eduGAIN Policy Framework

Constitution

Version 4.0

Version	Date	Description of Change	Person
1.0	29-04-2011	Approved by NREN PC 21-03-2011	M Linden
1.1	14-11-2012	Comments received during the Policy review	M Linden
2.0	19-04-2013	eduGAIN-TSG revised version	B Schofield
3.0	01-05-2017	Version 3 as approved by eduGAIN Executive	B Schofield & N Harris
4.0	01-01-2024	Version 4 as approved by eduGAIN Executive	N Harris and C Dreef

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 Member Federations. This document, the Technology Profiles supplementing it and the eduGAIN Policy Declaration, which must be signed by Member Federations, form the Policy Framework of the eduGAIN service. Member Federations commit to the Policy Framework when they sign the Policy Declaration to join eduGAIN. These documents are supported by the eduGAIN Operational Practice Statement, which describes the integrity and availability of tools centrally operated by eduGAIN to support Technology Profiles. The full set of eduGAIN documents is available on the eduGAIN website [eduGAIN-DOC].

The eduGAIN service enables Federations to interfederate. The Member 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 Federations. End users authenticate at Identity Providers and get access to Service Providers.

An Entity is always registered by a Participant Federation which uses an appropriate mechanism to exchange the metadata of Entities via eduGAIN as described in the Technology Profiles.

1.2.   Goal

The goal of eduGAIN is to support Identity Federations primarily engaged in research and education by providing a service which enables them to interfederate.

1.3.   Definitions

AAI	Authentication and authorisation infrastructure.
eduGAIN	eduGAIN enables the trustworthy exchange of information related to authentication and authorisation infrastructure (AAI) via its Member Federations by offering a policy framework, consolidated metadata and shared governance for the eduGAIN service.
eduGAIN Policy Declaration	The agreement signed by Federations on joining eduGAIN.
eduGAIN Operational Practice Statement	A document which covers any issues relevant to ensure the integrity and availability of tools centrally operated by eduGAIN to support Technology Profiles.
eEC – eduGAIN Executive Committee	eduGAIN Executive Committee is a body nominated by the sponsors of the eduGAIN service and is responsible for ratifying certain decisions of the eSC, as defined in section 2.1.
eduGAIN Assembly	Body of Member Federation Delegates and Deputies as defined in section 2.3.
eSC - eduGAIN Steering Committee	eduGAIN Steering Committee is a body that consists of representatives voted for by Member Federations and has an oversight role in the eduGAIN service, as defined in section 2.2.

eduGAIN Secretariat	Function responsible for membership management and support for the various eduGAIN governing bodies.
eduGAIN Service Team	eduGAIN Service Team provides all the functions to deliver the eduGAIN service and is composed by identity specialists and developers.
Entity	Entity means an AAI endpoint. 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. Federations are typically represented in eduGAIN by a Federation Operator.
Federation Operator	Organisation providing or commissioning the infrastructure for Authentication and Authorisation to the members of its Federation.
Federation Policy	The set of rules, guidelines or processes governing member behaviour within any given Federation.
GÉANT	GÉANT is a membership organisation acting with and for its members to further research and education networking in Europe and globally.
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 Federation.
Identity Provider	A server acting in an Identity Provider role. The system that issues assertions on behalf of end users of a Home Organisation who use them to access services of Service Providers.

Interfederation	Sharing of federation metadata to allow a user from one federation to access a service which is registered in another federation.
Member Federation	A Federation which has met the joining requirements for eduGAIN as defined in section 3.2.
Participant Federation	A Member Federation that is actively participating in eduGAIN having met the requirements defined in section 3.3.
Policy Framework	eduGAIN Policy Framework. This document, Technology Profiles supplementing it and the eduGAIN Policy Declaration signed by Member Federations.
Service Provider	An organisation that is responsible for offering the end user the service s/he is going to use via a federated login.
Technology Profile	Technology Profiles describe how given technologies are implemented within the eduGAIN framework. Each Technology Profile is made up of one or more documents which describe and define rules for specific trust brokers, including metadata production and aggregation and use of protocols. Each Technology Profile is associated with an operational team responsible for the management of core trust broker infrastructure.

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.

