# Company Reporting in the UK – an XBRL Success Story

The use of eXtensible Business Reporting Language for company financial reporting in the UK has proved an outstanding success. Some 1.9 million UK companies file accounts and tax returns in XBRL each year.

The UK approach enables comprehensive and efficient reporting in XBRL at low cost. It provides all the data required for analysis and comparison by regulators and other users without a need for companies to create their own effort-consuming XBRL 'extensions'.

The UK success is founded on the use of the 'Inline XBRL' reporting format and advanced taxonomies which enable comprehensive identification of data in XBRL.

This publication describes the UK XBRL programme and the factors behind its success.

# CONTENTS

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# 1. Introduction

The publication explains the outstanding success of XBRL (eXtensible Business Reporting Language) for company financial reporting in the UK.

With some 1.9 million companies filling accounts and tax returns in XBRL each year, the UK XBRL programme is by some way the largest in the world in terms of numbers of reports.

It is providing comprehensive company financial information in an "intelligent", easily analysable electronic format to both the tax authority, HMRC, and the business register, Companies House. The latter is now publishing this company data in XBRL free-of-charge for investors and the public.

The use of XBRL in the UK has proved both efficient and cost-effective. The cost of filing in XBRL for individual companies is far less than in some similar projects elsewhere.

This document describes the **main features** of the UK XBRL programme and the **key factors** behind its success. It is intended for all those with an interest in the use of XBRL for financial reporting. In particular, it may provide helpful background for those running or embarking on comparable projects to use XBRL for company reporting.

It assumes readers already have a basic understanding of the nature and purpose of XBRL. General information on XBRL is available on the XBRL international website at https://www.xbrl.org/.

For more information on the topics in this publication, please contact XBRL UK via email at: info@xbrl.org.uk

## 2.    Key features and benefits

Two key features have contributed to the success of XBRL in the UK.

- **The use of the 'Inline XBRL', or iXBRL, format for reporting.**

    Under Inline XBRL, all XBRL data is contained within **ordinary, human-readable files**. These files are presented in HTML, the format of the web. This enables a single iXBRL report to operate as both a standard set of accounts which may be viewed on screen or printed, and as a file of XBRL 'tagged' data which can be analysed automatically by software.

    An individual company can thus present its accounts in exactly the way it wishes. No additional mechanisms are required to convert an XBRL filing into a human-readable form, saving complexity and cost.

    A company simply creates its accounts in a normal way and uses software to embed computer-readable XBRL tags within the report. The accounts are then said to be 'tagged' in XBRL.

- **Innovative UK taxonomy design.**

    Taxonomies are the 'dictionaries' of XBRL, which define the computer-readable tags that identify individual items of financial data. Their design is critical to the scope, efficiency and usefulness of XBRL tagged data.

    The UK XBRL taxonomies use a variety of techniques to enable a comprehensive range of accounting data, including company-specific, unusual and unexpected information, to be tagged **easily, quickly and consistently** in XBRL.

Taken together, these two factors have a further major benefit:

- **Company-specific taxonomy extensions are NOT required for UK XBRL filing.**

    Some XBRL projects require companies to create their own 'company taxonomy extensions' to cover information which is specific to the company concerned or to enable a human-readable version of the accounts to be produced. (Taxonomy extensions add tags to or modify a basic taxonomy published by a national or similar authority.)

    In the UK programme, such extensions are **not** necessary. The use of iXBRL means that reports are already presented as the company wishes – no company-specific extension is required to help convert a set of XBRL data into a readable form. The innovative techniques used in the UK taxonomies also allow comprehensive and consistent tagging of accounts, without the need for additional company-specific XBRL tags.

    The avoidance of extensions greatly saves cost and effort for companies. It also avoids the considerable difficulties for comparison and analysis that company extensions may cause.

These features have enabled the UK XBRL programme to:

- Ensure that all data relevant to analysis and comparison in company accounts can be clearly and accurately represented in XBRL.

- Provide data that is represented in XBRL in a coherent and consistent way. This enables analysis and comparison of company information that is practical, efficient and useful.

- Promote ease-of-use of XBRL, keeping down cost and effort for reporting companies and other users. It has not imposed unreasonable or unnecessary burdens on either producers or consumers of information and has provided value for money for organisations, particularly government bodies, supporting the programme.

Underlying these technical features is a **cooperative approach to governance and use of XBRL** in the UK. Committees which oversee the development of taxonomies bring together representatives of government, regulators, other official agencies, accounting firms and software providers.

The practical features of the UK programme and the ease of iXBRL implementation have enabled a **wide range of software companies** to offer applications for filing reports in XBRL. Users have a good choice of tools and technical support.

The next section, section 3, describes the scope and nature of the UK XBRL programme.

Section 4 provides an overview of Inline XBRL. (A separate document, 'Inline XBRL – Saving cost and effort for company reporting', gives more detail on the nature, uses and benefits of Inline XBRL. It is available on the XBRL UK website at http://www.xbrl.org.uk/.)

Section 5 explains the general principles underlying UK taxonomy design and how these relate to the purpose of XBRL – the provision of financial data for automated handling and analysis by software. It also sets out the reasons for avoiding company-level extension taxonomies.

Sections 6 to 12 describe the design, benefits and development of the UK taxonomies.

Other documents giving more technical detail on the taxonomies, including a Tagging Guide and a Developer Guide, are available on the UK Financial Reporting Council website at https://xbrl.frc.org.uk/.

The latest UK accounts taxonomies may be viewed over the internet at https://uk-taxonomies-tdp.corefiling.com/yeti. This shows the 'presentation view' of each taxonomy together with the details of individual tags. (It does not show all technical features of the taxonomies.)

# 3.   XBRL filing in the UK

## 3.1   Use of XBRL in the UK

UK companies have been required since April 2011 to file their annual accounts and corporation tax return in iXBRL to the **tax authority, HMRC.** Some 1.9 million companies are now successfully filing this information each year.

The accounts range from complex ones from large organisations to simple reports from small companies. They vary significantly in format and presentation, since they are filed under principle-based accounting standards which do not prescribe the layout of accounts. Most are filed under UK GAAP standards, but a small number of large companies file under International Financial Reporting Standards, IFRS.

As a concession to ease the introduction of XBRL, HMRC initially set a 'reduced tagging requirement'. This allowed companies to use a reduced set of tags from the UK taxonomies at that time, rather than the full set of tags. However, HMRC encouraged full tagging and a number of companies and accounting firms followed full rather than reduced tagging. Under the latest taxonomies, all companies are required to provide fully tagged data.

HMRC uses XBRL data to assess accounts and tax returns, help guide tax risk and policy decisions, judge the consequences of legal challenges and gain a better understanding of the business population. It says that iXBRL filing has been extremely successful:

*"iXBRL enhances understanding of the taxpayer base; allows better targeting of interventions; saves clerical resource and improves accuracy; makes accounts and computations accessible to computerized analysis tools,"* HMRC said recently. *"XBRL tagged data is a powerful resource. Exploitation of the data will become increasingly central to HMRC's compliance assurance, risk assessment and analysis functions."*

**The UK business register, Companies House,** which collects and publishes accounts from all UK entities, has encouraged voluntary filing of accounts in XBRL for a decade. It began accepting simple, small company accounts that followed a standard pattern in XBRL in 2005. It upgraded its systems from 2011 to handle all accounts in iXBRL.

Some 70% of UK companies now file voluntarily in XBRL to Companies House and this proportion is steadily increasing.

In 2013, for the benefit of investors, financial institutions and the public, Companies House began publishing free-of-charge all the iXBRL accounts it receives. The service now supports a variety of interfaces for searching and comparing UK company data. The government said the service represented a commitment to open access and transparency which *"can benefit everyone – whether it's entrepreneurs, taxpayers, businesses or the public sector. Better data efficiency encourages innovation, delivers better public services and stimulates growth through new revenue streams."*

**Other government departments and official bodies** are now implementing or actively planning XBRL projects. Some, such as a project led by the Charity Commission, which regulates charities in England and Wales, involve new filing of accounts in XBRL. Other projects involve sharing and using accounts information which is already being filed to HMRC or Companies House.

