

HKAS 8  
Revised ~~October 2008~~ January 2010

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Effective for annual periods  
beginning on or after 1 January 2005

*Hong Kong Accounting Standard 8*

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# **Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors**



Hong Kong Institute of  
**Certified Public Accountants**  
香港會計師公會

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**CONTENTS***paragraphs*

<b><u>INTRODUCTION</u></b>	<b><u>IN1-IN18</u></b>
<b>HONG KONG ACCOUNTING STANDARD 8 ACCOUNTING POLICIES, CHANGES IN ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES AND ERRORS</b>	
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>1-2</b>
<b>SCOPE</b>	<b>3-4</b>
<b>DEFINITIONS</b>	<b>5-6</b>
<b>ACCOUNTING POLICIES</b>	<b>7-31</b>
<b>Selection and application of accounting policies</b>	<b>7-12</b>
<b>Consistency of accounting policies</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Changes in accounting policies</b>	<b>14-31</b>
Applying changes in accounting policies	19-27
<i>Retrospective application</i>	22
<i>Limitations on retrospective application</i>	23-27
Disclosure	28-31
<b>CHANGES IN ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES</b>	<b>32-40</b>
<b>Disclosure</b>	<b>39-40</b>
<b>ERRORS</b>	<b>41-49</b>
<b>Limitations on retrospective restatement</b>	<b>43-48</b>
<b>Disclosure of prior period errors</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>IMPRACTICABILITY IN RESPECT OF RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION AND RETROSPECTIVE RESTATEMENT</b>	<b>50-53</b>
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	<b>54-54aA</b>
<b>WITHDRAWAL OF OTHER PRONOUNCEMENTS</b>	<b>55-56</b>

**APPENDICES~~X~~:**

**A Comparison with International Accounting Standards**

**B Amendments to other pronouncements**

**C Amendments resulting from other HKFRSs**

**BASIS FOR CONCLUSIONS**

**IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE**

**TABLE OF CONCORDANCE**

Hong Kong Accounting Standard 8 *Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors* (HKAS 8) is set out in paragraphs 1-56 and ~~the~~ Appendix C. All the paragraphs have equal authority. HKAS 8 should be read in the context of its objective and the Basis for Conclusions, the *Preface to Hong Kong Financial Reporting Standards* and the *Framework for the Preparation and Presentation of Financial Statements*.

## **Introduction**

IN1 Hong Kong Accounting Standard 8 *Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors* (HKAS 8) should be applied for annual periods beginning on or after 1 January 2005. Earlier application is encouraged.

## **Reasons for issuing HKAS 8**

IN2 The objectives of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants (HKICPA) issuing HKAS 8 were to reduce or eliminate alternatives, redundancies and conflicts within the Standards, to deal with some convergence issues and to make other improvements.

IN3 For HKAS 8, the HKICPA's main objectives were:

- (a) to remove the allowed alternative to retrospective application of voluntary changes in accounting policies and retrospective restatement to correct prior period errors;
- (b) to eliminate the concept of a fundamental error;
- (c) to articulate the hierarchy of guidance to which management refers, whose applicability it considers when selecting accounting policies in the absence of Standards and Interpretations that specifically apply; and
- (d) to define material omissions or misstatements, and describe how to apply the concept of materiality when applying accounting policies and correcting errors.
- (e) [Not used]

IN4 [Not used]

## **The main features**

IN5 The main features of HKAS 8 are described below.

### **Selection of accounting policies**

IN6 The requirements for the selection and application of accounting policies in SSAP 1 *Presentation of Financial Statements* have been transferred to the Standard. The Standard updates the previous hierarchy of guidance to which management refers and whose applicability it considers when selecting accounting policies in the absence of Hong Kong Financial Reporting Standards (HKFRSs) that specifically apply.

## **Materiality**

- IN7 The Standard defines material omissions or misstatements. It stipulates that:
- (a) the accounting policies in HKFRSs need not be applied when the effect of applying them is immaterial. This complements the statement in HKAS 1 that disclosures required by HKFRSs need not be made if the information is immaterial.
  - (b) financial statements do not comply with HKFRSs if they contain material errors.
  - (c) material prior period errors are to be corrected retrospectively in the first set of financial statements authorised for issue after their discovery.

## **Voluntary changes in accounting policies and corrections of prior period errors**

- IN8 The Standard requires retrospective application of voluntary changes in accounting policies and retrospective restatement to correct prior period errors. It removes the allowed alternative in SSAP 2:
- (a) to include in profit or loss for the current period the adjustment resulting from changing an accounting policy or the amount of a correction of a prior period error; and
  - (b) to present unchanged comparative information from financial statements of prior periods.
- IN9 As a result of the removal of the allowed alternative, comparative information for prior periods is presented as if new accounting policies had always been applied and prior period errors had never occurred.

## **Impracticability**

- IN10 The Standard retains the ‘impracticability’ criterion for exemption from changing comparative information when changes in accounting policies are applied retrospectively and prior period errors are corrected. The Standard now includes a definition of ‘impracticable’ and guidance on its interpretation.
- IN11 The Standard also states that when it is impracticable to determine the cumulative effect, at the beginning of the current period, of:
- (a) applying a new accounting policy to all prior periods, or
  - (b) an error on all prior periods,
- the entity changes the comparative information as if the new accounting policy had been applied, or the error had been corrected, prospectively from the earliest date practicable.

## **Fundamental errors**

IN12 The Standard eliminates the concept of a fundamental error and thus the distinction between fundamental errors and other material errors. The Standard defines prior period errors.

## **Disclosures**

IN13 The Standard now requires, rather than encourages, disclosure of an impending change in accounting policy when an entity has yet to implement a new HKFRS that has been issued but not yet come into effect. In addition, it requires disclosure of known or reasonably estimable information relevant to assessing the possible impact that application of the new HKFRS will have on the entity's financial statements in the period of initial application.

IN14 The Standard requires more detailed disclosure of the amounts of adjustments resulting from changing accounting policies or correcting prior period errors. It requires those disclosures to be made for each financial statement line item affected and, if HKAS 33 *Earnings per Share* applies to the entity, for basic and diluted earnings per share.

## **Others**

IN15 The presentation requirements for profit or loss for the period have been transferred to HKAS 1.

IN16 The Standard requires that:

- (a) an entity selects and applies its accounting policies consistently for similar transactions, other events and conditions, unless a HKFRS specifically requires or permits categorisation of items for which different policies may be appropriate; and
- (b) if a HKFRS requires or permits such categorisation, an appropriate accounting policy is selected and applied consistently to each category.

IN17 The Standard includes a definition of a change in accounting estimate.

IN18 The Standard includes exceptions from including the effects of changes in accounting estimates prospectively in profit or loss. It states that to the extent that a change in an accounting estimate gives rise to changes in assets or liabilities, or relates to an item of equity, it is recognised by adjusting the carrying amount of the related asset, liability or equity item in the period of the change.

# Hong Kong Accounting Standard 8

## *Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors*

### Objective

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- 1 The objective of this Standard is to prescribe the criteria for selecting and changing accounting policies, together with the accounting treatment and disclosure of changes in accounting policies, changes in accounting estimates and corrections of errors. The Standard is intended to enhance the relevance and reliability of an entity's financial statements, and the comparability of those financial statements over time and with the financial statements of other entities.
- 2 Disclosure requirements for accounting policies, except those for changes in accounting policies, are set out in HKAS 1 *Presentation of Financial Statements*.

