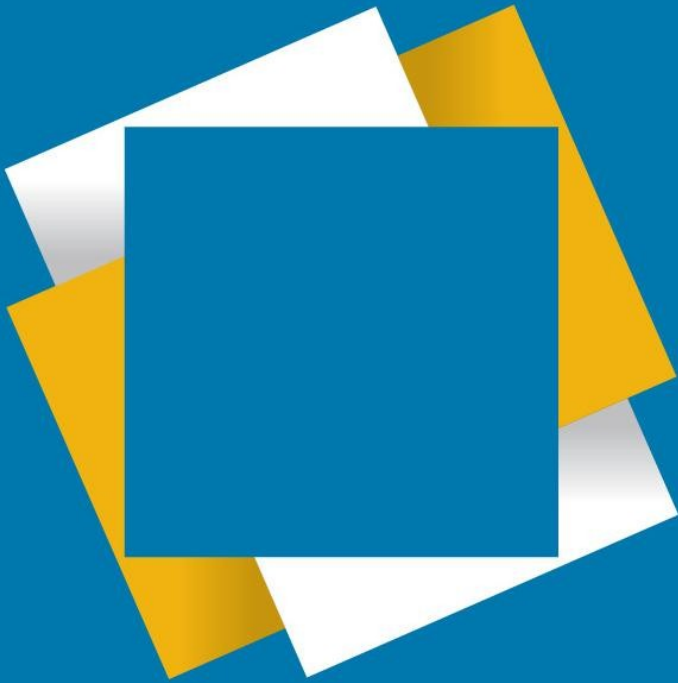


May

2010



**Due process and working  
procedures for the  
development and review of  
APESB pronouncements**

APESB



Accounting Professional & Ethical Standards Board



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# 1. Introduction

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The primary objectives of Accounting Professional & Ethical Standards Board Limited (APESB), as set out in its constitution, are:

- To develop and issue in the public interest, professional and ethical standards that will apply to the membership of the professional accounting bodies; and
- To provide a formal and rigorous forum for the consideration, promulgation and approval of professional and ethical standards, which are performed in an open, timely, independent and proactive manner.

The constitution further articulates the activities APESB will undertake to fulfil its primary objectives, including:

- Reviewing the status of the professional and ethical standards annually, and monitoring the needs of the accounting profession and the public, for areas requiring new or updated professional and ethical standards;
- Ensuring rigorous review of all matters proposed or developed by the secretariat;
- Referring matters to the secretariat for research, direction and amendment;
- Approving professional and ethical standards;
- Making recommendations to the boards of the professional accounting bodies and other interested stakeholders regarding professional and ethical matters;
- Seeking comment on exposure drafts from members of the professional accounting bodies, the public and the professional accounting bodies;
- Monitoring the effectiveness of professional and ethical standards;
- Ensuring that the standards approved do not adversely impact on the professional accounting bodies' ability to comply with the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) requirements as they pertain to professional and ethical standards;
- Ensuring that the standards approved do not adversely impact on the professional accounting bodies' ability to comply with the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) requirements as they pertain to professional and ethical matters;
- Reviewing the implementation of new and amended professional and ethical standards within six months of issue.

The purpose of this document is to describe the due process and working procedures that are to be followed by APESB in developing and reviewing professional and ethical standards.

The due process and working procedures document will be revised periodically and should be read in conjunction with APESB Constitution and Board Charter.



## 2. The role of professional judgement and ethical responsibility in applying APESB pronouncements

APESB pronouncements are 'principles based'. Members are expected to be guided by relevant professional and ethical requirements and to use professional judgement in light of any given circumstances in order to achieve the objectives of a pronouncement.

A conceptual framework that depicts the elements, attributes and activities that underpin the development, review and application of APESB pronouncements is illustrated in *Figure 1*.

Element	Framework attribute	APESB activity
1	Fundamental professional and ethical responsibility	Code of Ethics – public interest
2	Applicable values and principles	Code of Ethics - fundamental principles
3	Criteria for application of values and principles	Code of Ethics - threats/ safeguards
4	Practices requiring the application of values and principles	APESB standards
5	Guidance notes for the application of values and principles to practice	APESB guidance notes
6	Promotion of professional responsibility and application of values and principles	Education

**Figure 1. Conceptual framework for developing APESB pronouncements**

**(a) The fundamental professional and ethical responsibility of accountants**

A distinguishing aspect of the accountancy profession is its acceptance of the responsibility to act in the public interest. Therefore, a member's responsibility is not exclusively to satisfy the needs of an individual client or employer.

The public interest may be defined as the collective wellbeing of the community of people and institutions that the members serve. The accountancy profession's public includes clients, credit providers, governments, employers, employees, investors, the business and financial community, and others who rely on the objectivity and integrity of members to assist in maintaining the orderly functioning of commerce.



