

## Independent Accountant's Report

To Management  
Thomson Reuters (Tax and Accounting) Inc.

We have examined:

- The content related to the relevant standards and interpretive guidance in Thomson Reuters' quality management materials titled *PPC's Guide to Audits of Employee Benefit Plans*, February 3, 2025, 35th Edition, available in print and online at Checkpoint.RIAG.com (the "quality management materials" or QMM)
- The accompanying description prepared by Thomson Reuters titled, "Description, as of March 7, 2025, of Thomson Reuters' *PPC's Guide to Audits of Employee Benefit Plans*, February 3, 2024, 35th Edition" (the "description")

Management of Thomson Reuters (Tax and Accounting) Inc. is responsible for the QMM Content being in accordance with the QMM Content Criteria included in Attachment A and for the Description being in accordance with the QMM Description Criteria included in Attachment A (collectively, the "QMM Criteria"). Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the QMM Content and the Description based on our examination.

Our examination was conducted in accordance with attestation standards established by the AICPA. Those standards require that we plan and perform the examination to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the QMM Content and the Description are in accordance with the QMM Criteria in all material respects. An examination involves performing procedures to obtain evidence about the QMM Content and the Description. The nature, timing, and extent of the procedures selected depend on our judgment, including an assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the QMM Content and the Description, whether due to fraud or error. In making an assessment of the risks of material misstatement, we considered and obtained an understanding of internal control relevant to the subject matter in order to design procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed. We believe that the evidence we obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

We are required to be independent and to meet our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with relevant ethical requirements relating to the engagement.

In our opinion, in all material respects:

- The QMM Content is in accordance with the QMM Content Criteria specified in Attachment A.
- The Description is in accordance with the QMM Description Criteria specified in Attachment A.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of management of Thomson Reuters (Tax and Accounting) Inc., users and potential users of the QMM Content, and users' peer reviewers and regulators.

This report is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than these specified parties.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Plante & Moran, PLLC".

August 21, 2025

## **Attachment A: QMM Content Criteria and QMM Description Criteria**

### **QMM Content Criteria**

The quality management materials (QMM) are in accordance with the following criteria:

**CC1:** The content of the quality management materials (QMM) identified in the description (QMM content) accurately reflects the standards and interpretive guidance relevant to the QMM that are addressed by the QMM and address them in the manner described in the description, including the following:

- a. QMM content reproduced in whole or in part from standards and interpretive guidance does the following:
  - i. Appropriately references the relevant standards and interpretive guidance to enable user firms to locate the content
  - ii. Agrees with the relevant standards and interpretive guidance
- b. QMM content derived from the standards and interpretive guidance explains, elaborates, interprets, or paraphrases the relevant standards and interpretive guidance in a manner that does not change the meaning and intent of the standards and interpretive guidance.
- c. QMM content that illustrates the application of the relevant standards and interpretive guidance is not in conflict with the standards and interpretive guidance.

#### **CC2: QMM content**

- a. Identifies assumptions or judgments made in developing QMM content related to the relevant standards and interpretive guidance, if any.
- b. Identifies QMM content that is based on widely recognized or generally accepted practice rather than on the relevant standards and interpretive guidance.
- c. Identifies QMM content that represents the QMM provider's opinion or interpretation of the relevant standards and interpretive guidance.
- d. Uses the same terminology and definitions used in the relevant standards and interpretive guidance.

**CC3:** QMM content does not omit relevant principles, topics, requirements, considerations, procedures, or other aspects of the relevant standards and interpretive guidance, other than those identified in the description of the QMM in accordance with DC9 or DC10.

**CC4:** If the description indicates that a purpose of the QMM content is to provide a means to document compliance with the standards and interpretive guidance addressed by the QMM, the QMM content enables user firms to do so.

### **QMM Description Criteria**

The description of the content of quality management materials (the description) contains the following information:

**DC1:** An identification of the quality management materials (QMM) addressed by the description, including the following:

- a. The title of the QMM, including the version name, number, or date
- b. The format of the QMM and, if the QMM are in the format of application software, the delivery method

**Attachment A: QMM Content Criteria and Description Criteria  
(Continued)**

**DC2:** An identification of any elements of the QMM content that are provided by another QMM provider

**DC3:** An identification of any elements (parts) of the QMM content that are not addressed by the description. If applicable, identify how the elements relate to the entirety of the QMM.

**DC4:** The date of the description

**DC5:** A statement that “[*Identification of the QMM addressed by the description*] are quality management materials (QMM). The AICPA defines QMM as materials (for example, manuals or tools), including industry- or subject matter-specific materials, intended to enable the operation of a firm’s system of quality management and promote consistency in performing quality engagements. QMM may be made available through technology, for example, through automated tools and techniques, and IT applications. QMM address standards and interpretive guidance related to accounting; audit, attestation, review, compilation, or preparation engagements, or other services that CPA firms may provide; or ethics, independence, quality control, quality management, peer review, or practice monitoring related to those services. QMM would be considered an intellectual resource as described in QM section 10, *A Firm’s System of Quality Management*.”