### Scope

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- 3 **This Standard shall be applied in selecting and applying accounting policies, and accounting for changes in accounting policies, changes in accounting estimates and corrections of prior period errors.**
4. The tax effects of corrections of prior period errors and of retrospective adjustments made to apply changes in accounting policies are accounted for and disclosed in accordance with HKAS 12 *Income Taxes*.

### Definitions

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- 5 **The following terms are used in this Standard with the meanings specified:**

*Accounting policies* are the specific principles, bases, conventions, rules and practices applied by an entity in preparing and presenting financial statements.

*A change in accounting estimate* is an adjustment of the carrying amount of an asset or a liability, or the amount of the periodic consumption of an asset, that results from the assessment of the present status of, and expected future benefits and obligations associated with, assets and liabilities. Changes in accounting estimates result from new information or new developments and, accordingly, are not corrections of errors.

*Hong Kong Financial Reporting Standards (HKFRSs)* are Standards and Interpretations issued by the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants (HKICPA). They comprise:

- (a) Hong Kong Financial Reporting Standards;
- (b) Hong Kong Accounting Standards; and
- (c) Interpretations.

**Material omissions or misstatements of items are material if they could, individually or collectively, influence the economic decisions of users taken that users make on the basis of the financial statements. Materiality depends on the size and nature of the omission or misstatement judged in the surrounding circumstances. The size or nature of the item, or a combination of both, could be the determining factor.**

**Prior period errors are omissions from, and misstatements in, the entity's financial statements for one or more prior periods arising from a failure to use, or misuse of, reliable information that:**

- (a) was available when financial statements for those periods were authorised for issue; and**
- (b) could reasonably be expected to have been obtained and taken into account in the preparation and presentation of those financial statements.**

**Such errors include the effects of mathematical mistakes, mistakes in applying accounting policies, oversights or misinterpretations of facts, and fraud.**

**Retrospective application is applying a new accounting policy to transactions, other events and conditions as if that policy had always been applied.**

**Retrospective restatement is correcting the recognition, measurement and disclosure of amounts of elements of financial statements as if a prior period error had never occurred.**

**Impracticable Applying a requirement is impracticable when the entity cannot apply it after making every reasonable effort to do so. For a particular prior period, it is impracticable to apply a change in an accounting policy retrospectively or to make a retrospective restatement to correct an error if:**

- (a) the effects of the retrospective application or retrospective restatement are not determinable;**
- (b) the retrospective application or retrospective restatement requires assumptions about what management's intent would have been in that period; or**
- (c) the retrospective application or retrospective restatement requires significant estimates of amounts and it is impossible to distinguish objectively information about those estimates that:
 
  - (i) provides evidence of circumstances that existed on the date(s) as at which those amounts are to be recognised, measured or disclosed; and**
  - (ii) would have been available when the financial statements for that prior period were authorised for issue****

**from other information.**

*Prospective application of a change in accounting policy and of recognising the effect of a change in an accounting estimate, respectively, are:*

- (a) **applying the new accounting policy to transactions, other events and conditions occurring after the date as at which the policy is changed; and**
  - (b) **recognising the effect of the change in the accounting estimate in the current and future periods affected by the change.**
- 6 Assessing whether an omission or misstatement could influence economic decisions of users, and so be material, requires consideration of the characteristics of those users. The *Framework for the Preparation and Presentation of Financial Statements* states in paragraph 25 that ‘users are assumed to have a reasonable knowledge of business and economic activities and accounting and a willingness to study the information with reasonable diligence.’ Therefore, the assessment needs to take into account how users with such attributes could reasonably be expected to be influenced in making economic decisions.

## **Accounting policies**

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### **Selection and application of accounting policies**

- 7 ~~When a Standard or an Interpretation HKFRS specifically applies to a transaction, other event or condition, the accounting policy or policies applied to that item shall be determined by applying the Standard or Interpretation HKFRS, and considering any relevant Implementation Guidance issued by the HKICPA for the Standard or Interpretation.~~
- 8 HKFRSs set out accounting policies that the HKICPA has concluded result in financial statements containing relevant and reliable information about the transactions, other events and conditions to which they apply. Those policies need not be applied when the effect of applying them is immaterial. However, it is inappropriate to make, or leave uncorrected, immaterial departures from HKFRSs to achieve a particular presentation of an entity’s financial position, financial performance or cash flows.
- 9 HKFRSs are accompanied by guidance to assist entities in applying their requirements. All such guidance states whether it is an integral part of HKFRSs. Implementation Guidance that is an integral part of HKFRSs is mandatory. for Standards issued by the HKICPA does not form part of those Standards, and therefore Guidance that is not an integral part of HKFRSs does not contain requirements for financial statements.
- 10 **In the absence of a Standard or an Interpretation HKFRS that specifically applies to a transaction, other event or condition, management shall use its judgement in developing and applying an accounting policy that results in information that is:**
- (a) **relevant to the economic decision-making needs of users; and**

- (b) reliable, in that the financial statements:
- (i) represent faithfully the financial position, financial performance and cash flows of the entity;
  - (ii) reflect the economic substance of transactions, other events and conditions, and not merely the legal form;
  - (iii) are neutral, ie free from bias;
  - (iv) are prudent; and
  - (v) are complete in all material respects.
- 11 In making the judgement described in paragraph 10, management shall refer to, and consider the applicability of, the following sources in descending order:
- (a) the requirements ~~and guidance in Standards or Interpretations~~ HKFRSs dealing with similar and related issues; and
  - (b) the definitions, recognition criteria and measurement concepts for assets, liabilities, income and expenses in the *Framework*.
- 12 In making the judgement described in paragraph 10, management may also consider the most recent pronouncements of other standard-setting bodies that use a similar conceptual framework to develop accounting standards, other accounting literature\* and accepted industry practices, to the extent that these do not conflict with the sources in paragraph 11.

#### Consistency of accounting policies

- 13 An entity shall select and apply its accounting policies consistently for similar transactions, other events and conditions, unless a ~~Standard or an Interpretation~~ HKFRS specifically requires or permits categorisation of items for which different policies may be appropriate. If a ~~Standard or an Interpretation~~ HKFRS requires or permits such categorisation, an appropriate accounting policy shall be selected and applied consistently to each category.

#### Changes in accounting policies

- 14 An entity shall change an accounting policy only if the change:
- (a) is required by a ~~Standard or an Interpretation~~ HKFRS; or
  - (b) results in the financial statements providing reliable and more relevant information about the effects of transactions, other events or conditions on the entity's financial position, financial performance or cash flows.

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\* In the context of Hong Kong, other accounting literature includes Accounting Guidelines and Accounting Bulletins.

