Helping Statistics Serve the Public Good

For anyone who uses statistics

MAKING SURE PEOPLE CAN USE GOVERNMENT FIGURES

Official statistics are numbers collected and shared by the government to help people understand what's happening in the country. The Code of Practice for Statistics helps make sure the statistics are trustworthy, high quality, and useful.

THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR STATISTICS

The Code has three core principles, which help you address the following questions:

- Trustworthiness – Can we trust the people making the stats?
- Quality – Are the stats done properly?
- Value – Are the stats useful?

WHY THIS MATTERS

These rules help make sure that official statistics are:

- Trusted by the public
- Accurate and based on good data
- Useful for making decisions in everyday life

THE STATISTICS REGULATOR

The Office for Statistics Regulation is the official statistics watchdog. It maintains the Code of Practice for Statistics and checks to see it is being met by those producing official statistics.

Can We Trust the People Making the Statistics?

1 BE HONEST AND FAIR

People who work with statistics must always tell the truth and not try to hide or twist the facts. They should explain things clearly and not try to make the numbers look better or worse than they really are.

This helps people trust the information and know it's not being used to trick or mislead them.

2 BE GOOD LEADERS

Leaders in statistics must make fair decisions based on evidence, not opinions or pressure from others (like politicians). They should support their teams and make sure everyone is doing things in line with the Code.

This keeps the work independent and focused on what's best for the public.

3 BE OPEN ABOUT WHEN STATS ARE RELEASED

Statistics should be shared at the same time for everyone. The public should know in advance when they'll be released, and no one should get early access unless it's for checking the quality.

This makes sure no one gets an unfair advantage and everyone has equal access.

4 KEEP DATA SAFE

People's personal information must be protected. It should only be used in ways that are legal and ethical, to help the public.

This builds trust so people feel safe giving their information.

Can We Trust the People Making the Statistics?

5 CARE ABOUT QUALITY

Teams should always try to improve how they collect and share statistics. They should learn from mistakes, try new ideas, and make sure their work is the best it can be.

This means the statistics stay useful and up to date.

6 USE GOOD DATA AND METHODS

Leaders in statistics must make fair decisions based on evidence, not opinions or pressure from others (like politicians). They should support their teams and make sure everyone is doing things in line with the Code.

This keeps the work independent and focused on what's best for the public.

7 EXPLAIN HOW GOOD THE STATS ARE

It's important to tell people how accurate the stats are, what they can and can't show, and if there's any uncertainty (like a margin of error).

This helps people understand how much they can rely on the numbers.

Are the Statistics Useful?

8 LISTEN TO USERS

The people who use statistics (like the public, media, or researchers) should be listened to. Their feedback helps improve the stats and make sure they answer the right questions.

This makes the statistics more helpful for real-life decisions.

9 MAKE STATS EASY TO UNDERSTAND

Stats should be clear and easy to read. Charts, graphs, and explanations should help people understand what the numbers mean and how to use them.

This helps everyone, not just experts, make sense of the data.

10 MAKE STATS EASY TO FIND AND USE

Stats should be based on the best available data. The way they are collected and calculated should follow good scientific methods and be checked for mistakes.

This helps make sure the numbers are accurate and reliable.

Office for Statistics Regulation

Use the QR code to visit the Code of Practice website to find out more