



A New Participant's Guide to CVA Qualification

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

This Guide to Central Volume Allocation (CVA) Qualification has been produced to assist new entrants with understanding CVA Qualification and its relationship to Registration in the CRS (Central Registration System). The CVA Qualification process is defined in [BSCP70: CVA Qualification Testing for Parties and Party Agents](#). ELEXON's Customer Operations Team will assist the Participant to enter the Balancing and Settlement Code (BSC) arrangements. For further details of the assistance available from ELEXON, please see section 5.8 of this document.

The main body of the guide is in the form of a set of questions and answers with a 'watch points' section that brings out some key points which you may need to consider. The questions are grouped according to the objectives described below.

The guide covers the CVA Qualification process which must be undertaken if Parties & Party Agents wish to communicate with the CVA BSC Agent systems. SVA Qualification Processes and National Grid (NG) related communications testing are not covered in this guide.

The [Communications Requirements Document \(CRD\)](#) defines the list of all the BSC Agents related data flows that need to be tested. Within the [CRD](#) the test flows are grouped into test groups and further subdivided to/from the relevant CVA BSC Agent in order to show how many data flows fall into each group.

This document is not a contractual document. It has been produced with a view to simplifying some of the procedural complexities; the BSC and other related documentation take precedence over this document.

2 Watch Points

This section lists a number of points that may need particular attention.

Each BSC Party and Party Agent must register and qualify in its own right.

BSC Parties include:

- Supplier
- Non-physical Trader
- Interconnector User
- Generator
- Licenced Distribution System Operator (LDSO)
- Interconnector Administrator (IA)
- Interconnector Error Administrator (IEA)
- Virtual Lead Party (VLP)

Party Agents in this case refer only to:

- Energy Contract Volume Notification Agent (ECVNA)
- Metered Volume Reallocation Notification Agent (MVRNA)
- Central Volume Allocation Meter Operator Agent (CVA MOA)

Each BSC Party and Party Agent must register and qualify in accordance with [BSCP65](#), [BSCP70](#) & [BSCP71](#). This means that BSC Parties and Party Agents must ensure they have access to facilities which are proven to enable them to interface with the BSC Central Services Agent (CSA) and that they have had their unique details such as Party Name, Party ID, Party Agent ID and contact details registered by the CRA.

2.1 BSC Parties and CVA MOAs must either complete CVA Qualification testing, request to 'Opt Out' of all or specific test flows or seek a Waiver. ECVNAs and MVRNAs must either complete CVA Qualification tests or seek a waiver.

1. BSC Parties and CVA MOAs must inform ELEXON via the relevant [BSCP70](#) test booking form of their intention to complete, Opt Out or Waiver each specific test flow applicable to the roles in which they intend to register in CRS.
2. ECVNAs and MVRNAs must inform ELEXON via the relevant [BSCP70](#) booking form of their intention to complete or Waiver each specific test flow applicable to the roles in which they intend to register in CRS.
3. If a BSC Party or Party Agent shares some facility with another organisation, ELEXON requires a statement from the BSC Party or Party Agent of which data flow groups are covered and justification of why tests are not required.

Sections 3.10 and 4.2 of this document explain this further.

2.2 Responsibility for Readiness before CVA Qualification tests

Submission of the relevant test booking form in [BSCP70](#) confirms that that an organisation will:

1. Undertake, Waiver or Opt Out of the specific test flows in relation to the role(s) the organisation registers in CRS;
2. Ensure that all relevant software systems will be available and tested by the date of the tests;
3. Review the test scripts relevant to the interfaces to be tested and plan the preparation activities accordingly;
4. Ensure that all preparation, including the preparation of test data, will be complete by the booked date (where applicable); and
5. Ensure appropriate communication channels will be functional by the booked date.

Where a BSC Party or CVA MOA decides not to test flows this is at their own risk.

Should a BSC Party or CVA MOA wish to test flows after go-live, they can do so using the Participant Test Service (PTS). There is a cost associated with using the service.

