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# Information technology — Biometric performance testing and reporting —

## Part 1: Principles and framework

*Technologies de l'information — Essais et rapports de performance biométriques —*

*Partie 1: Principes et canevas*

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# Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) form the specialized system for worldwide standardization. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives or www.iec.ch/members_experts/refdocs).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO and IEC shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents) or the IEC list of patent declarations received (see patents.iec.ch).

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This document was prepared by Joint Technical Committee ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*, Subcommittee SC 37, *Biometrics*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO/IEC 19795-1:2006), which has been technically revised.

The main changes compared to the previous edition are as follows:

— Terminology is updated to follow the biometrics vocabulary of ISO/IEC 2382-37:2017;

— Additional detail is provided on testing and reporting of transaction times and computational workload, and on graphical representation of results.

A list of all parts in the ISO 19795 series can be found on the ISO website.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html and www.iec.ch/national-committees.

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# Introduction

This document is concerned solely with the scientific technical performance testing of biometric systems and devices. Technical performance testing seeks to determine error and throughput rates, with the goal of understanding and predicting the real-world error and throughput performance of biometric systems. The error rates include both false-positive and false-negative rates, as well as failure-to-enrol and failure-to-acquire rates across the test population. Throughput rates refer to the number of individuals processed per unit of time based both on computational speed and human–machine interaction. These measures are generally applicable to all biometric systems and devices. Technical performance tests that are modality-specific, for example, fingerprint scanner image quality, are not considered in this document.

The purpose of this document is to present the requirements and best scientific practices for conducting and reporting technical performance testing. It is acknowledged that technical performance testing is only one form of biometric testing. Other types of testing not considered in this document include:

— reliability, availability and maintainability;

— security, including vulnerability;

— conformance;

— safety;

— human factors, including user acceptance;

— cost/benefit;

— privacy regulation conformance.

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Biometric technical performance testing can be of three types: technology, scenario and operational evaluation. Each type of test requires a different protocol and produces different types of results. Other parts of the ISO/IEC 19795 series provide specific advice and requirements for the development and use of such different test protocols. This document addresses specific philosophies and principles that can be applied over a broad range of test conditions.

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# Information technology — Biometric performance testing and reporting —

# Part 1: Principles and framework

## 1 Scope

This document:

— establishes general principles for testing the performance of biometrics systems in terms of error rates and throughput rates for purposes including measurement of performance, prediction of performance, comparison of performance, and verifying conformance with specified performance requirements;

— specifies performance metrics for biometric systems;

— specifies requirements on the recording of test data and reporting of test results; and

— specifies requirements on test protocols in order to:

  — reduce bias due to inappropriate data collection or analytic procedures;

  — help achieve the best estimate of field performance for the expended effort;

  — improve understanding of the limits of applicability of the test results.

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This document is applicable to empirical performance testing of biometric systems and algorithms through analysis of the comparison scores and decisions output by the system, without requiring detailed knowledge of the system's algorithms or of the underlying distribution of biometric characteristics in the population of interest.

Not within the scope of this document is the measurement of error and throughput rates for people deliberately trying to subvert the intended operation of the biometric system (e.g. by presentation attacks).

## 2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO/IEC 2382-37, *Information technology — Vocabulary — Part 37: Biometrics*

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO/IEC 2382-37 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at http://www.electropedia.org/

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**3.1**
**test subject**
individual whose biometric data is intended to be enrolled or compared as part of the evaluation

**3.2**
**test crew**
set of *test subjects* (3.1) utilized in an evaluation

**3.3**
**target population**
set of biometric data subjects of the application for which performance is being evaluated

**3.4**
**test organization**
functional entity under whose auspices the test is conducted

**3.5**
**experimenter**
individual responsible for defining, designing and analysing the test

**3.6**
**test administrator**
individual performing the testing

EXAMPLE Staff conducting enrolments or overseeing verification or *identification transactions* (3.10).