- 15 Users of financial statements need to be able to compare the financial statements of an entity over time to identify trends in its financial position, financial performance and cash flows. Therefore, the same accounting policies are applied within each period and from one period to the next unless a change in accounting policy meets one of the criteria in paragraph 14.
- 16 **The following are not changes in accounting policies:**
- (a) **the application of an accounting policy for transactions, other events or conditions that differ in substance from those previously occurring; and**
  - (b) **the application of a new accounting policy for transactions, other events or conditions that did not occur previously or were immaterial.**
- 17 **The initial application of a policy to revalue assets in accordance with HKAS 16 *Property, Plant and Equipment* or HKAS 38 *Intangible Assets* is a change in an accounting policy to be dealt with as a revaluation in accordance with HKAS 16 or HKAS 38, rather than in accordance with this Standard.**
- 18 Paragraphs 19-31 do not apply to the change in accounting policy described in paragraph 17.

#### **Applying changes in accounting policies**

- 19 **Subject to paragraph 23:**
- (a) **an entity shall account for a change in accounting policy resulting from the initial application of a ~~Standard or an Interpretation~~ HKFRS in accordance with the specific transitional provisions, if any, in that ~~Standard or Interpretation~~ HKFRS; and**
  - (b) **when an entity changes an accounting policy upon initial application of a ~~Standard or an Interpretation~~ HKFRS that does not include specific transitional provisions applying to that change, or changes an accounting policy voluntarily, it shall apply the change retrospectively.**
- 20 For the purpose of this Standard, early application of a ~~Standard or an Interpretation~~ HKFRS is not a voluntary change in accounting policy.
- 21 In the absence of a ~~Standard or an Interpretation~~ HKFRS that specifically applies to a transaction, other event or condition, management may, in accordance with paragraph 12, apply an accounting policy from the most recent pronouncements of other standard-setting bodies that use a similar conceptual framework to develop accounting standards. If, following an amendment of such a pronouncement, the entity chooses to change an accounting policy, that change is accounted for and disclosed as a voluntary change in accounting policy.

#### *Retrospective application*

- 22 **Subject to paragraph 23, when a change in accounting policy is applied retrospectively in accordance with paragraph 19(a) or (b), the entity shall adjust the opening balance of each affected component of equity for the earliest prior period presented and the other comparative amounts disclosed for each prior period presented as if the new accounting policy had always been applied.**

*Limitations on retrospective application*

- 23 **When retrospective application is required by paragraph 19(a) or (b), a change in accounting policy shall be applied retrospectively except to the extent that it is impracticable to determine either the period-specific effects or the cumulative effect of the change.**
- 24 **When it is impracticable to determine the period-specific effects of changing an accounting policy on comparative information for one or more prior periods presented, the entity shall apply the new accounting policy to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities as at the beginning of the earliest period for which retrospective application is practicable, which may be the current period, and shall make a corresponding adjustment to the opening balance of each affected component of equity for that period.**
- 25 **When it is impracticable to determine the cumulative effect, at the beginning of the current period, of applying a new accounting policy to all prior periods, the entity shall adjust the comparative information to apply the new accounting policy prospectively from the earliest date practicable.**
- 26 When an entity applies a new accounting policy retrospectively, it applies the new accounting policy to comparative information for prior periods as far back as is practicable. Retrospective application to a prior period is not practicable unless it is practicable to determine the cumulative effect on the amounts in both the opening and closing ~~balance sheets~~ statements of financial position for that period. The amount of the resulting adjustment relating to periods before those presented in the financial statements is made to the opening balance of each affected component of equity of the earliest prior period presented. Usually the adjustment is made to retained earnings. However, the adjustment may be made to another component of equity (for example, to comply with a HKFRS). Any other information about prior periods, such as historical summaries of financial data, is also adjusted as far back as is practicable.
- 27 When it is impracticable for an entity to apply a new accounting policy retrospectively, because it cannot determine the cumulative effect of applying the policy to all prior periods, the entity, in accordance with paragraph 25, applies the new policy prospectively from the start of the earliest period practicable. It therefore disregards the portion of the cumulative adjustment to assets, liabilities and equity arising before that date. Changing an accounting policy is permitted even if it is impracticable to apply the policy prospectively for any prior period. Paragraphs 50-53 provide guidance on when it is impracticable to apply a new accounting policy to one or more prior periods.

**Disclosure**

- 28 **When initial application of a ~~Standard or an Interpretation~~ HKFRS has an effect on the current period or any prior period, would have such an effect except that it is impracticable to determine the amount of the adjustment, or might have an effect on future periods, an entity shall disclose:**
- (a) **the title of the ~~Standard or Interpretation~~ HKFRS;**
  - (b) **when applicable, that the change in accounting policy is made in accordance with its transitional provisions;**

- (c) the nature of the change in accounting policy;
- (d) when applicable, a description of the transitional provisions;
- (e) when applicable, the transitional provisions that might have an effect on future periods;
- (f) for the current period and each prior period presented, to the extent practicable, the amount of the adjustment:
  - (i) for each financial statement line item affected; and
  - (ii) if HKAS 33 *Earnings per Share* applies to the entity, for basic and diluted earnings per share;
- (g) the amount of the adjustment relating to periods before those presented, to the extent practicable; and
- (h) if retrospective application required by paragraph 19(a) or (b) is impracticable for a particular prior period, or for periods before those presented, the circumstances that led to the existence of that condition and a description of how and from when the change in accounting policy has been applied.

Financial statements of subsequent periods need not repeat these disclosures.

- 29 When a voluntary change in accounting policy has an effect on the current period or any prior period, would have an effect on that period except that it is impracticable to determine the amount of the adjustment, or might have an effect on future periods, an entity shall disclose:
- (a) the nature of the change in accounting policy;
  - (b) the reasons why applying the new accounting policy provides reliable and more relevant information;
  - (c) for the current period and each prior period presented, to the extent practicable, the amount of the adjustment:
    - (i) for each financial statement line item affected; and
    - (ii) if HKAS 33 applies to the entity, for basic and diluted earnings per share;
  - (d) the amount of the adjustment relating to periods before those presented, to the extent practicable; and
  - (e) if retrospective application is impracticable for a particular prior period, or for periods before those presented, the circumstances that led to the existence of that condition and a description of how and from when the change in accounting policy has been applied.

**Financial statements of subsequent periods need not repeat these disclosures.**

- 30 When an entity has not applied a new ~~Standard or Interpretation~~ HKFRS that has been issued but is not yet effective, the entity shall disclose:**
- (a) this fact; and**
  - (b) known or reasonably estimable information relevant to assessing the possible impact that application of the new ~~Standard or Interpretation~~ HKFRS will have on the entity's financial statements in the period of initial application.**
- 31 In complying with paragraph 30, an entity considers disclosing:
- (a) the title of the new ~~Standard or Interpretation~~ HKFRS;
  - (b) the nature of the impending change or changes in accounting policy;
  - (c) the date by which application of the ~~Standard or Interpretation~~ HKFRS is required;
  - (d) the date as at which it plans to apply the ~~Standard or Interpretation~~ HKFRS initially; and
  - (e) either:
    - (i) a discussion of the impact that initial application of the ~~Standard or Interpretation~~ HKFRS is expected to have on the entity's financial statements; or
    - (ii) if that impact is not known or reasonably estimable, a statement to that effect.

