

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

with the National Statistics Code of Practice and Protocols

The Office for Standards in Education is responsible for collecting, compiling, processing, analysing, interpreting, and disseminating of statistics which cover educational and childcare statistics.

Although currently none of our statistics are designated as 'National Statistics', we produce them in accordance with the arrangements set out in the *Framework for National Statistics* and in line with the principles set out in the *National Statistics Code of Practice* and its 12 supporting *Protocols*

Links to Framework, Code and Protocols:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/national_statistics/downloads/FrameDoc1.pdf

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/national_statistics/cop/downloads/StatementRD.pdf

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/national_statistics/cop/protocols_published.asp

As well as complying with the Code of Practice and its supporting Protocols, all of our statistics are also produced and published in accordance with the following statements and policies, each of which forms an integral part of this Compliance Statement.

Data Management Policy

Publication Strategy

Statement on Releases Practices

Statement on Revisions, and Errors

Statement on Confidentiality and Access

Statement on Customer Service and Complaints

Data Management

Introduction

Our Data Management Policy is published in accordance with the requirements set out in the *Protocol on Data Management, Documentation and Preservation*. It applies to all our statistics, whether obtained from administrative or statistical sources, and howsoever published. The policy also applies to any associated metadata or documentation.

Policy Implementation

Data Managers

Responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this Data Management policy and for the stewardship of each of our organisation's data holdings is vested in a number of trained, identifiable and accountable Data Managers who will work under the overall direction of Ofsted's Head of Research Analysis and International Division.

Their responsibilities are to ensure that Ofsted manages its data resources in accordance with the best practice principles and standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice and its supporting Protocols; with the Statements and Policies which form part of this Compliance Statement; and in accordance with the organisation's statutory obligations. Our Data Managers are also responsible for:-

- compiling and maintaining metadata to cover the whole life-cycle of each of the statistical resources they manage;
- guarding the integrity and security of their data holdings in accordance with the organisation's overall policies on security and business continuity;
- archiving their resources in line with the organisation's overall 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.

Publication

Introduction

Our Publication Strategy is issued in accordance with the requirements set out in the *National Statistics Protocol on Data Presentation, Dissemination and Pricing*. Its aim is to make our statistics accessible to the widest possible community and to maximise the use of our statistical information in all walks of life – subject to the need to comply with legal, ethical and confidentiality constraints. It is based on the following key principles:

Knowing our customers – the content of our resources and products, and the supporting information we provide will be informed by an understanding of our customers' needs - obtained through a combination of analysis of demand, networking and consultation.

Informing our users – we will help customers and users to understand and make the best possible use of our products by publishing supporting, background, or educational information and material, and by encouraging users to make use of our helpline services.

Web focus – In order to promote widespread access and informed public debate, we will use the Web as our main channel for the dissemination of statistics. We will continue to provide products in other formats in line with our statutory obligations, and where there is sufficient demand.

Charging – All the information we publish on-line will be free at the point of use. Any charges we impose will conform to the rules and procedures set out in the Protocol.

Accessibility – We will make it easy for users to find and understand our published data by using adequate signposting and standard documentation procedures.

Release Practices

This statement is issued in accordance with the requirements set out in *the Protocol on Release Practices* and sets out our intention to have release arrangements which are open and pre-announced with data released in an orderly way, as early as possible after compilation. Where privileged early access has been granted, details will be documented and publicly available.

Accessibility: Number and types of releases

Ofsted produces a small number of statistical publications and releases in both hard-copy and electronic format.

Publications are released primarily in web format and are available free of charge.

Ofsted currently has no statistical outputs marked as market sensitive.

Pre-announcement

Release dates for all Ofsted's statistical outputs will be pre-announced in NS Updates from summer 2005. This is available on the National Statistics website at: www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/updates.pdf.

The programme of releases will be maintained and regularly updated for a full year ahead.

Timing of releases

Publication is usually at 9.30 on a normal working day.

Format of releases

Ofsted's Chief Statistician maintains responsibility for the content, format and timing of all National Statistical outputs. In general, releases are prepared to a standard format.

Quarterly publications are currently in the form of standard tabulations. Annual publications generally retain a core set of standard tabulations, but content varies to reflect needs of users and to allow proper presentation and analysis of any new or particularly interesting results.

Pre-release access to statistics

Ofsted maintains a record of all those who have pre-release access to statistics and the purpose of that access for each individual release. Any such access is in line with the protocol. This includes those with access for management, briefing and quality assurance purposes.

In all instances, privileged early access is provided no earlier than 5 days ahead of publication, as set out in the protocol.

Availability of detailed results

To encourage the fullest use of Ofsted's source data, there are a variety of arrangements in place for making additional and more detailed results available on request, subject to restrictions such as confidentiality. These are described in the relevant outputs.

Pre-announcement of changes

Changes affecting releases are subject to a formal and transparent procedure:

- Alterations to pre-announced release dates are made public as soon as possible and accompanied by an explanation for the change.
- Significant changes to content, format or publication arrangements will first be subject to user consultation and then pre-announced and the reasons made publicly available.
- Methodological changes that will affect frequent periodical releases will be announced at least one release period earlier.

