



# Digital Access Standard

Supporting government agencies to minimise  
and consolidate access points

Version 1.0

Digital Transformation Agency



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# Introducing the Digital Access Standard

The Digital Access Standard sets the requirements for agencies to make informed decisions and reduce the duplication of front doors and entry points to government digital services, providing people and business with a unified experience when interacting with the Australian Government.

The Digital Access Standard is not mandating one login for users or a single front door for government digital services, but careful consideration into the creation of new access points and investigation into the benefits of the consolidation of multiple access points.

Australian Government digital services are currently dispersed across multiple agency websites, portals and apps. This means that people need to understand how government works to find the support and services they need, leaving them to navigate a fragmented and decentralised digital government landscape. The myGov User Audit called for a consolidation of digital services across government to stop this situation from worsening. A coordinated approach moving government agencies towards a more centralised digital landscape is needed to support people in navigating government services.

The **Digital Access Standard** is part of a suite of standards and guidance that sits within the **Digital Experience Policy**. The Digital Experience Policy supports a whole-of-government focus on improving the experience for people and business interacting digitally with government information and services. The Digital Experience Policy includes a suite of standards and guidance that supports agencies to deliver cohesive and consistent digital experiences, including the **Digital Service Standard**, the **Digital Inclusion Standard** and the **Digital Performance Standard**.



To support a common experience for users, the Digital Access Standard extends on [Criterion 4 'Connect services'](#) and [Criterion 6 'Don't re-invent the wheel'](#) of the Digital Service Standard. The Digital Access Standard sets criteria that agencies must meet to determine where their new digital service fits into the whole-of-government digital service landscape. The criteria will help agencies assess if a new access point is required or if they can reuse existing platforms and capabilities.

This policy will ensure agencies design and deliver digital services in consideration of the broader government landscape, including the [Data and Digital Government Strategy](#) the [Digital Service Standard](#) and [The Digital and ICT Reuse Policy](#).

The Digital Access Standard supports the Data and Digital Government Strategy and Digital Service Standard by promoting consistency across digital services and making sure services:

- are accessible
- are secure
- are transparent
- meet the needs of people and business.

# Services covered by the Digital Access Standard

The Digital Access Standard is mandatory and applies to digital services that are:

- owned by non-corporate Commonwealth entities
- informational or transactional
- authenticated or unauthenticated
- new or replacement of existing services that are public facing.

The Digital Access Standard will be introduced and enforced in 2 phases. Refer to the Transition approach section for details about the 2 phases.

## Informational services

Informational services provide users with information, such as reports, fact sheets or videos. They may include:

- government agency websites
- smart answers and virtual assistants
- e-learning
- publications
- multimedia.

## Transactional services

Transactional services lead to a change in government-held records, typically involving an exchange of information, money, licences or goods.

Examples of transactional services include:

- submitting a claim
- registering a business
- updating contact details
- lodging a tax return.

## Access points

Access points are the online entry points or ‘front doors’ where users go to find and interact with government digital services. Access points for digital services typically take the form of:

- informational websites
- web applications accessed from a web browser
- online portals
- mobile apps
- digital wallets.

People and business do not only access government services online. While this standard applies to online access points, agencies should also consider the non-digital access of their services for users to ensure that government services are more accessible and inclusive for all. Non-digital services are out of scope of this standard.

## Services not covered by the Digital Access Standard

The Digital Access Standard does not apply to:

- state, territory or local government services
- personal ministerial websites that contain a minister’s political activities or views on issues not related to their ministerial role
- existing public-facing digital services
- Australian Public Service (APS) staff-facing services.

State, territory or local government, third parties and APS staff-facing systems may choose to apply the Digital Access Standard to improve access and discoverability of their digital services.

Some services may request an exemption from the Digital Access Standard. See the Exemptions section below.



# Transition approach

The Digital Access Standard will be implemented in phases to target the requirements for agencies to connect new services for individuals to myGov. This will be followed by further decision-making principles that will consider digital service access more broadly.

- **Phase 1: 1 January 2025** – New and replacement digital services for individuals suitable for myGov
- **Phase 2: 1 January 2026** – All other new and replacement public-facing digital services for individuals as well as those for businesses and providers.

