



Government Website and e-Services Framework

Ministry of Communications and Information Technology

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Definitions and Acronyms

1. The terms used by the Standards and Guidelines, and their definitions are as follows:

“SHALL” - The associated definition is an absolute requirement of this specification

“SHOULD” - Indicates a recommended practice

“MAY” - Indicates that an item is truly optional

2. “**e-Accessibility**” is a measure of the extent to which a product or service can be used by a person with a disability as effectively as it can be used by a person without that disability for purposes of accessing or using ICT related products or services.
3. “**e-Accessibility Policy**” refers to Qatar’s e-Accessibility Policy available at https://www.mcit.gov.qa/sites/default/files/qatar_eaccessibility_policy_en_v4.pdf.
4. “**e-Authentication Framework**” refers to Qatar’s e-Authentication Framework available at https://www.qcert.org/sites/default/files/public/documents/cs-csps_qatar_e-authentication_framework_eng_v1.2.pdf.
5. “**Qatar Digital Government 2020 Strategy**” refers to Qatar’s Digital Government Strategy for the year 2020 available at <https://www.mcit.gov.qa/ar/legislations-and-policies/strategies/all>.
6. “**e-Participation**” as defined by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs is the process of engaging citizens through ICTs in policy and decision-making in order to make it participatory, inclusive, and deliberative
7. “**e-Participation Policy**” refers to Qatar’s e-Participation Policy available at <https://www.mcit.gov.qa/ar/legislations-and-policies/policies/all>
8. “**Government Agency**” refers to all ministries and public institutions directly reporting to ministries or Council of Ministers in the State of Qatar
9. “**ICT**” is an abbreviation for Information and Communications Technology
10. “**Open Data**” refers to the concept that information and data should be made available for everyone to access, reuse, and redistribute without any restrictions. In addition, the datasets opened should be in a machine-processable format, free of charge and devoid of any Personal Information.
11. “**Open Data Policy**” refers to Qatar’s Open Data Policy available at <https://www.mcit.gov.qa/ar/legislations-and-policies/policies/all>



12. “**W3C**” refers to World Wide Web Consortium (<http://www.w3.org>) where Member organizations, a full-time staff, and the public work together to develop Web standards.
13. “**WCAG 2.0**” stands for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.0 published by W3C that covers a wide range of recommendations and guidelines following which will make content accessible to a wider range of people with disabilities, including blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss, learning disabilities, cognitive limitations, limited movement, speech disabilities, photosensitivity and combinations of these.



1 **Legal Mandate**

Article 17 of Amiri Decree No. 57 of 2021 sets the mandate and function for the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (hereinafter referred to as “MCIT”) to supervise, regulate, and develop the sector of Information and Communications Technology (hereinafter referred to as “ICT”) in the State of Qatar in a manner consistent and aligned with, but not limited to the following:

- Supervising and developing the ICT sector in line with national development needs.
- Supervising the creation of an appropriate regulatory environment for fair competition.
- Supporting, developing, and stimulating the ICT sector and encouraging investment.
- Securing, developing, and raising the efficiency of information and technological infrastructure.
- Raising awareness on the importance of using ICT to advance society, build a knowledge-based digital economy, and improve the life of the individual.
- Implementing and supervising e-Government and Smart Society programs.
- Strengthening government infrastructure and capabilities in the field of ICT.

Furthermore, this policy has additional legal support from the following:

- Amiri Decision No. 47 of 2022 established the Digital Government Policies and Standards Department and its responsibilities which include but are not limited to developing policies, guidelines, and technical frameworks for digital government affairs; proposing draft related legislative tools; setting standards and technical specifications related to digital government; measuring government agencies' compliance with policies, guidelines, and technical frameworks related to digital government affairs.

This document has been prepared taking into consideration current applicable laws of the State of Qatar. In the event that a conflict arises between this document and the laws of Qatar, the latter, shall take precedence. Any such term shall, to that extent be omitted from this document, and the rest of the document shall stand without affecting the remaining provisions. Amendments in that case shall then be required to ensure compliance with the relevant applicable laws of the State of Qatar.



2 Introduction

The websites and online services of each Government Agency carries their own unique designs, layouts, interfaces and navigation architecture. This different “look and feel” can be confusing and difficult for the public as they would have to re-orientate themselves when they visit each government website. Standardization and uniformity is needed to ensure that government agencies’ websites and services are public centric and user friendly.

In order to ensure that government websites are easy for the public to access and provide a more consistent experience when navigating across different government websites, the Government Website and e-Services Framework has been developed to define a set of both standards and best practice guidelines for the overall design of government websites and e-Services. The objective of the framework is to assist in:

- bringing about a level of consistency throughout all State of Qatar Government Agencies’ websites through a clear, consistent and uniform online communication channel for all users;
- ensuring a consistent, intuitive and smooth online experience when one navigates from one government website to another;
- facilitating ease of navigation, information retrieval, and access to online services within and across government websites;
- promoting and fostering a common identity of the State of Qatar Government by making it easier for users to identify Qatar Government websites;
- accelerating the ease of access and development of e-Services through the use of common components and services; and
- ensuring trust, security, reliability and confidence among the users while transacting e-Services.



3 Scope and Application

- 3.1 All government websites using the .gov.qa domain shall adopt the mandatory Policies and Standards for Government Websites and e-Services as laid out in this document.
- 3.2 Government websites not using the .gov.qa domain (for example, edu.qa, .com.qa, .org.qa and .qa) and non-government websites may choose to adopt the set of Framework for Government Websites and e-Services. However, these non-gov.qa websites shall not use the State of Qatar Government logo.



4 Policy Provisions

- 4.1 All Government Agencies shall establish and maintain an internet website in both Arabic and English languages by 2015. The Arabic and English versions of the website shall be exactly the same in terms of content and mirror image in terms of layout.
- 4.2 The Government Agencies shall apply and adopt mandatory standards in the following sections of the Government Websites and e-Services Framework:
- (i) **Government Website Layout Standards and Elements (Mandatory):** This section describes the common basic design and layout that all government websites should incorporate and the various website elements that shall be included. The objective is aimed at building a common “look and feel” across different government websites, which will facilitate users in navigating across different websites.
 - (ii) **e-Services Standards (Mandatory):** This section describes the standards on how e-Services shall be designed and developed, which seeks to ensure a minimum service level and common experience is provided to users transacting with government agencies. It also includes the common components that agencies shall access for optimization and accelerated development of their e-Services.
- 4.3 The Government Agencies shall also comply with Qatar’s National [e-Accessibility policy](#). The policy aims to ensure people with disabilities in Qatar have equal access to the technologies that can enrich their lives, and covers a range of e-Accessibility issues, including websites where all government websites are required to comply with W3C Level AA standards¹.
- 4.4 The Government Agencies are also recommended to apply and adopt following section of the Government Websites and e-Services Framework in designing or enhancing their websites:
- (i) **Government Websites Design Guidelines (Optional):** This section describes the overall design guidelines that apply to all websites based on international best practices. They are aimed at optimizing the user experience and ensuring websites are user-friendly and accessible by all users.

¹ Please refer to e-Accessibility Policy published on MCIT’s website



5 Government Website Layout and Elements Standards (Mandatory)

This section describes the key elements required in all State of Qatar Government Agencies' websites. The Government Website Layout and Elements Standards provides a consistent structure for the placement of key website elements on all Government Agencies' websites. These have been developed based on international best practices.

The objectives of the Government Website Layout and Elements Standards are to:

- (i) Ensure a common “look and feel” throughout all State of Qatar Government websites;
- (ii) Foster a common State of Qatar Government identity, making it easier for users to identify a State of Qatar Government website; and
- (iii) Make it easier for users to navigate across different State of Qatar Government websites.



Standard 1: Website Layout and Elements

All government websites should adopt the following basic design and layout (highly recommended) for every page in the website. They are grouped into sixteen sections on the webpage as described below. Please note that while the attached layout below is highly recommended for use by Agencies, the placement of the Logos for the State of Qatar and the Qatar Digital Government Program on the Top Panel is mandatory.

It should be ensured that information and e-Services on the websites are securely provided as required by the [National Information Assurance Policy v2.0. Information Security Controls for Website Development and Hosting](#) as provided by MCIT should also be applied in website design and development.

1 Webpage Title		
2 Bilingual Language Link	4 Agency Name with Logo (if any)	5 Digital Government Program Logo (mandatory placement at top panel)
3 State of Qatar Logo (mandatory [placement at top panel])		6 Header Links
		7 Search Box
		8 Accessibility Buttons
		9 Content Links
10 Horizontal Navigation Panel		
11 Left Vertical Navigation Panel	12 Page Body Space	13 Right Vertical Navigation Panel
14 External Links	15 Social Media Accounts	
16 Footer Panel		



Summary of the Key Website Elements:

Section	Section Name	Key Website Elements Required	Requirements
1	Webpage title	Show the title of the webpage user is viewing	Mandatory
2	Bilingual language link	To provide a bilingual language selection link to both Arabic and English	Mandatory
3	State of Qatar logo space	To display State of Qatar Government Logo at the top Panel	Mandatory
4	Agency name space	To insert Name of Agency, or logo where appropriate	Mandatory
5	Qatar Digital Government Program Logo	To display logo of the national Qatar Digital Government Program at the top Panel	Mandatory
6	Header hyperlinks space	To include Header links to Contact us, Feedback, Site map	Mandatory
7	Search	Website search function	Mandatory
8	Accessibility buttons	Space to include components such as Text Resizer, to assist people with disabilities for easy access to the webpage content and services	Mandatory
9	Content links	Includes Print and Save symbols for users to either print or save the webpage, and options to promote the website over social media by the users	Mandatory
10	Horizontal navigation panel	Most important part of the webpage; contains links to webpage content in a structured manner	Mandatory



Section	Section Name	Key Website Elements Required	Requirements
11	Left vertical navigation panel	To provide additional navigational assistance to users; such as links to departments	Recommended
12	Page body space	To display content of the selected topic or service	Mandatory
13	Right vertical navigation panel	Space may be used to highlight important events, news or announcements	Recommended
14	External links and logos	Includes all external and useful links such as Hukoomi, Council of Ministers etc.	Mandatory
15	Social media accounts	Present hyperlinked logos of all social media accounts	Mandatory
16	Footer panel	Accessibility information	Mandatory
		Includes Privacy Statements, Terms of Use	Mandatory
		Copyright	Mandatory



Standard 1.1: Webpage Title

Title of all webpages shall be provided in this space (using HTML <TITLE> tag). It is important that web page titles be clear and concise as these page titles are used as the default names when users bookmark a website or page.