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**3.7**
**test observer**
individual recording test data or monitoring the *test crew* (3.2)

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**3.8**
**enrolment attempt**
sequence of one or more capture attempts with the aim of producing a biometric reference for a capture subject

Note 1 to entry: An enrolment attempt can require a specific number of capture attempts (e.g. three separate placements of a finger on a sensor within a set period), from which the highest quality sample(s) is/are selected for further processing.

**3.9**
**enrolment transaction**
one or more *enrolment attempts* (3.8) with the aim of producing a biometric reference for a capture subject

Note 1 to entry: If an enrolment attempt fails, further enrolment attempts can be performed within the same enrolment transaction until an attempt succeeds or enrolment is given up.

**3.10**
**identification transaction**
sequence of one or more capture attempts and biometric searches to find and return the biometric reference identifier(s) attributable to a single individual

**3.11**
**channel effect**
variation of the biometric sample due to sampling, noise and frequency response characteristics of the sensor and transmission channel

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**3.12**
**presentation effect**
variation of the biometric sample due to the way that biometric characteristics are presented to the sensor

EXAMPLE In facial recognition, this can include pose angle; in fingerprinting, finger rotation and skin moisture. In many cases, the distinction between changes in the fundamental biometric characteristic and the presentation effects are unclear (e.g. facial expression in facial recognition or pitch change in speaker verification systems).

**3.13**
**technology evaluation**
*offline* (3.17) evaluation of one or more algorithms for the same biometric modality using a pre-existing or especially-collected corpus of samples

**3.14**
**scenario evaluation**
evaluation that measures end-to-end system performance in a prototype or simulated application with a *test crew* (3.2)

**3.15**
**operational evaluation**
evaluation that measures the performance of a biometric system in a specific application environment using a specific *target population* (3.3)

**3.16**
**online**
pertaining to execution of biometric enrolment or comparison directly following the biometric acquisition process

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**3.17**
**offline**
pertaining to execution of biometric enrolment or comparison of stored biometric data subsequent to and disconnected from the biometric acquisition process

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Note 1 to entry: Collecting a corpus of images or signals for offline enrolment and calculation of comparison scores allows greater control over which probe and reference images are to be used in any transaction.

**3.18**
**closed-set test**
test in which the *test crew* (3.2) comprises only individuals known to have a reference in the enrolment database

Note 1 to entry: Closed-set tests are a specific type of test for showing performance of identification systems in terms of a *cumulative match characteristic plot* (3.29).

**3.19**
**failure to acquire**
failure of the biometric capture and feature extraction processes to produce biometric features suitable for biometric comparison

**3.20**
**false reject rate**
**FRR**
proportion of verification transactions with true biometric claims erroneously rejected

**3.21**
**false accept rate**
**FAR**
proportion of verification transactions with false biometric claims erroneously accepted

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**3.22**
**false-negative identification rate**
**FNIR**
**FNIR(*N*, *R*, *T*)**
proportion of a specified set of *identification transactions* (3.10) by capture subjects enrolled in the system for which the subject's correct reference identifier is not among those returned

Note 1 to entry: The false-negative identification rate can be expressed as a function of *N*, the number of enrolees, and of parameters of the identification process where only candidates up to *rank* (3.24) *R*, and with a candidate score greater than threshold *T* are returned to the candidate list.

**3.23**
**false-positive identification rate**
**FPIR**
**FPIR(*N*, *T*)**
proportion of *identification transactions* (3.10) by capture subjects not enrolled in the system for which a reference identifier is returned

Note 1 to entry: The false-positive identification rate can be expressed as a function of *N*, the number of enrolees, and parameters of the identification process where only candidates with a candidate score greater than threshold *T* are returned to the candidate list.

Note 2 to entry: For systems that always return a fixed number of candidates without applying a threshold on scores, FPIR is not a meaningful metric.

