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Glossary of Terms Relating to Hong Kong Standards on Quality Management, Auditing, Review, Other Assurance and Related Services



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

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS RELATING TO HONG KONG STANDARDS ON QUALITY MANAGEMENT, AUDITING, REVIEW, OTHER ASSURANCE AND RELATED SERVICES¹

(March 2025)

Access controls - Procedures designed to restrict access to on-line terminal devices, programs and data. Access controls consist of “user authentication” and “user authorization”. “User authentication” typically attempts to identify a user through unique logon identifications, passwords, access cards or biometric data. “User authorization” consists of access rules to determine the computer resources each user may access. Specifically, such procedures are designed to prevent or detect:

- Unauthorized access to on-line terminal devices, programs and data;
- Entry of unauthorized transactions;
- Unauthorized changes to data files;
- The use of computer programs by unauthorized personnel; and
- The use of computer programs that have not been authorized.

**Accounting estimate* - A monetary amount for which the measurement, in accordance with the requirements of the applicable financial reporting framework, is subject to estimation uncertainty.

**Accounting records* - The records of initial accounting entries and supporting records, such as checks and records of electronic fund transfers; invoices; contracts; the general and subsidiary ledgers, journal entries and other adjustments to the financial statements that are not reflected in formal journal entries; and records such as work sheets and spreadsheets supporting cost allocations, computations, reconciliations and disclosures.

**Aggregation risk* - The probability that the aggregate of uncorrected and undetected misstatements exceeds materiality for the financial statements as a whole.

Agreed-upon procedures - Procedures that have been agreed to by the practitioner and the engaging party (and if relevant, other parties).

Agreed-upon procedures engagement - An engagement in which a practitioner is engaged to carry out procedures to which the practitioner and the engaging party (and if relevant, other parties) have agreed and to communicate the procedures performed and the related findings in an agreed-upon procedures report.

**Analytical procedures* - Evaluations of financial information through analysis of plausible relationships among both financial and non-financial data. Analytical procedures also encompass such investigation as is necessary of identified fluctuations or relationships that are inconsistent with other relevant information or that differ from expected values by a significant amount.

^{*} Denotes a term defined in the HKSAs.

[†] Denotes a term defined in the Hong Kong Standards on Quality Management.

¹ In the case of public sector engagements, the terms in this glossary should be read as referring to their public sector equivalents.

Where accounting terms have not been defined in the pronouncements of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants, reference should be made to the Glossary of Terms published by the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

**Annual report* - A document, or combination of documents, prepared typically on an annual basis by management or those charged with governance in accordance with law, regulation or custom, the purpose of which is to provide owners (or similar stakeholders) with information on the entity's operations and the entity's financial results and financial position as set out in the financial statements. An annual report contains or accompanies the financial statements and the auditor's report thereon and usually includes information about the entity's developments, its future outlook and risks and uncertainties, a statement by the entity's governing body, and reports covering governance matters.

**Anomaly* - A misstatement or deviation that is demonstrably not representative of misstatements or deviations in a population.

Applicable criteria (in the context of HKSAE 3410²) - The criteria used by the entity to quantify and report its emissions in the GHG statement.

Applicable criteria (in the context of HKSAE 3420³) - The criteria used by the responsible party when compiling the pro forma financial information. Criteria may be established by an authorized or recognized standard-setting organization or by law or regulation. Where established criteria do not exist, they will be developed by the responsible party.

**Applicable financial reporting framework* - The financial reporting framework adopted by management and, where appropriate, those charged with governance in the preparation of the financial statements 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. In the context of HKRSRS 4410 (Revised)⁴, reference is to the financial information, rather than to the financial statements.

The term "fair presentation framework" is used to refer to a financial reporting framework that requires compliance with the requirements of the framework and:

- (a) Acknowledges explicitly or implicitly that, to achieve fair presentation of the financial statements, it may be necessary for management to provide disclosures beyond those specifically required by the framework; or
- (b) Acknowledges explicitly that it may be necessary for management to depart from a requirement of the framework to achieve fair presentation of the financial statements. Such departures are expected to be necessary only in extremely rare circumstances.

The term "compliance framework" is used to refer to a financial reporting framework that requires compliance with the requirements of the framework, but does not contain the acknowledgements in (a) or (b) above.

Application controls in information technology - Manual or automated procedures that typically operate at a business process level. Application controls can be preventative or detective in nature and are designed to ensure the integrity of the accounting records. Accordingly, application controls relate to procedures used to initiate, record, process and report transactions or other financial data.

**Applied criteria (in the context of HKSA 810 (Revised)⁵)* - The criteria applied by management in the preparation of the summary financial statements.

**Appropriateness (of audit evidence)* - The measure of the quality of audit evidence; that is, its relevance and its reliability in providing support for the conclusions on which the auditor's opinion is based.

² HKSAE 3410, *Assurance Engagements on Greenhouse Gas Statements*

³ HKSAE 3420, *Assurance Engagements to Report on the Compilation of Pro Forma Financial Information Included in a Prospectus*

⁴ HKRSRS 4410 (Revised), *Compilation Engagements*

⁵ HKSA 810 (Revised), *Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements*

**Arm's length transaction* - A transaction conducted on such terms and conditions as between a willing buyer and a willing seller who are unrelated and are acting independently of each other and pursuing their own best interests.

**Assertions* - Representations, explicit or otherwise, with respect to the recognition, measurement, presentation and disclosure of information in the financial statements which are inherent in management representing that the financial statements are prepared in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework. Assertions are used by the auditor to consider the different types of potential misstatements that may occur when identifying, assessing and responding to the risks of material misstatement.

Assess - Analyze identified risks of material misstatement to conclude on their significance. "Assess", by convention, is used only in relation to risk. (also see *Evaluate*)

Association - (see *Auditor association with financial information*)

Assurance - (see *Reasonable assurance*)

Assurance engagement - An engagement in which a practitioner aims to obtain sufficient appropriate evidence in order to express a conclusion designed to enhance the degree of confidence of the intended users other than the responsible party about the subject matter information (that is, the outcome of the measurement or evaluation of an underlying subject matter against criteria). Each assurance engagement is classified on two dimensions:

- (i) Either a reasonable assurance engagement or a limited assurance engagement:
 - a. Reasonable assurance engagement - An assurance engagement in which the practitioner reduces engagement risk to an acceptably low level in the circumstances of the engagement as the basis for the practitioner's conclusion. The practitioner's conclusion is expressed in a form that conveys the practitioner's opinion on the outcome of the measurement or evaluation of the underlying subject matter against criteria.
 - b. Limited assurance engagement - An assurance engagement in which the practitioner reduces engagement risk to a level that is acceptable in the circumstances of the engagement but where that risk is greater than for a reasonable assurance engagement as the basis for expressing a conclusion in a form that conveys whether, based on the procedures performed and evidence obtained, a matter(s) has come to the practitioner's attention to cause the practitioner to believe the subject matter information is materially misstated. The nature, timing and extent of procedures performed in a limited assurance engagement is limited compared with that necessary in a reasonable assurance engagement but is planned to obtain a level of assurance that is, in the practitioner's professional judgment, meaningful. To be meaningful, the level of assurance obtained by the practitioner is likely to enhance the intended users' confidence about the subject matter information to a degree that is clearly more than inconsequential.
- (ii) Either an attestation engagement or a direct engagement:
 - a. Attestation engagement - An assurance engagement in which a party other than the practitioner measures or evaluates the underlying subject matter against the criteria. A party other than the practitioner also often presents the resulting subject matter information in a report or statement. In some cases, however, the subject matter information may be presented by the practitioner in the assurance report. In an attestation engagement, the practitioner's conclusion addresses whether the subject matter information is free from material misstatement. The practitioner's conclusion may be phrased in terms of:

- i. The underlying subject matter and the applicable criteria;
 - ii. The subject matter information and the applicable criteria; or
 - iii. A statement made by the appropriate party(ies).
- b. Direct engagement - An assurance engagement in which the practitioner measures or evaluates the underlying subject matter against the applicable criteria and the practitioner presents the resulting subject matter information as part of, or accompanying, the assurance report. In a direct engagement, the practitioner's conclusion addresses the reported outcome of the measurement or evaluation of the underlying subject matter against the criteria.

Assurance engagement risk - The risk that the practitioner expresses an inappropriate conclusion when the subject matter information is materially misstated.

Assurance skills and techniques - Those planning, evidence gathering, evidence evaluation, communication and reporting skills and techniques demonstrated by an assurance practitioner that are distinct from expertise in the underlying subject matter of any particular assurance engagement or its measurement or evaluation.