Standard 1.2: Bilingual Language Link

Each government agency shall establish and maintain a corporate website to present information about the agency, which includes informing the public of its Mission, Organization and Structure, Priorities and Services provided to the Public. Such information shall be kept updated and current.

It is important that access to people without Arabic proficiency is provided, which will encourage their participation. Hence, the website shall be bilingual, in both Arabic and English.

Agencies shall provide a bilingual link for access to its Arabic and English websites. An example of how the links could be configured in this space is shown below:

عربي | English

Standard 1.3: State of Qatar Government Logo

Agencies shall display the State of Qatar Government logo. No other images or text shall be displayed in this space.

Standard 1.4: Agency Name

This area shall be used to display the agency name and agency-logo (if applicable). The name or logo shall be hyperlinked for users to navigate back to the homepage.

Standard 1.5: Digital Government Program Logo

This space shall be used to display logo of the national Qatar Digital Government Program and shall be placed at the top Panel (mandatory). The logo may be requested from MCIT to ensure standardization.



Standard 1.6: Header Links – Contact Information, Feedback, Sitemap

This area shall contain the following links:

- Contact us
- Feedback
- Sitemap

An example of how these links should be configured in this space is shown below:

Contact Us | Feedback | Sitemap

Contact us

The “Contact Us” page provides users with a list of up-to-date communication details.

Agencies shall provide a “Contact Us” or similar, through which assistance related to the website or responsible Government organization can be requested. The website’s “Contact us” or similar webpage should include the following:

- (i) office address;
- (ii) a regularly monitored postal address ;
- (iii) an email account that is regularly monitored by the Agency;
- (iv) operating hours of the offices/departments;
- (v) the main telephone number and that for each call center that supports a service provided by the and hours of operation; and
- (vi) contact details for its Media Liaison Officer.

A map of the vicinity or directions to the office should also be provided here.

Feedback

Maintaining an ongoing dialogue between the Agencies and the public is essential to engaging its people and providing quality services.



Agencies shall provide a “Feedback” link to the web page allowing users to send comments or post enquiries about the website or agency matters. Agencies can consider providing different types of communication options through a form, in both online and offline format. The form should be designed to accommodate the following uses:

- Enquiry – for enquiries about the website, information or services provided. It should be highlighted here that for enquiry on specific services, users should first read the information provided for all services on the e-Services page (as mentioned in Standard 2.1) and post enquiry only if their queries are not addressed there;
- Feedback – to allow users to provide feedback about the website, information or services provided; please also refer Standard 2.12.

The form should:

- Clearly identify the purpose (as noted above) or allow users to select the option
- Be easy to complete
- Be designed to be as accessible as possible
- Indicate if the user would like a response. If a response is required, the form must capture the user’s name and email or postal address.

Site map

The site map represents the structure of the website both textually and graphically in a single page. It provides an excellent overview of the website and allows for quick access to pages and content of a website.

However, where websites are only two levels deep (home page is the top level), the sitemap may be omitted, as this means that the entire website can be reached from the home page. For these websites, the home page is already the sitemap, thus a sitemap is not necessary.



Standard 1.7: Search Function

Agencies should assist the public in locating government information and services. Agencies shall ensure that its public website and any other major entry point include a search function.

Website search is a common feature. A consistent location on the top right corner of the website would allow users to find the search form easily. There must be no rollover, drop down or mouse click actions to view these minimum required search functionalities. To increase usability, it is recommended that agencies display the text 'search this site' in the



search box. An example of how this will look like is as follows:

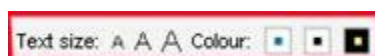
Where possible, the search results should display the following information:

- Title (linked to content page)
- Description
- File format
- File size

Users may not be aware of exact topic or service name while typing in the search box. Therefore, the website search engine should be able to respond users' terminology and may have intuitive features such as open lists to improve search performance and display the intended topic or service in results. Please also refer to Guideline 13 for further assistance.

Standard 1.8: Accessibility Buttons

Space here contains buttons to resize text, change color or contrast, or read out webpage content aloud, to ensure that needs of all users - including people with disabilities, to access the website and avail services, are addressed. For detailed requirements, please refer to Qatar's e-Accessibility policy ([qatar_eaccessibility_policy_en_v4.pdf \(mcit.gov.qa\)](#)). An example is shown below.





Text resize function

As per WCAG2.0, text can be resized without assistive technology up to 200 percent without loss of content or functionality, except for captions and images of text. The default browser function for text resizing should always be available, as some users find online text hard to see and read. The text resize function can also be made available through the website. Agencies choosing this option must ensure the script enabling this function is implemented correctly to meet web accessibility standard. The function should be placed in the top right section of the 'Page body' area. It can be displayed as follows with the alt text "increase text size" and "decrease text size" respectively:

- A+ A- or
- Text size: A A A

Change color or contrast function

Some people with cognitive disabilities require specific color combinations of foreground text and background or contrast to help them successfully understand the contents of the Web page. Although not required for conformance by WCAG 2.0, agencies may consider providing controls with a sufficient contrast ratio that allows users to switch to a presentation that suits their needs.

Agencies shall also refer to Qatar's National e-Accessibility Policy's requirements for websites.

Standard 1.9 Content Links

These links can be included to improve the visibility of the website. Elements include options for the user to print, save, email or share over social network. A separate "Like" button may also be included to propagate the website over social media. The content-link elements should be placed in the top right section of the main webpage. Examples of how these links could look like is shown as follows:



Alternative text in the above order would be "Print | Email | Save | Share | Like." If the "Share" feature is used, clicking on the "Share" button should also result in a drop-down or popping up of list containing the relevant social network websites' icons for the user to choose from for sharing the content.

Print this page



It is recommended that agencies provide a print friendly function which is configured to print the core content of the page only – i.e. the main content with navigation removed, formatted to print correctly on the page.


The function can be displayed as:

- text – “Print this page” or
- a print icon (for example:)  with the alternative text “Print this page”.

This function should open in a new window displaying the content to be printed, with a ‘Print’ button at the top right corner of the new window to activate the function.

Email this page

The ‘Email this page’ function makes it easier for web users to email the current page to a contact/friend. The function can be displayed as:

- an icon (e.g. an envelope image ) , with the alternative text ‘email this page’ or
- as text ‘Email’ or ‘email this page’

It is recommended that the function brings up a pop-up box with the following fields:

- Title (e.g. Email to Friend or email this page)
- From: <your name>
- To: <recipients email address>
- Optional message field
- Option to send a copy of the email to the sender. If this option is selected, the sender’s email address will need to be captured.

The pop-up box will also need to display the ‘Send’ and ‘Cancel’ buttons.

Save this page

This function allows the users to save the webpage in compatible formats such as PDF, HTML etc.

Social Media elements

Options to share or like over social media may also be provided in this section. Objective of these functions is to generate awareness about the webpage through social media.

Standard 1.10: Horizontal Navigation Panel

The hyperlinks on the horizontal navigation panel shall be consistent across the website, and shall not occupy more than a single row, as shown below:

[Home](#) | [About Us](#) | [Programs & Services](#) | [Publications](#) | [News & Events](#) | [Open Data](#) | [e-Participation](#) | [Careers](#)

Agencies shall use the following structure and labels for basic information, *where applicable* to the website:

Top Level Links	Second-level links	Description	Requirement
Home	-	Link to home page	Mandatory
About Us <i>(Note: Agency may use About <Agency /program name> where it deems to be clearer or more appropriate)</i>	Mandate	States the mandate and priorities of the Agency	Mandatory
	Vision/Mission	Vision/Mission statements of the Agency	Mandatory
	Values	Corporate Values of the Agency	Recommended
	Overview	Overview of the Agency and what it does	Mandatory
	Organization Structure	Overview of the major department and functions of the Agency	Mandatory



Top Level Links	Second-level links	Description	Requirement
	Management team	Information about the key management team/members	Mandatory
Programs and / or Services (Note: Agency may use “Programs” or “Services” if it is more appropriate)	-	Information about all services provided by the agency, including e-Services and government programs and public projects; please also refer to Standards 2.1 and 2.3 on how to display content here	Mandatory
Publications	Statistics	Statistics published by the agency	Recommended
	Newsletters	Newsletter by the Agency	Recommended
	Legislations/Regulations	Legal statutes/acts /regulatory frameworks etc.	Recommended
	Policies/Standards/Guidelines	Public policies and guidelines	Recommended
	Annual reports	Annual reports	Recommended
Open Data	Open Data catalogue	List of all available Open Data with links	Mandatory ²

² Please also refer to Qatar’s Open Data Policy published on MCIT’s website



Top Level Links	Second-level links	Description	Requirement
e-Participation	Consultation Papers	Public Consultation papers	Mandatory ³
News & Events	Press Releases	Press releases by the agency	Recommended
	Speeches	Speeches by management team members	
	Calendar of events	Past and upcoming events	
Careers	Job opportunities	Job openings	Recommended
	Scholarships (if applicable)	Scholarships offered by the Agency	Recommended

Standard 1.11: Left Vertical Navigation panel

A vertical left navigation panel should be used for additional navigation. This is because users tend to look for additional navigational hyperlinks on the left. A typical example is navigation of the website by departments in the agency, and their respective functions.

