

Consultation Document

Proposed changes to the Code of Practice for Statistics (Edition 3.0)

Office for Statistics Regulation

October 2024

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Introduction to the Consultation

The [Office for Statistics Regulation](#) (OSR) is refreshing the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) (the Code) to ensure it continues to meet the needs of its wide and evolving audience.

We are seeking feedback on our proposals for a new edition of the Code via public consultation, which will run from 23 October 2024 until 14 February 2025.

We would like to hear from a wide range of people including those who work in organisations that publish statistics and those who make use of the statistics themselves. We welcome feedback from anyone with an interest in ensuring that the proposed refreshed Code of Practice will support statistics to serve the public good.

This consultation document includes:

- Contextual information about the Code of Practice for Statistics, why OSR is refreshing the Code and a summary of our proposal
- Information on who should respond to the consultation and how
- Consultation questions, which cover the proposed Code, as well as examples of guidance that could accompany it
- Key elements of the new proposed Code 3.0 ([Annexes A-D](#))
- Examples of guidance that could accompany the proposed Code ([Annexes E-F](#))

Official statistics and the Code of Practice for Statistics

Official statistics are statistics produced by Crown bodies and other organisations listed within an Official Statistics Order, on behalf of the UK government or devolved administrations. They provide a factual basis for assessment and decisions on economic, social and environmental issues at all levels of society.

The UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Statistics (the Code) has set the standards for the production of official statistics since it was first [published](#) in 2009. The [second edition](#) of the Code, released in 2018, established a framework for standards that is grounded in three pillars: Trustworthiness, Quality and Value (TQV). The requirement for a Code is set in law, in the [Statistics Registration and Service Act 2007](#).

When statistics and data are produced in line with the core concepts of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value set out in the Code, they serve the public good and inspire public confidence. TQV represents an ethical framework that can support any kind of analysis or evidence. It is relevant and helpful for anyone in any organisation who wants to ensure that the information they provide serves society.

The role of the Office for Statistics Regulation

As the regulatory arm of the UK Statistics Authority, the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) is responsible for setting and maintaining the Code of Practice for

Statistics on behalf of the Authority. OSR is independent from government ministers and separate from producers of statistics, including the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

OSR also provides independent regulation of all official statistics produced in the UK. We ensure that producers of official statistics uphold the standards in the Code by conducting assessments against it. Statistics that meet the standards of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value are given accredited official statistics status. OSR also reports publicly on systemwide issues and on the way that statistics are being used, celebrating when the standards are upheld and challenging publicly when they are not.

OSR's primary aim is to ensure that statistics serve the public good.

The Code Review

The Code has been firmly embedded into the work of analysts producing official statistics. However, it is important that the Code remains relevant; over recent years, there have been substantial changes in the data landscape. These include the rapid growth of AI technology, an increased desire for statistics from users and developments in the ways statistics are produced and disseminated.

Recognising these changes, OSR launched a [review of the Code](#) in September 2023. We wanted to hear thoughts from a wide range of stakeholders about the suitability of the Code and how it can be adapted to meet the challenges and opportunities on the horizon related to data and statistics. We held a series of public events and sessions with producers and stakeholders over the autumn of 2023, with a written [call for evidence](#).

Findings from the Code Review

OSR heard throughout our [2023 Code review](#) that the Code of Practice is highly regarded by those producing official statistics, as well as by other stakeholders. The three pillars – TQV – clearly frame good statistical practice, are easily remembered and can be easily explained to others to support application of the Code.

There was, however, wide acceptance of the changed and further evolving data landscape, as well as consensus that the Code can be enhanced both in its content and presentation. A wide range of ideas were highlighted in the feedback received through the call for evidence and our engagement activities.

The feedback on how we could enhance standards relating to Trustworthiness included:

- further clarifying independent statistical leadership authority and a Head of Profession for Statistics' responsibilities
- integrating OSR's concept of and guidance on intelligent transparency
- better addressing the communication of statistics

Suggestions on strengthening the Quality pillar included:

- more fully addressing different types of data sources and the boundaries with other types of government numerical information
- clarifying comparability requirements
- better integration of the Code of Practice with international frameworks for quality management

Ways we could strengthen the Value pillar included:

- further prioritising meeting user needs and addressing the balance of different user needs within and outside government
- considering the implications of the RSS's concept of 'public statistics'
- emphasising the need to address data gaps

Beyond changes to the Code itself, a wide range of feedback emphasised the importance of finding more-effective ways to support understanding of TQV by members of the public, analysts outside of government and non-statistical staff in government, to guide their use of data and statistics.

While it was recognised that there is a body of guidance alongside the Code already, those producing official statistics asked for more-accessible materials. This guidance could range from simple high-level guides about the pillars to detailed material aimed at some of the most challenging current statistical issues, such as the implications of AI and the greater use of administrative data.

Outline of proposed changes

In response to the findings of our Code Review, OSR has sought to refresh the Code of Practice to better meet the needs of its users. These users include statistics producers both inside and outside of government, those working in government departments and agencies, statistics users and OSR itself.

Our proposal for Code 3.0 (illustrated in Figure 1) preserves the core concepts of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value that form the three pillars of the current Code, while making material changes to the content and presentation of the Code. We propose that Code 3.0 will comprise three key elements:

1. Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good

The TQV framework is explained in a new introduction, 'Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good', which communicates OSR's position on what TQV is and why the framework is important for statistics and other types of analysis and evidence.

2. Guiding Principles from the Code

Beneath the introduction sit the guiding principles from the Code, which explain how anyone working with data can put TQV into practice, in a wide range of settings.

3. The Code Standards

Code 3.0 then encompasses two sets of standards which are relevant to public bodies.

a) Standards for Official Statistics

The Standards for Official Statistics set out specific statistical practices that those producing official statistics must follow. These Standards are most equivalent to the current Code 2.1. We propose a shift from the current Code, which has 14 supporting principles and 84 practices, to a set of 10 standards of practice. We believe these revised standards set out clearer and more-actionable requirements for official statistics producers, to better support them in producing and disseminating statistics that serve the public good.

