



Office for
Statistics Regulation

**Assessment of compliance with the
Code of Practice for Official Statistics**

Statistics from the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey

(produced by the Scottish Government)

Office for Statistics Regulation

We provide independent regulation of all official statistics produced in the UK. Statistics are an essential public asset. We aim to enhance public confidence in the trustworthiness, quality and value of statistics produced by government.

We do this by setting the standards they must meet in the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics*. We ensure that producers of government statistics uphold these standards by conducting assessments against the *Code*. Those which meet the standards are given National Statistics status, indicating that they meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and value. We also report publicly on system-wide issues and on the way statistics are being used, celebrating when the standards are upheld and challenging publicly when they are not.

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Executive Summary

Subject of the assessment

ES.1 The report covers statistics from the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey¹ (SCJS), which are published by the Scottish Government through a range of reports. The most-recent reports, from the 2014/15 survey were as follows (see A1.1 for more information about these releases):

- *Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: Main Findings*²
- *Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: Partner Abuse*³
- *Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: Sexual Victimisation & Stalking*⁴
- *Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: Drug Use*⁵

Public Value Statement

ES.2 Statistics from SCJS are essential in providing a current view of the experience of victims of crime and confidence in the criminal justice system in Scotland. They estimate the trends in the main crime types, as well as providing important insight into the experience of highly sensitive crimes such as partner abuse and sexual offences. Scottish Government uses the statistics to monitor two National Indicators under the Scotland Performs⁶ policy (see A1.8) and in a number of Justice Outcome Indicators⁷ (see A1.9). These statistics are really important to many people, from academics and third sector organisations, to the media and general public, in relation to levels of crime and crime prevention. The chart below, reproduced from *SCJS Main Findings 2014/15*, demonstrates the range of topics covered by the survey.

¹ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/crime-and-justice-survey>

² <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/03/5269>

³ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/05/2505>

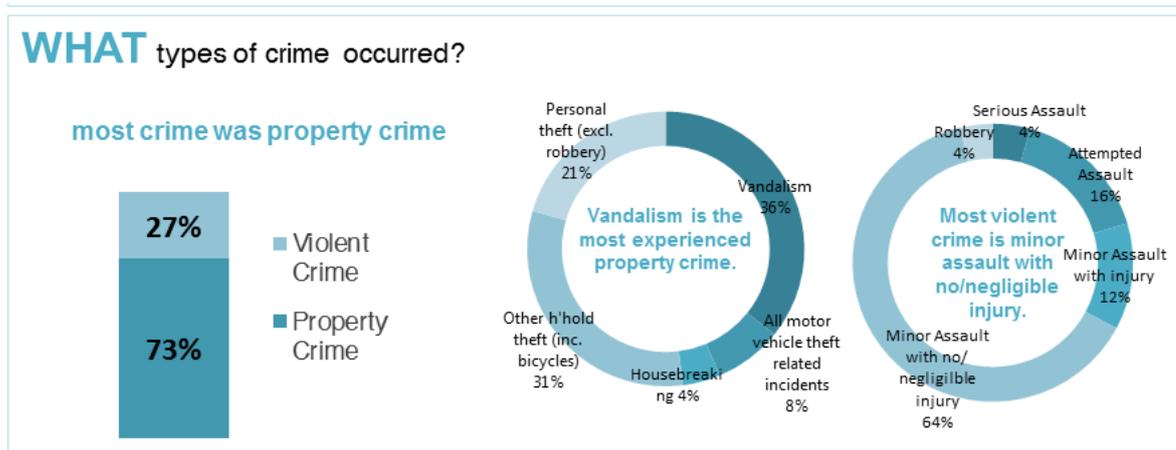
⁴ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/05/6129>

⁵ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/06/8687>

⁶ <http://www.gov.scot/About/Performance/scotPerforms>

⁷ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Justice/justicestrategy/Justice-Dashboard>

Figure ES1: Main types of crime, SCJS 2014/15



Source: SCJS Main Findings 2014/15 page 18

Decision on National Statistics Status

- ES.3 National Statistics (NS) status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value and comply with all aspects of the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics*. National Statistics status is awarded by the UK Statistics Authority (The Authority) on the advice of the Office for Statistics Regulation. The Office for Statistics Regulation undertakes an assessment which considers whether the statistics meet the required standard.
- ES.4 We judge that the existing NS status of the SCJS statistics may continue subject to Scottish Government demonstrating to us that it has enhanced the value, quality and trustworthiness of these statistics in the ways described in chapters one to three of this report. We expect Scottish Government to report back to us by 31 October 2017, whereupon the Authority will decide whether to confirm the NS designation, based on our advice. Scottish Government should provide sufficient evidence for all requirements before the publication of each the 2016/17 SCJS statistical reports to assure the regulatory team that the statistics will be fully compliant with the *Code of Practice*.
- ES.5 Reflecting the importance of NS designation, and to provide users with confidence in the direction of travel, we expect Scottish Government to publish its plan of proposed actions to increase public value, quality and trustworthiness as a result of this Assessment.

Strategic Perspective

- ES.6 Crime and justice statistics are a key public asset, and as such they must continue to evolve to keep pace with the rapid changes in technology and society. These changes include cyber crime, where there is a separation between where the crime is committed and the location of the victim. Fraud is also an increasing problem, and it can be more difficult to determine when a crime has occurred and who the victim is. Producers of crime and justice statistics need to explore innovative ways to address these issues in order to achieve further public value.
- ES.7 Producers must ensure that statistics on crime and justice remain relevant. This can be challenging when trying to incorporate changes in society while balancing the need for consistent and comparable data over time.

Key findings

Public value

- ES.8 Scottish Government has a good understanding of the uses and users of the SCJS statistics, and engages with them in a range of ways, for example via the SCJS user group, user consultations, organisational visits, ScotStat⁸ mailing list and Twitter. Most users were happy with their engagement with Scottish Government. However, a few users felt that while they had opportunities to share their views, there would be value in Scottish Government providing more clarity about their impact and how Scottish Government accounted for their views.
- ES.9 The SCJS statistical reports are clear and comprehensive with sufficient level of detail on method and quality issues contained within the accompanying technical report. The Scottish Government has enhanced public value through the use of infographics to aid interpretation for non-expert users. However, more could be done to ensure the infographics are put into context so that they clearly present the key messages.