Standard 1.12: Page Body Space

This area is the main page body space where content shall be displayed for the topics chosen by the user. For e.g., if the user clicks on “Organization Structure,” this area should display organization structure of the agency with brief description.

Standard 1.13: Right Vertical Navigation Panel

³ Please also refer to Qatar’s e-Participation Policy published on MCIT’s website



This section is optional but agency may use it to display important news, events or announcements that require users' immediate attention.

Standard 1.14: External Links and Logos

Logos with hyperlinks shall be displayed towards the bottom right of the webpage. Agency shall link to appropriate cross-agency portals when applicable, to guide the public to additional resources that exist across the Qatar government agencies. Among others, the list of external links must include Hukoomi (national e-Government portal) and Council of Ministers' website.

Agencies shall also establish and enforce explicit agency-wide linking policies that describe management controls for linking within and beyond the agency. These policies shall appropriately limit external linking to information or services necessary for the proper performance of agency functions. For example, if there is an appropriate, useful government-wide portal on a particular topic or website for a particular audience, that portal should be linked from the agency's webpage(s) on that topic. As with all links, links to such agency portals shall be routinely reviewed to ensure they are current and accurate. Please note that the website/portal content shall be linked only if it adds additional information or is a natural "next step" for the user or audience.

Standard 1.15: Social Media Accounts

Agencies that are implementing social media on their websites can use this space to display their social media accounts. These elements should be displayed as icons with the appropriate alternative text.

Typical depiction of links to the social media accounts looks as below:



Alternative text in the above order would be "Facebook | Twitter | YouTube | LinkedIn." Clicking on the above icons should lead the user to the agency's page on the respective social media account. Agencies should observe the policies and guidelines stipulated in the e-Participation Policy when released by MCIT while implementing social media elements on their websites.

Standard 1.16: Footer Panel

The hyperlinks on the horizontal footer panel should be consistent across the website, and should not occupy more than a single row, as shown below:

[Accessibility](#) | [Privacy Statement](#) | [Terms of Use](#)
Copyright © 2014 State of Qatar



The footer panel may also include system requirements to specify minimum supported web browsers, plug-in information etc. Please refer Guideline 4.4 in this document.

Accessibility Information

The accessibility content page shall be used to provide information on options by which the agency's accessibility features can be enabled. It shall contain information on:

- *how to change text size*

Detail how users can change the text size on the website. Government websites should be designed to ensure text resizing can occur, irrespective of the browser type or version being used. This can be done by setting relative sizes for text rather than absolute values.

- *tools to aid viewing website documents*

Description should include how users can change color or contrast to suit their needs. Also, if the website includes option to read out the content aloud, should instruct the users on the same. Agencies may also provide links to free 3rd party reader and viewer software that will allow all documents on the website to be readable from any computer system. For example: Microsoft/Apple readers/viewers, Open source readers/viewers, PDF conversion tools, etc.

- *any other accessibility issues specific to an agency's website*

Agencies should also state the website's accessibility level per WCAG 2.0.

Privacy Statement

Each website shall contain a privacy statement. Giving notice to website visitors about how the Agency collects and uses personal information is good practice and will assist the agency in both complying with privacy laws and principles, and gaining public trust and confidence in those who use government website and services. The statement shall clearly indicate:

- the scope of the statement;
- the circumstances in which personal information is collected, by whom it is held (e.g. the responsible Agency and/or any other third parties);
- the uses to which such collected personal information may be put by the collecting Agency and the circumstances in which it may be disclosed;



- if cookies are used, a statement and a brief description of its purpose should be included;

A link to the privacy statement shall be visible on the website's home page. A sample of how the Privacy statement can be worded is at Appendix 1.

Terms of Use

A link to a page detailing the terms of use of the website, the terms shall include any disclaimers, copyright clauses, privacy clauses and hyperlinking policies. A sample of the Terms of Use is at Appendix 2.

Copyright Notice

This space shall be used to insert a copyright notice in the format © followed by the current year (e.g. 2015) and "State of Qatar."



6 E-Services Standards (Mandatory)

This section describes the general standards for e-Services provided by Agencies. The objective is to ensure a common user experience and minimum level of service standards to users transacting with the Government online.

Standard 2: E-Services Standards

One of the core strategic objectives of our national Qatar Digital Government 2020 Strategy is to better serve individuals and businesses, with a strategic KPI set for all government agencies to put 100% of their services online and 80% of services end-to-end. This strategy requires all government agencies to deliver citizen-centered services online where users can complete e-Services end-to-end online.

It is in this light that the e-Services standards have been developed to guide government agencies to provide “simple, fast and secure services, anywhere and anytime.” They will ensure agencies are planning and implementing the e-government services in an integrated and consistent way. Agencies should ensure that all steps in availing services are simple and fast – this means that where possible government agencies should simplify processes, remove redundancies and adopt online workflow in delivering services from citizen-centric approach. During the Qatar Digital Government 2020 study, one of the major concerns of citizens and residents in Qatar has been the assurance of security of services delivered online. Agencies should take appropriate measures such as adopting Qatar’s [e-Authentication Framework](#), and assuring citizens about safety of their privacies and protection of their data by stating privacy protection policies on their websites. A sample privacy statement is provided in Appendix 1 of this document.

Standard 2.1: Provide Adequate Information about all Services

Qatar’s e-Participation Policy recognizes three-level model of e-Participation – (i) e-Information, (ii) e-Consultation and (iii) e-Decision-making. e-Information is the most “passive” or basic level of e-Participation that enables participation by providing citizens with public information and access to information upon demand.

In compliance with the basic requirement of e-Participation, agencies shall publish on their respective e-Services pages or sections of their websites, adequate information about all services needed by users to avail the services end-to-end:

- (i) **A Hyperlinked List containing Names of All Services Provided by the Agency** – Service names shall be descriptive and easy to understand. A brief narrative shall be provided alongside the service names. The hyperlink provided on service names shall take the user to the main service page containing information in (ii) to (iv) below, and to transact the e-Service if the service is



available online. Please also refer Standard 2.3 for listing based on grouping and categorization of e-Services.

- (ii) **Description of Service** – For each of the Services listed, agencies shall include a brief description of the Service; target user – whether Qatari citizen, expat residents, businesses or visitors; whether transacted online, offline or combination of both; and estimated time to complete the process as well as service transaction. Some examples of estimated completion or processing times include: “this e-Service will take about 5-10 minutes to complete”; “this application will take 1 week to process.” It shall also inform the user of the pre-requisites for the successful application of the e-Service.
- (iii) **Information on Requirements for Services** – agencies shall provide key requirements for the Services, including if there are any information or details that applicants should have ready prior to availing the Service. Also specify procedures and steps to complete the service transaction. If some steps or the entire service are to be availed offline, contact department, location and timings shall be provided. Information shall also include required fees and different payment options.

Attachments and downloadable forms shall also be provided, and assistance shall be provided to complete the form. All mandatory fields shall be highlighted. Additional information should be provided on what supportive documents are required to be submitted or uploaded as attachments for online Services.

Users should be able to enter an e-Service knowing what the e-Service is about, who it is for, and what is required to successfully complete the transaction, as well as how long it will take. Users should not be caught unprepared in the middle of a transaction and abort the process. For example, a credit card may be needed for e-payment to complete the transaction. In light of this, for all e-Services that require user authentication, users should not be asked to authenticate or login first prior to reading this information on the first page of the e-Service.

- (iv) Agencies shall provide Hyperlinks to **Terms & Conditions, FAQ and Help**. If the service is an e-Service, a link shall also be provided for users to begin the e-Service transaction.

Frequently Asked Questions and Help Pages

FAQs shall be prepared and published and they should address common questions that users may ask or situations that they may consider. “FAQs”



and “Help” Hyperlinks shall be located at the top of every page of the e-Service to provide assistance to the users at all times throughout the transaction.

The “Help” hyperlink will bring the user to a help page containing key information which shall include the following:

- a. Overview of the service
- b. Who is eligible for the service
- c. What is needed to complete the online service
- d. User guide on instructions for users to complete the transaction
- e. Information on how payment collections, refunds and failed deductions will be dealt with
- f. Information on what happens in case of errors including error messages, their descriptions and resolution process.

Terms and Conditions Page

The terms and conditions for an e-Service is different from that of the Terms of Use for the Agency Website and are specific to that specific e-Service. It may include user declarations and disclaimers. For e-payment services, the “Terms and Conditions” shall also include payment, or refund policies.

Standard 2.2: Plan and Design User-Centric Online Services

Agencies shall strive to deliver e-Services at their highest level of maturity (i.e. “Integrate” stage as defined by the United Nations) where applicable, and they must be easily accessible, so as to provide greater convenience to the public. Agencies shall also ensure consistency in the design of their e-Services and websites. These e-Services shall be user-centric and easy to use, with relevant and up-to-date contents.

- i. In designing their e-Services, Agencies shall conduct a Business Process Review (BPR) of their current service delivery flow and processes, aiming at removing non value adding steps and streamlining process flow. Agencies shall strive to



automate manual processes aiming at achieving an end-to-end backend integration to ensure a seamless service flow and reduced cycle time.

- ii. Agencies shall provide complete end-to-end e-Services by integrating systems and services within the Agency and with other Agencies where required, to offer a One-Stop service to their users. As per Qatar Digital Government 2020 strategic targets for year 2020, 100% of government services should be available online and 80% of all services should be available end-to-end online.

Many e-Services involve more than one government agency during different steps of service delivery. Such involvement of multiple agencies may be in the form of verification, information request or approval. Agencies shall work towards acting as the one-stop-shop for the users in delivery of services and not require users to approach various agencies during different stages of service delivery.

