bluesign Scheme

for consumer-facing bluepass Products

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1 Scope and application

1.1 Purpose of the scheme

bluesign supports the textile industry to reduce adverse impact across the value chain through processes that meet bluesign Criteria for product stewardship, resource productivity, environmental protection, worker and social responsibility, including associated management system requirements.

The purpose of the bluesign System is contributing to a better and safer planet by avoiding hazardous substances at the very beginning of the textile and leather supply chain and to ensure that production processes, chemical use, and final products are safe for people, environmentally responsible, and resource-efficient.

bluesign System compromises of three steps and their requirements are consolidated in the specific documents (See: bluesign documents [7]). The three steps are:

1. Company assessment based on the *bluesign Criteria*
2. Product assessment and *registration* based on the *bluesign Criteria*
3. *Product certification* based on the *bluesign Scheme*

This document describes the certification process requirements for product certification, which is an optional extension of product registration for consumer-facing *registered* products.

Product certification is an additional layer of evaluation conducted by an independent third-party *conformity assessment body*, and is suitable for complying with regulations, e.g. EU EmpCo Directive, short for the Directive on Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition (EU 2024/825).

For *product certification*, the relevant documents are:

- bluesign Scheme for consumer-facing bluepass Products (bluesign Scheme)
- bluesign Criteria for bluepass products (bluesign Criteria)

The ***bluesign Scheme*** describes the certification process requirements for third-party *conformity assessment bodies* with regards to product certification.

The **bluesign Criteria** describes the evaluation requirements for the object of conformity, e.g. end-consumer chemical products, articles that will be consumer-facing, and consumer products.

1.1.1 How to read this document

The following verbal forms are used to indicate requirements, recommendations, permissions, or possibilities in this document.

- "**shall**", "**required**" or "**necessary**" indicates a mandatory requirement
- "**should**", "**recommend**" or "**ought**" indicates a recommendation
- "**may**" indicates a permission
- "**can**" indicates a possibility

1.2 Field of application

The scheme applies to the following products placed on the market by eligible applicants:

- *chemical product*s that will be consumer-facing, e.g. via labelling on consumer product or for end-consumer use
  - for industrial use in the textile, accessories and leather industry

    - for direct use in the textile manufacturing process
    - chemical intermediates
  - for end-consumer use in textile care
- *article*s that will be consumer-facing, e.g. via labelling on consumer product or for end-consumer use
  - textile articles for industrial use at all processing levels (e.g. man-made fibres, yarns, woven fabrics)
  - finished leather articles for industrial use
  - accessories for industrial use (e.g. zippers, buttons)
  - textile articles and accessories for end-consumer use (e.g. repair kits)
- *B2B* and *B2C consumer product*s in the following categories:
  - *apparel*, including denim apparel
  - *home textile*s
  - *equipment*
  - *footwear*

It may be used globally, subject to applicable market regulations.

1.3 Relationship to other standards and schemes

The bluesign Scheme is designed to work as a product certification scheme under the functional approach of ISO/IEC 17067, which is the reference for scheme owners developing, operating, or revising certification schemes for products, processes, and services.

The *conformity assessment body* (CAB) that applies the scheme shall carry out its certification activities in line with ISO/IEC 17065, including the requirements for competence, impartiality, and consistent product certification decisions.

For consumer-facing environmental and sustainability claims, the scheme is also intended to support compliance with the EU's EmpCo directive, short for the Directive on Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition (EU 2024/825), which restricts misleading green claims and requires sustainability labels to be based on transparent, third-party-certified schemes.

The bluesign Scheme complements existing bluesign normative documents, most significantly the bluesign Criteria for bluepass Products.

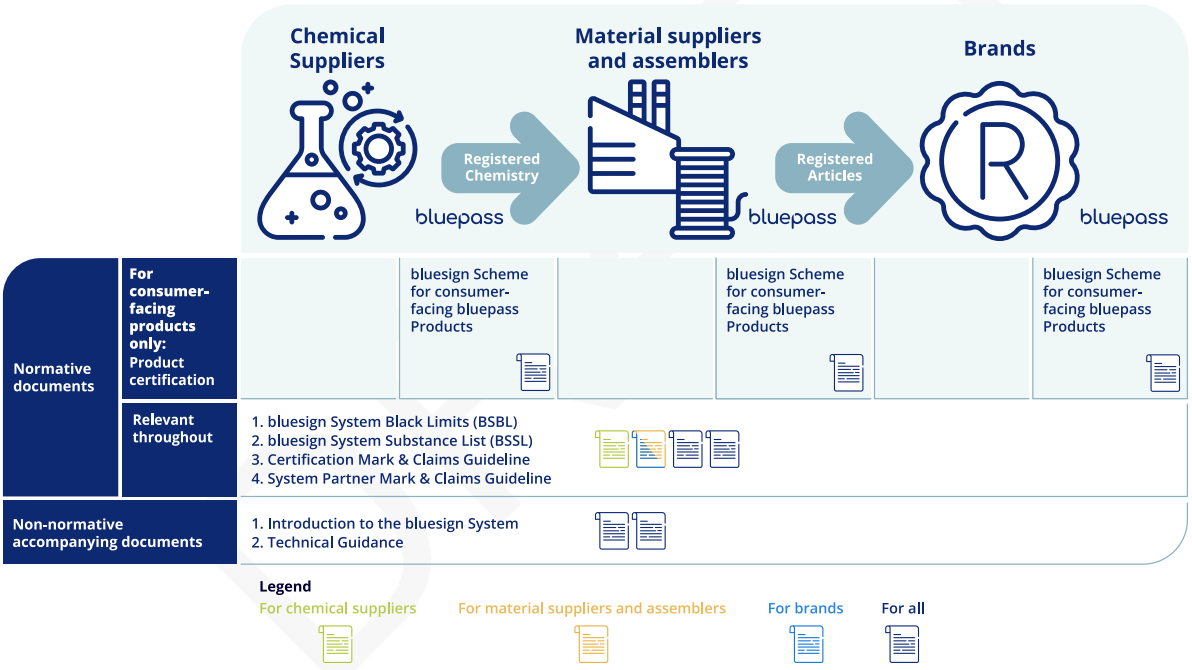
An overview of all bluesign documents relevant for consumer-facing *bluepass Products* is shown in bluesign documents [7].