**3.24**
**rank**
position of a candidate in a candidate list ordered by descending similarity score

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**3.25**
**true-positive identification rate**
**TPIR**
**TPIR(*N*, *R*, *T*)**
proportion of *identification transactions* (3.10) by capture subjects enrolled in the system for which the subject's correct identifier is among those returned

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Note 1 to entry: The true-positive identification rate can be expressed as a function of *N*, the number of enrolees, and of parameters of the identification process where only candidates up to *rank* (3.24) *R*, and with a candidate score greater than threshold *T* are returned to the candidate list.

Note 2 to entry: TPIR(*N*, *R*, *T*) = 1 – FPIR(*N*, *R*, *T*).

**3.26**
**selectivity**
**SEL(*N*, *R*, *T*)**
average number of candidates returned above threshold *T* in a non-mated *identification transaction* (3.10)

Note 1 to entry: Selectivity can be expressed as a function of *N*, the number of enrolees, and of parameters of the identification process where only candidates up to *rank* (3.24) *R* and with candidate score greater than threshold *T* are returned on the candidate list.

Note 2 to entry: When *R* = *N*, SEL(*N*, *R*, *T*) is measured against the entire database.

**3.27**
**computational workload**
total computational effort of a single transaction (or set of transactions) in a biometric system, including number of intrinsic operations, execution time and memory requirements

Note 1 to entry: Computational workload is dependent on the hardware on which the biometric system is operating.


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**3.28**
**detection error trade-off**
**DET**
relationship between false-negative and false-positive errors of a binary classification system as the discrimination threshold varies

Note 1 to entry: The DET can be represented as a DET table or as a DET plot.

Note 2 to entry: The receiver operating characteristic (ROC) curve was used in the previous edition of this document. The ROC is unified with the DET.

**3.29**
**cumulative match characteristic plot**
**CMC plot**
graphical presentation of results of mated searches in a closed-set identification test, plotting the *true-positive identification rate* (3.25), TPIR(*N, R,* 0), as a function of *R*

**3.30**
**pre-selection algorithm**
algorithm to reduce the number of comparisons that need to be made in an identification search of the enrolment database

**3.31**
**pre-selection error**
<pre-selection algorithm> error that occurs when the corresponding subject identifier is not in the pre-selected subset of candidates

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Note 1 to entry: In binning pre-selection, pre-selection errors occur when the data subject's enrolment reference and a subsequent sample from the same biometric characteristic are placed in different partitions.

**3.32**
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**penetration rate**
<pre-selection algorithm> average proportion of the total number of references that are pre-selected

## 4 Abbreviated terms

| | |
|---|---|
| API | application programming interface |
| CMC | cumulative match characteristic |
| FAR | false accept rate |
| FTAR | failure-to-acquire rate |
| FTCR | failure-to-capture rate |
| FTER | failure-to-enrol rate |
| FTXR | failure-to-extract rate |
| FNIR | false-negative identification rate |
| FPIR | false-positive identification rate |
| FRR | false reject rate |
| GFAR | generalized false accept rate |
| GFRR | generalized false reject rate |

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| | |
|---|---|
| PIN | personal identification number |
| RFID | radio frequency identification |
| ROC | receiving operating characteristic |
| SDK | software developer's kit |
| SEL | selectivity |
| TPIR | true-positive identification rate |

# 5 Conformance

To conform to this document, a biometric performance test shall be planned, executed and reported in accordance the requirements contained in Clauses 7 through 12.

# 6 General biometric system

## 6.1 Conceptual representation of general biometric system

Given the variety of applications and technologies, it can seem difficult to draw any generalizations about biometric systems. All such systems, however, have many elements in common. Captured biometric samples are acquired from a subject by a biometric capture device and are sent to a processor that extracts the distinctive but repeatable measures of each sample (the biometric features), discarding all other components. The resulting features may be stored in the biometric enrolment database as a biometric reference. In other cases, the sample itself (without feature extraction) may be stored as the reference. A subsequent query or probe biometric sample can be compared to a specific reference, to many references, or to all references already in the database to determine if there is a match. A decision regarding the biometric claim is made based upon the similarities or dissimilarities between the features of the biometric probe and those of the reference or references compared.