## **Changes in accounting estimates**

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- 32 As a result of the uncertainties inherent in business activities, many items in financial statements cannot be measured with precision but can only be estimated. Estimation involves judgements based on the latest available, reliable information. For example, estimates may be required of:
- (a) bad debts;
  - (b) inventory obsolescence;
  - (c) the fair value of financial assets or financial liabilities;
  - (d) the useful lives of, or expected pattern of consumption of the future economic benefits embodied in, depreciable assets; and
  - (e) warranty obligations.
- 33 The use of reasonable estimates is an essential part of the preparation of financial statements and does not undermine their reliability.

- 34 An estimate may need revision if changes occur in the circumstances on which the estimate was based or as a result of new information or more experience. By its nature, the revision of an estimate does not relate to prior periods and is not the correction of an error.
- 35 A change in the measurement basis applied is a change in an accounting policy, and is not a change in an accounting estimate. When it is difficult to distinguish a change in an accounting policy from a change in an accounting estimate, the change is treated as a change in an accounting estimate.
- 36 The effect of a change in an accounting estimate, other than a change to which paragraph 37 applies, shall be recognised prospectively by including it in profit or loss in:**
- (a) the period of the change, if the change affects that period only; or
  - (b) the period of the change and future periods, if the change affects both.
- 37 To the extent that a change in an accounting estimate gives rise to changes in assets and liabilities, or relates to an item of equity, it shall be recognised by adjusting the carrying amount of the related asset, liability or equity item in the period of the change.**
- 38 Prospective recognition of the effect of a change in an accounting estimate means that the change is applied to transactions, other events and conditions from the date of the change in estimate. A change in an accounting estimate may affect only the current period's profit or loss, or the profit or loss of both the current period and future periods. For example, a change in the estimate of the amount of bad debts affects only the current period's profit or loss and therefore is recognised in the current period. However, a change in the estimated useful life of, or the expected pattern of consumption of the future economic benefits embodied in, a depreciable asset affects depreciation expense for the current period and for each future period during the asset's remaining useful life. In both cases, the effect of the change relating to the current period is recognised as income or expense in the current period. The effect, if any, on future periods is recognised as income or expense in those future periods.

### Disclosure

- 39 An entity shall disclose the nature and amount of a change in an accounting estimate that has an effect in the current period or is expected to have an effect in future periods, except for the disclosure of the effect on future periods when it is impracticable to estimate that effect.**
- 40 If the amount of the effect in future periods is not disclosed because estimating it is impracticable, an entity shall disclose that fact.**

## Errors

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- 41 Errors can arise in respect of the recognition, measurement, presentation or disclosure of elements of financial statements. Financial statements do not comply with HKFRSs if they contain either material errors or immaterial errors made intentionally to achieve a particular presentation of an entity's financial position, financial performance or cash flows. Potential current period errors discovered in that period

are corrected before the financial statements are authorised for issue. However, material errors are sometimes not discovered until a subsequent period, and these prior period errors are corrected in the comparative information presented in the financial statements for that subsequent period (see paragraphs 42-47).

- 42 Subject to paragraph 43, an entity shall correct material prior period errors retrospectively in the first set of financial statements authorised for issue after their discovery by:**
- (a) restating the comparative amounts for the prior period(s) presented in which the error occurred; or**
  - (b) if the error occurred before the earliest prior period presented, restating the opening balances of assets, liabilities and equity for the earliest prior period presented.**

### **Limitations on retrospective restatement**

- 43 A prior period error shall be corrected by retrospective restatement except to the extent that it is impracticable to determine either the period-specific effects or the cumulative effect of the error.**
- 44 When it is impracticable to determine the period-specific effects of an error on comparative information for one or more prior periods presented, the entity shall restate the opening balances of assets, liabilities and equity for the earliest period for which retrospective restatement is practicable (which may be the current period).**
- 45 When it is impracticable to determine the cumulative effect, at the beginning of the current period, of an error on all prior periods, the entity shall restate the comparative information to correct the error prospectively from the earliest date practicable.**
- 46 The correction of a prior period error is excluded from profit or loss for the period in which the error is discovered. Any information presented about prior periods, including any historical summaries of financial data, is restated as far back as is practicable.
- 47 When it is impracticable to determine the amount of an error (eg a mistake in applying an accounting policy) for all prior periods, the entity, in accordance with paragraph 45, restates the comparative information prospectively from the earliest date practicable. It therefore disregards the portion of the cumulative restatement of assets, liabilities and equity arising before that date. Paragraphs 50-53 provide guidance on when it is impracticable to correct an error for one or more prior periods.
- 48 Corrections of errors are distinguished from changes in accounting estimates. Accounting estimates by their nature are approximations that may need revision as additional information becomes known. For example, the gain or loss recognised on the outcome of a contingency is not the correction of an error.

## Disclosure of prior period errors

- 49 In applying paragraph 42, an entity shall disclose the following:**
- (a) the nature of the prior period error;**
  - (b) for each prior period presented, to the extent practicable, the amount of the correction:**
    - (i) for each financial statement line item affected; and**
    - (ii) if HKAS 33 applies to the entity, for basic and diluted earnings per share;**
  - (c) the amount of the correction at the beginning of the earliest prior period presented; and**
  - (d) if retrospective restatement is impracticable for a particular prior period, the circumstances that led to the existence of that condition and a description of how and from when the error has been corrected.**

Financial statements of subsequent periods need not repeat these disclosures.

## Impracticability in respect of retrospective application and retrospective restatement

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- 50** In some circumstances, it is impracticable to adjust comparative information for one or more prior periods to achieve comparability with the current period. For example, data may not have been collected in the prior period(s) in a way that allows either retrospective application of a new accounting policy (including, for the purpose of paragraphs 51-53, its prospective application to prior periods) or retrospective restatement to correct a prior period error, and it may be impracticable to recreate the information.
- 51** It is frequently necessary to make estimates in applying an accounting policy to elements of financial statements recognised or disclosed in respect of transactions, other events or conditions. Estimation is inherently subjective, and estimates may be developed after the ~~balance sheet date~~ reporting period. Developing estimates is potentially more difficult when retrospectively applying an accounting policy or making a retrospective restatement to correct a prior period error, because of the longer period of time that might have passed since the affected transaction, other event or condition occurred. However, the objective of estimates related to prior periods remains the same as for estimates made in the current period, namely, for the estimate to reflect the circumstances that existed when the transaction, other event or condition occurred.
- 52** Therefore, retrospectively applying a new accounting policy or correcting a prior period error requires distinguishing information that
- (a) provides evidence of circumstances that existed on the date(s) as at which the transaction, other event or condition occurred, and**

- (b) would have been available when the financial statements for that prior period were authorised for issue

from other information. For some types of estimates (eg an estimate of fair value not based on an observable price or observable inputs), it is impracticable to distinguish these types of information. When retrospective application or retrospective restatement would require making a significant estimate for which it is impossible to distinguish these two types of information, it is impracticable to apply the new accounting policy or correct the prior period error retrospectively.

- 53 Hindsight should not be used when applying a new accounting policy to, or correcting amounts for, a prior period, either in making assumptions about what management's intentions would have been in a prior period or estimating the amounts recognised, measured or disclosed in a prior period. For example, when an entity corrects a prior period error in measuring financial assets previously classified as held-to-maturity investments in accordance with HKAS 39 *Financial Instruments: Recognition and Measurement*, it does not change their basis of measurement for that period if management decided later not to hold them to maturity. In addition, when an entity corrects a prior period error in calculating its liability for employees' accumulated sick leave in accordance with HKAS 19 *Employee Benefits*, it disregards information about an unusually severe influenza season during the next period that became available after the financial statements for the prior period were authorised for issue. The fact that significant estimates are frequently required when amending comparative information presented for prior periods does not prevent reliable adjustment or correction of the comparative information.