2. Governance and Governing Bodies

2.1   eduGAIN Executive Committee (eEC)

The eduGAIN Executive Committee comprises representatives from organisations that fund eduGAIN operations. The current process for appointing the Executive Committee and Executive members is documented on the eduGAIN website [eduGAIN-GOV].

The eEC is responsible for ratifying amendments to this Constitution.

The eEC may also request the implementation of changes to eduGAIN policies or eduGAIN membership in order to comply with external legislation or legal requirements.

If the eEC decides not to ratify a decision made by the eSC, the issue is returned to the eSC with appropriate comments and reasoning.

The eEC will also make decisions on the termination, dissolution or transfer of ownership of the eduGAIN service.

2.2   eduGAIN Steering Committee (eSC)

The eduGAIN Steering Committee (eSC) is a body elected by the eduGAIN Assembly with responsibility for steering all aspects of the eduGAIN service and community.

Representatives are nominated to the Committee in line with the eduGAIN Steering Committee Terms of Reference [eduGAIN-ToR].

The eduGAIN Steering Committee is responsible for:

- Proposing changes to the eduGAIN Declaration and Constitution and preparing for vote by the eduGAIN Assembly.
- Discussing and approving changes to the eduGAIN Technology Profiles and supporting technical documentation.
- Approving updates and changes to the eduGAIN Strategy and Workplan.
- Making decisions on metadata peering relationships, e.g. exchanging metadata with other trust infrastructures.
- Reviewing membership of new Federations and making recommendations to the eduGAIN Assembly.
- Approving the disqualification or temporary suspension for Member Federations as described in section 3.5.
- Appointing the Chair and non-voting invited observers to the eSC in line with the Terms of Reference.
- Approving, supporting and chairing eduGAIN Working Groups.

2.3   eduGAIN Assembly

The eduGAIN Assembly is a body that consists of Member Federations' representatives (delegates and deputies) and has an oversight role in the eduGAIN service. Each Member Federation SHOULD appoint a delegate and deputy to the eduGAIN Assembly. Each Member Federation SHOULD ensure that delegates and deputies can represent all Technology

Profiles used by the federation. The eduGAIN Assembly may also invite non-voting observers to its meetings and mailing lists.

The eduGAIN Assembly is responsible for voting in Member Federations, voting on changes to the eduGAIN Declaration and Constitution, and voting for membership of the eduGAIN Steering Committee as per the eduGAIN Steering Committee Terms of Reference.

Decisions of the eduGAIN Assembly are determined by a simple majority of Member Federations at the time of the call to vote. Each Member Federation's vote is equal and there is one vote per Member Federation. Voting takes place over two weeks, but a decision MAY be reached early if the required majority is achieved before that time. The voting period MUST be extended if a simple majority cannot be reached.

The eduGAIN Assembly will be chaired by the eduGAIN Steering Committee Chair. Responsibility for calling meetings will lie with the Secretariat and agenda items will be discussed with both the Steering Committee and the eduGAIN Assembly. The eduGAIN Assembly will meet at least once per year.

The eduGAIN Assembly may raise issues and complaints with the eduGAIN Steering Committee via the Secretariat. If there is no satisfactory resolution, these MAY be raised to the eduGAIN Executive Committee. Members of the eduGAIN Assembly MAY call for a veto on decisions made by the eduGAIN Steering Committee with support from a simple majority of eduGAIN Member Federations.

2.4   eduGAIN Service Team and Secretariat

The eduGAIN Service Team provides a series of functions to ensure the eduGAIN service can operate effectively. Funding for these functions is defined by the eduGAIN Executive Committee. The Service Team is responsible for:

- Operations: managing daily technical issues and development work for central eduGAIN operations and ensuring that the service complies with Technology Profiles and the eduGAIN Operational Practice Statement.
- Support: receiving enquiries about eduGAIN and managing issues with membership technical compliance.
- Security: provide a primary contact point for all security related issues affecting eduGAIN and its membership.

In addition, the eduGAIN Service Team provides the eduGAIN Secretariat function. The eduGAIN Secretariat is responsible for membership management and support for the various eduGAIN governing bodies.

3. eduGAIN Membership

eduGAIN recognises two categories of Federation within its operations:

- Member Federations that have met the joining requirements of eduGAIN but are not actively using a Technology Profile.
- Participant Federations that are actively participating in eduGAIN via the use of a Technology Profile.

