

Guide to participating in the development of a PAS



- Leadership
- Credibility
- Confidence

Introduction

Welcome to BSI and standards development. As member of a PAS Steering Group there is a lot of information to absorb, even if you're familiar with national, European and international standards development. PAS development follows the same standards development principles and processes as national, European and international standards but there are some variations in terminology and details.

This guide is supplementary to [PAS 0](#). It provides information on the principles and processes of PAS development and answers some commonly asked questions.

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What is a standard?

A standard is an agreed, repeatable way of doing something. It's a published document that contains a technical specification or other precise criteria designed to be used consistently as a rule, guideline, or definition. Standards help to make life simpler and to increase the reliability and the effectiveness of the many goods and services that we use. Examples of real societal benefits provided by standards include:

- interoperability of parts and machinery made by different manufacturers
- helping businesses to secure and protect customer data
- ensuring energy bills are clear and easy to understand
- safeguarding children while they're on the internet
- helping hospitals to stay open throughout severe weather conditions
- helping the service industry to identify and respond to vulnerable customers
- enabling businesses to continue operating after a major disaster or weather disruption
- ensuring safety in toys, household electrical appliances, lighting, etc.



Research carried out on the impact of standards revealed that of the organizations that took part in the survey:

- 81% see standards as providing an ongoing boost to productivity
- 78% benefited from an increase in revenues of at least 1% per year as a result of initial standardization, while 82% reported ongoing benefit
- 67% experienced easier access into new markets at home as a result of standardization

Source: [*The contribution of standards to the UK economy, April 2022*](#)

Standards are voluntary and can be verified within organizations either by self-declaration or independent verification. Standards are not regulatory or imposed by government but can be used to help support legislation or regulation.

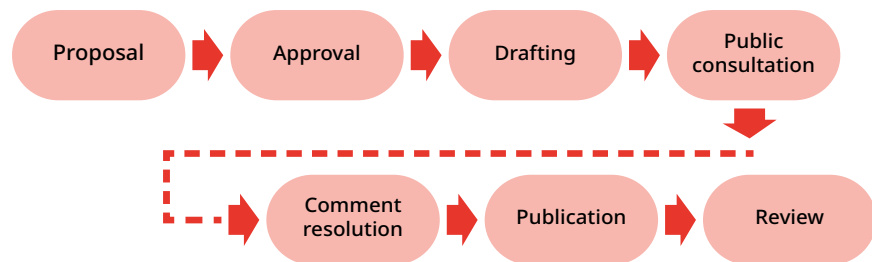
Standards are developed at several levels: international (ISO/IEC), regional (CEN/CENELEC), and national.

The British Standards Institution acts as the NSB (National Standards Body) for the UK and is one of the world's leading developers of standards. Eight out of ten of the most used and implemented standards worldwide are standards of UK origin – such as ISO 9001 *Quality management systems – Requirements*, which was based on the BS 5750 series *Quality systems*, first published in 1979.

Standards can be developed by any organization but only standards published by the NSB, in the case of the UK as 'BS' standards, are considered national standards. This includes adoptions of international and European standards. In addition to developing and publishing national standards, BSI develops and publishes PAS and BSI Flex standards. These standards are developed to the same principles and follow the same process. This guide explains the process for PAS standards and answers some commonly asked questions.

How are PAS standards developed?

PAS standards are developed in accordance with [PAS 0:2022 Principles of PAS standardization](#) and the standards development process used for international, European and national standards.



A PAS project is typically sponsored by one or more stakeholders who are interested in supporting new standardization in a particular area. BSI engages a Technical Author, convenes a Steering Group broadly representative of relevant stakeholders, and facilitates the development of the PAS. The content of the standard is developed through Steering Group review and public consultation using consensus-based decision making.

PAS standards are written in accordance with the [Rules for structure and drafting of UK standards](#), an adoption of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2:2021, with modifications to alter, clarify or extend some of its provisions for easier, clearer use in the UK.

The PAS development process is expected to be completed within 12 months or less. This is typically quicker than British Standards (18 months) and European and international standards (3 years). This is achieved by the time given to the Project Manager to progress the project and by the use of a Technical Author to do the majority of the drafting.