## Effective date

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- 54 **An entity shall apply this Standard for annual periods beginning on or after 1 January 2005. Earlier application is encouraged. If an entity applies this Standard for a period beginning before 1 January 2005, it shall disclose that fact.**
- 54aA If an entity decides to apply this Standard for an earlier period, it is not required to apply all the HKASs with the same effective date for that same period. However, it is required to apply the amendments set out in the appendix on amendments to other pronouncements for that earlier period.

## Withdrawal of other pronouncements

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- 55 This Standard supersedes SSAP 2 *Net Profit or Loss for the Period, Fundamental Errors and Changes in Accounting Policies*, revised in 2001.
- 56 [Not used]

## **Appendix A**

### **Comparison with International Accounting Standards**

This comparison appendix, which was prepared as at 9 March 2004 and deals only with significant differences in the standards extant, is produced for information only and does not form part of the standards in HKAS 8.

The International Accounting Standard comparable with HKAS 8 is IAS 8 *Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors*.

There are no major textual differences between HKAS 8 and IAS 8.

## **Appendix B**

### **Amendments to other pronouncements**

*The amendments in this appendix shall be applied for annual periods beginning on or after 1 January 2005. If an entity applies this Standard for an earlier period, these amendments shall be applied for that earlier period.*

\* \* \*

*The amendments contained in this appendix when this Standard was issued have been incorporated into the relevant Standards.*

## Appendix C

### Amendments resulting from other HKFRSs

The following sets out amendments required for this Standard resulting from other newly issued HKFRSs that are not yet effective. Once effective, the amendments set out below will be incorporated into the text of this Standard and this appendix will be deleted. In the amended paragraphs shown below, new text is underlined and deleted text is struck through.

#### **HKFRS 9 *Financial Instruments* (issued in November 2009) - effective for annual periods beginning on or after 1 January 2013**

Paragraph 53 is amended and paragraph 54A is added as follows:

- 53 Hindsight should not be used when applying a new accounting policy to, or correcting amounts for, a prior period, either in making assumptions about what management's intentions would have been in a prior period or estimating the amounts recognised, measured or disclosed in a prior period. For example, ~~when an entity corrects a prior period error in measuring financial assets previously classified as held-to-maturity investments in accordance with HKAS 39 *Financial Instruments: Recognition and Measurement*, it does not change their basis of measurement for that period if management decided later not to hold them to maturity.~~ In addition, when an entity corrects a prior period error in calculating its liability for employees' accumulated sick leave in accordance with HKAS 19 *Employee Benefits*, it disregards information about an unusually severe influenza season during the next period that became available after the financial statements for the prior period were authorised for issue. The fact that significant estimates are frequently required when amending comparative information presented for prior periods does not prevent reliable adjustment or correction of the comparative information.
- 54A HKFRS 9 *Financial Instruments*, issued in November 2009, amended paragraph 53. An entity shall apply that amendment when it applies HKFRS 9.

## **Basis for Conclusions on HKAS 8 *Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors***

*This Basis for Conclusions accompanies, but is not part of, HKAS 8.*

HKAS 8 is based on IAS 8, *Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors*. In approving HKAS 8, the Council of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants considered and agreed with the IASB's basis for conclusions on IAS 8 (as revised 2003). Accordingly, there are no significant differences between HKAS 8 and IAS 8. The IASB's basis for conclusions is reproduced below for reference. The paragraph numbers of IAS 8 referred to below generally correspond with those in HKAS 8.

### **Introduction**

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- BC1 This Basis for Conclusions summarises the International Accounting Standards Board's considerations in reaching its conclusions on revising IAS 8 *Net Profit or Loss for the Period, Fundamental Errors and Changes in Accounting Policies* in 2003. Individual Board members gave greater weight to some factors than to others.
- BC2 In July 2001 the Board announced that, as part of its initial agenda of technical projects, it would undertake a project to improve a number of Standards, including IAS 8. The project was undertaken in the light of queries and criticisms raised in relation to the Standards by securities regulators, professional accountants and other interested parties. The objectives of the Improvements project were to reduce or eliminate alternatives, redundancies and conflicts within Standards, to deal with some convergence issues and to make other improvements. In May 2002 the Board published its proposals in an Exposure Draft of *Improvements to International Accounting Standards*, with a comment deadline of 16 September 2002. The Board received over 160 comment letters on the Exposure Draft.
- BC3 The Standard includes extensive changes to the previous version of IAS 8. The Board's intention was not to reconsider all of the previous Standard's requirements for selecting and applying accounting policies, and accounting for changes in accounting policies, changes in accounting estimates and corrections of errors. Accordingly, this Basis for Conclusions does not discuss requirements in IAS 8 that the Board did not reconsider.

### **Removing allowed alternative treatments**

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- BC4 The previous version of IAS 8 included allowed alternative treatments of voluntary changes in accounting policies (paragraphs 54-57) and corrections of fundamental errors (paragraphs 38-40). Under those allowed alternatives:
- (a) the adjustment resulting from retrospective application of a change in an accounting policy was included in profit or loss for the current period; and
  - (b) the amount of the correction of a fundamental error was included in profit or loss for the current period.
- BC5 In both circumstances, comparative information was presented as it was presented in the financial statements of prior periods.

- BC6 The Board identified the removal of optional treatments for changes in accounting policies and corrections of errors as an important improvement to the previous version of IAS 8. The Standard removes the allowed alternative treatments and requires changes in accounting policies and corrections of prior period errors to be accounted for retrospectively.
- BC7 The Board concluded that retrospective application made by amending the comparative information presented for prior periods is preferable to the previously allowed alternative treatments because, under the now required method of retrospective application:
- (a) profit or loss for the period of the change does not include the effects of changes in accounting policies or errors relating to prior periods.
  - (b) information presented about prior periods is prepared on the same basis as information about the current period, and is therefore comparable. This information possesses a qualitative characteristic identified in the *Framework for the Preparation and Presentation of Financial Statements*, and provides the most useful information for trend analysis of income and expenses.
  - (c) prior period errors are not repeated in comparative information presented for prior periods.
- BC8 Some respondents to the Exposure Draft argued that the previously allowed alternative treatments are preferable because:
- (a) correcting prior period errors by restating prior period information involves an unjustifiable use of hindsight;
  - (b) recognising the effects of changes in accounting policies and corrections of errors in current period profit or loss makes them more prominent to users of financial statements; and
  - (c) each amount credited or debited to retained earnings as a result of an entity's activities has been recognised in profit or loss in some period.
- BC9 The Board concluded that restating prior period information to correct a prior period error does not involve an unjustifiable use of hindsight because prior period errors are defined in terms of a failure to use, or misuse of, reliable information that was available when the prior period financial statements were authorised for issue and could reasonably be expected to have been obtained and taken into account in the preparation and presentation of those financial statements.
- BC10 The Board also concluded that the disclosures about changes in accounting policies and corrections of prior period errors in paragraphs 28, 29 and 49 of the Standard should ensure that their effects are sufficiently prominent to users of financial statements.
- BC11 The Board further concluded that it is less important for each amount credited or debited to retained earnings as a result of an entity's activities to be recognised in profit or loss in some period than for the profit or loss for each period presented to represent faithfully the effects of transactions and other events occurring in that period.

