



CREST. Building trust in the digital world, together

Terms of Reference

Discipline Communities and Focus Groups

v 7.0 [Issued, 25.03.2026]

Contents

1. Definitions.....	3
2. Purpose.....	5
2.1. Discipline Communities	5
2.2. Focus Groups.....	5
3. Objectives & Work of the Focus Group	5
3.1. Objectives.....	5
3.2. Engagement with International Council.....	6
4. Working Groups.....	6
4.1. Advisers to Working Groups	7
5. Transparency and Communications.....	7
6. Community & Focus Group Memberships	7
6.1. Discipline Communities	7
6.2. Focus Groups.....	8
6.3. Technical input to Focus Group.....	8
6.4. Engagement from CREST	8
7. Focus Group Governance	9
7.1. Appointments	9
7.2. Selection Criteria.....	9
7.3. Term.....	10
7.4. Vacancies	11
7.5. Chair and Vice-Chair	11
7.6. Focus Group Meetings	13
8. Recognition	16
Annex A: Personal and role specifications	17
1. Focus Group Chairs.....	17
2. Focus Group Members	17
3. Working Group Members	18
Amendment List	19

1. Definitions

- (i) **“Accredited”** means a Member Company that has successfully completed a CREST audit of its quality processes, data handling procedures, technical methodologies and any other assessment criteria required by CREST for delivery of Services Accredited by CREST. **“Accreditation”** shall be similarly construed.
- (ii) **“Assessor”** means a person appointed by CREST International having appropriate skills and experience to support CREST Certification activities.
- (iii) **“Certification”** in the context of these Terms of Reference means a CREST Examination. **“Certified”** shall be similarly construed.
- (iv) **“CREST International”** means CREST (International), with Company Registration number 09805375, and any or all of its global businesses. **“CREST”** shall be similarly construed.
- (v) **“CREST International Council”** means the governing body of CREST (International).
- (vi) **“Discipline”** includes, but is not limited to, Penetration Testing (including Web/Mobile App testing); and/or Intelligence-Led Testing; and/or Incident Response; and/or Threat Intelligence; and/or Security Operations Centres; and/or Vulnerability Assessment; and/or any other Disciplines as determined by CREST from time to time.
- (vii) **“Discipline Community”** means a group of people that are interested in the development of a particular field of cyber security covered by a CREST Discipline and that comply with the criteria at set out in Clause 2.1.
- (viii) **“Examination”** means any collection of questions, prompts, or other items collected and offered with the intent of evaluating a candidate’s knowledge, proficiency, performance, competency, or skill. Examinations shall be deemed to be inclusive of all components of an evaluation instrument, whether written questions, hands-on tasks, or any other conceivable exercise including scoring criteria.
- (ix) **“Focus Group”** means a small group of individuals elected to drive the objectives of a Discipline and to achieve its Purpose (as defined in Clause 2.2) and appointed in line with the criteria set out in Clauses 6.2 and 7.
- (x) **“Member Company”** means a company that has passed the relevant CREST requirements for CREST Accreditation, agreed to the CREST Code of Conduct and has paid any fees associated with membership. **“Membership”** shall be similarly construed.
- (xi) **“Participation Agreement”** means a binding agreement relating to the specific output of a Working Group.
- (xii) **“Pathway Company”** means an organisation that has successfully achieved Pathway status.
- (xiii) **“Pathway+ Company”** means an organisation that has successfully achieved Pathway+ status.
- (xiv) **“Region”** means a group of countries in a relevant geographical area as determined by CREST from time to time. **“Regional”** shall be similarly construed.

- (xvi) **“Regional Council”** means a body created to oversee either multiple countries in a Region as determined by CREST from time to time, and comprising representatives elected by the Member Companies entitled to vote in a Region.
- (xvii) **“Secretariat”** means the employed staff of CREST.
- (xviii) **“Service”** includes, but is not limited to:
- (a) Penetration Testing; and/or
 - (b) Intelligence-Led Testing; and/or
 - (c) Incident Response; and/or
 - (d) Threat Intelligence; and/or
 - (e) Security Architecture; and/or
 - (f) Security Operations Centres; and/or
 - (g) Vulnerability Assessment.
- (xix) **“Technical Committee”** comprises the chairs of all the Focus Groups and chaired by the Chief Product Officer from within the CREST Secretariat.
- (xx) **“Working Group”** means a group of individuals appointed for their skills and experience to support the delivery of a particular project assigned to them by a Focus Group. See Clause 4.