## 3.2   Creation of iXBRL reports

The creation of iXBRL reports has become a standard feature of UK accounts and tax software.

Accounts production software for smaller companies with less complex accounts will create iXBRL reports automatically. Users enter accounts data in their normal manner. They need have no special knowledge of XBRL and may even be unaware of XBRL tagging. Such software generally uses flexible templates that tie accounting data to the correct tags 'behind the scenes'. Users face no additional costs or effort in creating accounts in iXBRL format.

Preparers of more complex accounts, which typically will be in spreadsheet or document form, will use tagging software to apply tags to the accounts. Such software may rely entirely on manual tagging or may include some automated processes which suggest correct tagging to users. The users of such software will require some XBRL expertise.

Some larger companies with more complex accounts have set-up iXBRL production in-house, while others have used their accounting firms or other third party organisations to convert accounts to iXBRL. Costs of third party services vary with the size and number of accounts being handled. However, they are a small fraction of the typical costs in comparable programmes elsewhere which require company extension taxonomies.

## 3.3   Taxonomies and accounting regulations in the UK

Mandatory filing of accounts in the UK began in 2011 with two main taxonomies, a UK GAAP taxonomy and a UK IFRS taxonomy. The vast majority of companies filed under UK GAAP, while publicly quoted organisations used IFRS. The UK GAAP and UK IFRS taxonomies were similar in design and size, but with different tags to reflect the differing requirements under the two sets of standards.

The taxonomies were developed by XBRL UK, the UK arm of XBRL International, with support from HMRC and Companies House. Ownership of these taxonomies was transferred in 2013 to the **Financial Reporting Council (FRC)**, the regulatory body which sets accounting standards in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

In 2014, the FRC published three new taxonomies to handle new accounting standards taking force in the UK and Ireland. These taxonomies are:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Full IFRS** | For accounts under EU-adopted IFRS. This principally covers the consolidated accounts of listed organisations. |
| **FRS 101** | For the new FRS 101 accounting standard. This is for subsidiaries and parents of listed organisations. It allows some exemptions from disclosures required under full IFRS. |
| **FRS 102** | For the new FRS 102 standard. This is for all other companies above the small company threshold and is based on the version of IFRS for small and medium entities. It effectively replaces the old UK GAAP standards. |

From the start of 2015, all UK companies above the 'smaller entity' threshold are required to use these standards. Some have already early-adopted FRS 101 and 102. The FRC is also consulting on new regulations for small and micro entities developed from FRS 102. These will give the UK and Ireland a coherent set of standards founded on IFRS. Additional taxonomies will be developed for small and micro entities.

The three new taxonomies, **Full IFRS, FRS 101 and FRS 102,** are all based on a **common core taxonomy,** since they are all based on IFRS principles and concepts. They thus:

•      Share a large range of common tags.

•      Follow identical designs.

•      Contain the same components for standard company information and reports such as the Audit Report and Directors' Report.

•      Contain sections to handle particular industry sectors.

Their design and content represents an evolution from the original taxonomies used from 2011. They reflect the experience gained during the first phase of mandatory XBRL use from 2011 to 2014.

After the next section on Inline XBRL, the rest of this document is focused on explaining the design, benefits and development of these taxonomies.

# 4. The role of Inline XBRL

Accounts prepared in Inline XBRL, generally known as 'iXBRL', appear to human readers as normal financial reports. The accounts are shown in HTML, the language of internet pages, exactly in the form in which the company wishes to present them. They can be read in any browser.

XBRL tags for specific items of information are embedded in a hidden layer in the HTML file. They can be displayed by software whenever users wish to see them and processed and analysed by software in the normal way.

iXBRL thus handles both the presentation of accounts and the delivery of XBRL data in a single file.

By contrast, the alternative form of delivering XBRL information, which consists of a file of raw XBRL data known as an 'instance document', requires additional mechanisms to make a report readable. Such files purely contain XBRL data without any presentational structure. These may be suitable for data that is entirely reported through fixed templates or tables in spreadsheets, which can be used to handle presentation. However, they are much less suitable for handling company accounts and other reports which follow highly flexible and variable formats.

The UK programme has found that **iXBRL provides an ideal solution for handling of company accounts which follow variable formats.** It gives a range of major benefits:

a.   **Presentation**

iXBRL provides a straightforward solution to the presentation of XBRL reports. It enables users to see data arranged and formatted as intended by the preparer. It removes the need for other presentational mechanisms, which typically add great complexity, effort and cost.

b.   **Accuracy of XBRL tagging**

A display of an iXBRL report can show the original text with associated XBRL tags alongside. This is a major aid to checking the accuracy and consistency of XBRL tagging.

c.   **Avoiding unnecessary XBRL tagging and reducing tagging effort**

iXBRL allows data to be reported as ordinary text without XBRL tagging. **Only data which is required for analysis and comparison by software need be tagged.** Other information is simply delivered as ordinary text as part of the Inline XBRL document. It does not have to be tagged in order to transmit it to consumers or enable the presentation of accounts to be rebuilt.

This avoids users having slavishly to apply XBRL tags to highly company-specific, supplementary or other data that is not appropriate for software analysis. For example, long textual statements, such as business reviews which contain extensive content that is not suitable for XBRL representation and are best read in their original form, can be left largely or wholly untagged.

This significantly reduces the cost and effort of XBRL implementation and use.

d.   **Phasing and simplifying the introduction of XBRL**

Regulators and other agencies can 'phase' their introduction of XBRL, initially requiring only a limited proportion of data to be tagged, while still receiving full reports. Tagging may be expanded flexibly as required in later phases in the light of experience. This approach enables the proportionate and cost-effective introduction of XBRL.

e.    **Simplifying the design and content of taxonomies**

Taxonomies need not be designed to cover the requirements of presentation or to 'chase' unusual, highly company-specific or eccentric data. They can be designed and scaled purely to cover data which is required for automated analysis. This greatly simplifies the development and use of taxonomies.

f.    **Easing the task of software development**

Software development for iXBRL is relatively straightforward. iXBRL avoids the complexities imposed by other approaches.

By using HTML, the language of the web, for delivering reports, iXBRL is employing an open, freely available standard which is well understood by software companies. This greatly reduces development expense and risk. It has encouraged the creation of a broad range of software products to handle iXBRL report production and consumption. Standard tasks such as display and printing can be handled by ordinary, off-the-shelf software.

g.    **Avoiding company extension taxonomies**

Company extension taxonomies to cover unusual company-specific data or to define presentation and layout of accounts are not required.

In summary, iXBRL solves the issues of presentation of XBRL accounts, simplifies the application of tagging and design of taxonomies and greatly reduces cost and effort in XBRL reporting.

# 5.    Taxonomy design and the purpose of XBRL

## 5.1    The UK approach

The purpose of XBRL is to enable the automated analysis and handling of financial data by software. However, this analysis can prove challenging, particularly if data is represented in incomplete or inconsistent ways.

The great variation in the content and format of company accounts means that business rules for comparing and analysing data are often complex, even if the data is accurate and unambiguous. An accounting item may be composed of very different components in different companies, even within a single industry sector. Calculation pathways will vary correspondingly.

Nevertheless, it is possible to write useful comparison and analysis rules which will apply across companies, provided data definitions and relationships are clear and stable. Such rules bring great rewards in terms of the transparency and understanding of company finances.

However, it becomes crushingly more difficult – if not impossible – to write useful and substantive rules when data definitions and relationships are uncertain and shifting.

**The UK taxonomies therefore aim to provide a complete, coherent and consistent model of the data in company accounts that is required for analysis.**

They define **all the tags** that are required to be used for accounts. They also fix the relationships between tags. For example, as explained in section 7, the relationship between tags representing line items and the 'dimension tags' which represent the different forms in which data may be reported (typically the columns the financial tables) are entirely predefined and fixed.