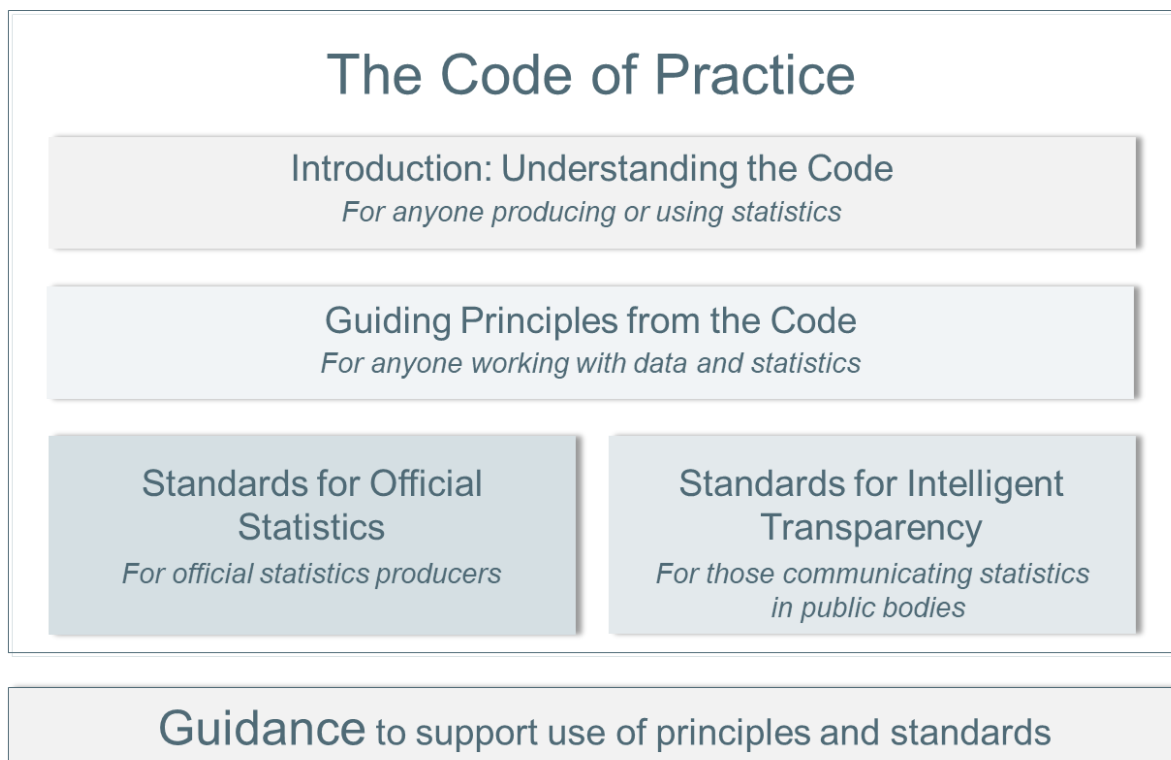
b) Standards for Intelligent Transparency

The Standards for Intelligent Transparency set out what anyone communicating statistics in public bodies needs to do to ensure an open, clear and accessible approach to the publication and communication of data, statistics and wider analysis.

Together, we consider that the proposed changes to the Code will strengthen and better support data and statistics production and use across the UK.

The Code will be set within a 'Code Hub' on OSR's website, which will also include guidance on how to understand and use the Code.

Figure 1. The proposed Code Hub, which includes the Code of Practice for Statistics edition 3.0 and accompanying guidance



About the consultation

This consultation seeks views about the effectiveness and clarity of our proposals for Code 3.0.

It offers an opportunity for respondents to comment on high-level changes being proposed to the Code, as well as any of the more detailed changes at the practice level. To help with this, we have provided a [mapping tool](#) alongside this consultation document, which illustrates how the draft edition 3.0 of the Code differs from edition 2.1.

We would like to hear from a wide range of people including those who work in organisations that publish statistics and those who make use of the statistics themselves. We welcome feedback from anyone with an interest in ensuring that the proposed refreshed Code of Practice will support statistics to serve the public good.

This consultation will run for 16 weeks, closing on 14 February 2025. The consultation period will coincide with the inaugural [Statistical Assembly](#), which is being established in response to Professor Denise Lievesley's [review of the UK Statistics Authority](#), and will take place 25 January 2025. We will provide an opportunity for comment on the Code as part of the Assembly.

We will summarise the feedback we receive and the main findings in a report in the spring of 2025, alongside plans for launching a refreshed Code.

The UK Statistics Authority Board will consider that report and make any further decisions on launching the refreshed Code in the spring/summer of 2025.

Responding to the consultation

Responses should be submitted to the Authority by 5.00pm on **14 February 2025**. Please complete the consultation questions online in [MS Forms](#), or alternatively, complete them using the Word template.

If using the Word template, please send your response either by email to regulation@statistics.gov.uk or by post to the following address, marked **Code 3.0 Consultation**:

Office for Statistics Regulation
Government Buildings
Cardiff Road
Newport
Gwent
NP10 8XG

Thank you for taking the time to review the consultation material.

Consultation questions: Proposed changes to the Code

The Code Review reinforced OSR's belief that the standards of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value, or 'TQV', are a powerful means to build confidence in statistics, data and analysis. To further strengthen the Code of Practice, we want to make the standards easier to understand and to apply.

We have reimagined how to describe and present the standards to better support their use in a range of settings. We propose using a new online Code Hub to present the different elements of the Code of Practice:

- Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good
- Guiding principles from the Code
- Standards for Official Statistics
- Standards for Intelligent Transparency

The proposed Code Hub also has an area for guidance that supports understanding of the core framework and how to apply TQV. This section will support statistics users and the wider public, as well as statistics producers.

Please follow this [link](#) to see some webpages that illustrate the proposed Code Hub.

We welcome your thoughts on how effectively or not the refreshed Code will support use of the standards to deliver statistics that serve the public good, by responding to the questions in this section.

1. Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good

Feedback from the Code Review confirmed to us that the framework of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value resonates very well with users of the Code. OSR is committed to further embedding this framework within the world of data and evidence, and we strongly believe that the benefits it brings to producers and users help to support an environment where statistics serve the public good.

'Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good' ([Annex A](#)) sets out the core philosophy behind Trustworthiness, Quality and Value and provides a fuller explanation about why we think the Code is so important, giving a deeper insight on what it means to serve the public good.

Consultation questions:

Section:	'Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good' is given in Annex A
Aim:	To clearly communicate OSR's position on what TQV is and why it is important for statistics, as well as for wider analysis and evidence
Main Audience:	For anyone producing or using statistics

Q1: How satisfied or unsatisfied are you that 'Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good' explains the importance of the Code?

- Very satisfied
- Quite satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied
- Quite unsatisfied
- Very unsatisfied

Please explain your response.

2. Guiding Principles from the Code

In preparing the second edition of the Code of Practice, we recognised that the core principles of the Code (Trustworthiness, Quality and Value) can be useful in all kinds of situations for producing data and evidence that are not official statistics.

To support this wider use of the Code, we began a scheme in May 2018 to encourage the [voluntary application \(VA\) of the Code](#). It supports anyone to apply the Code for data, statistics and analysis which are not official statistics, to help produce analytical outputs that are high quality, useful for supporting decisions and well respected. We now have 37 adopters in our [VA list](#) with published statements of compliance.

We also have over 150 members in our community of practice – analysts with an interest in applying the Code. The community includes government analysts for their work producing analysis and information beyond official statistics. Others come from a wide range of settings, such as local government, commercial organisations, think tanks and the charity sector. The community provides an opportunity to hear analysts share their experiences of applying the Code.