The DTA will regularly review the Digital Access Standard and make improvements as government service delivery and digital services mature. Improvements will be made in line with agency application and feedback.

## Phase 1 – Services for individuals suitable for myGov

From **1 January 2025**, services that meet the following criteria, will be required to meet the Digital Access Standard.

- owned by non-corporate Commonwealth entities
- informational or transactional
- authenticated or unauthenticated
- new or replacement services
- public-facing digital services for individuals suitable for myGov.

### Phase 1 example

New and/or replacement digital services for individuals suitable for myGov from 1 January 2025

Any new digital or ICT-enabled proposals coming forward in the 2025-26 Budget that have a public-facing portal must meet the requirements of the Digital Access Standard, as per the Investment Oversight Framework (the IOF). Agencies will be required to demonstrate they have considered the criteria of the Digital Access Standard.

## Phase 2 – All other public-facing services for individuals as well as those for businesses and providers

From 1 January 2026, services that meet the following criteria, will be required to meet the Digital Access Standard:

- owned by Australian Government entities
- informational or transactional
- authenticated or unauthenticated
- new or replacement services
- all public-facing digital services.

### Phase 2 example

New and/or replacement digital services (beyond individual services using myGov) from 1 January 2026

Any new digital or ICT-enabled proposals coming forward in the 2026-27 Budget that have a public-facing portal must meet the requirements of the Digital Access Standard, as per the IOF.

## Meeting the Digital Access Standard

The Digital Access Standard is made up of 5 criteria agencies must follow to determine if they need to reuse an existing access point or if they can create a new one.

To successfully apply it, agencies must meet all the criteria and be able to demonstrate:

- it is understood where the users of a new service already go to access existing digital government services
- capabilities needed to support the new service are well defined
- that the [Australian Government Architecture](#) (AGA) has been used to identify the tools, capabilities, policies and standards relevant to the new service
- the decision-making framework has been applied
- service delivery partners (where relevant) have been engaged to reuse existing access points and capabilities.

# Alignment with the Investment Oversight Framework

Agencies are expected to consider how their proposal aligns to the Digital Access Standard throughout all states of the [Digital and ICT Investment Oversight Framework](#).

During the design phase, agencies should consider how to apply the Digital Access Standard during the [Strategic Planning](#) and [Prioritisation](#) states to ensure alignment with the strategic outcomes of government.

From 1 January 2025, proposals for new digital services will be assessed through the IOF, at the following states:

- **Prioritisation state:** The Digital Access Standard will be assessed as part of the existing Digital Investment Overview (DIO). Where the proposal has a public-facing digital service, agencies will be required to demonstrate they have considered the criteria of the Digital Access Standard, and suitability of either integration with an existing, or development of a new access point.
- **Contestability state:** The Digital Access Standard will be assessed as part of the existing [ICT Investment Approval Process](#). Agencies must demonstrate to the DTA how they have or will apply the Digital Access Standard and provide evidence to support it through the [Digital Capability Assessment Process](#) (DCAP). Guidance of what evidence is required will be provided as part of the [DCAP Agency Guide](#).
- **Assurance state:** The Digital Access Standard will be assessed through the [Assurance Framework](#). Agencies will be required to demonstrate to the DTA how they applied the Digital Access Standard and provide supporting evidence.

For new services, agencies should consider obligations under the Digital Access Standard throughout the [Sourcing](#) and [Operations](#) states.

The Digital Access Standard will not apply to existing services in the first instance. Agencies will be consulted to determine if a process for the assessment of existing services will be applied in future.

Additional information on how the DTA will assess compliance with the Digital Access Standard is provided in the **Compliance and Reporting Framework**. This framework will continue to be evaluated and is expected to mature over time.

## Exemptions

The DTA acknowledges that some agencies may be unable to meet one or more of the criteria set out by the Digital Access Standard due to a range of circumstances. These circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- legacy technology barriers that the agency cannot reasonably overcome
- substantial financial burden caused by changing a service to meet criteria

For services being considered for integration into myGov these circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- the users of the service cannot access myGov, are ineligible for a myGov account or where it does not make sense for users to have a myGov account
- legislative or regulatory barriers preventing the service from being delivered via myGov
- circumstances where Services Australia has indicated that it is unable to onboard the service onto myGov.

