

Stakeholder engagement and materiality

Since adopting integrated reporting in 2011, we have extended and enhanced how we take account of stakeholder feedback in relation to our reporting each year.



We asked these groups of stakeholders to:

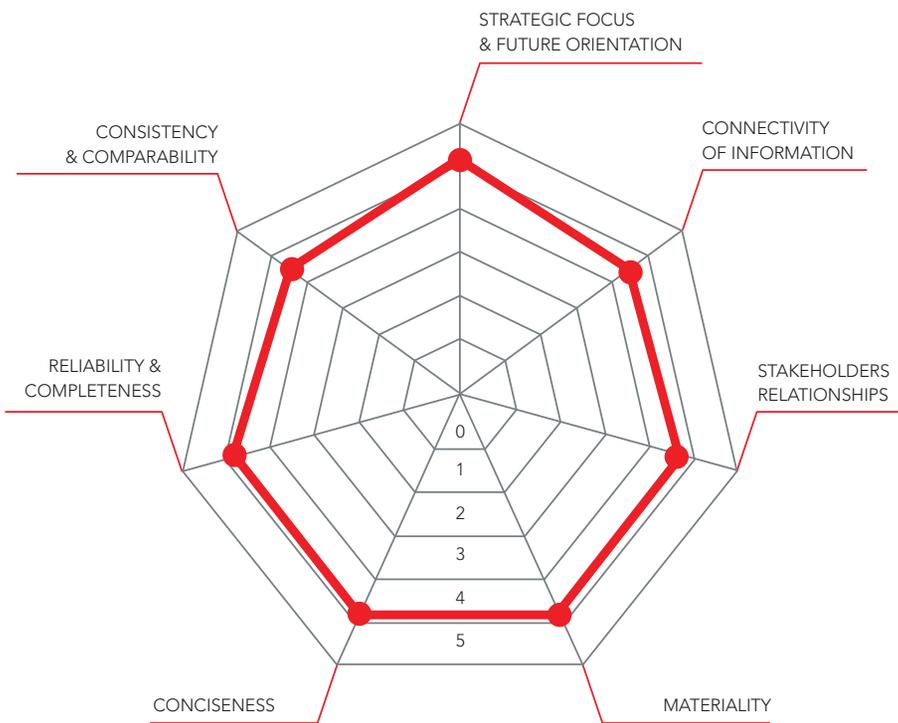
Review and comment on ACCA's 2013-14 integrated report and the extent to which it meets the <IR> Framework and help provide an indicative materiality rating of different topics associated with ACCA's financial and non-financial strategic performance.

For the past three years, we have conducted our stakeholder engagement exercise through a series of face-to-face workshops with a cross-section of external stakeholders in different markets, with independent oversight from an external expert in this field. This year, we have undertaken our largest feedback exercise yet, running workshops with a mixed group of stakeholders in seven contrasting markets:

China
Malaysia
Nigeria
Pakistan
Poland
UK
USA

Meeting IIRC's requirements

External stakeholders gave the following assessment of how they felt ACCA's 2013-14 integrated report measured up to the seven guiding principles of integrated reporting:



In terms of presentation, the main suggestions for future improvement were:

Feedback

Actions

The report could be even more concise.	→	The length of the text has been reduced, primarily through excluding non-material data points and also less disaggregation of data and focusing on global performance.
The reporting of GRI indicators should be re-evaluated, as it was unclear what the relationship of the GRI indicators included was to ACCA's overall strategy and the body of the report.	→	Only data which is considered material to our Strategy to 2020 and our stakeholders is included in this report.
Although the report provided credible information, the assurance process could be better highlighted.	→	The assurance statement and what assurance entails for ACCA is more prominently flagged.
It would be illuminating if more on the stakeholder engagement process was included in the report, to further emphasise how seriously ACCA takes this aspect of its reporting.	→	Stakeholder engagement protocol and an overview of feedback, including the materiality assessment, are now included in main report.