- iii. Agencies shall use verification against a backend database instead of asking users to produce physical document (e.g. ID, birth certificate, etc.). Where possible, always minimize data entry by users and obtain such data from source. Please refer to Qatar's Data Management Policy available at MCIT's website which includes provisions for the sharing of data across agencies to facilitate e-Services. Where such data sharing or exchange takes place, secure and encrypted transmission of Personal Data and Information shall be ensured for e-Service delivery.
- iv. Wherever backend database verification is not feasible or sufficient and users are required to submit printed documents for verification, option shall be provided for users to upload scanned copies of documents on the e-Service transaction webpage. Also, wherever users are required to collect printed documents, option shall be provided for delivery through courier. Similarly, options shall be provided to make online payments while transacting e-Services (please also refer Standard 2.10). The above will help in eliminating the need for users to visit the counter or keeping the number of visits to government agencies as low as possible.
- v. Agencies shall also ensure service reliability of e-Services. Wherever users encounter errors during e-Service transactions, specific error code should be provided in order that users are able to contact the agency with the error code for resolution. Also, Agencies shall ensure that users do not encounter HTTP errors (such as 404 or 505) while transacting e-Services. Agencies shall also ensure that e-Services are available for 24X7 online transaction.

Standard 2.3: Categorize and Group Online Services



Online services shall be grouped with the delivery of end-to-end service as an objective, from application through to final approval. All sub-services such as printing of forms, enquiry of status etc. shall be grouped together under the main service transaction covering all aspects of the service being delivered. Name of the main service transaction shall reflect the main service sought by citizens, even if this involves multiple government agencies or multiple sub-services.

Agencies shall also categorize main e-Services in logical order based on target user groups or beneficiaries of e-Services, so that users are able to easily search and navigate through the services list [Standard 2.1 (i)] to the target service page.

Standard 2.4: Use Right Level of User Authentication

Agencies shall assess, classify and implement the required level of authentication for their e-Services according to Qatar's [e-Authentication Framework](#) and [National Information Assurance Policy v2.0](#). Classification of services as above will set the requirement for one-factor (for example, username-password), two-factor (for example, username-password and smartcard/One Time Password (OTP)) or no authentication for e-Services transacted by the user.

Standard 2.5: Indicate Progress

For e-Services with multiple steps, include an indication of where the user is currently at, in relation to the entire transaction. For example, "You are at Step 1 of 5", etc.

All e-Services shall provide acknowledgement to the user upon completing the transaction and shall include the following:

- An Acknowledgement code or "receipt number"
- Date and time of transaction was made
- List of services or items transaction

Please also refer [Guideline 2.6](#) in this document for details.

Standard 2.6: Provide Notifications

Agencies shall provide automated notifications in the form of email or SMS to users for all key stages (e.g. Payment Received, Application under Process, Application Approved/Rejected) during the processing of requested services.



Standard 2.7: Provide Assistance and Support

When users encounter problems or difficulties with using the e-Service, they would need to be able to obtain help easily. Agencies shall provide the following options to the users:

- Providing online tutorial/help with screen shots and instructions. Online self-help like FAQs will be useful.
- Telephone contact details with working hours shall be provided so that users in need of help can get instant assistance. Please refer Standard 2.10 below.
- Live chat with service agents should also be provided, especially for services targeting remote users such as overseas citizens, tourists, businesses etc. Ideally, chat support for such services should be provided 24/7 considering different time zones per user locations.
- Where an e-Service is complex and is for a specific group of users or corporate users, training and hands-on workshops shall be provided.

Standard 2.8: Provide Tracking of Services

Agencies shall provide facility to users so that they are able to track the status of services availed. The status result shall also provide estimated duration in which the service will be completed. Users should be able to enquire about the service status through both online (web) and offline modes (telephone/visits) and Agencies shall provide description of various tracking options available.

Standard 2.9: Show User Data

Upon secure login, users shall be able to view their key account information such as name, contact details etc. If users spot any error, process shall be indicated to rectify the error. Ideally, users should be able to initiate request for correction/update of data online.

Logged in users shall also be able to view their past transactions for the e-Service that they are currently availing.

Standard 2.10: Adopt Government-wide ICT Infrastructure and Services

As required by [Council of Ministers Resolution No. \(18\)/2010 – Implementation of e-Government Policies](#), Government Agencies shall leverage and adopt Government-wide ICT Infrastructure and Services to ensure efficiency in operations, adherence to common



standards and platforms, and secure connectivity and information exchange within the Government.

A list of the Government-wide ICT infrastructure and services managed by MCIT that Agencies shall adopt include:

1. **Government Contact Center**: For users' convenience, a single telephone contact number for assistance in all e-Services should be provided. For this, Agencies shall appoint and use the Government Contact Center as the focal support for its e-Services.
2. **Government Authentication Service**: In order that users are not required to register individually with each agency and authenticate separately for different e-Services, Agencies shall adopt Government Authentication Service and adhere to Qatar's e-Services Registration & Authentication Policy (Council of Ministers Resolution No. (18)/2010-Third Attachment). Agencies shall also publish on their e-Services webpage information about security levels and methods adopted as well as privacy statements, in order to gain users trust in transacting e-Services.
3. **Government e-Payment Platform**: Agencies shall utilize Qatar's central e-payment platform to ensure safe and efficient payment process. SSL Certificates should be installed onto the Agencies' web server to initiate secure sessions with browsers during payment transactions. The online payment shall conform to the **National Information Assurance Policy v2.0** as well as the Banking Supervision Rules issued by the Qatar Central Bank particularly the clauses that regulate on-line payment.

In general, payment process shall not be longer than 3 steps – entering secure payment information, secure verification and transaction success/ failure confirmation. Printable payment receipt shall be provided after completion of payment transaction. Notifications shall be sent in accordance with Standard 2.6.

4. **Government Network Infrastructure**: To ensure secured connectivity and leverage common network infrastructure, Agencies shall connect to the Qatar Government Network for connectivity to its Data Exchange services for the backend verification of data for its e-Services enablement.

In addition to the above, Agencies shall further align themselves to adopt other Government-wide ICT services and infrastructure as and when they are made available.

Standard 2.11: Automate Data Validation/Verification

Upon login, key user data shall be auto-populated in the online service application form. Should users identify any error, they should be able to rectify the error in accordance with



Standard 2.9. For user-entered data, agencies shall automate data validation through intra and inter agency systems integration. Main benefits of this are – simplification of online e-Service forms with minimal or no need to attach documents, and fast and secure verification since validation would take place through systems.

Standard 2.12: User Feedback and Rating

Feedback from the public and users is important to help the agency to continually improve their service levels. Agencies shall establish mechanisms to solicit user feedback on Government services and using such feedback regularly to make service improvements. Agencies shall put in place processes to collect, monitor, review feedback and ensure follow-up actions are taken.

Where services are transacted online, include “Rate this e-Service” option for user feedback. Feedback ratings are encouraged to be published on Services page or section.

Standard 2.13: Increase Adoption of e-Services

As per targets of Qatar Digital Government 2020 Strategy, 80% of all government service transactions should be conducted online by the year 2020. Therefore, agencies shall plan for and identify various ways to help increase adoption and usage of their e-Services through various means and channels. Such means or channels includes:

- Providing early information to engage the public prior to the launch of any e-Services. Such distribution of information can be via the websites, direct mailers, or via the mass media. Where appropriate, agencies should leverage the mass media to carry information on key and important announcements;
- Educating and explaining the changes introduced to ensure user acceptance and buy-in.
- Providing incentives is one means to driving user adoption. Such incentives could include giving time and/or price differentiation (e.g. lower fees and/or shorter processing time if transaction is completed online).

Standard 2.14: Conduct Continuous Review and Introduce Improvements

Agencies shall conduct periodic reviews either half-yearly or yearly to improve its e-Services and how they could better deliver services to the public. [Guideline 14](#) may be referred for details on best practices to conduct usability testing.



7 Government Website Design Guidelines (Optional)

Websites should be designed to optimize the user experience. Users will be able to make use of the websites when the information is displayed in a directly usable format and content organization is highly intuitive. At the same time, information and e-Services on the websites should be securely provided as required by the [National Information Assurance Policy v2.0](#) in order to build user trust ensuring that the users believe the system is reliable, available and secure for them to conduct online transactions. [Information Security Controls for Website Development and Hosting](#) as provided by MCIT should also be applied in website design and development.

Guidelines below are provided to assist Government Agencies in the State of Qatar in designing and enhancing their websites as per international best practices to ensure that above objectives are met.

Guideline 1: Website Searchability and Performance

Key to a website's success lies in how easy it is for the user to "discover" the website on searching and how has their first experience been. Therefore, below guidelines should be followed to ensure success in this respect.

Guideline 1.1: Optimize Website Search-ability

In order to have a high probability of being accessed, ensure that a Web site is in the 'top 30' references presented from a major search engine. Studies have shown that users usually do not look at Web sites that are not in the 'top 30.' Some of the features required to be in the 'top 30' include appropriate meta-content and page titles, the number of links to the Web site, as well as updated registration with the major search engines.

For example, the below snippet of html code illustrates one important way of ensuring that a Web site will be found by search engines - embedding keyword metatags. These keywords are read by search engines and used to categorize Web sites; understanding typical users will provide clues as to what keywords should be used.

```
<meta name="description" content="The Official Website of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology">
```

```
<meta name="title" content="Ministry of Communications and Information Technology">
```

```
<meta name="subject" content="Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, MCIT, M.C.I.T., ICT, e-Government, e-Services, e-Government Steering
```



Committee, Qatar Digital Government 2020, i-Government, Cyber Security, Q-CERT, Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Minister of MCIT”>

Guideline 1.2: Enhance Website Performance

Set performance goals that include success rates and the time it takes users to find specific information, or preference goals that address satisfaction and acceptance by users. Setting user performance and/or preference goals helps developers build better Web sites. It can also help make usability testing more effective. For example, a goal may be set that information will be found eighty percent of the time and in less than one minute.