Quality

- ES.10 Scottish Government has taken a range of steps to maximise the quality of statistics from the SCJS. It has established strong collaborative relationships with other crime statistics teams in other parts of the UK. It has also formed effective working relationships with a consortium of contractors that runs the survey. Scottish Government has established its own regular monitoring of the survey data, as well as ensuring that the assurance conducted by the contractors is sufficient. These steps were partly to establish the appropriate functioning of the new survey processes but also to ensure ongoing assurance of the data. It has regular meetings with the contractors to discuss the survey process. It conducted testing of new questions for both the 2016/17 and 2017/18 surveys.
- ES.11 Scottish Government has developed a helpful online tool for users to calculate statistical significance for specific survey estimates. It provides clear guidance material for both expert and non-expert users in a technical guide and brief quality information note. Scottish Government has also published information about the impact of reducing the sample size of the survey and implications for merging the survey data to produce more detailed estimates every other year.

Trustworthiness

- ES.12 Trustworthiness is a product of the people, systems and processes within organisations that enable and support the production of statistics. Scottish Government has established, along with the contractor consortium, robust processes for the collection, processing and assurance of the SCJS data. The survey has gone through multiple changes over the past twenty years that have challenged its usefulness in monitoring trends in crime patterns over time – although the data are now mostly consistent from 2008/09 onwards. It has had to contend with reduced financial resources but at the same time seek to maintain the quality of the statistics. The statistics team in Scottish Government demonstrated professional skill and judgement in setting up the latest contract – for example in modernising coding and processing arrangements for offence coding. The team, however, is stretched in covering the range of research and development required of current areas of concern in crime and victimisation surveys – particularly in relation to new crime types such as cyber crime, as well as developing alternative measures for repeat victimisation.

⁸ ScotStat is a network for users and providers of Scottish Official statistics which aims to improve communication amongst those interested in particular statistics:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/scotstatcrime>

Chapter 1: Public value

Context

- 1.1 Crime and justice statistics have a wide range of uses and are of high public value. They are used in central and local policy making, in research to increase knowledge and understanding of crime and criminal justice, and by the general public who have an interest in crime in their local area. The SCJS is one of a range of data sources relating to crime and justice, such as the administrative data on crimes recorded by the police. The survey is important because it covers people's perceptions of crime, and includes crimes that have not been reported to, or recorded by, the police. The SCJS and police recorded crime statistics add most value when viewed together, since they create a more rounded perspective than could be gained from each individual set of statistics.
- 1.2 Law and order⁹ in the UK has been a devolved matter since 1998. The Scottish Government is responsible for law and order in Scotland, the Home Office covers England and Wales, and Department of Justice Northern Ireland is responsible in Northern Ireland. The differences in the criminal justice systems lead to some differences in the statistics produced by each administration.

Users' Perspective

- 1.3 As part of this assessment, we asked for views about the SCJS statistics from a variety of users, including those within the crime and justice sector, the voluntary sector, research organisations and data suppliers. Annex 3 gives details of the engagement process. Their views have been presented throughout the report and have influenced the Requirements.

Findings

User engagement and statistical planning

- 1.4 The statistics team engages with a range of users in a number of different ways in order to gain a better understanding of their current and future data needs. One method of engagement is through the SCJS user group, which was set up in 2014 to provide a user perspective on the SCJS. The group consists of representatives from government, academia, the justice system and the third sector. This group is primarily used to elicit feedback on specific issues, for example in April 2015 the group took part in an interactive session to discuss the potential options for the future of the survey after the contract ended for the 2014/15 survey¹⁰. The next meeting will be held on 9 August 2017 to discuss the future survey outputs, and the impact that any changes will have on users. In particular Scottish Government hopes to gain more knowledge of users' priorities in relation to the published tables, and other range of outputs, including, for example, annual reports.

⁹ This includes civil justice, civil law and procedure, courts, criminal justice, criminal law and procedure, police, debt and bankruptcy, family law, freedom of information, legal aid, legal profession, licensing law and property law.

¹⁰ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/crime-and-justice-survey/consultation/consultation-survey-design>

- 1.5 Scottish Government has also carried out a number of user consultations on the SCJS. Most recently it consulted on the content of the 2017/18 SCJS questionnaire, seeking views on proposed changes to the wording and categorisation of some of the questions. The team received three responses to this consultation from key external stakeholders, one of which was a collective response from twelve academics. The team also engaged directly with Police Scotland and a number of Scottish Government policy teams. The consultations are all published on the SCJS section of the Scottish Government website¹¹, including a summary of responses received and any subsequent actions that were then taken. Most users told us they were happy with their engagement with Scottish Government, and that the statistics team provides helpful advice and actively seeks feedback on future plans and reported findings. However, some users felt that there was a lack of clarity around how users' views had been taken account of, and would have appreciated more feedback to explain reasons for not taking their views on board.
- 1.6 In order to try to increase the use and value of the SCJS statistics, Scottish Government has visited a number of stakeholders, such as Police Scotland, Scottish Police Authority, Crown Office, Women's Aid, and the Applied Quantitative Methods Network (AQMeN), to explain what the survey is and does, and to highlight how it could be used within each organisation. This engagement has supported work by Police Scotland to set up a project which will consider what improvements can be made to the way it measures public confidence in the police. Scottish Government will be part of the steering group for this project, offering Police Scotland advice and support on how the SCJS data can, or cannot, be used, in order to help it produce a longer-term strategy on improving police confidence. We welcome this positive engagement, which has improved the use and understanding of SCJS data.
- 1.7 Scottish Government also engages with users on SCJS statistics is through the ScotStat mailing list¹² and the Justice Analytical Services Twitter account¹³. These are used, for example, to announce publication dates, user events or consultations. The statistics team also attends and presents at seminars and conferences to raise awareness and knowledge about the survey.
- 1.8 Scottish Government publishes the Justice Analytical Services Division Analytical Programme¹⁴ annually. The programme covers the analytical workload for the forthcoming year in line with current policy priorities and users' needs.

