

Process Manual

XBRL Software Certification

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Overview

The XBRL Software Certification programme enables software developers to obtain an official certification confirming their software's conformance to listed XBRL specifications. XBRL Software Certification provides access to an XBRL-trademarked logo for use in promotion of their software.

Over time we expect the certification to become a common requirement in XBRL software procurement processes.

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Certification benefits

Vendors of software that has been certified will be given access to a certification logo (“the conformance mark”) that may be used in marketing materials relating to the certified software. Additionally, vendors are permitted to use the phrase “XBRL^{TM1} Certified Software” to describe the software. The conformance mark and phrase may be used only whilst the certification is current.

XBRL International will publish a list of all current certified software on its website.

In addition, XBRL International will host a “certificate page” for each piece of certified software, confirming details of the certification (see Use of the conformance mark and certificate page). XBRL International will, on request, confirm the certification status of software to third parties, including organisations undertaking procurement processes.

Types and scope of certification

XBRL Software Certification is currently available to two categories of software: **Report Consumption Software** and **Report Creation Software**.

Report Consumption Software

Reporting Consumption Software is any software that takes XBRL or iXBRL Reports as input. In order to obtain certification, such software must apply any validation that is required by the specifications against which it is certified.

Report Creation Software

Report Creation Software is any software that produces XBRL or iXBRL reports as output. In order to obtain certification, such software must prevent the creation of any report that is invalid according to the specifications against which it is certified.

Specification support levels

The XBRL Standard is a modular specification, comprising the XBRL v2.1 specification and a number of additional specifications. Software is not required to support all specifications in order to obtain certification. The modules against which it has been certified will be listed on the Certificate Page (see Certification benefits).

¹ Or in those countries where the XBRL word mark is Registered vendors are permitted to use the phrase “XBRL[®] Certified Software”.

Certification is available against the following groups of specifications:

- **Base** – XBRL v2.1 and Dimensions v1.0 (all certified software is required to support these)
- **Inline XBRL** – Inline XBRL v1.1 and Transformation Rules Registry v3
- **Table Linkbase** – Table Linkbase v1.0
- **Extensible Enumerations** – Extensible Enumerations v1.0
- **Formula** – Formula v1.0, and the latest versions of all formula modules at recommendation status
- **Units Registry** – Units Registry v1.0

This list will be expanded as new XBRL recommendations become available. Conformance will always be tested against the latest errata release of a specification, and using the latest conformance suite that has been approved by the relevant working group.

Certification period

Initial certification lasts for one year, from the date of testing (or from the announcement date, if tested during the Sunrise Period – see Launch phase). Subsequent certification lasts for one year from the later of the expiry of the old certification, or the date of testing. Re-testing for subsequent years can be done at any point during the last three months of the current certification.

Software versions

The software certification applies to an individual software product. The Certificate Page will document exactly which version of the product was tested, but vendors are permitted to use the logo, and describe as being certified, later releases of the same product without the need for retesting.

Certification criteria

In order to obtain certification, software must demonstrate its conformance with the specification. This is done via a manual inspection of the software by XII staff. The process for this varies depending on the software category.

Report Consumption Software is primarily tested using the conformance suites for the relevant specifications. Software vendors will be required to provide a “test harness”. A test harness is software or a script that will automatically run all tests in a suite against the product, and report on whether the output matches the expected output. The harness must also allow additional test cases to be submitted during the inspection.

Report Creation Software is required to demonstrate that certified Report Consumption Software is embedded in the creation software as

a validator that prevents the output of reports that are not valid XBRL (or iXBRL). During the inspection, XII staff will use the report creation interface in order to attempt to create reports that will demonstrate the presence of the validator (i.e. by attempting to create invalid reports, and reviewing the errors that are returned).

Costs

The fee structure is shown in the table below. The discounts for additional product testing are only available where the additional products are inspected in the same testing session.

	Initial certification test		Annual re-test	
	Members	Non-members	Members	Non-members
1 st product	US\$1,000	\$2,000	\$400	\$800
2 nd and additional products	\$500	\$1,000	\$200	\$400

“Members” refers to all XBRL International participants, including Direct and Jurisdictional members.

The fees covering the testing of a product for either Report Consumption or Report Creation. If a single product is required to be tested in both category, this will be charged as two tests. The discount for an additional product will be applicable if both tests are conducted in the same testing session.