2. Purpose

2.1. Discipline Communities

- 2.1.1 The purpose of the Discipline Communities is to facilitate engagement with Member Companies, Pathway+ companies and individuals who hold a current CREST Certification and to enable them to contribute to Discipline-related activities in which they have an interest.
- 2.1.2 They will support the development of standards for cyber Service providers and the individual skills development for individuals. They represent a way to both stay in touch with Discipline related developments and provide feedback to aid the activities of the Focus Groups (see Clause 2.2 below).
- 2.1.3 Feedback from the wider cyber community is welcome.

2.2. Focus Groups

- 2.2.1. The purpose of the Focus Groups is to
 - (i) Lead the development of standards for both Service providers and to the development of individual skills, representing the related Discipline Community;
 - (ii) Set the technical strategy for CREST Services related to Service providers and individuals;
 - (iii) Support the delivery of CREST's product strategy;
 - (iv) Deliver research relevant to the Discipline and which aligns to the objectives at 2.2.1(i) and 2.2.1(ii) and which ensures that CREST remains closely aligned to industry trends and directions of travel;
 - (v) Collectively contribute to the delivery of Discipline-related objectives set out by CREST and agreed with the Focus Group Chairs.

3. Objectives & Work of the Focus Group

3.1. Objectives

- 3.1.1 To engage and represent the Discipline Community.
- 3.1.2 To champion CREST Accreditations and Certifications across the Discipline Communities to drive uptake and adoption.
- 3.1.3 To support delivery of CREST's Product Strategy and lead the development of standards for service providers and individuals.
- 3.1.4 Accreditation processes:
 - (i) Support development and maintenance of the standard for the Discipline;
 - (ii) Identify advancements in the Discipline to continually raise the standard for the Accreditation;
 - (iii) Contribute to the development of Accreditation marking guidelines.

3.1.5 CREST Skills and Certifications:

- (i) Support development of new and existing Examination syllabuses;
- (ii) Identify advancements in the Discipline to further improve the standard and value of Certifications;
- (iii) Contribute to ongoing mapping of internationally recognised standards;
- (iv) Help identify gaps in the Examinations and propose changes;
- (v) Provide guidance to CREST Assessors on Examination content and/or quality.
- (vi) Contribute to professionalisation of the industry and the development of professional titles, including support for CREST's activities as a licensing body with the UK Cyber Security Council for related specialisms as requested.

3.1.6 In conjunction with Discipline Community, contribute to horizon-scanning upcoming social, technological, economic, legal, regulatory, political and ethical factors that may impact CREST Accreditations and Certifications and the forward direction of CREST;

3.1.7 To support related Government initiatives as requested;

3.1.8 To assist with the review of potential papers for CRESTCon presentations within the Discipline;

3.1.9 To deliver research and white papers relevant to the Discipline;

3.1.10 Conduct Discipline Community activities:

- (i) Minimum of two (2) virtual Community events each year;
- (ii) Facilitate contribution from the Discipline Community to Focus Group agenda and activities;
- (iii) Ensure updates on Focus Group activities and discussions are made available to the Discipline Community;
- (iv) Engage with CREST to develop periodic Discipline-related newsletter(s).

3.1.11 To the extent that any intellectual property is created by Focus Group members during the course of supporting CREST with the development of any Accreditation, Certification or other services including any inventions and improvements that they make or conceive, either alone or jointly with others, in the course of, or as a direct result of, the work done for CREST, or as a consequence of information CREST or our Group Companies have supplied to them, Focus Group members assign all intellectual property rights in the developed material to CREST with full title guarantee.

3.2. Engagement with International Council

The Focus Group will be represented on the International Council by its Chair (see Clause 7.5 [Chair and Vice Chair]) and they will represent the global interests of the Discipline as well as feeding back key matters from the International Council to the Focus Group.

4. Working Groups

- (i) Focus Groups may establish Working Groups as and when required, whether short term or otherwise, in order to ensure delivery of projects or other activities.
- (ii) The Focus Group will be responsible for outlining the purpose and deliverables of any such Working Group, its membership, and for detailing when and how that working group should report back to the Focus Group and the timeline for doing so.

