

Code of Practice for Statistics

Introduction for Communications Professionals

This summary highlights key principles and common pitfalls for communications officers when using and presenting statistics, based on the Code of Practice for Statistics Edition 3.0. Applying these standards helps ensure you use statistics in ways that builds public confidence in the decisions made.

Key Principles (TQV Framework):

- **Trustworthiness:** Communicate data with integrity, transparency, and professionalism.
- **Quality:** Use reliable data and sound methods; disclose limitations and uncertainty.
- **Value:** Ensure statistics are relevant, clear, and accessible to all users.

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

1. **Equality of Access:** Publish data before or at the time of public use. Avoid referencing unpublished data.
2. **Supporting Understanding:** Avoid misleading use. Clearly communicate sources, context, and limitations.
3. **Decision Making & Leadership:** Seek expert analytical advice. Ensure senior leaders support statistical integrity.

Checklist: Avoiding Common Pitfalls

- Avoid cherry-picking or taking figures out of context.
- Do not reference unpublished data without prompt publication.
- Always cite the source of statistics.
- Separate statistics from policy or ministerial statements.
- Use clear, jargon-free language and accessible visuals.
- Explain limitations and uncertainty in the data.
- Ensure equal access to statistics for all audiences.
- Consult analytical experts before publishing.
- Correct errors transparently and promptly.
- Meet legal accessibility standards.

