

1 Scope and Specification of the Project

Aim

To revise and update the Independence Guide to ensure it remains fit for purpose for members of the professional bodies (CA ANZ, CPA Australia and the IPA) to assess auditor independence. This includes undertaking a review of any relevant changes to laws, regulations and/or professional standards (applicable independence standards) and ensuring relevant revisions are incorporated into the Independence Guide and that examples remain relevant for members.

1.1 Scope of Work

Review, revise and update the Independence Guide with respect to any relevant changes to:

- The APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code);
- *Corporations Act 2001* (the Corporations Act), including *Treasury Laws Amendment (Financial Market Infrastructure and Other Measures) Act 2024* (Cth);
- Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (AUASB) *Framework for Assurance Engagements*;
- *Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Act 1993* (SIS Act);
- *Australian Auditing Standards (ASAs)*, *Standards on Review Engagements (ASREs)*, *Standards on Assurance Engagements (ASAEs)* and *Australian Standards on Sustainability Assurance (ASSAs)*; and
- Any other relevant laws, regulations or professional standards.

Some aspects of the Independence Guide will be reviewed, revised and updated by APESB Technical Staff, whereas other sections will be the responsibility of the successful tenderer, as summarised in Appendix A.

To assist in informing the above process, the successful tenderer will be required to undertake stakeholder engagement, in collaboration and under the direction of APESB Technical Staff, on implications of the Independence Guide in practice, including with, but not limited to, Australian Securities and Investments Commission, Australian Taxation Office, Australian Prudential Regulation Authority, Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards Board, professional accounting bodies, members and firms.

The successful tenderer will need to liaise with APESB Technical Staff throughout the drafting process and provide marked-up drafts for discussion and review in accordance with the agreed timeline (refer to paragraph XX).

APESB Technical Staff will incorporate interactive PDF features within the Independence Guide.

1.2 Intellectual Property Rights

Intellectual Property Rights of the Independence Guide will remain with the professional accounting bodies (CA ANZ, CPA Australia and the IPA) and the APESB. The successful tenderer is to provide relevant documentation of the updated and revised Independence Guide to the APESB at the completion of project delivery.

Appendix A – Detailed Scope of Work, Responsibilities & Requirements

Section of the Independence Guide	Responsibility	Requirements
Introductory pages	APESB	This includes updating the information about the Professional Bodies and APESB, the Table of Contents and drafting a revised Foreword
1. Purpose of the Guide	APESB	Update background, key changes and acronyms for legislative and other relevant changes, including in respect of the Code. ¹
2. Fundamental Principles	APESB	Revise and update in accordance with the Code where relevant.
3. Assurance engagements	APESB & Successful Tenderer	APESB – Revise and update subsection 3.1 where relevant in accordance with the Code Successful Tenderer – Revise and update subsection 3.2 where relevant in respect of any changes to the relevant laws, regulations or other professional standards.
4. Conceptual Framework	APESB & Successful Tenderer	APESB – Revise and update subsections 4.1 to 4.4 in accordance with the Code where relevant. Successful Tenderer – Revise and update subsections 4.5 to 4.9 in respect of any changes to the Code, relevant laws, regulations or other professional standards.
5. Public Interest Entities	APESB	Revise and update in accordance with the Code where relevant and any changes to relevant laws, regulations or other professional standards.
6. Networks	APESB	Revise and update in accordance with the Code where relevant and determine whether examples remain relevant and/or whether additional examples are required.
7. Examples of independence issues	APESB & Successful Tenderer	Review examples in respect of whether they remain relevant and for any changes to the Code, relevant laws, regulations or other professional standards. Based on this review and stakeholder engagement (refer below and paragraph 2.1) determine whether other examples should be included within the Independence Guide. This would include an assessment of whether examples are required

¹ APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)*

Section of the Independence Guide	Responsibility	Requirements
		in respect of responding to Objectivity of an Engagement Quality Reviewer, Engagement Teams and Group Audits, Fees, Non-Assurance Services, Technology, Tax Planning Services, Sustainability Assurance and Reporting and the Use of External Experts.
8. Self-managed superannuation funds	APESB and Successful Tenderer	Undertake stakeholder engagement, including with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, the Australian Taxation Office, and revise and update in accordance with the Code, relevant laws, regulations or other professional standards where relevant. Determine whether additional examples are required.
9. Independence communications	Successful Tenderer	Revise and update subsections in respect of any changes to the Code, relevant laws, regulations or other professional standards.
10. Appendices	Successful Tenderer	Revise and update subsections in respect of any changes to the Code, relevant laws, regulations or other professional standards.
New Section: Sustainability Assurance	APESB and Successful Tenderer	Develop a new section that focuses on the Sustainability Assurance Independence requirements. This will involve undertaking stakeholder engagement, including with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (AUASB) and developing case studies in accordance with the Code, relevant laws, regulations or other professional standards where relevant.