3 What Needs To Be Done

3.1 Who does CVA Qualification apply to?

The CVA Qualification process applies to all BSC Parties and BSC Party Agents (as defined in 2.1). Every Party to the BSC must individually go through the CVA Qualification process, and this applies equally to Parties who are members of a corporate group.

Where file validation software that was tested for the relevant flows are being shared by another Party, an Applicant may request a Waiver of CVA Qualification testing by submitting a [BSCP70/02](#) form.

The CVA Qualification process also applies to all Party Agents who have interfaces with the **Central Systems**. Specifically, this means [ECVNAs](#), [MVRNAs](#) and [MOAs](#) who operate CVA meters. The test flows applicable are different in each case. For more information on the applicable flows, please refer to the [Communications Requirements Document](#) or the forms in [BSCP70](#).

If an organisation is both a BSC Party and one or more Party Agents, it must meet the CVA Qualification requirements applicable to all of the roles.

3.2 What is CVA Qualification?

CVA Qualification testing gives assurance that a BSC Party or Party Agent can communicate with the relevant CVA BSC Agents using data flows relating to the BSC Party's role or the specific Party Agent. Testing involves sending data to, or receiving data from, the Central Systems testing team which conducts the CVA Qualification testing for the CVA BSC Agents.

The tests look at the content of the files and the systems that produce them. They are not concerned with the business processes that sit around the systems.

Electronic data flows require an electronic connection to the relevant CVA BSC Agent, plus appropriate software systems to read or generate the data files. The tests assume that you have all the relevant connections and software installed and working. Please see section 5 of this document.

3.3 What format do we have to send data to Central Systems?

The format used for all flows is specified in the [CVA Data File Catalogue](#). This document is available from the [Market Entry page](#) of the [BSC Website](#).

3.4 What do the tests look like and how long do they take?

The CVA Qualification tests are to test the data interfaces and functionality of the systems which produce and read the data, but not the business processes that sit around the systems.

For an electronic data flow you must arrange to have your software generate an example file and send it to the Central Systems testing team, which confirms that it conforms to the CVA Data Catalogue.

For an electronic data flow from the Central Systems, you receive two example files, one valid and one invalid. Your software should accept the valid file and reject the invalid one. This is known as Acknowledging (Acking) or Non-acknowledging (NAcking). All files received from the Central Systems must be acknowledged or non-acknowledged as appropriate

BSC Parties and CVA MOAs can Opt Out of testing some or all of the test flows relevant to the roles they are registering in the CRS. Not to test is completely at the Party's own risk. Where the Party or CVA MOA chooses to complete all tests in a test group, the time needed for these test is in the table below.

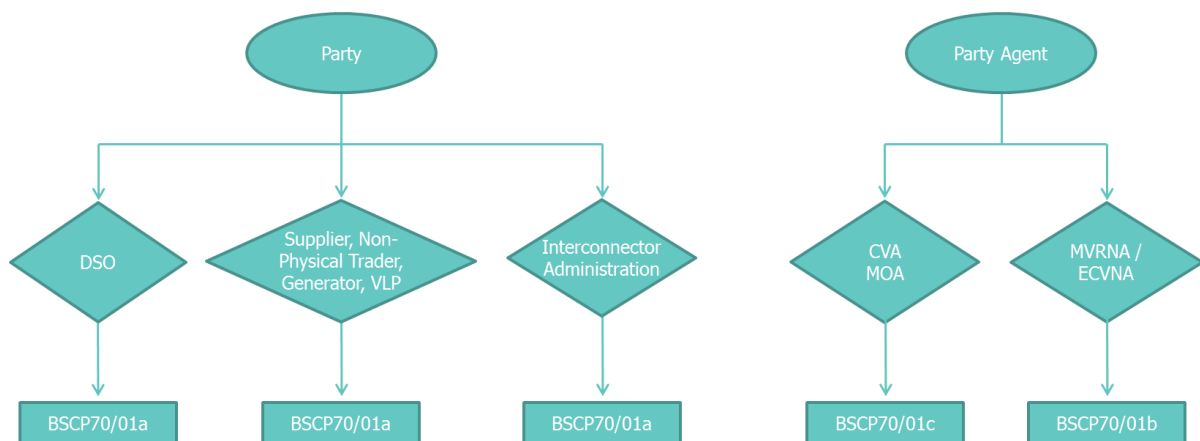
3.5 ECVNAs and MVRNAs must complete all test flows relevant to their roles.

