



MANUAL

NEN Scheme management

To replace NEN Scheme Management Manual V 7.0 May 2020

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SCHEME MANAGEMENT

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1 Reading pointer

Version seven of the Scheme Management Manual is a completely revised edition of the Scheme Control Manual version six. It replaces the previous version of the manual. This reading guide explains the differences between them. Paragraph 1.10 the amendments compared to the first edition of version seven.

1.1 Structure

First of all, the structure of the manual is completely different. The new manual now contains nine substantive chapters, of which the previous version had only six. In the new version, some chapters have been merged into one chapter and others have been broken down.

The manual has been adapted to better meet NTA 8813 "Requirements for development and management of conformity assessment schemes by independent scheme managers" ([link](#)). References to the relevant articles from NTA 8813 or other documents are therefore included in the various chapters and paragraphs.

1.2 Purpose, Terms and Definitions, General

Looking at the first three chapters of the previous version (Purpose, Terms and Definitions, General) then all of these are included in the first two chapters of this version of the manual (General, Principles and Principles).

The chapters Goal and Terms and Definitions are included in chapter two of the current version. After which chapter three continues with the principles that NEN Scheme Management uses.

1.3 The process

Chapter four of the previous manual looked at the composition and working methods of the various committees. Now chapter four deals with the development of a certification scheme within NEN. This chapter goes through all the steps from the idea to publishing a scheme. It also deals with the aspects of the management of schemes and, for example, how NEN deals with schemes that are not applied under accreditation.

The substantive texts of the previous version of chapter four, on the compositions and tasks of the various committees involved in the development and management of a scheme, have been moved to Annex A.

Chapter five of the previous version (Developing and managing schemes) has been completely replaced by chapter four of the current version of the manual.

1.4 Complaints and objections

Chapter six of the previous manual addressed the procedures surrounding complaints and objections. This chapter has been taken over in full and moved to chapter nine of this manual.

1.5 Logo use

In the previous version of the manual, a paragraph was devoted to the use of the trade mark in one of the chapters. A separate chapter is devoted to this in this version. Chapter six deals with the logo and the label of a scheme, in a general sense.

1.6 Quality assurance

Chapter eight of this version of the manual deals with the procedures for ensuring the quality of the schemes. It also deals with the quality assurance of NEN as a scheme manager. This section was not discussed in the previous version of the manual.

1.7 Registry

As part of the quality assurance for schemes, the current version of the manual includes the chapter "registry". This deals with the public registration of conformity assessing bodies (CABs).

1.8 Obligations

Chapter five deals with the obligations of a CAB. This includes rules on allowing certificates to be issued, retaining the license and removing the authorisation.

1.9 Confidentiality and disclosure

This last chapter deals with the exchange of information during the admission process for CABs and how NEN deals with it.

1.10 Table of changes

Status	Content	Version
Change	Table of contents is no longer numbered as chapter	7.1
Addition	Read hand added as chapter 1, including table of changes	7.1
Change	Incorrect Word object fields deleted	7.1
Change	Comprehension improvements: CAB, stakeholders, NEN Scheme Management	7.1
Change	Improvement of understanding to deposit a quality mark	7.1
Addition	Additional conditions for CAB in case of a scheme not under accreditation	7.1
Removed	Index and index markers	7.1
Change	Grammatical errors removed	7.1
Change	The concept of confidentiality made more widely applicable	7.1

2 General

2.1 Introduction

This manual is an integral part of any conformity assessment scheme in the management of the Royal Netherlands Standards Institute (NEN). Terms and definitions in this document are additions to the terms and definitions in the specific schemes scheme's².

This manual describes how NEN works as a scheme manager. It describes the policy guidelines and processes for developing, managing, and participating in each scheme that NEN manages.

The aim of NEN Scheme Management is to harmonise quality assessment so that quality of products, systems, people, processes and claims is assessed in the same way. NEN therefore develops standards and certification schemes together with interested parties.

NEN does not certify itself, but manages central certification schemes as an independent party. This ensures the uniformity of the review, prevents fragmentation and allows customers to rely on unambiguous labels and certificates.

2.2 Subject and scope

This document shall apply to conformity assessment schemes (schemes) in the following cases:

1. The development and adoption of schemes under the guidance of NEN;
2. The management of schemes developed at NEN;
3. Managing schemes developed by third parties.

NEN manages schemes related to product and services, personal, system, claims certification, validation and inspection. The starting point for development and management is that schemes are carried out under accreditation.

2.3 References

There are no normative references for this manual.

Note 1: The rules in this document are based on the requirements in NTA 8813 and thus on the international standards for conformity assessment (ISO/IEC 17000-series) and EA-1/22 of the European co-operation for Accreditation and the IAF Mandatory Documents. In addition, the rules of the Accreditation Council, as laid down in BR012 and T033, are the basis for this document. For further references to terms and definitions, read: Chapter 2.4. Terms and definitions.

¹ This manual also uses the term schedule where conformity assessment schedule is referred to.

² Where terms or definitions differ, the definition as mentioned in this document applies.

2.4 Terms and definitions

The following terms and definitions apply in this document. These terms and definitions are based on and intended as the terms used in the following documents or series of documents:

- ISO/IEC 17000 series
- RVA BR012
- RVA T033
- NTA 8813

This document uses the following terms:

2.4.1 Interested party

Party with an interest in the conformity assessment

Note 1 to the term: Interested parties include, for example:

- a) parties that are or may be the end-user; that is, the parties who take a decision on the basis of the result (report, certificate) of the conformity assessment (to purchase, use, grant authorisation, etc.). These may be for a scheme different parties such as public authorities, representation of customers and/or representation of consumers;
- b) parties that are or may be the direct customer of a conformity assessing body.

Note 2 to the term: Interested parties have a common interest in the conformity assessment in their own interest.

2.4.2 Conformity assessment

Process that demonstrates whether established requirements are met for a (management) system, authority, person, product, process, claim or service.

2.4.3 Conformity assessment body (CAB)

Organization performing conformity assessment activities such as calibrating, testing, certifying, validating and/or inspecting

Note 1 to the term: Examples of CABs are:

- (medical) laboratories;
- inspection–institutions;
- certification–institutions (certifying institutions);
- calibration–settings.

