

Standards for Using Statistics and Data in Public

WHAT ARE THESE STANDARDS FOR?

The Standards for the Public Use of Statistics, Data and Wider Analysis help public organisations use numbers and data in a way that is:

- Clear
- Honest
- Fair

This helps people trust the information and make good decisions. It also helps hold governments to account.

WHEN SHOULD THEY BE USED?

These Standards are for when statistics and data are used in things like:

- Press releases
- Blogs
- Social media
- Speeches
- Policy documents

They are not for official statistics reports – those have their own rules.

WHO SHOULD FOLLOW THESE STANDARDS?

Lots of people in public organisations should follow these Standards, including:

- Analysts and statisticians
- Communication and policy staff
- Senior leaders and Ministers

These Standards are based on the concept of intelligent transparency.

WHAT IS 'INTELLIGENT TRANSPARENCY'?

This means being:

- Open – sharing information clearly
- Honest – not hiding or twisting facts
- Accessible – making it easy for people to find and understand

Being transparent helps build trust and avoids confusion or misuse of data.



The Three Public Use Standards

Standards for the Public Use of Statistics, Data and Wider Analysis

1. EQUALITY OF ACCESS

Public organisations should:

- Share statistics and data with everyone at the same time
- Use the latest and most reliable data
- Publish data before or at the same time as using it in public
- Keep data separate from political messages
- If unpublished data is mentioned, publish it quickly

Why? So people can check the facts and understand decisions.

2. SUPPORTING UNDERSTANDING

Public organisations should:

- Not mislead people with data
- Explain clearly where the data comes from
- Show key limits or context for the data
- Help prevent confusion or misuse

Why? So people can understand the data and what it means.

3. DECISION MAKING AND LEADERSHIP

Public organisations should:

- Get advice from experts before using data publicly
- Senior leaders should support these Standards
- Decisions about publishing data should be made with expert advice

Why? So people can trust that data is used properly.

To contact the Office for Statistics Regulation email: regulation@statistics.gov.uk