2 Normative references and glossary

2.1 bluesign documents

The following figure provides an overview of all documents relevant for consumer-facing *registered* products:

Figure 1. Overview of bluesign documents for consumer-facing registered products



Normative documents establish the requirements and/or guidelines. Normative content is mandatory and must be followed to achieve conformance. Non-normative accompanying documents are informative in nature, providing context or explanations.

bluesign's holistic *input stream management* approach with the relevant value chain actors and their products is reflected header row. The relevant documents depending on the consumer-facing registered product are shown in the subsequent rows.

2.2 bluesign glossary

2.2.1 Terms, definitions and abbreviations

A

accepted	Status of a *basic chemical* that conforms with bluesign's process for the assessment of the *CIL* Antonym: not accepted
apparel	A category of textile *consumer product*s with which people cover their bodies except for footwear. An individual item within this category is called a *garment*. Examples: Trousers, shorts, skirts, dresses, men's suits, shirts, jackets, coats, outdoor and sports clothing, socks, lingerie, underpants, workwear, protective wear, and apparel accessories such as scarves, gloves, hats, ties
article	A product placed on the market by manufacturers and converters, which is composed of one or more *material*s given a specific shape, surface or design. Examples: Fabrics, zippers, thread, membrane, buttons

B

B2B	Short for: business-to-business Describes commercial transactions and relationships between one company and another, rather than with individual consumers Compare with: *B2C*
B2C	Short for: business-to-consumer Describes commercial transactions and relationships between one company and individual consumers, rather than with another company Compare with: *B2B*
Bill of Materials (BOM)	A comprehensive list of components and the quantity of each component required to manufacture a product. In the context of the *bluesign Criteria*: The bill of materials enables traceability to the supplier, supplier article number and color for each component and includes a functional description of the components.

bluepass Product

A product that has been created using certified processes, that has met the requirements of the bluesign Criteria for product registration, and that carries the bluesign trademark. They can be:

1. **bluepass Chemical Product**
   Certification mark for chemical products produced through processes that meet *bluesign Criteria for processing chemical products* and have fulfilled the *bluesign Criteria for bluepass Products*. Listed on the *bluesign Finder*.
2. **bluepass Article**
   Certification mark for intermediate articles (fabrics, accessories, trims) produced through processes that meet *bluesign Criteria for processing articles and B2B consumer products* and have fulfilled the *bluesign Criteria for bluepass Products*. Listed on the *bluesign Guide*.
3. **bluepass Consumer Product**
   Certification mark for finished consumer goods (apparel, denim, home textile, equipment, footwear) produced through processes that meet *bluesign Criteria for processing B2C consumer products* and have fulfilled the *bluesign Criteria for bluepass Products*. Listed on the *bluesign Guide*.

Formerly known as: *bluesign Approved*, *bluesign Product*

See Also ???TITLE???.

blue rating

Rating of a chemical product from a *bluesign System Partner*

Blue-rated chemical products for a specific application conform fully to the *bluesign Criteria* for bluepass Products. The use of these chemical products are preferred.

Compare with: *black rating*, *grey rating*

bluesign

bluesign technologies ag, the scheme owner

Compare with: *conformity assessment body*

bluesign Criteria

A set of evaluation requirements for

1. the assessment of companies and their processes ("company assessments):
   a. bluesign Criteria for processing chemical products: valid for *bluesign System Partner* chemical suppliers and their processes
   b. bluesign Criteria for processing articles and B2B consumer products: valid for *bluesign System Partner* material suppliers and assemblers; and their processes
   c. bluesign Criteria for processing B2C consumer products: valid for *bluesign System Partner* brands and their processes
2. the assessment of a product:
   a. bluesign Criteria for bluepass Products: valid for *product registration*, i.e. of bluepass Chemical Products, bluepass Articles and/or bluepass Consumer Products

bluesign Finder	Online database containing blue- and grey-rated chemical products (e.g. dyestuffs, auxiliaries). It serves as a search engine designed to help companies in finding registered chemical products Compare with: *bluesign Guide*
bluesign Guide	Online database containing registered *articles* and *consumer products* Compare with: *bluesign Finder*
bluesign Product	Former bluesign mark for labelling of consumer products which are registered in bluesign Guide See Also bluepass Product.
bluesign Restricted Substance List (bluesign RSL)	The bluesign Restricted Substances List (bluesign RSL) is an extract of the BSSL, and contains consumer safety limits and recommended testing methods for the most important and legally restricted substances in textile/ leather articles and accessories. Brands and retailers can use this RSL as an orientation for the terms and conditions of purchase, and together with a testing matrix as a guide for appropriate testing of articles (such as textiles). bluesign RSL is revised on the basis of the BSSL. Compare with: *RSL* Downloads available on bluesign.com: Downloads
bluesign Scheme	A set of certification process requirements valid for the conformity assessment body, evaluating conformance with the *bluesign Criteria* for bluepass Product
bluesign Status	Progress of a bluesign client as shown in *bluesign Connect*. The stages are as follows: 1. Assessment - when the client has begun the assessment 2. System partnership and Criteria conformance - when requirements are fulfilled
bluesign System Black Limits (BSBL)	The BSBL specify threshold limits for chemical substances in finished chemical products, such as auxiliaries or dyes. The BSBL substances with rating "Usage Ban" shall be not intentionally used in the manufacturing of chemical products, articles. It is designed to cover the ZDHC Manufacturing Restricted Substance List (MRSL). The BSBL is revised annually. Downloads available on bluesign.com: Downloads
bluesign System Partner	A legal entity with a valid bluesign Certificate, which includes holding a valid System Partner agreement and attaining the *bluesign Status* of Criteria conformance
bluesign System Substances List (BSSL)	The BSSL specifies consumer safety limits for chemical substances in articles. It is designed to cover the AFIRM RSL and the AAFA RSL. The BSSL is revised annually.

