

Digital by Default

National “Exemplar” Services

- As part of the [Government Digital Strategy](#), the seven government departments that handle the majority of central government transactions agreed to each develop at least three “digital exemplars” services.
- As of July 2013, 25 services were identified as exemplars. 13 were in development, 11 in testing and 1 was live.¹ The progress of these can be tracked through the [Digital Transformation Dashboard](#).
- Student finance is the first exemplar service to go live. It has estimated 1.16 million transactions per year in the first quarter of 2013, and estimates its digital take-up at 92.4%.²
- The current cost per transaction is estimated at £47. This cost takes into account, “the total cost for all aspects of processing a student finance application within the associated service level agreements, including mail handling (incoming & outgoing), staff processing time (including exceptions handling), customer advice (telephone, IAG etc) and subsequent payment (up to 9 per applicant per annum).”³
- The methodology of calculating a cost per transaction has only been used by the government since late 2012, so there are currently no meaningful data-sets on which to make a comparison. However, this will change as the Transaction Explorer continues to publish this data regularly.

¹ Cabinet Office, [Government Digital Services \(GDS\) July 2013 Quarterly Progress Report](#), July 2013

² Figures taken from the Cabinet Office’s [Transactions Explorer](#) (accessed 14 August 2013)

³ Cabinet Office, [‘Apply for Student Finance: Key Performance Indicators’ Transactions Explorer](#) (accessed 14 August 2013)

Identity Assurance Principles

6

- In order to support the delivery of digital services the government has set up a Privacy and Consumer Advisory Group (PCAG). The group's function is to advise on an Identity Assurance Scheme intended to "allow individual users to control when to reveal their own identifying information and the minimum detail to reveal."⁴
- PCAG have produced a set of nine Identity Assurance Principles "that gives real meaning to terms such as "individual privacy" and "individual control"[and] ensure that those participating in an Identity Assurance Service are left in no doubt it is designed around the needs of the individual (and not on the needs of any state body or commercial corporation)."⁵
- The draft principles are as follows:
 1. **User Control:** "Identity assurance activities can only take place if I consent or approve them."
 2. **Transparency:** "Identity assurance can only take place in ways I understand and when I am fully informed."
 3. **Multiplicity:** "I can use and choose as many different identifiers or identity providers as I want to."
 4. **Data Minimisation:** "My request or transaction only uses the minimum data that is necessary to meet my needs."
 5. **Data Quality:** "I choose when to update my records."
 6. **Service-User Access and Portability:** "I have to be provided with copies of all of my data on request; I can move/remove my data whenever I want."
 7. **Governance/Certification:** "I can have confidence in any Identity Assurance System because all the participants have to be accredited."
 8. **Problem Resolution:** "If there is a problem I know there is an independent arbiter who can find a solution."
 9. **Exceptional Circumstances:** "Any exception has to be approved by Parliament and is subject to independent scrutiny."
- The principles were broadly supported by the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee⁶ in their letter to Francis Maude, MP, dated 9 July 2013. However, concern was expressed over the security of people's data due to inadequacies in government software⁷.

⁴ Cabinet Office, [Privacy and Consumer Advisory Group: Draft Identity Assurance Principles](#), 17 June 2013

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ House of Commons, [Letter to Francis Maude, MP](#), Science and Technology Committee, 9 July 2013

⁷ "The Committee is concerned that sensitive personally identifiable data could be compromised and be the subject of unauthorised use." Ibid.