

Statistical Practice Capability Framework

Applying the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#)' pillars of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value (TQV) can help stimulate your thinking and decision-making as you work strategically to develop statistical practice across your business area or organisation.

The Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) has developed the Statistical Practice Capability Framework. OSR is the independent regulatory arm of the [UK Statistics Authority](#). We are currently trialling this framework with a group of official statistics producer bodies. We are sharing the framework to provide an opportunity for wider discussion and feedback. **If you have any comments about the framework or are interested in using it, please email regulation@statistics.gov.uk.**

The benefits of using the Statistical Practice Capability Framework

The Statistical Practice Capability Framework provides a way for an organisation to better understand itself, its strengths and its limitations, and to recognise what it can do to develop its statistical practice further.

An organisation that understands its TQV achievement levels is in a good position to improve and better meet its goals for serving the public good. The insight gained will be useful for producers, to provide reassurance to both its users and to OSR as its regulator.

Published organisational statements of compliance are great opportunities to describe the approach used for applying the pillars of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value. They help an organisation show its commitment to the Code standards and make itself accountable to its users for its approach.

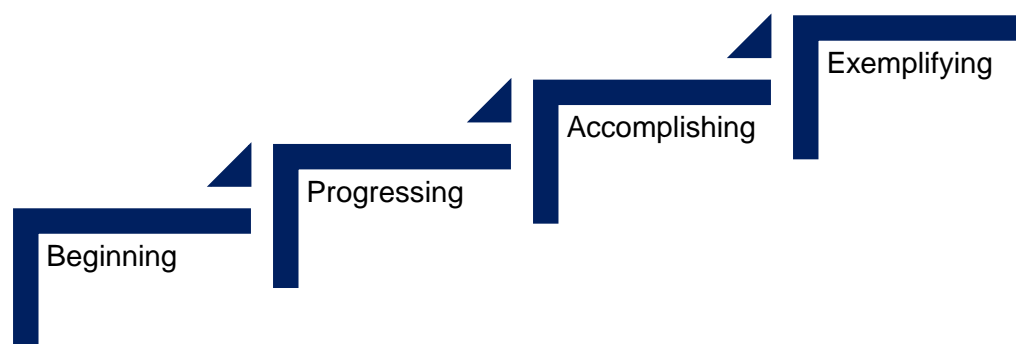
We strongly encourage producers to apply the Statistical Practice Capability Framework, to support the development of an effective approach and get the most from applying the Code of Practice for Statistics.

What is the Statistical Practice Capability Framework?

The Statistical Practice Capability Framework describes how organisations and or teams can achieve four progressive levels of statistical practice. Using the Framework can help statistics producers keep track of how organisationally and strategically they are demonstrating the Code pillars, and to decide how best to target efforts for development and improvement.

Taking an integrated approach supports producers in maximising the benefits from these individual strategies and to ensure that applying TQV is deliberate and proactive within their teams and/or across their organisation.

The framework has four levels of TQV achievement:



Beginning – Establishing Code standards across the producer organisation

‘Beginning’ can reflect developments in a new statistics producer or a new, developing area of statistics in a more experienced producer (see the **annex** for detailed information about the practices in each achievement level).

Progressing – Applying acceptable standards of practice in most areas, developing in some areas

‘Progressing’ shows advances in understanding and application of the Code. Progress may not be evenly spread across the three Code pillars – it may occur more rapidly in one or more pillars than another. For example, an experienced producer body developing a new statistical area could be more developed in Trustworthiness than in Quality and Value in that area.

Accomplishing – Demonstrating good practice in all aspects of the Code across the organisation

‘Accomplishing’ shows good standards of statistical practice in a Code pillar. Achievement in all three pillars would be consistent with OSR’s expectations for designation (confirming National Statistics status) through independent review.

Exemplifying – Coherently applying good practice across the organisation, proactively raising standards, an example for others to follow

Achieving this level does not mean achieving perfection, but it does point to an organisation (or business area) that is flourishing in one or more Code pillars and is an example for others to follow.