In June 2024, the [Royal Statistical Society](#) proposed that any statistics that benefit society by offering insight on the questions that people want answered can be considered 'public statistics'. OSR fully supports this concept, and we encourage producers of public statistics to be part of our voluntary application scheme.

In Code 3.0, we propose a new set of guiding principles from the Code ([Annex B](#)) that explain how anyone working with data can put TQV into practice in a wide range of settings, simply illustrated in sets of dos and don'ts. These guiding principles provide a way for those working with data and statistics to reassure their users about why they, as an organisation, can be trusted, and how they produce robust information that is useful and in line with stakeholders' needs.

Consultation questions:

Section:	The Guiding Principles from the Code are given in Annex B
Aim:	To explain how anyone working with data can put TQV into practice, in a wide range of settings, to deliver statistics that support society
Main Audience:	For anyone working with data and statistics

Q2a: How satisfied or unsatisfied are you that the 'Guiding principles from the Code' set out the essential practices for delivering statistics that support society?

- Very satisfied
- Quite satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied
- Quite unsatisfied
- Very unsatisfied

Please explain your response.

Q2b: How satisfied or unsatisfied are you that the 'Guiding principles from the Code' set out the essential practices for delivering other types of evidence that support society?

- Very satisfied
- Quite satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied
- Quite unsatisfied
- Very unsatisfied

Please explain your response.

Q2c: What changes, if any, would you like to see in the 'Guiding principles from the Code'?

3. Standards for Official Statistics

The Standards for Official Statistics ([Annex C](#)) are the equivalent of the current principles and practices in Code 2.1. Rather than taking a principle-based approach, edition 3.0 focuses on ten standards that [official statistics](#) producers must achieve. Each standard is essential. The standards are grouped under Trustworthiness, Quality and Value, and each one is accompanied by a list of practices.

We have retained most of the practices in Code 2.1 but rewritten them to be presented in a more action-oriented format. We have also combined related practices. A [mapping spreadsheet](#) setting out the relationship between Code 2.1 and the proposed practices in the Standards for Official Statistics is available for download from the OSR website.

In considering the suitability of the proposed Standards for Official Statistics, you may wish to consider some specific changes that we have introduced:

- To clarify the role of the Head of Profession for Statistics (HoP) and the concept of 'sole authority' in Code edition 2.1, Statement 2 focuses on the need for autonomy for HoPs in making statistical decisions. We regard this statement as inherently tied to the Standards for Intelligent Transparency and the endorsement by an organisation's senior leaders in granting that authority.
- We emphasise the importance of statistics producers understanding and promoting the social acceptability of their data collection and statistics in Statement 4. We also require producers to apply the UK Statistics Authority's [ethical principles](#) in their management and handling of data.
- Statement 5 focuses on the quality culture of producer organisations. Maintaining high-quality statistical production and dissemination requires not just effective processes and appropriately skilled staff, but organisations structured and run in ways that support a learning culture. The statement also emphasises the importance of independent review and transparency in addressing serious quality issues.
- Our expectations of statistics producers around user engagement emphasise the priority of actively involving internal and external users in activities to help determine statistical planning. Statement 8 endorses the importance of putting users at the heart of decision making, including around decisions to start, stop and change statistics, combined with the need for transparency on these decisions.

Consultation questions:

Section:	The Standards for Official Statistics are given in Annex C
Aim:	To set out the required standards for official statistics in an action-oriented format
Main Audience:	For official statistics producers

Q3a: How satisfied or unsatisfied are you with the 'Standards for Official Statistics' in representing the required standards for official statistics?

- Very satisfied
- Quite satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied
- Quite unsatisfied
- Very unsatisfied

Please explain your response.

Q3b: What changes, if any, would you like to see in the standards in the 'Standards for Official Statistics'?

Q3c: What changes, if any, would you like to see in the practices listed under the 'Standards for Official Statistics'?

4. Standards for Intelligent Transparency

Feedback in the Code Review highlighted how helpful producers and users find OSR's [regulatory guidance](#) on Intelligent Transparency and requested that it be incorporated into the Code. We have expressed the guidance as the Standards for Intelligent Transparency ([Annex D](#)) that those in public bodies should meet when using statistics to support statements in the public domain.

They should be seen by official statistics producer bodies as complementary to the Standards for Official Statistics. Meeting the Official Statistics Standard 2, 'Chief Statisticians/Heads of Profession for Statistics must have autonomy in deciding statistical methods and the content and timing of statistical releases', will be dependent on the organisation also meeting the 'Independent decision making and leadership' standard of intelligent transparency.

Consultation questions:

Section:	The Standards for Intelligent Transparency are given in Annex D
Aim:	To concisely set out the required standards for using statistics in the public domain
Main Audience:	For those communicating statistics in public bodies

Q4a: How satisfied or unsatisfied are you with the 'Standards for Intelligent Transparency' in setting the required standards for using statistics in the public domain?

- Very satisfied
- Quite satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied
- Quite unsatisfied
- Very unsatisfied

Please explain your response.

Q4b: What changes, if any, would you like to see in the 'Standards for Intelligent Transparency'?

5. Guidance for producers and users

The Code Review highlighted the need for easier access to guidance that supports the application of TQV. A wide range of information is currently provided on the [Code website](#) and through [guidance pages of the OSR website](#). We are looking to simplify access to our relevant guidance material through the new Code Hub.

We are planning to provide guidance on how to implement each of the ten standards related to official statistics, as well as material aimed at other analysts inside and outside government, including on how to voluntarily apply the Code. We will also provide straightforward guidance on how users and the public can apply TQV to inform their own use of information.

In developing our guidance, we plan to test materials with our stakeholders by holding workshops, having targeted conversations or by correspondence as best suits stakeholders' availability.

We have provided an example of guidance material to support producers in meeting the Standards for Official Statistics in [Annex E](#). The example is for the first standard. We are planning to develop equivalent guides for the other nine standards.

A further example of guidance is provided in [Annex F](#). One important finding from the Code Review is on the need for accountability in the production and presentation of statistics. We received helpful feedback during an [RSS roundtable discussion](#) suggesting a potential model of enforcement. Based on this model, we propose an accountability framework that we expect official statistics producers to adopt and encourage all producers of statistics to also apply. The framework emphasises the importance of producers making

themselves accountable to their users. To be effective, the framework also needs users to actively participate in the process.

Consultation questions:

Q5a: What areas of guidance would you like provided through the Code Hub?

Q5b: Would you be open to helping us test guidance materials as we develop these further? Please provide your contact details at the end of the consultation.

- Yes
- No

Please indicate what topic areas you would be particularly interested in testing.