**Audit documentation* - The record of audit procedures performed, relevant audit evidence obtained, and conclusions the auditor reached (terms such as "working papers" or "workpapers" are also sometimes used).

**Audit evidence* - Information used by the auditor in arriving at the conclusions on which the auditor's opinion is based. Audit evidence includes both information contained in the accounting records underlying the financial statements and other information. (see *Sufficiency of audit evidence* and *Appropriateness of audit evidence*.)

**Audit file* - One or more folders or other storage media, in physical or electronic form, containing the records that comprise the audit documentation for a specific engagement.

Audit firm - (see *Firm*)

**Audit opinion* - (see *Modified opinion and Unmodified opinion*)

**Audit risk* - The risk that the auditor expresses an inappropriate audit opinion when the financial statements are materially misstated. Audit risk is a function of the risks of material misstatement and detection risk.

**Audit sampling (sampling)* - The application of audit procedures to less than 100% of items within a population of audit relevance such that all sampling units have a chance of selection in order to provide the auditor with a reasonable basis on which to draw conclusions about the entire population.

**Audited financial statements (in the context of HKSA 810 (Revised))* - Financial statements⁶ audited by the auditor in accordance with HKSAs, and from which the summary financial statements are derived.

⁶ HKSA 200, *Overall Objectives of the Independent Auditor and the Conduct of an Audit in Accordance with Hong Kong Standards on Auditing*, paragraph 13(f) defines the term "financial statements".

**Auditor* - “Auditor” is used to refer to the person or persons conducting the audit, usually the engagement partner or other members of the engagement team, or, as applicable, the firm. Where an HKSA expressly intends that a requirement or responsibility be fulfilled by the engagement partner, the term “engagement partner” rather than “auditor” is used. “Engagement partner” and “firm” are to be read as referring to their public sector equivalents where relevant.

Auditor association with financial information - An auditor is associated with financial information when the auditor attaches a report to that information or consents to the use of the auditor’s name in a professional connection.

**Auditor’s expert* - An individual or organization possessing expertise in a field other than accounting or auditing, whose work in that field is used by the auditor to assist the auditor in obtaining sufficient appropriate audit evidence. An auditor’s expert may be either an auditor’s internal expert (who is a partner⁷ or staff, including temporary staff, of the auditor’s firm or a network firm), or an auditor’s external expert.

**Auditor’s point estimate or auditor’s range* - An amount, or range of amounts, respectively, developed by the auditor in evaluating management’s point estimate.

**Auditor’s range* - (see *Auditor’s point estimate*)

Base year - A specific year or an average over multiple years against which an entity’s emissions are compared over time.

**Business risk* - A risk resulting from significant conditions, events, circumstances, actions or inactions that could adversely affect an entity’s ability to achieve its objectives and execute its strategies, or from the setting of inappropriate objectives and strategies.

Cap and trade - A system that sets overall emissions limits, allocates emissions allowances to participants, and allows them to trade allowances and emission credits with each other.

Carve-out method - Method of dealing with the services provided by a subservice organization, whereby the service organization’s description of its system includes the nature of the services provided by a subservice organization, but that subservice organization’s relevant control objectives and related controls are excluded from the service organization’s description of its system and from the scope of the service auditor’s engagement. The service organization’s description of its system and the scope of the service auditor’s engagement include controls at the service organization to monitor the effectiveness of controls at the subservice organization, which may include the service organization’s review of an assurance report on controls at the subservice organization.

**Comparative financial statements* - Comparative information where amounts and other disclosures for the prior period are included for comparison with the financial statements of the current period but, if audited, are referred to in the auditor’s opinion. The level of information included in those comparative financial statements is comparable with that of the financial statements of the current period.

**Comparative information* - The amounts and disclosures included in the financial statements in respect of one or more prior periods in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework. In the context of HKSAE 3410, comparative information is defined as the amounts and disclosures included in the GHG statement in respect of one or more prior periods.

⁷ “Partner” and “firm” should be read as referring to their public sector equivalents where relevant.

Compilation engagement - An engagement in which a practitioner applies accounting and financial reporting expertise to assist management in the preparation and presentation of financial information of an entity in accordance with an applicable financial reporting framework, and reports as required by this HKSRS. Throughout HKSRS 4410 (Revised), the words “compile”, “compiling” and “compiled” are used in this context.

**Complementary user entity controls* - Controls that the service organization assumes, in the design of its service, will be implemented by user entities, and which, if necessary to achieve control objectives, are identified in the description of its system.

**Compliance framework* - (see *Applicable financial reporting framework* and *General purpose framework*)

**Component* - An entity, business unit, function or business activity, or some combination thereof, determined by the group auditor for purposes of planning and performing audit procedures in a group audit.

**Component auditor* - An auditor who performs audit work related to a component for purposes of the group audit. A component auditor is a part of the engagement team⁸ for a group audit.

**Component management* - Management responsible for a component.

**Component performance materiality* - An amount set by the group auditor to reduce aggregation risk to an appropriately low level for purposes of planning and performing audit procedures in relation to a component.

Computer-assisted audit techniques - Applications of auditing procedures using the computer as an audit tool (also known as CAATs).

**Controls* - Policies or procedures that an entity establishes to achieve the control objectives of management or those charged with governance. In this context:

- (i) Policies are statements of what should, or should not, be done within the entity to effect control. Such statements may be documented, explicitly stated in communications, or implied through actions and decisions.
- (ii) Procedures are actions to implement policies.

Control environment - Includes the governance and management functions and the attitudes, awareness and actions of those charged with governance and management concerning the entity's internal control and its importance in the entity. The control environment is a component of internal control.

Control objective - The aim or purpose of a particular aspect of controls. Control objectives relate to risks that controls seek to mitigate.

**Control risk* - (see *Risk of material misstatement*)

Controls at the service organization - Controls over the achievement of a control objective that is covered by the service auditor's assurance report.

Controls at a subservice organization - Controls at a subservice organization to provide reasonable assurance about the achievement of a control objective.

Corporate governance - (see *Governance*)

⁸ HKSA 220 (Revised), paragraph 12(d)

**Corresponding figures* - Comparative information where amounts and other disclosures for the prior period are included as an integral part of the current period financial statements, and are intended to be read only in relation to the amounts and other disclosures relating to the current period (referred to as “current period figures”). The level of detail presented in the corresponding amounts and disclosures is dictated primarily by its relevance to the current period figures.

Criteria - The benchmarks used to measure or evaluate the underlying subject matter. The “applicable criteria” are the criteria used for the particular engagement.

**Date of approval of the financial statements* - The date on which all the statements that comprise the financial statements, including the related notes, have been prepared and those with the recognized authority have asserted that they have taken responsibility for those financial statements.

**Date of the auditor’s report* - The date the auditor dates the report on the financial statements in accordance with HKSA 700 (Revised).⁹

**Date of the financial statements* - The date of the end of the latest period covered by the financial statements.

**Date the financial statements are issued* - The date that the auditor’s report and audited financial statements are made available to third parties.

**Deficiency in internal control* - This exists when:

- (a) A control is designed, implemented or operated in such a way that it is unable to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements in the financial statements on a timely basis; or
- (b) A control necessary to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements in the financial statements on a timely basis is missing.

†Deficiency in the firm’s system of quality management (in the context of HKSQM 1¹⁰) - This exists when:

- (i) A quality objective required to achieve the objective of the system of quality management is not established;
- (ii) A quality risk, or combination of quality risks, is not identified or properly assessed;
- (iii) A response, or combination of responses, does not reduce to an acceptably low level the likelihood of a related quality risk occurring because the response(s) is not properly designed, implemented or operating effectively; or
- (iv) An other aspect of the system of quality management is absent, or not properly designed, implemented or operating effectively, such that a requirement of this HKSQM 1 has not been addressed.

**Detection risk* - The risk that the procedures performed by the auditor to reduce audit risk to an acceptably low level will not detect a misstatement that exists and that could be material, either individually or when aggregated with other misstatements.

**Direct assistance* - The use of internal auditors to perform audit procedures under the direction, supervision and review of the external auditor.

⁹ HKSA 700 (Revised), *Forming an Opinion and Reporting on Financial Statements*

¹⁰ HKSQM 1, *Quality Management for Firms that Perform Audits or Reviews of Financial Statements, or Other Assurance or Related Services Engagements*

**Element - (see Element of a financial statement)*

**Element of a financial statement (in the context of HKSA 805 (Revised)¹¹) - An element, account or item of a financial statement.*

Emissions - The GHGs that, during the relevant period, have been emitted to the atmosphere or would have been emitted to the atmosphere had they not been captured and channeled to a sink. Emissions can be categorized as:

- Direct emissions (also known as Scope 1 emissions), which are emissions from sources that are owned or controlled by the entity.
- Indirect emissions, which are emissions that are a consequence of the activities of the entity, but which occur at sources that are owned or controlled by another entity. Indirect emissions can be further categorized as:
 - Scope 2 emissions, which are emissions associated with energy that is transferred to and consumed by the entity.
 - Scope 3 emissions, which are all other indirect emissions.