Exemptions may be granted for one or more of the criteria set out by the Digital Access Standard. This will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and must be applied for through the DTA.

Further information can be found in the **Digital Experience Policy Exemption Guide**.

## Measuring success of the Digital Access Standard

The DTA will measure success by reporting on agencies' compliance with the Digital Access Standard.

The DTA will provide oversight of adherence to the Digital Access Standard by collecting data from agencies through existing DTA data collection mechanisms, such as the digital and ICT Approved Programs Collection (referred to as Wave).

Agencies will be required to report outcomes to the DTA to maintain a Digital Register to track the digital landscape across the Australian Government. The DTA will require agencies to report when new access points are created, and where changes to existing access points are made, including how these access points interact with digital services. Reporting for the Digital Access

Standard will be required. Reporting for the Digital Access Standard will be required:

- for digital services for individuals suitable for myGov from 1 January 2025
- for all other public-facing digital services from 1 January 2026.

This register will allow the DTA to track the landscape of entry points and front doors across government to manage the performance of the Digital Access Standard and provide advice to government on refining the digital landscape of service experiences. New access point updates to the register will be informed by data provided through IOF reporting processes and will support reuse of government systems through the Australian Government Architecture.

# The Digital Access Standard Criteria

The Digital Access Standard consists of the following 5 criteria.

Each criterion is accompanied by:

- an explanation of its purpose
- your responsibilities in meeting it
- when it should be applied within the [Service Design and Delivery Process](#)
- suggested activities to apply it
- further resources and guidance.

<b>1</b>	<b>Understand how your users access services</b>	Make the most of existing access points by understanding where users already go to access digital government services.	page 10
<b>2</b>	<b>Define your service offering</b>	Understand what capabilities are needed to support the new service.	page 13
<b>3</b>	<b>Use the AGA to find reusable platforms and capabilities</b>	Use the AGA to discover existing capabilities available for reuse, and requirements that apply to new services.	page 15
<b>4</b>	<b>Follow the decision-making framework</b>	Apply decision-making criteria to apply a consistent approach to evaluating if a new access point is required.	page 17
<b>5</b>	<b>Engage with delivery partners</b>	Engage with delivery partners to establish a successful, collaborative and trusted partnership.	page 19



# Criterion 1

## Understand how your users access services

Make the most of existing access points by understanding where users already go to access digital government services.

### Your responsibilities

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies need to:

- know where your users go to access government services online
- evaluate if existing access points are fit for reuse for your service.

### When to apply

Apply Criterion 1 during the Discovery phase to gain a deep understanding about your digital service users and any benefits gained from leveraging off an existing access point.

### How to apply

#### Questions for consideration

- Who are the target users of the new service?
- How are the intended users of the new service currently accessing government services online?
- Is there an existing access point already familiar to the users?
- Have you explored ways to overcome current blockers for your users when they are accessing digital services?

## Know where your users already go to access government services online

**Understand your users' interactions:** Do research to understand where users already go to access similar digital services across government. Map the user's journey to create a deeper understanding of how they engage with digital platforms. Take stock of the platforms or capabilities that could be used to support a better digital experience (see criterion 3).

For replacement services, while the existing access point may be assessed as the best option, there may be instances where the replacement service could be consolidated with an alternative access point such as an agency website. When designing replacement services, consider if there is an opportunity to use another existing access point, for example a replacement service for individuals accessed through myGov.

**Increase discoverability:** Consider how to increase the visibility of the service by understanding where users access government information and services. Understand the navigation pathways users take and use these to maximise discoverability of the service.

## Evaluate if any existing access points are fit for purpose

**Assess existing access points:** Identify existing access points that users interact with (also see criterion 3). Determine if any existing access point will be fit for purpose for users of the digital service (see also criterion 4).

**Know the context:** Consider if the context is appropriate and if reusing an existing access point is the sensible approach. Determine whether incorporating the service as part of an existing platform enhances user experience.

**Understand the requirements:** Consider factors such as the capabilities and requirements for the digital service and how existing access points might meet these requirements. Understand if there are specific requirements that stand out for the users.