- (iii) Participants from the wider Discipline Community may be invited to join a Working Group in order to ensure sufficient resources are available to deliver the desired output. The CREST Secretariat will be advised where such action is necessary.
- (iv) All participants in a Working Group will be required to sign a Participation Agreement prior to commencing work to deliver the output of the working group.
- (v) Depending on the nature of the activity, specific Non-Disclosure Agreements may be required for all members of a Working Group.
- (vi) Participants from the wider Discipline Community who are engaged on a Working Group will not hold a vote within the Focus Group.
- (vii) Each Working Group will be led by a member of the Focus Group.
- (viii) Each Working Group should also identify a vice-lead to support the Focus Group lead.

4.1. Advisers to Working Groups

- 4.1.1 Where necessary the Focus Group may, at their discretion and with the agreement of the CREST Secretariat, appoint persons from the wider cyber community in an advisory role in order to assist with the activities of a Working Group.
- 4.1.2 Where such advisers are invited, they must sign a CREST Non-Disclosure Agreement and a Participation Agreement.
- 4.1.3 All advisers are expected to act in the interests of CREST as a whole and not in the interests of the organisation that they represent.

5. Transparency and Communications

- 5.1. The governance and appointment processes will be made available to Discipline Communities on the CREST website.
- 5.2. The composition of the Focus Groups will also be available on the CREST website.
- 5.3. The CREST Secretariat reserves the right to redact any commercially sensitive or confidential information from Focus Group meeting notes as it deems necessary.

6. Community & Focus Group Memberships

6.1. Discipline Communities

- (i) Membership of a Discipline Community will be open to any individual that either:
 - (a) works for a CREST Member Company, regardless of the Accreditation of that Member Company, or
 - (b) works for a Pathway or Pathway+ company, or
 - (c) who holds a valid CREST Certification.

- (ii) Individuals can join as many Discipline Communities as they choose using the online application. They may also leave a Discipline Community whenever they choose by opting out of marketing communications or alternatively, notifications to leave may be sent to focusgroup@crest-approved.org.
- (iii) Focus Groups will arrange activities for their apposite Discipline Communities which are likely to include:
 - (a) Two or more online events per year, relevant to the Discipline
 - (b) Periodic newsletters summarising the activities of the Focus Group

6.2. Focus Groups

- (i) Membership of Focus Groups is available to Accredited Member Companies.
- (ii) There will be a maximum of eight (8) Member Company representatives in a Focus Group, subject to approval by the Secretariat. Each of the CREST Regions should be represented, unless there are no Accredited Member Companies in a Region or a Member Company Representative cannot be identified [see Clause 6.2(iii)].
- (iii) A maximum of two (2) representatives from one Member Company Accredited to the Discipline can become a member of the Discipline's Focus Group (see also Clause 6.2.1 [Technical Input to Focus Group]).
- (iv) Focus Group representatives will either be:
 - (a) Elected to a CREST Regional Council where it has been agreed with the Focus Group chair that they will represent the Discipline on its Focus Group; or
 - (b) Elected or appointed periodically from the Member Companies Accredited to the Discipline and domiciled in a prescribed Region; or
 - (c) An individual holding a Discipline-related CREST qualification.
- (v) The intention of this criteria is:
 - (a) To deliver alignment between Regions and Focus Groups; and
 - (b) To ensure Regional nuances are reflected in Focus Group activities.
- (vi) The criteria for election to a Regional Council are contained in each Regional Council's Terms of Reference.

6.3. Technical input to Focus Group

- (i) Where appropriate, a current CREST Assessor holding appropriate Discipline-related qualification(s) should be either a member of or appointed to a Focus Group.
- (ii) If an Assessor is appointed rather than elected (Clause 6.3(i)), that Assessor may represent the same company as another individual in the Focus Group.
- (iii) An Assessor appointed will ensure alignment and collaboration with the Focus Group on the future direction of the discipline, of its related Examination syllabi and the development of Examination content.

6.4. Engagement from CREST

- (i) The CREST Chief Product Officer (or their nominated representative from the Secretariat) will be invited to attend each meeting of the Focus Group and meetings of the Discipline Community. The Head of Product and/or another member of the product team assigned to a discipline will also be invited to attend each Focus Group meeting and meetings of the Discipline Community.

