

CAS Protocol 3.0 specification

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CAS Protocol 3.0 Specification

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1. Introduction

This is the official specification of the CAS 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0 protocols.

The Central Authentication Service (CAS) is a single-sign-on / single-sign-off protocol for the web. It permits a user to access multiple applications while providing their credentials (such as userid and password) only once to a central CAS Server application.

1.1. Conventions & Definitions

The key words “MUST”, “MUST NOT”, “REQUIRED”, “SHALL”, “SHALL NOT”, “SHOULD”, “SHOULD NOT”, “RECOMMENDED”, “MAY”, and “OPTIONAL” in this document are to be interpreted as described in RFC 2119.

- “Client” refers to the end user and/or the web browser.
- “CAS Client” refers to the software component that is integrated with a web application and interacts with the CAS server via CAS protocol.

- “Server” refers to the Central Authentication Service server.
- “Service” refers to the application the client is trying to access.
- “Back-end service” refers to the application a service is trying to access on behalf of a client. This can also be referred to as the “target service.”
- “SSO” refers to Single Sign on.
- “SLO” refers to Single Logout.
- “<LF>” is a bare line feed (ASCII value 0x0a).

1.2 Reference Implementation

The JASIG CAS-Server 8 is the official reference implementation of the CAS protocol specification.

2. CAS URIs

CAS is an HTTP2,3-based protocol that requires each of its components to be accessible through specific URIs. This section will discuss each of the URIs:

URI	Description
/login	credential requestor / acceptor
/logout	destroy CAS session (logout)
/validate	service ticket validation
/serviceValidate	service ticket validation [CAS 2.0]
/proxyValidate	service- / proxy ticket validation [CAS 2.0]
/proxy	proxy ticket service [CAS 2.0]

2.1. /login as credential requestor

The /login URI operates with two behaviors: as a credential requestor, and as a credential acceptor. It responds to credentials by acting as a credential acceptor and otherwise acts as a credential requestor.

If the client has already established a single sign-on session with CAS, the web browser presents to CAS a secure cookie containing a string identifying a ticket-granting ticket. This cookie is called the ticket-granting cookie. If the

ticket-granting cookie keys to a valid ticket-granting ticket, CAS MAY issue a service ticket provided all the other conditions in this specification are met. See Section 3.6 for more information on ticket-granting cookies.

2.1.1. parameters

The following HTTP request parameters may be passed to `/login` while it is acting as a credential requestor. They are all case-sensitive, and they all MUST be handled by `/login`.

- `service` [OPTIONAL] - the identifier of the application the client is trying to access. In almost all cases, this will be the URL of the application. As a HTTP request parameter, this URL value MUST be URL-encoded as described in section 2.2 of RFC 3986 [4]. If a service is not specified and a single sign-on session does not yet exist, CAS SHOULD request credentials from the user to initiate a single sign-on session. If a service is not specified and a single sign-on session already exists, CAS SHOULD display a message notifying the client that it is already logged in.
- `renew` [OPTIONAL] - if this parameter is set, single sign-on will be bypassed. In this case, CAS will require the client to present credentials regardless of the existence of a single sign-on session with CAS. This parameter is not compatible with the “gateway” parameter. Services redirecting to the `/login` URI and login form views posting to the `/login` URI SHOULD NOT set both the “renew” and “gateway” request parameters. Behavior is undefined if both are set. It is RECOMMENDED that CAS implementations ignore the “gateway” parameter if “renew” is set. It is RECOMMENDED that when the renew parameter is set its value be “true”.
- `gateway` [OPTIONAL] - if this parameter is set, CAS will not ask the client for credentials. If the client has a pre-existing single sign-on session with CAS, or if a single sign-on session can be established through non-interactive means (i.e. trust authentication), CAS MAY redirect the client to the URL specified by the “service” parameter, appending a valid service ticket. (CAS also MAY interpose an advisory page informing the client that a CAS authentication has taken place.) If the client does not have a single sign-on session with CAS, and a non-interactive authentication cannot be established, CAS MUST redirect the client to the URL specified by the “service” parameter with no “ticket” parameter appended to the URL. If the “service” parameter is not specified and “gateway” is set, the behavior of CAS is undefined. It is RECOMMENDED that in this case, CAS request credentials as if neither parameter was specified. This parameter is not compatible with the “renew” parameter. Behavior is undefined if both are set. It is RECOMMENDED that when the gateway parameter is set its value be “true”.

- method [OPTIONAL, CAS 3.0] - The method to be used when sending responses. While native HTTP redirects (GET) may be utilized as the default method, applications that require a POST response can use this parameter to indicate the method type. It is up to the CAS server implementation to determine whether or not POST responses are supported.

2.1.2. URL examples of /login

Simple login example:

```
https://cas.example.org/cas/login?service=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.example.org%2Fservice
```

Don't prompt for username/password:

```
https://cas.example.org/cas/login?service=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.example.org%2Fservice&gateway=t
```

Always prompt for username/password:

```
https://cas.example.org/cas/login?service=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.example.org%2Fservice&renew=t
```

Use POST responses instead of redirects:

```
https://cas.example.org/cas/login?method=POST&service=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.example.org%2Fser
```

2.1.3. response for username/password authentication

When /login behaves as a credential requestor, the response will vary depending on the type of credentials it is requesting. In most cases, CAS will respond by displaying a login screen requesting a username and password. This page **MUST** include a form with the parameters, “username”, “password”, and “lt”. The form **MAY** also include the parameter “warn”. If “service” was specified to /login, “service” **MUST** also be a parameter of the form, containing the value originally passed to /login. These parameters are discussed in detail in Section 2.2.1. The form **MUST** be submitted through the HTTP POST method to /login which will then act as a credential acceptor, discussed in Section 2.2.

2.1.4. response for trust authentication

Trust authentication accommodates consideration of arbitrary aspects of the request as a basis for authentication. The appropriate user experience for trust authentication will be highly deployer-specific in consideration of local policy and of the logistics of the particular authentication mechanism implemented.

