

# **Request for Information**

## Comprehensive Review of the *IFRS for SMEs* Standard

January 2020

### **Optional Response Document**

#### **Instructions for completion**

The International Accounting Standards Board (Board) has published this separate Microsoft Word® document for respondents to use for submitting their comments, if they wish.

This document presents all of the questions in Parts A, B and C of the Request for Information in a table with spaces for responses.

Respondents are encouraged to complete this document electronically. Many respondents will find this the easiest way to submit their comments and making submissions in this form will also help ease the analysis of the answers. However, respondents are not required to use this document and responses will be accepted in all formats.

Comments to be received by **27 October 2020**

Comment deadline changed from 27 July 2020 because of the covid-19 pandemic

Part A—Strategic and general questions

<b>Name of Respondent:</b>	<b>Paul Thompson</b>
<b>Organisation:</b>	<b>European Federation of Accountants and Auditors for SMEs (EFAA) (SMEIG Member)</b>
<b>Jurisdiction:</b>	<b>Europe</b>
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<b>Ref</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b> <i>(Please give clear reasoning to support your response.)</i>
<p><i>Part A of the Request for Information sets out the framework the Board developed for approaching the second comprehensive review and asks for comments on the Board's approach.</i></p>		
G1	<p><b>Alignment approach</b></p> <p>The <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard was originally developed using an alignment approach. That is, the Standard was based on the 1989 <i>Framework for the Preparation and Presentation of Financial Statements</i> and the principles and related requirements of full IFRS Standards, with modifications that were appropriate in the light of users' needs and cost-benefit considerations.</p> <p>In considering how to approach this comprehensive review of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard, the Board considered whether it should continue to follow the alignment approach or if the Board should only consider issues raised by stakeholders regarding the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard. The second approach would see the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard diverge from full IFRS Standards over time and become an independent Standard.</p> <p>The Board's approach at the first stage of the review is to continue to align the principles in the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with those in full IFRS Standards and to seek views on this approach.</p>	<p><b>General Remarks</b></p> <p>We are a European federation of professional accountancy organisations (PAOs) and the <a href="#">EU Accounting Directive</a> is the main source of accounting regulation. Since the directive has not adopted the IFRS for SMEs few of the jurisdictions of our PAOs use IFRS for SMEs directly. However, we have evidence that IFRS Standards do influence the shape and form of national accounting standards that are primarily for use by SMEs. We call this the 'trickle-down effect'. We are, therefore, keen to see further alignment of IFRS, and the IFRS for SMEs Standard in particular, with the EU accounting directive so as to ensure greater comparability of SME reporting practice across jurisdictions as well as increase the possibility of EU SMEs being able to use the IFRS for SMEs Standard.</p>

Part A—Strategic and general questions

Ref	Question	Response <i>(Please give clear reasoning to support your response.)</i>
	<i>This approach is discussed in paragraph 30 of part A of the Request for Information.</i>	
G1A	<p><b>In your view, should the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard be aligned with full IFRS Standards?</b></p> <p><b>Please explain why you are suggesting the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard should or should not be aligned with full IFRS Standards.</b></p>	<p>While the fundamental concepts that underpin both sets of standards should be the same, we recognise the need for their application to differ depending on user needs and the technical capacity of SMEs to prepare financial statements. We believe the users of SME financial statements will expect common principles and that the IFRS for SMEs will deliver information of comparable quality to full IFRS standards. In addition, alignment is necessary for there to be a degree of comparability with the financial statements of companies using full IFRS Standards as well as to provide a common basis for the education and training of accountants.</p> <p>We believe that the IFRS for SMEs should be as standalone as possible, not simply a derivative or simpler version of the full IFRS Standards. Only then can the IFRS for SMEs Standard truly focus on the information needs of SMEs and their stakeholders and the technical capacity of SMEs to prepare financial statements.</p> <p>The alignment principles set out in G2 should be applied in conjunction with a robust cost-benefit analysis which evaluates whether the changes are justified. The IFRS for SMEs Standard should be kept as simple as possible and alignment only undertaken when there is a clear benefit to the users of SME financial statements (e.g. owner-managers and other stakeholders) that exceeds the costs.</p>
G1B	<p><b>What extent of alignment of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with full IFRS Standards do you consider most useful, and why?</b></p> <p>(a) <b>alignment of principles;</b>            (b) <b>alignment of both principles and important definitions; or</b>            (c) <b>align of principles, important definitions and the precise wording of requirements?</b></p> <p><b>Please explain the reasoning that supports your choice of (a), (b) or (c).</b></p>	<p>We support option (b) alignment of both principles and important definitions.</p> <p>This alignment is necessary for consistent global application and comparability for users and stakeholders of IFRS for SMEs Standard financial statements as well as the avoidance of confusion and uncertainty. It will also enable IFRS for SMEs Standard to benefit from the significant resources and due process supporting the</p>