- (ii) The CREST Head of Governance & Legal will attend each meeting of the Focus Group in order to oversee and advise on governance matters, to ensure engagement from the regions and relevant members of the Secretariat, and to provide secretarial support to the Focus Group.
- (iii) In addition to the Secretariat members at 6.4 (i) and 6.4(ii), other appropriate members of the of the Secretariat may attend meetings as required.

7. Focus Group Governance

7.1. Appointments

- 7.1.1 In order to ensure representation from each of the Regions, at least one company in each of the Regions should be represented and the company's representative must be domiciled, or at least active, within that Region and they are required to demonstrate and maintain that status.
- 7.1.2 Appointments to the Focus Group will be made as follows:
 - (i) An elected Regional Council representative who is an expert or leader in the Discipline may be appointed where it has been agreed with the Focus Group chair that they will represent the Discipline on its Focus Group; and/or.
 - (ii) A Member Company representative with relevant and current experience and/or qualifications and/or a relevant Certification may be invited to join a Focus Group; and/or
 - (iii) CREST Member Companies Accredited to the Discipline may be invited to nominate suitable representatives from their organisations for appointment to the Focus Group in accordance with Clause 6.2(iii) [Community & Focus Group Memberships>Focus Groups]; and/or
 - (iv) Individuals holding a Discipline-related Certification may be invited to submit a nomination to join a Focus Group in accordance with Clause 6.2(iii) [Community & Focus Group Memberships>Focus Groups].
- 7.1.3 For the avoidance of doubt, whilst it is preferable that the Member Company whose representative is appointed under the provision of Clause 7.1.2(ii) above holds Accreditation to the Discipline, if it does not it will be required to gain that Accreditation within six months of their representative being appointed.
- 7.1.4 In accordance with Clause 6.2 [Community & Focus Group Memberships>Focus Groups], there will be a maximum of eight (8) members of the Focus Group in total, subject to approval by the Secretariat, and a maximum of two representatives from any one Member Company on the Focus Group. See also Clause 6.3 [Technical input to Focus Group].
- 7.1.5 By volunteering to serve on a Focus Group, members must be in a position to allocate sufficient time to meet attendance and participation expectations which are estimated at approximately one day per month.
- 7.1.6 See also Clause 7.6.6 [Focus Group Meetings>Attendance at Focus Group meetings] relating to attendance and participation requirements for Focus Group members.

7.2. Selection Criteria

- 7.2.1. To be appointed to the Focus Group, an individual must be an experienced strategic leader in the field. Examples of the factors that will support this include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - (i) Demonstrable experience in the Discipline;
 - (ii) Holding a strategic leadership position in the Discipline in a cyber company;

- (iii) Being a well-established commentator, public speaker or advisor in the Discipline;
- (iv) Having previous experience in setting and overseeing the execution of strategy.
- (v) Having contributed to international research, standards development or cyber policy development in the Discipline;
- (vi) Having previous experience on boards or senior committees;

7.2.2. Personal and role specifications are described in Annex A.

Selection Process for Regional Council representatives

7.2.3. The process for appointing Regional Council representatives will be as follows:

- (i) Regional Council members advised of vacancy in relevant region;
- (ii) Regional Council representatives submit their nomination and rationale for appointment;
- (iii) Focus Group chair and a member of the Secretariat review the application and/or interview the representative;
- (iv) Regional Council representative notified of the outcome;
- (v) The decision of the Focus Group chair and Secretariat will be final.

Selection Process for Member Company representatives and/or Certified Individuals

7.2.4. The process for appointing Member Company representatives and/or Certified individuals will be as follows:

- (i) Either:
 - (a) Notice issued to eligible Member Companies and Certified individuals; or
 - (b) Individual identified as potential focus group member.
- (ii) Focus Group chair, and vice-chair (where in post), down-selects the requisite number of candidates based on the criteria at 7.2.1;
- (iii) Focus Group chair and a member of the Secretariat review the application(s) and/or interview the candidate(s);
- (iv) Candidates notified of the outcome;
- (v) The decision of the Focus Group chair and Secretariat will be final.

7.3. Term

7.3.1. Appointments to the Focus Group made under the provisions of Clause 7.1.1 will be for an initial period of three years.

7.3.2. All Focus Group members will be required to retire at that point and will be eligible for re-election or re-appointment, as relevant, for a further three-year term if they wish to stand.

7.3.3. Focus Group Members who have served for two consecutive three-year terms, ie. six years, must stand down compulsorily for a minimum period of one year.