Presentation and commentary

- 1.9 *SCJS Main Findings* is a comprehensive publication covering the key areas included in the survey. It presents statistics by crime type, and on the impact and public perceptions of crime. It clearly sets out the strengths and limitations of the statistics, particularly in the context of comparisons between the SCJS and police recorded crime statistics. In addition to *SCJS Main Findings*, Scottish Government also publishes reports on specific aspects of crime: *SCJS Partner Abuse*, *SCJS Sexual Victimisation and Stalking*, and *SCJS Drug Use*. These reports provide more-detailed analysis of these areas of interest (see A1.1 and A1.3 for more information). Scottish Government also publishes a technical report, which contains more-detailed information on the design of the survey, how the interviews were conducted, and the how the survey data are produced. This is a useful document to aid users' understanding of the statistics. In terms of the presentation of the statistics, most users felt the commentary was useful and provided a concise summary of the key issues.

¹¹ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/crime-and-justice-survey/consultation/2017qnairereview>

¹² ScotStat is a network for users and providers of Scottish Official statistics which aims to improve communication amongst those interested in particular statistics:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/scotstatcrime>

¹³ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/JASTwitterpolicy>

¹⁴ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Research/by-topic/crime-and-justice/JAS-Programme-2016-17>

- 1.10 All of the statistical reports contain a range of infographics throughout to highlight some of the key findings from the survey in a user-friendly way, which many users told us was useful for aiding interpretation of the statistics, particularly for non-expert users. However, some more-expert users felt that they did not always make it clear what the key message was, and did not add value. For example, page 6 of *SCJS Main Findings 2014/15*¹⁵ contains an infographic that states ‘most property crime (56%) took place on a week day’. However, it does not put that into context by explaining that there are five week days but only two days at the weekend, and that the incidence per day is therefore twice as high at the weekend than on weekdays.

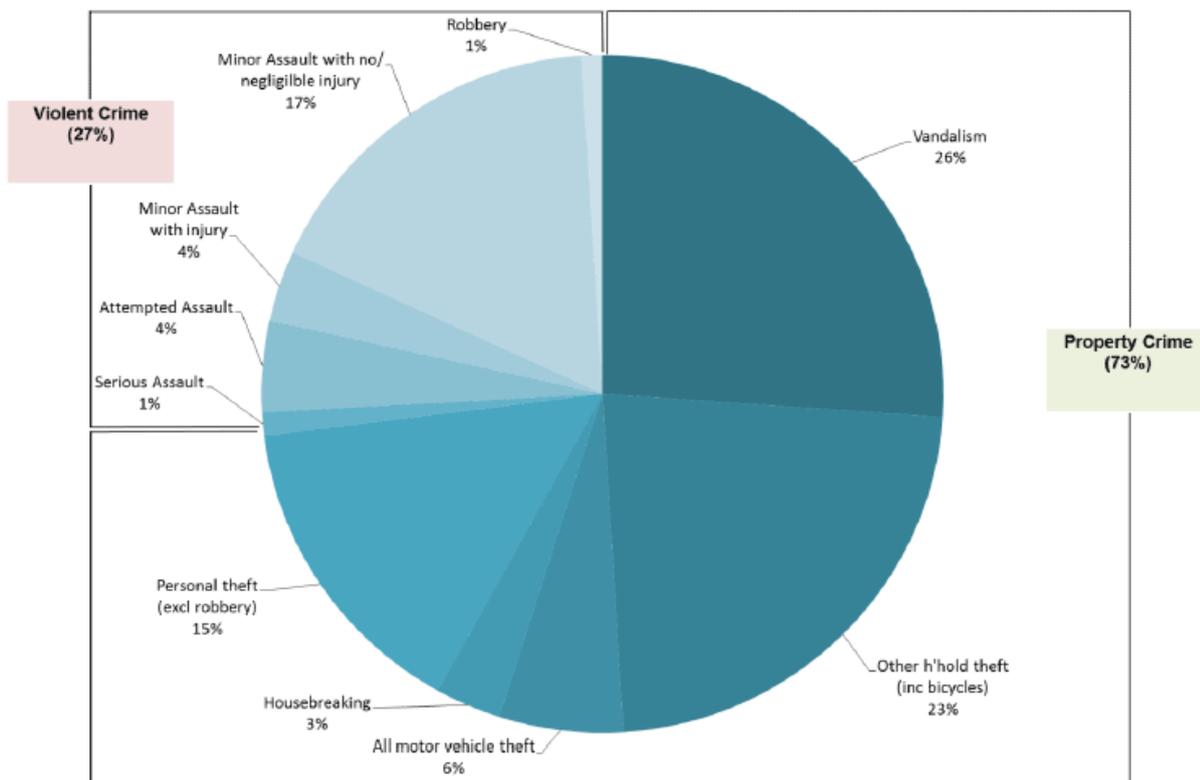
Figure 1.1: Property crime infographic, 2014/15



Source: *SCJS Main Findings 2014/15*, Figure 2.1

- 1.11 Users felt that some charts could be improved to enhance their clarity. For example, figure 2.1 (reproduced as figure 1.2 below), from *SCJS Main Findings 2014/15*, contains 10 categories within a pie chart, all with varying shades of blue. This makes it difficult to compare the categories because many of them look very similar.

Figure 1.2: Percentage of SCJS crime in each crime group, 2014/15



Source: *SCJS Main Findings 2014/15*, Figure 2.1

- 1.12 A wide range of SCJS datasets is readily available from the Scottish Government website in an open and accessible format. They include more-detailed analysis than is provided in the statistical reports. Due to the large amount of information provided the datasets are split into different volumes, each of which contains an introduction worksheet with useful

¹⁵ <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00496532.pdf>

information on each of the variables and how to use the tables. Scottish Government also publishes this information in videos on YouTube and Vimeo to increase the accessibility of these datasets. Scottish Government told us that it is also looking into the practicalities and any potential additional benefits of releasing SCJS data on the new and developing Scottish Government official statistics website¹⁶, which enables data to be viewed as tables (including customised tables), maps and charts, and provides the option to download in a number of different formats. To increase access to, and analysis of, the SCJS data further, some anonymised data are also deposited within the UK Data Service, together with supporting documentation. This is usually done two to three months after the statistical reports are published. We commend Scottish Government for making the SCJS data accessible in a number of different ways. However, there was a delay in adding the data from the 2014/15 survey, meaning that it was a year before the detailed data were included in the UK Data Service. A few users told us that this unanticipated delay negatively impacted on their work. Scottish Government told us this delay was due to the introduction of new disclosure control processes, which took longer to implement and the prioritisation of other ongoing development work. Any key users who contacted Scottish Government about this issue were given an explanation of the problem and in some cases were given access to the data in advance of them being uploaded to the UK Data Service. In order to ensure the UK Data Service receives the data in a timely manner, Scottish Government told us that in future the contractor consortium will prepare the data.