An exemplary achievement level is something that must be worked at to be maintained. It reflects proactive and coherent practice.

Moving through the levels

Over time producers may move up and down the levels, reflecting the realities of changes in staffing and technology, creating new areas of business, developing new

statistics and wider organisational changes. It is important to recognise these changes and their implications for resourcing and opportunities for growth.

A great way to move up to 'Exemplifying' is to promote TQV in parts of the organisation not involved in producing official statistics. Producers can integrate their work on wider organisational strategies with their approach to producing official statistics by considering the Code pillars of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value. This could be in areas such as public and policy engagement, data and quality management, and data governance and security.

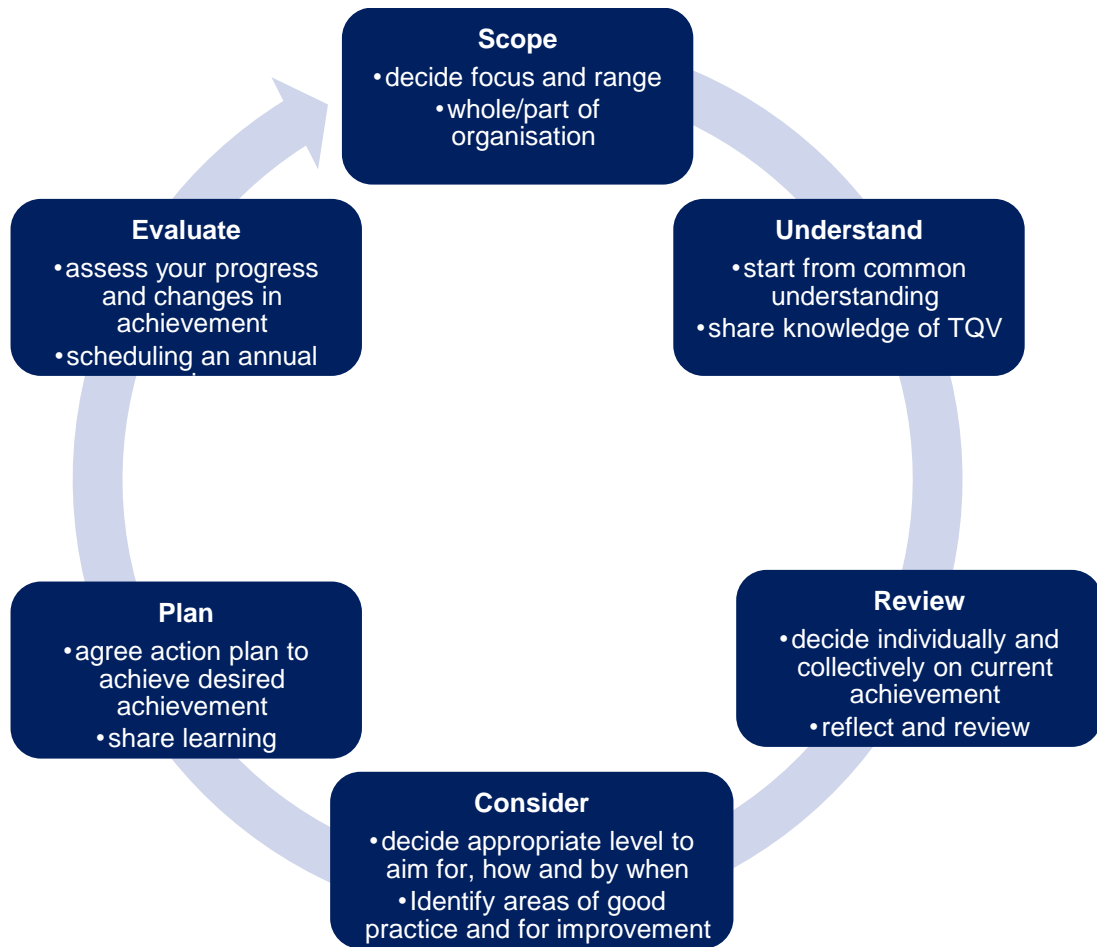
How to use the Statistical Practice Capability Framework

