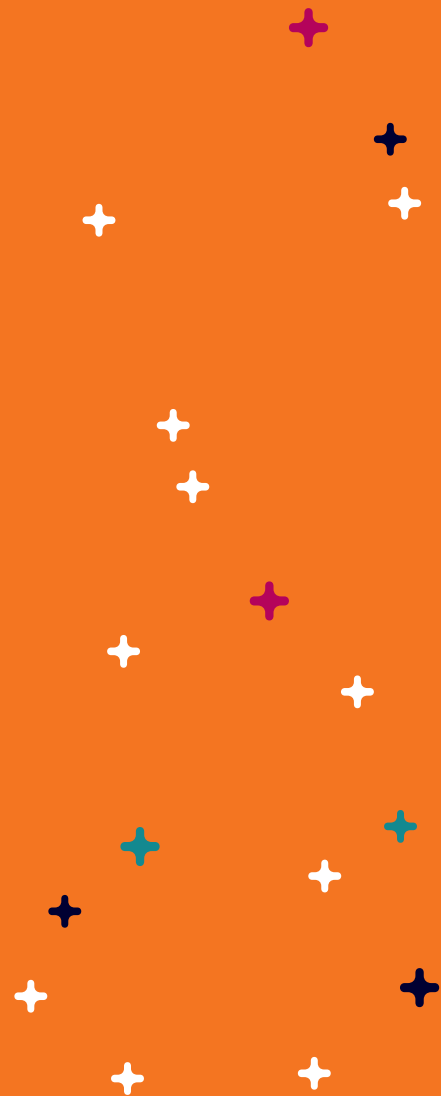


Audit Reports

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NOTES

1 Professional Standards

The Auditing and Attestation section tests audits of issuers, nonissuers, governmental entities, not-for-profit entities, and employee benefit plans. In addition to audits, this section also tests other types of engagements that an accountant may be called upon to perform, such as accounting and review service engagements and attestation and assurance engagements. Each engagement requires the accountant to follow the applicable ethical guideline(s) and standard(s) for the engagement. For example, an audit engagement requires the auditor to perform the audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards (GAAS). These engagements and applicable standards will be covered in more detail in later modules.

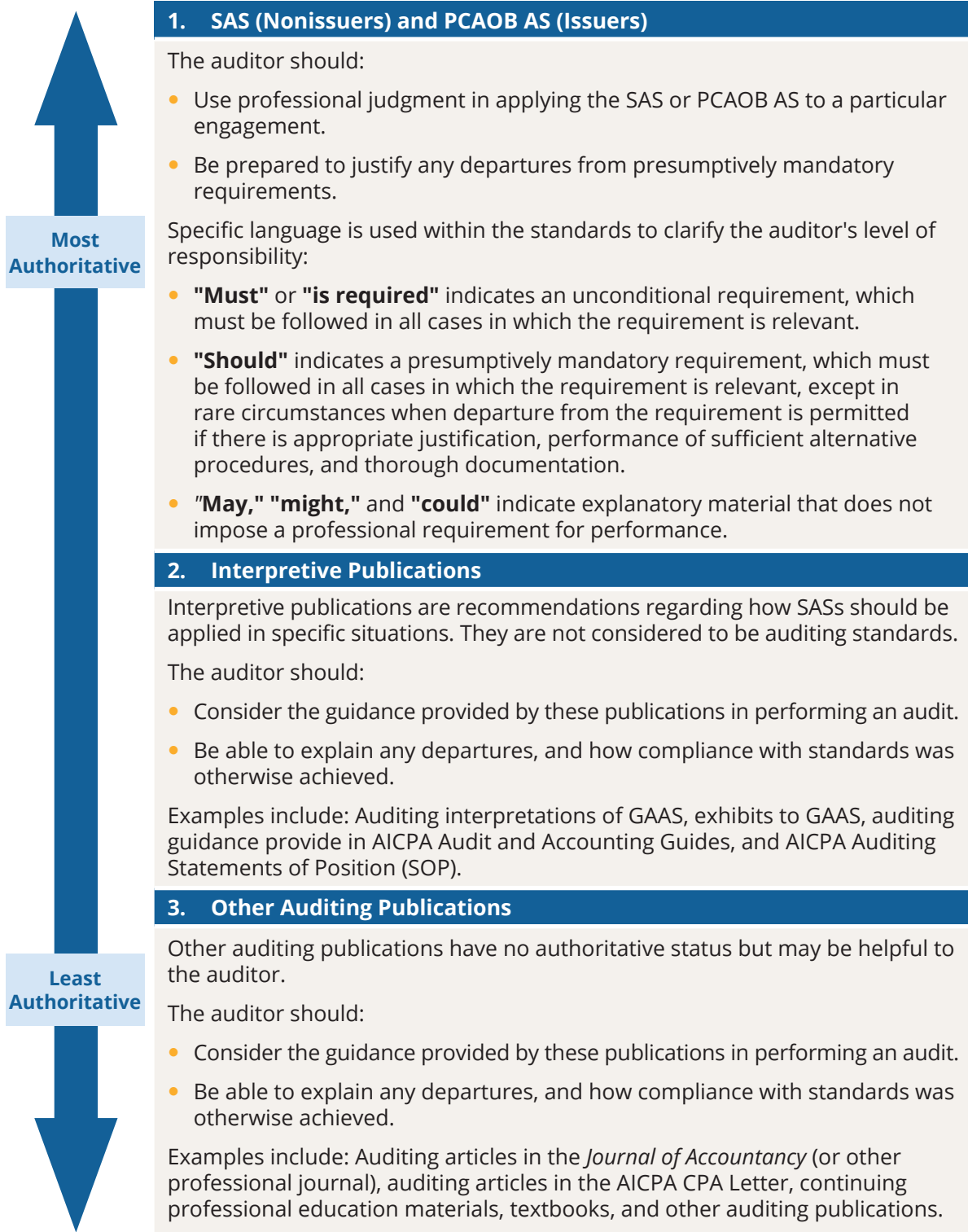
Below is an overview of standards and guidelines that will be tested in this section:

Professional Standards and Guidelines				
Standard/ Guideline	Section Reference	Standard- Setting Body	Description	Applies to:
Audits				
Statements on Auditing Standards (SAS)	AU-C	AICPA Auditing Standards Board	SAS provide generally accepted auditing standards for the audits of nonissuers . In addition, SAS provide guidance for other services, such as review of interim financial information and letters to underwriters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audits of annual historical financial statements: nonissuers • Special reports: nonissuers • Interim financial statements (where the annual financial statements have been audited): nonissuers
Public Company Accounting Oversight Board Auditing Standards (PCAOB AS)	PCAOB AS	Public Company Accounting Oversight Board	PCAOB AS provide generally accepted auditing standards for the audits of issuers . In addition, PCAOB AS provide guidance for other services, such as review of interim financial information and letters to underwriters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audits of annual historical financial statements: issuers • Special reports: issuers • Interim financial statements: issuers
Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS)	GAGAS	Governmental Accountability Office	GAGAS provide guidance for audits of government organizations, programs, activities, and of entities that receive government funds.	Financial or performance audits of government organizations, programs, activities, and of entities that receive government funds.

<i>Standard/ Guideline</i>	<i>Section Reference</i>	<i>Standard- Setting Body</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Applies to:</i>
Other Engagements				
Statements on Standards for Attestation Engagements (SSAE)	AT-C	AICPA	SSAE provide guidance for attestation engagements.	Examination, a review, or agreed-upon procedures report on a subject matter, or an assertion about a subject matter, that is the responsibility of another party.
Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services (SSARS)	AR-C	AICPA Accounting and Review Services Committee	SSARS provide guidance for unaudited financial statements or unaudited financial information of nonissuers .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation, compilation, and reviews of historical financial statements: nonissuers Preparation or compilation of pro forma financial information and forecasts: nonissuers
Guidelines				
Code of Professional Conduct	ET	AICPA	The AICPA Code of Professional Conduct provides members with guidelines for behavior in the conduct of their professional affairs. In addition, it provides assurance to the public that the profession intends to maintain high standards and to enforce compliance with these standards by its members.	Members of the AICPA
Statements on Quality Control Standards (SQCS)	QC	AICPA	SQCS provides guidance to CPA firms about a quality control system. A quality control system consists of policies and procedures designed, implemented, and maintained to ensure that the firm complies with professional standards and appropriate legal and regulatory requirements, and that any reports issued are appropriate in the circumstances.	CPA firms providing auditing, attestation, and accounting and review services.

