

Statement of administrative sources

This document sets out Ofsted’s arrangements for the use of administrative data in the official statistics produced by Ofsted.

Protocol 3 of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics states that administrative sources should be fully exploited for statistical purposes, subject to adherence to appropriate safeguards.

Version control

Version	Date	Details	Revision due
1.0	May 2015	First release	April 2016
2.0	April 2016	Second release	April 2017
3.0	February 2017	Third release. Removal of Appendix detailing old system. Change of Chief Statistician.	April 2018

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Introduction

In accordance with Protocol 3 of the UK Statistics Authority's 'Code of Practice for Official Statistics',¹ Ofsted is required to produce a statement of administrative sources that identifies:

- the administrative systems currently used in producing official statistics
- procedures to be followed in the organisation to ensure that we take full account of the implications for official statistics when changes to administrative systems are being considered
- information on other administrative sources that are not currently used when producing official statistics but have the potential to be
- arrangements for providing statistical staff – whether inside the producer body or elsewhere – with access to administrative data for statistical purposes
- arrangements for auditing the quality of administrative data used for statistical purposes
- arrangements for ensuring the security of statistical processes that draw on administrative data.

The UK Statistics Authority requires all statistical producers to publish a statement of administrative sources.

Background

The official statistics published by Ofsted are mainly based on the aggregation of inspection outcome grades.

Data on inspection outcomes are drawn from our administrative systems and these data are primarily held to allow Ofsted to effectively carry out, and discharge, its functions.

¹ Code of Practice for Official Statistics; www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/monitoring-and-assessment/code-of-practice/

Administrative sources used for statistics production in Ofsted

Table 1: Ofsted OfficeBase system

1. Name/identifier of the administrative data system used as a source of official statistics	Ofsted OfficeBase system
2. Titles of statistical releases that include data from this system	<p>'Further education and skills inspections and outcomes'</p> <p>'Non-association independent schools inspection outcomes'</p> <p>'Initial teacher education inspections and outcomes'</p> <p>'Maintained schools and academies inspections and outcomes'</p> <p>'Children's social care data'</p> <p>'Local authority and children's homes in England inspection outcomes'</p>
3. Procedural arrangements for dealing with any actual or planned changes (i.e. discontinuities) to this system	<p>Discussions between policy and information systems (IS) teams may result in a request for change (RFC). The change process involves agreeing specifications, developing and testing changes to the system, followed by a final sign-off.</p> <p>Data changes are tested by the IS team and policy teams, ensuring that those using the systems are involved in any important changes. Statistical staff are involved in testing the impact of changes on reporting, which usually allows some advance notice of any discontinuities that may arise and these can be explained in the official statistics releases.</p>
4. Arrangements in which statistical staff are given access to this system for statistical purposes	<p>Staff involved in the production of official statistics have access to data via Ofsted's SQL-based data warehouse and a range of internal MI reporting products.</p> <p>Staff access the data warehouse for statistical purposes by requesting the information asset owner. User permissions are reviewed regularly.</p>
5. Procedures employed by statistical staff to quality assure the data taken from this system	<p>A number of automated exception reports are in place, which are designed to alert staff to data that may be inaccurate. Processes are then followed to ensure that these data are corrected at source.</p>

	Additional manual quality assurance is carried out by statistical staff (including validation against external sources where available, for example, checking data against published inspection reports). The quality assurance is recorded in a checklist that statistical staff complete each time they compile official statistics.
6. Arrangements put in place to ensure the security of the statistical processes that draw on this system	<p>Data on inspection outcomes is used for operational purposes and therefore a wide range of staff within Ofsted have access to the underlying data held within the system.</p> <p>Access to the final version of a dataset used in the production of a statistical release before publication is restricted to those involved in the quality assurance and production processes, with the exception of 24-hour access granted to those listed on the published pre-release access list.</p> <p>Once extracted from Ofsted's data warehouse, data is held in Excel format. Access to this data is controlled by the use of appropriate shared storage locations, with controlled access.</p>

Table 2: Regulatory Support Application (RSA)