When /login behaves as a credential requestor for trust authentication, its behavior will be determined by the type of credentials it will be receiving. If the credentials are valid, CAS **MAY** transparently redirect the user to the service. Alternately, CAS **MAY** display a warning that credentials were presented and allow the client to confirm that it wants to use those credentials. It is

RECOMMENDED that CAS implementations allow the deployer to choose the preferred behavior. If the credentials are invalid or non-existent, it is RECOMMENDED that CAS displays to the client the reason why authentication failed, and possibly present the user with alternate means of authentication (e.g. username/password authentication).

2.1.5. response for single sign-on authentication

If the client has already established a single sign-on session with CAS, the client will have presented its HTTP session cookie to /login and behavior will be handled as in Section 2.2.4. However, if the “renew” parameter is set, the behavior will be handled as in Section 2.1.3 or 2.1.4.

2.2. /login as credential acceptor

When a set of accepted credentials are passed to /login, /login acts as a credential acceptor and its behavior is defined in this Section.

2.2.1. parameters common to all types of authentication

The following HTTP request parameters MAY be passed to /login while it is acting as a credential acceptor. They are all case-sensitive and they all MUST be handled by /login.

- service [OPTIONAL] - the URL of the application the client is trying to access. As a HTTP request parameter, this URL value MUST be URL-encoded as described in Section 2.2 of RFC 1738 [4]. CAS MUST redirect the client to this URL upon successful authentication. This is discussed in detail in Section 2.2.4. If the CAS Server operates in non-open mode (Service URLs allowed to use the CAS Server are registered within the CAS Server), the CAS Server MUST deny operation and print out a meaningful message if a non-authorized service URL is presented.
- warn [OPTIONAL] - if this parameter is set, single sign-on MUST NOT be transparent. The client MUST be prompted before being authenticated to another service.
- method [OPTIONAL] - The method to be used when sending responses. See section 2.1.1 for details

2.2.2. parameters for username/password authentication

In addition to the OPTIONAL parameters specified in Section 2.2.1, the following HTTP request parameters MUST be passed to /login while it is acting

as a credential acceptor for username/password authentication. They are all case-sensitive.

- username [REQUIRED] - the username of the client that is trying to log in
- password [REQUIRED] - the password of the client that is trying to log in
- lt [REQUIRED] - a login ticket. This is provided as part of the login form discussed in Section 2.1.3. The login ticket itself is discussed in Section 3.5.
- rememberMe [OPTIONAL, CAS 3.0] - if this parameter is set, a Long-Term Ticket Granting Ticket might be created by the CAS server (referred to as Remember-Me support). It is subject to the CAS server configuration whether Long-Term Ticket Granting Tickets are supported or not.

Note: When Long-Term Ticket Granting Tickets (Remember Me) are supported by the CAS Server, security considerations MUST be taken into account. This for example includes shared computer usage. On CAS client systems it might be necessary to handle Remember-Me logins differently. See Section 4.1 for details.

2.2.3. parameters for trust authentication

There are no REQUIRED HTTP request parameters for trust authentication. Trust authentication MAY be based on any aspect of the HTTP request.

2.2.4. response

One of the following responses MUST be provided by /login when it is operating as a credential acceptor.

- successful login: redirect the client to the URL specified by the “service” parameter in a manner that will not cause the client’s credentials to be forwarded to the service. This redirection MUST result in the client issuing a GET request to the service. The request MUST include a valid service ticket, passed as the HTTP request parameter, “ticket”. See Appendix B for more information. If “service” was not specified, CAS MUST display a message notifying the client that it has successfully initiated a single sign-on session.

- failed login: return to `/login` as a credential requestor. It is RECOMMENDED in this case that the CAS server display an error message to the user describing why login failed (e.g. bad password, locked account, etc.), and if appropriate, provide an opportunity for the user to attempt to login again.

2.3. `/logout`

`/logout` destroys a client's single sign-on CAS session. The ticket-granting cookie (Section 3.6) is destroyed, and subsequent requests to `/login` will not obtain service tickets until the user again presents primary credentials (and thereby establishes a new single sign-on session).

2.3.1. parameters

The following HTTP request parameter MAY be specified to `/logout`. It is case sensitive and SHOULD be handled by `/logout`.

- `url` [OPTIONAL] - if “`url`” is specified, the URL specified by “`url`” SHOULD be on the logout page with descriptive text. For example, “The application you just logged out of has provided a link it would like you to follow. Please click here to access <http://www.example.org>”. As a HTTP request parameter, the value MUST be URL-encoded as described in Section 2.2 of RFC 1738 [4].
- `service` [OPTIONAL, CAS 3.0] - if a “`service`” parameter is specified, the browser might be automatically redirected to the URL specified by “`service`” after the logout was performed by the CAS server. If redirection by the CAS Server is actually performed depends on the server configuration. As a HTTP request parameter, the “`service`” value MUST be URL-encoded as described in Section 2.2 of RFC 1738 [4].

2.3.2. response

[CAS 1.0, CAS 2.0] `/logout` MUST display a page stating that the user has been logged out. If the “`url`” request parameter is implemented, `/logout` SHOULD also provide a link to the provided URL as described in Section 2.3.1.

[CAS 3.0] `/logout` MUST display a page stating that the user has been logged out if no “`service`” parameter was provided. If a “`service`” request parameter with an encoded URL value is provided, the CAS server redirects to the given service URL after successful logout. If a “`url`” request parameter is provided, `/logout` SHOULD display a link to the provided URL as described in Section 2.3.1.

Note: When CAS Server operates in non-open mode (allowed Service URLs are registered within the CAS Server), the CAS server **MUST** ensure that only registered Service URLs are accepted for redirection ([service] parameter) or displaying ([url] parameter)

2.3.3 Single Logout

The CAS Server **MAY** support Single Logout (SLO). SLO means that the user gets logged out not only from the CAS Server, but also from all visited CAS client applications. If SLO is supported by the CAS Server, the CAS Server **MUST** send a HTTP POST request containing a logout XML document (see Appendix C) to all service URLs provided to CAS during this CAS session whenever a Ticket Granting Ticket is explicitly expired by the user (e.g. during logout). CAS Clients that do not support the SLO POST requests **MUST** ignore these requests. SLO requests **MAY** also be initiated by the CAS Server upon TGT idle timeout.

2.3.3.1 Server behaviour The CAS Server **SHALL** ignore all errors that might occur on a Single Logout POST request to CAS Client applications service URLs. This ensures that any errors while sending the POST request do not disturb CAS Server performance and availability (“fire and forget”).