**(b) Applicable values and principles**

Members' professional decision making (professional judgement) is informed by the values and principles articulated in the Code and reinforced by the professional accounting bodies. These include compliance with the following fundamental principles of integrity, objectivity, professional competence and due care, confidentiality and professional behaviour.

**(c) Criteria for application of values and principles**

Once the values and principles are agreed upon, members need to know what criteria to use in applying them. The Code has adopted a 'threats and safeguards' approach.

Many threats fall into the following categories: self interest, self review, advocacy, familiarity and intimidation threats. Safeguards that may eliminate or reduce such threats to an acceptable level fall into two broad categories: safeguards created by the profession, legislation and regulation, and safeguards in the work environment.

The Code recognises that it is impossible to define every situation that creates a threat to compliance with the fundamental principles and the appropriate corresponding action/s. Members have an obligation to identify, evaluate and address threats to compliance, rather than merely comply with a set of specific rules. Where identified threats are significant, a member should apply safeguards to eliminate or reduce the threats to an acceptable level. The objective is to ensure that compliance with the fundamental principles is not compromised.

**(d) Practices requiring the application of principles and values**

APESB will identify practices and activities where specific application of the values and principles should be established. These will be codified in APESB standards.

**(e) Guidance notes for the application of principles and values to practices**

Where necessary, APESB will issue guidance notes that elaborate on the application of the Code or an existing APESB standard. These will be issued as APESB guidance notes.

**(f) Promotion of professional responsibility and application of values and principles**

APESB has a role to play in the promotion of professional responsibility and application of the values and principles used in APESB pronouncements. APESB envisages that this educational process will involve APESB, the professional accounting bodies, members and other relevant stakeholders.



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## 3. APESB pronouncements

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### 3.1 Background

APESB develops and issues in the public interest, professional and ethical standards that apply to members of the professional accounting bodies. APESB pronouncements include, but are not limited to:

- a) the code of ethics for professional accountants;
- b) professional standards and guidance notes; and
- c) other publications that address ethical issues or similar matters of interest in respect of the accounting profession.

A diagrammatic presentation of the structure of APESB pronouncements and pronouncements issued, or planned to be issued by APESB, is contained in Appendices 1 and 2.

### 3.2 The Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code)

The Code establishes a 'principles based' standard of professional ethics for members and provides a conceptual framework for applying these principles.

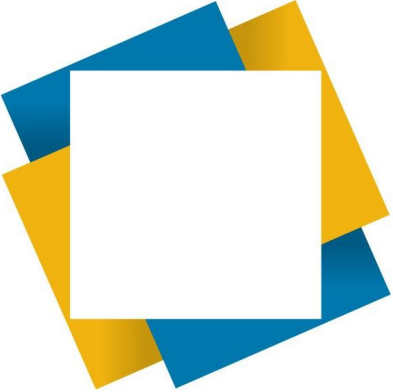
Based primarily on the Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants issued by the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants (IESBA), APESB has supplemented the Code with Australian specific requirements and guidance.

### 3.3 Professional standards

The objective of a standard is to promote competent, professional and ethical practice by applying fundamental values and principles. Whilst individual standards primarily deal with professional requirements, many also deal with ethical requirements that are to be applied in the specific circumstances covered by the relevant standard. These ethical requirements supplement those in the Code.

The circumstances that may lead to the issue of a standard include:

- a) when there is no existing APESB standard that prescribes the particular fundamental values and principles to be followed, and essential procedures to be undertaken, in a particular aspect of accounting services;
- b) when a relevant standard setting Board of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) issues a standard, an Australian equivalent standard will ordinarily be issued in due course by APESB, subject to any requirements imposed by Australia's legislative and/or regulatory environment;

- 
- c) when a standard setting body in another jurisdiction issues a professional or ethical standard which APESB believes warrants an Australian equivalent; and
  - d) stakeholder(s) request that an APESB standard be issued and APESB considers it appropriate to do so.

APESB has adopted the policy that its standards will be at least equal to, not less than, the requirements in the corresponding international pronouncement (if any).

Standards issued by APESB currently fall into the following three categories:

- a) professional standards applicable to all members ('APES 200' series);
- b) professional standards applicable to members in public practice ('APES 300' series); and
- c) professional standards applicable to members in business ('APES 400' series).

### 3.4 Guidance notes

The purpose of a guidance note is to provide authoritative guidance to improve knowledge and understanding of the scope and application of the fundamental values and principles and the mandatory requirements established in a standard. Guidance notes do not establish new principles or alter the requirements of an existing standard.

The circumstances that govern the issue of guidance include:

- a) when it is considered necessary to provide additional guidance to improve understanding and help fulfil mandatory requirements in an existing standard;
- b) when IFAC (or a standard setting body in another jurisdiction) issues guidance on a particular matter; and
- c) when stakeholder(s) request guidance be issued and APESB considers it appropriate to do so.