6. Any other feedback

Please let us know any other comments.

Q6a: How satisfied or unsatisfied are you that the draft refreshed Code of Practice for Statistics meets your needs?

- Very satisfied
- Quite satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied
- Quite unsatisfied
- Very unsatisfied

Please explain your response.

Q6b. Please let us know any further comments on the draft refreshed Code of Practice for Statistics.

Q6c. The refreshed Code of Practice for Statistics has been primarily written for the web. Would you also require a printed version? If so, which elements of the Code would you like to see included [please tick each that applies]:

- Yes – I would like a booklet version of the Code containing:
 - Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good
 - Guiding Principles from the Code
 - Standards for Official Statistics statement list (without practices)
 - Standards for Official Statistics statements including practices
 - Standards for Intelligent Transparency
 - Other: please indicate what other information you would find helpful

- No – I do not need a booklet

7. About you

OSR would like to collect information about you; however, these questions are not compulsory to complete your submission for this consultation. We may wish to contact you about your response to the consultation; please indicate if you would be happy to be contacted.

We aim to be as open as possible in our decision-making process. As part of this, we plan to publish an anonymised summary of the responses we receive. We will not publish names or other personal data of any individual respondent. However, the names of all organisations and groups responding to the consultation will be published in a list of respondents. Names of organisations and groups will not be ascribed to any comments without prior permission.

Please be aware that, as a public authority, we are subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and can never completely guarantee that names and responses will not be disclosed under the Act. You can find out more about our [privacy policy](#) on the UK Statistics Authority's website.

Q7a: What is your full name?

Q7b: What is your email address?

Q7c: Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

Q7d: What is the name of your organisation?

Q7e: What is your role?

Q7f: Are you happy for OSR to contact you about your submission?

Yes

No

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this consultation.

The Code Refresh project team in OSR will review all responses and prepare a findings paper and recommendations on the new edition of the Code of Practice to be considered by the UK Statistics Authority Board. We will publish our findings and planned next steps in spring 2025.

Annexes

Proposed Code of Practice for Statistics 3.0

- A. [Code 3.0: Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good](#)
- B. [Code 3.0: Guiding Principles from the Code](#)
- C. [Code 3.0: Standards for Official Statistics](#)
- D. [Code 3.0: Standards for Intelligent Transparency](#)

Draft guidance

- E. [Draft Guidance: Short guide to Standard 1](#)
- F. [Draft Guidance: Guidance on accountability](#)

Proposed Code of Practice for Statistics 3.0

A. Code 3.0: Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good

Proposal to inform [Consultation question 1](#)

'Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good' sets out the core philosophy behind Trustworthiness, Quality and Value and provides a fuller explanation about why we think the Code is so important, giving a deeper insight on what it means to serve the public good.

Main Audience: For anyone producing or using statistics

Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good

For anyone producing or using statistics

The Code of Practice for Statistics ensures that statistics are not just numbers, but reliable tools for understanding the world. When statistics and data are produced in line with the core concepts of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value set out in the Code, they serve the public good.

Taken together, Trustworthiness, Quality and Value provide an ethical framework that can support the publication of any kind of analysis or evidence. They are relevant for anyone in any organisation who wants to ensure that the information they provide serves the public good.

Statistics and the public good

Statistics should serve the public good. They do so when they provide insight and understanding, which supports informed choices and decision making.

Statistics should serve everyone, helping enhance knowledge about every section of society and the economy and people's place within them.

Statistics are vital to support democracy and democratic debate. They provide an evidence base to support policy decisions, enabling accountability and helping to identify what works. But the knowledge and insight they provide are not just for the policymakers at the centre of government; statistics offer knowledge to everyone.

Statistics should therefore be regarded as a public asset, in that they are produced for the public, are about the public and are produced with the public's input and support.

To fully realise the potential of statistics, the organisations producing them should place serving the public good at the heart of their work. These organisations must be conscious of their responsibilities to society and the implicit licence the public grants them to collect data, report them and make them publicly available.

Meeting the public good

Producing statistics that live up to their potential requires recognising that statistics are more than just aggregated numbers. How things are done matters as much as the numbers themselves.

In any social exchange of information, there are three factors at play. Firstly, the audience will consider the culture and behaviours of the information provider and their track record of meeting their commitments. In the case of statistics, this encompasses a wide range of people within the organisation – from the producer of the statistical bulletin to the minister quoting the statistics in a debate. Secondly, there is the nature of the information itself – in the case of the statistics, this means the aggregated statistics and underlying data. Finally, there is the context in which the information is heard and received by an individual as user of the information.

If organisations only focus on the production of the numbers, they risk not fulfilling the practical utility of the statistics and may reduce the confidence in them and their outputs. For people to have confidence, there must be clarity about the Trustworthiness of the organisation, the Quality of the statistics themselves and, crucially, the Value of the statistics to the users.

The Code offers a framework that considers all three factors.

Trustworthiness, Quality and Value

Focusing on Trustworthiness, Quality and Value allows the production and communication of statistics that people can have confidence in and that serve the public good.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness means that the public can have confidence in the people and organisations that produce statistics. It reflects the integrity, professionalism and impartiality of the producers and the statistical system. Trustworthiness signals that statistics are not subject to undue influence, bias or manipulation.

Trustworthiness is a matter of not only following rules but also demonstrating behaviours and attitudes that foster trust. Producers should be accountable for their actions and decisions, and responsive to feedback and criticism.

Trustworthiness also depends on the leadership and culture of the organisations that produce statistics, and the support and recognition they receive from senior leaders and stakeholders.

Quality

Quality means that statistics fit their intended uses, are based on appropriate data and methods and are not materially misleading. It is a key dimension of the usefulness of statistics, determining how well they measure and describe the phenomena they aim to represent.

Producers of statistics should actively promote appropriate quality standards and values. They should encourage a mindset that is open to seeing how their statistics could be wrong without blame and be transparent about their methods, data sources, quality assurance and uncertainty.

Quality is dynamic and evolving, not fixed or absolute, and so requires continuous monitoring and an openness to innovate to meet new needs. It requires effective communication and engagement with users and other stakeholders to ensure that statistics are understood and used appropriately.

Value

Value means that statistics benefit the public by informing and supporting decision making, action and debate. It also means that statistics can be accessed, understood and used by a wide range of users. Providing value is the ultimate goal of statistics, as it reflects their contribution to society and the public good.

Value is not a static or one-off outcome, but a continuous and interactive process. Producers of statistics should regularly consult and involve users and other stakeholders to understand their needs, preferences and feedback. They should be flexible and adaptable to changing user demands, data availability and policy contexts.

The core concepts of the Code work together and reinforce each other, providing a coherent framework for those producing statistics. For the public good to be served, all three must be addressed: Trustworthiness of organisational conduct; Quality of data and methods; and Value for users.