2.4.4 Standard for accreditation

Standard which imposes requirements on a CAB and whose reference has been published by the European Commission in the Official Journal in the context of the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 and used as a basis for accreditation.

Note 1 to the term: A number of ISO standards, for example from the ISO/IEC 17000–series, have been designated by the European Commission as a harmonised standard for accreditation. Only National Accreditation Bodies may grant accreditation on the basis of

these harmonised standards. In the Netherlands, this is the Dutch Accreditation Council - DAC.

2.4.5 Independent scheme manager

NTA 8813 Article 3.5

Identifiable organization that has established a scheme and is responsible for the design and management of the scheme and does not itself carry out conformity assessments.

Note 1 to the term: Where this document refers to NEN as a scheme manager, in all cases *independent* scheme manager is referred to, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

2.4.6 Conformity assessment scheme

RVA BR012

Documented and publicly available set of requirements that establishes the following:

- a) the object of conformity assessment, i.e. (management) system, body, person, product, process, claim or service, which is/is assessed for conformity;
- b) the requirements against which conformity is assessed;
- c) the mechanism by which conformity is established, e.g. testing, examination, inspection, verification or auditing and other supporting activities to ensure continued conformity;
- d) requirements for CAB, set by the scheme manager, and any specific applications and interpretations there, where applicable.

Note 1 to the term: This document also uses the terms scheme or certification scheme.

Note 2 to the term: For example, a scheme also includes amendments and established interpretations.

Note 3 to the term: The requirements referred to in (b) may also include legal requirements or national or international standards.

Note 4 to the term: The activities referred to in (c) to ensure *continued* conformity do not apply to all forms of conformity assessment (e.g. not inspection).

2.4.7 Accreditation

An independent confirmation by a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or a member of the European Co-Operation for Accreditation (EA) of the expertise, impartiality and independence of a conformity-assessing organisation, based on internationally harmonized standards.

2.4.8 Dutch Accreditation Council - DAC

RVA BR002

The Dutch Accreditation Council, which has been designated by the Minister of Economic Affairs as the Dutch National Accreditation Authority (NAI) within the meaning of Article 4 of the Regulation (EC) No 1782/2003, is to be appointed by the National Accreditation Authority (WANAI). 765/2008.

2.4.9 Stichting Koninklijk Nederlands Normalisatie Instituut - NEN

Bylaws NEN

The aim of the foundation, as a central authority in the Netherlands, to achieve standardisation in the interests of health, safety and efficiency in social relations, the aim of establishing and maintaining standards with the involvement of interested parties and promoting voluntary importation.

2.4.10 NEN Scheme Management

The program organization within NEN responsible for coordinating and executing scheme management.

2.5 Language

The final version of a scheme is written in Dutch and/or English. Translations to other languages are possible. Where the standard for conformity assessment is written in a different than the Dutch language, a Dutch version of the scheme is still sought.

2.6 Cost

The costs of developing a scheme are in principle borne by the interested parties. The costs are passed on in the form of membership contributions for the members of the College of Experts and by means of licence payments for the certifying institutions and certificate payments.

2.7 Review

Each scheme shall determine how the assessment takes place before obtaining a certificate.

3 Principles and principles

3.1 Mission and goal

RVA BR002 and BR012

The mission of NEN Scheme Management is to manage (national) schemes with high impact and social and broad stakeholders. The aim of developing and managing schemes by NEN is to ensure the support for the relevant scheme in the market and to increase the uniformity of the conformity assessment. To this end, NEN, as a scheme manager, regulates the harmonisation of the conformity assessment by CABs. NEN ensures support by structurally involving interested parties in both the development and management of schemes.

NEN strives to develop and manage schemes under accreditation. The starting point is the Accreditation Policy (BR002) of the DAC. If the conformity assessment is not yet carried out under accreditation, the management nevertheless complies as much as possible with the rules of the DAC. In this case, NEN organises additional supervisory measures itself. The rules as laid down in BR012 apply to this.

3.2 Impartiality

NTA 8813 Article 4.2

NEN endorses the importance of impartiality. NEN employees carry out their work impartially and are not under commercial, financial or other pressure when performing their duties as scheme managers. NEN Scheme Management does not strive for financial gain, but for a socially broad-based and applied standard.

3.3 Independence

As an independent organisation, NEN itself does not carry out conformity assessments. This is done by the CABs that apply a scheme.

NEN believes that independent scheme management only takes place if this concerns 'central scheme management'. This means that the method of conformity assessment is centrally organised. This has ensured a uniform review by all participating CABs.

3.4 Openness

NTA 8813 Article 4.3

NEN publishes each scheme it manages through the usual channels. In this way, the staffing of the main functions of each scheme is also made public. On the NEN website a current list of CABs is available for each scheme.

3.5 Accessibility

NTA 8813 Article 4.4

3.5.1 During development

The schemes under management at NEN are accessible to all interested parties. In doing so, NEN does not raise unfounded thresholds for participation in a scheme.

3.5.2 Application by CABs

All CABs, which wish to execute a scheme and meet the requirements set out in the scheme, can arrange an agreement with NEN for this purpose. NEN expects that CABs participating in a scheme intend to obtain accreditation for this scheme. Even if a scheme is not (directly) executed under accreditation.

3.5.3 Application by certificate holders

The schemes under management at NEN are accessible to anyone who wishes to comply with the conformity requirements set out in the scheme.

3.6 Support

BR012 Article 9.3; NTA 8813 Article 4.5, 5.4

NEN strives for a balanced representation of relevant stakeholders in the development and management of schemes. In doing so, it is aware that the participation of different parties in such a process is not always enough to support a scheme. Following on from DAC documentation,³ NEN assumes that the number and the nature of the relevant *interested parties may depend on the subject matter and the nature of the scheme. In any case, however, producers or suppliers and end users are participants³* in the development. In support of this, NEN Scheme Management is carrying out a support study on the feasibility of developing the scheme.

Substantive consensus is the starting point for developing and managing a scheme.

NEN Scheme Management ensures a large enough base of support as possible.

3.7 Legal person

BR012 Article 9.1; NTA 8813 Article 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 4.3.3

NEN Scheme management is carried out within the legal entity Stichting Koninklijk Nederlands Normalisatie Instituut (NEN). The end responsibility for scheme management activities lies with the Director of NEN. Within the organisation, the coordination and implementation is invested in the Scheme Management Programme.

