

Guide for independent identification management evaluation / conformance assessment

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About this guidance

The Trust Framework Authority is the regulator for accredited digital identity services in Aotearoa New Zealand. The Trust Framework Authority is responsible for accrediting providers and their services, and for monitoring compliance with the Digital Identity Services Trust Framework legislation, and relevant parts of the Privacy Act 2020.

This guidance is for providers of digital identity services seeking accreditation as a Trust Framework provider and/or for digital identity service(s) under the Digital Identity Services Trust Framework.

If you have any questions about the application process or need assistance, please contact TFA@dia.govt.nz.

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Overview

Robust identification processes help to prevent identity theft and its impacts on individuals and your organisation. Identification practices enable improved privacy and security when done well.

This guide provides a high-level overview of the process of getting an independent evaluation of conformance with the Identification Standards for digital identity service(s), , required for your application for Trust Framework accreditation.

Identification Standards evaluation is required before an application for Trust Framework accreditation can be submitted. Applicants must obtain and provide either:

- An identification management evaluation from an independent identification management evaluator. Independent evaluators considered by the Trust Framework Authority to have the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience to conduct identification management evaluations can be found at <https://www.dia.govt.nz/Trust-Framework-for-Digital-Identity-Independent-evaluators>. The provider engages and pays for the independent identification management evaluator.

OR

- An evaluation of conformance with the New Zealand Identification Standards. The evaluator for conformance with the Identification Standards is the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA). The relevant DIA team can be contacted at identity@dia.govt.nz, or the Trust Framework Authority will set up a meeting to introduce you to the Identification Standards team. There is no charge for the conformance evaluation.

Identification Standards

There are currently four Identification Standards. The Standards are:

- Information assurance
- Binding assurance
- Authentication assurance
- Federation assurance.

Your service(s) will determine which Standards or sub-parts you will need to conform with. Your evaluator will be able to assist with identifying these.

Digital identity service type	New Zealand identification standards to be evaluated against
Information service	Information Assurance Standard
Authentication service	Authentication Assurance Standard
Credential service	Federation Assurance Standard - Requirements for Credential Providers establishing Credentials
	Information Assurance Standard
	Authentication Assurance Standard
	Binding Assurance Standard
Facilitation service	Federation Assurance Standard - Requirements for Facilitation Providers establishing facilitation mechanisms
	Federation Assurance Standard - Requirements for the presentation of Credentials by Facilitation Providers
	Authentication Assurance Standard
Binding service	Binding Assurance Standard
	Information Assurance Standard

Review the content, guidance, and the full text of the Standards published on the [Department of Internal Affairs website](#).

Evaluation against the Identification Standards

There are three key stages for conformance with the Identification Standards:

Stage 1 – Introduction and scoping

You will meet with your identification management evaluator to discuss which Identification Standards your service(s) will conform with. You will be provided with the Conformance workbooks and tools relevant for your service(s). The evaluator will also discuss which Level(s) of Assurance (also referred to as 'LoA's) you need conformance for, and what you need to do to prepare for the evaluation.

Stage 2 – Applying the relevant controls and modifying processes

This stage involves documenting and applying the controls in each of the Standards relevant to your service(s). You may need to make changes to your processes or controls to meet the level(s) of assurance you need to achieve.

Documentation for this stage includes:

- **Risk assessments for your service(s):** an important step to indicate the Levels of Assurance for your service(s).
- **Privacy Impact Assessment:** The Privacy Impact Assessment will also be an input to the privacy evaluation as part of your preparation for Trust Framework accreditation.
- **Policy and process documents:** these can be either existing documents mapped to the evaluation reference numbers, or written specifically for the conformance evaluation in Stage 3 (Evaluation).
- **Assurance level reference documents:** these record the Level(s) of Assurance being met by your service(s).

The Conformance Workbooks and tools will help you to organise your documents for the conformance evaluation.

How long this stage takes will depend on the completeness of your documentation and whether any significant changes are needed for your service(s) to meet the desired Level(s) of Assurance.

The evaluator will be available to provide advice as you prepare your documentation.

Stage 3 – Evaluation

During this stage the evaluator will review your conformance documentation and ask for a demonstration of your service to review that it does as your documentation describes, and to the level(s) of assurance you sought.

If you do not reach the desired Level(s) of Assurance, you will have the option to either:

- carry out additional work to reach the desired Level(s) of Assurance; or
- elect to operate at a lower Level(s) of Assurance.

If you operate at the lower level of assurance you can continue to work on the areas that need improvement, apply for Trust Framework Accreditation and seek re-evaluation when you can reach the higher level of assurance.

At the end of the evaluation, you will be issued with an independent identification management evaluation report or, if the evaluation is conducted by the Identity team at DIA, an Identification Standards Conformance Certificate. This, along with the documentation described in Stage 2, above, must be submitted to the Trust Framework Authority as part of your application for Trust Framework accreditation.

Advice and guidance

The Identification Team at the Department of Internal Affairs (identity@dia.govt.nz) can provide assistance with:

- reviewing identification risk assessments and suggesting improvements
- interpreting and applying the Identification Standard controls
- suggesting alternative ways to design processes, and
- advising on options if controls cannot be met.