Guidance notes issued by APESB currently fall into the following three categories:

- a) guidance notes applicable to all members ('APES GN 20' series);
- b) guidance notes applicable to members in public practice ('APES GN 30' series); and
- c) guidance notes applicable to members in business ('APES GN 40' series).

### 3.5 Other publications

APESB may also, at its discretion, publish other relevant material to raise awareness and to educate members and the general public about emerging professional and ethical matters.

### 3.6 Status and enforceability of APESB pronouncements

#### *General enforceability*

APESB pronouncements are applicable to all members of the professional accounting bodies that have chosen to adopt these pronouncements. Non-compliance with APESB pronouncements by a member may lead to disciplinary proceedings being initiated by the professional accounting body to which the member belongs.

#### *Force of law*

The Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (AUASB) has issued auditing standards as legislative instruments, effective for financial reporting periods commencing on or after 1 July 2006.

For *Corporations Act* audits and reviews, those standards will have the force of law. To the extent that those force of law auditing standards make reference to ethical and quality control requirements, the relevant APESB pronouncements will have the same legal enforceability.





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## 4. Due process and working procedures

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### 4.1 General

The APESB follows a rigorous due process to maintain appropriate transparency about the standard setting process.

APESB meetings to discuss pronouncements are open to the public. Matters of a general or administrative nature are discussed in private.

Meeting agenda papers are published on the APESB website approximately one week in advance of each meeting. Highlights of APESB meetings are published approximately two weeks after the meeting.

### 4.2 Development of proposed pronouncements

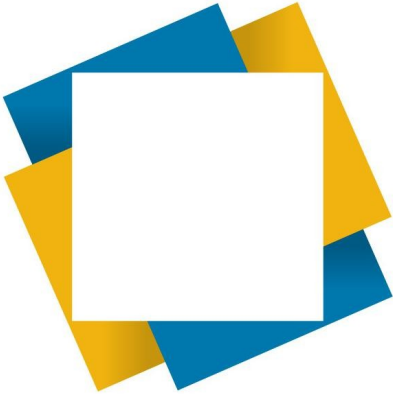
The development or review of any APESB pronouncement commences with the preparation of a project proposal initiated either by APESB Technical Director or an external party. A project proposal addresses (at minimum) the following key points:

- a) any relevant policy or legislative perspectives;
- b) existing practice in Australia;
- c) any relevant international pronouncements and/or practices; and
- d) expected impact of proposed new or revised pronouncement to be developed by the APESB on Australian practice.

The Board of Directors of the APESB (the Board) will consider the project proposal and if the Board decides that a pronouncement is required, or review of an existing standard is warranted, then the project proposal is approved.

The Board, at its discretion, may decide to establish a taskforce for some or all of the duration of the project or direct APESB Technical Staff to develop the pronouncement.

A taskforce is a temporary working group established for new or existing standards that require high level development, or review, or where industry specific expertise is required. A taskforce is disbanded once its goal has been achieved. Each taskforce will have a term of reference (generic terms of reference are listed in *Appendix 3*); with the overall objective to:

- 
- a) provide APESB with expert and authoritative advice on the development and review of professional and ethical standards in a specific area of expertise;
  - b) oversee the development and review of professional and ethical standards in a specific area of expertise in accordance with the due process and working procedures;
  - c) establish links with key stakeholders in order to incorporate the latest developments in the specific area of expertise; and
  - d) advise the APESB on the implementation of the pronouncement.

The outcome of this first phase is the development of an exposure draft together with an invitation to comment.

#### **4.3 Consultation with stakeholders**

APESB may consult with relevant stakeholders as appropriate in the context of particular projects. This consultation may be in the nature of soliciting views on a matter under consideration by APESB, or may take another form of interaction or consultation considered to be appropriate.

When APESB considers that a draft pronouncement would benefit from having external comment before it is ready for public exposure, APESB may issue a 'pre-exposure' version of the draft for review by relevant stakeholders. Any feedback or views received by APESB from these stakeholders is recorded and considered as part of due process.

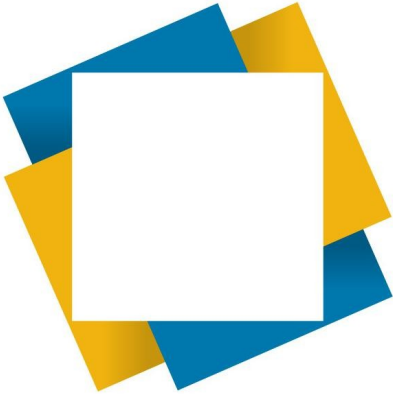
All development versions and pre-release versions of exposure drafts are treated as confidential information by all recipients. This facilitates constructive interaction with APESB and contributes to the effective development of APESB pronouncements.

#### **4.4 Exposure drafts**

Exposure drafts approved by APESB are published on APESB website and can be downloaded without charge. One copy shall be forwarded to all interested stakeholders on request.

