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# *IASB issues IFRS 9, 'Financial instruments'*

## *Issue*

The IASB has published the complete version of IFRS 9, 'Financial instruments', which replaces the guidance in IAS 39. This final version includes requirements on the classification and measurement of financial assets and liabilities; it also includes an expected credit losses model that replaces the incurred loss impairment model used today. The final hedging part of IFRS 9 was issued in November 2013.

## *Key Provisions*

### *Classification and measurement*

IFRS 9 has three classification categories for debt instruments: amortised cost, fair value through other comprehensive income ('FVOCI') and fair value through profit or loss ('FVPL').

Classification under IFRS 9 for debt instruments is driven by the entity's business model for managing the financial assets and whether the contractual cash flows represent solely payments of principal and interest ('SPPI'). An entity's business model is how an entity manages its financial assets in order to generate cash flows and create value for the entity. That is, an entity's business model determines whether the cash flows will result from collecting contractual cash flows, selling financial assets or both. If a debt instrument is held to collect, it may be classified as amortised cost if it also meets the SPPI requirement. Debt instruments that meet the SPPI requirement that are held in a portfolio where an entity both holds to collect assets' cash flows and sells assets may be classified as FVOCI. Financial assets that do not contain cash flows that are SPPI must be measured at FVPL (for example, derivatives).

Investments in equity instruments are always measured at fair value. However, management can make an irrevocable election to present changes in fair value in other comprehensive income, provided the instrument is not held for trading. If the equity instrument is held for trading, changes in fair value are presented in profit or loss.

### *Expected credit losses*

IFRS 9 introduces a new model for the recognition of impairment losses – the expected credit losses (ECL) model. The ECL model constitutes a change from the guidance in IAS 39 and seeks to address the criticisms of the incurred loss model which arose during

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the economic crisis. In practice, the new rules mean that entities will have to record a day 1 loss equal to the 12-month ECL on initial recognition of financial assets that are not credit impaired (or lifetime ECL for trade receivables).

IFRS 9 contains a 'three stage' approach which is based on the change in credit quality of financial assets since initial recognition. Assets move through the three stages as credit quality changes and the stages dictate how an entity measures impairment losses and applies the effective interest rate method. Where there has been a significant increase in credit risk, impairment is measured using lifetime ECL rather than 12-month ECL. The model includes operational simplifications for lease and trade receivables.

### *Disclosures*

Extensive disclosures are required, including reconciliations from opening to closing amounts of the ECL provision, assumptions and inputs and a reconciliation on transition of the original classification categories under IAS 39 to the new classification categories in IFRS 9.

### *Effective date and transition*

IFRS 9 is effective for annual periods beginning on or after 1 January 2018. Earlier application is permitted. IFRS 9 is to be applied retrospectively but comparatives are not required to be restated. If an entity elects to early apply IFRS 9 it must apply all of the requirements at the same time. Entities applying the standard before 1 February 2015 continue to have the option to apply the standard in phases. However, IFRS 9 is still subject to the endorsement process in Europe.

## *Am I affected?*

IFRS 9 applies to all entities. However, financial institutions and other entities with large portfolios of financial assets measured at amortised cost or FVOCI will be the most effected and in particular, by the ECL model. It is critical that these entities assess the implications of the new standard as soon as possible. It is expected that the implementation of the new ECL model will be challenging and might involve significant modifications to credit management systems. An implementation group has been set up by the IASB in order to deal with the most challenging aspects of implementation of the new ECL model.

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