Part A—Strategic and general questions

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		<p>development of full IFRS Standards as well as from the institutional knowledge.</p> <p>Alignment of the precise wording of requirements is not considered necessary and indeed may be excessive for the purpose of SME reporting. The IFRS for SMEs Standard should be as simple as possible to ensure it is easy to understand and apply and that the benefits from its use exceed the costs.</p>
G2	<p><b>Alignment principles</b></p> <p>The Board decided that in assessing whether and how to consult on aligning the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with full IFRS Standards not currently included in the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard, the Board would apply three principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) relevance to SMEs;</li> <li>(b) simplicity; and</li> <li>(c) faithful representation.</li> </ul> <p><i>These principles are discussed in paragraphs 32–37 of part A of the Request for Information.</i></p>	
	<p><b>In your view, do these principles provide a framework to assist in determining whether and how the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard should be aligned with full IFRS Standards?</b></p> <p><b>Please explain the reasoning that supports your response.</b></p>	<p>We believe these principles provide a sound framework to assist in determining whether and how the IFRS for SMEs Standard should be aligned with full IFRS Standards.</p> <p>We urge the Board to clarify that relevance to SMEs should be taken to mean a pervasive issue that is relevant to the significant majority of users of SME financial statements, and likely to affect their decisions, rather than a specific concern that impacts only a minority of SMEs. We also encourage the Board to clarify that the principle of</p>

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		<p>simplicity be applied on the basis that of the consideration of the needs of users of SME financial statements and cost-benefit.</p> <p>The IFRS for SMEs Standard also needs to be a stable platform and frequent changes avoided. This is especially important given the fact that preparers of SME financial statements often cite keeping up with changes in regulation and standards as one of their foremost challenges. SMEs face resource constraints and need time to implement new or revised requirements.</p>
G3	<p><b>When to consider alignment</b></p> <p>If the alignment approach is maintained there needs to be an agreed approach as to how soon after an IFRS Standard, an amendment to an IFRS Standard, or an IFRIC Interpretations is issued the Board should consider that change for incorporation into the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Three possible dates for when to consider alignment are discussed in paragraphs 38–40 of part A of the Request for Information. Which, if any, of these possible dates do you prefer?</b></p> <p><b>Those IFRS Standards, amendments to IFRS Standards or IFRIC Interpretations:</b></p> <p>(a) <b>issued up to the publication date of the Request for Information;</b>            (b) <b>effective before the publication date of the Request for Information;</b>            (c) <b>effective and on which the post-implementation review was completed before the publication date of the Request for Information; or</b>            (d) <b>issued or effective on some other date (please specify).</b></p> <p><b>Please explain the reasoning that supports your views, for example, the benefits of the date selected.</b></p>	<p>We prefer option (c) for those IFRS Standards, amendments to IFRS Standards or IFRIC Interpretations that have had or are likely to have a significant financial statement impact or entail significant implementation costs for SMEs (for example, IFRS 9, 15 and 16). The Board and stakeholders need to get a full cost-benefit impact analysis on which to base their decision. For those IFRS Standards, amendments to IFRS Standards or IFRIC Interpretations that have not had or are not likely to have a significant impact, we prefer option (a) or (b).</p>

Part B—Questions on aligning specific sections of the *IFRS for SMEs* Standard

Ref	Question	Response <i>(Please give clear reasoning to support your response.)</i>
<p><i>Part B of the Request for Information contains questions on sections of the IFRS for SMEs Standard that are being considered for alignment with IFRS Standards, amendments to IFRS Standards or IFRIC Interpretations in the scope of the comprehensive review. Part B summarises each of the issues under review. More detailed explanations of the Board’s reasoning are set out in Appendix B of the Request for Information.</i></p>		
S1	<p><b>Aligning Section 2 Concepts and Pervasive Principles of the IFRS for SMEs Standard with the 2018 Conceptual Framework for Financial Reporting</b></p> <p>In developing the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard, the Board stated that the 1989 <i>Framework for the Preparation and Presentation of Financial Statements (1989 Framework)</i> provides the foundation for the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard as well as for full IFRS Standards. Section 2 is currently aligned with the <i>1989 Framework</i>.</p> <p>The Board is seeking views on aligning Section 2 with the <i>Conceptual Framework for Financial Reporting</i> issued in 2018 (<i>2018 Conceptual Framework</i>). This alignment would require amendments to other sections of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard. For example, Section 17 <i>Property, Plant and Equipment</i> paragraph 17.4 uses the definition of ‘asset’ from Section 2.</p> <p>Section 2 also includes the concept of ‘undue cost or effort’, a concept that is made available to an entity applying the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard in specified circumstances. The <i>2018 Conceptual Framework</i> has no direct equivalent concept; however, the Board is seeking views on retaining the concept of ‘undue cost or effort’ in Section 2 because it provides a mechanism the Board can use to balance the costs and benefits of the requirements of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard.</p>	
	<p><b>What are your views on:</b></p> <p>(a) <b>aligning Section 2 with the 2018 Conceptual Framework?</b></p> <p>(b) <b>making appropriate amendments to other sections of the IFRS for SMEs Standard?</b></p> <p>(c) <b>retaining the concept of ‘undue cost or effort’?</b></p>	<p>We support, in principle, aligning Section 2 with the 2018 Conceptual Framework (CF), and making appropriate amendments to other sections, using the alignment principles in G2 above. We note, however, that the CF may in certain areas be more complex than necessary for the IFRS for SMEs Standard and some aspects less relevant to SMEs. For example, the CF describes the reporting entity and refers to consolidated accounts. Full IFRS has been developed</p>