Emissions deduction - Any item included in the entity's GHG statement that is deducted from the total reported emissions, but which is not a removal; it commonly includes purchased offsets, but can also include a variety of other instruments or mechanisms such as performance credits and allowances that are recognized by a regulatory or other scheme of which the entity is a part.

Emissions factor - A mathematical factor or ratio for converting the measure of an activity (for example, liters of fuel consumed, kilometers travelled, the number of animals in husbandry, or tonnes of product produced) into an estimate of the quantity of GHGs associated with that activity.

Emissions trading scheme - A market-based approach used to control greenhouse gases by providing economic incentives for achieving reductions in the emissions of such gases.

**Emphasis of Matter paragraph - A paragraph included in the auditor's report that refers to a matter appropriately presented or disclosed in the financial statements that, in the auditor's judgment, is of such importance that it is fundamental to users' understanding of the financial statements.*

Engagement circumstances - The broad context defining the particular engagement, which includes: the terms of the engagement; whether it is a reasonable assurance engagement or a limited assurance engagement, the characteristics of the underlying subject matter; the measurement or evaluation criteria; the information needs of the intended users; relevant characteristics of the responsible party, the measurer or evaluator, and the engaging party and their environment; and other matters, for example events, transactions, conditions and practices, that may have a significant effect on the engagement.

†Engagement documentation - The record of work performed, results obtained, and conclusions the practitioner reached (terms such as "working papers" or "workpapers" are sometimes used).

Engagement letter - Written terms of an engagement in the form of a letter.

†Engagement partner (in the context of HKSQM 1) - The partner or other individual, appointed by the firm, who is responsible for the engagement and its performance, and for the report that is issued on behalf of the firm, and who, where required, has the appropriate authority from a professional, legal or regulatory body.

¹¹ HKSA 805 (Revised), *Special Considerations—Audits of Single Financial Statements and Specific Elements, Accounts or Items of a Financial Statement*

**Engagement partner (in the context of the HKSAAs, defined in HKSA 220 (Revised))¹²* - The partner or other individual, appointed by the firm, who is responsible for the engagement and its performance, and for the auditor's report that is issued on behalf of the firm, and who, where required, has the appropriate authority from a professional, legal or regulatory body.

Engagement partner (in the context of HKSAE 3000 (Revised))¹³ - The partner or other individual, appointed by the firm, who is responsible for the engagement and its performance, and for the assurance report that is issued on behalf of the firm, and who, where required, has the appropriate authority from a professional, legal or regulatory body.

Engagement partner (in the context of HKRSR 4400 (Revised))¹⁴ - The partner or other individual, appointed by the firm, who is responsible for the engagement and its performance, and for the agreed-upon-procedures report that is issued on behalf of the firm, and who, where required, has the appropriate authority from a professional, legal or regulatory body.

Engagement partner (in the context of HKRSR 4410 (Revised)) - The partner or other individual, appointed by the firm, who is responsible for the engagement and its performance, and for the compilation report that is issued on behalf of the firm, and who, where required, has the appropriate authority from a professional, legal or regulatory body.

**†Engagement quality review* - An objective evaluation of the significant judgments made by the engagement team and the conclusions reached thereon, performed by the engagement quality reviewer and completed on or before the date of the engagement report.

**†Engagement quality reviewer* - A partner, other individual in the firm, or an external individual, appointed by the firm to perform the engagement quality review.

Engagement risk - The risk that the practitioner expresses an inappropriate conclusion when the subject matter information is materially misstated.

†Engagement team (in the context of HKSQM 1) - All partners and staff performing the engagement, and any other individuals who perform procedures on the engagement, excluding an external expert¹⁵ and internal auditors who provide direct assistance on an engagement.

**Engagement team (in the context of the HKSAAs, defined in HKSA 220 (Revised))* - All partners and staff performing the audit engagement, and any other individuals who perform audit procedures on the engagement, excluding an external expert¹⁶ and internal auditors who provide direct assistance on an engagement¹⁷.

Engagement team (in the context of HKSAE 3000 (Revised)) - All partners and staff performing the engagement, and any other individuals who perform procedures on the engagement excluding a practitioner's external expert.

Engagement team (in the context of HKRSR 4400 (Revised)) - All partners and staff performing the agreed-upon procedures engagement, and any other individuals who perform procedures on the engagement excluding a practitioner's external expert.

¹² HKSA 220 (Revised), *Quality Management for an Audit of Financial Statements*

¹³ HKSAE 3000 (Revised), *Assurance Engagements Other than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information*

¹⁴ HKRSR 4400 (Revised), *Agreed-Upon Procedures Engagements*

¹⁵ HKSA 620, *Using the Work of an Auditor's Expert*, paragraph 6(a), defines the term "auditor's expert".

¹⁶ HKSA 620, *Using the Work of an Auditor's Expert*, paragraph 6(a), defines the term "auditor's expert".

¹⁷ HKSA 610 (Revised 2013), *Using the Work of Internal Auditors*, establishes limits on the use of direct assistance. It also acknowledges that the external auditor may be prohibited by law or regulation from obtaining direct assistance from internal auditors. Therefore, the use of direct assistance is restricted to situations where it is permitted.

Engagement team (in the context of HKSRS 4410 (Revised)) - All partners and staff performing the engagement, and any other individuals who perform procedures on the engagement excluding a practitioner's external expert engaged by the firm or a network firm.

Engaging party - The party(ies) that engages the practitioner to perform the assurance engagement.

Entity (in the context of HKSAE 3410) - The legal entity, economic entity, or the identifiable portion of a legal or economic entity (for example, a single factory or other form of facility, such as a land fill site), or combination of legal or other entities or portions of those entities (for example, a joint venture) to which the emissions in the GHG statement relate.

Error - An unintentional misstatement in financial statements, including the omission of an amount or a disclosure.

**Estimation uncertainty* - Susceptibility to an inherent lack of precision in measurement.

Evaluate - Identify and analyze the relevant issues, including performing further procedures as necessary, to come to a specific conclusion on a matter. "Evaluation", by convention, is used only in relation to a range of matters, including evidence, the results of procedures and the effectiveness of management's response to a risk. (also see *Assess*)

Evidence - Information used by the practitioner in arriving at the practitioner's conclusion. Evidence includes both information contained in relevant information systems, if any, and other information. For purposes of the HKSAEs:

- (i) Sufficiency of evidence is the measure of the quantity of evidence.
- (ii) Appropriateness of evidence is the measure of the quality of evidence.

**Exception* - A response that indicates a difference between information requested to be confirmed, or contained in the entity's records, and information provided by the confirming party.

**Experienced auditor* - An individual (whether internal or external to the firm) who has practical audit experience, and a reasonable understanding of:

- (a) Audit processes;
- (b) HKSAEs and applicable legal and regulatory requirements;
- (c) The business environment in which the entity operates; and
- (d) Auditing and financial reporting issues relevant to the entity's industry.

**Expert* - (see *Auditor's expert* and *Management's expert*)

**Expertise* - Skills, knowledge and experience in a particular field.

**External confirmation* - Audit evidence obtained as a direct written response to the auditor from a third party (the confirming party), in paper form, or by electronic or other medium.

**External information source* - An external individual or organization that provides information that has been used by the entity in preparing the financial statements, or that has been obtained by the auditor as audit evidence, when such information is suitable for use by a broad range of users. When information has been provided by an individual or organization acting in the capacity of a management's expert, service organization¹⁸, or auditor's expert¹⁹ the individual or organization is not considered an external information source with respect to that particular information.

†External inspections – Inspections or investigations, undertaken by an external oversight authority, related to the firm's system of quality management or engagements performed by the firm.

**Fair presentation framework* - (see *Applicable financial reporting framework* and *General purpose framework*)

**Financial statements* - A structured representation of historical financial information, including disclosures, intended to communicate an entity's economic resources or obligations at a point in time, or the changes therein for a period of time, in accordance with a financial reporting framework. The term "financial statements" ordinarily refers to a complete set of financial statements as determined by the requirements of the applicable financial reporting framework, but can also refer to a single financial statement. Disclosures comprise explanatory or descriptive information, set out as required, expressly permitted or otherwise allowed by the applicable financial reporting framework, on the face of a financial statement, or in the notes, or incorporated therein by cross-reference.