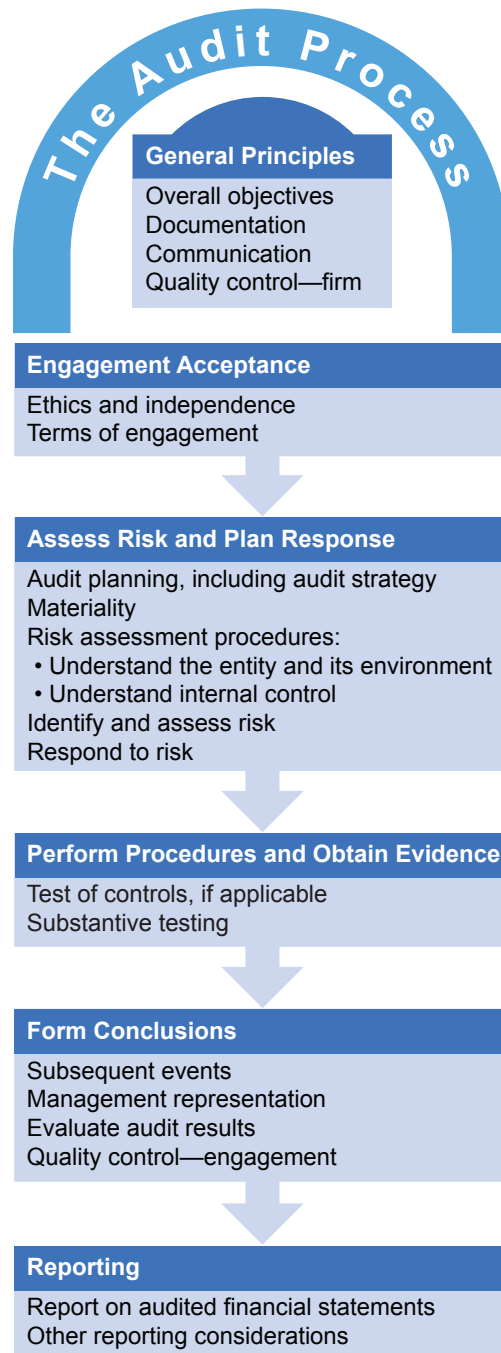
2 Auditing Guidance: The GAAS Hierarchy

There are three levels of audit guidance:



NOTES

1 Audit Process Overview



2 The Independent Audit Function: The Basics

The purpose of an audit is to provide financial statement users with an opinion on whether the financial statements are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with the *applicable financial reporting framework*.



Pass Key

The *applicable financial reporting framework* is the financial reporting framework that is acceptable in view of the nature of the entity and the objective of the financial statements, or that is required by law or regulation. Acceptable financial reporting frameworks include general purpose frameworks designed to meet the needs of a wide range of users (e.g., U.S. GAAP and International Financial Reporting Standards [IFRSs]), and special purpose frameworks.

The auditor's report gives credibility to the financial statements. The auditors, as a group independent of management, have an objective view and can report on a company's activities without bias or conflict of interest. Without a report from an independent auditor, a company's financial statements would be meaningless, because the public would have little faith in financial statements issued by the inherently biased company.

The financial statements of an enterprise are prepared by the management of the enterprise, not by the independent auditor. Further, the financial statements are the product and property of the enterprise; the independent auditor merely audits and expresses an opinion on them.

2.1 Management Responsibilities

An audit is conducted on the premise that management and, when appropriate, those charged with governance are responsible for:

1. the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework;
2. the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free of material misstatement due to error or fraud; and
3. providing the auditor with access to information and persons within the entity needed to complete the audit.



Pass Key

The preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements requires:

1. identification of the applicable financial reporting framework;
2. preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the framework; and
3. inclusion of an adequate description of the framework in the financial statements.

2.2 Auditor Responsibilities

The auditor is responsible for expressing an opinion on the financial statements based on the audit. The auditor is also responsible for:

1. maintaining professional skepticism;
2. complying with relevant ethical requirements;
3. exercising professional judgment throughout the planning and performance of the audit;
4. obtaining sufficient appropriate audit evidence; and
5. complying with generally accepted auditing standards (GAAS).

2.2.1 Professional Skepticism

The auditor should plan and perform the audit with professional skepticism. Professional skepticism is an attitude that the auditor must apply when making professional judgments that provide the basis for the auditor's actions. Professional skepticism is necessary to the critical assessment of audit evidence. Auditors should be alert for:

- Audit evidence that contradicts other audit evidence obtained.
- Information that calls into question the reliability of documents (including the identified controls over the preparation and maintenance of such information) and responses to inquiries that may be used as audit evidence.
- Conditions that indicate possible fraud.
- Circumstances that suggest the need for audit procedures in addition to those required by GAAS.
- Audit evidence that may impact the auditor's consideration of the initial identification and assessment of the risks of material misstatement.



