that committee

3.2 Abbreviated terms

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

BS	British Standard
BSI	British Standards Institution
CEN	European Committee for Standardization
CENELEC	European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization
DPC	draft for public comment
EN	European standard
ETSI	European Telecommunications Standards Institute
IEC	International Electrotechnical Commission
IPR	intellectual property rights
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MoU	<i>Memorandum of Understanding between the United Kingdom Government and the British Standards Institution</i>
NSB	National Standards Body
SPSC	Standards Policy and Strategy Committee
SC	subcommittee
TC	technical committee
TR	Technical Report
TS	Technical Specification

4 Principles of standardization

4.1 Context and purpose

4.1.1 Context

Standards 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 can include:

- a) facilitating trade, particularly in reducing technical barriers and artificial obstacles to international trade;
- b) supporting public policy objectives and, where appropriate, offering effective alternatives to regulation;

- c) providing a framework for achieving economies, efficiencies and interoperability;
- d) enhancing consumer protection, safety and confidence;
- e) supporting and defining good environmental, social and governance (ESG) practices;
- f) addressing climate change;
- g) supporting innovation; and
- h) enabling equality and inclusion.

4.1.3 Characteristics of British Standards

All British Standards have the defining characteristics of:

- a) representing good practice as defined by experts;
- b) being developed and maintained by balanced and broadly representative standing committees that retain responsibility for them indefinitely, and that reach agreement by consensus;
- c) being made subject to 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 also needs 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; and
- 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. All those participating in standards development work are also expected to comply with all BSI policies as are in force at the relevant time.

4.2 The National Standards Body

4.2.1 Standards development

BSI is the UK National Standards Body (NSB). Its role 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)⁶⁾. The role includes:

- a) coordinating and facilitating the development of British Standards of UK origin;
- b) participating in international standardization through ISO and IEC; and
- c) participating in regional (i.e. European) standardization through CEN and CENELEC.

BSI is also responsible for coordinating and facilitating the development of other types of standardization document, and, where appropriate, publishing them, including Technical Specifications (TSs), Technical Reports (TRs) and Published Documents (PDs). These do not share all the same defining characteristics as British Standards, and are therefore not to be regarded as British Standards (see 9.4.2).

NOTE 1 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 <https://portal.etsi.org/nso/revise nov02.asp>).

NOTE 2 BSI is permitted under its MoU to produce other standardization products such as PAS and BSI Flex, which are outside the scope of BS 0.

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

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

4.2.2 Resourcing

Standardization projects impose considerable demands on the resources of all those involved in them. BSI applies its resources at its discretion, taking into account the benefits that are likely to accrue from each project in the context of its overall work programme in its role as the NSB.

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 provide an indication of the scope and contents 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 provide individual interpretations of standards. Individuals who are approached in their capacity as

⁶⁾ Available at <https://www.bsigroup.com/globalassets/documents/about-bsi/bsi-uk-nsb-memorandum-of-understanding-uk-en.pdf>

committee members with questions of interpretation or analysis should refer to the relevant BSI committee manager.

However, any ambiguities, inconsistencies or possible errors notified to BSI will be referred for consideration to the committee responsible for the standard in question, as will any proposals for changes or improvements. These notifications are encouraged as a contribution to the maintenance of standards (see also [6.2](#)).

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 2:2018 [N1], Clause **33**.

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 or recommendation for third-party conformity assessment, the approval of SPSC is required.

British Standards may not be explicitly developed in support of an individual conformity assessment scheme.

NOTE Certification schemes might be offered by independent bodies in respect of published standards; this is wholly independent of the standards-making process and BSI's activities as the NSB.

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, media or social media attention, the identities of individuals are confidential.

Individuals may publicize the fact of their own involvement in standards development, provided that they adhere to BS 0 and all applicable policies, including all confidentiality provisions.