



# eduGAIN Policy Framework Constitution



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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

This document is the constitution of the eduGAIN service, defining how the service is governed and what procedural and technical requirements are mandatory for Participant Federations. This document, the profiles supplementing it and the eduGAIN Policy Declaration, which must be signed by Participant Federations, form the Policy Framework of the eduGAIN service. The Participant Federations commit to the Policy Framework when they sign the Policy Declaration to join eduGAIN.

The eduGAIN service enables Participant Federations to inter-federate. The Participant Federations primarily serve the authentication and authorisation interests of research and education sectors.

eduGAIN provides an infrastructure for establishing trusted communications between Entities, such as Identity and Service Providers, in different Participant Federations. End users authenticate at Identity Providers and get access to Service Providers. Technically, eduGAIN is managed by aggregating and distributing signed SAML 2.0 metadata files.

An Entity is always registered by a Participant Federation which will use an appropriate mechanism to exchange the metadata of Entities via eduGAIN.

## 1.2 Terms

AAI	Authentication and authorisation infrastructure.
Attribute Provider	An organisation which is responsible for managing additional identity data (attributes) for end users authenticated by a Home Organisation. Also a server that is acting in an Attribute Provider role as defined in SAML 2.0. In this document, an Attribute Provider refers to an attribute provider who is a Member of a Participant Federation and whom the Participant Federation has exchanged its metadata through eduGAIN.
DANTE	Delivery of Advanced Network Technology to Europe. The GÉANT network is managed by DANTE.
eEC	eduGAIN Executive Committee is a body nominated by the sponsor of the eduGAIN service and is responsible for ratifying certain decisions of the eSG, as defined in section 2.1. Currently, GÉANT Exec is the eduGAIN Executive Committee.
eSG	eduGAIN Steering Group is a body that consists of Participant Federations' representatives and has an oversight role in the eduGAIN service, as defined in section 2.2.
Entity	Entity means an AAI endpoint described with a SAML 2 Entity Description. For example, an Entity can be an Identity Provider, a Service Provider or an Attribute Provider. In this document, an Entity refers to an entity's metadata that a Participant Federation has exchanged through eduGAIN.
Federation	Identity federation. An association of organisations that come together to exchange information as appropriate about their users and resources to enable collaborations and transactions.
Federation Operational Practice Statement	A document which covers any issues relevant to ensure the integrity and availability of the metadata aggregation and delivery service.
GÉANT	The pan-European data network dedicated to the research and education community. The GÉANT network is managed by DANTE.
GÉANT Exec	Authority for supervision of the GN3+ Project is delegated to the Executive Committee (Exec) which runs the project at an executive level.
Home Organisation	The organisation with which the end users are affiliated. It is responsible for managing end users' identity data (attributes) and authenticating them. The Home Organisation is responsible for setting up and operating one or more Identity Providers, either by itself or via an outsourced service. In this document, a Home Organisation refers to a home organisation who is a Member of a Participant Federation and whose Identity Provider metadata the Participant Federation has

	exchanged through eduGAIN.
Identity Provider	A server acting in an Identity Provider role as defined in SAML 2.0 specifications. In this document, an Identity Provider refers to the Identity Provider that a Participant Federation has exchanged its metadata through eduGAIN.
Member	Any organisation that has signed an agreement with a federation operator to cover the registration, verification and publication of metadata. In this document, Member refers to a member whose Entity is exchanged through eduGAIN.
OT	eduGAIN Operational Team, as defined in section 2.3.
Participant Federation	A Federation which has passed the joining process defined in section 3.2
Policy Framework	eduGAIN Policy Framework. This document, the profiles supplementing it and the eduGAIN Policy Declarations signed by Participant Federations.
SAML	Security Assertions Markup Language (Organisation for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards).
Service Provider	An organisation that is responsible for offering the end user the service s/he is going to log in to. Also a server that is acting in a Service Provider role as defined in SAML 2.0. In this document, a Service Provider refers to a service provider who is a Member of a Participant Federation and whom the Participant Federation has exchanged its metadata through eduGAIN.

The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in RFC 2119.

### 1.3 Goal

The goal of eduGAIN is to support the constituency of Identity Federations primarily engaged in research and education by providing a service which enables them to inter-federate.

## 2 Governance and Governing Bodies

### 2.1 eduGAIN Executive Committee (eEC)

The sponsor of the eduGAIN service is the GÉANT Project. The sponsor nominates the eduGAIN Executive Committee. The GÉANT Exec has been nominated to act as the eduGAIN Executive Committee.

The eEC is responsible for ratifying the following decisions made by the eduGAIN Steering Group (eSG):

1. Approving changes to this constitution.
2. Approving new technical profiles and other documents in the Policy Framework if they are REQUIRED for Participant Federations (in other words, they can exclude a Participant Federation from the eduGAIN service).
3. Approving major updates to the profiles and documents described in item 2 (in other words, if the updates are likely to affect any Participant Federation's membership in the eduGAIN service).

If the eEC decides not to ratify a decision made by the eSG, the issue is returned to the eSG.