†Findings (in relation to a system of quality management) - Information about the design, implementation and operation of the system of quality management that has been accumulated from the performance of monitoring activities, external inspections and other relevant sources, which indicates that one or more deficiencies may exist.

Findings (in relation to HKSRS 4400 (Revised)) - Findings are the factual results of agreed-upon procedures performed. Findings are capable of being objectively verified. References to findings in HKSRS 4400 (Revised) exclude opinions or conclusions in any form as well as any recommendations that the practitioner may make.

**†Firm* - A sole practitioner, partnership or corporation or other entity of professional accountants, or public sector equivalent.

Forecast - Prospective financial information prepared on the basis of assumptions as to future events which management expects to take place and the actions management expects to take as of the date the information is prepared (best-estimate assumptions).

**Fraud* - An intentional act by one or more individuals among management, those charged with governance, employees, or third parties, involving the use of deception to obtain an unjust or illegal advantage.

**Fraud risk factors* - Events or conditions that indicate an incentive or pressure to commit fraud or provide an opportunity to commit fraud.

Fraudulent financial reporting - Involves intentional misstatements, including omissions of amounts or disclosures in financial statements, to deceive financial statement users.

Further procedures - Procedures performed in response to assessed risks of *material* misstatement, including tests of controls (if any), tests of details and analytical procedures.

¹⁸ HKSA 402, *Audit Considerations Relating to an Entity Using a Service Organization*, paragraph 8

¹⁹ HKSA 620, *Using the Work of an Auditor's Expert*, paragraph 6

**General information technology (IT) controls* - Controls over the entity's IT processes that support the continued proper operation of the IT environment, including the continued effective functioning of information processing controls and the integrity of information (i.e., the completeness, accuracy and validity of information) in the entity's information system. Also see the definition of *IT environment*.

**General purpose financial statements* - Financial statements prepared in accordance with a general purpose framework.

**General purpose framework* - A financial reporting framework designed to meet the common financial information needs of a wide range of users. The financial reporting framework may be a fair presentation framework or a compliance framework.

The term "fair presentation framework" is used to refer to a financial reporting framework that requires compliance with the requirements of the framework and:

- (i) Acknowledges explicitly or implicitly that, to achieve fair presentation of the financial statements, it may be necessary for management to provide disclosures beyond those specifically required by the framework; or
- (ii) Acknowledges explicitly that it may be necessary for management to depart from a requirement of the framework to achieve fair presentation of the financial statements. Such departures are expected to be necessary only in extremely rare circumstances.

The term "compliance framework" is used to refer to a financial reporting framework that requires compliance with the requirements of the framework, but does not contain the acknowledgements in (i) or (ii) above.²⁰

GHG statement - A statement setting out constituent elements and quantifying an entity's GHG emissions for a period (sometimes known as an emissions inventory) and, where applicable, comparative information and explanatory notes including a summary of significant quantification and reporting policies. An entity's GHG statement may also include a categorized listing of removals or emissions deductions. Where the engagement does not cover the entire GHG statement, the term "GHG statement" is to be read as that portion that is covered by the engagement. The GHG statement is the "subject matter information" of the engagement.²¹

Greenhouse gases (GHGs) - Carbon dioxide (CO₂) and any other gases required by the applicable criteria to be included in the GHG statement, such as: methane; nitrous oxide; sulfur hexafluoride; hydrofluorocarbons; perfluorocarbons; and chlorofluorocarbons. Gases other than carbon dioxide are often expressed in terms of carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂-e).

Governance - Describes the role of person(s) or organization(s) with responsibility for overseeing the strategic direction of the entity and obligations related to the accountability of the entity.

**Group* - A reporting entity for which group financial statements are prepared.

**Group audit* - The audit of group financial statements.

**Group audit opinion* - The audit opinion on the group financial statements.

²⁰ HKSA 200, paragraph 13(a)

²¹ HKSAE 3000 (Revised), paragraph 12(x)

**Group auditor* - The group engagement partner and members of the engagement team other than component auditors. The group auditor is responsible for:

- (i) Establishing the overall group audit strategy and group audit plan;
- (ii) Directing and supervising component auditors and reviewing their work;
- (iii) Evaluating the conclusions drawn from the audit evidence obtained as the basis for forming an opinion on the group financial statements.

**Group engagement partner* - The engagement partner²² who is responsible for the group audit.

**Group financial statements* - Financial statements that include the financial information of more than one entity or business unit through a consolidation process. For purposes of this HKSA, a consolidation process includes:

- (i) Consolidation, proportionate consolidation, or an equity method of accounting;
- (ii) The presentation in combined financial statements of the financial information of entities or business units that have no parent but are under common control or common management; or
- (iii) The aggregation of the financial information of entities or business units such as branches or divisions.

**Group management* - Management responsible for the preparation of the group financial statements.

**Group performance materiality* - Performance materiality²³ in relation to the group financial statements as a whole, as determined by the group auditor.

**Historical financial information* - Information expressed in financial terms in relation to a particular entity, derived primarily from that entity's accounting system, about economic events occurring in past time periods or about economic conditions or circumstances at points in time in the past.

**HKFRS Accounting Standards* - HKFRS Accounting Standards as issued by the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

**IFRS Accounting Standards* - IFRS Accounting Standards as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board.

Inclusive method - Method of dealing with the services provided by a subservice organization, whereby the service organization's description of its system includes the nature of the services provided by a subservice organization, and that subservice organization's relevant control objectives and related controls are included in the service organization's description of its system and in the scope of the service auditor's engagement.

*Independence*²⁴ - Comprises:

- (a) Independence of mind - the state of mind that permits the expression of a conclusion without being affected by influences that compromise professional judgment, thereby allowing an individual to act with integrity, and exercise objectivity and professional skepticism.
- (b) Independence in appearance - the avoidance of facts and circumstances that are so significant that a reasonable and informed third party would be likely to conclude that a firm's, or an audit or assurance team member's, integrity, objectivity or professional skepticism has been compromised.

²² HKSA 220 (Revised), paragraph 12(a)

²³ HKSA 320, *Materiality in Planning and Performing an Audit*, paragraphs 9 and 11

²⁴ As defined in the HKICPA's *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants*

**Information processing controls* – Controls relating to the processing of information in IT applications or manual information processes in the entity's information system that directly address risks to the integrity of information (i.e., the completeness, accuracy and validity of transactions and other information).

**Inherent risk* - (see *Risk of material misstatement*)

**Inherent risk factors* - Characteristics of events or conditions that affect susceptibility to misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, of an assertion about a class of transactions, account balance or disclosure, before consideration of controls. Such factors may be qualitative or quantitative, and include complexity, subjectivity, change, uncertainty or susceptibility to misstatement due to management bias or other fraud risk factors²⁵ insofar as they affect inherent risk.

**Initial audit engagement* - An engagement in which either:

- (a) The financial statements for the prior period were not audited; or
- (b) The financial statements for the prior period were audited by a predecessor auditor.

Inquiry - Inquiry consists of seeking information of knowledgeable persons, both financial and non-financial, within the entity or outside the entity.

Inquiry (in the context of HKSRE 2400 (Revised)²⁶) - Inquiry consists of seeking information of knowledgeable persons from within or outside the entity.

Inspection (as an audit procedure) - Examining records or documents, whether internal or external, in paper form, electronic form, or other media, or a physical examination of an asset.

Intended users - The individual(s) or organization(s), or group(s) thereof that the practitioner expects will use the assurance report. In some cases, there may be intended users, other than those to whom the assurance report is addressed.

Interim financial information or statements - Financial information (which may be less than a complete set of financial statements as defined above) issued at interim dates (usually half-yearly or quarterly) in respect of a financial period.

**Internal audit function* - A function of an entity that performs assurance and consulting activities designed to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the entity's governance, risk management and internal control processes.

Internal auditors - Those individuals who carry out the activities of the internal audit function. Internal auditors may belong to an internal audit department or similar function.

Internal control - The process designed, implemented and maintained by those charged with governance, management and other personnel to provide reasonable assurance about the achievement of an entity's objectives with regard to reliability of financial reporting, effectiveness and efficiency of operations, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The term "controls" refers to any aspects of one or more of the components of internal control.

Investigate - Inquire into matters arising from other procedures to resolve them.

IT environment - The IT applications and supporting IT infrastructure, as well as the IT processes and personnel involved in those processes, that an entity uses to support business operations and achieve business strategies.

²⁵ HKSA 240, paragraphs A24-A27

²⁶ HKSRE 2400 (Revised), *Engagements to Review Historical Financial Statements*

**Key audit matters* - Those matters that, in the auditor's professional judgment, were of most significance in the audit of the financial statements of the current period. Key audit matters are selected from matters communicated with those charged with governance.