Pass Key

The auditor should neither assume that management is dishonest nor assume unquestioned honesty. A belief that management is honest and has integrity does not relieve the auditor of the need to maintain professional skepticism or allow the auditor to be satisfied with less than persuasive evidence.

2.2.2 Impediments to Acting With Professional Skepticism

An auditor should act with professional skepticism throughout the audit. However, auditors often feel challenged to meet this requirement because of impediments to applying professional skepticism during an audit. Examples of impediments include:

- Unconscious human bias, which may cause the auditor to evaluate and recall information that favors the interest of the client over the interest of the investor or favors evidence that corroborates, rather than contradicts, the existence of risks. This may be facilitated by incentives and pressures to maintain and build client relationships, provide an unmodified (unqualified) opinion, keep audit costs low, or cross-sell other services.
- Development of an inappropriate level of trust or confidence in management, which may result in the auditor not taking as questioning a stance as needed.

- Pressure to avoid potential negative interactions with, or consequences to, individuals whom auditors know (e.g., management) instead of representing the interest of investors.
- Scheduling and workload demands, which may result in auditors making shortcuts in judgment, such as seeking audit evidence that is easier to obtain rather than evidence that is more reliable and relevant, or giving more weight to supporting evidence without considering contrary evidence.

2.2.3 Ethical Requirements

The auditor should comply with ethical requirements related to financial statement audit engagements, including *independence in both fact and appearance*. Ethical requirements include the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct and the rules of the state boards of accountancy and applicable regulatory agencies that are more restrictive.



Pass Key

The auditor must be independent of an entity when performing an engagement in accordance with GAAS unless: a) GAAS provides otherwise, or b) the auditor is required by law or regulation to accept the engagement and report on the financial statements.

2.2.4 Professional Judgment

The auditor should exercise professional judgment in planning and performing an audit. Professional judgment is necessary because an audit requires interpretation of ethical requirements and GAAS, as well as informed decisions based on the application of knowledge and experience.

In an audit, professional judgment is necessary when making decisions about:

- Materiality
- Audit risk
- The nature, extent, and timing of audit procedures
- Evaluating whether sufficient, appropriate evidence has been obtained
- Evaluating management's judgments in applying the applicable financial reporting framework
- Drawing conclusions based on the audit evidence obtained

2.2.5 Sufficient Appropriate Audit Evidence and Audit Risk

To obtain reasonable assurance, the auditor should obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to reduce audit risk to an acceptably low level and thereby enable the auditor to draw reasonable conclusions on which to base the auditor's opinion.

2.2.6 Compliance With GAAS

The auditor should not represent compliance with GAAS in the auditor's report unless the auditor has complied with all GAAS relevant to the audit. If the objective of a relevant GAAS section cannot be achieved, the auditor should consider whether this prevents the auditor from achieving the overall objectives of the auditor and thereby requires the auditor, in accordance with GAAS, to modify the auditor's opinion or withdraw from the engagement.

In certain audit engagements, the auditor may be required to comply with other auditing requirements in addition to GAAS. GAAS do not override laws or regulations that govern an audit of financial statements. The auditor may conduct the audit in accordance with both GAAS and:

- auditing standards issued by the PCAOB;
- requirements of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA);
- International Standards on Auditing (ISAs);
- government auditing standards (GAGAS); or
- auditing standards of a specific jurisdiction or country.

2.3 Reasonable Assurance and Inherent Limitations of an Audit

In order to express an opinion, the auditor obtains reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether due to error or fraud.

Reasonable assurance is a high, but not absolute, level of assurance. In order to obtain reasonable assurance, the auditor must:

1. plan the work and properly supervise any assistants;
2. determine and apply appropriate materiality levels;
3. identify and assess risks of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; and
4. obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence.