Downloads available on bluesign.com: Downloads

C

certificate	A document provided by bluesign or an approved conformity assessment body to the contractual partner as statement of conformance
certified	The term "certified" refers to either • processes assessed to conform to the bluesign Criteria, the output of which are *B2B* products that are eligible for *product registration* • consumer-facing *registered* products assessed to conform to the *bluesign Criteria* by an approved third-party *conformity assessment body* Products eligible for product certification are: • *chemical product*s that will be consumer-facing, e.g. via labelling on consumer product or for end-consumer use • for industrial use in the textile, accessories and leather industry • for direct use in the textile manufacturing process • chemical intermediates • for end-consumer use in textile care • *article*s that will be consumer-facing, e.g. via labelling on consumer product or for end-consumer use • textile articles for industrial use at all processing levels (e.g. man-made fibres, yarns, woven fabrics) • finished leather articles for industrial use • accessories for industrial use (e.g. zippers, buttons) • textile articles and accessories for end-consumer use (e.g. repair kits) • *B2B* and *B2C consumer product*s in the following categories: • *apparel*, including denim apparel • *home textile*s • *equipment* • *footwear*
chemical product	A commercial product placed on the market by chemical suppliers, which can be a chemical substance or a mixture of chemical substances, and can be for industrial use of end-consumer use Synonym: chemical
Company	In bluesign documents: A legal entity applying for certification, contractual partner Company types: *chemical supplier*s, *material supplier*s, *assembler*s, *brand*s
conformity assessment body (CAB)	The entity that conducts assessments and makes conformance decisions with bluesign System Partners
consumer product	A product placed on the market by brands for consumer use Categories: *apparel*, denim, *home textile*, *equipment*, *footwear*

	Example: A jacket, a pair of jeans, a pair of sneakers
correction	Immediate action for remedying the *nonconformity*
corrective action	Long-term action for preventing recurrence of the *nonconformity*

D

E

EHS	Environment, Health & Safety
equipment	Examples: tents, backpacks, luggage, climbing ropes, hammocks, umbrellas, sleeping bags, sleeping pads, handbags, camping chairs, rooftop tents, strollers, car seats for kids, bicycle trailers, personal flotation devices, yoga mats, and similar articles

F

footwear	Examples: street shoes, sport shoes, boots, and similar articles

G

grey rating	Rating of a chemical product from a *bluesign System Partner* Grey rated chemical products for a specific application are fully compliant with the *bluesign Criteria* for bluepass Products, but certain guidance on safe use at the factory is to be followed. Supporting information is given in the *bluesign Finder* Compare with: *black rating*, *blue rating*

H

home textile	A category of textile *consumer products* which people use at home Examples: • Bath linen such as bath towels, beach towels, wash towels, face towels/cloths, hand towels, washing mitts, bath sheets, bathrobes, bath-mats and toilet pedestal mats • Bed linen such as bed sheets, pillowcases, valance sheets, cot sheets, blankets, bed scarves/partial coverlets • Kitchen textiles such as tea towels, oven gloves/mitts, potholders, aprons, and tea cozies • Table linen such as tablecloths, non-disposable table napkins, fabric place mats/settings, non-disposable table runners, as well as cushion covers used for kitchen chairs • Household textile items typically used in the living room, such as cushions (including floor cushions), throw pillows, cushion covers and sofa throws, rugs, moveable floor coverings, curtains

I

input stream management	Implementation of good sourcing criteria to prevent the input of unwanted raw materials, e.g. chemicals and articles, into the manufacturing process.

	Usage of only raw materials, e.g. chemical products and articles, that are assessed based on their risk for people and environment, thus minimizing or even eliminating harmful substances before the manufacturing begins

K

L

M

Material Inventory List (MIL)	Overview of materials used to create a company's products

N

O

P

product certification	consumer-facing *registered* products assessed to conform to the *bluesign Criteria* may be certified by an approved third-party *conformity assessment body*
product registration	products made with certified processes and assessed to conform with the *bluesign Criteria* may be registered in the bluesign Finder (chemical products) or bluesign Guide (articles, consumer products)
product stewardship	Responsible and ethical management of products and their packaging at all stages of the lifecycle with a view to minimize their health, environmental and safety impacts. One of the main pillars that supports product stewardship is *input stream management*.

Q

R

registered	The term "registered" refers to products created using certified processes and assessed to be conformant with the *bluesign Criteria* See Also bluesign Product.

S

T

tolerated	Status granted to chemical products from non-System Partner; temporary use is allowed and re-evaluated during each company re-assessment. The conditions of which can be found in the *Technical Guidance* "Input Stream Management at Manufacturers". Antonym: *banned*

U

V

W

withdrawal	Permanent invalidation of a certification decision (certificate), removing all rights to claim conformity or use of bluesign marks The product registration becomes invalid. Compare with: *suspension*
workflow	A combination of manufacturing processes, chemicals and materials used to make a specific type of article/product (e.g. coated polyester woven fabric), covering all colors and material variations.

Z

3 Scheme governance and responsibilities

3.1 Scheme owner and governance

bluesign technologies ag (*bluesign*) is the scheme owner of the bluesign Scheme - the basis of the bluepass trademark, which is a sustainability label as defined by EU's EmpCo directive. As scheme owner, bluesign is responsible for

1. development - creating and documenting the scheme (See: Development [16])
2. management - governance, confidentiality, access conditions and competition considerations (See: Management [16])
3. maintenance - updating the scheme when standards, regulations or technologies evolve (See: Maintenance [16])
4. integrity - monitoring whether assessments are being conducted consistently and credibly (See: Integrity [17])

3.1.1 Development

The scheme owner shall develop the scheme in a structured and documented manner. The scheme shall define its purpose, scope, requirements, assessment logic, and responsibilities of the parties involved.

The scheme documentation shall be clear enough to allow *CAB*s to apply it consistently and applicants to understand the requirements. The development process shall consider relevant technical, legal, and market needs, and shall include both an internal and a public stakeholder consultation before publication.