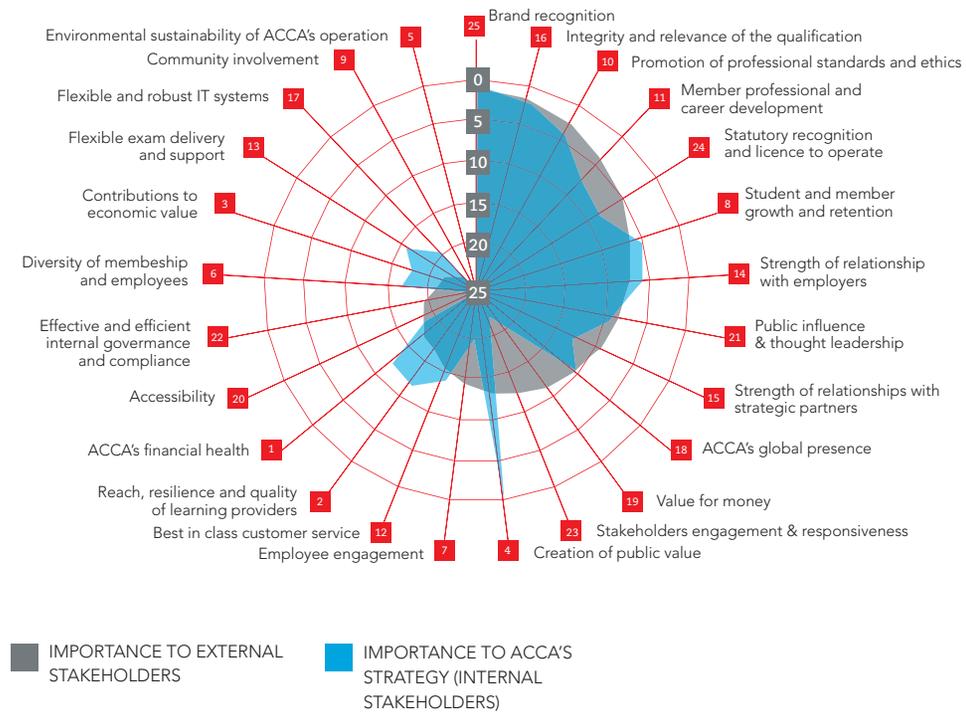
Material issues

We validated our existing material issues against our Strategy to 2020 and asked external stakeholders to rank the resulting 25 potential material issues in order of importance to them:

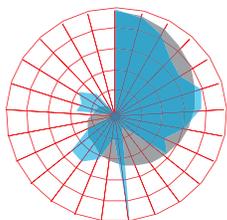
These issues were also ranked by a cross-functional panel of ACCA employees in terms of their significance to our Strategy to 2020, resulting in the following comparative ratings:

Potential material issues

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 ACCA's financial health 2 Reach, resilience and quality of learning providers 3 Contributions to economic value 4 Creation of public value 5 Environmental sustainability of ACCA's operations 6 Diversity of membership and employees 7 Employee engagement 8 Student and member growth and retention 9 Community involvement 10 Promotion of professional standards and ethics 11 Member professional and career development 12 Best in class customer service 13 Flexible exam delivery and support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 Strength of relationship with employers 15 Strength of relationships with strategic partners 16 Integrity and relevance of the qualification 17 Flexible and robust IT systems 18 ACCA's global presence 19 Value for money 20 Accessibility 21 Public influence & thought leadership 22 Effective and efficient internal governance and compliance 23 Stakeholder engagement and responsiveness 24 Statutory recognition and licence to operate 25 Brand recognition |
|--|---|



There was strong agreement between external and internal stakeholders that recognition of the ACCA brand, the integrity and relevance of the ACCA Qualification, and the promotion of professional standards and ethics were of greatest importance.



ACCA's ability to invest in future development, the flexibility of our exam delivery and support and learning provision were judged to be of more importance to ACCA's future by employees, as was diversity and the creation of economic value.

Given that ACCA's overall mission is to deliver public value, this was rated very highly by an internal audience but had less significance for external stakeholders.

We have used this feedback to shape this report, both in terms of content focus and presentation

Our key stakeholders

Members

Members are core to ACCA's existence. We work to protect and enhance the value of the ACCA designation and aim to help members maintain and develop their employability by supporting them through their careers, on a global basis.

Students

As future members, we support students by promoting the value of the qualification to employers and, in partnership with learning providers, developing the support and information they need to achieve qualification.

Employers

Employers are critical stakeholders as they are the primary user of the skills of ACCA accountants and provide students with the workplace experience needed for qualification. In this, they play a central role in determining demand for the ACCA designation and without their support, students are unable to achieve their goal of membership.

Learning providers

Like employers, learning providers are an essential partner. They provide the examination training needed by students and it is important that ACCA works with them so we have a shared understanding of the current and future learning landscape.

National and international body partners

Through inclusive partnerships, we are able to extend the range of services and recognition available to our members. These partners are therefore among the most significant relationships ACCA has. We also have a supplier relationship with many of these organisations, where we provide contracted services (such as practice monitoring).

Governments, donor agencies, standard setters and regulators

We engage with regulators and standard setters around the world to ensure we have the opportunity to influence the development of standards and regulation, with ACCA members and senior employees serving on influential forums and board across the international profession. We work with governments to ensure they understand and value the contribution ACCA makes to national economies

Suppliers

We rely on a number of key suppliers and providers to deliver services and support, particularly IT services and our international examining network.

Universities and colleges

Higher and further education institutions around the world supply ACCA with students and strong relationships with universities and colleges are therefore highly important.