Universality of this framework

Trustworthiness, Quality and Value can support any kind of research or evidence.

TQV does not prescribe a particular way of producing statistics or presenting data; instead, the focus is on the outcome of the public good, which allows for and encourages the adoption of new and innovative approaches in statistics. The framework supports the use of new data sources and new techniques to enable more-powerful insight on any aspect of society.

Wider application of these concepts can support a broad range of activities, for example, both qualitative and quantitative research design, data collection and analysis by charities, universities, local authorities and companies – any organisation that wants to publish information that supports the public good rather than just private interests.

Threats to the public good

There are clear threats to the culture and environment of evidence use that could undermine democratic institutions and erode public confidence.

The current UK statistics environment is, in many ways, a positive one. We have an established statistical system embedded within a wider analytical function. We have a respected research community. We have a wide range of media and social media outlets that draw on statistics and data and act as intermediaries between statistics producers and a wider user audience. Citizens, businesses, academics and decision makers have various ways to engage with and use data and statistics.

But we cannot take these positives for granted. Threats to the culture and environment of evidence use exist, from data gaps to information overload to concerns over deliberate, malicious misinformation to resource constraints faced by many producers of statistics – these threats can be varied and numerous.

While many of these threats have been part of society for some time, they may be magnified in an environment of technological advancement (including both social media and AI). These developments, for all the opportunities they bring, risk creating a degree of uncertainty for people.

Trustworthiness, Quality and Value provide safeguards against threats to the public good

Within the landscape of threats, the challenge is ensuring that accurate, cohesive data and statistics are accessible and available to all. Embedding Trustworthiness, Quality and Value provides strong, resilient safeguards against threats to the public good by helping organisations to demonstrate that they have the public’s interest at their core.

The framework of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value helps mitigate the concerns that arise in an environment of abundant data and concerns about misinformation. The fear of misinformation combines three factors: that the provider of information has inappropriate motives; that the information itself is unsound; and that the information leads people to unsound conclusions or judgements.

These concerns can be addressed by providing clarity about an organisation’s culture, represented through clear, binding commitments; being clear about the nature and limitations of the data, methods and resulting statistical estimates themselves; and providing insights and value for users.

Concern	Relevance to the Code’s framework
Information is provided by organisation or individuals with inappropriate motives	Trustworthiness Clarity about organisational culture through clear, binding commitments
Information is unsound, misleading or false	Quality Clarity about the nature and limitations of data, methods and resulting estimates
Information leads users to unsound conclusions or judgements	Value Clarity about the insights and value for users

Conclusion: Understanding how Trustworthiness, Quality and Value support the public good

The Code of Practice for Statistics is not only a set of guidelines but also a source of inspiration and support for producers and users of statistics.

The framework of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value represents a set of ethical guidelines that can support any kind of research or evidence. Though it originated in the context of the United Kingdom’s official statistics, it can be applied more widely.

As a result, it is not just for producers of statistics in government; it is relevant and helpful for anyone in any organisation who wants to ensure that the information they provide serves the public good.

When statistics and data are produced in line with the Code’s framework of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value, they serve the public good.

Related information

[Guiding Principles from the Code](#): these principles explain how anyone working with data can put TQV into practice, in a wide range of settings.

[Standards for Official Statistics](#): these standards set out specific statistical practices that those producing official statistics must follow.

[Standards for Intelligent Transparency](#): these standards set out what public bodies need to do to ensure an open, clear and accessible approach to the publication and communication of data, statistics and wider analysis.

Guidance hub: information that supports use of the Code, including understanding and delivery of the principles and standards.

B. Code 3.0: Guiding Principles from the Code

Proposal to inform [Consultation question 2](#)

Guiding Principles from the Code explain how anyone working with data can put TQV into practice in a wide range of settings, simply illustrated in sets of dos and don'ts. These guiding principles provide a way for anyone working with data and statistics to reassure users about why they, as an organisation, can be trusted, and how they produce robust information that is useful and in line with stakeholders' needs.

Main Audience: For anyone working with data and statistics

Guiding Principles from the Code

For anyone working with data and statistics

Following the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR)'s guiding principles from the Code is a way for anyone, in any setting, to show they can be trusted to produce and use robust statistics that are useful and in line with users' needs.

The guiding principles are grounded in the core concepts of the Code of Practice for Statistics – Trustworthiness, Quality and Value (TQV). The Code sets the standards of practice to deliver statistics that are not just numbers but reliable tools for understanding the world.

Trustworthiness is when users can have confidence in the people and organisations that produce statistics and data

To show you are trustworthy:

Dos	Don'ts
Integrity Work and communicate in ethical, honest, objective and professional ways to provide the public with impartial data and statistics	Don't cherry-pick data and statistics or take them out of context
Transparency Be open about how and when data and statistics are released	Don't restrict the publication of statistics just because it makes for uncomfortable reading
Safe data management Follow all legal and ethical obligations, being respectful of those providing their information	Don't share data without appropriate safeguards

Quality is when users can have confidence that the data and methods produce assured statistics

To show the statistics are of appropriate quality:

Dos	Don'ts
Suitable data Clearly present key information about data sources, highlighting why data are suitable and any important issues	Don't just trust that data are OK to use – find out about the provenance of the source
Sound methods Apply sound methods, explain statistical choices, highlighting key limitations, and be open to innovation to meet emerging needs	Don't hide or ignore quality issues
Quality communication Describe the quality of statistics, including details about uncertainty in estimates, and monitor for changes in quality	Don't assume quality remains static

Value is when users can have confidence that published statistics support society's needs for information

To show the statistics are valuable:

Dos	Don'ts
Relevancy Answer important questions, understand the needs of users and listen and act on their feedback	Don't assume you know your users' needs
Accessibility Ensure equality of access when publishing, meet accessibility standards and keep information available	Don't limit access to information with a public interest
Clear data presentation Ensure data are easy to work with, understandable and meet users' needs	Don't present too much information, confusing colours or 3D charts

Committing to uphold the Guiding Principles

The Royal Statistical Society has suggested that any statistics that benefit society by offering insight on the questions that people want answered, whether they come from official or non-official sources, can be thought of as [public statistics](#) – they are valuable to the public. Producers of public statistics are encouraged to be part of the [voluntary application scheme](#) run by OSR, applying TQV.

Analysts participating in the scheme are among a community of practitioners who want to ensure confidence in how they produce and use data and statistics, supporting the application of the Code standards and providing challenge to show how well the standards are met.

Application of the guiding principles can be enhanced by considering:

Standards for Official Statistics

The [Standards for Official Statistics](#) build on the guiding principles by setting out the specific statistical practices expected of official statistics producers. Official statistics become **accredited official statistics** when they have been verified by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) to meet these standards.

Other producers beyond official statistics can also consider the standards and see how they can enhance their preparation and release of statistics into the public domain.