Guideline 2: User Experience

Web sites should be designed to facilitate and encourage efficient and effective human-computer interactions. To ensure this, below guidelines should be observed.

Guideline 2.1: Enhance Website Credibility

Agencies should consider following actions to ensure high Web site credibility:

- Provide a useful set of frequently asked questions (FAQ) and answers;
- Ensure the Web site is arranged in a logical way;
- Provide articles containing citations and references;
- Ensure the site looks professionally designed;
- Provide an archive of past content (where appropriate);
- Ensure the site is as up-to-date as possible;
- Provide links to outside sources and materials; and
- Ensure the site is linked to and by the national Hukoomi government portal (www.gov.qa).

Guideline 2.2: Standardize Task Sequences

Allow users to perform tasks in the same sequence and manner across similar conditions in all government websites. Users learn certain sequences of behaviors and perform best when they can be reliably repeated. For example, users become accustomed to looking in either the left or right panels for additional information. Also, users become familiar with the steps in a search or payment process.

Guideline 2.3: Minimize Page Download Time

Minimize the time required to download a Web site's pages. Long page download time contributes to user fatigue and dissatisfaction. The best way to facilitate fast page loading is to minimize the number of bytes per page.

Guideline 2.4: Time-out Secure Information

Design pages that require or present secure information, to time-out automatically. Also, warn users before time expires with the option to request additional time. Be careful that pages that require users to use them within a fixed amount of time can present particular challenges to users who read or make entries slowly.



Guideline 2.5: Display Information in a Directly Usable Format

Display data and information in a format that does not require conversion by the user. Do not require users to convert or summarize information in order for it to be immediately useful. It is best to display data in a manner that is consistent with the standards and conventions most familiar to users.

To accommodate a multinational Web audience, information should be provided in multiple formats (e.g., Celsius and Fahrenheit for temperatures) or the user should be allowed to select their preferred formats (e.g., the 12- or the 24-hour clock).

Do not require users to convert, transpose, compute, interpolate, or translate displayed data into other units, or refer to documentation to determine the meaning of displayed data.

Guideline 2.6: Provide Process Completion Status

Provide users with appropriate feedback while they are waiting. For example, if processing will take less than 10 seconds, use an hourglass to indicate status; if processing will take up to sixty seconds or longer, use a process indicator that shows progress toward completion; if computer processing will take over one minute, indicate this to the user and provide an auditory signal when the processing is complete. Users frequently become involved in other activities when they know they must wait for long periods of time for the computer to process information. Under these circumstances, completion of processing should be indicated by a non-disruptive sound (beep).

Guideline 2.7: Provide Download Information

Indicate to users the time required to download an image or document at a given connection speed. Providing the size and download time of large images or documents gives users sufficient information to choose whether or not they are willing to wait for the file to download.

Guideline 2.8: Design Webpages in Printable Format

If users are likely to print one or more webpages, develop pages with widths that print properly. It is possible to display pages that are too wide to print completely on standard 8.5 x 11 inch paper in portrait orientation. Ensure that margin to margin printing is possible and content is not truncated while printing.



Guideline 2.9: Disallow Unsolicited Windows and Pop-ups

Do not have unsolicited windows or graphics 'pop-up' to users. Unsolicited windows or graphics that 'pop up' are annoying and distracting to users when they are focusing on completing their original activity.



Guideline 3: Accessibility

Web sites should be designed to ensure that everyone, including users who have difficulty seeing, hearing, and making precise movements, can use them. Generally, this means ensuring that Web sites facilitate the use of common assistive technologies.

Guideline 3.1: Adopt W3C Guidelines for Website Accessibility

The W3C guidelines define 3 sets of priorities for accessible website design:

(i) Priority 1 or 'A' level accessibility

Achieving this level is a basic requirement for some groups to be able to access information and use Web documents. A web content developer must satisfy this level.

(ii) Priority 2 or 'AA' level accessibility if this and priority 1 are satisfied

Achieving this level will remove significant barriers to accessing information in web documents. A web content developer should satisfy this level.

(iii) Priority 3 or 'AAA' level accessibility if this and priority 1 and 2 are satisfied

Achieving this level will improve access to web documents. A web content developer may address this level, otherwise, one or more groups will find it somewhat difficult to access information in the document.

While the minimum level accessibility as required by Qatar's [e-Accessibility Policy](#) is Level 'AA', Agencies should adopt higher level where feasible.

Guideline 3.2: Design Forms for Users Using Assistive Technologies

Ensure that users using assistive technology can complete and submit online forms. Much of the information collected through the Internet is collected using online forms. All users should be able to access forms and interact with field elements such as radio buttons and text boxes.



Guideline 3.3: Avoid Using Color to Deliver Information

Ensure that all information conveyed with color is also available without color. Never use color as the only indicator for critical activities. Most users with color deficiencies have difficulty seeing colors in the green portion of the spectrum. WCAG 2.0 Success Criterion 1.4.1 requires that color “is not used as the only visual means of conveying information, indicating an action, prompting a response, or distinguishing a visual element.”

To accommodate color-deficient users, designers should:

- Select color combinations that can be discriminated by users with color deficiencies;
- Use tools to see what Web pages will look like when seen by color deficient users;
- Ensure that the lightness contrast between foreground and background colors is high. [WCAG 2.0 Success Criterion 1.4.3](#) requires that the “visual presentation of text and images of text has a contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1.”
- Increase the lightness contrast between colors on either end of the spectrum (e.g., blues and reds); and
- Avoid combining light colors from either end of the spectrum with dark colors from the middle of the spectrum.

Guideline 3.4: Provide Text Equivalent for Non-Text Elements

Text equivalents should be used for all non-text elements, including images, graphical representations of text (including symbols), image map regions, animations (e.g., animated GIFs), applets and programmatic objects, ASCII art, frames, scripts, images used as list bullets, spacers, graphical buttons, sounds, stand-alone audio files, audio tracks of video, and video.

Guideline 3.5: Test Plug-Ins and Applets for Accessibility

To ensure accessibility, test any applets, plug-ins or other applications required to interpret page content to ensure that they can be used by assistive technologies. Applets, plug-ins and other software can create problems for people using assistive technologies, and should be thoroughly tested for accessibility.



Guideline 3.6: Ensure that Scripts Allow Accessibility

When designing for accessibility, ensure that the information provided on pages that utilize scripting languages to display content or to create interface elements can be read by assistive technology. Whenever a script changes the content of a page, the change must be indicated in a way that can be detected and read by a screen reader. Also, if 'mouseovers' are used, ensure that they can be activated using a keyboard.



Guideline 4: Hardware and Software

Websites should be designed to address the compatibility needs of hardware and software used by majority of the users.

Guideline 4.1: Design for Common Browsers

Design, develop and test the website for the most common browsers. It should be attempted to accommodate majority of all users. Ensure that all testing of a Web site is done using the most popular browsers. As at December 2014, Internet Explorer (59%), Chrome (23%) and Firefox (12%) account for 94% market share of desktop browsers⁴.

Guideline 4.2: Design for Popular Operating Systems

Design the Web site so it will work well with the most popular operating systems. Designers should attempt to accommodate majority of all users. Ensure that all testing of a Web site is done using the most common operating systems.

As at December 2014, the most popular desktop operating system is Microsoft's Windows 7 which has around 56% of the market share followed by Windows XP (~18%) and Windows 8/8.1 (~14%). Overall, Windows and OS X operating systems collectively account for around 99% desktop OS market share⁵. Designers should consult one of the several sources that maintain current figures to help ensure that they are designing to accommodate as many users as possible.

Guideline 4.3: Design for Commonly Used Screen Resolutions

Design for monitors with the screen resolution set at 1024x768 pixels. Designers should attempt to accommodate majority of all users.

As of December 2014⁶, 72% of users have a screen resolution of 1024x768 pixels or higher; highest used pixel being 1366X768 at 16%. By designing for a minimum of 1024x768, designers will accommodate the most common resolution, as well as those at any higher

⁴ All figures shown here are as of December 2014 according to Net Applications, and are only used to reflect current trends. These figures may vary per period depending on prevailing technological trends. Government Agencies are advised to perform thorough research while designing their websites.

⁵ All figures shown here are as of December 2014 according to Net Applications, and are only used to reflect current trends. These figures may vary per period depending on prevailing technological trends. Government Agencies are advised to perform thorough research while designing their websites.

⁶ All figures shown here are as of December 2014 according to Net Applications, and are only used to reflect current trends. These figures may vary per period depending on prevailing technological trends. Government Agencies are advised to perform thorough research while designing their websites.



resolution. Designers should consult one of the several sources that maintain current figures to help ensure that they are designing to accommodate as many users as possible.

Guideline 4.4: Specify System Requirements

Minimum supported web browsers and their version number should be displayed on the website home page. Information about any required plug-in software should also be displayed before the plug-ins are used. Wherever appropriate, websites may use Java applets or Macromedia Flash; however, a link should be provided in order that users not having the required software may download and install in their computing hardware.

Guideline 4.5: System Security

Government Agencies should refer to [Information Security Controls for Website Development and Hosting](#) when developing or enhancing websites. [Cloud Security Policy for Government Agencies](#) should be complied with whenever cloud solutions are opted for. It should also be ensured that the hardware and software are compliant to the requirements laid down in the [National Information Assurance Policy v2.0](#).



Guideline 5: Homepage

The homepage is different from all other Website pages. A well-constructed homepage will project a good first impression to all who visit the site. A homepage should clearly communicate the site's purpose, and show all major options available on the Web site.

Guideline 5.1: Ensure Universal Access to Homepage

Enable users to access the homepage from any other page on the Web site. Many users return to the homepage to begin a new task or to start a task over again. Create an easy and obvious way for users to quickly return to the homepage of the Web site from any point in the site.

Many sites place the organization's logo on the top of every page and link it to the homepage. While many users expect that a logo will be clickable, many other users will not realize that it is a link to the homepage. Therefore, include a link labeled 'Home' near the top of the page to help those users.