| Flows to be tested | Applicable Organisation | Time |
|--------------------|--|---|
| Registration flows | All Parties | 4 hours |
| Trading flows | Trading Parties | Done at the same time as registration flows |
| Metering flows | Parties who will register Metering Systems | 4 hours |
| BMU flows | Parties who will register BM Units | Done at the same time as Metering flows |
| DSO Specific flows | Distribution System Operators | 4 hours |
| ECVNA flows | Energy Contract Volume Notification Agent | 4 hours |
| MVRNA flows | Meter Volume Reallocation Notification Agent | 4 hours |
| CVA MOA flows | Meter Operator Agents who will be responsible for CVA meters | 4 hours |
| SMRA flows | Supplier Meter Registration Agents | 4 hours |

Please note that the times noted in the above table are only an indication. Testing times can differ dramatically and we always ask you to set aside at least a whole day for CVA Qualification testing. Although testing usually takes less than a whole day this will allow you time in case any amendments can be made to your systems at the time of the test to get a successful outcome.

3.6 Which data flows do I need to test?

You only need test data flows that apply to your business and the decision tree below should help you identify which data flows apply to you.



Interconnector Administrators and Interconnector Error Administrators are regarded as special situations where the Meters are registered without being directly allocated to a single BM Unit. The registrant of these Meters will need to test Metering Data Flows.

3.6 What is the relationship between the CVA Qualification process and registration in the CRS?

Registration is to register data in the CRS including the organisation's name, address and Party ID. The CVA Qualification process is a parallel activity, which must be completed before your registration becomes effective in CRS.

3.7 Do I also need to qualify with National Grid and the Funds Administration Agent?

You only need to qualify with National Grid if you need either an Electronic Data Link (EDL) or Electronic Data Transfer (EDT) link. The Funds Administration Agent (FAA) does not require any data flows to be tested.

For clarification, you only need an EDT link if you are submitting physical notifications for one or more BM Units, and you only need an EDL link if you are submitting bids and offers from a BM Unit and need to receive Bid/Offer Acceptances.

3.8 As a Supplier I am going through the SVA Qualification Processes. Do I still need to complete the CVA Qualification process?

CVA Qualification is mandatory for Parties. You have the option to complete, Waiver or Opt Out of CVA Qualification testing.

3.9 As an SVA Party Agent, I have been through the SVA Qualification Processes. Do I still need to complete the CVA Qualification process?

No, unless you are a MOA taking on the operation of one or more CVA Meters. CVA Qualification is mandatory for CVA MOAs and you can choose to complete, Waiver or Opt Out of CVA Qualification testing.

3.10 I am a BSC Party sharing facilities / software / administration with another BSC Party. How do I avoid duplicating tests?

All BSC Parties and Party Agents must complete the CVA Qualification process individually. However, the participant may submit an application to Waiver some or all of the tests, where the Party or Party Agent is recognised as:

- part of a corporate group using central facilities;
- a client to some third party operational company which provides facilities for more than one BSC Party; or
- a client of a software company providing similar software for more than one BSC Party or Party Agent.

Should a Party of Party Agent wish to Waiver, ELEXON requires evidence to show that the Qualifying participant will share previously tested facilities. This evidence can be a letter from the supporting participant, confirming their lines were tested for the relevant data flows and confirming that they will be handling live flows for the qualifying participant.

For information on the Waiver process please see [BSCP70: CVA Qualification Testing for Parties and Party Agents](#). Please also see section 4.2 of this document for more information.