7.3.4. The Secretariat reserve the right to adjust these timeframes for operational continuity as required.

7.4. Vacancies

- 7.4.1 In the event of a Focus Group member resigning from their Member Company, provided that they are transitioning to another Member Company that is accredited to the Discipline in accordance with the provisions of Clause 7.1 [Appointments], the member in question may remain on the Focus Group. In this circumstance, the Focus Group member shall serve for the same term for which they were originally appointed, subject to the provisions of Clause 7.3.4.
- 7.4.2 If a member on the Focus Group is transitioning to another Region already represented on the Focus Group, the Chair of the Focus Group will agree the Regional representation with the members concerned which may result in the Region being represented by two Member Company Representatives.
- 7.4.3 If a member of the Focus Group holding a Discipline-related Certification in accordance with Clauses 7.1.2(ii) or 7.1.2(iv) resigns from the Focus Group, the process at Clause 7.2.4 will be invoked.
- 7.4.4 Vacancies occurring for the following reasons will be filled in accordance with the provisions of Clause 7.2 [Selection Criteria]:
- (i) If the Focus Group member referenced in Clause 7.4.1 is either not transitioning to a Member Company Accredited to the Discipline or to a company that is not a CREST Accredited Member; or
 - (ii) Where it has been agreed that they will stand down in line with Clause 7.4.2; or
 - (iii) The Focus Group has determined that a member should be replaced in accordance with Clause 7.6.6(iv) [Attendance at Meetings].
- the incoming Focus Group member will serve the same term as the departing Focus Group member in order to ensure co-termining for future appointments where invoked; see Clause 7.3 [Term].
- 7.4.5 All appointments shall be duly recorded in the minutes of the apposite meeting.

7.5. Chair and Vice-Chair

7.5.1 Chair

- (i) The Focus Group shall appoint a Chair from amongst their number. For the avoidance of doubt, Regional Council representatives appointed in accordance with Clause 7.2.2 will be eligible for the role of Chair provided they are not also holding the position of Chair of a Regional Council.
- (ii) The Chair of the Focus Group will represent the Discipline on the CREST International Council and will also serve as a Director of CREST in that capacity.
- (iii) The Chair of the Focus Group will represent the Discipline on the CREST Technical Committee.
- (iv) The elected Chair will preside over meetings of the Focus Group.
- (v) The elected Chair will also act as Chair of the Discipline Community for that Discipline in the event that such a role is needed at any time, such as during community events.
- (vi) Chairs must be in a position to allocate sufficient time to meet the requirements of the role which are estimated at approximately two days per month.
- (vii) Personal and role specifications are described in Annex A.

Appointment process for Chair

- (viii) The process for appointing the Chair will be as follows:
 - (a) Members co-opted to a Focus Group (see Clause 7.6.8) will be eligible to stand for the position of Chair or Vice-Chair of a Focus Group.
 - (b) Focus Group members will be invited to submit their nomination and rationale for standing for election to the role and will be required to evince their suitability based on the criteria at Clause 7.2.1;
 - (c) Head of Governance and Legal (with support from other Secretariat representatives if required) will review the application(s) and assess whether the criteria for appointment have been met;
 - (d) Nominees that meet the criteria will be interviewed by at least two people (the “Interviewing Panel”), being the CEO and one or more of the following individuals (who must not be standing for the position themselves): the outgoing Chair, existing members of the Focus Group, or any member of the Secretariat as requested by the CEO;
 - (e) Nominees will be notified of the outcome;
 - (f) The decision of the Interviewing Panel will be final.
- (ix) The Chair will retain the role for a period of no longer than three years from the date of their election unless:
 - (a) they stand down from the role of Chair; or
 - (b) they stand down from the Focus Group; or
 - (c) if a majority of the Focus Group members choose to remove that person from the role.
- (x) If the Chair has held office for three consecutive years they will be required to stand for re-election if they wish to do so.
- (xi) If successfully re-elected, the Chair may serve for a further term of three years at which point they must stand down and will not be eligible to stand for appointment to the role again until a period of one year has elapsed.
- (xii) The Secretariat reserve the right to adjust these timeframes for operational continuity as required.
- (xiii) The CREST Secretariat reserve the right appoint to the role of Chair from the members of the Focus Group or by co-option in the event that there is a period with no Chair in place or no individual nominates themselves for the position.