Guideline 5.2: Present all Major Topics/Options on the Homepage

A homepage serves as the front door of your website. Agencies should design their homepages to feature the public's most requested information and services and to serve as a top-level directory to access the primary sections of your website.

Government websites need to focus on helping the public find the services and information they want and need most. Generally, users evaluate websites based on homepages alone. Hence, users should not be required to click down to second or third level to discover the full breadth of topics or options on a website. Be selective about what is placed on the homepage, and make sure the topics, options or links presented are the most important ones.

Guideline 5.3: Limit Prose Text on the Homepage

Limit the amount of prose text on the homepage. The first action of most users is to scan the homepage for link titles and major headings. Requiring users to read large amounts of prose text can slow them considerably, or they may avoid reading it altogether.



Guideline 5.4: Limit Homepage Length

Limit the homepage to one screenful of information, if at all possible. Information that cannot be seen in the first screenful may be missed altogether—this can negatively impact the effectiveness of the Web site. If users conclude that what they see on the visible portion of the page is not of interest, they may not bother scrolling to see the rest of the page.



Guideline 6: Page Layout

All Web pages should be structured for ease of comprehension. This includes putting items on the page in an order that reflects their relative importance. For ease of navigation, users should have a sense of predictability when browsing through different government agencies' websites. Therefore, government agencies' Web pages should be designed with a consistent structure.

Guideline 6.1: Show Webpage Titles

All web pages, including those nested within frames, should be titled (using HTML <TITLE> tag). It is important that web page titles be clear and concise as these page titles are used as the default names when users bookmark a website or page.

Guideline 6.2: Avoid Cluttered Displays

Create pages that are not considered cluttered by users. Clutter is when excess items on a page lead to a degradation of performance when trying to find certain information. On an uncluttered display, all important search targets are highly salient, i.e., clearly available.

Guideline 6.3: Place Important Items Consistently

Put important, clickable items in the same locations, and closer to the top of the page, where their location can be better estimated. Users will try to anticipate where items will appear on their screen. They will start 'searching' a page before the layout appears on their screen. When screen items remain constant, users learn their location on a page, and use this knowledge to improve task performance. Experienced users will begin moving their mouse to the area of the target before the eye detects the item. Users can anticipate the location of items near the top much better than those farther down the page.

Guideline 6.4: Establish Level of Importance

Establish a high-to-low level of importance for information and infuse this approach throughout each page on the Web site. The page layout should help users find and use the most important information. Important information should appear higher on the page so users can locate it quickly. The least used information should appear toward the bottom of the page. Information should be presented in the order that is most useful to users.

Guideline 6.5: Optimize Display Density



To facilitate finding target information on a page, create pages that are not too crowded with items of information. Density can be defined as the number of items per degree of visual angle within a visually distinct group. This density either can be crowded with many items, or sparse with few items. One study found that locating a target in a crowded area took longer than when the target was in a sparse area. Also, participants searched and found items in the sparse areas faster than those in the crowded areas. Participants used fewer fixations per word in the crowded areas, but their fixations were much longer when viewing items in the crowded areas. Finally, participants tended to visit sparse areas before dense groups. To summarize, targets in sparse areas of the display (versus crowded areas) tended to be searched earlier and found faster.

Guideline 6.6: Align Items on a Page

Visually align page elements, either vertically or horizontally. Users prefer consistent alignments for items such as text blocks, rows, columns, checkboxes, radio buttons, data entry fields, etc. Use consistent alignments across all Web pages.

Guideline 6.7: Use Fluid Layouts

Use a fluid layout that automatically adjusts the page size to monitor resolution settings that are 1024x768 pixels or higher. When web page layouts are fixed either to the left or centered, much of the available screen space is not used. It is best to take advantage of as much of the screen space as possible because this will help move more information above the fold. Keep in mind that large monitors and higher pixel resolutions allow viewing of more than one window at a time. Agencies may wish to consider fluid design to support higher screen resolution as they become popular among users, without a need for re-design.

Guideline 6.8: Set Appropriate Page Lengths

Use shorter pages for homepages and navigation pages, and pages that need to be quickly browsed and/or read online. Use longer pages to (1) facilitate uninterrupted reading, especially on content pages; (2) match the structure of a paper counterpart; (3) simplify page maintenance (fewer Web page files to maintain); and, (4) make pages more convenient to download and print.

Guideline 7: Navigation



Navigation refers to the method used to find information within a Web site. A Web site's navigation scheme and features should allow users to find and access information effectively and efficiently.

Guideline 7.1: Provide Navigational Options

Do not create or direct users into pages that have no navigational options. Many Web pages contain links that open new browser windows. When these browser windows open, since the new browser window knows nothing of the user's past navigation, the Back button is disabled. If such links are incorporated into a Web site, the newly-opened window should contain a prominent action control that will close the window and return the user to the original browser window.

In addition, the browser's Back button should not be disabled in Web pages. Disabling the Back button can result in confusion and frustration for users, and drastically inhibits their navigation.

Guideline 7.2: Differentiate and Group Navigation Elements

Create a common, Web site-wide navigational scheme to help users learn and understand the structure of your Web site. Use the same navigation scheme on all pages by consistently locating tabs, headings, lists, search, site map, etc. Locate critical navigation elements in places that will suggest clickability (e.g., lists of words in the left or right panels are generally assumed to be links).

Guideline 7.3: Use a Clickable 'List of Contents' on Long Pages

On long pages, provide a 'list of contents' with links that take users to the corresponding content farther down the page. Such links can serve two purposes: they provide an outline of the page so users can quickly determine if it contains the desired information, and they allow users to quickly navigate to specific information.

Guideline 7.4: Provide Feedback on Users' Location

Feedback provides users with the information they need to understand where they are within the Web site, and for proceeding to the next activity. Examples of feedback include providing path and hierarchy information (i.e., 'breadcrumbs,' e.g.: [Home](#) ▶ [Departments](#) ▶ [Minister Office](#)), matching link text to the destination page's heading, and creating URLs that relate to the user's location on the site. Other forms of feedback include changing the color of a link that has been clicked (suggesting that destination has been visited), and using other visual cues to indicate the active portion of the screen.

Guideline 7.5: Use Appropriate Menu Types



Use 'sequential' menus for simple forward-moving tasks, and use 'simultaneous' menus for tasks that would otherwise require numerous uses of the Back button. Most Web sites use familiar 'sequential' menus that require items to be selected from a series of menus in some predetermined order. After each selection is made, another menu opens. The final choice is constrained by the sum total of all previous choices.

Simultaneous menus display choices from multiple levels in the menu hierarchy, providing users with the ability to make choices from the menu in any order. Simultaneous menus are often presented in frames, and are best employed in situations where users would have to make extensive use of the Back button if presented with a sequential menu.

Guideline 7.6: Use Site Maps

Site maps provide an overview of the Web site. They may display the hierarchy of the Web site, may be designed to resemble a traditional table of contents, or may be a simple index.

Guideline 7.7: Use 'Glosses' to Assist Navigation

'Glosses' are short phrases of information that popup when a user places his or her mouse pointer close to a link. It provides a preview to information behind a link. Users prefer the preview information to be located close to the link, but not placed such that it disturbs the primary text.



Guideline 8: Scrolling and Paging

It should be ensured that users can move from page to page as efficiently as possible. If website designers are unable to decide between paging and scrolling, it is usually better to provide several shorter pages rather than one or two longer pages.

Guideline 8.1: Avoid Horizontal Scrolling

Use an appropriate page layout to eliminate the need for users to scroll horizontally. Horizontal scrolling is a slow and tedious way to view an entire screen. Common page layouts including fluid and left-justified may require some users to scroll horizontally if their monitor resolution or size is smaller than that used by designers.

Guideline 8.2: Use Paging Rather Than Scrolling

If users' system response times are reasonably fast, use paging rather than scrolling. Users should be able to move from page to page by selecting links and without having to scroll to find important information. Where scrolling is unavoidable, limit scrolling to fewer and shorter screenfuls. For many Web sites, users deal best with smaller, well-organized pages of information rather than lengthy pages because scrolling can take a lot of time. Older users tend to scroll much more slowly than younger users.



Guideline 9: Links

Linking means that users will select and click on a hypertext link on a starting page (usually the homepage), which then causes a new page to load. Users continue toward their goal by finding and clicking on subsequent links.

Guideline 9.1: Match Link Names with Their Destination Pages

Make the link text consistent with the title or headings on the destination page. In many cases links provided for a specific page within a website lands the user on the homepage from where he or she has to figure the way through to the intended page. Closely matched links and destination targets help provide the necessary feedback to users that they have reached the intended page. If users will have to click more than once to get to a specific target destination, avoid repeating the exact same link wording over and over because users can be confused if the links at each level are identical or even very similar.

Guideline 9.2: Use Text for Links

Use text links rather than image links. In general, text links are more easily recognized as clickable. Text links usually download faster, are preferred by users, and should change colors after being selected. It is usually easier to convey a link's destination in text, rather than with the use of an image.

Another benefit to using text links is that users with text-only and deactivated graphical browsers can see the navigation options.

Guideline 9.3: Designate Used Links

Use color changes to indicate to users when a link has been visited. Generally, it is best to use the default text link colors (blue as an unvisited location/link and purple as a visited location/link). Link colors help users understand which parts of a Web site they have visited.

Guideline 9.4: Use 'Pointing-and-Clicking'

'Pointing-and-clicking,' rather than mousing over, is preferred when selecting menu items from a cascading menu structure.



Guideline 9.5: Indicate Internal vs. External Links

Indicate to users when a link will move them to a different location on the same page or to a new page on a different Web site.