2.3.3.2 Client behaviour Handling the logout POST request data is up to the CAS client. It is recommended to logout the user from the application identified by the service ticket id sent in the SLO POST request. If the client supports SLO POST request handling, the client **SHALL** return a HTTP success status code.

2.4. /validate [CAS 1.0]

/validate checks the validity of a service ticket. /validate is part of the CAS 1.0 protocol and thus does not handle proxy authentication. CAS **MUST** respond with a ticket validation failure response when a proxy ticket is passed to /validate.

2.4.1. parameters

The following HTTP request parameters **MAY** be specified to /validate. They are case sensitive and **MUST** all be handled by /validate.

- service [REQUIRED] - the identifier of the service for which the ticket was issued, as discussed in Section 2.2.1. As a HTTP request parameter,

the “service” value MUST be URL-encoded as described in Section 2.2 of RFC 1738 [4].

- ticket [REQUIRED] - the service ticket issued by /login. Service tickets are described in Section 3.1.
- renew [OPTIONAL] - if this parameter is set, ticket validation will only succeed if the service ticket was issued from the presentation of the user’s primary credentials. It will fail if the ticket was issued from a single sign-on session.

2.4.2. response

/validate will return one of the following two responses:

On ticket validation success:

yes<LF>

On ticket validation failure:

no<LF>

2.4.3. URL examples of /validate

Simple validation attempt:

`https://cas.example.org/cas/validate?service=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.example.org%2Fservice&ticket=ST-1234567890-1234567890-1234567890-1234567890`

Ensure service ticket was issued by presentation of primary credentials:

`https://cas.example.org/cas/validate?service=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.example.org%2Fservice&ticket=ST-1234567890-1234567890-1234567890-1234567890`

2.5. /serviceValidate [CAS 2.0]

/serviceValidate checks the validity of a service ticket and returns an XML-fragment response. /serviceValidate MUST also generate and issue proxy-granting tickets when requested. /serviceValidate MUST NOT return a successful authentication if it receives a proxy ticket. It is RECOMMENDED that if /serviceValidate receives a proxy ticket, the error message in the XML response SHOULD explain that validation failed because a proxy ticket was passed to /serviceValidate.

2.5.1. parameters

The following HTTP request parameters MAY be specified to /serviceValidate. They are case sensitive and MUST all be handled by /serviceValidate.

- service [REQUIRED] - the identifier of the service for which the ticket was issued, as discussed in Section 2.2.1. As a HTTP request parameter, the “service” value MUST be URL-encoded as described in Section 2.2 of RFC 1738 [4].
- ticket [REQUIRED] - the service ticket issued by /login. Service tickets are described in Section 3.1.
- pgtUrl [OPTIONAL] - the URL of the proxy callback. Discussed in Section 2.5.4. As a HTTP request parameter, the “pgtUrl” value MUST be URL-encoded as described in Section 2.2 of RFC 1738 [4].
- renew [OPTIONAL] - if this parameter is set, ticket validation will only succeed if the service ticket was issued from the presentation of the user’s primary credentials. It will fail if the ticket was issued from a single sign-on session.

2.5.2. response

/serviceValidate will return an XML-formatted CAS serviceResponse as described in the XML schema in Appendix A. Below are example responses:

On ticket validation success:

```
<cas:serviceResponse xmlns:cas="http://www.yale.edu/tp/cas">
  <cas:authenticationSuccess>
    <cas:user>username</cas:user>
    <cas:proxyGrantingTicket>PGTIOU-84678-8a9d...</cas:proxyGrantingTicket>
  </cas:authenticationSuccess>
</cas:serviceResponse>
```

On ticket validation failure:

```
<cas:serviceResponse xmlns:cas="http://www.yale.edu/tp/cas">
  <cas:authenticationFailure code="INVALID_TICKET">
    Ticket ST-1856339-aA5Yuvrxzpv8Tau1cYQ7 not recognized`
  </cas:authenticationFailure>
</cas:serviceResponse>
```

For proxy responses, see section 2.6.2.

2.5.3. error codes

The following values MAY be used as the “code” attribute of authentication failure responses. The following is the minimum set of error codes that all CAS servers MUST implement. Implementations MAY include others.

- `INVALID_REQUEST` - not all of the required request parameters were present
- `INVALID_TICKET_SPEC` - failure to meet the requirements of validation specification
- `UNAUTHORIZED_SERVICE_PROXY` - the service is not authorized to perform proxy authentication
- `INVALID_PROXY_CALLBACK` - The proxy callback specified is invalid. The credentials specified for proxy authentication do not meet the security requirements
- `INVALID_TICKET` - the ticket provided was not valid, or the ticket did not come from an initial login and “renew” was set on validation. The body of the `<cas:authenticationFailure>` block of the XML response SHOULD describe the exact details.
- `INVALID_SERVICE` - the ticket provided was valid, but the service specified did not match the service associated with the ticket. CAS MUST invalidate the ticket and disallow future validation of that same ticket.
- `INTERNAL_ERROR` - an internal error occurred during ticket validation

For all error codes, it is RECOMMENDED that CAS provide a more detailed message as the body of the `<cas:authenticationFailure>` block of the XML response.

2.5.4. proxy callback

If a service wishes to proxy a client’s authentication to a back-end service, it must acquire a proxy-granting ticket (PGT). Acquisition of this ticket is handled through a proxy callback URL. This URL will uniquely and securely identify the service that is proxying the client’s authentication. The back-end service can then decide whether or not to accept the credentials based on the proxying service identifying callback URL.

The proxy callback mechanism works as follows:

1. The service that is requesting a proxy-granting ticket (PGT) specifies upon initial service ticket or proxy ticket validation the HTTP request parameter “pgtUrl” to `/serviceValidate` (or `/proxyValidate`). This is a callback URL of the service to which CAS will connect to verify the service’s identity. This URL MUST be HTTPS and CAS MUST evaluate the endpoint to establish peer trust. Building trust at a minimum involves utilizing PKIX and employing container trust to validate the signature, chain and

the expiration window of the certificate of the callback url. The generation of the proxy-granting-ticket or the corresponding proxy granting ticket IOU may fail due to the proxy callback url failing to meet the minimum security requirements such as failure to establishing trust between peers or unresponsiveness of the endpoint, etc. In case of failure, no proxy-granting ticket will be issued and the CAS service response as described in Section 2.5.2 MUST NOT contain a <proxyGrantingTicket> block. At this point, the issuance of a proxy-granting ticket is halted and service ticket validation will fail. Otherwise, the process will proceed normally to step 2.