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		<p>from primarily the perspective of consolidated group accounts. Unconsolidated financial statements of separate entities are more typical and appropriate for SMEs.</p> <p>We strongly support retaining the concept of ‘undue cost or effort’. This is critical to the goal of simplicity and a major source of its appeal to SMEs that have limited access to technical resources.</p>
S2	<p><b>Aligning Section 9 Consolidated and Separate Financial Statements of the IFRS for SMEs Standard with IFRS 10 Consolidated Financial Statements</b></p> <p>Section 9 of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard establishes control as the basis for determining which entities are included in the consolidated financial statements. The definition of control in Section 9 is aligned with the definition of control from the superseded version of <i>IAS 27 Consolidated and Separate Financial Statements</i> and includes some of the guidance from the superseded <i>SIC-12 Consolidation—Special Purpose Entities</i>.</p> <p>The Board is seeking views on aligning the definition of control in Section 9 with the definition in <i>IFRS 10 Consolidated Financial Statements</i> to provide a clearer principle and facilitate greater consistency among the financial statements of entities applying the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard. <i>IFRS 10</i> sets out a single principle of control that applies to all investees.</p> <p>The Board is also seeking views on retaining and updating the simplification in paragraph 9.5 of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard, which states that control is presumed to exist when the parent entity owns, directly or indirectly through subsidiaries, more than half the voting power of the entity.</p>	
S2A	<p><b>What are your views on:</b></p> <p>(a) <b>aligning the definition of control in Section 9 with IFRS 10; and</b></p> <p>(b) <b>retaining and updating paragraph 9.5 of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard?</b></p>	<p>We support aligning the definition of control in Section 9 with <i>IFRS 10</i> as well as retaining and updating the simplification in paragraph 9.5 of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard.</p>

Part B—Questions on aligning specific sections of the *IFRS for SMEs* Standard

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	<i>Further information on this question is provided in paragraphs B15–B24 of Appendix B of the Request for Information.</i>	
S2B	<p><b>Investment entities</b></p> <p>IFRS 10 requires an investment entity to measure an investment in a subsidiary at fair value through profit or loss and not consolidate such entity. The <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard has no equivalent requirement.</p> <p>Based on the definition of investment entity in IFRS 10 the Board considered that few entities eligible to apply the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard will also be investment entities. Consequently, the Board is seeking views on not introducing the requirement that an investment entity measure an investment in a subsidiary at fair value through profit or loss rather than consolidate such entities.</p>	
	<p><b>What are your views on not introducing the requirement that investment entities measure investments in subsidiaries at fair value through profit and loss?</b></p> <p><i>Further information on this question is provided in paragraphs B25–B26 of Appendix B of the Request for Information.</i></p>	<p>We support not introducing the requirement that investment entities measure investments in subsidiaries at fair value through profit and loss. Few entities eligible to apply the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard will be investment entities and where they are their investments are often not traded and hence their fair value difficult to determine.</p>
S3	<p><b>Aligning Section 11 <i>Basic Financial Instruments</i> and Section 12 <i>Other Financial Instrument Issues</i> of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with IFRS 9 <i>Financial Instruments</i></b></p> <p>In July 2014 the Board issued IFRS 9 <i>Financial Instruments</i>, completing its project to replace IAS 39 <i>Financial Instruments: Recognition and Measurement</i> with a principle-based Standard.</p> <p><b>Classification and measurement of financial assets</b></p> <p>IFRS 9 applies a principle-based approach to the classification of financial assets. Applying IFRS 9, when an entity initially recognises a financial asset, its classification is based on:</p>	



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	<p>(a) the contractual cash flow characteristics of the financial asset; and</p> <p>(b) the business model for managing the financial asset.</p> <p>Section 11 of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard provides a list of examples of basic financial instruments as well as the conditions a debt instrument must satisfy to qualify (that is to be classified) as a basic financial instrument and therefore be measured at amortised cost.</p> <p>The Board’s discussions on aligning the classification of financial assets included considering whether supplementing the list of examples in Section 11 with a principle based on their contractual cash flow characteristics would be helpful to entities in the circumstance in which a financial asset does not match the characteristics described in any of the examples.</p>	
S3A	<p><b>What are your views on supplementing the list of examples in Section 11 with a principle for classifying financial assets based on their contractual cash flow characteristics?</b></p> <p><i>Further information on this question is provided in paragraphs B27–B34 of Appendix B of the Request for Information.</i></p>	<p>We support supplementing the list of examples in Section 11 with a principle for classifying financial assets based on their contractual cash flow characteristics.</p>
S3B	<p><b>Impairment of financial assets</b></p> <p>The current requirements for recognising and measuring impairment of financial assets measured at cost or amortised cost in the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard are based on IAS 39. The impairment model in IAS 39 (an incurred loss model) may delay an entity’s recognition of credit losses because an impairment test is not required until there is objective evidence of impairment.</p> <p>The impairment requirements in IFRS 9 addressed the problem of delayed recognition by requiring an entity to recognise expected credit losses. IFRS 9 includes a simplified approach to provide for lifetime expected credit losses for trade receivables, contract assets</p>	