Guideline 9.6: Clarify Clickable Regions of Images

If any part of an image is clickable, ensure that the entire image is clickable or that the clickable sections are obvious. Users should not be required to use the mouse pointer to discover clickable areas of images. For example, in a map of Qatar, if individual cities are clickable, sufficient cues such as differentiable colors should be given to indicate the clickable cities.



Guideline 10: Text Appearance

Consistent text appearance, right color coding, highlighting aid in visual consistency as well as rightly communicating message.

Guideline 10.1: Use Black Text on Plain, High-Contrast Backgrounds

When users are expected to rapidly read and understand prose text, use black text on a plain, high-contrast, non-patterned background. Black text on a plain background elicits reliably faster reading performance than on a medium-textured background. In general, the greater the contrast between the text and background, the easier the text is to read.

Guideline 10.2: Format Common Items Consistently

Ensure that the format of common items is consistent from one page to another. The formatting convention chosen should be familiar to users. For example, dates should be consistently punctuated with forward slash (31/12/2014), and time records might be consistently punctuated with colons (HH:MM:SS).

Guideline 10.3: Use Mixed-Case for Prose Text

When users must read a lot of information, use lower-case fonts and appropriate capitalization to ensure the fastest possible reading speed. Using 'mixed-case' fonts for reading prose text means that most letters will be lowercase, with all letters that should be capitalized being in uppercase. Most users have had considerable experience reading lowercase letters and are therefore very proficient at it.

Guideline 10.4: Ensure Visual Consistency

Ensure visual consistency of Web site elements within and between Web pages. Visual consistency includes the size and spacing of characters; the colors used for labels, fonts and backgrounds; and the locations of labels, text and pictures.

Guideline 10.5: Use Bold Text Sparingly

Use bold text only when it is important to draw the user's attention to a specific piece of information.



Guideline 10.6: Use Familiar Fonts

Use a familiar font such as Times New Roman or Georgia (serif fonts), or Arial, Helvetica, or Verdana (sans serif fonts), to achieve the best possible reading speed.

Guideline 10.7: Use at Least 12-Point Font

Use at least a 12-point font (e.g., typeface) on all Web pages. Fonts smaller than 12 points elicit slower reading performance from users. For users over age 65, it may be better to use at least fourteen-point fonts. Never use less than nine-point font on a Web site.



Guideline 11: Screen-Based Controls (Widgets)

In order to interact with a Web site, users usually require the use of screen-based controls (sometimes known as 'widgets'). Commonly used screen-based controls include pushbuttons, radio buttons, check boxes, drop-down lists and entry fields. It should be ensured that familiar widgets are used in a conventional or commonly-used manner.

Guideline 11.1: Distinguish Required and Optional Data Entry Fields

Users should be able to easily determine which data entry fields are required and which are optional. Many Web sites are currently using an asterisk in front of the label for required fields. Other sites are adding the word 'required' near the label.

Guideline 11.2: Label Pushbuttons Clearly

The label of a pushbutton should clearly indicate the action that will be applied when the pushbutton is clicked. Common pushbutton labels include 'Update,' 'Go,' 'Submit,' 'Cancel,' 'Enter,' 'Home,' 'Next,' and 'Previous.'

Guideline 11.3: Label Data Entry Fields Consistently

Ensure that data entry labels are worded consistently, so that the same data item is given the same label if it appears on different pages. Do not create new jargon when labeling data entry fields. Use common terms (e.g., male, female) rather than arbitrary labels (e.g., Group 1, Group 2). Specify the desired measurement units with the field labels (e.g. kilograms, centimeters) rather than requiring users to enter them.

Guideline 11.4: Do Not Make User-Entered Codes Case Sensitive

Treat upper- and lowercase letters as equivalent when users are entering codes unless there is a valid reason for doing so (such as increased security of passwords). When retaining data entered by users, show the data as it was entered by the user.

Guideline 11.5: Minimize User Data Entry

Do not require users to enter the same information more than once. Requiring re-entry of data imposes an additional task on users, and increases the possibility of entry errors. When entries made by users on one page are required on another page, the computer should retrieve the original entries, rather than requiring re-entry of the same information. In general, require users to make as few entries as possible. Also, place cursor in first data entry field.



Guideline 11.6: Allow Users to See Their Entered Data

Create data entry fields that are large enough to show all of the entered data without scrolling. If there is a character limit for a particular field, state that near the entry field. Designers should be particularly aware of the length of data entry fields used for entering search terms. One study found that this entry field should be at least 35-40 characters long to accommodate ninety-five percent of search terms being used.

Guideline 11.7: Use Radio Buttons for Mutually Exclusive Selections

Provide radio buttons when users need to choose one response from a list of mutually exclusive options. Users should be able to click on the button or its text label to make their selection. Assign one of the radio button choices as the default when appropriate.

Guideline 11.8: Anticipate Typical User Errors

Anticipate possible user errors, and when possible, allocate responsibility to the computer to identify these mistakes and suggest corrections. For example, if a date is entered as 'February 31,' the computer should generate an error message asking for a revised entry.

Guideline 11.9: Prioritize Pushbuttons

If one pushbutton in a group of pushbuttons is used more frequently than the others, put that button in the first position. Also make the most frequently used button the default action, i.e., that which is activated when users press the Enter key.

Guideline 11.10: Use Check Boxes to Enable Multiple Selections

Use a check box control to allow users to select one or more items from a list of possible choices.

Guideline 11.11: Use Open Lists to Select One from Many

Use open lists rather than drop-down lists to select one from many. Generally, the more items users can see in a list (without scrolling), the faster their responses will be, and the fewer omission errors they will make. Ideally, users should be able to see all available items without scrolling.

When compared with drop-down lists, open lists tend to elicit faster performance primarily because drop-down lists require an extra click to open. However, if a list is extremely long, a drop-down list may be better. The available research does not indicate the upper number limit of items that should be displayed in a list.





Guideline 12: Graphics, Images, and Multimedia

An important image to show on most pages of a site is the organization's logo. When used appropriately, graphics such as images, animation, video and audio can add tremendous value to a Web site.

Guideline 12.1: Use Simple Background Images

Use background images sparingly and make sure they are simple, especially if they are used behind text. Background images can make it difficult for users to read foreground text. A single, large, complex background image (including a picture) can substantially slow page download rates. If background images must be employed, use small, simple images with 'tiling,' and/or keep the image resolution as low as possible.

Guideline 12.2: Label Clickable Images

Occasional or infrequent users may not use an image enough to understand or remember its meaning. Ensure that images and their associated text are close together so that users can integrate and effectively use them together. Additionally, alternative text should accompany every clickable image.

Guideline 12.3: Include Logos

Place the organization's logo in a consistent place on every page. Users are frequently unaware when they click through to a different Web site. Having a logo on each page provides a frame of reference throughout a Web site so that users can easily confirm that they have not left the site. Ideally, the logo should be in the same location on each page: typically in the top left corner in the English version of the website and top right corner in the Arabic version.

Guideline 12.4: Limit the Use of Images

Use images only when they are critical to the success of a Web site. Users tend to be most frustrated if they wait several seconds for a graphic to download, and then find that the image does not add any value. Some decorative graphics are acceptable when they do not distract the user.



Guideline 12.5: Include Actual Data with Data Graphics

Adjacent numeric annotation might be added to the ends of displayed bars on a bar graph, or to mark the points of a plotted curve. Some displays may require complete data annotation while others may require annotation only for selected data elements.

Guideline 12.6: Use Video, Animation, and Audio Meaningfully

Use video, animation, and audio only when they help to convey, or are supportive of, the Web site's message or other content. Multimedia elements (such as video, animation, and audio) can easily capture the attention of users; therefore, it is important to have clear and useful reasons for using multimedia to avoid unnecessarily distracting users. Some multimedia elements may take a long time to download, so it is important that they be worth the wait.

Used productively, multimedia can add great value to a site's content and help direct users' attention to the most important information and in the order that it is most useful.



Guideline 13: Search

Each page of a Web site should allow users to conduct a search. Usually it is adequate to allow simple searches without providing for the use of more advanced features.

Guideline 13.1: Design Search Engines to Search the Entire Site

Users tend to believe that a search engine will search the entire Web site. Do not have search engines search only a portion of the site without clearly informing users which parts of the site are being searched. Provide a means for users to narrow the scope of searches on large Web sites by providing easy access to specific sub-sites when searching.

Guideline 13.2: Design Search around Users' Terms

Construct a Web site's search engine to respond to users' terminology. Determining the keywords users are using may require considerable data collection. Designers should make use of search engine logs, surveys, and other techniques to determine the preferred search words for their site, and make information relevant to those terms easy to find through the site's search engine.

Guideline 13.3: Assist in Search Input to Improve Search Performance

Search boxes may have intuitive features such as open lists to improve search performance. Providing open lists helps user in entering most commonly used search criteria that will result in most effective search results. It may also include type-ahead suggestions and account for spelling errors while running the search.



Guideline 14: Usability Testing

There are two major considerations when conducting usability testing. The first is to ensure that the best possible method for testing is used. Generally, the best method is to conduct a test where representative participants interact with representative scenarios. The tester collects data on the participant's success, speed of performance, and satisfaction. The findings, including both quantitative data and qualitative observations information, are provided to designers in a test report. Using 'inspection evaluations,' in place of well-controlled usability tests, must be done with caution. Inspection methods, such as heuristic evaluations or expert reviews, tend to generate large numbers of potential usability 'problems' that never turn out to be actual usability problems.

The second major consideration is to ensure that an iterative approach is used. After the first test results are provided to designers, they should make changes and then have the Web site tested again. Generally, the more iterations, the better the Web site.

Guideline 14.1: Use an Iterative Design Approach

Develop and test prototypes through an iterative design approach to create the most useful and usable Web site. Iterative design consists of creating paper or computer prototypes, testing the prototypes, and then making changes based on the test results. The 'test and make changes' process is repeated until the Web site meets performance benchmarks (usability goals). When these goals are met, the iterative process ends.