Limited assurance (in the context of HKSRE 2400 (Revised)) - The level of assurance obtained where engagement risk is reduced to a level that is acceptable in the circumstances of the engagement, but where that risk is greater than for a reasonable assurance engagement, as the basis for expressing a conclusion in accordance with this HKSRE. The combination of the nature, timing and extent of evidence gathering procedures is at least sufficient for the practitioner to obtain a meaningful level of assurance. To be meaningful, the level of assurance obtained by the practitioner is likely to enhance the intended users' confidence about the financial statements.

Limited assurance engagement - (see *Assurance engagement*)

†Listed entity - An entity whose shares, stock or debt are quoted or listed on a recognized stock exchange, or are marketed under the regulations of a recognized stock exchange or other equivalent body.

**Management* - The person(s) with executive responsibility for the conduct of the entity's operations. For some entities in some jurisdictions, management includes some or all of those charged with governance, for example, executive members of a governance board, or an owner-manager.

**Management bias* - A lack of neutrality by management in the preparation of information.

**Management's expert* - An individual or organization possessing expertise in a field other than accounting or auditing, whose work in that field is used by the entity to assist the entity in preparing the financial statements.

**Management's point estimate* - The amount selected by management for recognition or disclosure in the financial statements as an accounting estimate.

Measurer or evaluator - The party(ies) who measures or evaluates the underlying subject matter against the criteria. The measurer or evaluator possesses expertise in the underlying subject matter.

Misappropriation of assets - Involves the theft of an entity's assets and is often perpetrated by employees in relatively small and immaterial amounts. However, it can also involve management who are usually more capable of disguising or concealing misappropriations in ways that are difficult to detect.

**Misstatement* - A difference between the reported amount, classification, presentation, or disclosure of a financial statement item and the amount, classification, presentation, or disclosure that is required for the item to be in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework. Misstatements can arise from error or fraud.

Where the auditor expresses an opinion on whether the financial statements are presented fairly, in all material respects, or give a true and fair view, misstatements also include those adjustments of amounts, classifications, presentation, or disclosures that, in the auditor's judgment, are necessary for the financial statements to be presented fairly, in all material respects, or to give a true and fair view.

Misstatement (in the context of HKSAE 3000 (Revised)) - A difference between the subject matter information and the appropriate measurement or evaluation of the underlying subject matter in accordance with the criteria. Misstatements can be intentional or unintentional, qualitative or quantitative, and include omissions.

Misstatement (in the context of HKSRS 4410 (Revised)) - A difference between the amount, classification, presentation, or disclosure of a reported item in the financial information, and the

amount, classification, presentation, or disclosure that is required for the item to be in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework. Misstatements can arise from error or fraud.

Where the financial information is prepared in accordance with a fair presentation framework, misstatements also include those adjustments of amounts, classifications, presentation, or disclosures that, in the practitioner's judgment, are necessary for the financial information to be presented fairly, in all material respects, or to give a true and fair view.

Misstatement of fact - (with respect to other information) (in the context of HKSAE 3000 (Revised)) Other information that is unrelated to matters appearing in the subject matter information or the assurance report that is incorrectly stated or presented. A material misstatement of fact may undermine the credibility of the document containing the subject matter information.

**Misstatement of the other information* - A misstatement of the other information exists when the other information is incorrectly stated or otherwise misleading (including because it omits or obscures information necessary for a proper understanding of a matter disclosed in the other information).

**Modified opinion* - A qualified opinion, an adverse opinion or a disclaimer of opinion on the financial statements.

**Negative confirmation request* - A request that the confirming party respond directly to the auditor only if the confirming party disagrees with the information provided in the request.

**†Network* - A larger structure:

- (a) That is aimed at cooperation; and
- (b) That is clearly aimed at profit or cost-sharing or shares common ownership, control or management, common quality management policies or procedures, common business strategy, the use of a common brand name, or a significant part of professional resources.

**†Network firm* - A firm or entity that belongs to the firm's network.

**Non-compliance (in the context of HKSA 250 (Revised)²⁷)* - Acts of omission or commission, intentional or unintentional, committed by the entity, or by those charged with governance, by management or by other individuals working for or under the direction of the entity, which are contrary to the prevailing laws or regulations. Non-compliance does not include personal misconduct unrelated to the business activities of the entity.

**Non-response* - A failure of the confirming party to respond, or fully respond, to a positive confirmation request, or a confirmation request returned undelivered.

**Non-sampling risk* - The risk that the auditor reaches an erroneous conclusion for any reason not related to sampling risk.

Observation - Consists of looking at a process or procedure being performed by others, for example, the auditor's observation of inventory counting by the entity's personnel, or of the performance of control activities.

**Opening balances* - Those account balances that exist at the beginning of the period. Opening balances are based upon the closing balances of the prior period and reflect the effects of transactions and events of prior periods and accounting policies applied in the prior period. Opening balances also include matters requiring disclosure that existed at the beginning of the period, such as contingencies and commitments.

²⁷ HKSA 250 (Revised), *Consideration of Laws and Regulations in an Audit of Financial Statements*

Organizational boundary - The boundary that determines which operations to include in the entity's GHG statement.

**Other information* - Financial or non-financial information (other than financial statements and the auditor's report thereon) included in an entity's annual report.

Other information (in the context of HKSAE 3000 (Revised)) - Information (other than the subject matter information and the assurance report thereon) which is included, either by law, regulation or custom, in a document containing the subject matter information and the assurance report thereon.

**Other Matter paragraph* - A paragraph included in the auditor's report that refers to a matter other than those presented or disclosed in the financial statements that, in the auditor's judgment, is relevant to users' understanding of the audit, the auditor's responsibilities or the auditor's report.

**Outcome of an accounting estimate* - The actual monetary amount that results from the resolution of the transaction(s), event(s) or condition(s) addressed by an accounting estimate.

Overall audit strategy - Sets the scope, timing and direction of the audit, and guides the development of the more detailed audit plan.

*†*Partner* - Any individual with authority to bind the firm with respect to the performance of a professional services engagement.

**Performance materiality* - The amount or amounts set by the auditor at less than materiality for the financial statements as a whole to reduce to an appropriately low level the probability that the aggregate of uncorrected and undetected misstatements exceeds materiality for the financial statements as a whole. If applicable, performance materiality also refers to the amount or amounts set by the auditor at less than the materiality level or levels for particular classes of transactions, account balances or disclosures.

Performance materiality (in the context of HKSAE 3410) - The amount or amounts set by the practitioner at less than materiality for the GHG statement to reduce to an appropriately low level the probability that the aggregate of uncorrected and undetected misstatements exceeds materiality for the GHG statement. If applicable, performance materiality also refers to the amount or amounts set by the practitioner at less than the materiality level or levels for particular types of emissions or disclosures.

Performing a walk-through - Selecting transactions and tracing them through the applicable process in the information system.

*†*Personnel* - Partners and staff in the firm.

**Pervasive* - A term used, in the context of misstatements, to describe the effects on the financial statements of misstatements or the possible effects on the financial statements of misstatements, if any, that are undetected due to an inability to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence. Pervasive effects on the financial statements are those that, in the auditor's judgment:

- (a) Are not confined to specific elements, accounts or items of the financial statements;
- (b) If so confined, represent or could represent a substantial proportion of the financial statements; or
- (c) In relation to disclosures, are fundamental to users' understanding of the financial statements.

**Population* - The entire set of data from which a sample is selected and about which the auditor wishes to draw conclusions.

**Positive confirmation request* - A request that the confirming party respond directly to the auditor indicating whether the confirming party agrees or disagrees with the information in the request, or providing the requested information.

Practitioner - A professional accountant in public practice.

Practitioner (in the context of HKSRE 2400 (Revised)) - A professional accountant in public practice. The term includes the engagement partner or other members of the engagement team, or, as applicable, the firm. Where HKSRE 2400 (Revised) expressly intends that a requirement or responsibility be fulfilled by the engagement partner, the term “engagement partner” rather than “practitioner” is used. “Engagement partner” and “firm” are to be read as referring to their public sector equivalents where relevant.

Practitioner (in the context of HKSAE 3000 (Revised)) - The individual(s) conducting the engagement (usually the engagement partner or other members of the engagement team, or, as applicable, the firm). Where this HKSAE expressly intends that a requirement or responsibility be fulfilled by the engagement partner, the term “engagement partner” rather than “practitioner” is used.

Practitioner (in the context of HKSRs4400 (Revised)) - The individual(s) conducting the engagement (usually the engagement partner or other members of the engagement team, or, as applicable, the firm). Where HKSRs 4400 (Revised) expressly intends that a requirement or responsibility be fulfilled by the engagement partner, the term “engagement partner” rather than “practitioner” is used.