Each exposure draft is accompanied by an invitation to comment that highlights the purpose of the exposure draft, and significant proposals contained therein. In the invitation to comment, APESB will highlight any areas where the proposed pronouncement differs from any existing equivalent Australian or international pronouncement.

Stakeholders are notified of the release of an exposure draft by a media release posted on APESB website and through the various communication mediums of the professional



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accounting bodies. For more complex proposed pronouncements, APESB Technical Staff may prepare an article for the professional body journals outlining the proposed pronouncement addressed by the exposure draft, and drawing attention to any contentious issues.

Exposure drafts are generally exposed for a period ranging from one to three months, with a longer exposure period considered if it falls over December and January. Some proposed pronouncements may also require longer exposure periods if they include significant changes to current practice. A shorter exposure period may sometimes be necessary to accommodate an international timeframe, or for those proposed pronouncements where there is an urgent market need.

As part of the exposure process, APESB makes submissions available for public access and downloading on APESB website until the final pronouncement is issued. Confidential submissions will be received at the discretion of the Board.

An APESB invitation to comment, a discussion paper or a consultation paper, may also be prepared and published in some circumstances.

#### **4.5 Consideration of respondents' comments on exposure drafts**

APESB Technical Staff or the taskforce (where one has been established) will provide the Board with a series of documents including:

- a) a summary of the exposure process and any meetings held with respondents;
- b) an analysis of the general and specific issues raised by respondents', summarising their proposed views, and, as appropriate, an explanation of the reason(s) significant changes recommended by a respondent were, or were not, accepted; and
- c) a 'marked up' version of the proposed pronouncement to illustrate changes (if any) made to the proposed pronouncement subsequent to the exposure.

These documents will be considered and discussed at public meetings of the Board. Private working meetings may be held in the early stages of considering a proposed standard, to identify the significant issues requiring further discussion and debate, at the public meeting.

The consideration of responses and resolution of issues may lead to approval of further changes to the proposed pronouncement by the Board. Significant decisions of the Board

are discussed in public meetings, and are recorded in the minutes and published highlights of the meeting, at which the decisions are taken.

#### **4.6 Approval of pronouncements or exposure drafts**

After following the due process outlined above, the Board may:

- a) approve the proposed pronouncement together with any approved changes for issue and distribution to members; or
- b) approve the exposure draft under consideration together with any approved changes for re-exposure, in which case the procedures outlined above for exposure drafts are repeated; or
- c) withdraw the proposed pronouncement or exposure draft under consideration.

Once issued, the pronouncement is placed on APESB website and can be downloaded together with a basis for conclusions paper.

Prepared by APESB Technical Staff, the basis for conclusions provides a summary of the background to the project, main comments received on the exposure draft, and the Board's conclusions regarding these comments in developing the final pronouncement.

Members are notified of the issue or withdrawal of a pronouncement by a media release posted on the APESB website and through the various communication mediums of the professional bodies.



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## 5. Drafting approach

### 5.1 Base standard

The initial focus of APESB activities was the review and re-launch of existing professional and ethical standards and guidance notes (old CPC, APS and GN series) transferred to APESB from CPA Australia and The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia (ICAA).

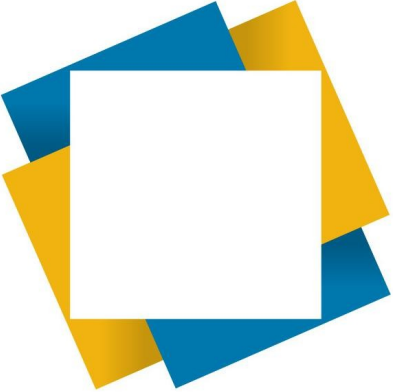
Relevant professional and ethical standards issued by IFAC (if applicable) are to be used as the base pronouncement from which to develop Australian professional and ethical standards. Notwithstanding this fact, the actual base standard (or physical starting point) used will depend the following scenarios:

- a) an equivalent IFAC pronouncement exists which is identical to an existing Australian standard;  
*In this case, the existing Australian pronouncement will be used as the base standard given that it already incorporates Australian terminology and references*
- b) an equivalent IFAC pronouncement exists which differs slightly from the existing Australian pronouncement;  
*In this case the existing Australian pronouncement will be used as the base pronouncement and modified to bring it in line with the equivalent international IFAC standard. Australian terminology and references in the existing Australian pronouncement will be retained*
- c) an equivalent IFAC pronouncement exists which differs significantly from the existing Australian standard; or  
*In this case the IFAC pronouncement will be used as the base pronouncement and where relevant, Australian requirements and guidance will inserted*
- d) an equivalent IFAC pronouncement does not exist.  
*If an equivalent IFAC pronouncement does not exist then the existing Australian standard will be used as the base standard, or where there is no Australian standard APESB will consider standards issued by national standard setters of other jurisdictions*