Taxonomy design and rules for tagging seek to ensure there is **only one clear and correct means of tagging any individual item of data** – not multiple alternative means.

Analysis and comparison rules can thus be written on a firm basis. This does not mean that the UK rules or the taxonomies are by any means flawless. Use in practice inevitably reveals gaps or weaknesses in available tags or their structure. However, these problems are generally marginal and may be dealt with over time, in the light of experience.

**The UK taxonomies thus provide a sound basis for comparison and analysis of company data which will steadily evolve and improve over time.**

UK filings do not attempt to represent the calculations which individual companies may use in their accounts. Consumers are expected to define analysis and risk rules for their own purposes, given the clear data definitions and relationships in the taxonomies. However, a set of consistency checks published with the taxonomies, which describe summation and other relationships, provides a foundation for checks on accurate tagging and analysis rules in software.

Sections 6-12 describe the design of the UK taxonomies. **In particular, they explain how the taxonomies can fully define all required XBRL tags, while being sufficiently flexible to cover the myriad variations in format and content which may arise in company accounts.**

## 5.2    Alternative approaches and company extensions

Some XBRL projects try to deal with the varied content in company accounts by allowing companies to create their own taxonomy extensions which add and amend tags and alter the relationships between them. Companies then use these extensions to tag their accounts.

Reviews of these projects show that even minor variations in taxonomies can wreak havoc with data analysis rules – posing a huge challenge for consumers.

For example, apparently small changes in dimension tags, connections and definitions can radically change the way a taxonomy is applied.

The use of company extension taxonomies which make significant additions or amendments to base taxonomies can thus deeply undermine predefined analysis and comparison. Almost by definition, companies will modify taxonomies in differing ways and will thus not provide consistent data for analysis. Consumers are forced towards case-by-case analysis based on the peculiarities of the extensions concerned.

This does not necessarily mean that company extension taxonomies can never be used or justified. But it does mean that such extensions must work within very tightly defined rules which control what taxonomy modifications are permitted.

However, this can only work if modifications are predictable. The UK programme has found it preferable to **build flexibility into its taxonomies to cover predictable variations in company reporting,** for example through the 'analysis items' and 'generic dimensions' explained in section 10, rather than permitting extensions.

The production and processing of company extensions inevitably increases the effort and cost involved in preparing and consuming XBRL reports. It demands additional expertise, processes and investment in software from preparers. It imposes a significant additional burden on consumers in handling and interpreting such extensions. The UK programme has therefore always sought to avoid them.

The UK approach to Inline XBRL, taxonomy design and extensions will not suit all projects. Other projects may operate under very different requirements and circumstances.

For example, the banking reporting programme in Europe under the European Banking Authority (EBA) defines requirements in the form of strictly defined spreadsheet templates. These determine the structure and presentation of filings. Such filings do not need Inline XBRL to present reports.

**However, the UK XBRL programme has found that the use of Inline XBRL and the taxonomy design features set out in this publication have provided a very powerful and successful base for the filing of company financial reports in XBRL.**

# 6.   UK taxonomy design – goals and requirements

## 6.1   Chief objectives

The main objectives of the UK accounts taxonomies are to:

a.    Define clearly and accurately the XBRL tags needed to identify specific items of information.

b.    Support comprehensive and cost-effective tagging of all data required for automated analysis, comparison and review by existing and expected consumers of XBRL reports.

c.    Be simple and efficient to use.

d.    Provide correct and consistent tagged information which can be used easily and effectively by consumers of XBRL reports.

A number of important requirements and considerations are linked to these objectives. They are covered in the next sections.

## 6.2   Scope of the taxonomies

The taxonomies are expected to enable:

a.    Complete tagging of the monetary and numeric data in the schedules in the primary financial statements and the notes or footnotes to the accounts.

b.    Tagging, for the purposes of identification, of all textual information which is important to the interpretation and meaning of accounts. This means high-level tagging to indicate the presence and scope of particular textual statements, but not necessarily granular tagging of the detailed components of such statements.

Data may be excluded from detailed representation in the taxonomies if it meets **at least two** of the following related criteria:

i.     Very varied in content and form across companies.

ii.    Highly specialised – either in general or for the sector concerned.

iii.   Not expected to be useful for automated analysis by likely users of accounts.

These requirements are intended to achieve **comprehensive tagging of all data required for automated analysis and comparison.** They deliberately **exclude data** which is so unusual or company-specific that it is unlikely to be open to comparison between companies or amenable to analysis by any general application or predefined set of rules.

The UK view is that there is no point in imposing cost and implementation burdens in order to represent numeric data in XBRL which in practice is not open to automated analysis.

## 6.3   Consistent data for analysis

A key test of the UK taxonomies is whether they support tagging which is consistent across different financial reports. Weakly designed taxonomies may support broad tagging by defining tags haphazardly, but the latter will not produce data which can be handled efficiently by software.

An aim of UK taxonomy design is that there should only be **one clear and correct means of tagging any individual item of data** – not multiple alternative means.

This aim is achieved not only through taxonomy design but also through the user guidance which accompanies the taxonomies. For example, this guidance sets rules on the correct choice of tags when effectively the same data is reported in primary statements and in notes to the accounts. (UK guidance requires tags should match the intended level of detail or granularity of a disclosure. Broad total tags should be used for items which effectively represent totals, as in primary statements, and granular tags should be used to represent breakdowns in notes.)

This underlines that taxonomies cannot be considered in isolation but must be understood in conjunction with the user guidance which accompanies them.

## 6.4   A complete data model – avoidance of company extensions

The UK taxonomies are intended to support all required tagging **without** any need for company-specific taxonomy extensions. This reflects the general goals that tagged data must be easily analysed and compared and that tagging must be cost-effective. The problems presented by company extensions are discussed in section 5.2.

## 6.5   Business requirements and cost issues

The design and content of the UK taxonomies are tied tightly to business considerations.

The scope of the taxonomies reflects the nature and extent of business requirements for the automated analysis and comparison of data.

Their design and use also reflect demands from business and government that the costs of XBRL implementation must be rigorously controlled and justified.

# 7.   UK taxonomy design – key features

The objectives and requirements for the UK taxonomies set out in the <u>previous section</u> are demanding ones.

The requirement for comprehensive coverage of all data that may be needed for automated analysis, without reliance on company extensions, means that use and content of the taxonomies must be fully thought out and tested during the development stage.

**All required tags must be predefined** in the taxonomies and the **structures of dimensions** (explained under point b below) **must be complete.** Technically, the taxonomies must provide a complete, coherent and consistent model of the data in accounts which should be tagged.

This must be achieved **without creating cumbersome taxonomies** containing very large numbers of tags that are hard to distinguish and manage. The taxonomies must be as easy as possible to use. They must support accurate, clear and consistent tagging.

Key features which enable the UK taxonomies to meet their goals are listed below. They are explained more fully in the subsequent sections. (The ordering below is for convenience: it does not reflect importance. All these points are relevant to the success of the taxonomies.)

a.   **Presentation**

   The presentation view of a taxonomy is based directly on the structure of a normal set of accounts. The structures of reports, primary statements and notes to the accounts will be immediately familiar to anyone accustomed to UK reporting. Within each section, the hierarchy of tags is designed to be simple and convenient to use on screen.

   The sole aim of the presentation view is to **make it easy for users to locate and identify tags.** It does not need to serve as a basis for the presentation of individual company accounts, since that is dealt with by iXBRL. This enables a cleaner and more effective view, since features needed for handling the presentation of accounts are not required.

   <u>Section 8</u> gives more information on the presentation of UK taxonomies.

b.   **Use of dimensions**

   'Dimensions' are used in the UK taxonomies to represent the represent the different forms or classes in which financial data may be reported. They identify **standard breakdowns,** such as that for continuing or discontinued operations.