## **Eliminating the distinction between fundamental errors and other material prior period errors**

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BC12 The Standard eliminates the distinction between fundamental errors and other material prior period errors. As a result, all material prior period errors are accounted for in the same way as a fundamental error was accounted for under the retrospective treatment in the previous version of IAS 8. The Board concluded that the definition of ‘fundamental errors’ in the previous version was difficult to interpret consistently because the main feature of the definition—that the error causes the financial statements of one or more prior periods no longer to be considered to have been reliable—was also a feature of all material prior period errors.

## **Applying a Standard or an Interpretation that specifically applies to an item**

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BC13 The Exposure Draft proposed that when a Standard or an Interpretation applies to an item in the financial statements, the accounting policy (or policies) applied to that item is (are) determined by considering the following in descending order:

- (a) the Standard (including any Appendices that form part of the Standard);
- (b) the Interpretation;
- (c) Appendices to the Standard that do not form a part of the Standard; and
- (d) Implementation Guidance issued in respect of the Standard.

BC14 The Board decided not to set out a hierarchy of requirements for these circumstances. The Standard requires only applicable ~~Standards and Interpretations~~ IFRSs to be applied. In addition, it does not mention Appendices.

BC15 The Board decided not to rank Standards above Interpretations because the definition of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) includes Interpretations, which are equal in status to Standards. The rubric to each Standard clarifies what material constitutes the requirements of an IFRS and what is Implementation Guidance\*. The term ‘Appendix’ is retained only for material that is part of an IFRS.

## **Pronouncements of other standard-setting bodies**

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BC16 The Exposure Draft proposed that in the absence of a Standard or an Interpretation specifically applying to an item, management should develop and apply an accounting policy by considering, among other guidance, pronouncements of other standard-setting bodies that use a similar conceptual framework to develop accounting standards. Respondents to the Exposure Draft commented that this could *require* entities to consider the pronouncements of various other standard-setting bodies when IASB guidance does not exist. Some commentators argued that, for example, it could require consideration of all components of US GAAP on some topics. After considering these comments, the Board decided that the Standard should indicate that considering such pronouncements is voluntary (see paragraph 12 of the Standard).

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\* In 2007 the Board was advised that paragraphs 7 and 9 may appear to conflict, and may be misinterpreted to require mandatory consideration of Implementation Guidance. The Board amended paragraphs 7, 9 and 11 by *Improvements to IFRSs* issued in May 2008 to state that only guidance that is identified as an integral part of IFRSs is mandatory.

- BC17 As proposed in the Exposure Draft, the Standard states that pronouncements of other standard-setting bodies are used only if they do not conflict with:
- (a) the requirements and guidance in ~~Standards and Interpretations~~ IFRSs dealing with similar and related issues; and
  - (b) the definitions, recognition criteria and measurement concepts for assets, liabilities, income and expenses in the *Framework*.
- BC18 The Standard refers to the most recent pronouncements of other standard-setting bodies because if pronouncements are withdrawn or superseded, the relevant standard-setting body no longer thinks they include the best accounting policies to apply.
- BC19 Comments received indicated that it was unclear from the Exposure Draft whether a change in accounting policy following a change in a pronouncement of another standard-setting body should be accounted for under the transitional provisions in that pronouncement. As noted above, the Standard does not mandate using pronouncements of other standard-setting bodies in any circumstances. Accordingly, the Board decided to clarify that such a change in accounting policy is accounted for and disclosed as a voluntary change in accounting policy (see paragraph 21 of the Standard). Thus, an entity is precluded from applying transitional provisions specified by the other standard-setting body if they are inconsistent with the treatment of voluntary changes in accounting policies specified by the Standard.

## **Materiality**

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- BC20 The Standard states that accounting policies specified by IFRSs need not be applied when the effect of applying them is immaterial. It also states that financial statements do not comply with IFRSs if they contain material errors, and that material prior period errors are to be corrected in the first set of financial statements authorised for issue after their discovery. The Standard includes a definition of material omissions or misstatements, which is based on the description of materiality in ~~the previous version of~~ IAS 1 *Presentation of Financial Statements* (as issued in 1997) and in the *Framework*.
- BC21 The former *Preface to Statements of International Accounting Standards* stated that International Accounting Standards were not intended to apply to immaterial items. There is no equivalent statement in the *Preface to International Financial Reporting Standards*. The Board received comments that the absence of such a statement from the *Preface* could be interpreted as requiring an entity to apply accounting policies (including measurement requirements) specified by IFRSs to immaterial items. However, the Board decided that the application of the concept of materiality should be in Standards rather than in the *Preface*.
- BC22 The application of the concept of materiality is set out in two Standards. ~~The revised~~ IAS 1 *Presentation of Financial Statements* (as revised in 2007) continues to specify its application to disclosures. IAS 8 specifies the application of materiality in applying accounting policies and correcting errors (including errors in measuring items).

## Criterion for exemption from requirements

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BC23 The previous version of IAS 8 included an impracticability criterion for exemption from retrospective application of voluntary changes in accounting policies and retrospective restatement for fundamental errors, and from making related disclosures, when the allowed alternative treatment of those items was not applied. The Exposure Draft proposed instead an exemption from retrospective application and retrospective restatement when it gives rise to undue cost or effort.

BC24 In the light of comments received on the Exposure Draft, the Board decided that an exemption based on management's assessment of undue cost or effort is too subjective to be applied consistently by different entities. Moreover, the Board decided that balancing costs and benefits is a task for the Board when it sets accounting requirements rather than for entities when they apply those requirements. Therefore, the Board decided to retain the impracticability criterion for exemption in the previous version of IAS 8. This affects the exemptions in paragraphs 23-25, 39 and 43-45 of the Standard. Impracticability is the only basis on which specific exemptions are provided in ~~Standards and Interpretations~~ IFRSs from applying particular requirements when the effect of applying them is material.\*

### Definition of 'impracticable'

BC25 The Board decided to clarify the meaning of 'impracticable' in relation to retrospective application of a change in accounting policy and retrospective restatement to correct a prior period error.

BC26 Some commentators suggested that retrospective application of a change in accounting policy and retrospective restatement to correct a prior period error are impracticable for a particular prior period whenever significant estimates are required as of a date in that period. However, the Board decided to specify a narrower definition of impracticable because the fact that significant estimates are frequently required when amending comparative information presented for prior periods does not prevent reliable adjustment or correction of the comparative information. Thus, the Board decided that an inability to distinguish objectively information that both provides evidence of circumstances that existed on the date(s) as at which those amounts are to be recognised, measured or disclosed and would have been available when the financial statements for that prior period were authorised for issue from other information is the factor that prevents reliable adjustment or correction of comparative information for prior periods (see part (c) of the definition of 'impracticable' and paragraphs 51 and 52 of the Standard).