### 5.2 Drafting conventions

The following drafting principles and conventions will be applied to APESB pronouncements:

- a) mandatory requirements and explanatory guidance are shown in separate paragraphs;
- b) paragraphs containing mandatory requirements are shown in bold type black lettering (except for the Code - refer 5.3 (a));

- 
- 
- c) paragraphs containing explanatory guidance are shown in normal type grey lettering (except for the Code - refer 5.3 (a));
  - d) the word 'shall' is used within mandatory requirements paragraphs to denote the obligations a member is required to comply with;
  - e) defined terms will be in title case;
  - f) the word 'should' is used in guidance paragraphs to denote best practice suggestions
  - g) the present tense of verbs is used in the explanatory guidance when it is the best form of expression;
  - h) qualifiers such as 'ordinarily', 'normally' and 'usually' are avoided as far as possible as these create ambiguity as to whether they should form part of the requirements;
  - i) references to 'use of professional judgement' are avoided as far as possible unless clearly necessary in the context of the requirement;
  - j) requirements that exist in another professional or ethical standard are anchored back to the original requirement (for example, using the phrase 'in accordance with') when repetition is considered necessary for understanding and context; and
  - k) Australian supplements to international pronouncements will be prefaced by the letters AUST.

### 5.3 Application of APESB pronouncements

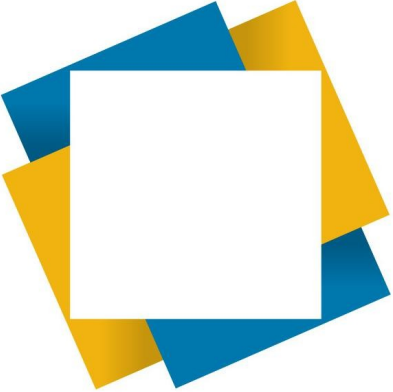
APESB pronouncements are to be applied in the following manner:

- (a) the entire Code is mandatory to members of the professional accounting bodies;
- (b) professional standards have mandatory requirements in black lettering and explanatory guidance in grey lettering; and
- (c) guidance notes have only explanatory guidance in grey lettering.

### 5.4 Elements of APESB pronouncements

Each APESB pronouncement contains the following elements that impact on its application:

- a) *Operative date* - the operative date stipulates the date from which the standard is to be applied. It remains in force until:
  - the operative date of any amendment to those requirements;
  - in relevant circumstances, the early adoption of such amendment; and
  - the standard is withdrawn by APESB.
- b) *Scope and application* - APESB pronouncements are intended to apply to members

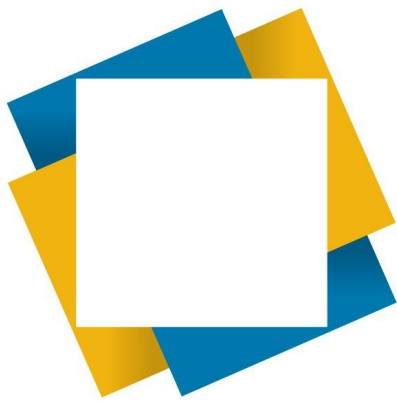


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of the professional bodies that have adopted APESB pronouncements. Where there is an exception, this is spelt out in these paragraphs.

The following paragraphs will be included in the scope and application of each APESB pronouncement:

- members practising in Australia are required to comply with APESB pronouncements;
  - members practising outside Australia are required to follow the provisions of the pronouncement to the extent to which they are not prevented from doing so by specific requirements of local regulations and/or laws in the country they are practising;
  - members need to comply with the Code and other relevant professional and ethical requirements;
  - APESB pronouncements are not intended to detract from any responsibilities that may be imposed by law; and
  - in applying the requirements outlined in an APESB pronouncement, members should be guided by both the words and the spirit of the standard and the Code.
- c) *Definitions* - definitions contained in APESB standards are to be applied in the interpretation of APESB standards and are consistent across all pronouncements issued by APESB.
- d) *Conformity paragraphs* - conformity paragraphs explain the relationship of an APESB pronouncement with an equivalent international standard (if any) issued by a standard setting board of IFAC. In cases where there is no equivalent international pronouncement, the conformity paragraphs will state that an international equivalent does not exist.



## 5.5 Revision and compilation of existing APESB pronouncements

### a) Revision

From time to time, issued pronouncements may require minor revisions to incorporate editorial and other changes. Where APESB revises a pronouncement:

- the title page will indicate the date of original issue and the date of the latest revision;
- a revision table will be included in the pronouncement which details the date of the revision, nature of the revision and operative date;
- where there are multiple revisions, the date of each revision, nature of the revision and operative dates will be included in the revision table.