3.1.2 Management

The scheme owner shall establish a governance structure with clearly defined responsibilities for approval, revision, interpretation, and oversight of the scheme. Governance shall support impartiality, transparency, and accountability.

The scheme owner shall protect confidential information received from applicants, certificate holders, and CABs. Such information shall only be disclosed where authorized or required by law.

Access to the scheme shall be based on transparent, objective, and non-discriminatory conditions. The scheme owner shall avoid rules or practices that create unjustified barriers to participation or unfair competitive advantages.

3.1.3 Maintenance

The scheme owner shall review the scheme annually to ensure that it remains aligned with current standards, regulations, scientific knowledge, and technologies. A review may or may not lead to a revision of the scheme. When changes affect the scheme, the owner shall update the relevant documents in a controlled and traceable manner.

The scheme owner shall assess whether changes require immediate application, transition periods, or additional communication to conformity assessment bodies and clients. The reasons for revisions and the date of application shall be documented.

NOTE

For information on changes affecting certification and transition period, see Changes affecting certification and transition period [28]

3.1.4 Integrity

The scheme owner shall monitor whether assessments and certification decisions are carried out consistently, competently, and in accordance with the scheme requirements. This may include witnessing assessments, reviewing certification decisions, monitoring performance, and analysing complaints.

Where weaknesses or recurring issues are identified, the scheme owner shall investigate the cause and take appropriate corrective action. This may include clarification of requirements, additional guidance, increased oversight, or other measures needed to restore consistency.

The scheme owner shall keep records of integrity monitoring activities and the resulting actions.

3.1.4.1 Audit

Scheme owner shall conduct an annual audit either in the premises of the CAB or remotely based on rules set in the bluesign Scheme. Scheme owner shall issue an audit report according to the agreed timetable. Both CAB and scheme owner shall keep records of conducted audits.

3.2 Conformity assessment bodies – roles and obligations

The *conformity assessment body* (CAB) shall:

- be independent from bluesign and from Company (See: Independency from scheme owner and Company [17])
- be ISO/IEC 17065 accredited
- apply the requirements consistently and impartially (See: Management of impartiality [17])
- use competent staff (See: Competency management [18])
- conduct periodic oversight assessments (See: Periodic oversight assessment [19])
- keep records for ten years after certification decision
- conduct at least 1500 product certifications per year to maintain their status

3.2.1 Independency from scheme owner and Company

3.2.1.1 Legal separation

The *CAB* shall be a separate legal entity from bluesign and from *Company* so that neither bluesign nor Company can directly control or override individual certification decisions.

3.2.1.2 Organisational separation

The CAB shall also be organisationally separated from bluesign's commercial, assessment and scheme-development functions and from Company's commercial functions, with separated reporting lines and decision processes that prevent bluesign or Company from exerting undue influence on individual certifications. The C-level and CEO functions of bluesign and CAB shall be helmed by different people.

3.2.1.3 Functional separation

Functionally, the CAB's certification personnel shall operate independently from bluesign's scheme management and assessment personnel, so that decisions on granting, refusing, or withdrawing certificates are made solely on objective evidence and defined requirements. The physical addresses and email addresses of bluesign and CAB shall be different.

3.2.2 Management of impartiality

The *CAB* shall ensure that all certification decisions are fair, unbiased, and not influenced by money, commercial interests, or personal relationships.

3.2.2.1 Commitment to impartiality

The CAB shall clearly state that impartiality is a core principle for all its certification activities and that it will not allow financial, commercial, or personal pressures to influence decisions. Top

management is responsible for promoting this commitment, communicating it to all staff, and acting whenever risks to impartiality are identified.

The CAB shall regularly look for situations that could create a risk to impartiality—such as close business ties, shared ownership, staff working both for the CAB and for clients, or pressure to "fast-track" decisions—and record these risks. For each identified risk, the CAB shall decide and document how it prevents or minimizes the risk to an acceptable level (e.g. by changing responsibilities, adding extra review, or refusing certain work).

The CAB (or the part of the legal entity acting as the CAB) shall not design, manufacture, market, or maintain the products it certifies, and shall not provide consultancy services that could influence certification decisions.

Within the CAB's organisation, activities that could create conflicts of interest (such as sales, marketing, product design, or consultancy) shall be clearly separated from the units that perform evaluation, review, and certification decisions.

The CAB shall ensure that people who perform product testing, evaluations, reviews, and final certification decisions have roles and responsibilities that avoid conflicts of interest, including clear rules that anyone involved in scheme design, marketing, or consultancy does not participate in certification decisions for products they have influenced.

3.2.2.2 Mechanism for safeguarding impartiality

The CAB shall have a documented mechanism (for example, a committee or panel) with balanced representation from interested parties (such as clients, bluesign, technical experts, possibly regulators) to oversee impartiality. This mechanism shall regularly review policies, decisions, and identified risks, and provide input to ensure that impartiality is protected and that trust in the CAB's work is maintained.

3.2.2.3 Independence and behaviour of personnel

All internal and external personnel involved in evaluations, reviews, and decisions shall sign and follow rules on impartial behaviour, including declaring potential conflicts of interest. The CAB shall take action if it becomes aware of behaviour that could compromise impartiality, and shall train staff regularly on these expectations.

3.2.3 Competency management

3.2.3.1 General

All personnel needed for the scheme operation shall have a signed employment contract with the *CAB* containing a confidentiality clause, covering the information obtained or created during the performance of the conformity assessment activities. Management of CAB shall be responsible for having access to sufficient number of conformity assessment personnel to cover its operations.

3.2.3.2 Competency management for personnel involved in product certification

The CAB shall have a procedure about their competence management in place including at least the following topics:

- how criteria for the competence of the personnel for each function involved in the conformity assessment process reflect at least the criteria about educational and professional qualification mentioned in this scheme (See: Educational and professional qualification [19])
- how training needs are identified and transferred into an onboarding and continuous training program
- how required competencies can be demonstrated and where the training records will be documented including formal authorization of the personnel for their specific functions

- how performance monitoring is carried out (See: Continuing professional development [19])

Success of the training shall be either monitored with a test at the end of each online training or with a documented review of the manager. Manager shall monitor the performance of the personnel and identify resulting training. A list of the personnel and their authorized functions shall be available as evidence at any time.