- 1.13 Another way that Scottish Government tries to maximise the use of the SCJS data is through the Scottish Surveys Core Questions¹⁷ (SSCQ). The SSCQ pools survey responses from identical questions in the SCJS, the Scottish Health Survey and the Scottish Household Survey into one output. This increases the sample size for these key questions, providing an opportunity for more-detailed analysis, both at the national and sub-national level. This has resulted in the publication of some supplementary analysis on people's attitudes to, and confidence in, a range of police services¹⁸, by equality characteristics or geographical area. We consider the re-use of these data to add value as an example of good practice (see A1.4-A1.6 for more information).

¹⁶ The new www.statistics.gov.scot website provides access to a range of official statistics about Scotland for information and re-use. The data can be viewed as tables, maps and charts or downloaded in various formats.

¹⁷ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/About/Surveys/SSCQ>

¹⁸ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/About/Surveys/SSCQ/SSCQ2014/SSCQ2014-PolCon>

Table 1: Value detailed findings and requirements

Finding	Example	Requirement
<p>Users could gain more confidence in the value of engagement with Scottish Government if they received more feedback to explain the outcomes of any engagement.</p>	<p>Some users told us that they felt that their feedback was not acted upon, and no reason was given to explain why.</p>	<p>1 Scottish Government should increase the effectiveness of its user engagement by providing users with more clarity on how it has taken account of users' feedback, including explanations when no action has been taken.</p>
<p>Scottish Government could add more value through improving the presentation of the statistics by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) adopting a more focused use of infographics, ensuring that they add value to the users; and (ii) reviewing the colour schemes and chart types used in the statistical reports. 	<p>Fig 2.1 in <i>SCJS Main Findings 2014/15</i> has too many categories, all with varying shades of blue, making it difficult to separately identify each of the categories, and to establish what the variation between each category is.</p> <p>The infographics in <i>SCJS Sexual Victimization and Stalking 2014/15</i> include an exploding pie chart, and visualisations which represent two layers of information within a set of dots. These could be difficult for users to interpret.</p>	<p>2 To maximise the public value of the statistics Scottish Government should improve the presentation, for example, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) reviewing each of the infographics to establish if they are accurately representing the data and adding value b) reviewing the chart types used to ensure they depict the data appropriately c) reviewing the colour schemes used in charts to ensure they meet accessibility rules.

Chapter 2: Quality

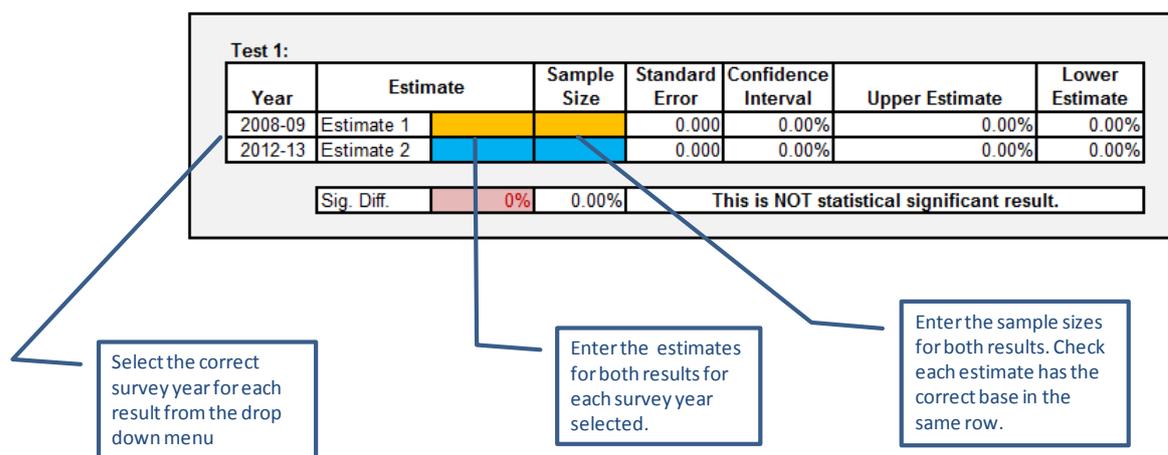
Context

2.1 Statistical quality is multi-faceted. The European Statistical System (ESS) identifies five aspects of quality: 'relevance', 'accuracy and reliability', 'timeliness and punctuality', 'coherence and comparability' and 'accessibility and clarity'. The focus is often on 'accuracy and reliability'. The need for statistics to be relevant, accurate and reliable means, in essence, that we are confident that the patterns shown by the statistics reflect real-world phenomena, and are not artefacts of the way that the statistics have been assembled. But these factors also need to take into consideration that without being accessible or timely, statistics fail to add as much public value as they might otherwise.

Findings

2.2 Scottish Government provides detailed technical guidance¹⁹ about the survey design and delivery. This guide includes clear information about the response rate and sample size. It describes the use of complex standard errors in producing confidence intervals which take into account the stratification, as well as clustering in some areas. SCJS statistical releases include helpful descriptions of the uncertainty around the survey estimates. Scottish Government also provides an online tool²⁰ that enables users to determine whether differences in the statistics are statistically significant. It outlines the calculation of the confidence intervals and highlights that it applies a design factor²¹ to the standard error. The tool clearly states whether a difference is significant and gives a straightforward explanation of what significance means.