Launch phase

In order to ensure that the scheduling of initial certification inspections does not create an unfair marketing advantage to particular software vendors, the certification programme will be launched using a Sunrise Period. During this period, testing will take place, but no certifications will be issued or announced. Certifications for all software successfully tested during this period will be issued and announced simultaneously at the end of the Sunrise Period.

Guide for software developers

Registering for software certification

In order to register for software certification, developers should email certification@xbrl.org providing the following information:

- Name & version of software to be tested
- The names of any product variants to be covered by the certification, and a description of the software architecture that relates them to the tested product
- Type of certification requested (Report Creation or Report Consumption)
- Modules to be tested (list of available XBRL Specification modules)

Testing process

The preferred mechanism for testing is either an in-person meeting or an online meeting using screen sharing software, with the software being tested on a computer provided by the software developer, but allowing XII Staff to control it remotely, as required.

Following the request for certification, a mutually convenient time for performing the testing will be agreed.

The process for testing during the session depends on the software category.

For Report Consumption Software, the developer will be asked to demonstrate a test suite harness applying all conformance suite tests for all modules being certified. The test harness should be a simple piece of software that reads the index files in a conformance suite, supplies the test documents referenced in each test case to the processor being tested as input, checks the resulting output against the expected output, and reports on any differences between expected and actual results.

The tester must then be allowed to submit their own test cases to confirm that they return the correct results and that the software has not been “rigged” to just provide the correct answers to conformance suite tests.

For Report Creation Software, the software is required to demonstrate that certified report consumption software is embedded as a validator, and prevents the export of invalid XBRL or iXBRL reports. If the embedded report consumption software has not already been certified, it will first be separately certified according to the process above. This certification will be subject to an additional fee.

The software developer will then be asked to demonstrate that the consumption software is embedded in the creation software by creating invalid input in the creation software that is caught by the consumption software. It is recognised that it is often desirable to

provide a user interface that prevents the creation of invalid reports in the first place, rather than allowing them, and then catching them with an often technical XBRL validation error. XBRL International will be happy to discuss potential workarounds for this, but one approach could be to use XBRL Formula rules in the taxonomy.

The tester must then be allowed to control the software, and attempt to create invalid XBRL through the user interface.

Retesting process

If the software does not pass its initial test, a single second testing session can be arranged for no additional fee within two weeks of the original test date. Beyond that, additional testing sessions will be charged at full price.

Updates to the conformance suite

From time to time, XBRL International working groups will release updates to the conformance suites, either as approved tests to ensure conformance with specific points of the specification, or as draft tests to establish current behaviour of processors in relation to an aspect of the specification that has been identified as ambiguous.

Developers of certified software are required to:

- Confirm conformance with new approved tests within three months of their approval.
- Respond within two weeks to a request to confirm current behaviour of certified software in relation to draft tests.

XBRL International may request a retest of software to confirm conformance with new approved tests. No fee will be charged for such re-tests.

Use of the conformance mark and certificate page

Upon successful completion of the certification process, XBRL International will make available a specific logo ("the conformance mark") for use in connection with certified software, and publish a page on the xbrl.org website ("the certificate page") documenting details of the certification.

The conformance mark may only be used in connection with the certified product and variants, and only for as long as the certification is current. Where the conformance mark is used online, it must be a hyperlink to the certificate page.

The certificate page will include:

- The status of the certification (current or expired)
- The dates on which the software has been successfully tested

- The supported specifications that were tested (see Specification support levels)
- The software category (see Types and scope of certification)
- The name and version of the software tested

A separate certificate page will be provided for each tested product, and the page will not include information about any other software. The certificate page for Report Creation Software will not disclose the name of the embedded Report Consumption Software.

Annual retesting process

Software must be retested annually in order to retain its certification. Software may be submitted for retesting at any point during the last three months of the current certification.

The testing process will be the same as for the initial test, but will always be done using the latest versions of the conformance suites.

Upon successful completion of the retest, the certification will be extended by one year from the expiry date of the current certification period (i.e. there is no penalty for testing early within the three month window), and the certificate page will be updated to record the details of the most recent test.

If software is not successfully retested, the vendor must stop using the certification mark, and the phrase “XBRL^{TM2} Certified Software” in connection with the software.

² Or in those countries where the XBRL word mark is Registered vendors are permitted to use the phrase “XBRL[®] Certified Software”.