The following trainings - provided by bluesign - shall be conducted during onboarding of a conformity assessment personnel as a minimum:

- Introduction of bluesign System
- General overview of bluesign Criteria for bluepass Products and scheme requirements
- Overview of bluesign Programs
- If applicable: further specific criteria or scheme related trainings provided by bluesign

The initial trainings are mandatory for becoming authorized to work independently in the function. Only candidates with adequate background education and experience shall be recruited for the conformity assessment relevant positions.

3.2.3.3 Educational and professional qualification

The following educational background and knowledge is expected at least:

- For assessors of chemical products, knowledge in
  - in the field of *product stewardship*, classification and labelling as well as regulatory affairs; gained experience acquired either in industry or working as a consultant
  - in the field of chemistry and/or plastic industry manufacturing; gained experience acquired either in industry or working as a consultant
  - in the field of environment, health and safety (*EHS*); gained experience acquired either in industry or working as a consultant
- For assessors of articles and consumer products,
  - Proficiency in material management or product development within the textile and apparel industry (minimum 2 years industry experience)
  - Good knowledge of textile value chain
  - Command of office and statistic tools
  - Experience in cross functional project distribution and autonomous and systematic solution planning
  - English - and if applicable local language - reading, writing and speaking communication ability

3.2.3.4 Continuing professional development

For ensuring CAB personnel's competence is up-to-date, each employee shall participate all 3 years (latest when a new criteria revision comes into force) in a "calibration training" carried out by bluesign. Further trainings shall be defined by CAB for ensuring continuous competence.

3.2.4 Periodic oversight assessment

The *CAB* shall conduct and document a periodic oversight assessment of bluesign's evaluation processes at least every three years, unless a risk-based approach justifies a shorter interval.

The oversight assessment shall verify that bluesign's evaluation processes continues to issue process certificates and to register products competently, impartially and within its scope. The CAB shall maintain records of oversight activities, findings, and resulting actions.

3.3 Company – roles and obligations

Companies (e.g. chemical suppliers, material suppliers, assemblers, brands) - both applicants and certificate holders shall:

- provide correct and complete information
- keep labels accurate
- inform bluesign of any changes that affect the product certification (See: Changes at the Company [28])

4 Object of conformity and product requirements

4.1 Object of conformity

The object of conformity shall be:

- *registered chemical product*s for end-consumer use only
- registered *article*s that will be consumer-facing only , e.g. via labelling on consumer product or for end-consumer use
- registered *consumer product*s

For details on how to define the object of conformity and its variants, please refer to: Definition of the product(s) and variants to be certified [23]

4.2 Applicable requirements

The applicable requirements are as follows:

1. The applicant shall have achieved the *bluesign Status* "Criteria conformance".
2. The product shall be *registered*.

5 Functional certification process

5.1 General

The *CAB* shall define and document the entire certification process, including the steps of application, application review, evaluation, review, decision, documentation, and post-decision activities. The CAB shall apply this process consistently to all applicants and certificate holders.

5.1.1 Overview of certification process steps

The certification process shall follow the ISO 17000 functional approach in alignment with Clause 7 of ISO/IEC 17065. The steps of the certification process shall include:

1. General [22]
2. Application [22]
3. Application review [23]
4. Evaluation [24]
5. Review [25]
6. Certification decision [25]
7. Certification documentation [26]
8. Directory of certified products [27]
9. Surveillance [27]
10. Changes affecting certification and transition period [28]
11. Suspension, withdrawal and termination [29]
12. Records [30]
13. Complaints and appeals [30]

5.1.2 Process flow and typical timelines

5.1.2.1 Process flow

1. Company signs agreement with approved *conformity assessment body* (CAB) for *product certification*.
2. Company submits application to CAB via bluesign. The application can only be submitted after provision of mandatory data and documentation of sufficient quality as described in the relevant chapters within *bluesign Criteria* for bluepass Products.
3. CAB evaluates if requirements of bluesign Criteria have been fulfilled based on submitted data.
4. Certification decision is made.
   If product evaluation is successful, the certification is complete. CAB to inform bluesign to update bluesign Guide to reflect the certification decision.
   If product evaluation is unsuccessful, the certification is incomplete and the System Partner has the option to re-submit data.
5. Samples for monitoring testing may be requested at any time (See: Testing).
6. No later than 3 years after registration date, a review of the data will be conducted by bluesign.

5.1.2.2 Typical timelines

A typical product certification takes between 2-6 weeks once all data and documentation are received.

5.2 Application

The *Company* shall submit a formal application together with all required information and documentation. This shall include, at minimum, a clear description of the product, intended scope

of certification, relevant technical data, and any declarations or supporting evidence required by the scheme.

5.2.1 Information to be submitted

The information to be submitted within the application are found in the following chapters within *bluesign Criteria* for bluepass Products:

Table 1. Applicable bluesign Criteria chapter based on product category

Product category	Applicable bluesign document	Applicable bluesign Criteria chapter
*registered chemical product*s for end-consumer use only	bluesign Criteria for bluepass Products	3.1.1 For end-consumer chemical products
*registered article*s that will be consumer-facing only	bluesign Criteria for bluepass Products	3.1.2 For articles that will be consumer-facing
*registered consumer product*s only	bluesign Criteria for bluepass Products	3.1.3 For consumer products

5.3 Application review

The *CAB* shall review the application to ensure that it is complete, that the scope is clear, and that the CAB has the competence and resources to carry out the evaluation. Any missing or unclear information shall be clarified with the applicant before proceeding.

