20 October 2026

Mr Channa Wijesinghe
Chief Executive Officer
Accounting Professional & Ethical Standards Board Limited
Suite 2, Level 3, 99 Queen Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

By email: https://apesb.org.au/current-projects/

Dear Channa

APESB ED 02/26 *Proposed Guidance Note: APES GN 40 Ethical Conflicts in the Workplace – Considerations for Members in Business*

The Institute of Public Accountants (IPA) welcomes the opportunity to provide comments on the above Exposure Draft (ED 02/26).

General Comment
Overall, IPA supports the proposals in ED 02/26 to revise GN 40 to incorporate the recent changes in APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* that impact Members in Business, including tax planning and related services and sustainability reporting. We find the Case Studies easy to navigate, sufficiently varied in circumstances and ethical issues that Members in Business may face, and the considerations and approaches to adopt in resolving the ethical issues.

Specific Comment
Our comments to the specific matters in ED 02/26, below, relate to editorial suggestions to improve the consistency of the Guidance Note:

"Determine whether a procedure of conflict resolution exists within the organisation" row – inconsistent matters for consideration
The "Determine whether a procedure of conflict resolution exists within the organisation" row for:

- Case Study 1 states "Consider the company's policies and procedures."
- Case Study 2 states "Consider the company's policies and procedures and applicable standards."
- Case Study 4 states "Consider the company's policies and procedures, applicable standards relevant best practices, and applicable laws and regulations."

Case Studies 1, 2 and 4 all relate to accounting expenditures in a financial report of expenses, accruals, and research and development costs respectively, and yet each of the Case Studies has different matters for consideration. We think the statement for Case Study 4 of "Consider the company's policies and procedures, applicable standards relevant best practices, and applicable laws and regulations." is equally applicable to Case Studies 1 and 2. We therefore suggest that the Case Study 4 wording be used in Case Studies 1 and 2. We also suggest the APESB review the remaining Case Studies in GN 40 for consistency.

"Issues" discussed for a Case Study are inconsistent

The body of:

- Case Studies 4 and 6 state "Issues: Preparation and presentation of information".
- Case Study 5 states "Issues: Preparation and presentation of information/Pressure to breach the fundamental principles".

We think the wording for Case Study 5 is equally applicable to Case Studies 4 and 6. We therefore suggest that the Case Study 5 wording be used in Case Studies 4 and 6.

Additionally, the "Issues Discussed" in Section 16 Case Studies table (ED 02/26, pages 18-19) are also inconsistent with the "Issues" section in the body of the Case Study. For example:

- the body of Case Study 19 states "Issue: Potential conflicts/Preparation and presentation of information".
- while "Issues Discussed" in Section 16 Case Studies table states "Professional behaviour/ Preparation and presentation of information".

We suggest the aligning the text for the two areas. We also suggest the APESB review the remaining Case Studies in GN 40 for consistency.

Case Study 22 – incomplete sentences

Case Study 22 states "Case outline: Oliver (Member in Business) is … which is performing in line with **plan and** generating substantial profits …" (emphasis added) – we think the wording is incomplete between the words "plan" and "and".

The third paragraph of Case Study 22 states "The next morning … that the Contract Director is satisfied with the amended KPIs and the Contract Director **signs off** monthly." (emphasis added). We think the word "them" should be added between the words "signs" and "off".

For any questions relating to this submission, please contact Vicki Stylianou, Group Executive Advocacy and Professional Standards at vicki.stylianou@publicaccountants.org.au.

Yours sincerely

[signed V Stylianou]
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