   The large number of dimensions used in the taxonomies provide flexible and efficient coverage of accounting data. Each dimension contains a number of individual 'dimension tags' to identify the specific breakdowns that may arise. For example, the dimension representing the classes of property, plant and equipment (PPE) contains some 40 dimension tags, each identifying a specific class.

   Line item tags representing particular accounting concepts, such as revenue or profit, are tied to the particular dimensions with which they may be used.

   **The relationships between line item tags and dimensions are fully defined in the UK taxonomies.** Each line item tag is connected to all the dimensions that are appropriate for it.

   This provides a **general structure of line item tags and dimensions which is expected to work across all companies,** whatever individual financial tables they may create.

Taxonomy users are presented with simple and sensible selections of dimension tags when tagging accounts or building analysis rules.

This is known as a 'data-centric' approach to defining and using dimensions. Alternative, presentation-oriented approaches require preparers of XBRL reports to use extension taxonomies to create dimensional structures to match the individual financial tables in a particular company's accounts.

Section 9 explains the use of dimensions in the UK taxonomies in more detail.

### c.    Comprehensive tagging

The UK taxonomies use a variety of techniques to achieve tagging of unpredictable, company-specific data. These provide a reliable means of tagging data which otherwise might need a company taxonomy extension.

The techniques include:

- *Analysis items*

    Analysis items enable company-specific breakdowns of information which cannot be predicted in advance to be tagged. They cover unusual or unexpected line items.

    Technically, they rely on the use of a feature of dimensions known as 'typed dimensions'.

- *Non-standard dimension tags*

    'Non-standard' dimension tags enable unusual breakdowns of data represented by dimensions to be tagged. For example, they are used to handle unusual classes of PPE.

- *Generic dimension tags*

    Generic dimensions tags are used to represent classes whose individual members are specific to a company and cannot be fully defined in advance. Examples include entity officers and directors, subsidiaries, associated companies and the like. Generic dimensions are tied to name tags so that companies can provide full identification of the individual, company-specific items they are reporting.

- *Groupings*

    Groupings are used to handle sets of tags which are expected to be used in combination and which may have to be repeated in a report to represent multiple occurrences of the information concerned. These are also handled by 'typed dimensions'.

    These techniques are described more fully in section 10 on comprehensive tagging.

### d.    Other features

A number of other features improve the usability and accuracy of the UK taxonomies. These include:

- *Guidance, cross-reference tags, hyperlinking and other help within taxonomies*

    **Guidance tags** contained within the taxonomy provide general information to users, for example on how a set of tags should be applied.

**Cross-reference items** point to where tags for related information may be found. They help users navigate efficiently through the taxonomy. Connections defined within the taxonomies enable software to include **hyperlinks** in taxonomy displays, allowing users to move easily between related sections.

**Documentation fields** are attached to some individual tags to provide additional information on how the tag should be used.

All line item tags in the financial sections of the taxonomies contain **accounting references** to authoritative publications defining the concept they represent. This helps to confirm their intended meaning and use.

- *Text tags*

  A variety of types of text tags enable efficient tagging of textual information within reports. All text tags define specific information. The taxonomies do not contain any 'text block' tags to cover large blocks of information.

- *Supporting documentation*

  The taxonomies are supported by documents stating in detail how they should be used. A **Tagging Guide** describes the features of the taxonomies and sets out rules for the application of tags under various circumstances. A **Developer Guide** explains the taxonomies for the benefit of software developers. It sets out rules for the handling and display of XBRL- related information by software.

- *Consistency checks*

  A set of consistency checks representing some summation and similar relationships for tagged data have been published in spreadsheet form alongside the taxonomies. These are intended to help software developers implement tests on the completeness and accuracy of tagging.

  Section 11 gives more detail on some of these features.

e.    **Taxonomy coverage and structure**

The main sections of the UK taxonomies are designed with normal **commercial and industrial companies** in mind, but the taxonomies also contain additional sections for **banking and finance, investment funds and extractive industries.**

Taxonomy extensions aimed at **other industry sectors** are expected to be published in due course. Work or planning on several is already under way. It is accepted that UK taxonomies will not cover every aspect of reporting by some specialist sectors for the time being. However, they do not need to. Data can still be reported satisfactorily as text in Inline XBRL.

Taxonomies and tagging will be expanded as and when a business justification for automated analysis and comparison of the data concerned is put forward and accepted.

Section 12 sets out the structure of the taxonomies and describes their development.

# 8.   Taxonomy presentation

## 8.1   The presentation view

By following the **typical structure and ordering of a set of accounts**, the presentation view or 'linkbase' provides users with an easily understandable display of a taxonomy. The figure below shows the top-level sections of the FRS 102 taxonomy. (The numbers on sections are just for ordering.)



The arrangement of sections and tags should be very familiar to all those familiar with UK company reporting. The following figure shows part of the notes section of the FRS 102 taxonomy.



Displays of tags are arranged with totals at the top of a hierarchy, with component items opening below them. **This provides the most efficient view on screen, with the most commonly used items being the most visible and accessible.** As an example, the following figure showing a partial view of the FRS 102 'Debtors' section. Component items are displayed below their totals.
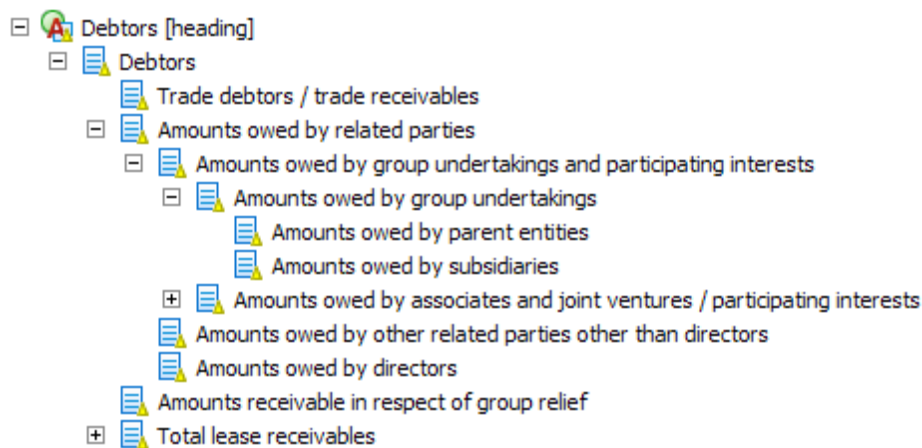
This approach to display is clean and easy-to-use, enabling the most important tags to be located quickly and efficiently. It can be achieved because the presentation view does not have to be used to generate readable versions of individual company accounts. That is handled by Inline XBRL.

Taxonomies which have to support special mechanisms to create human-readable accounts from XBRL data will typically require more complex presentation views. These may include more heading items and awkward hierarchies which place totals at the foot of their components in order to mimic the ordering in printed accounts. They may also require multiple label types such as total, negated, terse, verbose, period start / end and the like in order to capture terminology variations in printed accounts.

## 8.2   Display of dimensions

The main sections of the presentation view of the UK taxonomies only show **line item tags**, together with any required heading, guidance or cross-reference tags. **Dimension tags** are displayed in a separate section (numbered 500, at the foot of the presentation view). That is purely to provide an overview of available dimension tags.

**Taxonomy software is expected to show the dimension tags which may be used with each line item through a suitable display – typically a separate window or pop-up alongside the presentation view.** (The dimension tags which may be used with each line item are defined in a separate part of the taxonomy: the definition view or 'linkbase'.)