5.3.1 Eligibility and access to the scheme

Before *product certification* to *bluesign Criteria* can be started, the following shall be fulfilled by the *bluesign System Partner* company:

1. Hold a valid System Partner agreement
2. Achieve the *bluesign Status* Criteria conformance
3. Hold a valid certificate from bluesign
4. Have completed *product registration*, with the product to be certified visible on *bluesign Guide*
5. Hold a valid agreement with the *CAB*

In addition, the product to be certified shall match the defined object of conformity (See: Object of conformity [21]).

5.3.2 Definition of the product(s) and variants to be certified

5.3.2.1 For end-consumer chemical products

In order for products to be considered variants of the same product instead of a separate product, the following shall be the same:

- product type
- unique identifier for the product
- allocation of the product to product categories and sub-categories
- name, location and System Partnership status of production site(s) and subcontrator(s)
- information on upstream suppliers for inputs (e.g. chemicals, materials)
- For *chemical product*s: recipe
- For *article*s: material composition, *workflow* (See: Workflow [31])
- For *consumer product*s: material composition

Variations in sizes are possible, but the recipe shall remain the same. All sizes can be covered as variants under one certificate if the contents are identical.

5.3.2.2 For articles that will be consumer-facing

In order for products to be considered variants of the same product instead of a separate product, the following shall be the same:

- product type
- unique identifier for the product
- allocation of the product to product categories and sub-categories
- name, location and System Partnership status of production site(s) and subcontrator(s)
- information on upstream suppliers for inputs (e.g. chemicals, materials)
- For *chemical product*s: recipe
- For *article*s: material composition, *workflow* (See: Workflow [31])
- For *consumer product*s: material composition

Variations in sizes and colours are possible, but the material composition and *workflow* shall remain the same. All sizes and colours can be covered as variants under one certificate if the material composition and workflow are identical.

5.3.2.3 For consumer products

In order for products to be considered variants of the same product instead of a separate product, the following shall be the same:

- product type
- unique identifier for the product
- allocation of the product to product categories and sub-categories
- name, location and System Partnership status of production site(s) and subcontrator(s)
- information on upstream suppliers for inputs (e.g. chemicals, materials)
- For *chemical product*s: recipe
- For *article*s: material composition, *workflow* (See: Workflow [31])
- For *consumer product*s: material composition

Variations in sizes and colours are possible, but the material composition shall remain the same. All sizes and colours can be covered as variants under one certificate if the material composition is identical.

5.4 Evaluation

5.4.1 General principles

The *CAB* shall carry out the evaluation in accordance with the scheme requirements, using documented procedures and competent personnel. The evaluation shall be objective, evidence-based, and consistent across all applications.

5.4.2 Verification of completeness and consistency

The CAB shall verify that the documentation submitted is complete, current, and consistent with one another. Any discrepancies, gaps, or unclear information shall be resolved with the applicant before the evaluation can be concluded.

5.4.3 Assessment of conformance with requirements

The CAB shall evaluate the documentation submitted by the applicant to determine whether the product demonstrates conformance with all applicable scheme requirements. This may include the evaluation of product specifications, safety data sheets, declarations, labels, process descriptions, and relevant third-party certificates.

5.4.4 Handling gaps or non-conformities

If the evaluation identifies gaps, missing information, or nonconformities, the CAB shall communicate these clearly to the applicant and define how they can be addressed. The evaluation shall not be concluded until all significant issues are resolved or formally accepted according to scheme rules.

5.4.5 Documentation of the evaluation outcome

The CAB shall document the evaluation findings, the basis for the conclusion, and any conditions attached to the result. The review and decision stages shall rely on a clear audit trail showing why the product was accepted or rejected for certification.

5.4.6 Acceptance of external certification

The CAB may accept external certification as evidence that the applicant fulfils the scheme requirements. Before accepting the external certification, the CAB shall verify its validity, authenticity, holder, scope, issuing certification body, and expiry date.

The CAB shall not repeat evaluation processes where the external certification is accepted as reliable evidence. However, the CAB may request additional information or conduct a documentation check where this is necessary to resolve inconsistencies, gaps, or concerns.

The CAB shall not accept external certification where the certificate is expired, suspended, withdrawn, outside its accredited scope, does not cover the relevant activities or site, or where there is objective evidence that its reliability may be compromised. In such cases, the CAB shall require alternative evidence or perform an evaluation in accordance with the scheme requirements.

The acceptance and verification of external certification shall be documented in the evaluation record. ISO/IEC 17065 requires the CAB to retain responsibility for its own certification activities and decisions, including where external certification is used.

5.5 Review

The *CAB* shall review the evaluation results to ensure that the evaluation was carried out correctly, that the evidence is sufficient, and that the conclusions are justified. This review shall be performed by CAB personnel who were not directly involved in the evaluation ("Four-Eyes Principle").

5.6 Certification decision

The *CAB* shall make the certification decision based on the documented evaluation and review. The decision shall clearly state whether certification is granted, refused, or deferred, and on what basis.

The decision shall be made by personnel with the authority and competence to do so, and who are independent from the evaluation function.

5.6.1 Decision criteria for conformance

The certification decision for conformance shall only be made when all requirements within the applicable chapters of *bluesign Criteria* for bluepass Products have been evaluated to be fulfilled, and the evaluation has been reviewed:

Table 2. Applicable bluesign Criteria chapter based on product category

Product category	Applicable bluesign document	Applicable bluesign Criteria chapter
*registered chemical product*s for end-consumer use only	bluesign Criteria for bluepass Products	3.1.1 For end-consumer chemical products
*registered article*s that will be consumer-facing only	bluesign Criteria for bluepass Products	3.1.2 For articles that will be consumer-facing
*registered consumer product*s only	bluesign Criteria for bluepass Products	3.1.3 For consumer products

5.6.2 Granting or refusal of certification

The *Company* shall receive a clear and fair decision for the acceptance and/or rejection of the application for product certification.

CAB shall inform bluesign once the certificate has been issued, at the latest within five working days, and provide the following information:

- For chemical products and articles: Name of the Company and its production site
- For consumer products: Name of the Company and its brand
- Scope of certification (product type, product name and unique identifier)
- Link to which version of bluesign Standard the certificate was granted
- Expiry date of certificate
- Status of certificate

Any changes in the scope, status or expiry date of certification shall be reported to bluesign and visible on bluesign Guide.

