



Financial Reporting Council

January 2022

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# Foreword to Accounting Standards

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Registered in England number 2486368. Registered Office:  
8th Floor, 125 London Wall, London EC2Y 5AS



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## Introduction

- 1 This foreword explains the scope, authority and identification of accounting standards, issued by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), for the purposes of:
  - (a) in the UK, the *Companies Act 2006* (the Act) and Regulations made thereunder, and;
  - (b) in the Republic of Ireland, the *Companies Act 2014*.
- 2 This foreword relates to financial statements prepared in accordance with UK and Republic of Ireland legislation and accounting standards (for companies these are referred to in the Act as 'Companies Act accounts' and in Irish company law as 'Companies Act financial statements'). It does not apply to financial statements prepared in accordance with adopted IFRS (for companies these are referred to in the Act as 'IAS accounts' and in Irish company law as 'IFRS financial statements').

## Scope of accounting standards

- 3 Directors of companies incorporated under either the Act, or the *Companies Act 2014*, are required by legislation to prepare financial statements that give a true and fair view of:
  - (a) the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company and, where relevant, the group at the end of the reporting period; and
  - (b) the profit or loss of the company and, where relevant, the group for the reporting period.

In the case of a micro-entity, financial statements drawn up in accordance with the micro-entity provisions of company law are presumed to give a true and fair view.

- 4 Accounting standards are applicable to the financial statements of a reporting entity<sup>1</sup> that are required to give a true and fair view of its financial position at the reporting date and of its profit or loss (or income and expenditure) for the reporting period.
- 5 The whole essence of accounting standards is to provide for recognition, measurement, presentation and disclosure for specific aspects of financial reporting in a way that reflects economic reality and hence provides a true and fair view.
- 6 More information about the 'true and fair' concept can be found on the FRC website.

## Authority for issuing accounting standards

- 7 The FRC is a prescribed body for issuing accounting standards in the UK and Republic of Ireland as set out in:
  - (a) the *Statutory Auditors (Amendment of Companies Act 2006 and Delegation of Functions etc) Order 2012* (SI 2012/1741) for the UK; and
  - (b) the *Companies Act 2014 (Accounting Standards) (Prescribed Body) Regulations 2018* (SI No. 84 of 2018) for the Republic of Ireland.

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<sup>1</sup> This includes entities incorporated under the Act and preparing Companies Act accounts, or the *Companies Act 2014* and preparing Companies Act financial statements, and also entities that are not constituted as companies, but that are otherwise required to prepare financial statements that are required to give a true and fair view.

- 8 The FRC's overriding objective in setting accounting standards is to enable users of accounts to receive high-quality, understandable financial reporting proportionate to the size and complexity of the entity and users' information needs.

### **Identification of accounting standards**

- 9 Accounting standards developed by the FRC are designated Financial Reporting Standards (FRSs).
- 10 The FRC may issue FRSs that relate to other aspects of financial reporting, but which are not accounting standards.
- 11 Each FRS will indicate its status, ie that it is an accounting standard or, if not, the circumstances in which it may be applied.
- 12 The FRC may issue other material with, or alongside, an FRS. This material is only part of an accounting standard when it is identified as an integral part of an FRS that is an accounting standard.

### **Early adoption of Financial Reporting Exposure Drafts (FREDs)**

- 13 An exposure draft is issued for comment and is subject to revision. Until it is finalised as an accounting standard, the requirements of any existing accounting standards that would be affected by proposals in the exposure draft remain in force.
- 14 Some reporting entities may wish to provide additional information reflecting proposals in an exposure draft. In the FRC's view there are two ways that this can be achieved:
- (a) Insofar as the information does not conflict with existing accounting standards, it could be incorporated into the financial statements. It should be remembered, however, that the proposals may change before forming part of an accounting standard and the consequences of a change to the proposals should be considered.
  - (b) The information could be provided in supplementary form.
- 15 Similar considerations apply to consultation documents or discussion documents issued by the FRC, and to proposals to amend FRSs that are not accounting standards.

### **Withdrawal of Foreword to Accounting Standards (issued March 2018)**

- 16 The *Foreword to Accounting Standards* issued by the FRC in March 2018 is superseded by this Foreword and is accordingly withdrawn.



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