For example, the figure below shows the dimensions connected to the line item tag 'Disposals, property, plant and equipment' from the PPE movement analysis section. (For simplicity, only one of the dimensions, PPE ownership, is shown partly expanded, with its dimension tags.)
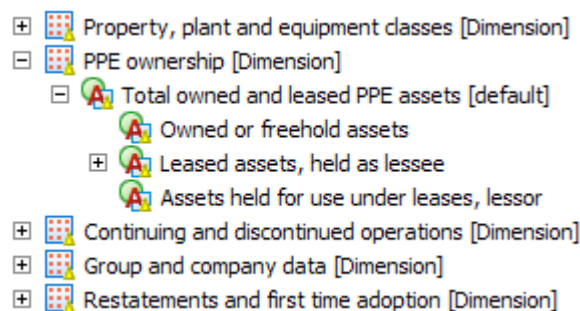
**It is not necessary or practical to show dimensional connections within the main body of the presentation view.** Any attempt to represent specific financial tables which mix line items and dimension tags will inevitably fail since companies vary greatly in how they structure such tables. It is not required for the presentation of individual accounts, since that is handled by iXBRL.

Instead, available dimensions are most efficiently displayed by taxonomy software. This enables preparers to select all the dimensional options they may need to represent particular content or tables.

## 8.3   Labels

The quality of the labels of tags is critical to the efficiency and usability of taxonomies.

The labels in UK taxonomies are designed to identify items clearly and uniquely without being overlong and clumsy. They use standard accounting terminology. Their content follows a number of styles and conventions to help users discern patterns and quickly recognise meaning. Only a single standard label is needed to identify each tag.

Labels show whether values should be entered as positive or negative. They include terms in brackets to show data which should be negative, as for example in *'Operating profit (loss)'*.

Terms in square brackets at the end of labels are used to enable users to distinguish different types of tags at a glance. Examples include [boolean], [guidance], [cross-reference] and the like. This helps to reinforce any distinctions made by technical means, such as the 'datatype' of tags.

## 8.4   Viewing the UK taxonomies

The latest UK accounts taxonomies can be viewed over the internet at https://uk-taxonomies-tdp. corefiling.com/yeti

This shows the presentation view of each taxonomy and the details of individual tags. (It does not show dimensional connections or other 'definition linkbase' relationships. Those may be seen in appropriate taxonomy viewing software.)

The taxonomies may be downloaded from the FRC website at https://xbrl.frc.org.uk/.

# 9.   Taxonomy dimensions

## 9.1   Scope of dimensions

The UK accounts taxonomies contain some 90 dimensions to identify a very wide range of forms and classes of data. Among other things, dimensions are used to distinguish:

- Company and consolidated data
- Continuing and discontinued operations
- Classes of equity
- Classes of assets such as PPE, intangible assets and provisions
- Geographic, operating and other business segments
- Subsidiaries, joint-ventures and associates
- Acquisitions or business combinations
- Related parties
- Pension schemes; share-based payment arrangements
- A wide range of data related to financial instruments, including class of asset and liability, various aspects of instrument type, derivative types and purpose, value type, current / non-current, maturity period, impairment allowance, risk exposure and the like.
- Share classes and share types
- Directors
- Restated information, including prior period adjustments
- Type and nature of the entity and various aspects of the financial report

Some dimensions are purely concerned with general distinctions, such as whether assets are owned or leased or whether inventories are current or non-current. Other dimensions may cover both general and specific distinctions. For example, the related parties dimension enables the identification of **general classes** of related party, such as parent entities, other group members and key management personnel, as well as **specific** related parties within each class.

The number of dimension tags in each dimension varies greatly. For example, the equity classes dimension contains some 50 dimension tags representing individual types of reserve, while the group/ company dimension contains just two, identifying group and company data.

This broad range of dimensions provides a powerful means of ensuring the UK taxonomies satisfactorily cover the wide range of data that may appear in accounts.

## 9.2   Use of dimensions

The dimensions which may be used with any line item tag are **fully defined** in the taxonomies. This makes the choice and use of dimension tags easy for users. Preparers of reports do not have to understand technical aspects of dimensions; they simply have to apply the tags made available to them by taxonomy software.

The taxonomies cover **all combinations** of line item and dimension tags required for XBRL reporting. **They do not permit** combinations which are inappropriate under accounting standards or which make no accounting sense.

The taxonomies are not defined to represent specific financial tables, since tables may vary enormously in format and content across companies. Instead, by defining general relationships between line item and dimension tags, the taxonomies enable the easy and efficient tagging of data in lists or tables, whatever their particular content and format.

Most line item tags are only connected in the taxonomies to a small number of dimensions. For example, most PPE items are attached to five dimensions: PPE classes, PPE ownership, continuing / discontinued operations, group / company and restatements. These are shown in the figure in section 8.2. However, some financial instrument line items are attached to a significantly larger number of dimensions, reflecting the complexity and flexibility of financial instrument reporting.

To make tagging easier for preparers of reports, most dimensions in the UK taxonomies contain a **'default'** dimension tag which is assumed to apply for a dimension, if a preparer does not actively select a tag from the dimension. This saves preparers' effort in applying tags. The default tag represents the typical, expected meaning of a dimension. Generally, this will be a tag for a total value, although that does not have to be the case.

The figure below shows the financial instrument current / non-current dimension with its total default.
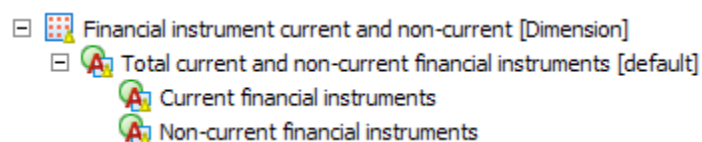


Some dimensions contain the default tag *'Not applicable'*. This means that the dimension can effectively be ignored, **unless** the user actively applies a tag from the dimension. This is useful when a dimension is only **sometimes** relevant to the line items to which it is linked. For example, the dimension representing different types of reclassification of financial assets has a *'Not applicable'* default, because financial assets may only sometimes be reclassified. The dimension may thus be tied to all financial asset line items in the taxonomies, but is only applied when required.

This aids flexibility in pre-defining line item and dimension relationships in the taxonomies. It enables all dimensions which may potentially be required with line items to be linked to them.

# 10. Achieving comprehensive tagging

## 10.1 Introduction

As outlined in section 7, the UK taxonomies use a variety of techniques to achieve comprehensive tagging of accounts, without requiring companies to create extension taxonomies to cover unusual or unpredictable company-specific data. These techniques enable such data to be reliably identified and classified with XBRL tags.

The techniques represent some innovations in taxonomy design, but are based on standard features of the XBRL specification. They operate reliably for UK filing.
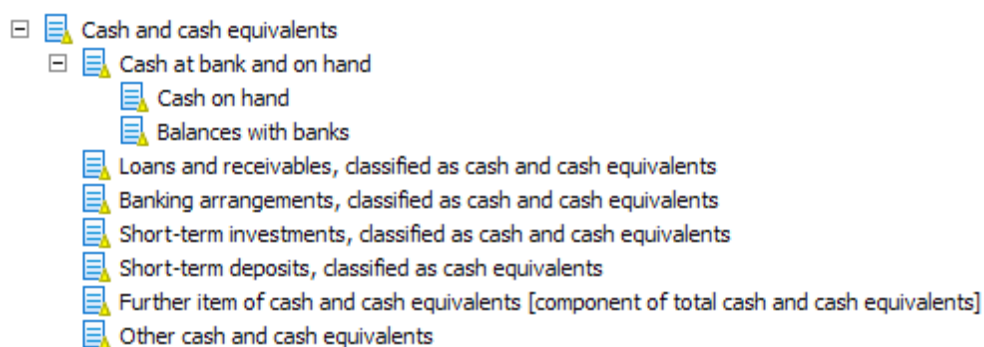
## 10.2 Analysis items

Tags known as 'Analysis items' are used tor tagging of entries in accounts for which no suitable line item tag exists in the taxonomies.

As far as possible, the taxonomies provide specific tags for disclosures, so that most or all data in accounts can be covered by ordinary, explicit line item tags. However, it is impossible to predict all variations and breakdowns in reporting that individual companies may adopt. Analysis items handle uncommon or unexpected breakdowns of information not covered by ordinary line item tags.