7.5.2 Vice Chair

- (i) The Focus Group may appoint or elect a Vice-Chair to support the Chair and who will also act as Vice-Chair for the Discipline Community if the Chair is unavailable and in the event that such a role is needed at any time.
- (ii) The process to appoint or elect a Vice-Chair and all provisions surrounding the appointment shall be as outlined in Clause 7.5.1 [Chair].

Vice Chair Responsibilities

- (iii) Responsibilities of the Vice Chair will include, but may not be limited to:
 - (a) Chairing meetings of the Focus Group if the Chair is unavailable;
 - (b) Chairing meetings of the Discipline Community if the Chair is unavailable;
 - (c) Representing the Discipline at meetings of the CREST International Council if the Chair is unavailable;
 - (d) Representing the Discipline at meetings of the Technical Committee if the Chair is unavailable;
 - (e) Representing the Focus Group Discipline at other meetings either alongside or instead of the Chair. Such meetings may include those held with stakeholders, etc.

7.5.3 Collaboration

The Chair, and Vice-Chair where appointed, should collaborate with their equivalent numbers in the other CREST Focus Groups as necessary.

7.6. Focus Group Meetings

7.6.1 Format and Frequency of Meetings

- (i) The Focus Group will meet every two months, scheduled ahead of each CREST International Council meeting. If any physical meetings are arranged, virtual attendance will be made available for those unable to attend in person.
- (ii) The Chair should arrange informal meetings in the intervening months to ensure momentum for activities is maintained and members remain engaged.
- (iii) The Discipline Community should be offered the opportunity to contribute to the agenda for Focus Group meetings.
- (iv) The meetings will be chaired by the Chair of the Focus Group and specific topics will be identified for discussion and agendas circulated in advance.
- (v) If the Chair is not in attendance at a meeting of the Focus Group, the Vice-Chair shall preside.
- (vi) If the Chair and Vice-Chair are both absent from a meeting, the members of the Focus Group in attendance shall appoint an acting Chair from the members present for the meeting in question. At all Focus Group meetings, it shall be the duty of the Chair to ensure that all members show respect to the process and are provided with equal access to the floor. The Chair of the meeting shall also determine when consensus has been reached and in accordance with the provisions of Clause 7.6.5 [Quorum]

7.6.2 Record of Focus Group Meetings

- (i) The Chair of the Focus Group will ensure that a written record of actions from the formal meetings is made. The Head of Governance & Legal will be responsible for recording the actions and important updates of those meetings and for ensuring that the agreed written record of each of their meetings is made available to the CREST Secretariat.
- (ii) Each meeting will be recorded for context and the recording made available to Focus Group members and the Secretariat.
- (iii) An action log will be maintained that identifies the owner, status and associated timeframes of those actions. Focus Group members must monitor actions from meetings and complete those assigned to them in the timeframe provided.
- (iv) Where necessary, the Chair of the Focus Group may deliver recommendations from the Focus Group to the CREST Secretariat for consideration and their decision on adoption or not will be in accordance with the provisions of Clause 7.6.3 [Focus Group Recommendations].
- (v) The record of the meeting, the recording and any discussions shall be treated as CREST Confidential and not for disclosure outside the Focus Group without permission from the CREST Head of Governance & Legal, or another member of the Secretariat.
- (vi) A summary of the discussions at a Focus Group meeting will be made available to the Discipline Community. CREST reserves the right to redact any information within such summary as it deems necessary.
- (vii) The use of AI by Focus Group members for notetaking, or any other function, during meetings is strictly prohibited.

7.6.3 Focus Group Recommendations

- (i) The CREST Secretariat will make the final decision on the adoption, or not, of any recommendations passed to them by the Focus Group and during their consideration of recommendations, the CREST Secretariat may engage the Technical Committee and/or Regional Councils where necessary, and/or the International Council if appropriate.
- (ii) In the event of any difference of view, it is expected that the Focus Group and the Secretariat will discuss the matter constructively but in the unlikely event that agreement cannot be reached, the Chair of the Focus Group may escalate discussion to the CEO in the Secretariat or via their position on the International Council.