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Figure 1 illustrates the information flow within a general biometric system consisting of data capture, signal processing, data storage, comparison and decision subsystems. This diagram illustrates both enrolment and the operation of verification and identification systems.

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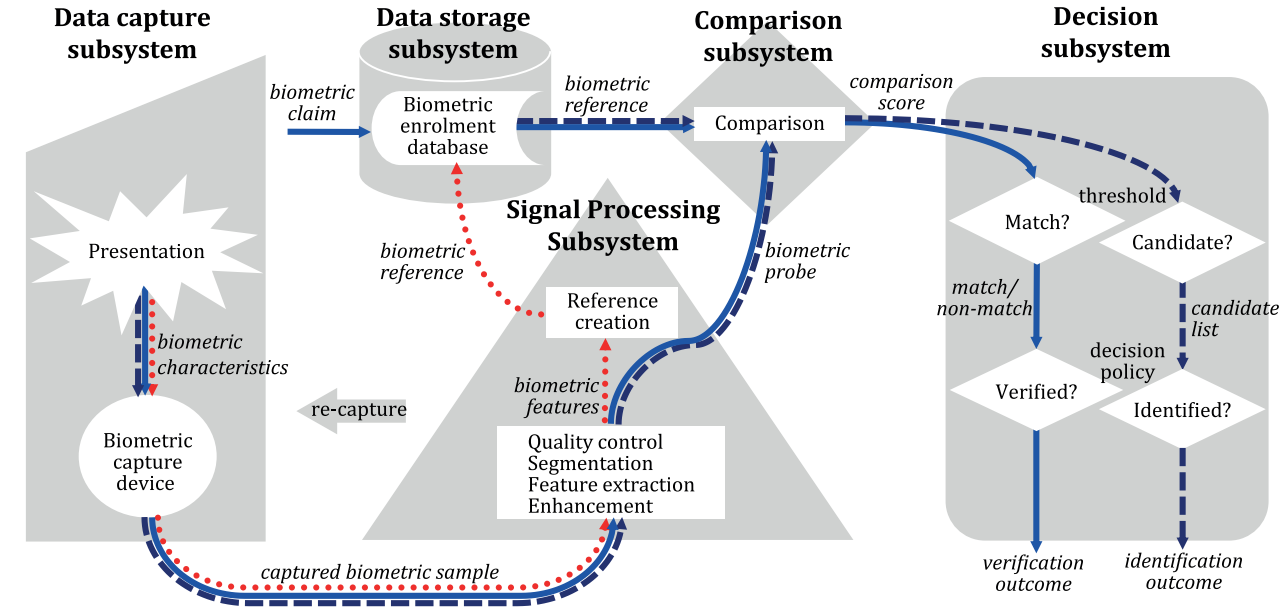


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**Figure 1 — Components of a general biometric system**

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The following subclauses describe each of these subsystems in more detail. However, it should be noted that in any implemented system, some of these conceptual components may be absent, or may not have a direct correspondence with a physical or software entity.

## 6.2 Conceptual components of a general biometric system

### 6.2.1 Data capture subsystem

The data capture subsystem collects an image or signal of a subject's biometric characteristics presented to the biometric capture device, and outputs this image or signal as a captured biometric sample.

### 6.2.2 Transmission subsystem

The transmission subsystem (not always present or visibly present in a biometric system) transmits samples, features, probes, references, comparison scores and outcomes between different subsystems. The captured biometric sample may be compressed and/or encrypted before transmission and expanded and/or decrypted before use. A captured biometric sample may be altered in transmission due to noise in the transmission channel as well as losses in the compression/expansion process. Data may be transmitted using standard biometric data interchange formats, and cryptographic techniques may be used to protect the authenticity, integrity, and confidentiality of stored and transmitted biometric data.

NOTE The transmission subsystem is not portrayed in Figure 1.

### 6.2.3 Signal processing subsystem

Signal processing includes processes such as:

— enhancement, i.e. improving the quality and clarity of the captured biometric sample;

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