Standards for Intelligent Transparency

OSR's [Standards for Intelligent Transparency](#), also grounded in the guiding principles, set out how public bodies can support public confidence in the use of data, statistics and analysis, by ensuring that they are communicated in a way that means they can be easily accessed, scrutinised and used appropriately.

Accountability guidance

Producers of statistics should see themselves as accountable to their users and can apply OSR's [accountability framework](#) to provide reassurance about how they demonstrate Trustworthiness, Quality and Value.

Further information about the core concepts of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value is given in [Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good](#).

C. Code 3.0: Standards for Official Statistics

Proposal to inform [Consultation question 3](#)

The Standards for Official Statistics, set out specific statistical practices that those producing [official statistics](#) must follow. These Standards are most equivalent to the current Code 2.1. We believe these revised standards set out clearer and more-actionable requirements for official statistics producers, to better support them in producing and disseminating statistics that serve the public good.

Main Audience: For official statistics producers

Standards for Official Statistics

For official statistics producers

The Standards for Official Statistics describe the standards and practices that those producing official statistics must meet.

The Standards for Official Statistics are grounded in the core concepts of the Code of Practice – Trustworthiness, Quality and Value – and build on the [Guiding Principles from the Code](#).

Good-practice guidance for each standard is available within the Code Hub.

Official statistics become **accredited official statistics** when they have been verified by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) to meet these standards. Accredited official statistics are called National Statistics in the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and are required under the Act to continually meet the standards of the Code.

To ensure official statistics serve the public good:

1. Producers must behave with integrity, working and communicating in ethical, honest, objective and professional ways
2. Chief Statisticians/Heads of Profession for Statistics must have autonomy in deciding statistical methods and the content and timing of statistical releases
3. Producers must release statistics in an orderly way, at a standard time, and pre-announce the date and timing of the release
4. Producers must manage data and statistics safely and securely and encourage the provision of information by being open about how it will be used and protected
5. Chief Statisticians/Heads of Profession for Statistics must encourage a quality culture that promotes good practice and ensure their statistics will not materially mislead users
6. Producers must use suitable data sources and sound methods, and assure the quality of the statistics across the production and release processes, being open to innovate to keep statistics relevant and useful
7. Producers must prominently explain the quality of the statistics, including any strengths and limitations, and communicate the uncertainty in the estimates
8. Producers must put users at the centre of decision making about the statistics, listening to and acting on feedback, and be transparent about statistical planning
9. Producers must ensure the statistics are accessible and freely available to all
10. Producers must clearly present the statistics to support appropriate interpretation, collaborating with other producers and experts to develop fuller insight for key topics

Standards for Official Statistics with related practices

Trustworthiness

1. Producers must behave with integrity, working and communicating in ethical, honest, objective and professional ways

so that the public can have confidence in the behaviours of those involved in handling and using data and statistics

- Handle data and statistics with honesty and integrity
- Act professionally, work collaboratively and behave responsibly
- Be ethical in how you collect, access, use and share data
- Do nothing to undermine confidence in the independence of published statistics
- Present statistics and explanations impartially and objectively, ensuring statistical communication is balanced by presenting the totality of evidence rather than promoting a particular perspective (see the Standards for Intelligent Transparency)
- Recruit suitably skilled staff and apply an appropriate competency framework. Have clear roles and responsibilities for these staff
- Provide resources and time to enable staff to develop skills, knowledge and competencies, including training on safe data and quality management

2. Chief Statisticians/Heads of Profession for Statistics must have autonomy in deciding statistical methods and the content and timing of statistical releases

so that the public can have confidence in the independent and objective nature of statistics

- Apply professional judgement, free from conflicts of interest, to decide methods, standards and procedures, as well as the content and timing of release for regular and ad hoc statistics (see the [Standards for Intelligent Transparency](#))
- Promote the professional standards of the Code of Practice across the organisation
- Challenge inappropriate use of statistics and pre-empt misunderstandings by explaining potential misinterpretations of the evidence
- Seek the advice of the National Statistician or the Chief Statistician for the relevant administration on professional matters, including any concerns about statistical independence
- Report concerns about meeting the Code to the Director General for Regulation

- Apply good business practices in managing your resources. Raise any concerns about inadequate funds to deliver key priorities with senior leaders

3. Producers must release the statistics in an orderly way, at a standard time, and pre-announce the date and timing of the release

so that the public can have confidence in how and when the statistics are released

- Be open about how you ensure your release process is orderly
- Pre-announce release, giving the time and date in a 12-month release calendar, 4 weeks ahead where possible
- Release on a timely basis, meeting the needs of users, and as soon as the statistics are ready. Provide a straightforward way for users to contact the producer team
- Limit access before release to quality checking and for operational purposes
- Act in line with the relevant pre-release access rules and principles set out in legislation
- Release at the standard time of 9.30am on a weekday unless an alternative release time is agreed with the Director General for Regulation
- Release policy and ministerial statements separately from the official statistics, in line with professional standards, and with advice from the lead statistician (see the [Standards for Intelligent Transparency](#))
- Release revisions and corrections of errors as soon as possible in line with published policy, being clear about the nature and scale of change

4. Producers must manage data and statistics safely and securely and encourage the provision of information by being open about how it will be used and protected

so that the public can be confident about providing their own information for official statistics

- Work in line with the UK Statistics Authority's [ethical principles](#)
- Work with users to understand and promote the social acceptability of the statistics, clearly explaining how data will be used when collected for statistical purposes
- Consider and manage the rights of data subjects at all times, in ways that are consistent with data protection legislation
- Keep and handle data safely and securely. Follow all relevant statutory obligations governing the collection, storage, sharing, access, linking and analysis of data. Keep up to date with changing circumstances and technological advances

- Protect personal data when producing statistics. Be transparent about the choices made and apply appropriate disclosure control methods before release
- Hold regular reviews. Share best practice across the organisation and ensure data management and sharing arrangements are robust

Quality

5. Chief Statisticians/Heads of Profession for Statistics must encourage a quality culture that promotes good practice and ensure their statistics will not materially mislead users

so that the public can have confidence that published statistics are fit to be used for the intended purpose

- Be open about your quality management approach and how you ensure appropriate quality standards. Be proactive in considering the dynamic nature of statistical quality
- Use independent evaluation to periodically review the effectiveness of processes
- Provide a safe environment and support staff in raising quality concerns
- Conduct timely reviews of quality issues and determine whether published statistics should be withdrawn and if unpublished statistics are suitable to be released
- Inform the Director General for Regulation of any concerns about potentially misleading statistics
- Commission reviews of statistical areas with serious quality concerns and be open about the resulting actions taken to improve the statistics

6. Producers must use suitable data sources and sound methods, and assure the quality of the statistics across the production and release processes, being open to innovate to keep statistics relevant and useful

so that the public can have confidence that the statistics are produced in robust ways