2. CAS uses an HTTP GET request to pass the HTTP request parameters “pgtId” and “pgtIou” to the pgtUrl. These entities are discussed in Sections 3.3 and 3.4, respectively.
3. If the HTTP GET returns an HTTP status code of 200 (OK), CAS MUST respond to the /serviceValidate (or /proxyValidate) request with a service response (Section 2.5.2) containing the proxy-granting ticket IOU (Section 3.4) within the <cas:proxyGrantingTicket> block. If the HTTP GET returns any other status code, except HTTP 3xx redirects, CAS MUST respond to the /serviceValidate (or /proxyValidate) request with a service response that MUST NOT contain a <cas:proxyGrantingTicket> block. CAS MAY follow any HTTP redirects issued by the pgtUrl. However, the identifying callback URL provided upon validation in the <proxy> block MUST be the same URL that was initially passed to /serviceValidate (or /proxyValidate) as the “pgtUrl” parameter.
4. The service, having received a proxy-granting ticket IOU in the CAS response, and both a proxy-granting ticket and a proxy-granting ticket IOU from the proxy callback, will use the proxy-granting ticket IOU to correlate the proxy-granting ticket with the validation response. The service will then use the proxy-granting ticket for the acquisition of proxy tickets as described in Section 2.7.

2.5.5. attributes [CAS 3.0]

[CAS 3.0] The response document MAY include an optional <cas:attributes> element for additional authentication and/or user attributes. See Appendix A for details.

2.5.6. URL examples of /serviceValidate

Simple validation attempt:

`https://cas.example.org/cas/serviceValidate?service=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.example.org%2Fservi`

Ensure service ticket was issued by presentation of primary credentials:

`https://cas.example.org/cas/serviceValidate?service=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.example.org%2Fservi`

Pass in a callback URL for proxying:

`https://cas.example.org/cas/serviceValidate?service=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.example.org%2Fservi`

2.5.7 Example response with custom attributes

```
<cas:serviceResponse xmlns:cas="http://www.yale.edu/tp/cas">
  <cas:authenticationSuccess>
    <cas:user>username</cas:user>
    <cas:attributes>
      <cas:firstname>John</cas:firstname>
      <cas:lastname>Doe</cas:lastname>
      <cas:title>Mr.</cas:title>
      <cas:email>jdoe@example.orgmailto:jdoe@example.org</cas:email>
      <cas:affiliation>staff</cas:affiliation>
      <cas:affiliation>faculty</cas:affiliation>
    </cas:attributes>
    <cas:proxyGrantingTicket>PGTI0U-84678-8a9d...</cas:proxyGrantingTicket>
  </cas:authenticationSuccess>
</cas:serviceResponse>
```

2.6. /proxyValidate [CAS 2.0]

/proxyValidate MUST perform the same validation tasks as /serviceValidate and additionally validate proxy tickets. /proxyValidate MUST be capable of validating both service tickets and proxy tickets. See Section 2.5.4 for details.

2.6.1. parameters

/proxyValidate has the same parameter requirements as /serviceValidate. See Section 2.5.1.

2.6.2. response

/proxyValidate will return an XML-formatted CAS serviceResponse as described in the XML schema in Appendix A. Below are example responses:

Response on ticket validation success:

```
<cas:serviceResponse xmlns:cas="http://www.yale.edu/tp/cas">
  <cas:authenticationSuccess>
    <cas:user>username</cas:user>
```



```

<cas:proxyGrantingTicket>PGTIOU-84678-8a9d...</cas:proxyGrantingTicket>
<cas:proxies>
  <cas:proxy>https://proxy2/pgtUrl</cas:proxy>
  <cas:proxy>https://proxy1/pgtUrl</cas:proxy>
</cas:proxies>
</cas:authenticationSuccess>
</cas:serviceResponse>

```

Note: when authentication has proceeded through multiple proxies, the order in which the proxies were traversed MUST be reflected in the <cas:proxies> block. The most recently-visited proxy MUST be the first proxy listed, and all the other proxies MUST be shifted down as new proxies are added. In the above example, the service identified by <https://proxy1/pgtUrl> was visited first, and that service proxied authentication to the service identified by <https://proxy2/pgtUrl>.

Response on ticket validation failure:

```

<cas:serviceResponse xmlns:cas='http://www.yale.edu/tp/cas'>
  <cas:authenticationFailure code="INVALID_TICKET">
    ticket PT-1856376-1HMg086Z2ZKeByc5XdYD not recognized
  </cas:authenticationFailure>
</cas:serviceResponse>

```

2.6.3 error codes

See section 2.5.3

2.6.4 URL examples of /proxyValidate

/proxyValidate accepts the same parameters as /serviceValidate. See Section 2.5.5 for use examples, substituting “proxyValidate” for “serviceValidate”.

2.7. /proxy [CAS 2.0]

/proxy provides proxy tickets to services that have acquired proxy-granting tickets and will be proxying authentication to back-end services.

2.7.1. parameters

The following HTTP request parameters **MUST** be specified to `/proxy`. They are both case-sensitive.

- `pgt` [REQUIRED] - the proxy-granting ticket acquired by the service during service ticket or proxy ticket validation.
- `targetService` [REQUIRED] - the service identifier of the back-end service. Note that not all back-end services are web services so this service identifier will not always be an URL. However, the service identifier specified here **MUST** match the “service” parameter specified to `/proxyValidate` upon validation of the proxy ticket.