Figure 2.1: Excerpt from the guidance in the Scottish Government significance tool



Source: Scottish Crime and Justice Survey - Statistical Significance Testing Tool

¹⁹ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/crime-and-justice-survey/publications/scjs2014-15technicalreport>

²⁰ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/Datasets/SCJS/scjsstatstestingtool>

²¹ Design factors of 1.5 for 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11, 1.3 for 2012/13 and 1.2 for 2014/15 are applied

- 2.3 Scottish Government works closely with producer teams in the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Department of Justice in Northern Ireland, to understand their approaches and developments in producing their equivalent statistics. They all use the crime surveys to produce estimates of the total number of incidents of victimisation experienced by the population. Some victims experience multiple crimes that are very similar and probably carried out by the same people. Scottish Government limits the number of incidents that are processed. For each individual the first five incidents on up to five survey forms will be processed and included in the statistics (giving a maximum count of 25 per individual). This is in line with the other crime surveys. Users of the Crime Survey in England and Wales have questioned the continued use of the cap as it alters the distribution of crime by gender of victim and by whether the offender is well known to the victim or a stranger. ONS is leading on developing new measures of the incidence of fraud and computer misuse, as well as new approaches to the capping of repeat victimisation. Scottish Government told us that it has discussed the capping of repeat victimisation with academic users in Scotland and found less demand for uncapped data than found in England. There are a very small number of respondents with capped responses. Scottish Government said it is considering undertaking further research in the area to show the potential impact on the crime survey statistics. In the interim, it will monitor ongoing developments in the Crime Survey for England and Wales and examine the implications for the coherence of the statistics across the UK countries.
- 2.4 Scottish Government regards developing measures of fraud and computer misuse, along with other types of cyber crime, as important. It is considering and prioritising options for improving the collection of data on cyber crime, and may use methods developed by ONS. Detailed estimates for these types of crime may require a larger sample size than can be achieved in a single year of the new annual survey design. If so, the Scottish Government would likely combine two years of data. Scottish Government told us that it will review whether further questions are required; in turn this may have implications for the overall survey. It will report to the project board on its findings later in 2017 in order that a decision can be made for the content in the 2018/19 SCJS. We welcome the openness of the team to innovation, in seeking new ways to respond to user needs.

Chapter 3: Trustworthiness

Context

- 3.1 Trustworthiness means that statistics are produced free from any vested interest, and that they represent the best professional judgement of statisticians acting in accordance with the highest standards. Trustworthiness in all its dimensions is a precondition of value. A failure in trust leads to a risk of a diminished role for statistics.

Findings

Resources

- 3.2 The SCJS team in Scottish Government comprises three staff spending around 70 per cent of their time on the SCJS. The team is part of the Justice Analytical Services (JAS) that provides analytical advice and support in both criminal and civil justice. JAS is separate from, but works closely with, the related policy areas within the Scottish Government. The Office of the Chief Statistician supports the SCJS team with survey sampling, weighting and other technical advice.
- 3.3 Scottish Government has rigorous arrangements for the management and delivery of the survey. Under a single contract, the Scottish Government has appointed a consortium of two contractors for designing and running the survey. Scottish Government established appropriate safeguards by specifying the roles, data requirements, delivery arrangements and communication channels between the survey team in Scottish Government and the contractor consortium. It also established a project board to oversee the survey. The board includes key stakeholders representing Scottish Government ministers and policy colleagues. The statistics team also feeds back any information gathered from its internal and external user engagement to the project board.
- 3.4 Scottish Government moved to the annual survey in 2016 within tight financial constraints. However, the change in design has implications for the resourcing of the Scottish Government team in going forward with two (and, in due course, three) surveys running concurrently at different phases of the survey process. The team is responsible for managing the contract, liaising with the consortium, quality assuring the data and preparing the statistical outputs. The team told us that it is sufficiently resourced to deliver the survey currently, but it identified that remaining responsive to emerging crime issues will be particularly challenging when managing multiple surveys. We are concerned whether the statistical team will have sufficient resource to continue to deliver the SCJS statistics to the standards required under the Code of Practice (see Table 2).

Pre-release access

- 3.5 Scottish Government granted pre-release access (PRA) for SCJS in 2014/15 to five government ministers plus 47 recipients in Scottish Government, most of whom are policy officials covering different aspects of the criminal justice system. It also circulates the statistics in their final form to a further 16 recipients from the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland. The PRA list is not accessible from the statistics web pages. While we

recognise that there is no statutory obligation for Scottish Government to publish the PRA list, we feel it would enhance transparency and trustworthiness if it was made available from the SCJS webpages.

- 3.6 Scottish Government has not announced the publication dates for the next publication of the SCJS statistics. The Scottish Government policy is to announce regular statistical outputs around 12 months in advance. Scottish Government told us that while it has a planned release schedule, delays in data processing might mean that publication would need to be changed. In order to demonstrate trustworthiness in its statistical operations we advised the Scottish Government SCJS team to give a broad indication of expected publication timetable for the 2016/17 statistics and to provide a firm date to users when it is known, at least a month before release.

Table 2: Trustworthiness Detailed Findings and Requirements

Finding	Example	Requirement
The redesign of the survey presents new demands for a small team of three staff. Scottish Government is at risk of not being able to undertake important methodological development work.	Continuous surveying for annual surveys requires working across multiple surveys concurrently: planning and reporting activities have to be done at the same time as the current survey is in the field. It will leave little resource for responding to the development of emerging crime types.	3 Scottish Government should review the resources allocated to the production of these statistics to ensure that they are sufficient to meet the standards of the Code of Practice and the obligation within it to serve the public good, and publish the outcome of the review.
Confidence in the statistics could be enhanced by reducing the pre-release access list to essential recipients and by being accessible from the SCJS statistics web pages.	The PRA list is long with 68 recipients and it is not available from the SCJS web pages.	4 To promote public confidence in the SCJS statistics Scottish Government should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) reduce the number of people included on the pre-release access list and provide a justification for each individual listed b) ensure that the pre-release access list is reviewed prior to each publication and updated accordingly.
The trustworthiness of Scottish Government's statisticians could be enhanced by publishing more information about the future publication of SCJS statistics.	Scottish Government has not announced a publication date for the 2016/17 main findings from SCJS on its release calendar.	5 Scottish Government should provide an indicative publication date for SCJS on its release calendar, updated with a firm date within a reasonable notice period of publication.