Revisions

This Statement is issued in accordance with the requirements set out in the *Protocol on Revisions* and sets out our intention to be open and transparent about any revisions we make to statistics and to ensure that users of our statistics have easy access to comprehensive information about those revisions:

We will achieve this aim by including explanations for, and background details about, revisions, corrections or methodological changes within any of the publications that incorporate them.

Errors

Revisions are a normal, unremarkable and inevitable feature of statistical life and users are able to absorb and plan for those revisions accordingly. However, some revisions are 'avoidable' in the sense that they are the consequence of errors or weaknesses in our procedures or systems, rather than of design. In the latter case, and regardless of whether the responsibility is ours or others, we will follow the procedures described below:

Announcement of impending corrections

We will be open and transparent about the need for any unscheduled corrections and, in normal circumstances, and once we ascertain the need for a correction, and become aware of its likely size and direction, we will inform all users about our intention to issue corrections, and by when.

Dissemination of corrections

Decisions relating to the dissemination of unscheduled corrections will be made by the Head of Profession in the light of the circumstances prevailing at the time but in general terms:

Web versions of publications

As soon as possible after we ascertain that a correction is necessary and warranted, we will amend all current electronic versions of any publication which contains the affected statistics or text, and re-populate the website as soon as possible with those amended versions. If the correction is minor or insignificant in the sense of being inconsequential and hardly noticeable, we will insert the necessary changes without alerting anyone. Otherwise, these electronic versions will include a note alerting readers to the fact that certain (albeit insubstantial) corrections have been incorporated and the reason why. If the error is substantial or significant, we will, in addition, issue a prominent alert on the website to notify users about the correction and the reason for its occurrence.

Paper versions of publications

Unless there are compelling reasons, we will not attempt to recall/re-issue any paper versions of any publication that contains the affected statistics or text if it has already been distributed. We will, of course, ensure that when we issue further paper copies, they will include any corrections that have been incorporated in the electronic versions.

However, if the error is substantial or significant, we will, where practicable, notify the recipients of paper versions by telephone or e-mail, and point them to the revised version available on the web. If the release or publication has a long shelf-life, we will consider re-issuing a revised paper version.

Confidentiality and Access

This Statement is issued in conformance with the requirements set out in the *Protocol on Data Access and Confidentiality*. It sets out the arrangements we have put in place to:

- protect the security of our data holdings and uphold our guarantee that no statistics will be produced that contravene any of the data protection principles set out in Part I of Schedule I to the Data Protection Act 1998;

while at the same time

- obtain maximum value from these micro-data, once obtained, by extending access under the Freedom of Information Act and other disclosure legislation.

Arrangements for maintaining the confidentiality of statistical data

Physical security

All staff working in this organisation and all visitors to its sites require a pass to access the premises. There is no public access to any part of the organisation where confidential statistical data may be held.

Technical security

No confidential statistical data are held on laptops or any other portable devices or kept on unprotected portable storage media. All transmission of micro-data is conducted through encrypted e-mail or password protected CDs.

Organisational security

We use a combination of survey project managers, data custodians, and data management teams to protect and maintain our data.

Disclosure Security

We use a combination of data manipulation and statistical disclosure techniques to meet the confidentiality guarantee.

Customer Service

This Statement is issued in accordance with the requirements set out in the *Protocol on Customer Service and User Consultation*. It describes our intention to provide a high level of service to all our customers. More specifically we aim to meet the following standards of customer service:

Service to Data Suppliers

We will endeavour to operate efficiently by placing the minimum load necessary on data providers and by integrating our statistical work across government. We will take good care of all the information provided to us and we will respect the confidentiality of all identifying information in accordance with the accompanying Statement on Confidentiality

Service to Users

We will maintain the relevance of all our statistical activities so that they meet the needs of all our users, and where possible, make sure that the information we provide is equally accessible to the whole community.

We welcome constructive comments on everything we do because that will help us to improve our service.

Service Standards

If you get in touch with us, you can expect us to be polite, approachable and helpful, and to readily identify ourselves. We will make every reasonable effort to ensure that you are provided with information that is timely, relevant and accurate.

- We will endeavour to respond to customer correspondence, whether in paper or electronic form quickly.
- Our response will either be an answer to the issue you have raised, or a notification that the correspondence is being dealt with, and noting that you will receive a reply within 20 working days.
- Our holding reply will either contain a date by which we intend to provide a full response, or a date by when we will contact you with a progress update.

Sometimes our service delivery standards will be affected by circumstances beyond our control. And occasionally we make mistakes. When this happens we will apologise and do everything we can to put things right. If you have a concern about the quality of our service, or the treatment you have received from us and you cannot resolve the problem with the person you have been dealing with, you can make a formal complaint.

If you do decide to make a formal complaint, then please follow our Complaints Procedure, available via the complaints page on the Ofsted website:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/contactus/index.cfm?fuseaction=contactus.complaints>