The auditor is unable to obtain absolute assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement because of the following inherent limitations:

- **The Nature of Financial Reporting:** Some financial statement items are subject to an inherent level of variability because they involve judgment by management or because they involve subjective decisions or assessments or a degree of uncertainty (e.g., accounting estimates).
- **The Nature of Audit Procedures:** There are practical and legal limits on an auditor's ability to obtain audit evidence, including:
 - The possibility that management or others may not provide, intentionally or unintentionally, the complete information that is needed for the preparation and presentation of the financial statements or that is requested by the auditor.
 - Fraud may be concealed in such a way that it is difficult to detect with audit procedures.
 - An audit is neither an investigation into a wrongdoing nor does the auditor have specific legal powers.
- **Timeliness of Financial Reporting and the Balance Between Cost and Benefit:** There is an expectation by users of financial statements that the auditor will form an opinion on the financial statements within a reasonable period of time and will achieve a balance between benefit and cost, recognizing that it is impracticable to address all information that may exist. Therefore, it is necessary for the auditor to:
 - plan the audit so that it is performed effectively;
 - direct efforts to areas most expected to contain risks of material misstatement; and
 - use testing and other means of examining populations for misstatement.

3 Determine the Nature and Scope of the Engagement

The following should be considered as the auditor, the audit committee, and management determine the appropriate nature and scope of the engagement:

- An auditor may be hired to perform an audit for a single period or multiple periods.
- An audit may be on the complete financial statement; single financial statement; or specific elements, accounts, or items of a financial statement.
- Many audit firms are hired to perform tax services in addition to audit services.

3.1 Nonissuers

When auditing nonissuers, the auditor must determine if an audit is the most appropriate engagement, or whether a review, compilation, or preparation may be more appropriate. If an audit is needed, nonissuers have the choice of:

- a financial statement audit only (where one opinion is rendered on the fairness of the financial statements); or
- an integrated audit (where two opinions are rendered: one opinion on the fairness of the financial statements and one opinion on the operating effectiveness of internal controls over financial reporting).

3.2 Issuers

When auditing issuers, the auditor must perform an integrated audit of the client's financial statements and internal controls over financial reporting (covered later).

4 Overall Objectives of Audit Engagements

4.1 Objectives of the Financial Statement Audit

The overall objectives of the auditor when conducting a financial statement audit (which apply to audits of issuers, nonissuers, and governmental entities) are:

1. to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to error or fraud, which enables the auditor to express an opinion on whether the financial statements are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with an applicable financial reporting framework; and
2. to report on the financial statements and communicate as required by GAAS based on the auditor's findings.

4.2 Objectives of the Audit of Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

Issuers are required to have an integrated audit of financial statements and internal control over financial reporting. In some cases, nonissuers and governmental entities may also have an audit of internal control over financial reporting. The overall objectives of the auditor when conducting an audit of internal control over financial reporting are:

1. Express an opinion on the effectiveness of the company's internal control over financial reporting; and
2. Plan and perform the audit to obtain appropriate evidence that is sufficient to obtain reasonable assurance about whether material weaknesses exist as of the date specified in management's assessment.

Audits of internal control over financial reporting must be integrated with an audit of the financial statements.

4.3 Objectives of the ERISA Plan Financial Statements Audit

The overall objectives of the auditor when conducting an ERISA plan financial statement audit are:

- Accept an ERISA plan audit engagement when the basis upon which it is to be performed has been agreed upon through establishing whether the preconditions for the audit are present.
- Appropriately plan and perform the audit of ERISA plan financial statements, including procedures required by this SAS on the certified investment information when management elects an ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit.
- Form an opinion on the ERISA plan financial statements based on an evaluation of the audit evidence obtained, including evidence obtained about comparative financial statements.
- Express clearly the opinion on the ERISA plan financial statements through a written report.
- Perform procedures and report on the presentation of the supplementary information in accordance with this SAS.
- Appropriately communicate to management and those charged with governance reportable findings that the auditor has identified during the audit of the ERISA plan financial statements.

NOTES

1 Forming an Opinion on the Financial Statements

The auditor should form an opinion on whether the financial statements are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.

In order to form that opinion, the auditor should take into account the following:

1. Whether sufficient appropriate audit evidence was obtained (as required by GAAS);
2. Whether uncorrected misstatements are material, individually or in the aggregate; and
3. Whether the financial statements are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the requirements of the applicable financial reporting framework (i.e., GAAP).

Financial statements generally mean a complete set of general-purpose financial statements, including disclosures. The applicable financial reporting framework determines the form and content of a complete set of financial statements. For example, under U.S. GAAP a complete set of financial statements includes a balance sheet, a statement of income (or comprehensive income), a statement of changes in equity, a cash flow statement, and disclosures.