Part B—Questions on aligning specific sections of the *IFRS for SMEs* Standard

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	<p>and lease receivables. The Board is seeking views on introducing the simplified approach into the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard.</p> <p><b>What is your view on aligning the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with the simplified approach to the impairment of financial assets in IFRS 9?</b></p> <p><i>Further information on this question is provided in paragraphs B35–B37 of Appendix B of the Request for Information.</i></p>	<p>We believe the Board should wait for the completion of the post-implementation review of IFRS 9 before deciding on whether to align with the simplified approach to the impairment of financial assets in IFRS 9. This will ensure the Board is able to better understand the practical issues SMEs face with the incurred credit loss model and make a more informed decision based on cost-benefit analysis. IFRS 9 is a particularly complex standard and hence much care needs to be taken when deciding how best to incorporate it into the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard.</p>
S3C	<p><b>Hedge accounting</b></p> <p>IFRS 9 includes new hedge accounting requirements that represent a major overhaul of hedge accounting and introduce significant improvements.</p> <p>Section 12 sets out requirements for the types of hedging activities an entity applying the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard is likely to use to manage risks.</p> <p>The Board decided to seek views on the need for Section 12 to provide hedge accounting requirements and to seek views on retaining the current requirements rather than aligning with IFRS 9.</p> <p>(a) <b>Do you consider Section 12 needs to include requirements on hedge accounting?</b></p> <p>(b) <b>If your answer is yes, what are your views on retaining the current requirements to address the needs of entities applying the Standard, rather than aligning Section 12 with IFRS 9?</b></p> <p>(c) <b>If your answer is no, please explain the reasons for your answer.</b></p>	<p>We consider that Section 12 does need to include requirements on hedge accounting.</p> <p>Given the complexity of IFRS 9 and the fact SMEs rarely hold complex derivative financial instruments we support retaining the current requirements rather than align Section 12 with IFRS 9.</p>

Part B—Questions on aligning specific sections of the *IFRS for SMEs* Standard

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b> <i>(Please give clear reasoning to support your response.)</i>
S3D	<p><b>Using recognition and measurement requirements in IFRS Standards for financial instruments</b></p> <p>The <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard currently permits entities to opt to apply either:</p> <p>(a) the requirements of both Sections 11 and 12 of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard in full; or</p> <p>(b) the recognition and measurement requirements of IAS 39 and the disclosure requirements of Sections 11 and 12.</p> <p>In order to decide whether to amend the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard and permit an entity to opt to apply the recognition and measurement requirements of IFRS 9 and the disclosure requirements of Sections 11 and 12, the Board would like to obtain evidence on how frequently the option to apply IAS 39 is used.</p>	
	<p>(a) <b>Are you aware of entities that opt to apply the recognition and measurement requirements of IAS 39 with the disclosure requirements of Sections 11 and 12?</b></p> <p>(b) <b>What are your views on changing the reference to IAS 39 to permit an entity to opt to apply the recognition and measurement requirements of IFRS 9 and the disclosure requirements of Sections 11 and 12?</b></p>	<p>We are not aware of SMEs, except those that are subsidiaries and as such seek to align with the group accounting policy that opt to apply the recognition and measurement requirements of IAS 39 with the disclosure requirements of Sections 11 and 12.</p> <p>We support changing the reference from IAS 39 to permit an entity to opt to apply the recognition and measurement requirements of IFRS 9 and the disclosure requirements of Sections 11 and 12.</p>
S3E	<p><b>Treatment of Q&amp;As on the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard</b></p> <p>Since the 2015 <i>Amendments to the IFRS for SMEs Standard</i> were issued by the Board, the SMEIG has published one Q&amp;A on <i>Accounting for financial guarantee contracts in individual or separate financial statements of the issuer</i> (Q&amp;A 2017/12.1).</p> <p>This comprehensive review provides an opportunity for the Q&amp;A 2017/12.1 to be incorporated into the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard and for the Q&amp;A to be withdrawn. The Board noted the SMEIG’s recommendation that the Board revisit the accounting treatment for issued financial guarantee contracts during the second comprehensive review with a</p>	

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	<p>view to providing measurement relief. The SMEIG made this recommendation based on feedback that measuring issued financial guarantee contracts at fair value at each reporting date is more complex than the accounting requirements in IFRS 9. The Board is seeking views on aligning the accounting requirements in Section 12 for issued financial guarantee contracts with IFRS 9.</p>	
	<p><b>What are your views on:</b></p> <p>(a) <b>adding the definition of a financial guarantee contract from IFRS 9 to the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard; and</b></p> <p>(b) <b>aligning the requirements in the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard for issued financial guarantee contracts with IFRS 9?</b></p> <p><i>Further information on this question is provided in paragraphs B38–B45 of Appendix B of the Request for Information.</i></p>	<p>We support adding the definition of a financial guarantee contract from IFRS 9 to IFRS for SMEs Standard since, as we mention above, important definitions should be aligned. While we also support aligning the requirements in the IFRS for SMEs Standard for issued financial guarantee contracts with IFRS 9 we suggest the Board consider the undue cost or effort exemption when measuring fair value.</p>
S4	<p><b>Aligning Section 15 <i>Investments in Joint Ventures</i> of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with IFRS 11 <i>Joint Arrangements</i></b></p> <p>Section 15 of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard is based on IAS 31 <i>Interests in Joint Ventures</i>, requiring entities that are jointly controlled to be classified as either jointly controlled operations, jointly controlled assets or jointly controlled entities. A significant difference between Section 15 and IAS 31 is that Section 15 does not permit proportionate consolidation for jointly controlled entities.</p> <p>In May 2011 the Board issued IFRS 11 <i>Joint Arrangements</i>, which replaced IAS 31. Applying IFRS 11, an entity classifies joint arrangements on the basis of the parties’ rights and obligations under the arrangement. IFRS 11 changed the definitions and requirements of IAS 31 and classifies arrangements as either joint operations or joint ventures.</p> <p>The Board is seeking views on aligning the definition of joint control in Section 15 with the definition in IFRS 11 but retaining the three categories of joint arrangements—jointly controlled operations, jointly controlled assets and jointly controlled entities—in Section 15. Consequently, the accounting requirements of Section 15 would be retained.</p>	