4 Dates and Booking

4.1 How do I make a booking?

Please complete the CVA Qualification Test booking form in [BSCP70](#) and return to bscservicedesk@cgi.com

Refer to the CVA Qualification Checklist, which can be found in [Appendix A of BSCP70](#), before requesting a testing slot. The checklist is a guide to ensure you are prepared for testing.

Generally, a ten day period is needed between booking a test slot and the actual test date to allow test data to be prepared, a tester allocated and administrative details confirmed.

If you are unsuccessful in your testing, CGI will liaise with you directly to arrange another test date giving enough time to make any changes relevant to your systems to produce a successful test.

All CVA testing for a new BSC participant role is free of charge. Please see section 5.8 for further information.

4.2 Can I apply to Waiver any tests?

Under certain circumstances you may apply for a Waiver of CVA Qualification. A Waiver can be sought if the software which will generate or read flows on your behalf is to be shared with another BSC Party or Party Agent, and you believe that the relevant flows have already been, or will be tested.

If you do not share software or organisation (described above) then you cannot Waive Qualification.

Waivers are not automatically granted. This facility is to reduce obvious duplication and it does not remove the obligation on Parties and Party Agents to satisfy CVA Qualification requirements. Waivers will not be granted if there is any doubt or concern about the identification of shared facilities or the relationship of those facilities to the particular data flows.

In the case of Waivers based on tests not yet done, you must state when these future tests are due. You may be required to undertake tests if the tests on which your Waiver is based are not complete. You will not have completed the CVA Qualification requirements until these other tests are complete.

4.3 Can I apply to 'Opt Out' of CVA Qualification testing?

BSC Parties and CVA MOAs have the option to Opt Out of testing all or specific flows relevant to the roles they are registering in the CRS. This is entirely at the Parties own risk. If the Party decides to Opt Out of testing they will not know if their systems can communicate with the CVA systems successfully and this may increase the risk to Settlement and the companies own finances.

BSC Parties and CVA MOAs must complete the relevant CVA Qualification test booking form in [BSCP70](#) and state against each applicable test flow whether they wish to test the flow as part of the CVA Qualification process.

ECVNAs and MVRNAs must complete all of the relevant CVA Qualification testing; they cannot Opt Out of testing.

5 Ensuring the Schedule Can Be Met

5.1 How do I ensure my communications work beforehand?

Part of the installation activity for [High Grade Service](#) includes an FTP (File Transfer Protocol) test. The Central Systems communications team will contact you to facilitate this once they have received an order from ELEXON for this activity. This tests the security software and communications by passing a plain text file from one end to the other. All that remains for you to do after this test is to ensure that your application software can communicate with the security software. The FTP testing is used primarily by High Grade Service users, but is also available on request to users of

[Low Grade Services](#) – requests should be made to the Central Systems during liaison with them when setting up your communications.

You should obtain your encryption keys as early as possible, as historically these can delay the communications set-up process.

Successful completion of FTP testing is not a guarantee that no problems will be encountered in CVA Qualification testing. If configuration changes are made after completion of FTP testing it is recommended that an FTP re-test should be requested.

5.2 How does the FTP protocol work?

You should encrypt any files that you are going to send to the Central Systems using the same key you used for FTP testing.

Log on to the FTP area using the username and password provided to you by your Central Systems new entrant testing team contact during FTP testing.

You will see three directories: inbox, outbox, and temp.

Participants should use the following protocol when sending flows to the Central Systems:

- cd temp
- put <filename>
- rename <filename> ..\inbox\<filename>

The flow will then be processed by the Central Systems.

Participants should use the following protocol when pulling files from the Central Systems:

- cd outbox
- get <filename>

The flow can then be decrypted using the key you used for FTP testing.

Participants using the High Grade Service and opted to have files pushed to them will see these files appear in the appropriate directory in the participant's system. Further details of push and pull options and FTP operations in general can be found in the [Participant Communications Installation Guide \(PCIG\)](#). Please contact the bscservicedesk@cgi.com to obtain a copy of the PCIG. Low Grade Service users will always pull files to themselves.

5.3 What are the FTP connection parameters?

Please contact the [BSC Service Desk](#) for High Grade Service, Low Grade Service, IP addresses and user names and passwords.