2.7.2. response

`/proxy` will return an XML-formatted CAS `serviceResponse` document as described in the XML schema in Appendix A. Below are example responses:

Response on request success:

```
<cas:serviceResponse xmlns:cas="http://www.yale.edu/tp/cas">
  <cas:proxySuccess>
    <cas:proxyTicket>PT-1856392-b98xZrQN4p90ASrw96c8</cas:proxyTicket>
  </cas:proxySuccess>
</cas:serviceResponse>
```

Response on request failure:

```
<cas:serviceResponse xmlns:cas="http://www.yale.edu/tp/cas">
  <cas:proxyFailure code="INVALID_REQUEST">
    'pgt' and 'targetService' parameters are both required
  </cas:proxyFailure>
</cas:serviceResponse>
```

2.7.3. error codes

The following values **MAY** be used as the “code” attribute of authentication failure responses. The following is the minimum set of error codes that all CAS servers **MUST** implement. Implementations **MAY** include others.

- `INVALID_REQUEST` - not all of the required request parameters were present
- `BAD_PGT` - the pgt provided was invalid

- `INTERNAL__ERROR` - an internal error occurred during ticket validation

For all error codes, it is RECOMMENDED that CAS provide a more detailed message as the body of the `<cas:authenticationFailure>` block of the XML response.

2.7.4. URL example of /proxy

Simple proxy request:

`https://server/cas/proxy?targetService=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.service.com&pgt=PGT-490649-W81Y9`

2.7.4 Service Ticket Lifecycle implications

The CAS Server implementation MAY update the parent Service Ticket (ST) lifetime upon proxy ticket generation.

3. CAS Entities

3.1. service ticket

A service ticket is an opaque string that is used by the client as a credential to obtain access to a service. The service ticket is obtained from CAS upon a client's presentation of credentials and a service identifier to /login as described in Section 2.2.

3.1.1. service ticket properties

- Service tickets are only valid for the service identifier that was specified to /login when they were generated. The service identifier **SHOULD NOT** be part of the service ticket.
- Service tickets **MUST** only be valid for one ticket validation attempt. Whether or not validation was successful, CAS **MUST** then invalidate the ticket, causing all future validation attempts of that same ticket to fail.
- CAS **SHOULD** expire unvalidated service tickets in a reasonable period of time after they are issued. If a service presents an expired service ticket for validation, CAS **MUST** respond with a validation failure response.
- It is **RECOMMENDED** that the validation response include a descriptive message explaining why validation failed.
- It is **RECOMMENDED** that the duration a service ticket is valid before it expires be no longer than five minutes. Local security and CAS usage considerations MAY determine the optimal lifespan of unvalidated service tickets.
- Service tickets **MUST** contain adequate secure random data so that a ticket is not guessable.
- Service tickets **MUST** begin with the characters, "ST-".
- Services **MUST** be able to accept service tickets of up to 32 characters in length. It is **RECOMMENDED** that services support service tickets of up to 256 characters in length.

3.2. proxy ticket

A proxy ticket is an opaque string that a service uses as a credential to obtain access to a back-end service on behalf of a client. Proxy tickets are obtained from CAS upon a service's presentation of a valid proxy-granting ticket (Section 3.3), and a service identifier for the back-end service to which it is connecting.

3.2.1. proxy ticket properties

- Proxy tickets are only valid for the service identifier specified to /proxy when they were generated. The service identifier **SHOULD NOT** be part of the proxy ticket.
- Proxy tickets **MUST** only be valid for one ticket validation attempt. Whether or not validation was successful, CAS **MUST** then invalidate the ticket, causing all future validation attempts of that same ticket to fail.
- CAS **SHOULD** expire unvalidated proxy tickets in a reasonable period of time after they are issued. If a service presents for validation an expired proxy ticket, CAS **MUST** respond with a validation failure response.
- It is **RECOMMENDED** that the validation response include a descriptive message explaining why validation failed.
- It is **RECOMMENDED** that the duration a proxy ticket is valid before it expires be no longer than five minutes. Local security and CAS usage considerations **MAY** determine the optimal lifespan of unvalidated proxy tickets.
- Proxy tickets **MUST** contain adequate secure random data so that a ticket is not guessable.
- Proxy tickets **SHOULD** begin with the characters, "PT-".
- Proxy tickets **MUST** begin with either the characters, "ST-" or "PT-".
- Back-end services **MUST** be able to accept proxy tickets of up to 32 characters in length.
- It is **RECOMMENDED** that back-end services support proxy tickets of up to 256 characters in length.

3.3. proxy-granting ticket

A proxy-granting ticket (PGT) is an opaque string that is used by a service to obtain proxy tickets for obtaining access to a back-end service on behalf of a client. Proxy-granting tickets are obtained from CAS upon validation of a service ticket or a proxy ticket. Proxy-granting ticket issuance is described fully in Section 2.5.4.

3.3.1. proxy-granting ticket properties

- Proxy-granting tickets MAY be used by services to obtain multiple proxy tickets. Proxy-granting tickets are not one-time-use tickets.
- Proxy-granting tickets MUST expire when the client whose authentication is being proxied logs out of CAS.
- Proxy-granting tickets MUST contain adequate secure random data so that a ticket is not guessable in a reasonable period of time through brute-force attacks.
- Proxy-granting tickets SHOULD begin with the characters “PGT-”.
- Services MUST be able to handle proxy-granting tickets of up to 64 characters in length.
- It is RECOMMENDED that services support proxy-granting tickets of up to 256 characters in length.

3.4. proxy-granting ticket IOU

A proxy-granting ticket IOU is an opaque string that is placed in the response provided by `/serviceValidate` and `/proxyValidate` used to correlate a service ticket or proxy ticket validation with a particular proxy-granting ticket. See Section 2.5.4 for a full description of this process.

3.4.1. proxy-granting ticket IOU properties

- Proxy-granting ticket IOUs SHOULD NOT contain any reference to their associated proxy-granting tickets. Given a particular PGTIU, it MUST NOT be possible to derive its corresponding PGT through algorithmic methods in a reasonable period of time.
- Proxy-granting ticket IOUs MUST contain adequate secure random data so that a ticket is not guessable in a reasonable period of time through brute-force attacks.
- Proxy-granting ticket IOUs SHOULD begin with the characters, “PGTIU-”.
- Services MUST be able to handle PGTIUs of up to 64 characters in length. It is RECOMMENDED that services support PGTIUs of up to 256 characters in length.

3.5. login ticket

A login ticket is a string that is provided by /login as a credential requestor and passed to /login as a credential acceptor for username/password authentication. Its purpose is to prevent the replaying of credentials due to bugs in web browsers.