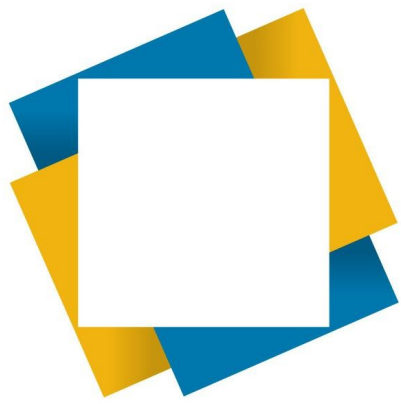
### b) Compilation

In certain circumstance APESB may issue amending pronouncements to an existing pronouncement.

In these instances there may be a need to issue a compiled version of the pronouncement. Where APESB issues a compiled version of a pronouncement:

- The title page will indicate that it is a compiled version and the date of the compilation;
- The compilation details will include a compilation table, details of the original pronouncement as well as the amending pronouncements;
- The compilation table will include the date of the original and amending standards, nature of amendments and operative date of the amendments;
- A statement will be included that the compilation is not a separate pronouncement, but a representation of the relevant pronouncements which incorporate the original pronouncement and subsequent amendments.





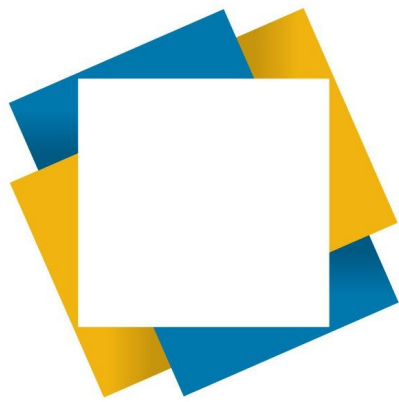
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## 6. Work program

The work program of APESB is available on APESB website. The Board regularly reviews the work program against achievement of its stated objectives, strategies and key performance indicators articulated in the business plan. This review includes consideration of:

- a) developments in Australia and internationally, including but not limited to:
  - developments relating to international convergence with relevant pronouncements; and
  - consideration of the professional accounting bodies' ability to fulfil their obligations of IFAC membership
- b) comments and suggestions from those who have an interest in the development of accounting professional and ethical standards and guidance; and
- c) technical and administrative support resources available to APESB.

New projects approved by the Board for inclusion in the work program are progressed in accordance with the relative priority they are assigned on approval, and in light of available resources.



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## 7. Communications

### 7.1 APESB website

APESB makes available for public viewing on its website ([www.apesb.org.au](http://www.apesb.org.au)):

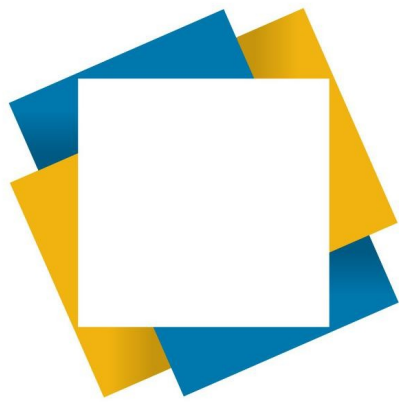
- a) all issued standards and guidance notes;
- b) all issued standards and guidance notes under review;
- c) exposure drafts currently on exposure;
- d) submissions received for current exposure drafts when confidentiality has not been requested;
- e) submissions to relevant national and international stakeholders on matters pertaining to the development and review of accounting professional and ethical standards;
- f) Current strategic plan, business plan and work program;
- g) all agendas and associated papers on items related to the development and review of professional and ethical standards;
- h) meeting highlights following each APESB meeting;
- i) six month review reports;
- j) annual review reports; and
- k) issues register.

### 7.2 Requests for advice

APESB does not provide advice on how its pronouncements should be interpreted in practice by members of the professional accounting bodies.

From time to time, APESB may be approached to provide guidance or commentary on matters of relevance to accounting professional and ethical standards. Involvement in the provision of such guidance and commentary will be assessed on the basis of factors such as the following:

- a) relevance and relationship to accounting professional and ethical standards;
- b) defined need for APESB guidance;
- c) project priorities reflected in the APESB business plan and work program; and
- d) the availability of appropriate resources to provide guidance and commentary on a useful basis.



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## 8. Review and evaluation

In recognition of the changing environment in which pronouncements are developed and applied, APESB undertakes a regular program of review in accordance with its constitutional obligations.

### 8.1 Six month review

APESB is required to review the implementation of new and amended professional and ethical standards within six months after a pronouncement is effective. The six month review, available for public viewing on the APESB website, includes:

- a) issues identified;
- b) analysis of issues identified; and
- c) recommendations for action.