- Produce statistics to a level of quality that meets their intended uses
- Use the best available data for what needs to be measured. Monitor for changes in the sources, and explain any issues and their implications for use in producing statistics

- Check the suitability and availability of existing data from governmental and non-governmental sources before collecting new data
- Maintain constructive relationships with those involved in the statistics supply and preparation process. Be clear about your data requirements. Ensure the burden on providers is proportionate to the anticipated benefits
- Base methods on national or international good practice, scientific principles or professional consensus. Identify and address limitations. Use recognised standards, classifications and definitions
- Use data that are coherent when aggregated, consistent over time and comparable across geography. Seek to improve consistency and coherence
- Collaborate with experts, other analysts and statistics producers in the UK and internationally and share best practice
- Use a proportionate quality assurance approach across production and release processes. Be open about why you are satisfied that the statistics are of suitable quality. Monitor quality dimensions for both input data and the statistics
- Keep up to date with possible ways to improve the statistics. Assess the added value of method developments and consider the impact on the statistics
- Regularly review strengths and limitations in the data and statistics, involving users. Be open about your decisions and reasons

7. Producers must prominently explain the quality of the statistics, including any strengths and limitations, and communicate the uncertainty in the estimates

so that the public can have confidence in using the statistics to make decisions and take actions

- Prominently communicate the quality of the statistics and the strengths and limitations that impact their use. Describe any uncertainty in the estimates, for example, using qualifying words, numbers and graphics
- Explain the nature of data sources and why they were selected. Prominently communicate limitations in the underlying data and explain their impact
- Be clear about the methods used. Explain quality issues related to the methods, systems and processes. Identify potential bias and describe any steps taken to address it
- Give advance notice of method changes. Explain the nature and extent of the change, and provide a consistent back series where possible
- Clearly flag where statistics are being developed and tested. Be transparent about developments, outlining the plans and expected outcomes

Value

8. Producers must put users at the centre of decision making about the statistics, listening to and acting on feedback, and be transparent about statistical planning

so that the public can have confidence that statistics are relevant and useful

- Ensure statistics support informed and effective decision making. Involve users in deciding on your work programme, including when statistics are started, stopped or changed, being clear on where and why user needs can and cannot be met, such as addressing information gaps
- Be open about your public engagement strategy and how you work with stakeholders, including users and potential users of statistics outside of your organisation
- Maintain a dialogue with a range of users. Be deliberate and proactive in engaging stakeholders and accountable to users
- Be open about your annual statistical work programme and how you make the best use of available human, financial and technical resources
- Use a variety of methods to engage with users that are suited to different types and preferences of users. Use evidence of stakeholders' interests and consider new and innovative ways to engage that better meet the needs of users and potential users
- Review user satisfaction routinely, considering the relevance, timeliness, accessibility, clarity and accuracy of the statistics and data
- Involve users in the ongoing development and testing of statistics

9. Producers must ensure the statistics are accessible and freely available to all

so that the public can have confidence that there is equal access to official statistics and the value of data are maximised

- Provide free and equal access to regular and ad hoc published statistics
- Make sure statistics, data and other relevant information, such as metadata, coding and guidance, are easily accessible, and account for the needs of users with disabilities, in line with accessibility legislation
- Provide data at the greatest level that is practical to support use. Enable data and statistics to be shared, accessed and linked, using common data standards
- Support the reuse of data and statistics. Release useful supplementary analyses, and statistics and data from commonly asked queries

- Be transparent about any charges for additional services
- Ensure that statistics continue to be publicly available

10. Producers must clearly present the statistics to support appropriate interpretation, collaborating with other producers and experts to develop fuller insight for key topics

so that the public can have confidence that the statistics support understanding and use

- Release relevant, clear and unambiguous statistics, data and related information that are suitable for all types of users
- Communicate the statistics in a way that helps users understand issues and empowers them to make better decisions
- Provide a clear description of the main messages with suitable data visualisations. Help users interpret complex results without undue emphasis on a single message
- Provide comparisons to support interpretation and signpost other relevant statistics. Explain the consistency and coherence with other related statistics and sources
- Advise and support users. Anticipate misunderstandings by pointing out potential misinterpretations. Clarify the meaning of the statistics when they are used inappropriately
- Collaborate with other producers across the UK and subject experts to provide appropriate context and insight on the statistical topic
- Improve ways of disseminating and presenting the statistics. Look to better meet the needs of different types of users and potential users

Related information

[Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good](#): an introduction to the core concepts of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value

[Guiding Principles from the Code](#): these principles explain how anyone working with data can put TQV into practice, in a wide range of settings

[Standards for Intelligent Transparency](#): these standards set out what public bodies need to do to ensure an open, clear and accessible approach to the publication and communication of data, statistics and wider analysis

Guidance hub: information that supports use of the Code, including understanding and delivery of the principles and standards

D. Code 3.0: Standards for Intelligent Transparency

Proposal to inform [Consultation question 4](#)

The Standards for Intelligent Transparency set out what anyone communicating statistics in public bodies need to do to ensure an open, clear and accessible approach to the publication and communication of data, statistics and wider analysis.

Main Audience: For those communicating statistics in public bodies

Standards for Intelligent Transparency

For those communicating statistics in public bodies

Statistics and data should serve the public good and be communicated in a way that is proactive, open, clear and accessible. This approach – ‘intelligent transparency’ – should be the default for communicating all government statistics, data and wider analysis.

Everyone in government has an important role to play in achieving intelligent transparency in the communication of statistics and data, including ministers, organisation leaders, communication professionals, advisors and policy leads.

The Standards of Intelligent Transparency set out how to do this. They are grounded in the core concepts of the Code of Practice of Statistics, Trustworthiness, Quality and Value, and build on the [Guiding Principles from the Code](#).

By following the Standards of Intelligent Transparency, the government can ensure that everyone is able to easily access published data, scrutinise and understand the context of statistics and, through clear presentation and communication of the statistics and data, reduce the opportunity for misinterpretation or misunderstanding. This will support public confidence in the use of data, statistics and analysis.

All public bodies, including official statistics producer organisations, should apply these Standards for Intelligent Transparency:

Equality of access

Make data used by government in the public domain available to all in an even-handed, accessible and timely way, including, for example:

- figures quoted by ministers in parliaments or the media
- figures used in government publications such as press releases, blogs and infographics

Enhancing understanding

Enhance public understanding of societal and economic issues, including the impacts of policy, by:

- citing sources for figures used publicly
- clearly communicating an appropriate explanation of context, including strengths and limitations, alongside the figures
- taking care to avoid the selective use of data or use of data without appropriate context which could lead to their misinterpretation

Independent decision making and leadership

Ensure decisions about the publication of statistics and data, such as content and timing, are made independently of political influence and policy processes by:

- senior leaders, including permanent secretaries and ministers, endorsing decisions made by analytical leaders

- analytical leaders supporting and encouraging the use of intelligent transparency across the organisation

More information on meeting these standards, including questions to ask yourself, is available in OSR's [regulatory guidance on intelligent transparency](#) and [FAQs](#).