5.4 What is the Central Systems Participant ID?

The Participant ID for the Central Systems is – 'UKDC'.

5.5 What do I do if I have more than one ID using the same line?

If you are using one line for more than one Party ID, Party Agent ID, or combination, you need separate log on details to transfer files relating to each ID. This means that you will be using different keys for each Party's data flows, and it's the same as you will be doing for live running.

5.6 What happens during testing?

You will be contacted by the Central Systems a few days before your tests to confirm you are ready and agree what tests you are expecting. On the day, you will use your systems to send and receive electronic data flows. If you run into problems you will be able to talk to someone at the other end who will work with you to resolve the issues.

5.7 What happens if it does not work?

If you are unable to complete the tests relating to electronic flows in the allocated time you may be asked to book a future time when you expect to have resolved the problems. If the problems are to do with communications or understanding the interfaces we should be able to agree the scale of the problem and, either, bring in support to help you complete the tests in one go, or agree a new date.

5.8 Where can I get further assistance?

For further assistance and to book CVA Qualification tests, please contact market.entry@elexon.co.uk stating in the subject box of the email what assistance you require. Alternatively, you can also contact the [BSC Service Desk](#) to log a query.

6 Status and Records

6.1 How are the results recorded and reported?

Where applicable, CGI will provide the Customer Operations team with confirmation that data flows were tested satisfactorily. The Market Entry team then issues you with a Confirmation email for your records that you have been successfully Passed, Waivered or Opted Out of CVA Qualification.

6.2 Do I have to pass every test?

You have to pass, Opt Out or Waive every test flow in each group that is relevant to the role you register in CRS and you will not be qualified until then. For example, if you are a meter registrant you must Pass, Opt Out or Waive all the tests for all the data flows in the metering group.

6.3 Can I be partially qualified?

It is not possible to be partially qualified. You must successfully complete the CVA Qualification process for all the relevant flows that apply to the role(s) you register in the CRS. For example, if you are a meter registrant at the time, or you are about to become the registrant for meters, you must complete the relevant CVA Qualification tests in the metering group. See the diagram in section 3.6 to identify the flows required. Please also refer to the Communications Requirement Document which provides detailed information on the applicable flows.

A Party may wish to add capability as it is required. For example, a Supplier with no CVA meters can omit the metering group from testing it initially undertakes. If that Supplier later chooses to register CVA meters they must ensure they complete the relevant CVA Qualification tests for metering flows before registering the meters.

6.4 How do I know when I have completed the CVA Qualification and Registration Processes?

CGI will work with you during your CVA Qualification activities and will provide confirmation when the processes are complete.

Please bear in mind that completion is your responsibility; if the relevant forms and paperwork are not received, then your registration will not be enabled in CRS.

CVA Qualification is complete when CGI issue a CVA Qualification Statement which confirms you have met the relevant CVA Qualification requirements. The CVA Qualification Statement will be issued following the review and verification of the testing. This review process can take up to two working days from the completion of your final test group.

7. Data Flows

The Communications Requirement Document contains the formal definition of the data flows that need to be tested for this requirement.

The following points should be noted when considering data flow requirements for CVA Qualification tests.

- 7.1** Metering registration flows only relate to registrants of Metering Systems. Suppliers with base BMUs, or BMUs based on SVA aggregations only, will not use these flows and do not need to test them. However, tests will be required if a Supplier registers a CVA Metering System.
- 7.2** BMU Registrant flows apply in principle to all Parties with BM Units. In practice the flows in this group only apply to Interconnector Administrator.

Further information

- [BSCP65: Registration of Parties and Exit Procedures](#)
- [BSCP70: CVA Qualification Testing for Parties and Party Agents](#)
- [BSCP71: Submission of ECVNs and MVRNs](#)
- [Communication Requirements Document](#)
- [CVA Data Catalogue](#)
- [Market Entry](#)

For other information please contact the **BSC Service Desk** at bscservicedesk@cgi.com or call **0370 010 6950**.

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