Practitioner (in the context of HKSRs 4410 (Revised)) - A professional accountant in public practice who conducts the compilation engagement. The term includes the engagement partner or other members of the engagement team, or, as applicable, the firm. Where HKSRs 4410 (Revised) expressly intends that a requirement or responsibility be fulfilled by the engagement partner, the term “engagement partner” rather than “practitioner” is used. “Engagement partner” and “firm” are to be read as referring to their public sector equivalents where relevant.

Practitioner’s expert - An individual or organization possessing expertise in a field other than assurance, whose work in that field is used by the practitioner to assist the practitioner in obtaining sufficient appropriate evidence. A practitioner’s expert may be either a practitioner’s internal expert (who is a partner or staff, including temporary staff, of the practitioner’s firm or a network firm), or a practitioner’s external expert.

Practitioner’s expert (in the context of HKSRs 4400 (Revised)) - An individual or organization possessing expertise in a field other than assurance and related services, whose work in that field is used to assist the practitioner in fulfilling the practitioner’s responsibilities for the agreed-upon procedures engagement. A practitioner’s expert may be either a practitioner’s internal expert (who is a partner or staff, including temporary staff, of the practitioner’s firm or a network firm) or a practitioner’s external expert.

**Preconditions for an audit* - The use by management of an acceptable financial reporting framework in the preparation of the financial statements and the agreement of management and, where appropriate, those charged with governance to the premise²⁸ on which an audit is conducted.

**Predecessor auditor* - The auditor from a different audit firm, who audited the financial statements of an entity in the prior period and who has been replaced by the current auditor.

**Premise, relating to the responsibilities of management and, where appropriate, those charged with governance, on which an audit is conducted* - That management and, where appropriate, those charged with governance have acknowledged and understand that they have the following responsibilities that are fundamental to the conduct of an audit in accordance with HKSAAs. That is, responsibility:

²⁸ HKSA 200, paragraph 13

- (a) For the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework, including where relevant their fair presentation;
- (b) For such internal control as management and, where appropriate, those charged with governance determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; and
- (c) To provide the auditor with:
 - (i) Access to all information of which management and, where appropriate, those charged with governance are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
 - (ii) Additional information that the auditor may request from management and, where appropriate, those charged with governance for the purpose of the audit; and
 - (iii) Unrestricted access to persons within the entity from whom the auditor determines it necessary to obtain audit evidence.

In the case of a fair presentation framework, (a) above may be restated as “for the preparation and *fair* presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the financial reporting framework”, or “for the preparation of financial statements *that give a true and fair view* in accordance with the financial reporting framework”.

The “premise, relating to the responsibilities of management and, where appropriate, those charged with governance, on which an audit is conducted” may also be referred to as the “premise”.

Pro forma adjustments - In relation to unadjusted financial information, these include:

- (a) Adjustments to unadjusted financial information that illustrate the impact of a significant event or transaction (“event” or “transaction”) as if the event had occurred or the transaction had been undertaken at an earlier date selected for purposes of the illustration; and
- (b) Adjustments to unadjusted financial information that are necessary for the pro forma financial information to be compiled on a basis consistent with the applicable financial reporting framework of the reporting entity (“entity”) and its accounting policies under that framework.

Pro forma adjustments include the relevant financial information of a business that has been, or is to be, acquired (“acquiree”), or a business that has been, or is to be, divested (“divestee”), to the extent that such information is used in compiling the pro forma financial information (“acquiree or divestee financial information”).

Pro forma financial information - Financial information shown together with adjustments to illustrate the impact of an event or transaction on unadjusted financial information as if the event had occurred or the transaction had been undertaken at an earlier date selected for purposes of the illustration. In this HKSAE, it is presumed that pro forma financial information is presented in columnar format consisting of (a) the unadjusted financial information; (b) the pro forma adjustments; and (c) the resulting pro forma column.

*Professional accountant*²⁹ - An individual who is a member of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

*Professional accountant in public practice*³⁰ - A professional accountant, irrespective of functional classification (for example, audit, tax or consulting) in a firm that provides professional services. This term is also used to refer to a firm of professional accountants in public practice.

²⁹ As defined in the HKICPA’s *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants*

**Professional judgment* - The application of relevant training, knowledge and experience, within the context provided by auditing, accounting and ethical standards, in making informed decisions about the courses of action that are appropriate in the circumstances of the audit engagement.

†Professional judgment (in the context of HKSQM 1) - The application of relevant training, knowledge and experience, within the context of professional standards, in making informed decisions about the courses of action that are appropriate in the design, implementation and operation of the firm's system of quality management.

Professional judgment (in the context of HKSRE 2400 (Revised)) - The application of relevant training, knowledge and experience, within the context provided by assurance, accounting and ethical standards, in making informed decisions about the courses of action that are appropriate in the circumstances of the review engagement.

Professional judgment (in the context of HKSAE 3000 (Revised)) - The application of relevant training, knowledge and experience, within the context provided by assurance and ethical standards, in making informed decisions about the courses of action that are appropriate in the circumstances of the engagement.

Professional judgment (in the context of HKSRE 4440 (Revised)) - The application of relevant training, knowledge and experience, within the context provided by this HKSRS and relevant ethical requirements, in making informed decisions about the courses of action that are appropriate in the circumstances of the agreed-upon procedures engagement.

**Professional skepticism* - An attitude that includes a questioning mind, being alert to conditions which may indicate possible misstatement due to error or fraud, and a critical assessment of audit evidence.

Professional skepticism (in the context of HKSAE 3000 (Revised)) - An attitude that includes a questioning mind, being alert to conditions which may indicate possible misstatement, and a critical assessment of evidence.

**Professional standards* - Hong Kong Standards on Auditing (HKSAAs) and relevant ethical requirements.

†Professional standards (in the context of HKSQM 1) - Hong Kong Engagement Standards, as defined in the *Preface to the Hong Kong Quality Management, Auditing, Review, Other Assurance, and Related Services Pronouncements*, and relevant ethical requirements.

Projection - Prospective financial information prepared on the basis of:

- (a) Hypothetical assumptions about future events and management actions which are not necessarily expected to take place, such as when some entities are in a start-up phase or are considering a major change in the nature of operations; or
- (b) A mixture of best-estimate and hypothetical assumptions.

Prospective financial information - Financial information based on assumptions about events that may occur in the future and possible actions by an entity. Prospective financial information can be in the form of a forecast, a projection or a combination of both. (see *Forecast* and *Projection*)

Prospectus - A document issued pursuant to legal or regulatory requirements relating to the entity's securities on which it is intended that a third party should make an investment decision.

³⁰ As defined in the HKICPA's *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants*

Public sector - National governments, regional (for example, state, provincial, territorial) governments, local (for example, city, town) governments and related governmental entities (for example, agencies, boards, commissions and enterprises).

Published financial information - Financial information of the entity or of an acquiree or a divestee that is made available publicly.

Purchased offset - An emissions deduction in which the entity pays for the lowering of another entity's emissions (emissions reductions) or the increasing of another entity's removals (removal enhancements), compared to a hypothetical baseline.

[†]*Quality objectives* - The desired outcomes in relation to the components of the system of quality management to be achieved by the firm.

[†]*Quality risk* - A risk that has a reasonable possibility of:

- (i) Occurring; and
- (ii) Individually, or in combination with other risks, adversely affecting the achievement of one or more quality objectives.

Quantification - The process of determining the quantity of GHGs that relate to the entity, either directly or indirectly, as emitted (or removed) by particular sources (or sinks).

^{*†}*Reasonable assurance (in the context of audit engagements, and HKSQM 1)* - A high, but not absolute, level of assurance.

Reasonable assurance engagement - (see *Assurance engagement*)

Recalculation - Consists of checking the mathematical accuracy of documents or records.

^{*}*Related party* - A party that is either:

- (a) A related party as defined in the applicable financial reporting framework; or
- (b) Where the applicable financial reporting framework establishes minimal or no related party requirements:
 - (i) A person or other entity that has control or significant influence, directly or indirectly through one or more intermediaries, over the reporting entity;
 - (ii) Another entity over which the reporting entity has control or significant influence, directly or indirectly through one or more intermediaries; or
 - (iii) Another entity that is under common control with the reporting entity through having:
 - a. Common controlling ownership;
 - b. Owners who are close family members; or
 - c. Common key management.

However, entities that are under common control by a state (that is, a national, regional or local government) are not considered related unless they engage in significant transactions or share resources to a significant extent with one another.

Related services - Comprise agreed-upon procedures and compilations.

**Relevant assertions* - An assertion about a class of transactions, account balance or disclosure is relevant when it has an identified risk of material misstatement. The determination of whether an assertion is a relevant assertion is made before consideration of any related controls (i.e., the inherent risk).