3.5.1. login ticket properties

- Login tickets issued by /login MUST be probabilistically unique.
- Login tickets MUST only be valid for one authentication attempt. Whether or not authentication was successful, CAS MUST then invalidate the login ticket, causing all future authentication attempts with that instance of that login ticket to fail.
- Login tickets SHOULD begin with the characters “LT-”.

3.6. ticket-granting cookie

A ticket-granting cookie is an HTTP cookie[5] set by CAS upon the establishment of a single sign-on session. This cookie maintains login state for the client, and while it is valid, the client can present it to CAS in lieu of primary credentials. Services can opt out of single sign-on through the “renew” parameter described in Sections 2.1.1, 2.4.1, and 2.5.1.

3.6.1. ticket-granting cookie properties

- Ticket-granting cookies MUST be set to expire at the end of the client’s browser session.
- CAS MUST set the cookie path to be as restrictive as possible. For example, if the CAS server is set up under the path /cas, the cookie path MUST be set to /cas.
- The value of ticket-granting cookies MUST contain adequate secure random data so that a ticket-granting cookie is not guessable in a reasonable period of time.
- The value of ticket-granting cookies SHOULD begin with the characters “TGC-”.

3.7. ticket and ticket-granting cookie character set

In addition to the above requirements, all CAS tickets and the value of the ticket-granting cookie MUST contain only characters from the set {A-Z, a-z, 0-9, and the hyphen character “-”}.

4. Optional Features

4.1 Long-Term Tickets - Remember-Me [CAS 3.0]

CAS Server MAY support Long-Term Ticket Granting Tickets (referred to as “Remember Me” functionality). If this feature is supported by the CAS Server, it is possible to perform recurring, non interactive re-logins to the CAS Server as long as the Long-Term Ticket Granting Ticket in the CAS Server is not expired and the browsers TGC Cookie is valid.

4.1.1 Enabling Remember-Me (Login Page)

- The CAS Server MUST provide a checkbox on the login page to allow Remember-Me functionality.
- By default, the checkbox MUST be unchecked.
- It MUST be the users choice to enable Remember-Me for the login or not. See Section 2.2.2.

4.1.2 Security implications

Enabling Remember-Me MAY have security implications. As the CAS authentication is bound to the browser and the user is not getting interactively logged-in when a valid Long-Term TGT ticket exists and the CAS cookie presented by the browser is valid, special care MUST be taken on the CAS client side to handle Remember-Me logins properly. It MUST be the CAS clients responsibility to decide if and when Remember-Me CAS logins might be handled special. See 4.1.3.

4.1.3 CAS Validation Response Attributes

As only the CAS Client MUST decide how to handle Remember-Me logins (see 4.2.1), the CAS Server MUST provide information about a Remember-Me login to the CAS Client. This information MUST be provided by all ticket validation methods supported by the CAS Server (See Sections 2.5, 2.6 and 2.8) in this case.

- in serviceValidate XML responses (see Appendix A), a Remember-Me login MUST be indicated by the longTermAuthenticationRequestTokenUsed attribute. Additionally, the isFromNewLogin attribute MAY be used to decide whether this has security implications.
- In SAML validation responses, Remember-Me MUST be indicated by the longTermAuthenticationRequestTokenUsed attribute.

4.1.4 CAS Client requirements

If the CAS client needs to handle Remember-Me logins special (e.g. deny access to sensitive areas of the CAS client application on a remembered login), the CAS client **MUST NOT** use the /validate CAS validation URL, as this URL does not support CAS attributes in the validation response document.

4.2 /samlValidate [CAS 3.0]

/samlValidate checks the validity of a Service Ticket by a SAML 1.1 request document provided by a HTTP POST. A SAML (Secure Access Markup Language) 1.1 response document **MUST** be returned. This allows the release of additional information (attributes) of the authenticated NetID. The Security Assertion Markup Language (SAML) describes a document and protocol framework by which security assertions (such as assertions about a prior act of authentication) can be exchanged.

4.2.1 parameters

The following HTTP request parameters **MUST** be specified to /samlValidate. They are both case-sensitive.

- **TARGET [REQUIRED]** - URL encoded service identifier of the back-end service. Note that as an HTTP request parameter, this URL value **MUST** be URL-encoded as described in Section 2.2 of RFC 1738[4]. The service identifier specified here **MUST** match the “service” parameter provided to /login. See Section 2.1.1. The TARGET service **SHALL** use HTTPS. SAML attributes **MUST NOT** be released to a non-SSL site.

4.2.2 HTTP Request Method and Body

Request to /samlValidate **MUST** be a HTTP POST request. The request body **MUST** be a valid SAML 1.0 or 1.1 request XML document of document type “text/xml”.

4.2.3 SAML request values

- **RequestID [REQUIRED]** - unique identifier for the request
- **IssueInstant [REQUIRED]** - timestamp of the request
- **samlp:AssertionArtifact [REQUIRED]** - the valid CAS Service Ticket obtained as a response parameter at login. See section 2.2.4.

4.2.4 Example of /samlValidate POST request

POST /cas/samlValidate?ticket=
Host: cas.example.com
Content-Length: 491
Content-Type: text/xml

```
<SOAP-ENV:Envelope xmlns:SOAP-ENV="http://schemas.xmlsoap.org/soap/envelope/"  
  <SOAP-ENV:Header/>  
  <SOAP-ENV:Body>  
    <samlp:Request xmlns:samlp="http://www.oasis-open.org/schemas/2003/05/saml-protocol" M  
      MinorVersion="1" RequestID="_192.168.16.51.1024506224022"  
      IssueInstant="2002-06-19T17:03:44.022Z">  
        <samlp:AssertionArtifact>  
          ST-1-u4hrm3td92cLxpCvrjylcas.example.com  
        </samlp:AssertionArtifact>  
      </samlp:Request>  
    </SOAP-ENV:Body>  
  </SOAP-ENV:Envelope>
```

4.2.5 SAML response

CAS Server response to a /samlValidate request. MUST be a SAML 1.1 response.