Annex 1: About the statistics

The Statistics

A1.1 The SCJS is a large-scale continuous survey measuring adults' experiences and perceptions of crime in Scotland. Scottish Government released the statistics across a number of published reports for the survey in 2014/15, as well as through detailed data sets for approved researchers:

- *Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: Main Findings*²²
- *Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: Partner Abuse*²³
- *Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: Sexual Victimization & Stalking*²⁴
- *Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: Drug Use*²⁵

A1.2 Scottish Government presents a suite of outputs²⁶ giving the patterns of statistics about the main crime types, such as property and violent crime, as well as perceptions of local and national crime and the effectiveness of the police and courts (see Figure A1.1 below). *SCJS Main Findings* presents an overview of crime patterns from the SCJS and compares with crime patterns in England and Wales. It also presents a comparison with equivalent offences measured by the police and a detailed analysis of the risk of victimisation by characteristics of the victim and where the crime happened. It also includes statistics on multiple and repeat victimisation. *SCJS Main Findings* also presents attitudes about the criminal justice system including public confidence in the police and in the courts.

²² <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/03/5269>

²³ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/05/2505>

²⁴ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/05/6129>

²⁵ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/06/8687>

²⁶ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/crime-and-justice-survey/publications>

Figure A1.1: Extract from infographics giving SCJS statistics

Key findings from the SCJS 2014/15 on Crime in Scotland



- A1.3 Scottish Government subsequently publishes detailed topic reports based on the self-completion modules for partner abuse, sexual victimisation and stalking, and on drug use. *SCJS Partner abuse* presents estimates of the incidence of experiencing different types of abuse, by sex, age and area deprivation, and the psychological and physical effects of abuse on families. *SCJS Sexual victimisation* presents statistics on the experience of stalking and harassment, of serious sexual assault and of other less serious sexual offences. It includes measures of the incidence and risk of the offences, the relationship with the offender, and repeat victimisation. *SCJS Drug use* presents statistics on the patterns of illicit drug use by age, sex, area, type of drug and on drug dependency.
- A1.4 SCJS contributes to the Scottish Surveys Core Questions (SSCQ). The SSCQ provides reliable and detailed information on the composition, characteristics and attitudes of Scottish households and adults across a number of topic areas including equality characteristics, housing, employment and perceptions of health and crime. Findings from the core question set for 2014 were published in May 2016²⁷. The crime statistics in SSCQ are on the perception of local crime rate and perceptions of police performance, broken down by Police Scotland divisions.
- A1.5 Scottish Government published experimental statistics about confidence in the police²⁸ based on the SSCQ dataset that address people's attitudes to and confidence in police services. These relate to confidence in the ability of the police to:
- prevent crime
 - respond quickly to appropriate calls and information from the public
 - deal with incidents as they occur
 - investigate incidents after they occur
 - solve crimes
 - catch criminals
- A1.6 Scottish Government used latent class analysis to examine inter-relationships within the response patterns and determine four groups containing individuals who are similar to each other and different from individuals in the other classes, in relation to the nature and degree

²⁷ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/05/7615>

²⁸ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/About/Surveys/SSCQ/SSCQ2014/SSCQ2014-PolCon>

of confidence. This publication is not being assessed within this Assessment – Scottish Government has not yet determined whether to continue producing these statistics.

Uses and Users

A1.7 The main aims of the SCJS are to:

- Enable the Scottish population to tell Scottish Government about their experiences of, and attitudes to, a range of issues related to crime, policing and the justice system; including crime not reported to the police
- Provide a valid and reliable measure of adults' experiences of crime, including services provided to victims of crime
- Examine trends, over time, in the number and nature of crimes in Scotland, providing a complementary measure of crime compared with police recorded crime statistics
- Examine the varying risk and characteristics of crime for different groups of adults in the population

A1.8 The Scottish Government uses SCJS statistics to inform the development and monitoring of policy – it has two National Indicators:

- National Indicator 29 to improve people's perceptions of crime in their local area. The SCJS collects data on the percentage of respondents who believe that crime has stayed the same or reduced in the past 2 years in their local area
- National Indicator 31 to reduce crime victimisation rates. The SCJS collects data on the proportion of people in Scotland who have been the victim of one or more crimes in the past year

A1.9 Scottish Government uses the SCJS to monitor confidence in the justice system and policing during the reforms in their delivery, assess views on prisons and the implementation of community sentencing, and assess changes in the public's perceptions of the crime. The Justice Dashboard provides an overview of progress towards improving the Justice Outcomes²⁹:

- We experience low levels of crime
- We experience low levels of fear, alarm and distress
- We have high levels of confidence in justice institutions and processes
- Our public services are fair and accessible
- Our institutions and processes are effective and efficient
- Our public services respect the rights and voices of users

A1.10 The SCJS is used to inform policy in other areas; for example, in relation to fear of crime and walking after dark by Active Scotland³⁰ and on safety for neighbourhood communities. The drugs statistics are used by ScotPHO³¹ – the public health observatory for Scotland – within its reporting on alcohol and drugs.

A1.11 The survey data are also used by academics and other researchers, with particular interests in investigating domestic violence, victim experience of crime and interaction with the criminal justice system and drug use.

A1.12 Scottish Government has summarised the uses of the SCJS on its website³².