**Assess the investment:** Consider if an investment is required to provide access to the new service through an existing platform, either to uplift an existing access point, or further investment in the new service itself. Investigate cost-effectiveness to determine if reuse would be cost-prohibitive.

**Share learnings:** Collaborate with other agencies to consider lessons learned and user insights to help inform continuous improvement of digital experiences across whole-of-government.

## Guidance and resources

- ▶ [Digital Access Standard Guidelines](#)
- ▶ [Data and Digital Government Strategy](#)
- ▶ [Digital Service Standard](#)



## Criterion 2

# Define your service offering

Understand what capabilities are needed to support the new service.

## Your responsibilities

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies need to:

- enhance digital experience of the service offering by using familiar platforms, products and capabilities
- demonstrate that new access points and capabilities will provide future opportunities for reuse.

## When to apply

Apply Criterion 2 during the Discovery phase to help determine if the consolidation of multiple existing access points is achievable. Apply Criterion 2 during the Alpha and Beta phases to validate that the service offer meets the needs of target users.

## How to apply

### Questions for consideration

- What are the current pain points and needs of the target users that this digital service will address?
- Are there existing digital services/access points you should replace or consolidate to reach the optimal service offering for your new digital service?
- Is there an existing digital service doing it well that you could learn from?
- Should the service offering extend to pointing users to other related and complementary digital services?

## Enhance digital experience with your service offering by using familiar platforms, products and capabilities

**Identify capabilities:** Determine the outcomes the digital service enables and use these to inform the capabilities and functions required to achieve this and support the best experience for the users. Test the proposed digital service offering with target users to confirm and iterate the service offering to maximise uptake and make it relevant to the users.

**Reuse where available:** Reuse existing capabilities when these meet the needs of the users. Understand how these capabilities will enhance the overall experience of users and support their rollout where appropriate.

**Consider common non-government capabilities:** Understand non-government capabilities that users utilise and if they can be used to support or improve the overall digital experience.

## Demonstrate that new access points and capabilities will provide future opportunities for reuse

**Ensure scalability and reusability:** Where new capabilities are required, make sure these can accommodate reuse and future growth while maintaining performance.

**Learn from others:** Engage across government to learn from others and apply these learnings across the development and design of the new service. Understand from others about how to incorporate reuse into the new service.

**Develop a roadmap:** Document the plan to reuse new solutions in upcoming projects.

## Guidance and resources

- ▶ [Digital Access Standard Guidelines](#)
- ▶ [Digital and ICT Reuse Policy](#)
- ▶ [Data and Digital Government Strategy](#)
- ▶ [Australian Government Architecture](#)
- ▶ [Digital Service Standard](#)
- ▶ [Commonwealth Procurement Rules](#)



## Criterion 3

# Use the AGA to find reusable platforms and capabilities

Use the AGA to discover existing capabilities available for reuse and requirements that apply to new and redesigned services.

## Your responsibilities

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies need to:

- understand available capabilities and services available for reuse
- identify and apply any relevant whole-of-government requirements and policies
- document how reuse has been considered in an agency's decisions.

## When to apply

Apply Criterion 3 during the Discovery phase to help consider capabilities and services available to improve user experience and promote reuse.

## How to apply

### Questions for consideration

- Has the the Australian Government Architecture (AGA) been used to determine what capabilities can be reused?
- Have you explored existing platforms that offer similar capabilities before considering a new one?
- Have considerations been made towards whole-of-government identification and authentication?

## Understand available capabilities and services available for reuse

**Use the AGA:** Review the AGA early in the design of the service to understand what is available to you.

**Avoid unnecessary investment:** Consider the capabilities available through existing portals and leverage existing government investment. Use existing whole-of-government resources and guidance to help build an understanding of what platforms and capabilities are available.

**Connect and assess:** Assess how well the existing capabilities align with the service's requirements and objectives (Criterion 1). Engage other agencies to gain insights on ways to promote, use or plan for future reuse.

## Identify and apply any applicable whole of government requirements and policies

**Know what's required:** Use the AGA to determine what requirements and policies apply to the service. Consider how to apply these across the service to enhance the user's experience and support compliance.