When forming the opinion, the auditor should evaluate whether, based on the applicable financial reporting framework:

- The financial statements adequately disclose the significant accounting policies selected and applied, including a description of the applicable financial reporting framework.
- The accounting policies selected and applied are consistent with the applicable financial reporting framework and are appropriate.
- The accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management are reasonable.
- The information presented in the financial statements is relevant, reliable, comparable, and understandable.
- The financial statements provide adequate disclosures to enable the intended users to understand the effect of material transactions and events on the information conveyed in the financial statements.
- The terminology used in the financial statements, including the title of each financial statement, is appropriate.
- The overall structure and content of the financial statements is fairly presented.
- The financial statements, including disclosures, represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

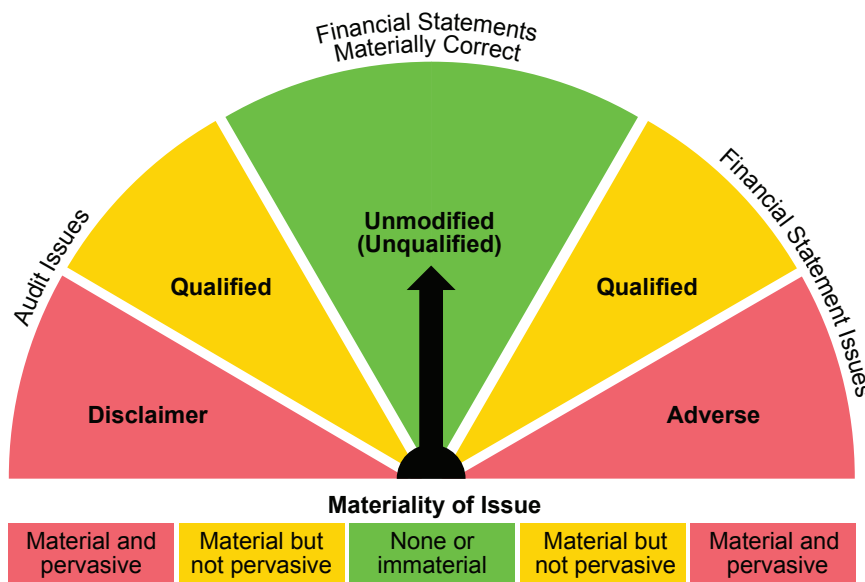


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The auditor refers to generally accepted auditing standards (GAAS) for guidelines on how to perform the audit (e.g., inventory count should be observed by the auditor).

The auditor refers to the financial reporting framework (e.g., U.S. GAAP) to evaluate whether the transactions are recorded and reported fairly in the financial statements (e.g., land should not be depreciated).

2 Types of Opinions



2.1 Unmodified (Unqualified) Opinion

An unmodified (unqualified) opinion states that the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position, results of operations, and cash flows of the entity in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework. Note that *unmodified* is the term used for nonissuers and *unqualified* is the term used for issuers.

In certain circumstances, the auditor may determine that it is necessary to add additional communications to the auditor's report without modifying the auditor's opinion. This is done using emphasis-of-matter, other-matter, and explanatory paragraphs. Nonissuers use the terms *emphasis-of-matter* and *other-matter*, and issuers use the term *explanatory*.

2.2 Modifications to the Auditor's Opinion

The auditor's report should be modified when:

1. the auditor concludes that the financial statements as a whole are materially misstated (financial statement issue); or
2. the auditor is unable to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to conclude that the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement (audit issue).

2.2.1 Types of Modified Opinions

There are three types of modified opinions: the qualified opinion, the adverse opinion, and the disclaimer of opinion.

- **Qualified Opinion:** A qualified opinion states that except for the effects of the matter(s) to which the qualification relates, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position, results of operations, and cash flows of the entity in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework.
- **Adverse Opinion:** An adverse opinion states that the financial statements do not present fairly the financial position, results of operations, or cash flows of the entity in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework.
- **Disclaimer of Opinion:** A disclaimer of opinion states that the auditor does not express an opinion on the financial statements.



Pass Key

When the auditor expresses an adverse opinion or a disclaimer of opinion on the complete financial statements (i.e., balance sheet, statement of income, statement of changes in equity, statement of cash flows, and disclosures), the auditor's report should not also include an unmodified (unqualified) opinion on a single financial statement (e.g., the statement of cash flows) or one or more specific elements, accounts, or items of a financial statement. Issuing such an unmodified (unqualified) opinion in these circumstances would contradict the adverse opinion or the disclaimer of opinion on the complete financial statements.