1. Name/identifier of the administrative data system used as a source of official statistics	Regulatory support application (RSA)
2. Titles of statistical releases that include data from this system	'Childcare providers and inspections'
3. Procedural arrangements for dealing with any actual or planned changes (i.e. discontinuities) to this system	<p>Discussions between policy and IS teams may result in a request for change (RFC). The change process involves agreeing specifications, developing and testing changes to the system, followed by a final sign-off.</p> <p>Data changes are tested by the IS team, policy teams and providers, ensuring that those using the systems are involved in any important changes. Statistical staff are involved in testing the data received into RSA, which allows advance notice of any discontinuities that may arise and these can be explained in the official statistics releases.</p>
4. Arrangements in which statistical staff are given access to this system for	Access to the system for statistical purposes is by request to the information asset owner

<p>statistical purposes</p>	<p>and levels of access depend on role responsibilities.</p> <p>Staff involved in the production of official statistics are given 'read access' to data. This allows them to view the data but not to edit them.</p>
<p>5. Procedures employed by statistical staff to quality assure the data taken from this system</p>	<p>Automated quality-assurance processes, such as validation rules, are built into the RSA system.</p> <p>Additional manual quality assurance is carried out by statistical staff (including validation against external sources where available, for example, checking data against published inspection reports). The quality assurance is recorded in a checklist that statistical staff complete each time they compile official statistics.</p>
<p>6. Arrangements put in place to ensure the security of the statistical processes that draw on this system</p>	<p>Data on inspection outcomes is used for operational purposes and therefore a wide range of staff within Ofsted have access to the data held within the system.</p> <p>Access to the final version of a dataset used in the production of a statistical release, prior to publication, is restricted to those involved in the quality assurance and production processes, with the exception of 24 hour access granted to those listed on the published pre-release access list. Once extracted from RSA, data is held in SQL or Excel format. Access to data held in SQL is controlled by permissions and access to Excel by password protection and the storage of workbooks in restricted storage locations.</p>

External data used in the production of official statistics

Ofsted uses some external data for reporting. On receiving it, this data is either fed into the OfficeBase and RSA systems or is held in separate SQL databases.

- Department for Education: details of maintained and independent schools, multi-academy trusts, social care data including information on characteristics and placements of children looked after, data from the National Pupil Database.
- Education Funding Agency: details of academies, learners aged 14 to 16 and 16 to 19.
- Skills Funding Agency: details of post-16 further education and skills providers and learner numbers.

- Office for National Statistics: geographical data.

Quality assurance of Ofsted inspection data

Data collected during Ofsted inspections is recorded promptly into Ofsted systems. Regular quality checks are undertaken on inspection data. Inspected providers are able to comment on the factual accuracy of an inspection report before publication.

Inspections outcome data is extracted from Ofsted's administrative systems. Inspection outcomes are entered onto our systems by the lead inspector. As inspection reports undergo a quality assurance process, any errors are likely to be identified at this stage. In addition, a selection of the entries onto our administrative system are checked to ensure that these match the inspection report. There is a focus on checking those entries where the risk of there being an error is the highest. An example of this is where the inspection outcome awarded changes during the quality assurance process. There remains a small chance that some outcomes are entered incorrectly onto our systems.

Ofsted staff involved in the production of official statistics are required to have completed training on information security and on identifying and managing the risk of disclosure of sensitive data.

Quality assurance of data from external sources

All external data is supported through service level agreements and data-sharing protocols. These agreements and protocols put in place the necessary mechanisms to ensure that data is:

- stored, used and disposed of in a safe manner
- accessed only by those with a completed data access agreement
- not released ahead of official statistics, where applicable
- robust and accurate and has agreed processes for raising any issues and concerns.

Where data is provided to Ofsted from external agencies, the team leader completes a declaration stating how Ofsted will use this data and how they will adhere to any requirements specified by the owner of the data. In addition to this, each member of staff, given access to data from external agencies, must complete an individual declaration that details their own responsibilities around the management and use of the data.

Ofsted has worked with a range of data suppliers to improve the quality before delivery into Ofsted systems. A series of validation checks are carried out at source to minimise errors. Ofsted carries out additional checks on data received to assure their quality. As well as these checks, communication with data suppliers ensures that Ofsted is informed of any issues as they arise. This allows Ofsted to manage the use of data where there are known issues.

Further information

Ofsted has comprehensive arrangements in place for ensuring the security of statistical processes that draw on administrative data. More details can be found in Ofsted's policy statement on confidentiality and data access, which is published on the Ofsted pages on the GOV.UK site.

Further information on data quality can be found in the quality reports released alongside Ofsted official statistics.

Helen Barugh
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Ofsted
January 2017



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