**DC6:** An identification of the characteristics of the QMM, including the following:

- a. The type of QMM and purpose of the type of QMM
- b. The topics addressed by the QMM
- c. If the QMM are intended to be used for a specific type of engagement or specific aspects of an engagement, an identification of the characteristics of that engagement, including the following:
  - i. The relevant characteristics of the type of client for which the QMM are intended to be used, including the following:
    - Area of practice
    - Industry
    - Form or type of organization
    - Operational characteristics
  - ii. The characteristics of the type of engagement for which the QMM are intended to be used, including the following:
    - Area of service
    - Level of service
    - Unique characteristics of the engagement

**DC7:** An identification of QMM, other than the QMM identified for DC1, necessary to accomplish the purpose of the QMM as noted in DC6a.

**DC8:** An identification of the standards and interpretive guidance relevant to the QMM that the QMM address, including the following:

- a. The standard-setting body that issued the standards and interpretive guidance
- b. Either:
  - i. The date through which the QMM address issued and effective standards and interpretive guidance (date approach), or
  - ii. The number and title of the most recently issued and effective standards and interpretive guidance addressed by the QMM (title approach)

**Attachment A: QMM Content Criteria and Description Criteria  
(Continued)**

**DC9:** An identification of standards and interpretive guidance relevant to the QMM that were issued and effective up to the date (if using the date approach referred to in DC8bi) or the number and title (if using the title approach referred to in DC8bii) but:

- a. Not addressed by the QMM
- b. Not fully addressed by the QMM, including why the relevant standards and guidance were not fully addressed, and how they were addressed by the QMM

**DC10:** A description of how the QMM address standards and interpretive guidance relevant to the QMM that were issued but *not effective* up to the date (if using the date approach referred to in DC8bi) or the number and title (if using the title approach referred to in DC8bii), including the following:

- a. The title and effective date of the standards and interpretive guidance
- b. Whether the standards and interpretive guidance are addressed by the QMM and, if so, how they are addressed
- c. Whether the standards and interpretive guidance allow for early implementation or adoption

**DC11:** A description of the QMM provider's policy for updating the QMM content, including the nature and anticipated timing of updates

**DC12:** A statement that user firms are responsible for the following:

- a. Determining whether the QMM are suitable for the user firm's purposes
- b. Understanding that the QMM are not intended to be a substitute for the standards and interpretive guidance, an evaluation thereof, or professional judgment
- c. Using QMM that reflect the most current (up-to-date) relevant standards and interpretive guidance that are applicable in the circumstances and accessing and using relevant standards and interpretive guidance that are applicable in the circumstances that are not addressed or not fully addressed by the QMM
- d. Properly implementing the QMM and using professional judgment in the application of the QMM based on the facts and circumstances (for example, of each engagement)
- e. Providing the appropriate training for the use of the QMM and performing the appropriate supervision and review procedures regarding the use of the QMM, based on the skill, training, knowledge, and experience of individual users within the user firm
- f. Identifying that there may be certain facts, circumstances, risk factors, or specific issues that exist for a particular client, engagement, or user firm that may not be addressed by the QMM; in that case, understanding that the QMM will require tailoring and augmentation to address such facts, circumstances, risk factors, or specific issues
- g. Monitoring the activities of standard-setting bodies for changes that would affect the user firm, including amendments of standards and interpretive guidance and deferrals of effective dates
- h. Complying with relevant professional standards and interpretive guidance
- i. Understanding that the effectiveness of the QMM is dependent on the user firm fulfilling the preceding responsibilities and the effectiveness of its actions

**Description, as of March 7, 2025, of Thomson Reuters' *PPC's Guide to Audits of Employee Benefit Plans*, February 3, 2025, 35th Edition**

*PPC's Guide to Audits of Employee Benefit Plans*, February 3, 2025, 35th Edition (the Guide), is available in print and online at Checkpoint.RIAG.com. The Guide consists of chapter text and multiple practice aids, including illustrative accountant's compilation and auditor's reports, audit programs, checklists, and confirmation and correspondence letters. These practice aids are included in this description and are available as uneditable PDFs on Checkpoint.RIAG.com as part of the Guide.

PPC's Workflow Tools are not included in this description. The Workflow Tools, which are designed to enhance productivity, efficiency, and quality when used in combination with the Guide, include PPC's Practice Aids, Thomson Reuters Guided Assurance (formerly Checkpoint Engage), and PPC's SMART Practice Aids.