Each analysis item tag is specific to the section in which it appears. It is defined as representing a component of the total monetary or numeric value for the section. If necessary, it may be used repeatedly to tag multiple entries in the section for which no line item tag exists.

**The purpose of analysis items is to support complete tagging of the section in which they appear. They thus enable summation and other automated analysis of the data in the section.**

Analysis items have labels in a special format which enable users to identify them easily. They normally begin with the word 'Further' and state the total of which they are a component. The figure below shows the analysis item *'Further item of cash and cash equivalents [component of total cash and cash equivalents]'* in the cash and cash equivalents section of the taxonomy.



This analysis item may be used to tag the value of any type of cash and cash equivalent which is reported as a **direct component** of total cash and cash equivalents and is **not represented** by an available specific tag. For example, it could be used to cover detailed entries which replace the banking arrangements entry. It could also cover aggregations, such as a combination of short-term investments and short-term deposits. The analysis item should thus enable complete tagging of any financial disclosure which shows a breakdown of cash and cash equivalents.

Analysis items are used in sections of primary statements and notes where unexpected line items may occur, including main sections, sub-sections, movement analyses and other detailed disclosures.

Aside from their role in covering unexpected data, **analysis items operate in exactly the same way as ordinary line item tags.** They are attached to the same dimensions as other line item tags in the section concerned, so they can represent the same forms and classes of data.

Technically, analysis item tags are attached to a special form of dimension, known as a 'typed dimension'. This enables each tag to be used multiple times to cover different entries in a section, if necessary, with each use being individually identified.

In the UK, analysis items are **not** used in combination with a 'name' tag to describe the specific data for which they are used. It was felt this would require unnecessary effort from preparers, since any consumer can check the inline XBRL text to see a description of the data represented by an analysis item. The lack of a description does not hinder automated numeric analysis. However, if required in other projects, a name tag could easily be associated with each analysis item tag, enabling a description to be attached to each use.

## 10.3 Non-standard dimension tags

'Non-standard' dimension tags are included in some dimensions to cover untypical classes or breakdowns which cannot be defined in advance.

They fulfil a similar role within dimensions to that handled by analysis items for line item tags. They may be used to represent any class or breakdown which is (a) not covered by explicit tags in the dimension and (b) a direct component of the total for the dimension.

They are only used in a limited number of dimensions where unexpected classes or categories may arise. Only a small number of non-standard dimension tags are included in each of these dimensions, since ordinary dimension tags are expected to cover most eventualities. The following figure shows the non-standard dimension tags included in the PPE classes dimension.



The existence of such tags enables full tagging of data and thus permits a range of automated tests and rules on data to be run. They do not describe the specific class for which they are used. Consumers have to read the Inline XBRL text for the description.

## 10.4 Generic dimension tags

'Generic' dimension tags are used for classes of data whose individual members are company-specific and cannot be fully identified in advance. Examples include entity officers and directors, subsidiaries, associated companies and the like.

Generic dimension tags represent such classes by numbered tags. For example, individual subsidiaries are represented by the tags *'Subsidiary 1', 'Subsidiary 2'* and so forth. The taxonomies contain sufficient of these tags in each class to cover all likely tagging requirements.

The following figure shows part of the subsidiaries dimension. The number of generic subsidiary tags goes up to 50. (Some companies may have more than 50 subsidiaries, but the number listed in detail and needing tagging in their accounts is normally much less than this.)
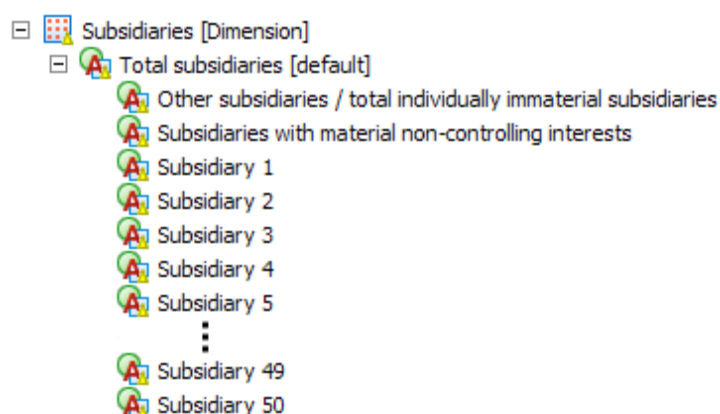


Each set of generic dimension tags is associated with a name tag so that companies can provide full identification of the individual, company-specific items they are reporting. For example, the subsidiaries generic tags are tied to the line item tag *'Name of subsidiary'*.

A total of 16 dimensions in the UK accounts taxonomies contain some generic members. All also include explicit dimension tags to cover totals or other information. Examples of the dimensions are:

- Entity officers: identifying individual directors.
- Continuing / discontinued operations: identifying specific discontinued operations.
- Associates: identifying specific associates.
- Operating segments: identifying specific operating segments.
- Related parties: identifying specific related parties of various types.
- Business combinations: identifying specific business combinations.
- Post-employment benefit plans: identifying specific plans.
- Share-based payment arrangements: identifying specific arrangements.
- Share classes: identifying specific classes.

Generic dimension tags are an important means of achieving full tagging while avoiding any need for company-specific extensions.

## 10.5 Groupings

A 'grouping' contains tags which describe related aspects of a piece of information and are expected to be used in combination. The tags may be repeated in a report to handle multiple occurrences of the type of information they cover.

Typically, groupings cover narrowly defined, detailed information. They frequently will include a combination of descriptive text tags and monetary tags. An example is the grouping for specific bank loans shown below. This may be used multiple times to handle different loans.
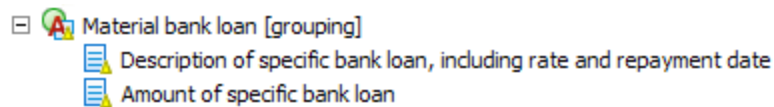


The heading item marked as a 'grouping' is purely a container and is not itself used in tagging.

Tags in groupings operate like other line item tags. Technically, they are attached to a special 'typed dimension' which enables the fact that they are being used in combination to be recognised by software and also enables them to be repeated, when necessary. Historically, features called 'tuples' have been used in XBRL to group together related information, but these have been replaced in the latest UK taxonomies by groupings using typed dimensions, since the latter offer greater consistency and usability.

Groupings offer significant benefits in enabling the easy tagging of detailed, company-specific information. The latest UK accounts taxonomies contain 23 groupings. These cover a broad range of subjects, including information on individual share issues, specific deferred tax assets, director loans and guarantees, material individual assets and other detailed reporting required by accounting standards.

# 11. Other taxonomy features

## 11.1 Guidance information

The taxonomies contain a range of information to help users apply them correctly.

### a.    Guidance tags

Guidance tags appear in the presentation view. They provide guidance on how sets of tags should be used, reminders on the use of dimensions and similar help. They contain the word [guidance] at the end of their labels and have a 'guidance item' data type. (The latter enables easy identification by software and special display if required.)