### 2.2 eduGAIN Steering Group (eSG)

Each Participant Federation SHOULD appoint a delegate and deputy to the eduGAIN Steering Group (eSG). The term of the eSG Chair and non-voting invited observers is two calendar years. The eSG is responsible for:

1. Approving the profiles and documents in the Policy Framework and their updates.
2. Decisions on peering relationships.
3. Approving the membership of new Federations.
4. Approving Participant Federation's disqualification or temporary suspension of eduGAIN membership in case of Policy Framework violation, as defined in section 3.5
5. Accept or amend the plan for audits of eduGAIN operations, as defined in section 2.3.
6. Appointing the Chair and non-voting invited observers to the eSG.
7. Appointing the Operational Team.
8. Other tasks delegated to the eSG in supplementing profiles.

Decisions of the eSG are determined by a simple majority vote of active participants at the time of the call to vote. Each participant federation's vote is equal, and each participant federation is initially regarded as active. A participant federation which is absent from two consecutive votes will be removed from the active list for the purpose of subsequent votes under this section. Participating in a vote returns the federation to the active list.

Voting under this section will take place over two weeks, but a decision may be reached early if the required majority is achieved before that time.

## 2.3 Operational Team (OT)

The Operational Team (OT) is responsible for:

- Daily technical issues in eduGAIN.
- Receiving enquiries about eduGAIN and forwarding them to the appropriate body.
- Receiving and processing applications to join eduGAIN.
- Preparing and publishing a Federation Operational Practice Statement for the eduGAIN interfederation service.
- Preparing an audit plan for the eduGAIN operational practices on the request of the eSG.

## 3 eduGAIN Membership

### 3.1 Requirements for Participant Federations

Participant Federations MUST:

- Primarily serve the interests of the education and research sector.
- Provide a point of contact for their Members for dealing with technical issues.
- Provide processes for handling complaints and incidents involving their Members.
- Have a published Metadata registration practice statement.
- Follow the eduGAIN SAML 2.0 Metadata Profile if it decides to exchange the metadata of Entities via eduGAIN (“upstream metadata”).

### 3.2 Joining Process

The process to join eduGAIN is as follows:

1. To apply for membership, the applicant Federation signs the eduGAIN Policy Declaration and presents it to the OT.
2. The OT confirms that the applicant Federation fulfils the requirements in section 3.1
3. Unless the eSG has decided that the applicant Federation does not need further approvals, the OT prepares and presents a proposal to the eSG to approve or reject the application.
4. When an applicant is approved, the OT takes the necessary technical steps to register the Federation to eduGAIN.

### 3.3 No Express Right of Communication

For an Entity registered in an eduGAIN Participant Federation it does not imply any right of communication with any other Entity exchanged through eduGAIN.



An individual Participant Federation or Home Organisation MAY decide not to communicate with a Service Provider exchanged through eduGAIN. An individual Participant Federation or Service Provider MAY decide not to communicate with an Identity Provider exchanged through eduGAIN.

### 3.4 Leaving eduGAIN

When a Participant Federation leaves eduGAIN it MUST give one month's written notice to the OT, which forwards the notice to the other Participant Federations.

### 3.5 Policy Framework Violation

In the event of:

- A Participant Federation's severe Policy Framework violation
- A Participant Federation's Policy Framework violation which is continuous and not fixed despite several requests sent by the OT

the OT will react in one of the following ways, depending on the level and duration of violation:

- Issue a notice to the eSG.
- propose to the eSG a temporary period of suspension.
- propose to the eSG a disqualification of the participant federation from eduGAIN.

Following a decision by the eSG to suspend or disqualify, the OT will:

- Announce suspension or disqualification of eduGAIN membership to all Participant Federations and
- Make technical changes necessary to implement the decision.

## 4 Other Issues

### 4.1 Trademarks

eduGAIN is a trademark of DANTE (Delivery of Advanced Network Technology to Europe) and is used under license by the Participant Federations in conjunction with the eduGAIN service. DANTE is responsible for managing and protecting the trademark.

### 4.2 Dispute Resolution

Resolution of disputes between the Participant Federations is defined in the eduGAIN Declaration.

For dispute resolution between a Participant Federation and the eduGAIN service, the OT is the first point of contact. If the Participant Federation is not satisfied with the OT and its resolution, a Participant Federation should bring the issue to the attention of the body that nominates the OT, as defined in section 2.3.

### 4.3 Documents Supplementing the Constitution

The eSG approves and the OT publishes profiles and other documents supplementing the Constitution. These supplementary documents will be included in the eduGAIN Technical Overview defining optional enhancements to eduGAIN for adoption by participant federations.

### 4.4 Updating this Constitution

For the eSG to agree to a revision of this Constitution requires an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of current Participant Federations. When the eduGAIN Executive Committee ratifies a change to this Constitution, a written notice must be sent to all Participant Federations. The change becomes effective three months after sending the notice. The OT ensures that up-to-date Policy Framework documents are published and available to the Participant Federations.