Example SAML 1.1 validation response

```
<SOAP-ENV:Envelope xmlns:SOAP-ENV="http://schemas.xmlsoap.org/soap/envelope/">  
  <SOAP-ENV:Header />  
  <SOAP-ENV:Body>  
    <Response xmlns="urn:oasis:names:tc:SAML:1.0:protocol" xmlns:saml="urn:oasis:names:tc:SAML:1.0:protocol" xmlns:samlp="urn:oasis:names:tc:SAML:1.0:protocol" xmlns:xsd="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema" xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance" IssueInstant="2008-12-10T14:12:14.817Z" MajorVersion="1" MinorVersion="1" Recipient="https://eiger.iad.vt.edu/dat/home.do" ResponseID="_5c94b5431c540365e5a70b2874b75996">  
      <Status>  
        <StatusCode Value="samlp:Success">  
        </StatusCode>  
      </Status>  
      <Assertion xmlns="urn:oasis:names:tc:SAML:1.0:assertion" AssertionID="_e5c23ff7a38" IssueInstant="2008-12-10T14:12:14.817Z" Issuer="localhost" MajorVersion="1" MinorVersion="1">  
        <Conditions NotBefore="2008-12-10T14:12:14.817Z" NotOnOrAfter="2008-12-10T14:12:14.817Z">  
          <AudienceRestrictionCondition>
```

```

        <Audience>
            https://some-service.example.com/app/
        </Audience>
    </AudienceRestrictionCondition>
</Conditions>
<AttributeStatement>
    <Subject>
        <NameIdentifier>johnq</NameIdentifier>
        <SubjectConfirmation>
            <ConfirmationMethod>
                urn:oasis:names:tc:SAML:1.0:cm:artifact
            </ConfirmationMethod>
        </SubjectConfirmation>
    </Subject>
    <Attribute AttributeName="uid" AttributeNamespace="http://www.ja-sig.org/produ
        <AttributeValue>12345</AttributeValue>
    </Attribute>
    <Attribute AttributeName="groupMembership" AttributeNamespace="http://www.ja-s
        <AttributeValue>
            uugid=middleware.staff,ou=Groups,dc=vt,dc=edu
        </AttributeValue>
    </Attribute>
    <Attribute AttributeName="eduPersonAffiliation" AttributeNamespace="http://www
        <AttributeValue>staff</AttributeValue>
    </Attribute>
    <Attribute AttributeName="accountState" AttributeNamespace="http://www.ja-sig.
        <AttributeValue>ACTIVE</AttributeValue>
    </Attribute>
</AttributeStatement>
<AuthenticationStatement AuthenticationInstant="2008-12-10T14:12:14.741Z"
AuthenticationMethod="urn:oasis:names:tc:SAML:1.0:am:password">
    <Subject>
        <NameIdentifier>johnq</NameIdentifier>
        <SubjectConfirmation>
            <ConfirmationMethod>
                urn:oasis:names:tc:SAML:1.0:cm:artifact
            </ConfirmationMethod>
        </SubjectConfirmation>
    </Subject>
</AuthenticationStatement>
</Assertion>
</Response>
</SOAP-ENV:Body>
</SOAP-ENV:Envelope>

```

4.2.5.1 SAML CAS response attributes

The following additional attributes might be provided within the SAML response:

- `longTermAuthenticationRequestTokenUsed` - If Long Term Ticket Granting Tickets (Remember-Me) are supported by the CAS Server (see Section 4.1), the SAML response MUST include this attribute to indicate remembered logins to the CAS client.

Appendix A: CAS response XML schema

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<!--
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agreements. See the NOTICE file distributed with this work
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"AS IS" BASIS, WITHOUT WARRANTIES OR CONDITIONS OF ANY
KIND, either express or implied. See the License for the
specific language governing permissions and limitations
under the License.
-->
<!--
Authors:
Drew Mazurek Version: $Id: cas2.xsd,v 1.1 2005/02/14 16:19:06 dmazurek Exp $
Robert Oschwald Version: 3.0
-->
<xs:schema xmlns:xs="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema" xmlns:cas="http://www.yale.edu/tp/cas"
targetNamespace="http://www.yale.edu/tp/cas" elementFormDefault="qualified"
attributeFormDefault="unqualified">
  <xs:annotation>
    <xs:documentation>
      The following is the schema for the Central Authentication Service (CAS) ver-
      sion 2.0 response.
      This covers the responses for the following servlets:
        /serviceValidate,
        /proxyValidate
        /proxy
      This specification is subject to change.
    </xs:documentation>
  </xs:annotation>
  <xs:element name="serviceResponse" type="cas:ServiceResponseType"/>
  <xs:complexType name="ServiceResponseType">
    <xs:choice>
      <xs:element name="authenticationSuccess" type="cas:AuthenticationSuccessType"/>
      <xs:element name="authenticationFailure" type="cas:AuthenticationFailureType"/>
      <xs:element name="proxySuccess" type="cas:ProxySuccessType"/>
      <xs:element name="proxyFailure" type="cas:ProxyFailureType"/>
    </xs:choice>
  </xs:complexType>
</xs:schema>
```

```

        </xs:choice>
    </xs:complexType>
    <xs:complexType name="AuthenticationSuccessType">
        <xs:sequence>
            <xs:element name="user" type="xs:string"/>
            <xs:element name="attributes" type="cas:AttributesType" minOccurs="0"/>
            <xs:element name="proxyGrantingTicket" type="xs:string" minOccurs="0"/>
            <xs:element name="proxies" type="cas:ProxiesType" minOccurs="0"/>
        </xs:sequence>
    </xs:complexType>
    <xs:complexType name="ProxiesType">
        <xs:sequence>
            <xs:element name="proxy" type="xs:string" maxOccurs="unbounded"/>
        </xs:sequence>
    </xs:complexType>
    <xs:complexType name="AuthenticationFailureType">
        <xs:simpleContent>
            <xs:extension base="xs:string">
                <xs:attribute name="code" type="xs:string" use="required"/>
            </xs:extension>
        </xs:simpleContent>
    </xs:complexType>
    <xs:complexType name="ProxySuccessType">
        <xs:sequence>
            <xs:element name="proxyTicket" type="xs:string"/>
        </xs:sequence>
    </xs:complexType>
    <xs:complexType name="ProxyFailureType">
        <xs:simpleContent>
            <xs:extension base="xs:string">
                <xs:attribute name="code" type="xs:string" use="required"/>
            </xs:extension>
        </xs:simpleContent>
    </xs:complexType>
    <xs:complexType name="AttributesType">
        <xs:sequence>
            <xs:element name="authenticationDate" type="xs:dateTime" minOccurs="0"/>
            <xs:element name="longTermAuthenticationRequestTokenUsed" type="xs:boolean"
                minOccurs="0">
                <xs:annotation><xs:documentation>
                    true if a long-term (Remember-Me) token was used
                </xs:documentation></xs:annotation>
            </xs:element>
            <xs:element name="isFromNewLogin" type="xs:boolean" minOccurs="0">
                <xs:annotation><xs:documentation>
                    true if this was from a new, interactive login.
                </xs:documentation></xs:annotation>
            </xs:element>
        </xs:sequence>
    </xs:complexType>

```