7.6.4 Guests at Focus Group Meetings

- (i) The Focus Group may invite guests or advisers to attend parts of a meeting or an entire meeting where their participation is relevant or essential. Such invitations should be based on a business purpose such as, but not limited to, contributing input to a specific topic as a subject matter expert.
- (ii) Where guests or advisers are invited, and depending on the subject matter, they may be required to sign a CREST Non-Disclosure Agreement and a statement agreeing to act in the interests of CREST as a whole and not in the interests of the organisation which they represent. The CREST Head of Governance & Legal, or another member of the Secretariat, should be consulted prior to an invitation being issued.

7.6.5 Quorum at Focus Group Meetings

- (i) In the event of a vote situation, a quorum at a Focus Group meeting shall be 50% including either the Chair or the Vice-Chair.
- (ii) Decisions taken at any meeting shall be decided by a majority of votes.
- (iii) Each Focus Group member will hold one vote. For the avoidance of doubt and in accordance with Clause 7.6.8(iii) [Co-Options to Focus Group], Co-optees will not hold a vote unless they hold the position of Chair or Vice-Chair of the Focus Group.
- (iv) In the case of an equality of votes, the Chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

7.6.6 Attendance at Focus Group meetings

- (i) All Focus Group members must regularly attend meetings and contribute to the activities of the Group in order to retain their position.
- (ii) Focus Group members will be expected to actively participate in all aspects of the Focus Group. It is also expected they would engage in active communications with other Focus Group members as necessary. They should expect to allocate time for preparing for meetings and participating in projects where appropriate. This time commitment may realistically amount to around one day per month.
- (iii) Focus Group members are volunteers and it is recognised that their time availability may change after their appointment meaning that they may no longer be able to fulfil their duties on the Focus Group effectively. As active participation is critical to CREST's overall governance, Focus Group members are encouraged to voluntarily stand down from their position in these circumstances by informing the Chair and the Head of Governance and Legal.

- (iv) Attendance of Focus Group members will be monitored by the Head of Governance and Legal. If a Focus Group member meets any of the following criteria for potential removal, they will be notified of their automatic removal from post:
 - (a) Absence from two consecutive meetings without providing any notice or reason to the Chair or Head of Governance and Legal in advance; or
 - (b) Absence from three meetings in a 12 month period, with or without notice or reason in advance.
- (v) If there are extenuating circumstances, the Focus Group member may appeal their removal by submitting a written request to the Focus Group Chair. The Focus Group Chair will have the discretion to grant an exception, such exception only being permitted once in each three-year term.
- (vi) A vacancy created in these circumstances will be filled in line with the provisions of Clause 7.4 [Vacancies] of these Terms of Reference.

7.6.7 Contribution at Focus Group meetings

- (i) Consistent and active contribution is paramount and all Focus Group members are expected to contribute to the activities of the Group by contributing ideas and suggestions and delivering contributions when requested or allocated.
- (ii) The contribution of Focus Group members in meetings and in supporting activities will be monitored by the Chair to ensure that CREST has an active and engaged community driving its Discipline activities.
- (iii) The Chair may ask Focus Group Members to describe the activities they have undertaken for the Focus Group in the previous six months and where they are not deemed to meet the minimum level of contribution (or no response is received within 10 working days), the Chair may issue a warning requiring increased contribution over the following six months. If no improvement is seen in the following six months, the Chair has the option to require the Focus Group member to stand down, which will be confirmed in writing by the Head of Governance and Legal upon request by the Chair.
- (iv) A vacancy created in any of these circumstances will be filled in line with the provisions of Clause 7.4 [Vacancies] of these Terms of Reference.

7.6.8 Co-Options to Focus Group

- (i) The Focus Group may, at their discretion or as recommended by the CREST Secretariat, co-opt persons (a “**Co-optee**”) in observer or advisory roles in order to assist with the productive operation of the Focus Group and its effective representation of the Discipline.
- (ii) Any individual appointed as a Co-Optee will be eligible to stand for appointment as Chair of the Focus Group, or as Vice-Chair if the Focus Group wish to create such an appointment.
- (iii) Unless appointed as Chair or Vice-Chair, Co-optees will not hold a vote.
- (iv) Where Co-optees are appointed, they may be asked to sign a CREST Non-Disclosure Agreement. If they engage with a Working Group, they will be required to sign a Participation Agreement. See also Clause 4 [Working Groups].
- (v) The appointment of a Co-Optee will be recorded in the minutes of the Focus Group meeting next occurring after the appointment.
- (vi) All Co-optees are expected to act in the interests of CREST as a whole and not in the interests of the organisation that they represent.
- (vii) Examples of the advisors and observers that may be co-opted include Government representatives, buyers of related Services, or technical specialists.