NEN's quality management system defines the organisational structure, tasks, responsibilities and competences. A formal form of assessment of the competences of staff, including those directly involved in scheme management, is also included.

The organizational structure of NEN and the position of NEN Scheme Management has been published on its website.

3.8 Property

BR012 Article 9.2, 9.4

The scheme document establishes how the scheme manager has been empowered to set, change, and manage the scheme. This is possible because it owns the scheme or because it has obtained these rights in a different way.

³ RvA BR012 Article 9.3

In the event that NEN does not own the scheme, at least an agreement stipulates that it has the mandate to evaluate the scheme in consultation with the (C)CoE.

4 Process Scheme Management

This chapter describes how NEN develops a scheme and what organizations need to do to participate in that development. In addition, this chapter explains what an organization needs to do to act as CAB in a scheme. Finally, this chapter explains what NEN does as a scheme manager.

Figure 1 is an overview of the organisational structure within NEN, appointing NEN Scheme Management, the Scheme Management Commission and the CCoE and other committees.

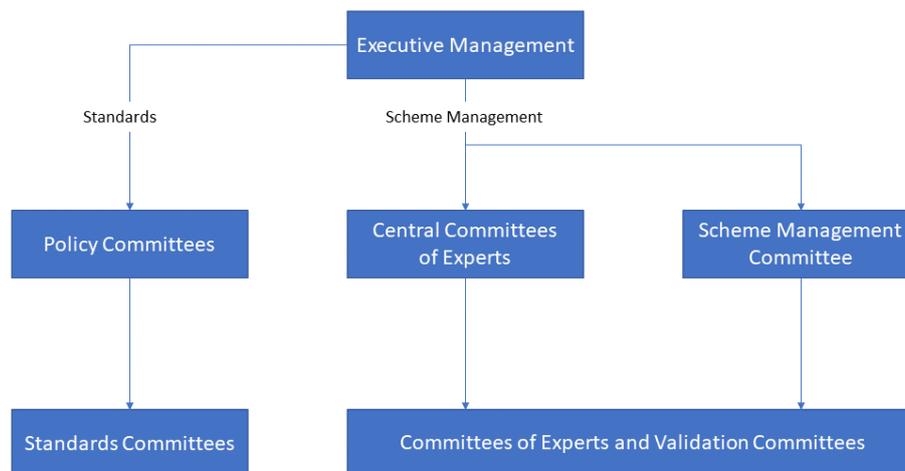


Figure 1 Organization NEN Scheme Management

4.1 Scheme development process

This section describes the working methods of NEN's organizational components involved in developing and managing schemes.

4.1.1 Introduction

Based on the idea that a certificate demonstrates that a process, product, person, service, or claim meets a standard, is an obvious starting point for the development of a scheme, a moment during the development of a standard.

It is important to first of all get a clear focus on the usefulness, necessity and objective of a certification scheme. A first step in this process is a market research into the feasibility of a scheme and thus to clarify usefulness, necessity and objective. If this research shows that there is a usefulness and a need for a scheme and that the objective is clearly formulated, then it is time for the next step.

Two parts are important in the financial picture of a scheme: the licence fee and certificate payments. Both components must be known and publicly available before the scheme is published. The license fee is the annual (or other frequency) fee that a CAB or other participating organization has to pay to the scheme manager. The second cost component,

the certificate payments, can be paid per issued certificate. These costs may be passed on to the certificate holder paragraph 2.6 Cost incurred on these components.

In a third step, the substantive development of a scheme starts. A Central College of Experts (CCoE) or a Committee of Experts (CoE), in some cases a derivative of the standards committee, is responsible for the substantive development of a scheme. The purpose of the CoE is to develop the certification scheme, to establish it and then to play an important role in the management of the certification scheme. The CoE consists of a group of competent experts. These experts may come from relevant parties as well as from review bodies or other interested parties.

One or more third parties can also develop a scheme independently and transfer the management of the scheme to NEN. In this case, there is also a (C)CoE to ensure the content of the scheme.

In the development process, accreditation is one of the more important questions for the CoE. NEN prefers that developed schemes come under accreditation, but there may be reasons not to do so directly or not at all. If the choice is not (yet) to apply for accreditation for the scheme, the supervision will be submitted to the Scheme Management Committee.

4.2 Recruiting Commissioners

NTA 8813 Article 5.4

A NEN consultant initiates the recruitment of members of the CoE. In the case of substantive experts, they should be able to substantiate their expertise on the basis of their Curriculum Vitae or similar documentation.

4.3 Setting up the Commission

NTA 8813 Article 5.4

If the potential committee members have indicated that they wish to be involved in the development, they shall sign a non-disclosure agreement for participation in the CoE.⁴

4.3.1 Scheme Management Committee

The Scheme Management Committee was set up by the Management Board of NEN. The Scheme Management Commission is responsible for determining and prioritising the topics on which scheme management is carried out for those sectors for which no CCoEs are set up. In addition, the Scheme Management Commission is responsible for monitoring the conformity assessment of schemes that are not (yet) applied under accreditation. The Scheme Management Committee shall consist of at least three members, one of whom shall act as chairman.

4.3.2 Central College of Experts (CCoE)

It is the responsibility of a CCoE to determine and prioritize for their area the topics, for which scheme management is carried out⁴. A CCoE has a composition that is representative of the parties, who use schemes in a particular sector of social traffic. The Management Board of NEN appoints members of a CCoE.

⁴ Details about composition, tasks en responsibilities can be found in Addendum A

The Management Board may also decide to dissolve the Scheme Management Commission or a CCoE.

4.3.2.1 Setting up Central College of Experts

The Executive Board shall appoint an independent chairman and the members of the CCoE.

A member of a committee terminates his/her duties after resignation, dismissal by his own employer or if he/she loses the capacity on the basis of which he was nominated, and if the organisation on behalf of which the member is seated indicates this.

The appointment takes into account the personal competences of the committee members. For each college it is determined whether and if so, specific competencies should be present (e.g. in connection with the applicable accreditation standard). In the case of nomination proposals, the Management board shall assess whether they are individually competent for the committee concerned and whether they jointly cover the competence required for the committees. The management is advised by NEN Scheme Management and by the college concerned.