5.7 Certification documentation

5.7.1 Issue and content of the certificate

Certificate template shall be provided by bluesign and used by *CAB*. Key elements include:

- Certification body
- Product group
- Version of the bluesign Criteria conformed with
- Issue date
- Validity

In addition to the ISO/IEC 17065 requirements the certification template contains the right to use the bluepass mark (See: Rules for use of marks and references to the scheme [27]) and the authorization to include the certification status of products *bluesign Guide*.

Once the product has been evaluated to conform with the applicable chapters within *bluesign Criteria* for bluepass Products, a *certificate* shall be issued for the product as statement of conformance. It attests conformance of the product with the bluesign Criteria and shall be signed by the person responsible for taking the certification decision on behalf of the CAB. bluesign certificates are valid only in connection with an entry on *bluesign Guide*.

Renewal of certification is possible after application for renewal of certification and provision of updated data and documentation.

5.7.2 Validity and limitations of the certificate

5.7.2.1 For end-consumer chemical products

All end-consumer chemical products which are listed in the bluesign Finder with the status "certified" are considered as bluepass Chemical Products.

Chemical product registration has a validity of 3 years from the day of registration. To maintain the certification status, the following shall be fulfilled:

1. A valid certificate for production site and product stewardship site – the certificate status is shown in the *bluesign Finder*
2. Ongoing compliance with the BSBL limit values

In case the above conditions are no longer met, already *certified* chemical products expire after further 3 months or as defined in the BSBL.

Expired chemical products are no longer listed in the bluesign Finder.

In case of serious consumer safety or legal compliance risk, bluesign has the right to adjust these periods.

5.7.2.2 For consumer products

All consumer products manufactured during the validity period are bluepass Consumer Products.

Consumer product registration has a validity of 3 years from the day of certification. To maintain the certification status, the following shall be fulfilled:

1. A valid certificate of brand and manufacturer – the certificate status is shown in the *bluesign Guide*
2. Non-bluesign assemblers managed by the brands are accepted
3. Updated supply chain data of sufficient quality (annual)
4. Updated Brand *MIL*

In case the above conditions are no longer met, already *certified* consumer products expire after further 3 months.

Expired consumer products will be listed in the bluesign Guide with the status "expired".

Furthermore, brands may consider all articles that are ordered during the validity period for their bluepass Consumer Products as "certified".

In case of serious consumer safety or legal compliance risk, bluesign has the right to adjust these periods.

5.7.3 Rules for use of marks and references to the scheme

The rules for usage of the certification mark "bluepass" are described in the document "bluepass Certification Mark & Claims Guideline" (available on bluesign.com).

The rules for usage of the bluesign logo, including communication about System Partnership status, are described in the document "bluesign System Partner Mark & Claims Guideline".

The right to use certificates shall be embedded in the agreement documents (e.g. Terms & Conditions).

5.7.4 Misuse of certificates or marks and corrective actions

Non-compliance with the authorised usage of the certification trademark is defined as a breach of contract and shall be remedied within 30 days of notification. Failure to rectify any non-compliance may be treated as a breach of contract resulting in termination and withdrawal of all certification rights for the entirety of the user's portfolio of processes and their registered products.

In case of misuse of bluesign marks for consumer-facing *certified* products which cannot be disproved with suitable evidence, CAB shall take legal actions if the misuser is not willing to take appropriate action and escalate it to bluesign.

5.8 Directory of certified products

bluesign shall maintain a directory of certified products that is accessible to relevant parties. The directory shall include at least the product name, certificate holder, scope, and status.

5.9 Surveillance

5.9.1 Testing

The *CAB* shall either purchase a sample of a *certified* product per System Partner from the market annually or, if not possible, shall request a sample of a certified product from the System Partner's

warehouse annually. This sample shall be sent for testing by the CAB based on bluesign's testing matrix. CAB shall inform bluesign upon the purchase of the sample product and shall provide bluesign with the complete test report(s).

bluesign shall request the *BOM* of the purchased sample from client and review BOM.

5.9.2 Surveillance monitoring

The CAB shall conduct independent, risk-based monitoring of *certified* products on an annual basis by selecting a random sample of products and reviewing the availability, completeness, and consistency of documentation required by the scheme.

The minimum sample size shall be determined as

$$n = \sqrt{N} + 1 \quad (1)$$

rounded up to the next whole number, where

- n = number of units to sample
- N = number of product records of product type registered in the surveillance year by companies with an agreement with CAB[1]

This monitoring is conducted as a surveillance activity after certification, does not form part of the initial certification evaluation, and shall not delay the certification timeline.

Where the monitoring identifies evidence that may affect conformity, CAB shall evaluate the finding and take any subsequent action in accordance with the applicable certification, corrective-action, suspension, or withdrawal procedures.

5.10 Changes affecting certification and transition period

5.10.1 Changes in bluesign Criteria

bluesign will inform the *CAB* and *System Partner* companies of any changes to the *bluesign Criteria* and the required actions within a reasonable timeframe.

CAB shall ensure that *Company* is informed. Implementation shall be evaluated with the next renewal of *certificate*.

5.10.2 Changes in BSBL, BSSL, RSL

The limit values in *BSBL*, *BSSL*, *bluesign RSL* are revised on an annual basis to ensure compliance with legal requirements and alignment with other substances lists. Changes in restricted substance limit values are implemented with transition periods in the frame of product certification process.

5.10.3 Changes at the Company

Company shall inform bluesign, in writing, of any intended changes to their production site(s), process(es), product(s) or management. bluesign shall forward this information to the CAB, and the CAB shall determine whether the notified changes require additional evaluation. If an additional evaluation is needed, the CAB shall inform bluesign.

5.10.4 Transition period

The transition period of the bluesign Scheme starts on the day of release and lasts one year. Early adoption is permitted and encouraged for all CABs before the effective date. All assessments conducted on or after the transition period has ended shall be conducted according to latest effective version.

