

# Statement of administrative sources

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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.

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## Introduction

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

- the administrative systems currently used in the production of official statistics
- procedures to be followed in the organisation to ensure that full account is taken of the implications for official statistics when changes to administrative systems are being considered
- information on other administrative sources that are not currently used in the production of 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.

## Administrative sources used for statistics production in Ofsted

**Table 1: Inspection tracking system (ITS)**

1. Name/identifier of the administrative data system used as a source of official statistics	Inspection tracking system (ITS)
2. Titles of statistical releases that include data from this system	'Children's centres inspections and outcomes' 'Further education and skills inspections and outcomes' 'Independent school inspections and

	<p>outcomes, including regulation compliance'</p> <p>'Initial teacher education inspections and outcomes'</p> <p>'Maintained school inspections and outcomes'</p>
<p>3. Procedural arrangements for dealing with any actual or planned changes (i.e. discontinuities) to this system</p>	<p>Discussions between Policy and Information Systems 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>Testing of data changes is done by the Information Systems team, Policy teams and providers, ensuring that those using the systems are involved in any important changes. Statistical staff are involved in testing the receipt of data into ITS, which allows advance notice of any discontinuities that may arise and these can be explained in the official statistics releases.</p>
<p>4. Arrangements in which statistical staff are given access to this system for statistical purposes</p>	<p>Access to the system for statistical purposes is by request to the information asset owner and levels of access depend on job role.</p> <p>Staff involved in the production of official statistics have access to data via an SQL extract provided by the Information Systems team.</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 ITS system.</p> <p>A document scanner (external to ITS) looks at documents/data within ITS. The scanner checks what information is held in the report (such as inspection grades) and that this information matches the data in the dataset and will produce exceptions when it is run.</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 are 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</p>

	<p>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 ITS, data are 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 on restricted drives.</p>
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**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	<p>'Children's social care data'</p> <p>'Childcare providers and inspections'</p> <p>'Local authority children's services inspections and 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 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>Testing of data changes is done by the Information Systems team, Policy teams and providers, ensuring that those using the systems are involved in any important changes. Statistical staff are involved in testing the receipt of data 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 statistical purposes	<p>Access to the system for statistical purposes is by request to the information asset owner and levels of access depend on job role.</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>
5. Procedures employed by statistical staff to quality assure the data taken from this system	<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</p>

	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 are 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 are 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 on restricted drives.</p>

## External data used in the production of official statistics

Ofsted uses some external data for reporting. Upon receipt by Ofsted, these data are either fed into the ITS and RSA systems or are held in SQL databases.

- Department for Education: details of independent schools, academy chains, children’s centres and social care providers.
- Education Funding Agency: academies, learners aged 16–19.
- Department for Business Innovation & Skills/Skills Funding Agency: post-16 education.
- Office for National Statistics: geographical data.

## Quality assurance of Ofsted inspection data

Data collected during Ofsted inspections are subject to the following process:

- inspection service providers enter inspection data into their systems post-inspection
- data are submitted to Ofsted
- Ofsted runs quality assurance checks on a sample of the data
- Ofsted publishes the inspection report
- inspection service providers perform a visual check of the report.

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

- 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 have agreed processes for raising any issues and concerns.

Where data are provided to Ofsted from external agencies, the Data Acquisition team completes a declaration stating how Ofsted will use this data and how they will adhere to any requirements specified by the data owner. 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 quality prior to 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.

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