4.3.2.2 Set up and appoint other scheme committees

A CCoE can set up scheme committees, insofar as they are active within its sector. It shall also appoint the chairman and members and decide on the removal of these scheme committees. For sectors where CCoE is not established, the Scheme Management Committee shall set up these scheme committees, appoint its chairman and members and decide on the dissolution.

When appointing such scheme committees, the CCoE or the Scheme Management Commission shall ensure that the composition of these committees meets the criteria.

4.4 Developing or adjusting a scheme

NTA 8813 Article 6, Article 7; BR012

The college develops the scheme. In doing so, the College shall draw up the scheme, make any changes and, where necessary, write interpretation documentation for the scheme. Finally, it shall determine how the scheme is evaluated.

At the minimum, as provided for in Article 6 of NTA 8813, the College shall lay down in a scheme the following main matters:

1. The **purpose** of the scheme;
2. The **kind** of conformity assessment in the form of
 - a. identification of the subject of the conformity assessment;
 - b. the requirements against which the subject review takes place.
3. **How** the conformity assessment is executed;
4. The **who**, meaning the nature of the CAB and the competencies of the persons who carry out the conformity assessment activities.

The scheme takes into account existing laws, standards, schemes, available testable requirements, available techniques, etc.

Preconditions to the testable requirements are:⁵

- verifiable;
- unambiguously formulated, so that differences in interpretation are avoided as much as possible.

4.4.1 Decision-making

Consensus is sought in the decision-making process in the committees, subject to the various interests involved. If, in the absence of agreement on a subject, one or more members consider that the matter is of sufficient importance to this end, it should be voted on. The committee itself draws up a regulation for this.

4.4.2 Method

The members of the colleges and committees shall maintain confidentiality and shall be confidential in relation to the information obtained in their work. The members of the colleges and committees should avoid conflicts of interest and refrain from voting in the case of a possible conflict of interest.

4.4.3 Demonstrability representation

NEN oversees the fact that, when developing schemes, committee members, with the exception of the members of the Scheme Management Committee, demonstrably represent a party in accordance with existing procedures. Exceptions to this must be justified and determined by the relevant committee.

4.4.4 Interpretation

The committees adopt unambiguous interpretations in response to interpretation disputes. The committees monitor, archive and process interpretation disputes. An interpretation dispute is part of a scheme. NEN, as a scheme manager, publishes these interpretations after they have been included in the scheme through the relevant communication channels. NEN informs the CAB in writing about established interpretations.

4.5 Organizing independent supervision

The quality assurance of the scheme requires independent monitoring of the implementation of the scheme. This supervision is regulated if the scheme is carried out under accreditation. In other cases, NEN is supervised under the final responsibility of the Scheme Management Commission, a CCoE, or a committee to be set up.

4.6 Develop license agreement

NTA 8813 Article 8

To use a scheme, NEN will come to a licensing agreement with each CAB that wants to execute the scheme. NEN determines the corresponding licence agreement. It determines the pricing of both the licence fee and the certificate remittance and also the duration of the pricing.

⁵ Requirements should be described in a clear, direct and precise manner and result in an accurate and uniform interpretation, so that parties using the have a common understanding of its meaning and design. Requirements belong to preference to be described in terms of results or outcomes (i.e. not by specific technologies), together with limit values and tolerances, if relevant. Requirements should be described unambiguously, using terms that are objective, logical, valid and specific. NEN-ISO/IEC 17007 provides guidelines for the preparation of normative documents are intended as a basis for conformity assessment.

4.6.1 License agreement

NTA 8813 Article 8,9,2

NEN concludes a licensing agreement for schemes to be managed with one or more CAB. The license agreement contains at least the following agreements:

1. the rights, responsibilities and obligations of the scheme manager and the CAB;
2. the use of any trademark or reference to such arrangements;
3. the CAB's obligation to comply with the requirements of the certification scheme without additions or restrictions;
4. whether the scheme in question is applied under or without accreditation;
5. the method of quality assurance if the scheme is not applied under accreditation;
6. acquiring accreditation, where applicable;
7. the obligation to exchange and supply information;
8. participation in the harmonization consultation on the method of conformity assessment;
9. accessibility of reports, where applicable;
10. the obligation to participate in an NEN register and to provide data correctly and in a timely manner for that register⁶;
11. fees, licence fees and any other fees;
12. rescinding conditions and (where applicable) sanctions;
13. the mandate given to NEN;
14. effective date, period of validity and conditions for termination of the contract;
15. agreements on the use of the scheme during the period in which the CAB is in the procedure for obtaining accreditation, if applicable.

The provisions of the Agreement may not conflict with the applicable standards and related documents, which are used for accreditation.

NEN signs an agreement with this scheme owner for the management of set scheme in order to obtain sufficient mandate.

NEN publishes on its web pages by scheme with which CAB it has entered into a licensing agreement with a CAB and at least for which scope(s) that has been done.

4.7 Set up registry and web pages

NTA 8813 Article 7.4 and Article 4.3

The scheme has a register of certificate holders and a web page with information about the contents of the scheme. NEN sets up the register and website. The scheme also explains which information is shared publicly.

For each scheme, NEN shall publish at least the following elements:

- The purpose of the scheme;
- The kind of conformity assessment;
- Conformity assessment how;
- The CCAs licensed by NEN carry out the conformity assessment;
- The way in which the CCoE or the CoE has taken shape and the persons or organisations that are part of it.
- The persons of the CCoE (if applicable);

⁶ Only if participation in a register is excluded by laws and regulations does this not have to be included in the license agreement.

- The composition of the Scheme Management Commission.

Where a scheme has decided not to share certain information publicly, this must be justified in documentation available to the scheme manager.

4.8 Trade mark

NTA 8813 Article 10

If a trade mark is developed in the development of the scheme, only NEN is entitled to protect this mark by depositing it and incorporating specific rules on its use in the scheme document.

4.9 Validation

NTA 8813 Article 7.3

Validation takes place in the final stage for final adoption of the certification scheme. The purpose of validation is to support the fact that the objective of the scheme is achieved with the chosen conformity assessment. The validation substantiates that the results of conformity assessments are accurate and reliable. The applicability of the scheme must be demonstrated by practical tests. This can take the form of a test period in which pilot assessments take place. In the event that it is desired to publish a scheme under accreditation, validation can be done by not publishing the scheme under accreditation in the first instance. The experience seen in this first period can be considered validation.