3.1 Requirements for eduGAIN Membership

Member Federations MUST:

- Primarily serve the interests of the education and research sector.
- Provide a point of contact for their federation members for dealing with technical issues.
- Provide processes for handling complaints and incidents involving their federation members.
- Meet the requirements of the eduGAIN Policy Declaration.
- Have an agreement defining federation membership between the Federation and its members (typically known as a Federation Policy).

3.2 Joining Process

The process to join eduGAIN as a Member Federation is as follows:

1. A representative of the applicant Federation signs the eduGAIN Policy Declaration and presents it to the eduGAIN Secretariat.
2. The eduGAIN Secretariat confirms that the applicant Federation fulfils the requirements in section 3.1.
3. The eduGAIN Secretariat prepares and presents a membership proposal to the eSC for comment and review.
4. The eduGAIN Assembly approves or rejects the application via a vote.
5. When an applicant is approved, the Service Team takes the necessary steps to register the Federation to eduGAIN.

3.3 Participation Process

The process to become a Participant Federation in a Technology Profile is as follows:

- The Federation publishes appropriate documents as defined in relevant Technology Profiles.

- The eSC is invited to review the documents presented.

The Service Team confirms adherence to the selected Technology Profile and publishes adherence for that Federation on the eduGAIN website.

3.4 Leaving eduGAIN

When a Federation leaves eduGAIN or ceases to use a Technology Profile within eduGAIN it MUST give one month's written notice to the eduGAIN Secretariat which forwards the notice to the other Federations.

3.5 Dispute Resolution

When a breach or issue occurs, the Service Team MAY react in one or more of the following ways, depending on the level and duration of the issue:

- Issue a notice to the Participant Federation.
- Issue a notice to the eduGAIN Assembly.
- Propose a temporary period of suspension to the eSC.
- Propose a disqualification of the Participant Federation from eduGAIN to the eSC.
- Automatically suspend Participant Federations in appropriate circumstances.

A Participant Federation MAY be suspended from eduGAIN for the following reasons:

- Breaching REQUIRED elements of Technology Profiles.
- Breaching its Federation Policy.
- Breaching the eduGAIN Policy Declaration.
- A vote of no confidence by the eduGAIN Assembly.

External requirements communicated by the eduGAIN Executive Committee (eEC) as described in section 2.1.

Following a decision by the eSC to suspend or disqualify, the Service Team:

- Announces suspension or disqualification of eduGAIN membership to all Member Federations and,
- Makes technical changes necessary to implement the decision.

Following satisfactory rectification of the breach or issue, the Service Team:

- Issues a notice to the eduGAIN Assembly.
- Resumes publication of the Participant Federation's metadata to eduGAIN.

For dispute resolution between a Member Federation and the eduGAIN service, the Service Team is the first point of contact. If the Member Federation is not satisfied with the Service

Team and its resolution, a Member Federation should bring the issue to the attention of the eduGAIN Steering Committee and ultimately, the eduGAIN Executive Committee.

4. General

4.1 Trademarks

eduGAIN® is a trademark of GÉANT and may be used under license by the Participant Federations in conjunction with the eduGAIN service. The eduGAIN Executive Committees responsible for managing and protecting the trademark.

4.2 Updating this Constitution

For the eduGAIN Assembly to agree to a revision of this Constitution requires an affirmative vote of at least twothirds of Federations from the voting list. When the eduGAIN Executive Committee ratifies a change to this Constitution, a written notice must be sent to all Member Federations. The change becomes effective three months after sending the notice. The Service Team ensures that up-to-date Policy Framework documents are published and available to the Member Federations.

5. References

- [eduGAIN-DOC] eduGAIN Policy and Technical Documents: https://edugain.org/policy.
- [eduGAIN-GOV] eduGAIN governance structure: https://edugain.org/governance.
- [eduGAIN-OP] eduGAIN Operational Practice Statement: https://technical.edugain.org/documents.
- [RFC2119] Bradner, S., "Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels", BCP 14, RFC 2119, March 1997.
- [eduGAIN-ToR] eduGAIN Steering Committee Terms of Reference: https://edugain.org/governance.