8. Recognition

CREST is currently developing its policy on continuous professional development (CPD) but it is expected that participation in Focus Groups and Working Groups will attract CPD points for participants.

It is likely to be a requirement that Focus Group chairs and Working Group leads will be required to approve the award of CPD based on Focus Group or Working Group contributions to ensure that only active participants receive this recognition.

Annex A: Personal and role specifications

1. Focus Group Chairs

Personal specification:

- Elected from amongst Focus Group members and with clear expertise in the category and its connection to other cyber security sectors.
- Strong interpersonal skills and demonstrable leadership experience including strategy development and delivery, and a history of leading effective meetings.
- Experience on boards or senior committees.
- Experience of driving groups or teams to ensure balanced contributions and shared ownership among focus group members.
- Established commentator, speaker and adviser in the category.
- Able to allocate sufficient time to meet the requirements of the role (est. two days per month).
- Able to take on directorship of CREST (International) [a requirement for elected members of the International Council].

Responsibilities:

- Represent their category on the CREST International Council.
- Act as a link between the Focus Groups to enable collaborative working as appropriate.
- Preside over meetings of the Focus Group, supported by the CREST Secretariat.
- Provide guidance to the Focus Group and associated Working Groups as and when necessary.
- Ensure momentum within Working Groups is maintained and that progress enables delivery of defined activities/outputs.
- Represent the Focus Group on Regional Councils as required.
- Review papers submitted for presentation at Technical Community events.
- Monitor attendance and participation levels of Focus Group members
- Consulted on award of CPD points claimed by Focus Group and Working Group members against defined criteria.
- Act as a senior member of CREST defining, agreeing and then actively and publicly supporting CREST's vision, mission and values.

2. Focus Group Members

Personal specification:

- Experience in the category.
- Ability to think strategically to support enhancements and progress of the category within the CREST product framework.
- Experience of interacting with governments or national authorities, including on cyber frameworks or policies.
- Skilled at creating papers/blog posts to support promotion of the category to the wider community.

- Domiciled in the specified region.
- Able to allocate sufficient time to meet the requirements for participation in the focus group (est. one day per month).

Responsibilities:

- Contribute to CREST's Product Strategy.
- Contribute to development of CREST's product framework and portfolio.
- In collaboration with the Focus Group chair, to oversee the working group(s) established to deliver outputs defined by the Focus Groups.
- Horizon scan future developments with their sector of cyber security and identify forward trends to inform the product strategy and enhance the standards and content of the product portfolio.
- Encourage engagement of the wider discipline community in the activities of the Focus Groups.
- Support technical community events organised by CREST.
- If the organisation they represent is not accredited to the category of the Focus Group, to ensure that such accreditation is achieved within six months of joining the Focus Group.
- To contribute to and actively and publicly support CREST's vision, mission and values.

3. Working Group Members

Personal specification:

- Substantial technical expertise in the sector represented by the category in which they are participating.
- Demonstrable technical knowledge related to the purpose of the working group (eg. certification content updates, buyer guidance, etc.).
- Able to allocate sufficient time to meet the requirements for delivery of the required output(s).

Responsibilities:

- To deliver the output requested by the Focus Group or Secretariat initiative under which the Working Group has been established.
- Encourage momentum within the group to ensure delivery of defined output within timeframe agreed with Focus Group or Secretariat.
- Support identification of CREST regional leads.
- To actively and publicly support CREST's vision, mission and values.

Amendment List

- (i) Version 7 of these Focus Group Terms of Reference were effective from March 2026 and were re-written throughout to reflect the change in criteria and process of CREST’s Discipline Communities and Focus Groups which were approved by the International Council at their meeting on 1 February 2024.
- (ii) Subsequent versions of the document have been amended in the areas described below.

a. Section reference b. Clause Reference c. Date Issued	Description of Changes	Authorised by	Version No. issued
a. b. c.			
a. b. c.			
a. b. c.			
a. b. c.			
a. b. c.			
a. b. c.			
a. b. c.			



General enquiries: info@crest-approved.org

Membership: newmembers@crest-approved.org

Examinations: exambookings@crest-approved.org

Press / Public Relations: media@crest-approved.org

www.crest-approved.org