²⁹ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Justice/justicestrategy/Justice-Dashboard>

³⁰ <http://www.gov.scot/About/Performance/scotPerforms/partnerstories/Outcomes-Framework/Wellbeing-Resilience-Communities>

³¹ <http://www.scotpho.org.uk/behaviour/drugs/data/data-introduction>

³² <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/crime-and-justice-survey/users>

Annex 2: The source data

Data Sources and Flows

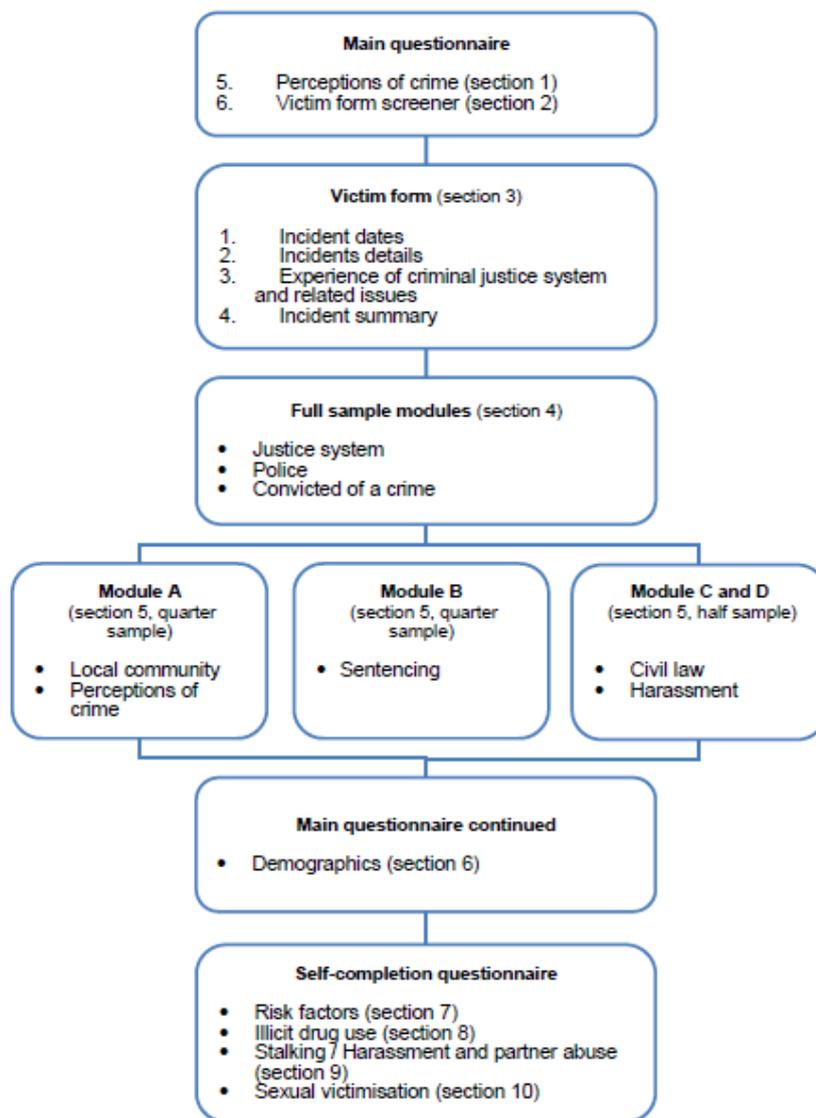
- A2.1 SCJS is a nationally representative survey based on face-to-face interviews with adults (aged 16 or over) living in private households in Scotland³³. Interviews are conducted using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI), and Computer Aided Self-completion Interviewing (CASI) for a self-completion element.
- A2.2 SCJS is not the first crime survey in Scotland. Surveys of victimisation in Scotland began with the 1982 and 1988 sweeps of the British Crime Survey (BCS) co-ordinated by the Home Office. BCS coverage in Scotland was limited to south of the Caledonian Canal. The first independent Scottish Crime Survey (SCS) was commissioned by the Scottish Office in 1993, with repeated sweeps in 1996, 2000 and 2003.
- A2.3 An external review of the survey between 2002 and 2003 led to a name change, becoming the Scottish Crime and Victimisation Survey (SCVS). There was also a major methodological change, moving away from in-home face-to-face interviewing to telephone interviewing in 2004. However, the 2006 survey returned to face-to-face interviewing after it was shown that the robustness of the data produced by the 2004 telephone survey could not be substantiated.
- A2.4 The collection of survey data on crime and victimisation in Scotland went through further changes in methodology and became the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) in 2008/09. It was an annual, continuous survey, with a substantially larger sample (increasing from around 5,000 to 16,000) compared with the early years. The survey became biennial in 2010/11.
- A2.5 The latest SCJS (in 2016/17) represents a further major change to survey design, methodology and sample size (6,000 interviews). The size of the achieved sample fell in each survey from 2010/11, to reach 11,500 in 2014/15. In the latest procurement, the challenges of maintaining an interview force for a biennial survey were highlighted by a range of potential contractors. The Scottish Government therefore decided to move to a smaller annual survey. Scottish Government undertook a range of activities to decide on the survey design, including meeting with users and potential contractors. Under a single contract, the Scottish Government appointed a consortium of two contractors to jointly deliver the SCJS from 2016/17. Ipsos Mori focused on the content and questionnaire development, and ScotCen is responsible for data processing – from data cleaning through to delivery of final data sets. Both contractors conduct the fieldwork.
- A2.6 Scottish Government is developing a new reporting approach for the new smaller annual sample. It is currently consulting with its users on plans to present many annual statistics on crime and on attitudinal and public perceptions of crime, and to also combine data from consecutive fieldwork years. This would enable more detailed estimates by police division, and further analysis of rarer offences, and potentially on comparisons with police recorded crime. SCJS users have previously agreed that a continuous approach would better enable combining data than the intermittent surveys conducted prior to 2008/09.

³³ Incidents which happened in England and Wales are recorded in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (formerly the BCS); incidents in Northern Ireland are recorded in the Northern Ireland Crime Survey; incidents which happen abroad are not covered by SCJS and are termed non-valid incidents

A2.7 The survey has a 12-month reference period. Victims can experience more than one crime during the reporting period – SCJS allows up to five forms for each victim. In data processing, it also caps the maximum number of repeat occurrences of the same crime at five and over. It uses computer assisted interviewing, including a self-completion component for the sensitive topics: partner abuse, drug use and sexual victimisation and stalking.

A2.8 Despite changes in the design of crime surveys in Scotland over time, the wording of the questions has generally been consistent. The questionnaire structure is illustrated below in Figure A2.1.