### 8.2 Annual review

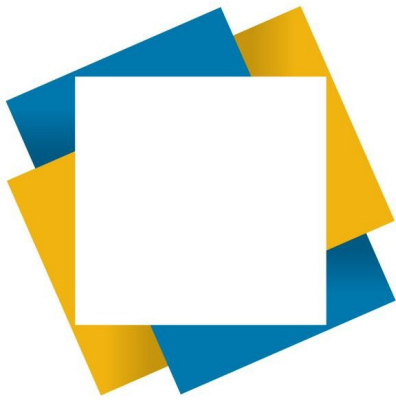
APESB is required to review the status of professional and ethical standards on a yearly cycle and monitor the needs of the accounting profession and the public for areas requiring new or updated professional and ethical standards. The twelve month review, available for public viewing on APESB website, includes:

- a) issues identified;
- b) analysis of issues identified; and
- c) recommendations for action.

### 8.3 Issues register

APESB maintains an issues register for every standard and guidance note released. Issues logged on the register provide the basis for project proposals, six monthly and annual review reports.

Each issue logged on the issues register is allocated a reference number. The issue, affected stakeholders, proposed response and current status is logged. The issues register content is updated regularly and is available for public viewing on the APESB website.



# Appendix 1: Structure of APESB pronouncements

## Due process and working procedures

### Conceptual Framework

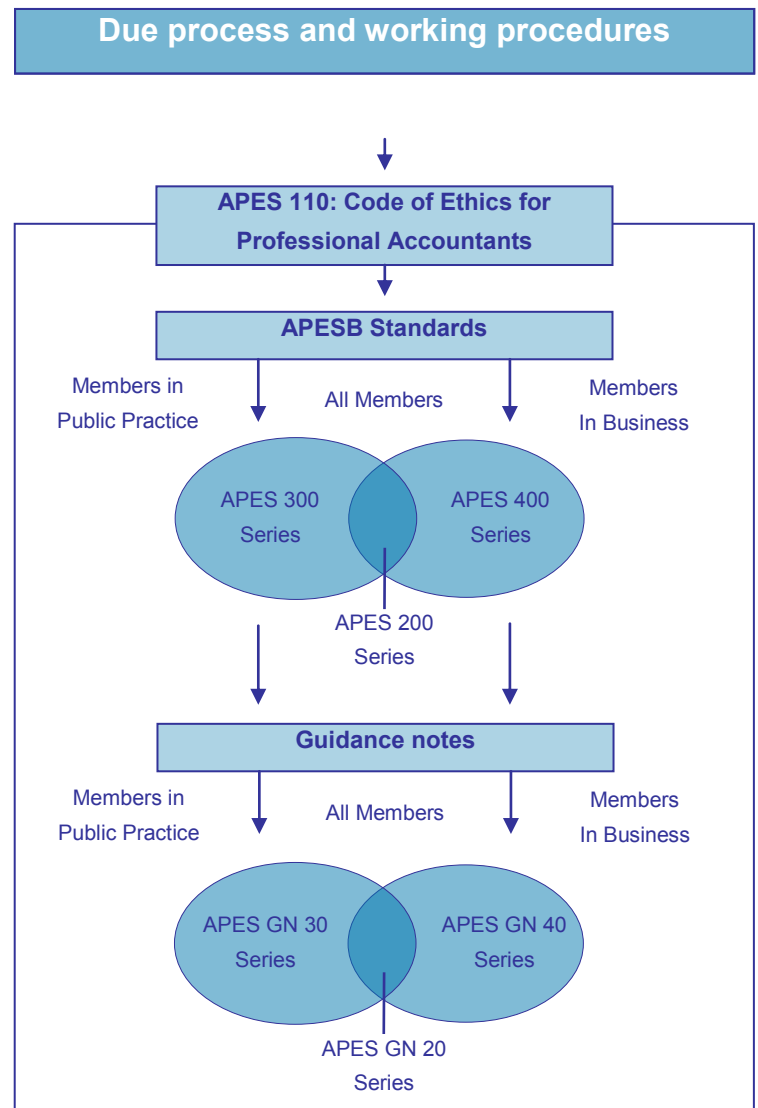
- Principles based
- Mandatory for professional accountants

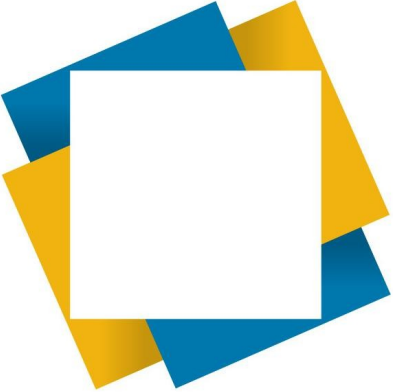
### Standard

- Introduces principles
- Mandatory requirements in black letter
- Guidance and/or explanation in grey letter

### Guidance notes

- Do not introduce new principles
- Guidance on a specific matter on which the Principles are already stated in a Standard
- Guidance is only in grey letter