PAS projects can take longer than 12 months. If an agreement with the sponsor includes **optional extras** then the timescale will be extended to accommodate these. Some projects require more time to engage stakeholders and build the necessary level of consensus. Occasionally developments in industry, technology or regulation affect the schedule.

The project for a PAS has three phases, as illustrated in **Figure 1**:

Phase I – Initiation: During phase I the project team is formed and content for the PAS is scoped. An outline draft (e.g. structure, headings, initial requirements proposed to sit under those headings, etc.) is created

based on the draft scope, which is reviewed by the sponsor and Project Manager, and then developed into a base document. The Steering Group and Review Panel are assembled. In some PAS projects there will be an additional scoping meeting in which the Steering Group will be asked to review the outline before the base document is created (see **Optional extras**).

Phase II – Consensus building: During phase II the base document for the PAS is reviewed by the Steering Group and comments are resolved by the Steering Group and Technical Author in a Steering Group meeting. The draft is then updated by the Technical Author. The Steering Group are asked to confirm proceeding to public consultation and the sponsor approves the draft. The public consultation is launched and the Review Panel notified. Comments from the public consultation are resolved by the Steering Group and Technical Author in a Steering Group meeting, and the draft updated in response to these agreed resolutions.

Phase III – Publication: During phase III the final draft undergoes a final editorial review with the Steering Group, following which BSI designs, publishes and distributes the final PAS.

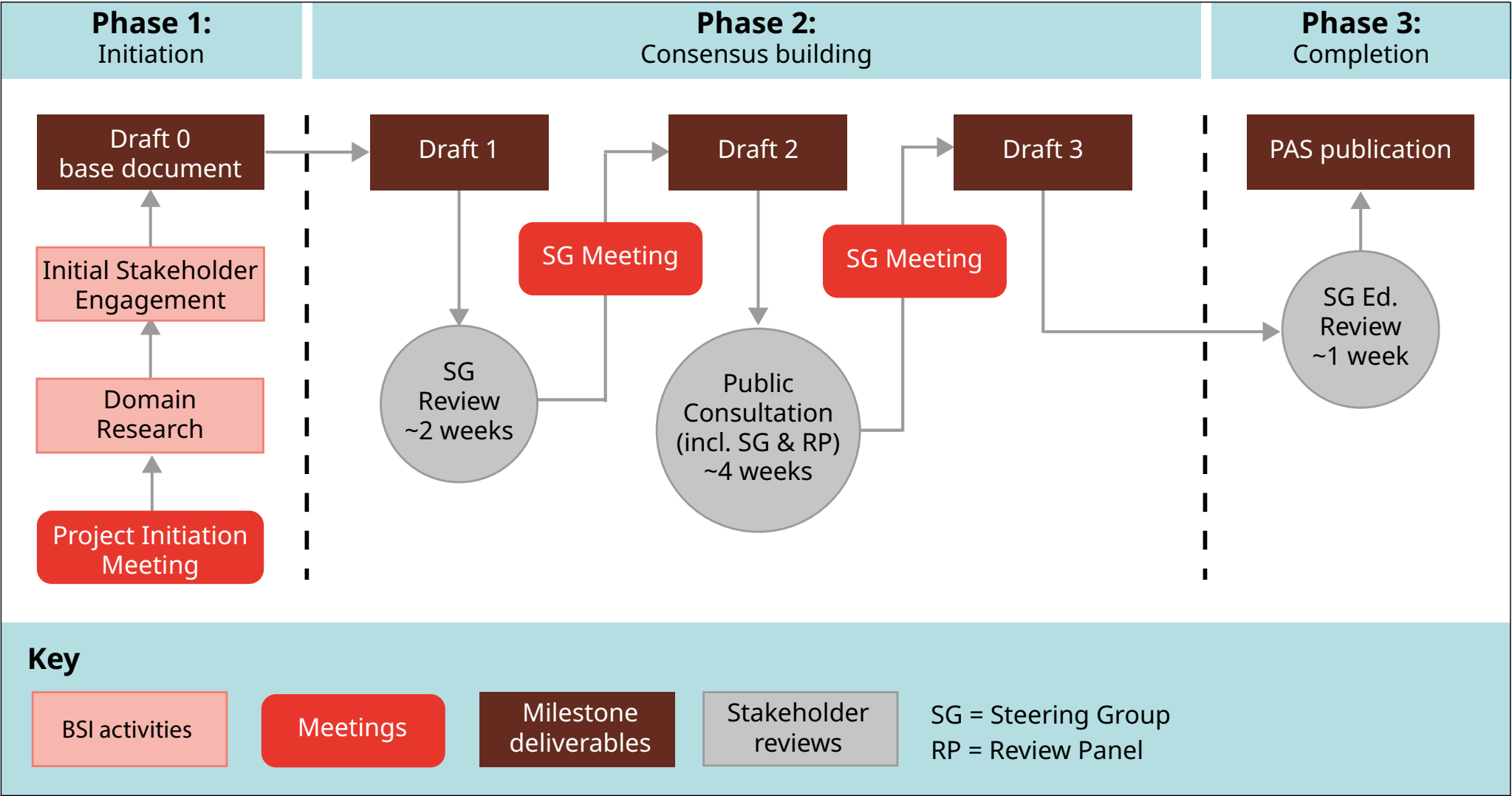
The sponsor is expected to approve several stages during the PAS project:

- the readiness of the base document for circulation to the Steering Group for review
- the readiness of the draft for the launch of the public consultation
- the final draft for publication
- the design of the PAS

Decisions on the content of the standard are made by consensus at Steering Group meetings. The sponsor attends the meetings and participates in discussions to reach consensus on the same basis as all other stakeholders.

On rare occasions the sponsor has withdrawn from the process, either because of a change in their circumstances (the sponsor organization ceases to exist or has to focus their resources elsewhere) or as a result of lack of consensus among the Steering Group or between the sponsor and the Steering Group. When this happens, there are several options. The document can be published by the sponsor as a private standard or other document, BSI can continue with the development of the PAS without the sponsor, or the project can be abandoned.

Figure 1: PAS development process



Principles of standardization

PAS standards are developed according to the same principles as British Standards:

- openness
- transparency
- confidentiality
- consensus
- relevance
- verifiability
- consistency

Standards are:

- developed by a balanced and broadly representative committee
- subject to open consultation
- reviewed regularly
- voluntary in application

These principles are derived from the [ISO/IEC Directives](#) and are covered in [PAS 0](#), the [Rules for the structure and drafting of UK standards](#), and other supporting documents.

Consensus

The content of PAS standards is developed by the consensus of the Steering Group. PAS 0:2022 defines consensus as:

“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.”

This is the same definition as used in the development of British Standards of UK origin and is taken from ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004.

Consensus-based decision making is a fundamental principle of standards development. It provides users with the confidence that the standard has broad industry support.

If one or more stakeholders have a fundamental objection, which is sustained and supported by sound arguments, then consensus is not reached. BSI will make every effort to reach consensus by understanding the concerns and arguments of stakeholders and looking for creative solutions that can be accepted by everyone. Where consensus is hard to reach, this may mean that BSI holds meetings and conversations with specific stakeholders outside the Steering Group rounds of meetings. This is to facilitate greater appreciation of the issues and to understand what an acceptable compromise could be. This does not give any stakeholder increased influence over the content as any proposals will be brought back to the Steering Group for decision-making.

What is the role of a PAS Steering Group member?

PAS Steering Groups are temporary committees formed for the duration of the project. They are broadly representative of the stakeholders likely to be affected by the PAS. Members are selected by BSI.

Steering Group members are crucial to the development of the content of the PAS. Being a PAS Steering Group member is a substantial undertaking and involves reviewing and commenting on the PAS as well as participating in meetings.

Getting started

There are three things you'll need to do right at the beginning to prepare yourself for the role:

1. Read and sign the PAS Steering Group acceptance form. This outlines your commitments and responsibilities.
2. Read [PAS 0](#), the guiding principles for PAS standards development, which you can find on the [BSI website](#).
3. Read the PAS project overview. This will tell you the background to and scope of the PAS project you're working on.

What's involved?