Part B—Questions on aligning specific sections of the *IFRS for SMEs* Standard

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	<p>Retaining these accounting requirements would include retaining the accounting policy election in Section 15 such that a venturer can choose to apply the cost model, the equity method or the fair value model to account for jointly controlled entities.</p> <p><b>What are your views on:</b></p> <p>(a) <b>aligning the definition of joint control in Section 15 with IFRS 11?</b></p> <p>(b) <b>retaining the categories of joint arrangements: jointly controlled operations, jointly controlled assets and jointly controlled entities?</b></p> <p>(c) <b>retaining the accounting requirements of Section 15, including the accounting policy election for jointly controlled entities in Section 15?</b></p> <p><i>Further information on this question is provided in paragraphs B50–B54 of Appendix B of the Request for Information.</i></p>	<p>We support aligning the definition of joint control in Section 15 with IFRS 11 since, as we mention above, important definitions should be aligned</p> <p>We support retaining the categories of joint arrangements: jointly controlled operation, jointly controlled assets and jointly controlled entities.</p> <p>We support retaining the accounting requirements of Section 15, including the accounting policy election for jointly controlled entities in Section 15.</p>
S5	<p><b>Aligning Section 19 <i>Business Combinations and Goodwill of the IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with IFRS 3 (2008) <i>Business Combinations</i></b></p> <p>Section 19 of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard is based on IFRS 3 (2004) <i>Business Combinations</i>, which applies the purchase method of accounting for business combinations.</p> <p>The Board is seeking views on aligning Section 19 with parts of IFRS 3 (2008) to:</p> <p>(a) introduce requirements for step acquisitions.</p> <p>(b) recognise acquisition-related costs as an expense at the time of the acquisition.</p> <p>(c) require contingent consideration to be recognised at fair value and subsequently accounted for as a financial instrument with changes in fair value recognised in profit or loss. The Board is also seeking views on permitting an entity to use the undue cost or effort exemption in paragraph 2.14A of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> and provide the related disclosures if measuring contingent consideration at fair value would involve undue cost or effort.</p>	

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S5A	<p>(a) <b>Do you consider Section 19 needs to include requirements for the accounting for step acquisitions?</b></p> <p>(b) <b>If your answer is yes, should the requirements be aligned with IFRS 3 (2008).</b></p> <p><i>Further information on this question is provided in paragraphs B55–B66 of Appendix B of the Request for Information.</i></p>	<p>We do not consider that Section 19 needs to include requirements for the accounting for step acquisitions as step acquisitions are not commonplace for SMEs. In those rare cases of step acquisitions SMEs can use the guidance in Section 10.6 of IFRS for SMEs Standard permitting reference and guidance under full IFRS.</p>
S5B	<p><b>What are your views on aligning Section 19 with IFRS 3 (2008) for acquisition costs and contingent consideration, including permitting an entity to use the undue cost or effort exemption and provide the related disclosures if measuring contingent consideration at fair value would involve undue cost or effort?</b></p> <p><i>Further information on this question is provided in paragraphs B55–B66 of Appendix B of the Request for Information.</i></p>	<p>We support aligning Section 19 with IFRS 3 (2008) for acquisition costs and contingent consideration, including permitting an entity to use the undue cost or effort exemption and provide the related disclosures if measuring contingent consideration at fair value would involve undue cost or effort.</p>
S5C	<p><b>Definition of a business</b></p> <p>In October 2018 the Board issued an amendment to IFRS 3, effective for acquisitions on or after 1 January 2020, to improve consistency of application by clarifying the definition of a business. The amended definition emphasises that the output of a business is the goods and services it provides to customers; the previous definition defined outputs as having the ability to provide returns in the form of dividends, lower costs and other economic benefits to investors and others.</p>	
	<p><b>What are your views on aligning the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with the amended definition of a business issued in October 2018?</b></p>	<p>We support aligning the IFRS for SMEs Standard with the amended definition of a business issued in October 2018 since, as we mention above, important definitions should be aligned. In any case we suspect this will not impact many SMEs.</p>
	<p><b>Aligning Section 20 <i>Leases</i> of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with IFRS 16 <i>Leases</i></b></p>	