NEN Scheme Management validates the scheme.

4.10 Establishing a scheme

In case a CCoE is present, the CCoE establishes the scheme. The College publishes its decision via the web page of the scheme and through direct communication to all parties involved: Committee on Scheme Management, Members of the CoE, members of the CCoE, NEN Scheme Management. In the event no CCoE is present, the Scheme Management Committee or the College of Interested Parties shall establish the scheme.

The college or committee shall establish the scheme only if:

1. There is a consensus within the College or Committee on the text of the scheme document;
2. The applicability of the conformity assessment has been assessed by competent organizations (at least two) and they agree to it;
3. Independent monitoring is organized in the scheme document;
4. A licensing agreement has been established;
5. A register is organized in the scheme document;
6. An evaluation of the scheme is included in the scheme document and the first evaluation takes place up to one year after the publication of the scheme;
7. An evaluation of the scheme will take place at least when the underlying requirements document is evaluated;
8. A procedure has been included on the handling of complaints and interpretation disputes within the scheme;

9. An "own assessment" of the scheme has been carried out against the requirements of RvA-BR012 using the explanatory document RvA-T033.⁷

The own assessment is authorized by one of the designated consultants within NEN. These consultants are determined on the basis of which they are competent to carry out this authorization. Competence is regularly reassessed.

4.11 Publication scheme

NTA 8813 Article 3.6, 9.3

If the scheme is established (see 4.10) NEN Scheme Management publishes the scheme. In doing so, it shall inform the college or committee which has drawn up the scheme on the publication and/or publication date.

The title of the scheme to be published contains at least the text "NEN Certification Scheme" and an assigned number. This number is the same as the number of the normative document that is the basis for the scheme. NEN Certification Scheme can be shortened to: NCS.⁸

The exception to this rule is, if the title of a scheme published by third parties at an earlier stage, of which NEN becomes a scheme manager at a later stage.

At least the information as referred to in paragraph 4.7 shall be publicly available when the scheme 4.7 published.

4.12 Managing a scheme

NTA 8813 Article 9

In the management phase, the certification scheme is operational. In consultation with the interested parties concerned, matters such as: management of the website, information, promotional activities, answering user questions, harmonisation, etc. are organised. The Committee of Interested Parties remains active in deciding on interpretation issues and any changes to the certification scheme.

4.13 Extend, terminate, inactivate, revise a scheme

NTA 8813 Article 9

A scheme can be extended, terminated, inactivated, or revised. Inactivation means that the decision to revise or renew is postponed indefinitely, pending interest from the market or possible market developments. The decision-making power for this lies with the CCoE or the Scheme Management Commission.

Considerations that play a role in this are:

- market developments;
- experience of relevant CABs;
- credibility, current events and support;
- number of certificate holders.

⁷ BR012 Article 9.7. This also covers BR012 Articles 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22.

⁸ Example: NCS 8080:2017 - NEN Certification Schedule Better Biomass certification scheme, which is based on NTA 8080.

In the event of a review, more time is likely to be required to adjust the requirements. A decision to adjust the requirements will therefore usually involve extending the period of validity by a to be agreed upon period of time. In the case of a revision of a scheme, the same rules apply as when developing a new scheme.

NEN Scheme Management informs interested parties about extending, terminating, inactivating or revising a scheme. NEN Scheme Management, in cooperation with the CAB, shall inform the certificate holders in good time of the expiry of the period of validity of schemes, any adjustment of requirements and the effective date for the revised requirements. Agreements are made on the transitional period.

4.14 Schemes "not under accreditation"

There is a market demand for developing or managing schemes that are not applied under accreditation. For this, the term 'not under accreditation' is used. In the case of schemes not subject to accreditation, independent supervision shall consist of:

- the implementation of the CAB's conformity assessment on the basis of that scheme;
- the conditions to be met by the scheme.

All this is done with the aim of maintaining confidence in certification as much as possible.

In order to maintain confidence in conformity assessment at accreditation level, NEN Scheme Management shall, under the supervision of the Scheme Management Commission, organise additional measures to monitor conformity assessment against schemes that are 'not under accreditation'. Where the form of chosen accreditation offers fewer safeguards, additional measures are taken by the scheme manager to approach the desired level of quality.

4.14.1 Scheme Management Committee tasks

This Committee shall have the following tasks and responsibilities with regard to schemes not subject to accreditation:

- testing the guarantee of the independence and competence of the CAB;⁹
- advise the Management Board, NEN Scheme Management and concerned CCoE or CoE on the basis of the findings of the review as appointed for this. This includes advice on suspending and revoking licensing agreements. The starting point is that the schemes, which are 'not under accreditation', will eventually be brought under the supervision of the Supervisory Board. Until then, the consideration of not doing so should be laid down in any revision of the scheme.

4.14.2 Developing and managing schemes that are not subject to accreditation

The same rules as described for schemes applied under accreditation apply to develop and manage schemes that are not applied under accreditation.

The following addition shall apply to this:

- a. In any case, a CAB must have the ISO-17000 accreditation relevant to the scheme
 - a. In the event that the CAB **does not** have the relevant ISO-17000 accreditation, but has the intention to achieve it, it is permitted to enter into a licensing agreement. The following decomposing conditions shall be included:
 - i. The CAB is required to register with the DAC within a maximum period

⁹ The so-called risk pyramid serves as a basis for this.

- of 30 days to obtain the relevant ISO-17000 accreditation
 - ii. The CAB is obliged to make such an effort that it actually achieves the relevant ISO-17000 accreditation
 - iii. The CAB undertakes to make such an effort that it achieves the aforementioned accreditation within a foreseeable period
 - b. Agreements should be made with the CAB on the supervision carried out by NEN Scheme Management on the CAB's conformity assessment. The supervision is based on a risk assessment.¹⁰

5 Obligations for licensees

5.1 Allowing certificate issuing

Testing against a certification scheme and issuing a corresponding certificate is only permitted if a license agreement has been signed between NEN and a CAB. Claims of meeting the admission requirements, being an authorised CAB, or being in possession of accreditation for a scheme are not permitted if the full admission or accreditation process has not yet been completed or if the certifying institution has been (temporarily) suspended for or removed from a scheme.