Guideline 14.2: Solicit Test Participants' Comments

Solicit usability testing participants' comments either during or after the performance of tasks. Participants may be asked to give their comments either while performing each task ('simultaneously') or after finishing all tasks (retrospectively). When using the 'simultaneous' method, participants report on incidents as soon as they happen. When using the retrospective approach, participants perform all tasks uninterrupted, and then watch their session video and report any observations (critical incidents).

Guideline 14.3: Evaluate Web Sites Before and After Making Changes

Conduct 'before and after' studies when revising a Web site to determine changes in usability. Conducting usability studies prior to and after a redesign will help designers determine if changes actually made a difference in the usability of the site.

Guideline 14.4: Prioritize Tasks



Participants judge how difficult or easy a task will be before trying to do it, and then make a second judgment after trying to complete the task. Each task is eventually put into one of four categories based on these expected versus actual ratings:

- Tasks that were expected to be easy, but were actually difficult;
- Tasks that were expected to be difficult, but were actually easy;
- Tasks that were expected to be easy and were actually easy; and
- Tasks that were expected to be difficult and were difficult to complete

When deciding which usability issues to fix first, address the tasks that users initially believe to be easy that actually turn out to be difficult.

Guideline 14.5: Select the Right Type and Number of Participants

Selecting the number of participants to use when conducting usability evaluations depends on the method being used:

- Inspection evaluation by usability specialists:
 - The typical goal of an inspection evaluation is to have usability experts separately inspect a user interface by applying a set of broad usability guidelines. This is usually done with two to five people. Generally, the more expert the usability specialists, the more useful the results.
- Performance usability testing with users:
 - Early in the design process, usability testing with a small number of users (approximately six) is sufficient to identify problems with the information architecture (navigation) and overall design issues. If the Web site has very different types of users (e.g., novices and experts), it is important to test with six or more of each type of user. Another critical factor in this preliminary testing is having trained usability specialists as the usability test facilitator and primary observers.
 - Once the navigation, basic content, and display features are in place, quantitative performance testing (measuring times, wrong pathways, failure to find content, etc.) can be conducted to ensure that usability objectives are being met. To measure each usability objective to a particular confidence level, such as ninety-five percent, requires a larger number of users in the usability tests.



- When the performance of two sites is compared (i.e., an original site and a revised site), quantitative usability testing should be employed. Depending on how confident the usability specialist wants to be in the results, the tests could require a larger number of participants.

Guideline 14.6: Use the Appropriate Prototyping Technology

Create prototypes using the most appropriate technology for the phase of the design, the required fidelity of the prototype, and skill of the person creating the prototype.

Designers can use either paper-based or computer-based prototypes. Paper prototypes can be used when it is necessary to view and evaluate many different (usually early) design ideas, or when computer-based prototyping does not support the ideas the designer wants to implement, or when all members of the design team need to be included - even those that do not know how to create computer-based prototypes.

Software tools that are available to assist in the rapid development of prototypes include MS PowerPoint, MS Visio, including other HTML base tools. MS PowerPoint can be used to create medium fidelity prototypes. These prototypes can be both interactive and dynamic, and are useful when the design requires more than a 'pencil-and-paper' prototype.

Guideline 14.7: Use Inspection Evaluation Results Cautiously

Inspection evaluations include heuristic evaluations, expert reviews, and cognitive walkthroughs. It is a common practice to conduct an inspection evaluation to try to detect and resolve obvious problems before conducting usability tests.

Inspection evaluations should be used cautiously because several studies have shown that they appear to detect far more potential problems than actually exist, and they also tend to miss some real problems. Evaluators seem to have the most success identifying usability issues that can be seen by merely looking at the display, and the least success finding issues that require users to take several steps (clicks) to a target.

Heuristic evaluations and expert reviews may best be used to identify potential usability issues to evaluate during usability testing.

Guideline 14.8: Apply Automatic Evaluation Methods

An automatic evaluation method is one where software is used to evaluate a Web site. An automatic evaluation tool can help find certain types of design difficulties, such as pages that will load slowly, missing links, use of jargon, potential accessibility problems, etc. While automatic evaluation methods are useful, they should not be used as a



substitute for evaluations or usability testing with typical users. There are many commercially available automatic evaluation methods available for checking on a variety of Web site parameters.

Guideline 14.9: Use Cognitive Walkthroughs Cautiously

Cognitive walkthroughs are often conducted to resolve obvious problems before conducting performance tests. The cognitive walkthrough appears to detect far more potential problems than actually exist, when compared with performance usability testing results. Several studies have shown that many potential problems predicted by the cognitive walkthrough are sometimes not found to be actual problems in a performance test and many actual problems in the performance test are sometimes missed altogether in the cognitive walkthrough. Cognitive walkthroughs may best be used to identify potential usability issues to evaluate during usability testing.



8 Additional Information

8.1 Implementation Schedule:

- i This Framework is effective from DD MMM 2015. All Government Agencies shall meet the requirements of Policy 4.1 for the establishment of a website by DD MMM YYYY.
- ii All Government websites and e-Services shall adopt the mandatory elements and standards by DD MMM YYYY.

8.2 Assessment and Reporting:

- i Each Government Agency to which this Framework applies should be prepared, when notified by MCIT, to:
 - Conduct an internal self-assessment and report on its level of conformance with this Framework; and,
 - In cases of a low level of non-conformance with this Framework, submit a report on its assessment findings and an action plan regarding any areas of non-conformance on how and when it plans to comply with the standards.

8.3 Supporting Guidelines:

- i MCIT may issue supplemental guidelines and best practices from time to time to support this set of Government Website and e-Services Framework.



9 Annexure

Appendix 1: Sample of a Privacy Statement

Appendix 2: Sample of a “Terms of Use” Statement



Appendix 1

Sample of a Privacy Statement

This is a [Name of Ministry/Agency] website.

We are committed to protecting your privacy and providing a secure website environment. We take precautions to protect your information. When you submit sensitive information via the website, your information is protected both online and offline.

Information Collection, Use, Sharing and Rectification

If you are only browsing this website, we do not capture any information that allows us to identify you individually.

If you are making an online e-Service application that contains your personal information, we may share such data with other Government agencies, or with non-Government entities which have been authorized to carry out specific Government services, so as to serve you in an efficient and effective way, unless such sharing is prohibited by law.

For your convenience, we may also display to you data you had previously supplied to us or other Government agencies. This will help speed up the transaction and save you the time of providing us the same information as in your previous submissions.

Although all reasonable efforts will be made to keep your information update, please do provide us with the latest updated information should you find the information inaccurate

Security

To safeguard your personal information, all electronic storage and transmission of personal data are secured with appropriate security technologies.

Links to External Websites

This site may contain links to external non-Government sites whose data protection and privacy practices may differ from ours. We are therefore not responsible for the content and privacy practices of these other websites.

Please contact us using our feedback form if:

- (i) you have any enquiries or feedback on our data protection policies and procedures,
or



- (ii) you require more information on or access to the data which you have earlier provided to us.

Updates to Privacy Policy

Our Privacy Policy may change from time to time and all updates will be posted on this page.



Appendix 2

Sample of a “Terms of Use” Statement

General

These Terms of Use govern your use of our Website; by using our website, you agree to these terms of use in full. If you disagree with these terms of use or any part of these terms of use, you must not use our website.

Proprietary Rights

This Website is maintained by [Name of Ministry/Agency].

Privacy Policy

Please [click here](#) to review this website’s Privacy Policy Statement.

Restrictions on use of Materials

Except as otherwise provided, the Contents of this Website shall not be reproduced, republished, uploaded, posted, transmitted or otherwise distributed in any way, without the prior written permission of [Name of Ministry/Agency]

General Disclaimer and Limitation of Liability

We do not warrant the completeness or accuracy of the information published on this website; nor do we commit to ensuring that the website remains available or that the material on the website is kept up to date.

In no circumstances shall we be liable for any damage or loss of any kind caused as a result (direct or indirect) of the use of the Website, including but not limited to any damage or loss suffered as a result of reliance on the Contents contained in or available from the Website.

External Links

This Website may contain hyperlinks to websites which are not maintained by us. We are not responsible for the contents of those websites and shall not be liable for any damages or loss arising from access to those websites. Use of the hyperlinks and access to such websites are entirely at your own risk.

We reserve the right to disable any unauthorized links or frames and disclaims any responsibility for the content available on any other site reached by links to or from this Website or any of the Contents.

Restricted access

Access to certain areas of our website may be restricted. If you are registered to access restricted areas of our website or other content or e-Services, you must ensure that the password is kept confidential and to report immediately if you become aware of any unauthorized use of your account or password.

You are responsible for any activity on our website arising out of any failure to keep your password confidential and may be held liable for any losses arising out of such a failure.



Security

Where appropriate, we use available technology to protect the security of communications made through our Website. However, we do not accept liability for the security, authenticity, integrity or confidentiality of any transactions and other communications made through this Website.

Internet communications may be susceptible to interference or interception by third parties. Despite our best efforts, we make no warranties that our Website is free of infection by computer viruses or other unauthorized software.

You should therefore take appropriate steps to keep your information, software and equipment secure. This includes clearing your Internet browser cookies and cache before and after using any services on our Website.

Policy Updates

We may revise these Terms at any time by updating this page. We may modify or discontinue any information on our Website at any time, with or without notice to you, and without liability.

Terms and Conditions for e-Services

In addition to these Terms, you shall also be required to comply with all other terms and conditions of the respective e-Services when using them.

In the event of conflict, the terms and conditions of the respective e-Services shall prevail.

Governing Law

These Terms of Use shall be governed and construed in accordance with laws of the State of Qatar.

Document History

Version	Date Released	Amendments	Author
1.0.0	30/04/2015	Initial creation	ICTQatar / MCIT
2.0.0	30/04/2016	Update mandatory layout areas	MOTC
2.0.1	24/03/2022	Updated branding and legal mandate	MCIT