Part B—Questions on aligning specific sections of the *IFRS for SMEs* Standard

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S6	<p>In January 2016 the Board issued IFRS 16 <i>Leases</i>. IFRS 16 replaced IAS 17 <i>Leases</i> and became effective on 1 January 2019.</p> <p>Section 20 of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> is based largely on IAS 17.</p> <p>The Board noted that leases provide an important source of funding to SMEs and therefore decided to seek views on aligning Section 20 with IFRS 16, with simplifications. The requirements in IFRS 16 can be simplified so they are easier and less costly for SMEs to apply including by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) simplifying recognition and measurement requirements in respect of matters such as variable lease payments, determining the discount rate and the term of the lease;</li> <li>(b) retaining the disclosure requirements of Section 20; and</li> <li>(c) simplifying the language in the Standard.</li> </ul> <p><b>What are your views on aligning Section 20 with IFRS 16, making the simplifications listed in paragraphs (a)–(c)?</b></p> <p><i>Further information on this question is provided in paragraphs B67–B72 of Appendix B of the Request for Information.</i></p>	
S7	<p><b>Aligning Section 23 Revenue of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with IFRS 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers</b></p> <p>Section 23 of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard is based on IAS 18 <i>Revenue</i>. IAS 18 provided relatively limited principles for the recognition of revenue from the supply of goods or services.</p> <p>IFRS 15, effective from 1 January 2018, replaced IAS 18 and set out a more structured framework based on performance obligations and the timing of their satisfaction. The main distinction it makes is between performance over time and performance at a point in time,</p>	<p>While we can support making the proposed amendments right now, we wonder whether it is better that the Board completes the post-implementation review of IFRS 16 before it considers aligning Section 20 with IFRS 16. In this way the Board will have the evidence necessary to make a more informed decision. We believe IFRS 16 is posing a significant challenge to publicly accountable entities. Lease accounting has a big impact on many SMEs and a simplified approach is essential.</p>

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<b>Ref</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b> <i>(Please give clear reasoning to support your response.)</i>
	<p>rather than between goods and services.</p> <p>The Board considered that although there are substantive conceptual differences between IAS 18 and IFRS 15, the effect in practice for most entities in the scope of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard would be minimal in terms of the timing and measurement of revenue. However, some feedback indicates that aligning principles and language would be helpful for preparers who seek consistency with IFRS Standards.</p> <p>The Board is seeking views on the merits of three possible approaches to aligning Section 23 with IFRS 15:</p> <p>(a) Alternative 1—modifying Section 23 to remove the clear differences in outcome from applying Section 23 or IFRS 15, without wholly reworking Section 23;</p> <p>(b) Alternative 2—fully rewriting Section 23 to reflect the principles and language used in IFRS 15; and</p> <p>(c) Alternative 3—deciding not to make amendments to Section 23 as part of this comprehensive review.</p>	
S7A	<p><b>Which of the three alternatives do you prefer for amending Section 23 to align with IFRS 15? Why have you chosen this alternative?</b></p> <p><i>Further information on this question is provided in paragraphs B73–B74 of Appendix B of the Request for Information.</i></p>	<p>We prefer alternative 2 or 3. While we can support alternative 2, we wonder whether it is better that the Board completes the post-implementation review of IFRS 15 before it considers aligning Section 23 with IFRS 15. In this way the Board will have the evidence necessary to make a more informed decision.</p>
S7B	<p>The Board also discussed whether to provide transition relief, if Alternative 1 or Alternative 2 is chosen, by permitting an entity to continue its current revenue recognition policy for any contracts already in progress at the transition date or scheduled to be completed within a set time after the transition date.</p> <p><b>If Alternative 1 or Alternative 2 is the basis for an Exposure Draft, should transitional relief be provided:</b></p>	<p>We support option (a) if Alternative 1 or 2 is the basis for an Exposure Draft - transitional relief should be provided through the method proposed by permitting an entity to continue its current</p>



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Ref	Question	Response <i>(Please give clear reasoning to support your response.)</i>
	<p>(a) <b>by permitting an entity to continue its current revenue recognition policy for any contracts already in progress at the transition date or scheduled to be completed within a set time after the transition date?</b></p> <p>(b) <b>by some other method?</b></p> <p>(c) <b>not at all?</b></p> <p><b>Please explain why you have chosen (a), (b) or (c) above.</b></p>	<p>revenue recognition policy for any contracts already in progress at the transition date or scheduled to be completed within a set time after the transition date.</p>
S8	<p><b>Aligning Section 28 <i>Employee Benefits</i> of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with IAS 19 (2011) <i>Employee Benefits</i></b></p> <p>In 2011 the Board issued amendments to IAS 19 <i>Employee Benefits</i> that changed the requirements for presenting actuarial gains and losses relating to defined benefit plans.</p> <p>Paragraph 28.24 of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard permits an entity to select a policy for the presentation of actuarial gains and losses. The Board’s view is this simplification is appropriate for entities applying the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard.</p> <p>The 2011 amendments to IAS 19 also clarified that termination benefits should be recognised at the earlier of:</p> <p>(a) when the entity can no longer withdraw those benefits; and</p> <p>(b) when any related restructuring costs are recognised.</p> <p>The Board is seeking views on aligning the recognition requirements for termination benefits in Section 28 with those in IAS 19.</p>	
	<p><b>What are your views on aligning Section 28 with the 2011 amendments to IAS 19 only in respect of the recognition requirements for termination benefits?</b></p> <p><i>Further information on this question is provided in paragraphs B75–B78 of Appendix B of the Request for Information.</i></p>	<p>We support aligning Section 28 with the 2011 amendments to IAS 39 only in respect of recognition requirements only for termination benefits.</p>
S9	<p><b>Aligning the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with IFRS 13 <i>Fair Value Measurement</i></b></p>	