Guidance items cannot give full explanations on taxonomy use – that is the role of taxonomy documentation – but they provide prompts and reminders of key points to users. The figure below shows guidance tags that provide reminders on the use of dimensions.
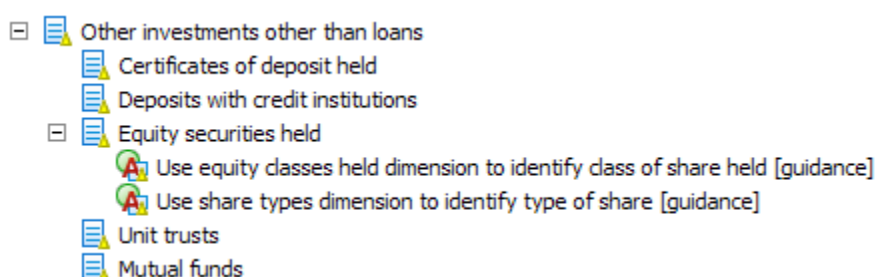


Other guidance tags give reminders on the method or scope of tagging:



### b.    Cross-reference tags

Cross-reference tags appear in the presentation view and point to sections where related information may be found, helping users navigate through taxonomies. Taxonomy software is expected to use **hyperlinks** to enable users to move at a single click between the tags and related information. Examples of some cross-reference tags are shown below.
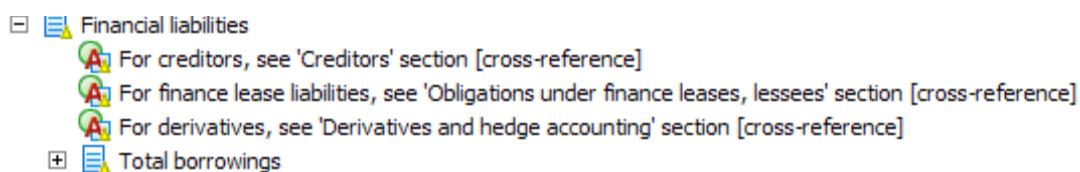


All cross-reference tags are connected to the section at which they point by special links placed in the taxonomies definition linkbase. These 'custom arcs' enable software developers to create hyperlinking in taxonomy displays.

As explained in section 7 on the key features of the taxonomies, 'documentation fields' are attached to some individual tags to give additional guidance on their use. Line item tags carry accounting references to help confirm their meaning. **Documents** accompanying the taxonomies explain how they should be used by preparers and handled by software developers. They also set out **consistency checks** which can be used by software to test the completeness and accuracy of tagging.

## 11.2 Text tagging

The main purposes of tags for textual information in the UK taxonomies are to identify:

- Important data, such as names of entities.
- Significant descriptive items, such as specific accounting policies.
- Important statements, for example on the status of the company and its accounts.
- Supplementary commentary by the entity on some disclosures.

This tagging is intended to confirm the presence of and make it easy to find significant textual information. It is not intended to cover very large slabs of textual reports, such as business reviews, which can best be read in Inline XBRL in the form intended by the company.

Text tags are generally designed to cover **items of textual information in full** rather than fragments of text which do not make sense when seen in isolation. For example, a single text tag exists to cover a description of impairment losses recognised or reversed in PPE. The taxonomies do not include separate tags for descriptions of events leading to impairment, how recoverable amounts are determined, assumptions lying behind estimates and so forth.

This approach ensures **tagged text is immediately comprehensible and useful,** as well as avoiding unnecessary tagging effort by preparers.

Inline XBRL allows separate portions of text, for example before and after a financial table, to be covered by a **single text tag.** This helps to simplify the tagging of text.

Supplementary commentary in primary statements or notes is covered in the taxonomies by text tags labelled as 'free-text comment' tags. These enable such comments to be captured easily in XBRL.

The labels of text tags follow standard conventions. For example, tags for descriptive information begin 'Description of . . . '. These conventions help text tags to be easily recognised and understood.

## 11.3 Technical features

### a.  Fixed value tags

Some tags are intended to represent data which can only take a set of predefined values. The UK taxonomies handle these through the use of 'fixed value' tags. These take their value through the dimension tags to which they are attached. The tags themselves are defined as 'empty' and have a special 'fixedItemType' datatype. The dimension tags represent all possible values which they may take.

For example, the *'Country of formation or incorporation'* tag is attached to the countries dimension, providing a predefined set of countries for preparers to use. Similarly, the *'Legal form of entity'* tag is attached to a legal form of entity dimension containing tags representing all allowable types of entity.

This provides an easy and reliable way to ensure such tags are only used with correct values which can be recognised by software.

b. Balance attribute and cash flow data

Almost all monetary item tags in the taxonomies carry a balance attribute of debit or credit. This aids developers in setting up calculation rules in software. However, the application of debit and credit to cash flow data is not strictly appropriate from an accounting perspective and can lead to calculation anomalies. The UK taxonomies have thus introduced a special feature to identify cash flow tags and to indicate that a balance attribute of **debit on these items means a cash inflow** and **credit means a cash outflow.**

This is achieved through special links or 'custom arcs' in the definition linkbase. All cash inflow debit items are attached to an inflow arc and all credit items are attached to an outflow arc.

This provides a more rigorous definition from an accounting point of view and helps software to overcome potential calculation anomalies.

The UK taxonomies include a number of other features to support tagging and enable correct processing by software. For example, technical features include datatypes to identify heading items, cross-reference items and the like.

These are described in full in the **Tagging Guide** and **Developer Guide** to the taxonomies, available on the UK Financial Reporting Council website at https://xbrl.frc.org.uk/.

## 12. Taxonomy structure, coverage and development

### *12.1 Structure and coverage*

The UK accounts taxonomies principally reflect the requirements of commercial and industrial companies, but include sections with additional tags for banking and finance, investment funds and the extractive industries, mining, oil and gas. Extensions are planned for some other industry sectors.

As explained in section 3.3 on the taxonomies and UK accounting regulations, the taxonomies are structured around a **common financial reporting core taxonomy** which covers accounting concepts that derive from the main UK accounting standards.

The taxonomies also include common components covering standard information which may appear in financial reports. The components comprise:

- Basic information on the entity and the financial statement itself, together with tags for standard information such as countries and regions. This is termed the '**Common data**' component.
- Directors' report.
- Audit report.
- Accountant's report. (This is for unaudited companies.)

The components are built as separate taxonomy modules, so that they can be used flexibly in future taxonomy developments.

The basic structure of the main UK accounts taxonomies is shown conceptually in the diagram below.
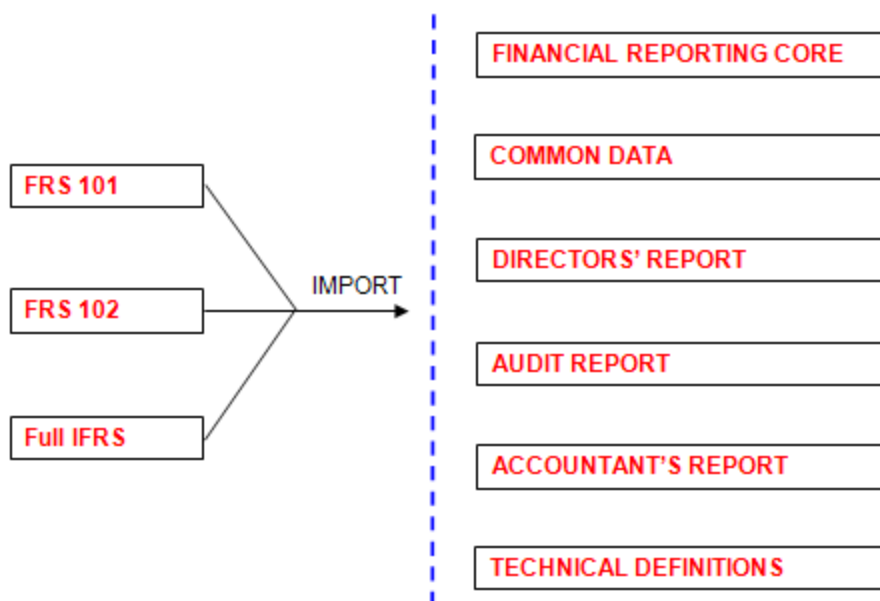


The **FRS 101, FRS 102 and Full IFRS taxonomy components** are principally concerned with **tailoring and presenting** the information contained in the core taxonomy to meet the needs of each standard.

Other taxonomies, particularly for other industry sectors, can build on the same base, importing the underlying components as required. They may add tags, modify dimensional structures and create presentation views to suit the sector concerned.

UK taxonomies do **not** include 'calculation' linkbases to model summations. The UK view is that these linkbases, which are incapable of representing dimensional information, are **not** useful.

## 12.2 Future developments

The FRC is cooperating with other agencies and industry bodies to create taxonomy extensions for sectors which follow special regulations or practices and whose accounts cannot easily be covered by the existing taxonomies. It is planning extensions for insurance and smaller companies and is working with the Charity Commission on an extension for charities accounts.