2.2.2 Brief Summary of When to Use Different Opinions

The chart below summarizes when to use different opinions.

Materiality of Problem	Financial Statements Are Materially Misstated (Financial Statement Issues)	Inability to Obtain Sufficient Appropriate Audit Evidence (Audit Issues)
None or immaterial	Unmodified (unqualified)	Unmodified (unqualified)
Material but not pervasive	Qualified opinion	Qualified opinion
Material and pervasive	Adverse opinion	Disclaimer of opinion

2.2.3 Definition of Pervasive

Pervasive effects on the financial statements are those which in the auditor's professional judgment:

- are not confined to specific elements, accounts, or items of the financial statements;
- if so confined, represent a substantial proportion of the financial statements; or
- are disclosures fundamental to the users' understanding of the financial statements.

1 Unmodified Audit Opinion (Nonissuers)

The auditor of a nonissuer should express an unmodified opinion when the auditor concludes that the financial statements are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework. The auditor's report should be in writing. Note that nonissuers use the term *unmodified* and issuers use the term *unqualified*.

1.1 Contents of the Audit Report

The basic elements of the unmodified audit opinion are the following:

Independent Auditor Report	
Title	Title clearly indicates that it is a report of an independent auditor.
Addressee	The report is addressed as required by the circumstances of the engagement.
Auditor's Opinion	<p>The auditor's report should include a section with the heading "Opinion" that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entity whose financial statements have been audited. • A statement that the financial statements have been audited. • The title of each statement that the financial statements comprise and reference to the notes. • The dates or periods covered by each financial statement that the financial statements comprise. • A statement that in the auditor's opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the entity as of the balance sheet date and the results of operations and its cash flows for the period then ended, in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework. • Identification of the applicable financial reporting framework and its origin.
Basis for Opinion	<p>The auditor's report should include a section with the heading "Basis for Opinion" that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A statement that the audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and identifies the United States of America as the country of origin of those standards (GAAS). • A reference to the section of the auditor's report that describes auditor responsibilities under GAAS. • A statement that the auditor is required to be independent and to meet other relevant ethical requirements. • A statement as to whether the auditor believes that the evidence obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for the auditor's opinion.
Substantial Doubt About the Entity's Ability to Continue as a Going Concern (When Relevant)	<p>When relevant, the auditor should include a separate section in the auditor's report with the heading "Substantial Doubt About the Entity's Ability to Continue as a Going Concern" that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draws attention to the note in the financial statements that discloses the conditions or events identified, management's plans to deal with the conditions or events, and states that they indicate that substantial doubt exists about the entity's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time. • States that the auditor's opinion is not modified with respect to the matter.

<p>Key Audit Matters (When Engaged)</p>	<p>When engaged to communicate key auditor matters, the auditor should describe each key audit matter, using an appropriate subheading, in a separate section in the auditor's report with the heading "Key Audit Matters." The introductory language should state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Key audit matters are those matters that were communicated with those charged with governance and, in the auditor's professional judgment, were of most significance in the audit of the financial statements in the current period. ● These matters were addressed in the context of the audit of the financial statements as a whole, and in forming the auditor's opinion thereon, and the auditor does not provide a separate opinion on these matters. <p>The description of each key audit matter should include a reference to the related disclosures, if any, in the financial statements, and should address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Why the matter was considered to be one of the most significant in the audit. ● How the matter was addressed in the audit. <p>The auditor should not communicate a matter in this section of the auditor's report when the auditor would be required to modify the opinion as a result of the matter.</p>
<p>Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements</p>	<p>The auditor's report should include a section with the heading "Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements" that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An explanation that management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework. ● A statement that this responsibility includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. ● When required, the evaluation of whether there are conditions or events that raise substantial doubt about the entity's ability to continue as a going concern.
<p>Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements</p>	<p>The auditor's report should include a section with the heading "Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements" that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A statement that the objectives of the auditor are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether due to error or fraud, and to issue an auditor's report that includes the auditor's opinion. ● A statement that reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and, therefore, is not a guarantee a material misstatement will always be detected when it exists. ● A statement that the risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. ● A statement that misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgement made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements. ● A description of the audit that states the auditor's responsibilities are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism. — Identify and assess the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to error or fraud, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. — Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, <i>but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control, and accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.</i> (The italicized portion of this statement should be omitted if the auditor does have a responsibility to express an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control in conjunction with the audit of financial statements.)