Approval Profile for Certification Dissemination

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Executive summary

This document defines the *tScheme* criteria against which organisations must be successfully assessed in order to be eligible for approval for the provision of Certificate Dissemination services.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Approval Profile is one of a number developed by *tScheme* against which TSPs offering trust services may be assessed by *tScheme*-recognised Assessors. It addresses the provision of a Certificate Dissemination service and may be one of a selection which a TSP has identified within the definition of its Service(s) Subject to Assessment. It must, as a minimum, be applied in combination with the Base Approval Profile.

Full details of Approval Profiles and the Approval Process may be found on the *tScheme* website.

Definitions of terms and acronyms not defined in this document may be found in the tScheme Glossary of Terms

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2. SCOPE AND RELATION TO OTHER PROFILES.

The criteria given in this Approval Profile are related to the provision of services which perform either or both of the following functions:

1. the Provision of certificates to subscribers and, if the subscriber requests or permits, to potential relying parties;

2. the Publication of a certificate through it being held in a repository for subsequent retrieval.

With the exception of the Base Approval Profile, the criteria given in this Approval Profile are not directly related to any other Approval Profiles, i.e. it may be used in isolation and is not dependant upon a successful assessment against any other Approval Profile.

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3. CRITERIA

The applicability of this Approval Profile must be described in a Specification of Service(s) Subject to Assessment (S3A), as described in Preparing for an Assessment.

Compliance with this Approval Profile will be achieved by demonstrating compliance with the following criteria:

3.1 Service Definition

The Service Definition must state clearly the following service attributes:

1. the manner in which dissemination is conducted in accordance with the Certificate Policy of the CA;
2. the manner in which requests for the dissemination of certificates may be received and are authenticated;
3. the response times which it offers to properly authenticated requests for certificate provision, and where also requested, publication;
4. the manner in which Certificates are disseminated (e.g. active 'push' to the subscriber, or passive 'pull' from the subscriber);
5. where requested, the manner in which Certificates are published (e.g. active 'push' to the relying community, or passive 'pull' from the relying community);
6. whether certificates are published to a closed or public community and what form of access control is applied where closed.

3.2 Certificate Dissemination mechanism(s)

The TSP must state clearly the mechanisms by which certificates are provided to subscribers and published for relying party access.

The TSP must ensure that certificates are available for retrieval only in those cases in which the subscriber's consent has been obtained.

3.3 Records

The TSP shall record a signed agreement with the subscriber including:

1. whether, and under what conditions, the subscriber requires and consents to the publication of its certificate;

2. that the information held in the certificate as being correct.

The TSP must capture and retain records of all actions undertaken, and the time at which they occurred. It must also state the period for which such records are to be retained, with a clear justification for the basis of determining the stated period. The records are to include:

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1. actions concerning the dissemination of certificates;
2. the authentication data relating to the source of the request from the certificate generation function and its parameters;
3. changes in status which may affect the TSP's legitimate claim of conformance with this *tScheme* Approval Profile (or any on which a claim of conformance is based).

Furthermore, the TSP must show that they have in place appropriate audit procedures to apply self-monitoring and provide evidence of such records where the service is already operational.

These records must be protected against unauthorised access and be made available within a reasonable period following a properly justified and authorised request.

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4. ABOUT EVIDENCE

Most of the evidence required of a TSP is of the same general form whatever the service being assessed. There is some flexibility here, but the specific forms of evidence for each assessment must be agreed with the *tScheme*-recognised Assessor before assessment can start. More information is given in Preparing for an Assessment.

For some Approval Profiles however, there are specific standards[1] that could apply, and to which prior conformance could be demonstrated. Thus, rather than offering point by point evidence, a TSP can offer evidence of already established conformance to appropriate standards. For this Approval Profile, there are no actual standards that are specific to it.

[1] Within *tScheme*'s Approval Profiles the term 'standard' is intended to include both formal (*de jure*) and *de facto* Standards, recognised industry schemes, and other means of demonstrating levels of performance and practice having similar merit.

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5. REFERENCES

None.

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