Part B—Questions on aligning specific sections of the *IFRS for SMEs* Standard

Ref	Question	Response <i>(Please give clear reasoning to support your response.)</i>
	<p>The <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard requires the use of fair value and thereby includes a definition of fair value. Paragraphs 11.27–11.32 of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard set out requirements for estimating fair value and are also referred to in other sections of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard, for example, Sections 14 and 15 (regarding the fair value model for associates and jointly controlled entities), Section 16 (regarding investment property) and Section 28 (regarding the fair value of pension plan assets). The definition of fair value and the requirements to estimate fair value are not aligned with IFRS 13.</p> <p>In the first comprehensive review of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard, the Board consulted on aligning the definition of fair value, but decided to wait, because IFRS 13 had only recently become effective.</p> <p>The Board completed its post-implementation review of IFRS 13 in December 2018 and concluded that the Standard is working as intended.</p> <p>The Board is seeking views on aligning the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with IFRS 13 and including the illustrative examples in the Standard. This change would not add new requirements for the use of fair value measurement.</p>	
	<p><b>What are your views on:</b></p> <p>(a) <b>aligning the definition of fair value in the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with IFRS 13?</b></p> <p>(b) <b>aligning the guidance on fair value measurement in the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with IFRS 13 so the fair value hierarchy incorporates the principles of the fair value hierarchy set out in IFRS 13?</b></p> <p>(c) <b>including examples that illustrate how to apply the hierarchy?</b></p> <p>(d) <b>moving the guidance and related disclosure requirements to Section 2?</b></p> <p><i>Further information on this question is provided in paragraphs B79–B83 of Appendix B of the Request for Information.</i></p>	<p>We support aligning the definition of fair value in the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with IFRS 13 since, as we mention above, important definitions should be aligned.</p> <p>We support aligning the guidance on fair value measurement in the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with IFRS 13 so that the fair value hierarchy incorporates the principles of the fair value hierarchy set out in IFRS 13. The Board has completed its post-implementation review of IFRS 13 and concluded that the Standard is working as intended. We also recognize that this will improve the information provided and enhance comparability with other entities.</p> <p>We welcome examples that illustrate how to apply the hierarchy as this will help preparers apply the standard.</p>

Part B—Questions on aligning specific sections of the *IFRS for SMEs* Standard

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b> <i>(Please give clear reasoning to support your response.)</i>
		We support moving the guidance and related disclosure requirements to Section 2 as this is a more logical place for it.
S10	<p><b>Aligning multiple sections of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard for amendments to IFRS Standards and IFRIC Interpretations</b></p> <p>The Board is seeking views on whether and how to align the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with the amendments to IFRS Standards and IFRIC Interpretations set out in Appendix A of the Request for Information.</p> <p>In aligning the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with amendments to IFRS Standards and IFRIC Interpretations the Board would introduce simplifications and language appropriate to the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard.</p> <p>Appendix A groups the amendments to IFRS Standards and IFRIC Interpretations using the following tables:</p> <p>Table A1—Amendments to IFRS Standards—Board is seeking views on aligning the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard;</p> <p>Table A2—Amendments to IFRS Standards—Board is seeking views on leaving the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard unchanged;</p> <p>Table A3—Amendments to IFRS Standards and IFRIC Interpretations and—Board is requesting further information on whether to align the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard;</p> <p>Table A4—Amendments to IFRS Standards—Board will consider along with the full IFRS Standards they amend; and</p> <p>Table A5—Amendments to IFRS Standards with which the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard is already aligned.</p>	

Part B—Questions on aligning specific sections of the *IFRS for SMEs* Standard

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b> <i>(Please give clear reasoning to support your response.)</i>
	<p><b>What are your views on:</b></p> <p>(a) <b>aligning the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with the amendments to IFRS Standards outlined in Table A1 of Appendix A?</b></p> <p>(b) <b>leaving the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard unchanged by the amendments to IFRS Standards listed in Table A2 of Appendix A?</b></p> <p>(c) <b>whether to align the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with the amendments to IFRS Standards and IFRIC Interpretations listed in Table A3 of Appendix A?</b></p> <p><b>Please explain your views and provide any relevant information in support of your views.</b></p>	<p>We support aligning the IFRS for SMEs Standard with the amendments to IFRS Standards outlined in Table A1 of Appendix A. The changes are not difficult to implement.</p> <p>We support leaving the IFRS for SMEs Standard unchanged by the amendments to IFRS Standards listed in Table A2 of Appendix A. We concur with the Board’s rationale: alignment would not add much value to the financial statements of SMEs.</p> <p>We believe it is not necessary on cost-benefit grounds to align the IFRS for SMEs Standard with the amendments to IFRS Standards and IFRIC Interpretations listed in Table A3 of Appendix A. These issues are highly specific and usually not material for SMEs, except the recognition of deferred tax assets (DTA). The alignment of DTA should be included in the Section 29</p>

Part C—Questions on new topics and other matters related to the *IFRS for SMEs* Standard