5.2 Retaining the license

The licensee undertakes actions to continuously comply with the terms of the scheme. This includes possible interpretation documents and consultations determined by a (C)CoE or NEN Scheme Management.

The scheme manager has the right to test a licensee against the requirements and conditions of a scheme. In doing so, the scheme manager may always ask for all the data that it reasonably needs to assess the retention of the license. The licensee has a maximum of 45 days to comply with this request for information. After that, the scheme manager has the right to suspend the license. As a result, the licensee can no longer claim to be an authorised certifying institution for that particular scheme.

In addition to the scheme-determined frequency of interim review, the scheme manager is always permitted to attend an conformity assessment without prior warning.

If it is found, in any way, that a licensee no longer meets the license terms, the scheme manager will send a written message to the licensee and the licensee must:

1. Within 30 calendar days, send a plan to the scheme manager to correct non-conformity and restore this non-conformity within a further 45 calendar days;
2. Within 30 calendar days, the scheme manager shall inform the scheme manager that it complies with the conditions laid down and provide evidence for this;
3. Within 30 calendar days, the scheme manager will be informed that it will not be able to resolve the non-conformity within a further 45 calendar days. In doing so, the organisation loses the status of authorised CAB;
4. Where applicable, within 30 calendar days, initiate the appeal procedure as described in Chapter 9 Complaints and interpretations

¹⁰ NEN schedule management has a risk pyramid for this purpose, in which the minimum requirements for supervision are laid down for each level of risk. NEN Schedule Management also regularly conducts a risk assessment to determine the extent and manner in which supervision is carried out.

If a licensee does not perform any of the above actions within the times defined above, the license will be revoked and it will lose its status as an authorised certifying institution.

5.3 Termination of admission or accreditation

In the event that an authorised certifying institution loses its status as being authorised or accredited, it will, at its own expense, remove any expression of that former status. The scheme manager is allowed to conduct an inspection to verify that the expressions have indeed been removed.

The loss of the status of an authorised or accredited institution also immediately loses the right to use the scheme-related logo(s) and quality marks.

5.4 Harmonisation consultations

NTA 8813 Article 6.4

For each scheme, harmonisation shall be held. In these consultations, the scheme manager and the CAB discuss at least the following topics:

- the competencies of the persons carrying out the conformity assessment activities
- the standard for accreditation applicable and any specific rules of application or interpretation thereof;
- any additional requirements, for example from legislation or industry-specific requirements;
- any specific rules of application or interpretations of ISO/IEC 17011.
- Experiences with the application of the scheme
- Differences in interpretation of the standard or scheme when applied
- Proposals for adjusting the scheme submitted to the CoE.

6 Use of logo and trade mark

6.1 The use of the logo and trade mark

Once the scheme manager has recognised the CAB as an authorised institution, it may use the logo of the scheme (further logo) and label for the scheme for which it has signed the licence agreement.

The logo and the label may only be used in relation to the scheme. The licensee is allowed to use the logo on expressions such as business cards, quotes, marketing materials or other expressions. The quality mark may only be used by the CAB to confirm the conformity check.

The Dutch Advertising Code applies to advertisements of the licensee.

The logos of NEN Scheme management are, as a collective part of the logo of the Stichting Koninklijk Nederlands Normalisatie Instituut, registered with the Benelux Trademark Office. The Stichting Koninklijk Nederlands Normalisatie Instituut will take action against any unlawful use of the logo.

6.2 License

In order to use the logo and the seal of approval, the organization must sign a licensing agreement with the scheme manager. This Agreement lays down specific provisions on the rights and obligations for the use of the logo and the quality mark. All other parties are excluded from the use of the logo and/or the label of a scheme.

6.3 Removal of the logo

If the licensee loses its status as an authorised holder, it also immediately loses the right to use the logo and the seal of approval. If the institution wants to use the logo after the loss of the right to do so, it will first have to sign a new license agreement.

Failure to comply with the obligations on the use of the logo and (commercial) labels as named in the license agreement or scheme documents results in the termination of the agreement.

7 Registry

7.1 Register of authorised certifying institutions

The scheme manager has an online and publicly accessible register of authorised certifying institutions. This register shall include the name of the institution, the length of time the admission to a scheme and the name of the scheme or schemes for which the institution is admitted.

The publication in the registry occurs after the scheme administrator and the institution have signed the scheme license agreement.

7.2 Removal from the registry

Only authorised certifying institutions are included in the register. Once a certifying institution is no longer admitted to a scheme, it will be immediately removed from the register.

The admission stops if:

- The institution requests the scheme administrator to terminate the license agreement;
- The institution does not (anymore) meet the conditions laid down within the scheme;
- The institution loses its accreditation for the scheme¹¹, if accreditation applies;
- The institution does not meet the requirements for re-admission or re-accreditation;
- The institution does not meet the requirements of this document;
- The institution fails to implement agreed corrective measures satisfactorily within the agreed time frame.

¹¹ BR012 Article 9.5

8 Quality assurance

8.1 Duty

BR012 Article 9.6

The scheme manager and the (Central) College of Experts guarantee the quality of the published scheme. During the duration of a scheme, this can lead to changes in the scheme. Licensees and other interested parties are notified of these changes with a minimum period of 30 calendar days before these changes are published and thus become active.

The scheme manager shares relevant substantive or procedural changes to a scheme. In case of schemes under accreditation the scheme manager submits any changes to the DAC in accordance with the applicable procedures.

By entering into the license agreement, the licensee is obliged to share relevant content or procedural information that may have an impact on the quality of (the application of) the scheme. It will inform the scheme manager as soon as possible, but at the latest within three working days.

The licensee is obliged to inform all persons involved in the conformity assessment directly and without any changes to changes in the scheme or otherwise relevant information shared by the scheme manager.

8.2 Periodic review

The scheme manager conducts periodic reviews of the licensee to ensure the quality of the application of a scheme and to determine the follow-up to the rules. The nature and execution of these assessments are defined in a specific scheme document.

Within one (1) year after the licensee has been admitted as a certifying institution, the scheme manager will carry out an assessment.

8.3 Scheme Manager

The scheme management process (both development and management) is included in NEN's recurring ISO 9001 audit. The scheme development and management process is included in the NEN Quality Management System.