You might be representing your company, a broader stakeholder group through a Nominating Organization such as a trade association or consumer group, or be co-opted for your professional expertise. Your role is to contribute to the development of the PAS by:

- reviewing and commenting on drafts
- contributing content, which might be in the form of comments, text, data, or figures
- attending meetings to resolve comments on the draft through consensus-based decision making

If you are representing your company or a Nominating Organization, you are expected to consult them on the content of the PAS. Drafts should be kept confidential within your company or Nominating Organization.

It's not unusual for the debates during the standards development process to involve a robust and frank exchange of views. There are serious matters under discussion and people who volunteer to join PAS Steering Groups do so because they believe the work is important.

The debates will be positive and constructive if you bear in mind the following points.

- Everyone has the right to courteous and open-minded treatment and for their views to be considered and respected, as set out in BSI's [committee member policy](#).
- Any conflicts of interest should be declared as soon as they are known.
- Confidentiality should be maintained, as set out in BSI's media contact policy (which can be found within the committee member policy).

Meetings

Meetings are held online. In-person meetings may occasionally be held (at any suitable location) if there is a good reason to do so. There will be a hybrid option in such cases.

In the PAS development process there will typically be two rounds of Steering Group meetings. The first round takes place once the Technical Author has completed an initial draft PAS and before the public consultation is launched. This round is usually two or three half-day meetings on consecutive days. The purpose of this round of meetings is for the Steering Group to agree updates to the draft based on Steering Group members' comments.

The second round of meetings takes place after the public consultation and is likely to be two or three half-day meetings on consecutive days. The purpose of the second round of meetings is to review the comments from the public consultation and agree updates to the draft based on these comments.

If there are high numbers of comments more meetings may be needed.

Occasionally, a PAS process may involve additional rounds of meetings. This can be where a scoping workshop or meeting has been agreed with the sponsor (see **Optional extras**), or where updates to the draft following Steering Group or public comments have resulted in significant technical changes.

Reviewing and commenting

You will be asked to read and provide feedback on the draft at various points in the process. PAS drafts are typically up to 40 pages long, but can be longer.

At the start of the process, your Project Manager will circulate the first draft before the first round of Steering Group meetings. Steering Group members will provide comments back to the Project Manager on the commenting template. The comments will be collated and shared with the Technical Author and the Steering Group prior to the meeting. Comments will be discussed by the Steering Group and a response agreed. In order to facilitate comment resolution and manage the time commitment of the Steering Group, the Technical Author will provide suggested responses to comments and the Project Manager will prioritize the comments for Steering Group discussion.

This first round is the main opportunity for Steering Group members to shape the technical content of the draft. It doesn't go to public consultation until the Steering Group are happy with it (i.e. have reached consensus).

The next time the draft is updated is following the resolution of the public comments at the second round of Steering Group meetings. After the Steering Group has agreed responses to the public comments the Technical Author updates the draft accordingly. The draft is then circulated to the Steering Group to confirm that they are happy with the text.

Comments are submitted to BSI via the commenting form, which will be provided to you by your Project Manager. A blank form is shown in **Figure 2**.

No. (Col 1)

This numbers each comment and is pre-populated.

Comment submitted by (Col 2)

In the first column, enter either your name or the name of your Nominating Organization.

Clause/Subclause/Annex, Para/Fig/Table/Note (Cols 3-4)

The next two columns help identify the particular part of the PAS you're commenting on.

Type of comment (Col 5)

There are three types of comments:

1. General – general comments on the PAS as a whole or comments that are neither technical nor editorial.
2. Technical – comments on the technical content of the PAS.
3. Editorial – purely editorial comments such as corrections to spelling or rewording to express the technical point more clearly.

Comment (justification for change) (Col 6)

Make your comments in this column, explaining why you think this part of the PAS should be changed.

Proposed change (Col 7)

Make a suggestion for what you would like the PAS to say. It helps to clarify your comment if you can make a suggestion for improvement. Comments are more likely to be accepted if a constructive alternative is provided.

Response to comments (Col 8)

Do not fill in this column. It's used by the Technical Author to suggest a Steering Group's response to the submitted comments. This is provided so that Steering Group members' time can be used efficiently and effectively by giving a starting point for discussion.

Summary of outcome (Col 9)

Don't fill in this column. It's used by the Project Manager to record the Steering Group's consensus-based response to the comment.