[1]For product type "chemical products", product records are on a product basis; for product type "articles", product records are on an article basis; for product type "consumer products", product records are on a style basis

5.11 Suspension, withdrawal and termination

5.11.1 Suspension of certification

A *certificate* shall be suspended by *CAB* for a limited period, maximum 3 months, in cases such as the following:

- if assessments and surveillance activities are not carried out within the prescribed timeframe
- if the implementation of *correction*s and *corrective action*s is not completed within 6 months or other deviating agreed time limit
- if a case of misuse of the *certificate* or the certification mark is not corrected by suitable retractions or other appropriate remedial measures by the Company

CAB shall confirm in writing to the *Company* the suspension of the certificate and indicate under which conditions the suspension will be removed. CAB shall inform bluesign such that the status of the certificate will be shown as 'suspended' on bluesign platforms. Company shall no longer identify its products as *certified*.

At the end of the suspension period, CAB shall investigate whether the indicated conditions for reinstating the certificate have been fulfilled. If so, the suspension shall be stopped and the status of the certificate changed to 'valid'. Not fulfilling the conditions shall lead to withdrawal of certification (See: Withdrawal of certification [29]).

5.11.2 Withdrawal of certification

A *certificate* shall be *withdrawn* in any of the following cases:

- if nonconformities are found to exist during the validity period and measures taken have been inadequate
- if any of the pre-conditions for access to the scheme are no longer met (See: Eligibility and access to the scheme [23])

CAB shall inform the Company in writing on the withdrawal of certificate and indicate under which conditions Company can apply for certification.

The status of the certificate will be shown as "withdrawn" on bluesign Guide, registration of new products will be stopped and existing product registrations become invalid.

The bluesign status of Company on bluesign platforms will be removed and shown as "not defined".

The Company shall not identify its processes as certified and stop using the bluesign System Partner and the bluepass marks.

CAB shall inform bluesign so that System Partner downstream users can be notified and necessary actions can be taken.

NOTE
Withdrawal of certification does not automatically lead to termination of agreement.

5.11.3 Termination of agreement

In case of termination of the bluesign System Partnership Agreement by Company or bluesign for whatever reason, the certificate and all product certifications will become invalid on the day of termination.

bluesign will inform CAB if this is the case. The Company shall not identify its products as certified and shall stop using the bluesign System Partner and the certification marks particularly the bluepass marks.

Status of certified products shall be changed to "expired" but the products are kept on *bluesign Guide* for traceability purposes.

5.12 Records

The CAB shall maintain records of all certification activities, including applications, evaluations, reviews, decisions, surveillance, changes, and any actions such as suspension or withdrawal. Records shall be kept for a minimum of 6 years and protected against unauthorized access or alteration.

Certificate holders shall maintain relevant records that demonstrate continued conformity with the scheme requirements.

5.13 Complaints and appeals

Processing complaints and appeals shall be an integral part of *CAB*'s clients' relations and assurance of customer satisfaction. The process shall be open to companies, individuals, and other stakeholders who wish to raise a complaint or appeal concerning

- *Certified* products
- The quality of CAB's certification services
- Appeal against a CAB decision

In case CAB should receive complaints concerning:

- *bluesign Scheme* and/or *bluesign Criteria*
- Misuse of bluesign trademarks

it shall be forwarded to bluesign for further investigation.

CAB shall submit a summary report of all complaints to bluesign on a quarterly basis at the minimum. In the event that a complaint needs earlier involvement by bluesign, CAB shall contact them in a timely manner.

Complaints shall be handled within a reasonable timeframe and as transparently as possible, while fully respecting the principles and requirements of confidentiality and impartiality. They shall not result in any discriminatory actions. A complaint or appeal shall be submitted in writing, without delay, supported by evidence such as documents, test reports, links or pictures and addressed to the CAB and/or bluesign. The complaint/appeal shall be acknowledged in writing following receipt; evidence shall be provided to support the final decision on the complaint.

6 Annex

6.1 For articles that are consumer-facing

6.1.1 Workflow

Workflows describe processing routes within a production site. They are combination of:

- Article Type
- Materials, including ranges for their content e.g. 5-15% Elastane
- Combinations of certified processes covering all production steps carried out for this article type at this site
- All chemical products used in this process covering all colors, if applicable, performances and common material blends
- Chemicals used in authorized workflows must be listed in the CIL as 'in use' and have the rating blue/grey, tolerated, accepted. Allocated chemicals must be updated whenever there are relevant changes in CIL or rating of the chemicals

Usually, one workflow is applicable for numerous articles.

6.1.1.1 Workflow creation

Workflows can be created at any time with the information outlined above (See: Workflow [31]) and with a production recipe for a typical article (at best in black color) as an example for workflow usage. They are submitted to bluesign with the first article registrations using this workflow.

6.1.1.2 Workflow authorization

The initial *product registration* of articles made with a new workflow includes testing of a typical article against the limit values of the *BSSL*. bluesign selects the testing sample, focusing on items with high risk for impurities and considering the relevance for this group.

Testing is done in an accredited third-party lab on bluesign's account. Company shall send the sample directly to the lab.

If all test results meet the BSSL limit values, bluesign will authorize the workflow for usage in product registration and register all articles made with it.

In case of a testing fail, a root cause analysis shall be carried out to eliminate the source for impurity. After settling the issue, Company may re-submit the article.

6.1.1.3 Workflow authorization validity

Pre-conditions for continued usage of a workflow are:

- All processes are *certified*
- All chemicals have been rated *blue*, *grey*, *tolerated*, or *accepted*

Rating of the chemicals allocated to a workflow may change to unsuitable rating or chemicals may be phased out. Such products must be re-assessed or replaced within 3 months after change of rating / usage status. After this period the workflow will be deactivated and can no longer be used for registration of new articles.

Deviating periods are possible if they result from transition periods defined in other binding documents such as *BSBL*/*BSSL* (annual revision cycle) or specific phase-out scenarios.