Related information

[Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good](#): an introduction to the core concepts of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value

[Guiding Principles from the Code](#): these principles explain how anyone working with data can put TQV into practice, in a wide range of settings.

[Standards for Official Statistics](#): these standards set out specific statistical practices that those producing official statistics must follow.

Guidance hub: information that supports use of the Code, including understanding and delivery of the principles and standards.

Draft Guidance

E. Draft Guidance: Short guide to Standard 1

Illustrative example to inform [Consultation question 5](#)

We are developing Code guidance and plan to test materials with our stakeholders.

This draft guidance aims to support producers in meeting the first standard of the Standards for Official Statistics.

We are planning to develop equivalent guides for the other nine standards.

Short guide to Standard 1: behave with integrity, working and communicating in ethical, honest, objective and professional ways

Standard 1 from the [Standards for Official Statistics](#) in the Code of Practice for Statistics speaks to the behaviours demonstrated by those producing and using official statistics and what is required to enable them to behave in a trustworthy way.

At the heart of the standard are the Civil Service values, applied to working with official statistics: integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality. The standard requires ethical practice and care, to maintain public confidence in statistical independence.

Impartial and objective use of statistics is allied to the [Standards for Intelligent Transparency](#), which emphasise the importance of avoiding the selective use of data. This practice is therefore relevant to senior leaders and others in the organisation using official statistics.

And there are responsibilities for the organisation too, in ensuring staff are suitably skilled, trained and resourced, to meet the needs of the production of official statistics.

The Standard:

1. Producers must behave with integrity, working and communicating in ethical, honest, objective and professional ways

so that the public can have confidence in the behaviours of those involved in handling and using data and statistics

- Handle data and statistics with honesty and integrity
- Act professionally, work collaboratively and behave responsibly
- Be ethical in how you collect, access, use and share data
- Do nothing to undermine confidence in the independence of published statistics
- Present statistics and explanations impartially and objectively, ensuring statistical communication is balanced by presenting the totality of evidence rather than promoting a particular perspective (see the Standards for Intelligent Transparency)
- Recruit suitably skilled staff and apply an appropriate competency framework. Have clear roles and responsibilities for these staff
- Provide resources and time to enable staff to develop skills, knowledge and competencies, including training on safe data and quality management

Questions to consider:

1. What do you do to ensure everyone involved in producing official statistics works to these professional standards?
2. What do you do to reassure users that the professional standards are being met?
3. How do you make sure that everyone in your organisation involved in the release or use of official statistics behaves appropriately?
4. How do you make sure that everyone involved in producing official statistics understands their role and responsibilities?
5. Is everyone able to access the training necessary to develop their statistical skills and knowledge?

Related guidance:

Code of Practice for Statistics:

- [Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good](#)
- [Guiding Principles from the Code](#)
- [Standards for Official Statistics](#)
- [Standards for Intelligent Transparency](#)

Civil Service:

- [Civil Service Code](#)

UN Fundamental Principles:

- [Handbook on Management and Organization of National Statistical Systems](#)

Analysis Function:

- [Career framework](#)
- [Role profiles and career pathways](#)
- [GSS competency framework](#)

UK Research and Innovation:

- Research integrity – [good research resource hub](#) and UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity

UKSA Centre for Applied Data Ethics:

- [ethics guidance and support](#)

Case study:

Office for Rail and Regulation: [Independent production and the managed handling of statistics and data](#)

F. Draft Guidance: Guidance on Accountability

Illustrative example to inform [Consultation question 5](#)

We are developing Code guidance and plan to test materials with our stakeholders.

This draft guidance on accountability set out a framework that we expect official statistics producers to adopt and encourage all producers of statistics to also apply. The framework emphasises the importance of producers making themselves accountable to their users.

Guidance on Accountability

This guidance outlines a model for public accountability that we expect official statistics producers to apply and encourage any producers that publish statistics to adopt.

Official statistics

Official statistics producers are accountable to the public for how well their statistics serve the public good.

Public accountability requires demonstration of how the Standards for Official Statistics are achieved, based on evidence of practice and an openness to listen and act on feedback.

To enable public accountability, we expect official statistics producers to:

Give an account by providing information with the data and statistics about the sources and methods used, the reasons for their selection, their strengths and limitations, and quality measures such as of accuracy and reliability

Be held to account by providing the means for users to engage meaningfully in open and constructive ways with the producers, when questions can be asked and responses given

Make good by improving the statistics or their production if and where needed and responding appropriately to the feedback

In deciding whether to use official statistics, we recommend that users carefully review the material shared by official statistics producers about the statistics to decide whether the statistics meet the user's specific need.

We encourage users to work with statistics producers to assist in developing new official statistics and improving existing official statistics by giving feedback when requested and participating in opportunities to test official statistics in development.

Users and other members of the public can also flag any concerns about official statistics by contacting the producer teams.

The Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) considers evidence of how official statistics producers meet the standards of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value in the Code of Practice for Statistics. Where we find the standards have been met, we confirm the status of 'accredited official statistics' (called National Statistics in the [Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007](#)). Our compliance reviews are published on our [website](#).

Other statistics

We encourage all producers publishing statistics to be open about how they ensure their statistics are delivered to professional standards.

All statistics producers that have [voluntarily committed](#) to applying the [Guiding Principles from the Code](#) should demonstrate to their users how they show the standards of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value in a statement of compliance. The producers should regularly review their statements to ensure they reflect the actions and improvements undertaken for the statistics.

Questions for producers to consider in applying this guidance

Quality questions

1. What is the need for these statistics?
2. How well do the data match the concept you wish to measure?
3. What are the levels of response, completeness, duplication and known sources of error?
4. What are the limitations of your statistics?
5. How will the limitations affect the quality and use of the outputs?

User engagement questions

1. How do you know what users think about the statistics?
2. Are they satisfied or unsatisfied with the quality of the statistics?
3. What changes would users like to see in the statistics?
4. In what ways have you been able to address users' needs?
5. How have you fed back to users on what improvements you have/haven't made?

Other resources

Further questions about quality are available in [quality questions and red flags](#) on GitHub.

OSR guides:

- [Thinking about quality when producing statistics](#)
- [Guidance on user engagement](#)
- [Guidance on voluntarily applying the Code](#)

Code of Practice for Statistics:

- [Understanding the Code and how it supports the public good](#)
- [Guiding Principles from the Code](#)
- [Standards for Official Statistics](#)
- [Standards for Intelligent Transparency](#)