Ref	Question	Response <i>(Please give clear reasoning to support your response)</i>
<p><i>Part C of the Request for Information seeks views on topics that are not addressed in the IFRS for SMEs Standard and on whether, in relation to these topics, the Standard should be aligned with full IFRS Standards. It also asks about specific topics on which the Board has received feedback.</i></p>		
N1	<p><b>Aligning the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with IFRS 14 <i>Regulatory Deferral Accounts</i></b></p> <p>The Board issued IFRS 14 <i>Regulatory Deferral Accounts</i> in January 2014. IFRS 14 addresses regulatory deferral account balances that arise when an entity provides goods or services to customers at a price or rate that is subject to rate regulation. The <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard has no section that corresponds to IFRS 14. Entities applying the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard cannot recognise regulatory deferral account balances if these balances would not be permitted or required to be recognised by other sections of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard.</p> <p>Entities subject to rate regulation may be in the scope of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard and hence the topic may be relevant. The Board, however, has an active project on Rate-regulated Activities which could lead to the replacement of IFRS 14. Consequently, the Board’s view is it should not, as part of this comprehensive review, amend the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard to align with IFRS 14.</p>	
	<p><b>What are your views on not aligning the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with IFRS 14, that is, not including requirements for regulatory deferral account balances within the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard?</b></p>	<p>We believe it is not necessary to align the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard with IFRS 14. Regulatory deferral accounts are rare in SMEs.</p>
N2	<p><b>Cryptocurrency</b></p> <p>The Board would like to gather information about the prevalence of holdings of cryptocurrency and issues of cryptoassets among entities eligible to apply the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard. Obtaining this information will help the Board decide whether the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard should address the accounting for holdings of cryptocurrency and issues of cryptoassets.</p>	

Part C—Questions on new topics and other matters related to the *IFRS for SMEs* Standard

Ref	Question	Response <i>(Please give clear reasoning to support your response)</i>
	<p><b>Are holdings of cryptocurrency and issues of cryptoassets prevalent (that is, are there material holdings among entities eligible to apply the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard) in your jurisdiction?</b></p> <p><i>Further information on this question is provided in paragraphs B85–B86 of Appendix B of the Request for Information.</i></p>	<p>We do not believe it is necessary for the IFRS for SMEs Standard to address holdings of cryptocurrency. These assets are not prevalent in our jurisdictions.</p>
N3	<p><b>Defined benefit plans—simplifications allowed in measuring the defined benefit obligation</b></p> <p>Section 28 <i>Employee Benefits</i> of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard allows an entity to apply simplifications in measuring a defined benefit obligation if the entity is unable, without undue cost or effort, to use the projected unit credit method. Paragraph 28.19 of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard allows an entity to ignore estimated future salary progression, the effect of future service and death in service.</p> <p>The Board has received feedback that some preparers are uncertain about how to apply the simplifications.</p> <p>To decide whether to clarify how to apply the simplifications in paragraph 28.19, the Board would like to know how frequently the simplifications are applied and whether constituents experience difficulties in applying them.</p>	
	<p><b>Are you aware of entities applying the simplifications allowed by paragraph 28.19 of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard? If so, are you aware of difficulties arising in applying the simplifications? Please include a brief description of the difficulty encountered in applying the simplification.</b></p>	<p>We are not aware of entities applying the simplifications allowed by paragraph 28.19 of IFRS for SMEs Standard.</p>

Part C—Questions on new topics and other matters related to the *IFRS for SMEs* Standard

Ref	Question	Response <i>(Please give clear reasoning to support your response)</i>
N4	<p><b>Other topics not addressed by the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard</b></p> <p>The Board intended that the 35 sections in the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard would cover the kinds of transactions, events and conditions typically encountered by most SMEs. The Board also provided guidance on how an entity’s management should exercise judgement in developing an accounting policy in a case in which the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard does not specifically address a topic (see paragraphs 10.4–10.6 of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard).</p> <p><i>Note: this question is asking about topics that the IFRS for SMEs Standard does not address. It is not asking for areas of the IFRS for SMEs Standard for which additional guidance is required. If you think more guidance should be added for a topic already covered by the IFRS for SMEs Standard, please provide your comments in response to question N5.</i></p>	
	<p><b>Are there any topics the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard does not address that you think should be the subject of specific requirements (for example, topics not addressed by the Standard for which the general guidance in paragraphs 10.4–10.6 of the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard is insufficient)?</b></p>	<p>We do not think there are any topics the IFRS for SMEs Standard does not address that should be the subject of specific requirements.</p>
N5	<p>Please describe any additional issues you would like to bring to the Board’s attention relating to the <i>IFRS for SMEs</i> Standard.</p>	<p><b>Incentivising Adoption in the UE</b></p> <p>As we note above the <a href="#">EU Accounting Directive</a> is the main source of accounting regulation. This directive has not adopted directly the IFRS for SMEs so few of the jurisdictions of our PAOs use IFRS for SMEs. However, we have evidence that IFRS Standards do influence the shape and form of national accounting standards that are primarily for use by SMEs. We call this the ‘trickle-down effect’. We are, therefore, keen to see further alignment of IFRS, and the IFRS for SMEs Standard in particular, with the EU accounting directive so as to ensure greater comparability of SME reporting practice across jurisdictions as well as increase the possibility of EU SMEs being able to use the IFRS for SMEs Standard.</p>

Part C—Questions on new topics and other matters related to the *IFRS for SMEs* Standard

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b> <i>(Please give clear reasoning to support your response)</i>
		<p><b>Pressure for Complexity from Non-Adopting Countries</b></p> <p>We note that the IFRS for SMEs is not used directly in many of the world’s biggest economies, including many in Europe, that arguably have the ‘loudest voices’ in the process of setting IFRS. These jurisdictions might have incentives to steer the IFRS for SMEs Standard more closely to full IFRS since their listed companies would benefit from their qualifying subsidiaries using an SME Standard that is essentially a reduced disclosure framework (that is, the IFRS for SMEs disclosures and full IFRS recognition and measurement). The Board needs to resist pressures from such jurisdictions.</p>