Statistical leaders can work through the following steps to get started in applying Statistical Practice Capability Framework:

1. **Scope:** decide the focus and range of the application – is it an individual business area, all areas producing statistics, or the whole organisation?
2. **Understand:** Work from the same starting point – ensure everyone involved has a common understanding of TQV
3. **Review:** Individually and collectively (with those in the work areas) reflect on which achievement level you would place your organisation or business area at for each of the Code pillars – start by noting an immediate reaction, then unpack why and see if you would modify your rating. Think about what evidence you can see of your achievements
4. **Consider:** Having a sense of where you are currently, discuss where you would like to get to, how and by when. Identify areas of good practice for sharing more widely as well as areas for improvement
5. **Plan:** Agree an action plan for acting on the areas to address and practices to share across the organisation
6. **Evaluate:** Continue to cycle through the stages to assess your progress and changes in achievement – consider scheduling an annual self-assessment.

Record your observations in the [Statistical Practice CF workbook](#).

Figure showing the Statistical Practice Capability Framework cycle



Annex:

Statistical Practice Capability Framework in detail

What it looks like to achieve each TQV practice level

Achievement level 1:

Beginning – Establishing Code standards across the producer organisation

Trustworthiness:

- Raise awareness of staff about the importance of acting ethically, handling data with honesty and integrity, presenting statistics objectively
- Raise awareness of senior executives about the importance of making a public commitment to ensuring equality of access and releasing statistics in an orderly way
- Obtain the backing of senior executives for their statistical leaders
- Be transparent in developing approaches to public engagement and quality management
- Develop the knowledge and skills of analytical staff in working to the standards of the Code
- Ensure that systems are in place for the safe and secure management of data

Quality:

- Raise awareness of staff about the importance of ensuring statistics are fit for their intended uses, based on appropriate data and methods and are not materially misleading
- Build relationships with data suppliers and other partners
- Develop a shared understanding with partners of the statistical needs and nature of the data and associated processes for the generation of the data
- Periodically review the suitability of the data and methods for producing statistics
- Develop a clear statement of the strengths and limitations of the data and statistics, identify any assumptions and how to address the identified issues
- Develop processes to assure that statistics are of an acceptable level of quality for the intended use
- Develop ways of monitoring the quality of data and statistics

Value:

- Build a shared understanding of the value of statistics – that statistics and data are useful, easy to access, remain relevant and support understanding of important issues
- Develop an understanding of user needs and views, and act on the feedback
- Ensure published statistics are equally available to all
- Develop the capability and means to present statistics clearly and meaningfully
- Begin to establish a norm for continuous improvement, encourage staff to be creative, seek collaborations, to enhance statistics to better serve society

- Look for opportunities to enable the reuse of data and statistics and for ways to be efficient in the collection, sharing and use of statistical information

Achievement level 2:

Progressing – Applying acceptable standards of practice in most areas, developing in some areas

Trustworthiness:

- Require all staff to act ethically, handle data honestly and with integrity, and present statistics objectively, and question where these standards are not met
- Endorse the role and authority of the statistical leaders, who will be visible and vocal in advocating the standards of the Code
- Publish clear statements on approaches to the orderly release of statistics, public engagement, and quality management
- Establish effective systems and processes for producing statistics
- Support the development of skills, knowledge and competencies of analytical staff
- Manage data respectfully, safely and securely

Quality:

- Have regular communication with key data suppliers and other partners, agreement over the nature of data supply, and ways to be informed about changes to relevant systems and policies
- Ensure the suitability of the data and methods for producing the main statistics and review the suitability of other statistics
- Ensure processes are in place to produce the main statistics to an acceptable level of quality for the intended use and develop the processes for other statistics
- Provide users with clear explanations about the methods and be open about the strengths and limitations related to the main statistics, setting out any assumptions and ways of addressing identified issues, and develop this understanding and information for other statistics
- Monitor the quality of the main statistics and data and develop the means to do so for other statistics

