

UK GAAP Plus

CD-rom

Text: Ron Patterson, Allison Wilson and Mike Davis of Ernst Young

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UK GAAP Plus is an electronic version of Ernst Young's UK GAAP (6th edition) which incorporates a wealth of additional reference materials. The subscription price includes four hardcopy newsletters and two full updates a year, timed to include major announcements from the Accounting Standards Board. In short GAAP Plus should provide you with everything you may wish to refer to when preparing financial statements for a UK company.

As expected the CD includes the full text of all the UK Standards, UIFT abstracts, EDs and discussion papers released by the ASB, but it also contains all the International Standards, EDs and Interpretations issued by the IASC.

The full text of the Companies Act 1985 is provided along with the relevant parts of 19 other major Acts and 53 Statutory Instruments. Hidden away in the Appendices to the legislation are some excellent guidance notes concerning submission of documents to Companies House, and the old versions of Table A, which you never know when you might need. I was slightly puzzled as to the arrangement of the Acts that are neither in alphabetical nor chronological order.

The SIs are in chronological order with the earliest at the top of the list. This is possibly not the most useful arrangement as one would normally want to view a more recent regulation rather than an earlier one, which forces one to scroll to the bottom of the screen for the required document. Also the issue date of each SI is at the end of the full title so is hidden by the text if viewed through the 'browse' tab. All becomes clear if the 'contents' tab is selected, but this may not be obvious to the casual user.

The fourth and fifth elements of the reference materials consist of 33 full sets of company accounts and annual reports from a cross section of quoted companies, and two full sets of specimen financial statements for a limited company and for a PLC.

One of the major benefits of accessing reference materials such as legislation and standards electronically is the ability to jump between documents by way of hyperlinks. UK GAAP Plus provides a confusing array of links each with different properties:

- [Green underlined](#) text;
- [Blue underlined](#) numbers;
- [Blue +](#) signs;
- [Red triangles](#); and
- **R&A**

The [green text](#) should take you to the chapter or section mentioned, but they appear to have a random element built in so can jump so somewhere slightly different, in an Alice-esk sort of way.

[Blue numbers](#) are references to what would have been footnotes in the paper version. When clicked they produce a little pop-up explanation of the term and tell you where it is discussed further but do not provide a hyperlink to that text. The [blue cross](#) is not an indication of a small animal hospital, but represents a history note within legislation to inform the reader of when text has been replaced or repealed.

[Red triangles](#) are more useful as they do provide hyperlinks to other parts of the UK GAAP text, however the text often gives nothing away in the mystery tour where the link will end up.

The **R&A** symbol provides access to a popup menu of quoted company accounts and possibly a link to the relevant part of the specimen financial statements. However as with other links you spin the chance card by clicking the text to discover its destination.

The **black arrows** in the top bar will always take you back to where you were in the text, so there is no fear of getting lost.

Rebecca Cave MBA, FCA, ATII