BC27 The Standard specifies that hindsight should not be used when applying a new accounting policy to, or correcting amounts for, a prior period, either in making assumptions about what management's intentions would have been in a prior period or estimating the amounts in a prior period. This is because management's intentions in a prior period cannot be objectively established in a later period, and using information that would have been unavailable when the financial statements for the prior period(s) affected were authorised for issue is inconsistent with the definitions of retrospective application and retrospective restatement.

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\* In 2006 the IASB issued IFRS 8 *Operating Segments*. As explained in paragraphs BC46 and BC47 of the Basis for Conclusions on IFRS 8, that IFRS includes an exemption from some requirements if the necessary information is not available and the cost to develop it would be excessive.

**Applying the impracticability exemption**

- BC28 The Standard specifies that when it is impracticable to determine the cumulative effect of applying a new accounting policy to all prior periods, or the cumulative effect of an error on all prior periods, the entity changes the comparative information as if the new accounting policy had been applied, or the error had been corrected, prospectively from the earliest date practicable (see paragraphs 25 and 45 of the Standard). This is similar to paragraph 52 of the previous version of IAS 8, but it is no longer restricted to changes in accounting policies. The Board decided to include such provisions in the Standard because it agrees with comments received that it is preferable to require prospective application from the start of the earliest period practicable than to permit a change in accounting policy only when the entity can determine the cumulative effect of the change for all prior periods at the beginning of the current period.
- BC29 Consistently with the Exposure Draft's proposals, the Standard provides an impracticability exemption from retrospective application of changes in accounting policies, including retrospective application of changes made in accordance with the transitional provisions in ~~a Standard or an Interpretation~~ an IFRS. The previous version of IAS 8 specified the impracticability exemption for retrospective application of only *voluntary* changes in accounting policies. Thus, the applicability of the exemption to changes made in accordance with the transitional provisions in ~~an Standard or an Interpretation~~ IFRS depended on the text of that ~~Standard or Interpretation~~ IFRS. The Board extended the applicability of the exemption because it decided that the need for the exemption applies equally to all changes in accounting policies applied retrospectively.

**Disclosures about impending application of newly issued Standards and Interpretations IFRSs**

- BC30 The Standard requires an entity to provide disclosures when it has not yet applied a new ~~Standard or Interpretation~~ IFRS that has been issued but is not yet effective. The entity is required to disclose that it has not yet applied the ~~Standard or Interpretation~~ IFRS, and known or reasonably estimable information relevant to assessing the possible impact that initial application of the new ~~Standard or Interpretation~~ IFRS will have on the entity's financial statements in the period of initial application (paragraph 30). The Standard also includes guidance on specific disclosures the entity should consider when applying this requirement (paragraph 31).
- BC31 Paragraphs 30 and 31 of the Standard differ from the proposals in the Exposure Draft in the following respects:
- (a) they specify that an entity needs to disclose information only if it is known or reasonably estimable. This clarification responds to comments on the Exposure Draft that the proposed disclosures would sometimes be impracticable.
  - (b) whereas the Exposure Draft proposed to mandate the disclosures now in paragraph 31, the Standard sets out these disclosures as items an entity should consider disclosing to meet the general requirement in paragraph 30. This amendment focuses the requirement on the objective of the disclosure, and, in response to comments on the Exposure Draft that the proposed disclosures were more onerous than the disclosures in US GAAP, clarifies that the Board's intention was to converge with US requirements, rather than to be more onerous.

**Recognising the effects of changes in accounting estimates**

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BC32 The Exposure Draft proposed to retain without exception the requirement in the previous version of IAS 8 that the effect of a change in accounting estimate is *recognised in profit or loss* in:

- (a) the period of the change, if the change affects that period only; or
- (b) the period of the change and future periods, if the change affects both.

BC33 Some respondents to the Exposure Draft disagreed with requiring the effects of all changes in accounting estimates to be recognised in profit or loss. They argued that this is inappropriate to the extent that a change in an accounting estimate gives rise to changes in assets and liabilities, because the entity's equity does not change as a result. These commentators also argued that it is inappropriate to preclude recognising the effects of changes in accounting estimates directly in equity when that is required or permitted by a Standard or an Interpretation. The Board concurs, and decided to provide an exception to the requirement described in paragraph BC32 for these circumstances.

## Guidance on Implementing IAS 8 *Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors*

*This guidance accompanies, but is not part of, IAS 8.*

### Example 1 – Retrospective restatement of errors

- 1.1 During 20X2, Beta Co discovered that some products that had been sold during 20X1 were incorrectly included in inventory at 31 December 20X1 at CU6,500.\*
- 1.2 Beta's accounting records for 20X2 show sales of CU104,000, cost of goods sold of CU86,500 (including CU6,500 for the error in opening inventory), and income taxes of CU5,250.
- 1.3 In 20X1, Beta reported:

	CU
Sales	73,500
Cost of goods sold	(53,500)
Profit before income taxes	<u>20,000</u>
Income taxes	<u>(6,000)</u>
Profit	<u><u>14,000</u></u>

- 1.4 20X1 opening retained earnings was CU20,000 and closing retained earnings was CU34,000.
- 1.5 Beta's income tax rate was 30 per cent for 20X2 and 20X1. It had no other income or expenses.
- 1.6 Beta had CU5,000 of share capital throughout, and no other components of equity except for retained earnings. Its shares are not publicly traded and it does not disclose earnings per share.

#### Beta Co Extract from the statement of comprehensive income

	20X2	(restated) 20X1
	CU	CU
Sales	104,000	73,500
Cost of goods sold	<u>(80,000)</u>	<u>(60,000)</u>
Profit before income taxes	24,000	13,500
Income taxes	<u>(7,200)</u>	<u>(4,050)</u>
Profit	<u><u>16,800</u></u>	<u><u>9,450</u></u>

*continued...*

\* In these examples, monetary amounts are denominated in 'currency units' (CU).

*continued...*

**Beta Co**  
**Statement of changes in equity**

	Share capital CU	Retained earnings CU	Total CU
Balance at 31 December 20X0	5,000	20,000	25,000
Profit for the year ended 31 December 20X1 as restated		9,450	9,450
Balance at 31 December 20X1	<u>5,000</u>	<u>29,450</u>	<u>34,450</u>
Profit for the year ended 31 December 20X2		16,800	16,800
Balance at 31 December 20X2	<u>5,000</u>	<u>46,250</u>	<u>51,250</u>

**Extracts from the notes**

1. Some products that had been sold in 20X1 were incorrectly included in inventory at 31 December 20X1 at CU6,500. The financial statements of 20X1 have been restated to correct this error. The effect of the restatement on those financial statements is summarised below. There is no effect in 20X2.

