



How can qualitative research help to address standard-setters' questions?

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- It captures meaning, not measurement: Focuses on the how and why (qualities), not the how much or how many (quantities)
- Research in a context, close to practice: Understand social phenomena as they happen – such as the implementation or use of IFRS
- Qualitative research methods: Interviews, case studies, ethnographies, discourse analysis
- Strengths: Richness, in-depth insights into practices
- Limitations: Depth over breadth, limited generalizability

- Single case studies
 - Challenges for preparers in determining value in use for impairment purposes and its objectification through external factors (Huikku et al., 2017, AOS; Hartmann, 2022, QRAM)
 - Substantial changes in a company's disclosure policy in the annual report (Oberwallner et al., 2021, EAR)
- Cross-sectional interview studies
 - Challenges in determining mark-to-model fair values for non-financial assets (Barker & Schulte, 2017, AOS)
 - Challenges in determining fair values in an emerging economy setting (Nugraheni et al., 2022, QRAM)
 - Challenges in the audit of fair values (Griffith et al., 2015, CAR; Glover et al., 2019, CAR)
 - Use of judgment in accounting for internally generated intangible assets (Lantto et al., 2024, QRAM)

Users' perspectives on IFRS:

- Dissonance between the views of financial analysts (users) and the IASB on decision usefulness of fair value (Georgiou, 2018, CAR; Georgiou et al., 2021, ABR)
- Different views of users and standard-setters when making sense of goodwill (Durocher & Georgiou, 2022, CPA)
- Different views of users and standard-setters on internally generated intangibles (Mazzi et al., 2022, JAPP)

Real effects of new standards

- Effects of IFRS 15 on implementation costs and contractual arrangements (Napier & Stadler, 2020, ABR)

- Often driven by academic debates rather than the practical concerns of standard-setters
- Findings typically address broader institutional or organizational dynamics, not individual standards
- Theoretical framing may overshadow practical implications
- Academic writing style may obscure practical relevance for non-academic audiences

- Create tailored outputs for different audiences (e.g., policy-focused journals like *Accounting in Europe*, *Accounting Horizons*)
- Researchers could involve standard-setters early – in developing research designs and interview outlines
- Standard-setters could involve qualitative researchers in their constituent outreach during standard-setting and PIRs
- However, this requires greater openness from standard-setters:
“Given our role is in standard-setting rather than implementation, it is our internal policy to not provide interviews about how IFRS accounting requirements are applied in practice by preparers.”
(IASB staff member, email, 21 May 2025)

To know whether standards work – and to shape better ones – we must understand *how* they are used, and what they mean in practice. Qualitative research offers this understanding.

With more openness from both standard-setters and academics, insights from qualitative studies could be more intentionally used to inform not only academic debates but also the work of standard-setters.