## Appendix 2:

# APESB issued and proposed pronouncements as at 1 May 2010

Professional Standards Classification and Range	APES Reference	Name of Standard or Guidance Note
Introductory	—	<i>Due process and working procedures</i>
Conceptual Framework for all the Members	APES 110	<i>Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants*</i>
Standards & Guidance Notes for all Members	APES 205 APES 210	<i>Conformity with Accounting Standards</i> <i>Conformity with Auditing and Assurance Standards</i>
APES 200-299	APES 215 APES 220 APES 225 APES 230	<i>Forensic Accounting Services</i> <i>Taxation Services</i> <i>Valuation Services</i> <i>Financial Advisory Services*</i>
APES GN 20-29	APES GN 20	<i>Outsourcing of Accounting Services*</i>
Standards & Guidance Notes for Members in Public Practice	APES 305 APES 310 APES 315 APES 320 APES 325 APES 330 APES 345	<i>Terms of Engagement</i> <i>Dealing in Client Monies*</i> <i>Compilation of Financial Information</i> <i>Quality control for Firms</i> <i>Risk Management for Firms</i> <i>Insolvency Services</i> <i>Reporting on Prospective Financial Information prepared in connection with a Disclosure Document</i>
APES 300-399	APES 350	<i>Participation by Members in Public Practice in Due Diligence Committees in connection with a Public Document</i>
APES GN 30-39		
Standards & Guidance Notes for Members in Business		
APES 400-499		
APES GN 40-49	APES GN 40	<i>Members in Business guidance statement *</i>

\* Projects are currently in progress either to develop or revise these pronouncements.



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# Appendix 3:

## Taskforce terms of reference

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### Accounting Professional & Ethical Standards Board Limited

#### Standard Taskforce

#### Terms of reference

##### 1. Introduction

Accounting Professional & Ethical Standards Board Limited (APESB) was established as an initiative of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia (ICAA) and CPA Australia as an independent body to set the code of ethics and professional standards which their members are required to abide. The National Institute of Accountants (NIA) has subsequently become a member of APESB.

A standard taskforce is a temporary working group established by APESB for new or existing standards that require high level development or review. A taskforce is disbanded once its goal has been accomplished.

##### 2. Objectives

The objectives of a standard taskforce are:

- 2.1 To provide APESB with expert and authoritative advice on the development and review of professional and ethical standards in a specific area of expertise.
- 2.2 To oversee the development and review of professional and ethical standards in a specific area of expertise in accordance with the due process and working procedures.
- 2.3 To establish links with key stakeholders in order to incorporate the latest developments in the specific area of expertise.
- 2.4 To advise APESB on the implementation of the standard.

### 3. Composition and size

- 3.1 Representation will be invited from, but not limited to, the following stakeholders:
- APESB Technical Director (Chairperson)
  - APESB Board Member (Observer) - *Non voting*
  - APESB Senior Project Manager (Secretary) - *Non voting*
  - 1 CPA Australia representative
  - 1 ICAA representative
  - 1 NIA representative
  - 1 legal representative (if required)
  - Members with demonstrated experience in the area of interest.
- 3.2 The size of the taskforce is a compromise between a reasonable broad base of representation and the need to restrict membership to workable numbers.
- 3.3 Taskforce meetings are only open to nominated members; or if a member cannot attend, their representative.
- 3.4 APESB Senior Project Manager provides technical support to the taskforce and is the principal drafting editor of the standard.
- 3.5 APESB Technical Director will function as the Chairperson and Quality Assurance Reviewer of the taskforce. The Technical Director is also responsible for providing guidance on APESB policies and procedures.
- 3.6 The nominated APESB Board Member will attend taskforce meetings and will also perform reviews of the pronouncements before it is presented to the APES Board.
- 3.7 Administrative support is provided by APESB Secretariat. This includes meeting organisation, compilation and distribution of agendas, minutes and any other associated taskforce documents and drafts.

### 4. Method of appointment

- 4.1 Each standard taskforce is formed on a representative basis by seeking nominations from organisations listed in 3.1.

4.2 When an organisation nominates a taskforce member it is expected that the member will be able to speak with authority on behalf of that organisation.

**5. Meeting frequency**

5.1 Each standard taskforce will meet as required by teleconference or in some circumstances in person.

5.2 It is anticipated that there will be regular email communication between meetings.

**6. Accountability**

6.1 Each standard taskforce is accountable to the Board through the Chairperson.

**7. Confidentiality**

7.1 Internal standard taskforce documents will be marked 'in confidence' and should be treated as confidential. This does not preclude a taskforce member reporting back to a nominating organisation.

7.2 No taskforce member is authorised to make public statements on behalf of that taskforce or the APESB, without agreement from the APESB General Manager.

**8. Intellectual property**

8.1 Standard taskforce members may be required to sign a document acknowledging that the intellectual property of all material developed by the taskforce rests with APESB.



APESB



Accounting Professional & Ethical Standards Board