Figure A2.1: Questionnaire structure, Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2014/15



A2.9 Along with the Scottish Health Survey and the Scottish Household Survey, SCJS is part of the Scottish Surveys Core Questions³⁴ (SSCQ). SSCQ pools responses to the Core Questions in an annual sample of around 21,000 respondents. This sample size enables the detailed analysis of key national estimates by country of birth, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, age and sex, marital status, education level and economic activity, as well as tenure, car access and household type. SSCQ also enables a detailed sub-national

³⁴ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/About/Surveys/SSCQ/SSCQ2014>

analysis by Local Authority, urban-rural classification and Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

Annex 3: The Assessment process

- A3.1 This Assessment was conducted from July 2015 to July 2017. The assessment was suspended during the formation of the Office for Statistics Regulation between July 2016 and March 2017.
- A3.2 This report was prepared by the Office for Statistics Regulation and approved by the Regulation Committee on behalf of the Board of the UK Statistics Authority, based on the advice of the Director General for Regulation.
- A3.3 The regulatory team – Donna Hosie and Penny Babb – agreed the scope of and timetable for this assessment with representatives of the Scottish Government in 31 July 2015. The documentary evidence (see the list of key documents below) was provided in April 2016. The regulatory team subsequently met the statistics team at Scottish Government during March and May 2017, to review compliance with the *Code of Practice*, taking account of the all evidence provided and researched.
- A3.4 This is one of a series of reports³⁵ prepared under the provisions of the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*³⁶. The Act gives the Statistics Authority (the Authority) power to re-assess whether the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics*³⁷ continues to be complied with in relation to official statistics already designated as National Statistics.
- A3.5 Part of the assessment process involves our consideration of the views of users. We approach some known and potential users of the set of statistics, and we invite comments via an open note on our website. This process is not a statistical survey, but it enables us to gain some insights about the extent to which the statistics meet users' needs and the extent to which users feel that the producers of those statistics engage with them. We are aware that responses from users may not be representative of wider views, and we take account of this in the way that we prepare Assessment reports.
- A3.6 The regulatory team received 12 responses from the user and data supplier consultation, including a meeting with a group of academics. The respondents were grouped as follows:

³⁵ www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publications-list/?keyword=&type=assessment-report

³⁶ www.opsi.gov.uk/Acts/acts2007/pdf/ukpga_20070018_en.pdf

³⁷ www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/images-codeofpracticeforofficialstatisticsjanuary2009_tcm97-25306.pdf

Table 3: Summary of respondents to the assessment consultation

Users	
Crime and justice sector	4
Researcher/Analyst	1 group
Producer	1
Voluntary Sector	3
Local Government	1
Non-departmental public body	1
Suppliers	
Commercial organisation	1

Key documents

A3.7 Evidence provided by Scottish Government included the following material:

- Procurement and survey contract information
- Questionnaire review
- User and use review
- User engagement plan
- Planning documents
- Project Board minutes
- Pre-release access lists
- Departmental policies for revisions, corrections and data accessibility
- Improvement Plan
- Review of SCJS dissemination
- Links to published documents for:
 - technical report
 - quality and reliability statement
 - fieldwork materials including protecting confidentiality
 - comparison with police recorded crime

Contact us

A3.8 For any queries about this assessment, or the work of the Office for Statistics Regulation in general, please email regulation@statistics.gov.uk.

Annex 4: Responding to the assessment report: what the Office for Statistics Regulation and the producer body should expect from each other

A4.1 The publication of the Assessment report represents a key milestone in the assessment process, but should not be viewed as the end point. The next phase, to meet the Requirements set out in this report, is critical to delivering the value, quality and trustworthiness to achieve and maintain National Statistics status. The next steps are as follows:

- immediately following the publication of the report, the Office for Statistics Regulation will arrange a meeting with the statistics team to talk through the detail of the Requirements and to ensure a common understanding
- the Chief Statistician can follow up with the Assessment Programme Manager about the Director General for Regulation's letter that accompanies this Assessment Report. The letter: draws out the key findings; provides advice about where the statistics team is likely to need senior management support and direction and conveys any findings that have wider implications for the producer body and statistical system
- the Chief Statistician is encouraged to:
 - i) develop an action plan to meet the Requirements to the timetable set out in paragraph ES.4 of this report
 - ii) agree the action plan with their senior management, and confirm that it is appropriately resourced
 - iii) share the action plan with the Office for Statistics Regulation, publish it alongside the statistics, and explain to users and suppliers how it will engage with them in delivering the plan
 - iv) seek out peers and support services that can help in delivering the plan – for example, [the National Statistician's Good Practice Team](#)
 - v) agree with the regulatory team, how often, and in what form, the statistics team would like to engage about progress against the action plan – for example, some teams choose to meet with the regulatory team once a month
- the statistics team should provide full formal written evidence to the Office for Statistics Regulation by the deadline of 31 October 2017 as set out in paragraph ES.4 of this report. There is no set format for reporting, except that Scottish Government should

demonstrate that it has addressed the findings given in Tables 1 and 2 and provide links to any published or internal documents as support

- the regulatory team will review the evidence within 10 working days and arrange to provide feedback to the statistics team. As part of this process, the regulatory team will talk again to users to establish how their experience of the statistics has changed. When the regulatory team is satisfied that the Requirements have been fully met, their conclusions will be quality assured by Office for Statistics Regulation's senior management and then presented to the Authority's Regulation Committee to confirm designation. The Director General will then write publicly to the lead official to confirm the decision
- in the event that Requirements are not fully met within the agreed timetable, the Authority will implement escalation procedures.

A4.2 Based on experience, the Office for Statistics Regulation strongly encourages statistics teams to:

- engage with the detailed thinking of the Assessment report, and revisit it regularly. The regulation team will be seeking evidence that the statisticians are demonstrating curiosity and are challenging their own thinking around delivering value, quality and trustworthiness. The Requirements in this report should not be viewed as a simple checklist
- view the responsibility for meeting the Requirements as falling to the organisation as a whole, not just the team that produces the statistics.
- engage users early, not just to keep them updated, users can often offer valuable insight and expertise
- contact the regulatory team at any time if there are any questions or concerns

A4.3 Responsibility for complying with the Code of Practice does not end with the award of the National Statistics designation. It is the statistics producers' responsibility to maintain compliance and also to improve the statistics on a continuous basis. The Office for Statistics Regulation encourages statistics producers to discuss promptly with the regulatory team any concerns about whether its statistics are meeting the appropriate standards. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated only when standards are restored.