```

        If login was from a non-interactive login (e.g. Remember-Me), this v
    </xs:documentation></xs:annotation>
</xs:element>
<xs:element name="memberOf" type="xs:string" minOccurs="0" maxOccurs="unbound
    <xs:annotation><xs:documentation>
        One or many elements describing the units the user is member in.
        E.g. LDAP format values.
    </xs:documentation></xs:annotation>
</xs:element>
<xs:element name="userAttributes" minOccurs="0">
    <xs:complexType>
        <xs:sequence>
            <xs:any minOccurs="0" maxOccurs="unbounded" processContents="lax
                <xs:annotation>
                    <xs:documentation>
                        Any user specific attribute elements.
                    </xs:documentation>
                </xs:annotation>
            </xs:any>
        </xs:sequence>
    </xs:complexType>
</xs:element>
</xs:sequence>
</xs:complexType>
</xs:schema>

```

Note: As userAttributes can be extended by the CAS Server implementor (see <xs:any> schema definition), it is recommended to form custom attributes as <cas:attributes name="NAME">VALUE</cas:attributes>.

Appendix B: Safe redirection

After a successful login, safely redirecting the client from CAS to its final destination must be handled with care. In most cases, the client has sent credentials to the CAS server over a POST request. By this specification, the CAS server must then forward the user to the application with a GET request.

The HTTP/1.1 RFC[3] provides a response code of 303: See Other, which provides for the desired behavior: a script that receives data through a POST request can, through a 303 redirection, forward the browser to another URL through a GET request. However, not all browsers have implemented this behavior correctly.

The recommended method of redirection is thus JavaScript. A page containing a `window.location.href` in the following manner performs adequately:

```
<html>
  <head>
    <title>Yale Central Authentication Service</title>
    <script>
      window.location.href="https://portal.yale.edu/Login?ticket=ST-..."
mce_href="https://portal.yale.edu/Login?ticket=ST-...";`
    </script>
  </head>
  <body>
    <noscript>
      <p>CAS login successful.</p>
      <p> Click <a xhref="https://portal.yale.edu/Login?ticket=ST-..."
mce_href="https://portal.yale.edu/Login?ticket=ST-...">here</a>
      to access the service you requested.<br /> </p>
    </noscript>
  </body>
</html>
```

Additionally, CAS should disable browser caching by setting all of the various cache-related headers:

- Pragma: no-cache
- Cache-Control: no-store
- Expires: [RFC 1123[6] date equal to or before now]

The introduction of the login ticket removed the possibility of CAS accepting credentials that were cached and replayed by a browser. However, early versions of Apple's Safari browser contained a bug where through usage of the Back

button, Safari could be coerced into presenting the client's credentials to the service it is trying to access. CAS can prevent this behavior by not automatically redirecting if it detects that the remote browser is one of these early versions of Safari. Instead, CAS should display a page that states login was successful, and provide a link to the requested service. The client must then manually click to proceed.

Appendix C: Logout XML document

When SLO is supported by the CAS Server, it will callback to each of the services that are registered with the system and send a POST request with the following SAML Logout Request XML document:

```
<samlp:LogoutRequest xmlns:samlp="urn:oasis:names:tc:SAML:2.0:protocol"
  ID="[RANDOM ID]" Version="2.0" IssueInstant="[CURRENT DATE/TIME]">
  <saml:NameID xmlns:saml="urn:oasis:names:tc:SAML:2.0:assertion">
    @NOT_USED@
  </saml:NameID>
  <samlp:SessionIndex>[SESSION IDENTIFIER]</samlp:SessionIndex>
</samlp:LogoutRequest>
```

Appendix D: References

- [1] Bradner, S., “Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels”, [RFC 2119](#), Harvard University, March 1997.
- [2] Berners-Lee, T., Fielding, R., Frystyk, H., “Hypertext Transfer Protocol - HTTP/1.0”, [RFC 1945](#), MIT/LCS, UC Irvine, MIT/LCS, May 1996.
- [3] Fielding, R., Gettys, J., Mogul, J., Frystyk, H., Masinter, L., Leach, P., Berners-Lee, T., “Hypertext Transfer Protocol - HTTP/1.1”, [RFC 2068](#), UC Irvine, Compaq/W3C, Compaq, W3C/MIT, Xerox, Microsoft, W3C/MIT, June 1999.
- [4] Berners-Lee, T., Masinter, L., and MaCahill, M., “Uniform Resource Locators (URL)”, [RFC 1738](#), CERN, Xerox Corporation, University of Minnesota, December 1994.
- [5] Kristol, D., Montulli, L., “HTTP State Management Mechanism”, [RFC 2965](#), Bell Laboratories/Lucent Technologies, Epinions.com, Inc., October 2000.
- [6] Braden, R., “Requirements for Internet Hosts - Application and Support”, [RFC 1123](#), Internet Engineering Task Force, October 1989.
- [7] OASIS SAML 1.1 standard, saml.xml.org, December 2009.
- [8] JASIG [CAS Server](#) reference implementation

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Appendix F: Changes to this Document

May 4, 2005: v1.0 - initial release

March 2, 2012: v1.0.1 - fixed “noscript” typo. apetro per amazurek with credit to Faraz Khan at ASU for catching the typo.

April, 2013: v2.0 - CAS 3.0 protocol, Ja-SIG copyright, Apache License 2.0