8.4 Competences and expertise

NTA 8813 Article 5.3

The persons involved in developing and managing a scheme must be jointly competent.

8.4.1 Committee members and members of the College

Committee members are jointly competent to develop and manage a scheme. The competences of the members are, before they are actually appointed as members, assessed to verify that they will contribute to the collective competence of the committee.

The assessment is done by:

1. The management of NEN when it comes to appointing a CCoE or CoE;;

2. The CCoE or CoE when it comes to appointing other committees;
3. The Committee on Scheme Management in case there is no CoE.

For all persons, relevant knowledge is part of their competencies. The following non-exhaustive list of examples of relevant knowledge:

- Knowledge of the object of conformity assessment;
- Knowledge of the applicable standard for accreditation;
- Knowledge of the applicable conformity assessment activities;
- Where applicable, knowledge of relevant law and regulations;
- Where applicable, knowledge of rural or geographical aspects.

8.4.2 Employees NEN

NEN employees who perform tasks for NEN Scheme Management must be jointly competent to develop and manage schemes. In doing so, their competencies are assessed when they start carrying out work for NEN Scheme Management and then periodically at the annual assessment.

For all employees, relevant knowledge is part of their competencies. The following non-exhaustive list is a list of examples of relevant knowledge:

- Knowledge of the object of conformity assessment;
- Knowledge of the applicable standard for accreditation;
- Knowledge of the applicable conformity assessment activities;
- Where applicable, knowledge of relevant law and regulations;
- Where applicable, knowledge of rural or geographical aspects.

Knowledge sharing on scheme management is organised through various structured forms of consultation.

9 Complaints and interpretations

NTA 8813 Article 5.5

9.1 Complaints

NEN Scheme Management deals with complaints about the functioning of the committees, the implementation of the committees' activities and the incorrect and/or unlawful use of certification marks by third parties. Complaints about NEN Scheme Management are dealt with by the Scheme Management Committee at the request of the Management Board.

For the treatment of complaints, NEN Scheme Management follows the NEN wide complaints procedure, with the following additions.

NEN Scheme Manager:

- is not obliged to deal with complaints relating to conduct:
 - which has already been complained about and which has been dealt with;
 - which has taken place more than 12 months before the complaint is lodged;
 - against which the complainant could appeal;
- confirms in writing the receipt of a complaint, forwards complaints for treatment to the responsible and competent party for the handling and informs the sender of the above and the time limit of processing;
- inform the consignor within 4 weeks if the complaint is assessed as inadmissible;

- ensure that the handling of the complaint is not carried out by a person who has been involved in the subject to which the complaint relates. A copy of the complaint and the documents sent to the person to whose conduct the complaint relates shall be sent. If the evaluation of the complaint reveals that essential information is lacking, the applicant shall be given the opportunity to provide additional information within a period of six weeks;
- the complainant shall inform in writing and in a reasoned statement of the findings of the investigation into the complaint, the opinion on it and of any conclusions it attaches to it. The notification shall specify the time limit within which the complainant may then submit an application.

9.2 Treatment of objections and appeals

9.2.1 Objection

The following decisions may be appealed to NEN Scheme Management:

- decision on licensing: CAB's involved in NEN;
- rejection of the request to develop verifiable requirements whether or not following a feasibility study: possibly already a member of the relevant committee by the applicant;
- decides to discontinue development of testable requirements or not to establish testable requirements/scheme: by those who have participated in the development at the relevant committee;
- decision to establish testable requirements/scheme: by interested parties to the committee concerned;
- decision to extend, terminate, inactivate or revise an existing scheme: by interested parties to the relevant committee.

9.2.2 Appeal

The following decisions may be appealed to NEN Scheme Management:

- against all decisions of NEN Scheme Management in response to complaints and objections;
- decisions of the Committee on Scheme Management or CCoEs.

9.2.3 Suspension

If a person objects to a decision because he is disproportionately disadvantaged or fears that it will be in force by the remaining of that decision during the settlement of his objection, he may turn to NEN Scheme Management with a request for a suspension of that decision and/or to make an interim injunction which removes or reduces the disadvantage.

NEN Scheme Management shall decide as soon as possible in response to such a request.

In any event, the provisional injunction shall expire as soon as:

- the objection has been withdrawn, or
- NEN Scheme Management has ruled, unless a later date has been determined at the time of the ruling.

9.2.4 Appeal and appeal procedure

Objections are dealt with by the first higher committee to which it relates. If an appeal can be lodged against the decision on the objection, it shall be mentioned at the time of publication

of the decision, indicating by whom and within what time limit NEN Scheme Management can appeal.

An independent arbitration committee shall be set up for the appeal procedure. The persons concerned shall be given the opportunity to be heard. The body assessing the appeal shall:

- fix the date and place of the hearing;
- shall make this known to interested parties at least 14 days in advance;
- to this end, submit the appeal and the documents and documents which are present at least 14 days before the hearing to interested parties.

Interested parties shall be heard in each other's presence, unless it is plausible that joint hearing will impede careful treatment or that facts or circumstances will be known during hearing, of which secrecy is required for important reasons. Where interested parties have been heard separately, each of them shall be informed of the contents of the hearing, except in so far as secrecy is required for significant reasons. A report will be drawn up of the hearing.

Interested parties may submit further information to those who will assess the appeal up to seven days before the hearing.

The independent arbitration committee can hear witnesses, consult experts and make all the provisions it deems necessary to reach a good verdict. Interested parties may, in writing and not later than seven days before the hearing, request witnesses and experts to be heard. Both the petitioner and NEN Scheme Management have the right to be represented or assisted at the hearing by a counsellor.

Holding a hearing and providing the opportunity to submit further information and bring forward witnesses and experts may not be allowed to:

- the appeal is inadmissible or unfounded;
- interested parties have stated that they do not wish to make use of the right to be heard, to submit further information or to bring forward witnesses or experts;
- the appeal is fully met and other interested parties cannot be harmed in their interests;
- the urgency required to do so is opposed;
- the interested party has previously been given the opportunity to express its views and no new facts or circumstances have occurred since then;
- the objective envisaged by the decision can only be achieved if the interested party has not been informed in advance.

The independent arbitration committee is reasonable and fair. However, they are bound by the arrangements they have adopted. This includes, in any case, the various procedures relating to scheme management.