†Relevant ethical requirements (in the context of HKSQM 1) - Principles of professional ethics and ethical requirements that are applicable to professional accountants when undertaking engagements that are audits or reviews of financial statements or other assurance or related services engagements. Relevant ethical requirements ordinarily comprise the provisions of the HKICPA's *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) related to audits or reviews of financial statements, or other assurance or related services engagements, together with local requirements that are more restrictive.

†Relevant ethical requirements (in the context of HKSQM 2) - Principles of professional ethics and ethical requirements that are applicable to a professional accountant when undertaking the engagement quality review. Relevant ethical requirements ordinarily comprise the provisions of the HKICPA's *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) related to audits or reviews of financial statements, or other assurance or related services engagements, together with local requirements that are more restrictive.

**Relevant ethical requirements (in the context of the HKSAAs)* – Principles of professional ethics and ethical requirements that are applicable to professional accountants when undertaking the audit engagement. Relevant ethical requirements ordinarily comprise the provisions of the HKICPA's *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) related to audits of financial statements, together with local requirements that are more restrictive.

Relevant ethical requirements (in the context of HKSRE 2400 (Revised)) - Principles of professional ethics and ethical requirements that are applicable to professional accountants when undertaking reviews of financial statements. Relevant ethical requirements ordinarily comprise the provisions of the Code related to reviews of financial statements, together with local requirements that are more restrictive.

Relevant ethical requirements (in the context of HKSRS 4400 (Revised)) – Principles of professional ethics and ethical requirements that are applicable to the engagement team when undertaking agreed-upon procedures engagements. Relevant ethical requirements ordinarily comprise the provisions of the Code, together with local requirements that are more restrictive.

Relevant ethical requirements (in the context of HKSRS 4410 (Revised)) – Principles of professional ethics and ethical requirements that are applicable to the engagement team when undertaking compilation engagements. Relevant ethical requirements ordinarily comprise the provisions of the HKICPA's *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code), together with local requirements that are more restrictive.

Removal - The GHGs that the entity has, during the period, removed from the atmosphere, or that would have been emitted to the atmosphere had they not been captured and channeled to a sink.

Reperformance - The auditor's independent execution of procedures or controls that were originally performed as part of the entity's internal controls.

**Report on the description and design of controls at a service organization (referred to in HKSA 402³¹ as a type 1 report) - A report that comprises:*

- (a) A description, prepared by management of the service organization, of the service organization's system, control objectives and related controls that have been designed and implemented as at a specified date; and
- (b) A report by the service auditor with the objective of conveying reasonable assurance that includes the service auditor's opinion on the description of the service organization's system, control objectives and related controls and the suitability of the design of the controls to achieve the specified control objectives.

Report on the description and design of controls at a service organization (referred to in HKSAE 3402³² as a "type 1 report") (in the context of HKSAE 3402) - A report that comprises:

- (a) The service organization's description of its system;
- (b) A written statement by the service organization that, in all material respects, and based on suitable criteria:
 - (i) The description fairly presents the service organization's system as designed and implemented as at the specified date;
 - (ii) The controls related to the control objectives stated in the service organization's description of its system were suitably designed as at the specified date; and
- (c) A service auditor's assurance report that conveys a reasonable assurance conclusion about the matters in (b)(i)–(ii) above.

**Report on the description, design, and operating effectiveness of controls at a service organization (referred to in HKSA 402 as a type 2 report) - A report that comprises:*

- (a) A description, prepared by management of the service organization, of the service organization's system, control objectives and related controls, their design and implementation as at a specified date or throughout a specified period and, in some cases, their operating effectiveness throughout a specified period; and
- (b) A report by the service auditor with the objective of conveying reasonable assurance that includes:
 - (i) The service auditor's opinion on the description of the service organization's system, control objectives and related controls, the suitability of the design of the controls to achieve the specified control objectives, and the operating effectiveness of the controls; and
 - (ii) A description of the service auditor's tests of the controls and the results thereof.

Report on the description, design and operating effectiveness of controls at a service organization (referred to in HKSAE 3402 as a "type 2 report") (in the context of HKSAE 3402) - A report that comprises:

- (a) The service organization's description of its system;

³¹ HKSA 402, *Audit Considerations Relating to an Entity Using a Service Organization*

³² HKSAE 3402, *Assurance Reports on Controls at a Service Organization*

- (b) A written statement by the service organization that, in all material respects, and based on suitable criteria:
 - (i) The description fairly presents the service organization's system as designed and implemented throughout the specified period;
 - (ii) The controls related to the control objectives stated in the service organization's description of its system were suitably designed throughout the specified period; and
 - (iii) The controls related to the control objectives stated in the service organization's description of its system operated effectively throughout the specified period; and
- (c) A service auditor's assurance report that:
 - (i) Conveys a reasonable assurance conclusion about the matters in (b)(i)–(iii) above; and
 - (ii) Includes a description of the tests of controls and the results thereof.

[†]*Response (in relation to a system of quality management)* - Policies or procedures designed and implemented by the firm to address one or more quality risk(s):

- (i) Policies are statements of what should, or should not, be done to address a quality risk(s). Such statements may be documented, explicitly stated in communications or implied through actions and decisions.
- (ii) Procedures are actions to implement policies.

Responsible party (in the context of the HKSAEs) - The party(ies) responsible for the underlying subject matter.

Responsible party (in the context of HKSRS 4400) - The party(ies) responsible for the underlying subject matter on which the agreed-upon procedures are performed.

Review engagement - The objective of a review engagement is to enable an auditor to state whether, on the basis of procedures which do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, anything has come to the auditor's attention that causes the auditor to believe that the financial statements are not prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with an applicable financial reporting framework.

Review procedures - The procedures deemed necessary to meet the objective of a review engagement, primarily inquiries of entity personnel and analytical procedures applied to financial data.

**Risk assessment procedures* - The audit procedures designed and performed to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, at the financial statement and assertion levels.

**Risk of material misstatement* - The risk that the financial statements are materially misstated prior to audit. This consists of two components, described as follows at the assertion level:

- (a) Inherent risk - The susceptibility of an assertion about a class of transaction, account balance or disclosure to a misstatement that could be material, either individually or when aggregated with other misstatements, before consideration of any related controls.
- (b) Control risk - The risk that a misstatement that could occur in an assertion about a class of transaction, account balance or disclosure and that could be material, either individually or when aggregated with other misstatements, will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis by the entity's controls.

Risk of material misstatement (in the context of HKSAE 3000 (Revised)) - The risk that the subject matter information is materially misstated prior to the engagement.

**Risks arising from the use of IT* - Susceptibility of information processing controls to ineffective design or operation, or risks to the integrity of information (i.e., the completeness, accuracy and validity of transactions and other information) in the entity's information system, due to ineffective design or operation of controls in the entity's IT processes (see *IT environment*).

**Sampling* - (see *Audit sampling*)

**Sampling risk* - The risk that the auditor's conclusion based on a sample may be different from the conclusion if the entire population were subjected to the same audit procedure. Sampling risk can lead to two types of erroneous conclusions:

- (a) In the case of a test of controls, that controls are more effective than they actually are, or in the case of a test of details, that a material misstatement does not exist when in fact it does. The auditor is primarily concerned with this type of erroneous conclusion because it affects audit effectiveness and is more likely to lead to an inappropriate audit opinion.
- (b) In the case of a test of controls, that controls are less effective than they actually are, or in the case of a test of details, that a material misstatement exists when in fact it does not. This type of erroneous conclusion affects audit efficiency as it would usually lead to additional work to establish that initial conclusions were incorrect.

**Sampling unit* - The individual items constituting a population.

Scope of a review - The review procedures deemed necessary in the circumstances to achieve the objective of the review.

**Service auditor* - An auditor who, at the request of the service organization, provides an assurance report on the controls of a service organization.

Service auditor (in the context of HKSAE 3402) - A practitioner who, at the request of the service organization, provides an assurance report on controls of a service organization.

**Service organization* - A third-party organization (or segment of a third-party organization) that provides services to user entities that are part of those entities' information systems relevant to financial reporting.

Service organization (in the context of HKSAE 3402) - A third-party organization (or segment of a third-party organization) that provides services to user entities that are likely to be relevant to user entities' internal control as it relates to financial reporting.

Service organization's statement - The written statement about the matters referred to in (b) of the definition of a report on the description, design and operating effectiveness of controls at a service organization (in the case of a type 2 report) or (b) of the definition of a report on the description and design of controls at a service organization (in the case of a type 1 report).

**Service organization's system* - The policies and procedures designed, implemented and maintained by the service organization to provide user entities with the services covered by the service auditor's report.