## Document how reuse has been considered in your decisions

**Compare your needs with existing capabilities:** Clearly demonstrate how reuse has been applied in the decision-making process by documenting how the needs of the service compare with what existing platforms offer in terms of user experience, cost and efficiency.

### Guidance and resources

- ▶ [Digital Access Standard Guidelines](#)
- ▶ [Australian Government Architecture](#)
- ▶ [Data and Digital Government Strategy](#)
- ▶ [Digital Service Standard](#)



## Criterion 4

# Follow the decision-making framework

Apply decision-making criteria to determine if a new access point is required.

## Your responsibilities

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies need to:

- apply the relevant decision-making framework.

## When to apply

Apply Criterion 4 during the Discovery phase to help consider capabilities and services available to improve user experience and promote reuse.

This criterion requires agencies to apply and follow a set of decision-making principles to determine where a new service is best placed within the existing landscape of government digital services. The decision-making framework will apply based on the users of the new digital service:

- citizen-facing services (for individuals)
- business and provider-facing services.

## How to apply

### Question for consideration

- Are users accessing the new service as a private individual, as a representative of a business, as a representative of a service provider, or a combination of these roles?

### Apply the relevant decision-making framework

**Use the decision-making framework relevant to the service:** Assess the service against the decision-making framework to understand if reusing existing platforms and capabilities is beneficial to users.

**Know your user context:** Understand if users are accessing the new service as a private individual, as a representative of a business, as a representative of a service provider, or a combination of these.

**Understand if it is cost effective:** Determine if using an existing access point is not prohibitive on the basis of investment required, and if the cost of using the existing portal is outweighed by the benefits. For example, Investment to uplift an existing portal is outweighed by a significantly better experience for users.

**Consider how to overcome barriers:** Consider if there are any challenges making the new service available through an existing point. For example, could there be technical issues interfacing with legacy internal systems or legal barriers such as data sharing. Consider, where appropriate, using mechanisms such as the Data Availability and Transparency Act (DATA) scheme to support ethical data sharing.

## Guidance and resources

- ▶ [Digital Access Standard Guidelines](#)
- ▶ [Decision making framework – public facing services for individuals](#)
- ▶ [myGov User Audit – User Audit Report & Response to the User Audit](#)
- ▶ [Data Availability and Transparency Act 2022](#)
- ▶ [Benefits Management Policy](#)



# Criterion 5

## Engage with delivery partners

Engage with delivery partners to establish a successful, collaborative and trusted partnership.

### Your responsibilities

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies need to:

- seek out your government delivery partners early
- establish open communication lines.

### When to apply

Apply Criterion 5 during the Discovery, Alpha, Beta and Live phases to include key delivery partners early.

### How to apply

#### Questions for consideration

- What is the scope of services the delivery partner offers?
- What are the onboarding and other requirements to join up with existing capabilities and platforms?
- Can the delivery partner meet the delivery timeframes?

## Seek out government delivery partners early

**Engage early:** Do research to identify key stakeholders both internally and across the Australian Public Service. Engage delivery partners from the beginning and often to foster a trusted, transparent and collaborative partnership. Include delivery partners in every phase of the Service Design and Delivery Process, involving them in the decision making, design and testing of your digital service solution.

**Understand your part:** Engage with delivery partners to determine what requirements the service needs to meet to join up with the capabilities and platforms on offer. Ensure that responsibilities are clearly defined up front.

## Establish open communication lines

**Include your delivery partners:** Set up combined agile ceremonies, user experience activities and other team events as one team so everyone remains across requirements. Make sure they're also accountable for the delivery of your digital service by establishing obligations and commitments through agreed governance mechanisms.

**Build to support future connection:** Where immediate connection or partnership may not be possible, work with delivery partners to understand how to build within the requirements for potential future connections. Maintain a continuous communication channel to support ongoing engagement.

## Guidance and resources

- ▶ [Digital Access Standard Guidelines](#)
- ▶ [Guide to the right engagement | DISR](#)
- ▶ [Engagement & Partnership | APS Learn](#)
- ▶ [Guide to Best Practice Planning Engagement | WA.gov.au](#)