- PPC's Practice Aids: Audits of Employee Benefit Plans (version 2/25) are editable Microsoft Word and Excel versions of all practice aids in the Guide and may be used alone or through Thomson Reuters Guided Assurance or SMART Practice Aids.
- Thomson Reuters Guided Assurance is a fully integrated online engagement solution that provides enhanced technological functionality of the content and engagement methodology in the Guide, while SMART Practice Aids is a desktop application that provides similar functionality.

**Definition of QMM**

*PPC's Guide to Audits of Employee Benefit Plans* are quality management materials (QMM). The AICPA defines QMM as materials (for example, manuals or tools), including industry- or subject matter-specific materials, intended to enable the operation of a firm's system of quality management and promote consistency in performing quality engagements. QMM may be made available through technology, for example, through automated tools and techniques, and IT applications.

QMM address standards and interpretive guidance related to accounting; audit, attestation, review, compilation, or preparation engagements or other services that CPA firms may provide; or ethics, independence, quality control, quality management, peer review, or practice monitoring related to those services. QMM would be considered an intellectual resource as described in QM section 10, *A Firm's System of Quality Management*.

**Other QMM Providers**

The elements of the QMM provided and within this description are delivered by Thomson Reuters (Tax and Accounting) Inc. (Thomson Reuters) and no other QMM provider.

**Characteristics of the QMM**

The Guide provides the following:

- A full set of practice aids and relevant industry guidance to perform a non-Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit or an ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit of the financial statements of nongovernmental plans, including most defined contribution retirement plans, defined benefit pension plans, and health and welfare benefit plans, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (U.S. GAAS) and the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA)
- Limited guidance and practice aids to perform compilations in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services (SSARs) of financial statements of employee benefit plans

The practice aids provide a means to document compliance with relevant standards and interpretive guidance and include illustrative accountant's compilation and auditor's reports; engagement, management representation, confirmation, and other illustrative letters; checklists; and audit programs. The unique characteristics and the necessary responses and procedures that would apply to 403(b) plans, governmental plans, and plans that are required to file with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) are not addressed within this Guide.

**Description, as of March 7, 2025, of Thomson Reuters' *PPC's Guide to Audits of Employee Benefit Plans*, February 3, 2025, 35th Edition (Continued)**

The Guide addresses engagement-level quality management requirements but does not address firm-level quality management system requirements. Consequently, for audit engagements, the Guide is intended to be used in conjunction with *PPC's Guide to Quality Management*. For compilation engagements, the Guide is intended to be used in conjunction with either *PPC's Guide to Quality Management* or *PPC's Guide to Quality Management—Compilation and Review*. In addition, the Guide contains references to more extensive discussions of audit guidance in *PPC's Guide to Audits of Nonpublic Companies*.

**Relevant Standards and Interpretive Guidance Addressed by the Guide**

***Auditing Standards and Interpretive Guidance***

The Guide addresses relevant auditing standards and interpretive guidance issued and effective by the Auditing Standards Board (ASB) of the AICPA through February 3, 2025.

Although the following auditing standards may not be fully effective at the time of publication, the user applying guidance in the Guide must evaluate each standard's applicability and effective date based on the period covered in each specific engagement. The following auditing standards were issued before February 3, 2025, were not fully effective at the time of publication, and are not fully incorporated into the Guide:

- SAS No. 146, *Quality Management for an Engagement Conducted in Accordance With Generally Accepted Auditing Standards*, is effective for engagements conducted in accordance with U.S. GAAS for periods beginning on or after December 15, 2025. The Guide provides an overview of SAS No. 146; however, the requirements of this standard have not been incorporated into this edition of the Guide. It is expected to be fully incorporated into a future edition of the Guide. SAS No. 146 does not prohibit early implementation.
- SAS No. 149, *Special Considerations—Audits of Group Financial Statements (Including the Work of Component Auditors and Audits of Referred-to Auditors)*, is effective for audits of group financial statements for periods ending on or after December 15, 2026. SAS No. 149 does not prohibit early implementation. While this *Guide* provides a brief description of SAS No. 149, it does not address audits of group financial statements.

The Guide also addresses the following interpretive guidance and regulations related to audits of employee benefit plans issued through February 3, 2025:

- AICPA Audit and Accounting Guide, *Employee Benefit Plans*, as of August 1, 2024
- The Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA

***Compilation Standards and Interpretive Guidance***

The Guide addresses relevant compilation standards and interpretive guidance issued and effective by the Accounting and Review Services Committee (ARSC) of the AICPA through February 3, 2025.

