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## 1. Introduction

Principle 5 of the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#) requires producers of official statistics to publish transparent guidance on their arrangements for protecting confidential data.

Ofsted's chief statistician is responsible for all of the official statistics we produce and for making sure they are governed by Ofsted's data protection policy.

This policy reflects the wide use of data within the organisation, including for the production of official statistics. It is reviewed every January with any changes implemented in April.

## 2. Confidentiality

Ofsted holds and processes data that is confidential because it is personal or commercially sensitive. Most

of it comes from administrative sources and management information systems.

Principle 5 of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics states: 'Private information about individual persons (including bodies corporate) compiled in the production of official statistics is confidential, and should be used for statistical purposes only.'

Ofsted maintains the confidentiality of the data it receives, stores and processes. Staff who work with data receive security checks and training in protecting and managing information.

## Physical security

All Ofsted staff and visitors are required to wear a pass. Further internal security levels prevent unauthorised access. Access is strictly controlled in line with Ofsted policy and there is no public access to any part of the organisation where confidential statistical data may be held.

## Technical security

A secure technical environment is achieved by the use of multi-layered authentication, using a combination of physical token, PIN and password. All microdata is sent by encrypted email or secure file transfer.

Access to specific data sets is granted only where the job role requires the use of the data.

## 3. Organisational security

Ofsted has an information management team responsible for policy, guidance and advice on data protection, information access, assurance and management.

Data managers are responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the policy. They make sure data resources are managed in accordance with:

\*the Code of Practice and its supporting protocols \*this compliance statement \*Ofsted's statutory obligations.

Data managers are also responsible for:

- compiling and maintaining metadata for the life cycle of each statistical resource
- guarding the integrity and security of their data holdings in accordance with Ofsted's policies on security and business continuity
- archiving their resources in line with Ofsted's policy on data retention, preservation, and destruction

Data managers' duties will evolve to match the development of each of the systems and policies described above.

## 4. Statistical disclosure control

Ofsted uses statistical disclosure control (SDC) to ensure that individuals or groups can't be identified from statistical data. This means that:

- confidential information about a person or unit (such as a household or business) is not made available
- different outputs from the same source, or outputs from different sources, can't be combined to reveal information about a person or a group of people

## Suppression and rounding of data

Ofsted uses suppression and rounding of data for disclosure control. For example, suppression of data, so that the cell value in a table (which may be disclosive where, for instance, the value is small) is not given.

Secondary suppression of cells, where at least one other value in the row or column is also not given, ensures that suppressed values cannot be deduced through subtraction. Values of 0 and 100% may also be suppressed, for example, where all pupils in a school are eligible for free school meals.

Rounding of cells to a multiple of a set base, such as 5, (where, for example, a true value of 3, 4 or 6 would be shown as 5) adds uncertainty to the true values of small cells and helps avoid disclosure.

## 5. Access to data

Data access or data sharing agreements must be established before named third parties are given access to confidential information. These agreements are written documents and must specify the precise data and variables provided and the nature of the analysis where they will be used.

Ofsted operates service level agreements when sharing data with internal users and other government groups. Respondents receive privacy notices detailing the purpose of the data collected and Ofsted's responsibilities regarding confidentiality.

Helen Barugh  
Chief Statistician  
Ofsted  
January 2017

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