Take care not to alter the column widths or merge cells in the commenting table. Documents are collated and changes to the column width interfere with this process.

What happens once I've submitted comments?

All the comments are collated by the project team. The Technical Author prepares some suggested responses for the Steering Group and comments are circulated to the Steering Group to review prior to discussion at the Steering Group meeting. The comments will be considered and responses agreed. Where possible, the Steering Group will seek to incorporate comments made. If that is not possible, the reasons will be recorded alongside the comment.

Figure 2: PAS commenting template

For private circulation only		Name of SG review draft: XXXX			Deadline for comments: XX XX 202X	
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No	Comment submitted by	Clause./ Subclause/ Annex	Para/Fig/ Table/Note	Type of comment*	Comment (justification for change)	Proposed change	Response to comment	Summary of outcome
NOTE TO COMMENTERS: Please quote the clause, subclause or annex reference, NOT the page number.								
e.g.	Organization:Name	4.3.2	Para 2	T	40 N is unnecessarily high, which will result in the products being over designed.	Change to 30 N as this value is sufficiently high to ensure the product is safe.	30 N is too low as some products that have met the 30 N requirement have failed in the past. Change to 35 N, which raises the bar and ensures safety.	Revised
1								
2								
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...								
18								
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20								

To insert more rows, place cursor at end of row and press Return.

* Comments: ge = general, te = technical, ed = editorial

page 1 of 1

The role of the sponsor

The sponsor contracts with BSI to develop a PAS. Working closely with BSI the sponsor proposes the scope and boundaries of the project. The sponsor agrees to follow the standards development process and to participate in consensus-based decision making on the content of the PAS. The broad stakeholder engagement, the robust development process and the consensus-based nature of the final publication is often the reason that sponsors want to work with BSI to develop standards.

We ask the sponsor to give approval that the relevant steps in the process have been taken before launching the public consultation and preparing the PAS for publication. We seek the agreement of the Steering Group in both cases. The sponsor has no power of veto if the Steering Group is not in agreement. Publication of a PAS is approved by the Director of Standards.



The role of the Technical Author

The Technical Author is typically engaged by BSI, but can be provided by the sponsor. The Technical Author will do the majority of the drafting of the PAS. They provide a base draft for the Steering Group to review and then update that draft in line with the decisions of the Steering Group.



How are Technical Authors selected?

Candidates for the Technical Author role are sometimes identified during the development of proposal for a PAS, or are identified once a PAS project has been agreed. They are sourced through BSI's networks, including suggestions from the sponsor, Technical Committees or other stakeholders, and BSI's research.

A Technical Author is expected to be a subject matter expert. It is desirable that they are familiar with standards and standards drafting, and training is provided to them by BSI. They are expected to be able to develop content collaboratively with the Steering Group and to be impartial.

Once candidates with the right experience and knowledge are identified, BSI will interview them, seek quotes and contract with the successful candidate to draft the PAS.

Occasionally, a sponsor may provide a Technical Author from within their organization. They are still expected to be impartial, will receive appropriate training, and will work closely with the Project Manager.

Optional extras

All PAS standards follow the standards development process as described above. In some cases, though, the sponsor and BSI can agree some additional activities.

Scoping workshop

A workshop with a large number of stakeholders can be held to explore the subject area of the PAS and develop a scope. Workshops can be held prior to an agreement to develop a PAS or as part of the PAS development process. They provide broad input and insight into the subject area and can give an indication of the level of consensus around the subject.

Scoping meetings

Where the sponsor wants to agree the scope of the PAS with the Steering Group, an additional round of Steering Group meetings can be planned as part of the PAS development process. These will take place after the Steering Group has been formed, but before the Technical Author starts work on the base document.

Extra Steering Group meetings

Where there is expected at the outset to be a need for more than two rounds of Steering Group meetings, due to the complexity or length of the document, or due to known need for a lot of consensus-building on the subject matter, additional rounds of Steering Group meetings can be agreed.

Standards landscape reports

At the beginning of every PAS project, BSI will create a report on the existing standardization related to the subject area, called a domain research report. In some projects, the sponsor wants more extensive analysis and can opt for a standards landscape report which gives additional information. These are often used for emerging technologies likely to disrupt established industries.