	<u>Effect on 20X1</u> CU
(Increase) in cost of goods sold	(6,500)
Decrease in income tax expense	<u>1,950</u>
(Decrease) in profit	<u>(4,550)</u>
(Decrease) in inventory	(6,500)
Decrease in income tax payable	<u>1,950</u>
(Decrease) in equity	<u>(4,550)</u>

**Example 2 – Change in accounting policy with retrospective application**

[Deleted]

- 2.1 During 20 2, Gamma Co changed its accounting policy for the treatment of borrowing costs that are directly attributable to the acquisition of a hydro-electric power station under construction for use by Gamma. In previous periods, Gamma had capitalised such costs. Gamma has now decided to treat these costs as an expense, rather than capitalise them. Management judges that the new policy is preferable because it results in a more transparent treatment of finance costs and is consistent with local industry practice, making Gamma's financial statements more comparable.
- 2.2 Gamma capitalised borrowing costs incurred of CU2,600 during 20 1 and CU5,200 in periods before 20 1. All borrowing costs incurred in previous years in respect of the acquisition of the power station were capitalised.
- 2.3 Gamma's accounting records for 20 2 show profit before interest and income taxes of CU30,000; interest expense of CU3,000 (which relates only to 20 2); and income taxes of CU8,100.
- 2.4 Gamma has not yet recognised any depreciation on the power station because it is not yet in use.
- 2.5 In 20 1, Gamma reported:

	CU
Profit before interest and income taxes	18,000
Interest expense	-
Profit before income taxes	<u>18,000</u>
Income taxes	<u>(5,400)</u>
Profit	<u><u>12,600</u></u>

- 2.6 20 1 opening retained earnings was CU20,000 and closing retained earnings was CU32,600.
- 2.7 Gamma's tax rate was 30 per cent for 20 2, 20 1 and prior periods.
- 2.8 Gamma had CU10,000 of share capital throughout, and no other components of equity except for retained earnings. Its shares are not publicly traded and it does not disclose earnings per share.

***Gamma Co***  
***Extract from the Income Statement***

	20 2	(restated) 20 1
	CU	CU
Profit before interest and income taxes	30,000	18,000
Interest expense	<u>(3,000)</u>	<u>(2,600)</u>
Profit before income taxes	27,000	15,400
Income taxes	<u>(8,100)</u>	<u>(4,620)</u>
Profit	<u><u>18,900</u></u>	<u><u>10,780</u></u>

**Gamma Co**  
**Statement of Changes in Equity**

	Share capital	(restated) Retained earnings	Total
	CU	CU	CU
Balance at 31 December 20 0 as previously reported	10,000	20,000	30,000
Change in accounting policy for the capitalisation of interest (net of income taxes of CU1,560) (Note 1)		(3,640)	(3,640)
Balance at 31 December 20 0 as restated	10,000	16,360	26,360
Profit for the year ended 31 December 20 1 (restated)		10,780	10,780
Balance at 31 December 20 1	10,000	27,140	37,140
Profit for the year ended 31 December 20 2		18,900	18,900
Balance at 31 December 20 2	10,000	46,040	56,040

**Extracts from the Notes**

1— During 20 2, Gamma changed its accounting policy for the treatment of borrowing costs related to a hydro electric power station under construction for use by Gamma. Previously, Gamma capitalised such costs. They are now written off as expenses as incurred. Management judges that this policy provides reliable and more relevant information because it results in a more transparent treatment of finance costs and is consistent with local industry practice, making Gamma's financial statements more comparable. This change in accounting policy has been accounted for retrospectively, and the comparative statements for 20 1 have been restated. The effect of the change on 20 1 is tabulated below. Opening retained earnings for 20 1 have been reduced by CU3,640, which is the amount of the adjustment relating to periods prior to 20 1.

<i>Effect on 20 1</i>	CU
(Increase) in interest expense	(2,600)
Decrease in income tax expense	780
(Decrease) in profit	(1,820)
<i>Effect on periods prior to 20 1</i>	
(Decrease) in profit (CU5,200 interest expense less tax of CU1,560)	(3,640)
(Decrease) in assets in the course of construction and in retained earnings at 31 December 20 1	(5,460)

### Example 3 - Prospective application of a change in accounting policy when retrospective application is not practicable

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- 3.1 During 20X2, Delta Co changed its accounting policy for depreciating property, plant and equipment, so as to apply much more fully a components approach, whilst at the same time adopting the revaluation model.
- 3.2 In years before 20X2, Delta's asset records were not sufficiently detailed to apply a components approach fully. At the end of 20X1, management commissioned an engineering survey, which provided information on the components held and their fair values, useful lives, estimated residual values and depreciable amounts at the beginning of 20X2. However, the survey did not provide a sufficient basis for reliably estimating the cost of those components that had not previously been accounted for separately, and the existing records before the survey did not permit this information to be reconstructed.
- 3.3 Delta's management considered how to account for each of the two aspects of the accounting change. They determined that it was not practicable to account for the change to a fuller components approach retrospectively, or to account for that change prospectively from any earlier date than the start of 20X2. Also, the change from a cost model to a revaluation model is required to be accounted for prospectively. Therefore, management concluded that it should apply Delta's new policy prospectively from the start of 20X2.
- 3.4 Additional information:

Delta's tax rate is 30 per cent.

	CU
Property, plant and equipment at the end of 20X1:	
Cost	25,000
Depreciation	(14,000)
Net book value	<u>11,000</u>
Prospective depreciation expense for 20X2 (old basis)	1,500
Some results of the engineering survey:	
Valuation	17,000
Estimated residual value	3,000
Average remaining asset life (years)	7
Depreciation expense on existing property, plant and equipment for 20X2 (new basis)	2,000

*continued...*

*continued...*

*Extract from the notes*

- 1 From the start of 20X2, Delta changed its accounting policy for depreciating property, plant and equipment, so as to apply much more fully a components approach, whilst at the same time adopting the revaluation model. Management takes the view that this policy provides reliable and more relevant information because it deals more accurately with the components of property, plant and equipment and is based on up-to-date values. The policy has been applied prospectively from the start of 20X2 because it was not practicable to estimate the effects of applying the policy either retrospectively, or prospectively from any earlier date. Accordingly, the adoption of the new policy has no effect on prior years. The effect on the current year is to increase the carrying amount of property, plant and equipment at the start of the year by CU6,000; increase the opening deferred tax provision by CU1,800; create a revaluation reserve at the start of the year of CU4,200; increase depreciation expense by CU500; and reduce tax expense by CU150.

## Table of Concordance

This table shows how the contents of the superseded SSAP 2 and the current HKAS 8 correspond. Paragraphs are treated as corresponding if they broadly address the same matter even though the guidance may differ.

Superseded SSAP 2 paragraph	Current HKAS 8 paragraph
Objective	1
1	3
2	55
3	2
4	None
5	5
6	(HKAS 1.78)
7	(HKAS 1.79)
8	(HKAS 1.80)
9	(HKAS 1.85)
10	None
11	None
12	None
13	None
14	None
15	(HKAS 1.86)
16	None
17	(HKAS 1.87)
18	None
19	None
20	None
21	None
22	32, 33
23	34

Superseded SSAP 2 paragraph	Current HKAS 8 paragraph
24	35
25	36
26	38
27	None
28	None
29	39, 40
30	41
31	41
32	48
33	42
34	46
35	None
36	49
37	15
38	14
39	14
40	16-18
41	None
42	19
43	None
44	30, 31
45	22, 23

<b>Superseded SSAP 2 paragraph</b>	<b>Current HKAS 8 paragraph</b>
46	26
47	None
48	24, 25
49	28, 29
50	54
Appendix	Guidance on Implementing HKAS 8

<b>Superseded SSAP 2 paragraph</b>	<b>Current HKAS 8 paragraph</b>
None	4
None	6
None	7-12
None	13
None	20, 21
None	27
None	37
None	43-45
None	47
None	50-53
None	56