Service organization's system (or the system) (in the context of HKSAE 3402) - The policies and procedures designed and implemented by the service organization to provide user entities with the services covered by the service auditor's assurance report. The service organization's description of its system includes identification of: the services covered; the period, or in the case of a type 1 report, the date, to which the description relates; control objectives; and related controls.

[†]*Service provider* - An individual or organization external to the firm that provides a resource that is used in the system of quality management or in the performance of engagements. Service providers exclude the firm's network, other network firms or other structures or organizations in the network.

Significance - The relative importance of a matter, taken in context. The significance of a matter is judged by the practitioner in the context in which it is being considered. This might include, for example, the reasonable prospect of its changing or influencing the decisions of intended users of the practitioner's report; or, as another example, where the context is a judgment about whether to report a matter to those charged with governance, whether the matter would be regarded as important by them in relation to their duties. Significance can be considered in the context of quantitative and qualitative factors, such as relative magnitude, the nature and effect on the subject matter and the expressed interests of intended users or recipients.

**Significant class of transactions, account balance or disclosure* - A class of transactions, account balance or disclosure for which there is one or more relevant assertions.

**Significant deficiency in internal control* - A deficiency or combination of deficiencies in internal control that, in the auditor's professional judgment, is of sufficient importance to merit the attention of those charged with governance.

Significant facility - A facility that is of individual significance due to the size of its emissions relative to the aggregate emissions included in the GHG statement or its specific nature or circumstances which give rise to particular risks of material misstatement.

**Significant risk* - An identified risk of material misstatement:

- (i) For which the assessment of inherent risk is close to the upper end of the spectrum of inherent risk due to the degree to which inherent risk factors affect the combination of the likelihood of a misstatement occurring and the magnitude of the potential misstatement should that misstatement occur; or
- (ii) That is to be treated as a significant risk in accordance with the requirements of other HKSA's.

Sink - A physical unit or process that removes GHGs from the atmosphere.

Smaller entity - An entity which typically possesses qualitative characteristics such as:

- (a) Concentration of ownership and management in a small number of individuals (often a single individual - either a natural person or another enterprise that owns the entity provided the owner exhibits the relevant qualitative characteristics); and
- (b) One or more of the following:
 - (i) Straightforward or uncomplicated transactions;
 - (ii) Simple record-keeping;
 - (iii) Few lines of business and few products within business lines;
 - (iv) Few internal controls;
 - (v) Few levels of management with responsibility for a broad range of controls; or
 - (vi) Few personnel, many having a wide range of duties.

These qualitative characteristics are not exhaustive, they are not exclusive to smaller entities, and smaller entities do not necessarily display all of these characteristics.

Source - A physical unit or process that releases GHGs into the atmosphere.

**Special purpose financial statements* - Financial statements prepared in accordance with a special purpose framework.

**Special purpose framework* - A financial reporting framework designed to meet the financial information needs of specific users. The financial reporting framework may be a fair presentation framework or a compliance framework.³³

*†*Staff* - Professionals, other than partners, including any experts the firm employs.

**Statistical sampling* - An approach to sampling that has the following characteristics:

- (a) Random selection of the sample items; and
- (b) The use of probability theory to evaluate sample results, including measurement of sampling risk.

A sampling approach that does not have characteristics (a) and (b) is considered non-statistical sampling.

**Stratification* - The process of dividing a population into sub-populations, each of which is a group of sampling units which have similar characteristics (often monetary value).

Subject matter information - The outcome of the measurement or evaluation of the underlying subject matter against the criteria, that is, the information that results from applying the criteria to the underlying subject matter.

**Subsequent events* - Events occurring between the date of the financial statements and the date of the auditor's report, and facts that become known to the auditor after the date of the auditor's report.

**Subservice organization* - A service organization used by another service organization to perform some of the services provided to user entities that are part of those user entities' information systems relevant to financial reporting.

Subservice organization (in the context of HKSAE 3402) - A service organization used by another service organization to perform some of the services provided to user entities that are likely to be relevant to user entities' internal control as it relates to financial reporting.

**Substantive procedure* - An audit procedure designed to detect material misstatements at the assertion level. Substantive procedures comprise:

- (a) Tests of details (of classes of transactions, account balances, and disclosures); and
- (b) Substantive analytical procedures.

**Sufficiency (of audit evidence)* - The measure of the quantity of audit evidence. The quantity of the audit evidence needed is affected by the auditor's assessment of the risks of material misstatement and also by the quality of such audit evidence.

Suitable criteria - (see *Criteria*)

³³ HKSA 200, paragraph 13(a)

**Summary financial statements (in the context of HKSA 810 (Revised))* - Historical financial information that is derived from financial statements but that contains less detail than the financial statements, while still providing a structured representation consistent with that provided by the financial statements of the entity's economic resources or obligations at a point in time or the changes therein for a period of time.³⁴ Different jurisdictions may use different terminology to describe such historical financial information.

Supplementary information - Information that is presented together with the financial statements that is not required by the applicable financial reporting framework used to prepare the financial statements, normally presented in either supplementary schedules or as additional notes.

**System of internal control* - The system designed, implemented and maintained by those charged with governance, management and other personnel, to provide reasonable assurance about the achievement of an entity's objectives with regard to reliability of financial reporting, effectiveness and efficiency of operations, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. For the purposes of the HKSAs, the system of internal control consists of five inter-related components:

- (a) Control environment;
- (b) The entity's risk assessment process;
- (c) The entity's process to monitor the system of internal control;
- (d) The information system and communication; and
- (e) Control activities.

†System of quality management - A system designed, implemented and operated by a firm to provide the firm with reasonable assurance that:

- (i) The firm and its personnel fulfill their responsibilities in accordance with professional standards and applicable legal and regulatory requirements, and conduct engagements in accordance with such standards and requirements; and
- (ii) Engagement reports issued by the firm or engagement partners are appropriate in the circumstances.

Test - The application of procedures to some or all items in a population.

**Tests of controls* - An audit procedure designed to evaluate the operating effectiveness of controls in preventing, or detecting and correcting, material misstatements at the assertion level.

Test of controls (in the context of HKSAE 3402) - A procedure designed to evaluate the operating effectiveness of controls in achieving the control objectives stated in the service organization's description of its system.

**Those charged with governance* - The person(s) or organization(s) (for example, a corporate trustee) with responsibility for overseeing the strategic direction of the entity and obligations related to the accountability of the entity. This includes overseeing the financial reporting process. For some entities in some jurisdictions, those charged with governance may include management personnel, for example, executive members of a governance board of a private or public sector entity, or an owner-manager.³⁵

³⁴ HKSA 200, paragraph 13(f)

³⁵ For discussion of the diversity of governance structures, see paragraphs A1-A8 of HKSA 260 (Revised), *Communication with Those Charged with Governance*.

**Tolerable misstatement* - A monetary amount set by the auditor in respect of which the auditor seeks to obtain an appropriate level of assurance that the monetary amount set by the auditor is not exceeded by the actual misstatement in the population.

**Tolerable rate of deviation* - A rate of deviation from prescribed internal control procedures set by the auditor in respect of which the auditor seeks to obtain an appropriate level of assurance that the rate of deviation set by the auditor is not exceeded by the actual rate of deviation in the population.

Type of emission - A grouping of emissions based on, for example, source of emission, type of gas, region, or facility.

Unadjusted financial information - Financial information of the entity to which pro forma adjustments are applied by the responsible party.

Uncertainty - A matter whose outcome depends on future actions or events not under the direct control of the entity but that may affect the financial statements.

**Uncorrected misstatements* - Misstatements that the auditor has accumulated during the audit and that have not been corrected.

Underlying subject matter - The phenomenon that is measured or evaluated by applying criteria.

**Unmodified opinion* - The opinion expressed by the auditor when the auditor concludes that the financial statements are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.³⁶

**User auditor* - An auditor who audits and reports on the financial statements of a user entity.

User auditor (in the context of HKSAE 3402) - An auditor who audits and reports on the financial statements of a user entity.³⁷

**User entity* - An entity that uses a service organization and whose financial statements are being audited.

User entity (in the context of HKSAE 3402) - An entity that uses a service organization.

Walk-through test - see *Performing a walk-through*.

**Written representation* - A written statement by management provided to the auditor to confirm certain matters or to support other audit evidence. Written representations in this context do not include financial statements, the assertions therein, or supporting books and records.

³⁶ HKSA 700 (Revised), paragraphs 25-26 deal with the phrases used to express this opinion in the case of a fair presentation framework and a compliance framework respectively.

³⁷ In the case of a subservice organization, the service auditor of a service organization that uses the services of the subservice organization is also a user auditor.