It plans to **update existing taxonomies** in the light of developments in accounting standards and experience in use.

HMRC is separately responsible for **two other taxonomies used in the UK for tax reporting**. One covers basic information relating to corporation tax. The other handles the 'detailed profit and loss' report, which contains an in-depth breakdown of certain income and expenses. Company filings to HMRC contain these tax reports as well as accounts.

These HMRC taxonomies follow **identical design principles to those used for the accounts taxonomies**. As described below, UK bodies coordinate closely on taxonomy development and use.

## 12.3 Development process

The project led by the FRC to develop the latest UK accounts taxonomies was a substantial one. After an initial project planning stage, work on the new taxonomies began in March 2013. They were released for public review in May 2014. After revision in light of comments, the final versions were formally published in September 2014. The project was completed on schedule and within budget.

The development team consisted of a development manager, who was experienced in XBRL and handled the building of the taxonomies, and accounting specialists seconded from accounting firms and HMRC. The FRC provided overall project management.

XBRL development at the FRC is overseen by a **governance committee** which includes representatives from HMRC, Companies House, the Department of Business (the government ministry in charge of business affairs), the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), a number of large accountancy firms and representatives of XBRL UK and XBRL Ireland. This committee sets strategy, consulting with other agencies when necessary.

A **technical committee** made up of representatives of accountancy firms, software developers, HMRC and other bodies monitors the detailed development of taxonomy content and design. Final taxonomy approval rests with the FRC.

Taxonomies are published in draft and final forms via **CoreFiling's Yeti system** which enables them to be viewed on the internet as well as providing means of gathering comments from reviewers.

**XBRL UK,** the UK jurisdiction of XBRL International, provides general support for development and use of XBRL in the UK. Bringing together accounting firms, software companies, government departments and other agencies, it supplies a forum for preparers and consumers of financial information to discuss XBRL implementation and plans for its expansion. It helps to foster effective coordination on XBRL in the UK.

# GLOSSARY

| | |
|---|---|
| *Analysis items* | Analysis items are line item tags which are designed for use with entries in accounts for which no specific tag exists. Each analysis item tag is specific to the section in which it appears and may be reused multiple times to tag different entries. See section 10.2 for more information. |
| *Datatypes* | Taxonomy tags are assigned a 'data type' to identify their meaning and role and to assist in processing XBRL data. |
| *Definition linkbase* | The definition linkbase is used to establish various relationships between tags in a taxonomy. Its principal function in the UK taxonomies is to define the structure and use of dimensions (see other glossary entry), although it also sets other relationships. |
| *Dimensions and dimension tags* | Taxonomy dimensions represent the different forms in which financial data may be reported. Each dimension contains a number of individual 'dimension tags' to identify the specific breakdowns that may arise. See section 9 for a fuller explanation. |
| *Extension taxonomy* | An extension taxonomy modifies another taxonomy by adding tags, providing alternative presentation views or other changes. Extensions must not alter the definition of tags in the base taxonomy. The filing of XBRL reports in the UK is not expected to require company-specific extension taxonomies. |
| *Financial Reporting Council* | The Financial Reporting Council (FRC) is the UK's independent regulator which sets standards for corporate reporting, audit and actuarial practice and which monitors and enforces accounting and auditing standards. |
| *Fixed value tags* | Fixed value tags represent data which can only take a set of predefined values. These take their value through the dimension tags to which they are attached. The tags themselves are defined as 'empty' and have a special 'fixedItemType' datatype. The dimension tags represent all possible values which they may take. See section 11.3 for more information. |
| *FRS 101 and FRS 102* | Accounting standards for the UK and Ireland published by the Financial Reporting Council. |

| | |
|---|---|
| *Generic dimension tags* | Generic dimension tags represent classes of information where the precise name of each member of the class is not known in advance. Examples include individual directors, individual subsidiaries and the like. A generic dimension tag consists of the name of the class followed by a number to indicate the individual tag. Generic dimensions are tied to name or description line item tags which identify the use of each generic tag. See section 10.4 for more information. |
| *Grouping* | A grouping is used to contain tags which (a) describe related aspects of a particular piece of information and which are expected to be used in combination and (b) may be used repetitively in an XBRL report. See section 10.5 for a fuller explanation. |
| *IFRS* | The international accounting regulations published by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) under which UK publicly quoted companies report. |
| *Inline XBRL or iXBRL* | All XBRL reports in the UK are in Inline XBRL format. This provides a human-readable version of a report based on HTML, the language of the web, with XBRL tags hidden from view in the underlying file. It provides a powerful solution to the presentation of XBRL data and offers a range of other benefits. Also known as iXBRL. |
| *Instance document* | A file of raw XBRL data. This will consist of facts being represented in XBRL together with computer-readable XBRL tags and other related XBRL information. It is intended for consumption by computer software not human readers. It does not contain any presentational structure. |
| *Label* | A label is the human-readable description on an XBRL tag, which provides its main definition. As far as possible, they uniquely identify the tag concerned. |
| *Line item tags* | Tags which represent ordinary accounting concepts. These are all tags apart from (a) dimension tags (see other glossary entry) and (b) special tags such as headings, guidance items and the like which cannot directly be used for tagging. Line item tags are shown in full in the presentation linkbase (see other glossary entry). |
| *Non-standard dimension tags* | Non-standard dimension tags are included in some dimensions to cover untypical classes or breakdowns which cannot be defined in advance. They fulfil a similar role within dimensions to that handled by analysis items for line item tags. See section 10.3 for more information. |

| | |
|---|---|
| *Notes to the accounts* | Detailed disclosures underlying the primary financial statements. Known as 'footnotes' in some countries. |
| *Presentation view or linkbase* | A user's basic view of the tags in a taxonomy is defined in the presentation linkbase. The linkbase can set both the structure and order of tags. |
| *Tag* | An XBRL tag is the computer-readable identifier attached to an item of business data. |
| *Tagging* | The application of XBRL tags to a report as part of the process of creating an iXBRL report. (See other glossary entries for 'tags' and 'iXBRL'.) Tags are applied through software. This may be done automatically or manually, depending on the nature of the report and software used. |
| *Taxonomy* | Taxonomies are the dictionaries of the XBRL language, containing the computer-readable tags used to identify specific financial and business data items. |
| *Typed dimension* | A special type of dimension which does not contain a set of specific, predefined dimension tags, but is defined by some general property. The typed dimensions in the UK taxonomies are used with analysis item tags and groupings (see other glossary entries). These typed dimensions are defined as containing dimension tags represented by positive integers. They effectively provide 'anonymous' dimension tags which enable the line items tags attached to them to be reused any number of times by changing the integer for each occurrence. See the guidance documents published with the taxonomies for more information. |

# THE XBRL UK JURISDICTION

XBRL UK is a long-standing jurisdiction of the XBRL International consortium (XII).

Dedicated to advancing the use of XBRL in the United Kingdom, XBRL UK's main activities include:

• Promoting the XBRL standard through marketing and educational information.

• Providing technical and other support to those adopting XBRL.

• Representing UK interests within XBRL International.

• Providing access to European markets and standards-setting working groups through XBRL Europe.

XBRL UK is facilitated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW). Members include a range of public agencies, accountancy and technical specialists, and software suppliers.

The UK jurisdiction has worked closely with HMRC and Companies House to develop their respective XBRL filing projects, providing public and technical feedback and advice at both design and implementation phases.

XBRL UK is most closely identified with the development of the Inline XBRL standard which was developed by jurisdiction members, under the aegis of the XII Rendering Working Group, in order to resolve technical and market-acceptance issues around the HMRC corporation tax programme. The iXBRL standard, which has been the most successful single part of the XBRL standard to date, went on to be adopted by a number of other OECD countries for their own filing programmes.

The UK jurisdiction provides a programme of face-to-face meetings, conferences and roadshows.

The production of this white paper was coordinated by Peter Calvert.

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