The judgment on an appeal must be made within six months of submission. If circumstances so require, this period may be extended once for two months. Judgments on appeal shall be written and, in a reason, sent within 14 days to the petitioners and to those involved in the hearing. The ruling of the independent arbitration committee is signed and sent to all parties. The original shall be archived for at least five years.

9.2.5 Deficiencies in objection or appeal

The person who has to judge an objection or appeal can decide not to consider the objection or appeal if the petitioner has not complied with the requirements set out in these regulations

or if the information and documents provided are insufficient for a proper assessment. However, the petitioner must have been given an opportunity to sufficiently supplement his objection or appeal. The term is suspended with effect from the day on which the petitioner is requested to rectify a default until the day on which the default has been rectified or the term set for this has expired unused.

A decision not to deal with an objection or appeal will be announced to the applicant within four weeks after the objection or appeal has been completed or after the period for which it has been used or for meeting other requirements has expired.

9.2.6 Opinion on the assessment of objections or appeals

NEN Scheme management and/or the designated person responsible can be advised by the bodies of NEN Scheme Management before making a ruling.

9.3 Secrecy

NEN Scheme management and/or the designated person responsible are obliged to maintain confidentiality of anything they experience or learn in the performance of their duties regarding the person, the company/organisation or the personal or business circumstances of the applicant.

9.4 General provisions

The complaint, notice of objection or appeal shall be signed by the applicant and shall contain at least:

- the name and address of the applicant;
- the date;
- a description of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint or the decision against which the objection or appeal is addressed;
- the indication that it is a complaint, objection or appeal;
- the grounds of the complaint, the objection or the appeal.

The applicant must declare in writing that he submits to the provisions of this procedure.

If the complaint, objection or appeal is made in a foreign language and a translation is necessary for proper treatment, the applicant must ensure a translation.

NEN Scheme Management confirms receipt of the complaint, the objection or appeal in writing. NEN Scheme Management shall inform the party which has taken the contested decision as soon as possible of receipt of the complaint, the notice of objection or appeal if the notice of objection or appeal is lodged with an unauthorised party, it shall be forwarded to the competent party as soon as possible, at the same time, to the channel.

9.5 Terms

The period for submitting an appeal or appeal shall be six weeks. The period shall begin on the day after the decision has been published in the prescribed manner.

A notice of objection or appeal has been submitted in good time if it has been received by NEN Scheme Management before the end of the deadline. If an objection or appeal has

been lodged at the end of the period, the notice of appeal or objection shall still be considered if it cannot reasonably be considered that the applicant has been in default.

The objection or appeal shall not suspend the operation of the decision against which it is addressed. A decision which has been objected to or appealed may, despite a breach of a formal requirement, be maintained by NEN Scheme Management or the designated person who decides on the objection or appeal if it is found that the interested party(n) has not been disadvantaged as a result.

10 Confidentiality and disclosure

10.1 Confidentiality

During the development and management of a scheme, all information shared by the CAB is treated confidentially.

All documents and information shared with the scheme manager are considered confidential information at all times. This information will not be shared in any way with third parties. Even if admission to a scheme is not successful, all information about it will be considered confidential information.

10.2 Disclosure of admission information

Admission information shall consist of the authorisation being obtained by a licensee and the scheme.. Any claim of admission or information relating to the admission process, may only be made by the scheme manager on the condition that she has informed the licensee of obtaining the permitted status.

The scheme manager discloses the information by including the licensee in the registry that can be found on the scheme manager's website.

Addendum A. Tasks and powers

A.1. Scheme Management Commission

The Scheme Management Commission is responsible for determining and prioritising the topics on which scheme management is carried out for those sectors for which no CCoEs are set up. In addition, the Scheme Management Commission is responsible for monitoring the conformity assessment against schemes where this is not (yet) under accreditation.

The Scheme Management Committee shall consist of at least three independent experts. NEN shall run the Secretariat of the Scheme Management Commission.

The tasks of the Scheme Management Commission shall be:

- advising the management of NEN on the scheme management policy;
- setting up other committees for activities outside the sectors for which the NEN Management Has established a CCoE;
- advising NEN Scheme Management on the management or development of schemes;
- monitor the implementation of the development and management of schemes in accordance with the NEN Scheme Management Manual, NTA 8813 and other relevant regulations;
- identify relevant social developments and third-party schemes;
- laying down the NEN Scheme Management Manual;
- handling of received complaints and signals in the second instance on the implementation of schemes.

The Scheme Management Commission shall carry out its duties under the responsibility of the Management of NEN.

A.2. Central College of Experts

NTA 8813 Article 5.4

A CCoE has a composition, which is representative of those organizations or individuals, who use schemes in their content sector. Members can demonstrate that they are competent in the scope of the CCoE. The tasks of CCoEs are defined as:

- monitoring the implementation of the development and management of schemes in accordance with the NEN Scheme Management Manual and other relevant regulations within the sector for which this College is established;
- identifying relevant social developments and third-party schemes;
- obtaining and retaining support for schemes;
- the establishment of schemes within the sector for which they are established;
- the adoption of amendments and interpretation documents of schemes;
- evaluating schemes;
- advising the Management Board on the scheme management policy for the sector for which this college is set up;
- handling complaints and interpretation disputes (initially with regard to schemes).

With regard to the above tasks, testability should always be assessed in the context of conformity assessment and the experience of CAB must be involved.

CCoEs carry out their duties under the responsibility of the management.

A.3. CoEs and other committees

NTA 8813 Article 5.4

CCoEs can set up one (or several) CoEs and possibly other committees to develop and manage (specific) schemes within the sector for which the CCoE is responsible. The Committee on Scheme Management shall do this for the sectors for which CCoE has not been set up.

A CoE or other committee shall have at least the following tasks:

- obtaining and retaining support for schemes;
- the establishment of schemes;
- the adoption of amendments and interpretation documents of schemes;
- evaluating schemes.

A.4. Other tasks and responsibilities

All committees are authorized to advise NEN Scheme Management on matters related to managing schemes. The committees assess the activities of NEN Scheme Management, the developments desired by the interested parties, as well as other relevant developments in the market and/or society. NEN Scheme Management provides the committees with all the information they need for their work. If NEN Scheme Management does not comply with an opinion of a committee, it will communicate the reasons for this to the committee.