**Description, as of March 7, 2025, of Thomson Reuters' PPC's Guide to Audits of Employee Benefit Plans, February 3, 2025, 35th Edition (Continued)**

The following compilation standard was issued before February 3, 2025; was not fully effective at the time of publication; and is not fully incorporated into the Guide:

- SSARS No. 26, *Quality Management for an Engagement Conducted in Accordance With Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services*, is generally effective for engagements performed in accordance with SSARSs for periods beginning on or after December 15, 2025. The Guide provides an overview of the provisions of SSARS No. 26; however, the requirements have not been incorporated into this edition of the Guide. It is expected to be fully incorporated into a future edition of the Guide. SSARS No. 26 does not prohibit early implementation.

The Guide also addresses the AICPA Guide, *Preparation, Compilation, and Review Engagements*, as of September 1, 2024.

### **Other AICPA Professional Standards**

The Guide incorporates professional standards from the AICPA, beyond the auditing and compilation standards, that are relevant to this Guide. These include standards relating to ethics from the AICPA *Code of Professional Conduct* in the context of their application to the Guide.

### **Accounting Standards**

The primary focus of the Guide is on AICPA engagement standards rather than accounting standards; however, it does provide relevant industry accounting guidance. In addition, accounting standards with disclosure requirements are included in the Disclosure Checklist (EBP-CX-13).

The Guide addresses relevant accounting standards issued and effective by the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) through February 3, 2025, and up to FASB Accounting Standards Update (ASU) No. 2025-1, *Income Statement—Reporting Comprehensive Income—Expense Disaggregation Disclosures (Subtopic 220-40) Clarifying the Effective Date*.

Although the following may not be fully effective at the time of publication, the user applying the guidance in the Guide must evaluate each standard's applicability and effective date based on the period covered in each specific engagement. The following relevant accounting standards were issued before February 3, 2025, and dual guidance is provided:

- ASU No. 2022-03, *Fair Value Measurement (Topic 820): Fair Value Measurement of Equity Securities Subject to Contractual Sale Restrictions*, is effective for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2024, including interim periods within those years. Early adoption is permitted for financial statements that have not been made available for issuance.
- ASU No. 2023-06, *Disclosure Improvements: Codification Amendments in Response to the SEC's Disclosure Update and Simplification Initiative*, is effective prospectively two years after the effective date of the removal of the related guidance in Regulation S-X or Regulation S-K by the SEC. As of February 3, 2025, the SEC had not removed the related guidance; thus, the effective date has not yet been defined. (If the SEC does not remove the guidance by June 30, 2027, the amendments in the ASU will not become effective.) Early adoption is permitted for entities other than those that are subject to the SEC's existing disclosure requirements.
- ASU No. 2023-08, *Intangibles—Goodwill and Other—Crypto Assets (Subtopic 350-60): Accounting for and Disclosure of Crypto Assets*, is effective for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2024, including interim periods within those years. Early adoption is permitted for financial statements that have not been made available for issuance.
- ASU No. 2024-02, *Codification Improvements—Amendments to Remove References to the Concepts Statements*, is effective for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2025. Early adoption is permitted for financial statements that have not been made available for issuance.

**Description, as of March 7, 2025, of Thomson Reuters' *PPC's Guide to Audits of Employee Benefit Plans*, February 3, 2025, 35th Edition (Continued)**

**Policy for Updating the QMM Content**

Thomson Reuters updates *PPC's Guide to Audits of Employee Benefit Plans* annually and generally releases a new edition each spring to reflect changes in standards and interpretive guidance, content enhancements, and the corrections of minor errors not previously updated. The Guide referenced herein was completed on February 3, 2025, and no changes have been made to this specific edition of the Guide since then.

**User Firm Responsibilities**

User firms are responsible for the following:

- a. Determining whether the QMM are suitable for the user firm's purposes
- b. Understanding that the QMM are not intended to be a substitute for the standards and interpretive guidance, an evaluation thereof, or professional judgment
- c. Using QMM that reflect the most current (up-to-date) relevant standards and interpretive guidance that are applicable in the circumstances and accessing and using relevant standards and interpretive guidance that are applicable in the circumstances that are not addressed or not fully addressed by the QMM
- d. Properly implementing the QMM and using professional judgment in the application of the QMM based on the facts and circumstances (for example, of each engagement)
- e. Providing the appropriate training for the use of the QMM and performing the appropriate supervision and review procedures regarding the use of the QMM based on the skill, training, knowledge, and experience of individual users within the user firm
- f. Identifying that there may be certain facts, circumstances, risk factors, or specific issues that exist for a particular client, engagement, or user firm that may not be addressed by the QMM; in that case, understanding that the QMM will require tailoring and augmentation to address such facts, circumstances, risk factors, or specific issues
- g. Monitoring the activities of standard-setting bodies for changes that would affect the user firm, including amendments of standards and interpretive guidance and deferrals of effective dates
- h. Complying with relevant professional standards and interpretive guidance
- i. Understanding that the effectiveness of the QMM is dependent on the user firm fulfilling the preceding responsibilities and the effectiveness of its actions