Frequently asked questions

What does PAS stand for?

When PAS standards were first introduced by BSI, they were called 'Publicly Available Specifications', which became PAS. However, as PAS standards have become more widely used, they are now all types of document (specifications, guides, codes of practice, etc.). As the term PAS is now established, we continue to use it, but it no longer stands for anything.

Does sponsorship of a PAS deter the sponsor's competitors from participating in the development process?

No. A PAS is technology-neutral and is not biased towards or against any specific product or service. When BSI is constituting a broadly representative Steering Group, we include competitors of the sponsor and all other relevant stakeholders. In our experience, the sponsor's competitors are often keen to be involved because they see the benefit to the industry as a whole.

Does the sponsor have control over the content?

The sponsor recommends the scope for the project, and works with BSI to finalize an appropriate scope that is neither too broad nor too restrictive. The sponsor has a representative on the Steering Group, but the content of the PAS is decided through the consensus of the Steering Group and publication is approved by the Director of Standards.

How is BSI's independence maintained when there is a sponsor?

When BSI works with a sponsor, the independence and impartiality of BSI are part of the terms of the contract, including that the PAS will be developed in accordance with PAS 0. Our independence is often a reason that sponsors want to work with BSI and is part of the agreement about how the work will be conducted.

How is BSI's impartiality maintained when BSI is acting in the role of the sponsor?

BSI is subject to its own governance and to the principles of standards development in PAS 0. The same controls that are in place to secure BSI's impartiality when working with any other stakeholder apply when BSI is acting as the sponsor for a PAS. This includes having a Steering Group that is broadly representative of the relevant industry and developing the content through consensus.

What is a Review Panel?

The BSI Project Manager creates a Review Panel during the domain research and initial stakeholder engagement phases (see **Figure 1**). We look for all organizations that could be affected or interested in the content of the PAS. Review Panels vary in size relative to the scope of the PAS and often consist of several hundred organizations. The Project Manager notifies the Review Panel that the PAS has started development and when the public consultation opens.



Can I volunteer to join a Steering Group?

Yes, you can submit an application through the [Apply to be a committee member](#) form.

How frequently are PAS standards reviewed?

PAS standards are typically reviewed every two years. BSI will consult the original sponsor and all the members of the original Steering Group to see whether or not the PAS needs to be updated, and whether or not there is a benefit to proposing it as a National, European or international standard.

How can the PAS development process be both transparent and confidential?

Transparency and confidentiality are both principles of standards development and are in tension with each other. Transparency is important for enabling the wide acceptance of standards because it is clear who has contributed to the development of the content. BSI lists the organizations of the Steering Group in the Foreword, along with the sponsoring organization and the Technical Author. All PAS standards have a public consultation period and commenters can request to see the Steering Group responses to their comments.

Confidentiality during the process is important for enabling Steering Group members to participate fully. Sometimes commercially sensitive information is shared to shape the content of the PAS. This makes the PAS more robust and can only be done if the confidentiality of the Steering Group discussions is respected. While the names of organizations on a PAS Steering Group are made public, the names of individual representatives are not. This is to protect Steering Group members from lobbying.

What platforms are used for PAS Steering Group meetings?

We use MS Teams for Steering Group meetings. However, other platforms (e.g. Zoom or Webex) are available if MS Teams can't be accessed by all members. If you have difficulty accessing online meetings, speak to the Project Manager and BSI will provide support.

Useful resources

PAS 0:2022 *Principles of PAS standardization*:

<https://www.bsigroup.com/globalassets/localfiles/en-gb/pas/pas-0-2022.pdf>

Rules for the structure and drafting of UK standards (2022):

<https://www.bsigroup.com/globalassets/documents/standards/guide-to-standards/rules-for-structure-and-drafting-of-uk-standards-2022.pdf>

Glossary of standardization terms:

<https://www.bsigroup.com/globalassets/localfiles/en-gb/standards/glossary-of-standardization-terms.pdf>

BSI committee member policy:

<https://www.bsigroup.com/globalassets/localfiles/en-gb/about-bsi/nsb/committee-members/useful-resources/bsi-committee-member-policy-eversion.pdf>



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