Value:

- Form an ongoing dialogue with users to understand their needs and views, act on the insights and provide feedback
- Develop a range of ways of engaging users, potential users and other stakeholders
- Provide easy access and clear information to support use of the main statistics and develop the processes and information for other statistics
- Tailor the level of detail in the statistics to meet user needs and use common data standards
- Present the main statistics clearly and meaningfully, supported by appropriate data visualisation, statistical comparisons, and explanatory material, to aid

interpretation, and develop these processes and information for other statistics

- Support improvement in statistics, encouraging analysts to recognise opportunities for improving their statistics, and promoting opportunities for collaboration with others
- Enable the reuse of the main data and statistics; seek ways to be efficient in the collection, sharing and use of statistical information; be proportionate in the burden imposed on those supplying data

Achievement level 3

Accomplishing – Demonstrating good practice in all aspects of the Code

Trustworthiness:

- Respect the Code standards and listen and act on the advice of the statistical leaders
- Protect against interference and promote and ensure the orderly release of information to support public debate
- Have fully established public commitments and strategies for statistical delivery through effective policies and business processes
- Be questioning about the approaches and systems and be responsive in acting on feedback
- Have analysts that confidently apply the standards of the Code in producing official statistics, acting professionally, working collaboratively and behaving responsibly
- Ensure data management arrangements remain effective and keep pace with changing circumstances and opportunities for data linking and sharing

Quality:

- Have constructive relationships with data suppliers and other partners
- Use appropriate data, minimise the impact of limitations and provide clear explanations about the sources in producing the statistics
- Monitor the changes in circumstances and context of the data and respond appropriately
- Use the best available methods and recognised standards and be open about decisions in producing the statistics
- Have well established partnerships with topic and method experts and other producers
- Explain clearly how statistics are sufficiently accurate, reliable, coherent and timely
- Regularly review approaches to quality and openly address identified issues

Value:

- Place users at the centre of statistical production by using the insight gained through ongoing dialogue with users to inform decision-making

- Ensure statistics and data are equally available to all; be responsive to emerging needs for more granular data, and ensure that statistics are findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable
- Present statistics and data in ways that clearly communicate their meaning and relevance, and support and encourage their proper use
- Actively encourage continuous improvement in statistics, be open about developments, plans and progress, and work collaboratively with experts, other producers, and users
- Reuse data, promote data sharing and the use of administrative data and other existing sources, and be transparent about the burden imposed on data suppliers

Achievement level 4

Exemplifying – Coherently applying good practice across the organisation, proactively raising standards, an example for others to follow

Trustworthiness:

- Show you (the organisation) are trustworthy by being transparent and reliable in the way you handle and release information, with respected and authoritative statistical leadership
- Consistently meet Code standards for Trustworthiness across statistical areas
- Integrate business strategies, such as on data delivery, data governance, public engagement, and quality management
- Ensure learning in one part of the organisation is effectively shared and applied in other parts
- Be an advocate for high statistical standards and a clear example of a trustworthy producer and promote the Code of Practice pillars

Quality:

- Show statistical excellence in the approach to produce assured statistics that are fit for their intended uses
- Consistently meet Code standards for Quality across statistical areas
- Establish a culture of quality across the organisation with a coherent strategy for quality management across the statistical areas
- Ensure learning in one part of the organisation is effectively shared and applied in other parts
- Be an advocate for high statistical standards, producing high quality statistics and promote the Code of Practice pillars

Value:

- Show that serving the public good drives your statistical activities and choices, informed by an ongoing dialogue with users and others, responsive to evolving societal needs
- Consistently meet Code standards for Value across statistical areas
- Establish a coherent strategy for public engagement across the statistical areas and look to integrate with stakeholder engagement conducted in other parts of the organisation

- Ensure learning in one part of the organisation is effectively shared and applied in other parts
- Be an advocate for valuable statistical information that serves the public good and promote the Code of Practice pillars