

## Statement on Revisions and Errors

Principle 2 of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics requires all producers of Official Statistics to:

- publish a revisions policy for those outputs that are subject to scheduled revisions;
- provide a statement explaining the nature and extent of revisions at the same time that they are released;
- correct errors discovered in statistical reports and alert stakeholders promptly.

A **revision** is a change to any Official Statistic once it has been placed in the public domain, whether through a printed document or electronically.

Where we have decided to produce statistics we endeavour to produce the best figures we can in light of the available information and resources. We have systems and processes in place to minimise the number of revisions, but if errors are found in published figures we will make amendments. We continually strive to improve the methods and sources and consequential revisions can result.

This statement sets out our intention to be open and transparent about any revisions we make to our statistics and to ensure that users have easy access to comprehensive information about those revisions.

### Types of revisions

#### Scheduled revisions

Routinely scheduled or planned revisions take place when we publish timely provisional estimates before all data sources have been delivered or provide regular updates to published statistics. For example:

- ‘Total Income from Farming’ figures are originally published as “provisional” and then updated later to “final”.
- Regular updates to individual indicators within the ‘Statistical Digest of Rural England’ are published at regular intervals throughout the year.

#### Non-scheduled revisions

This type of revision occurs when data is received following publication, when no further publication was planned. This type of revision can arise, for example, where information given by data suppliers missed the original publication deadline or when data suppliers give notification that they have submitted incorrect information. In these cases a judgement will normally be made by the Head of Profession or senior statistician as to whether the change is significant enough to publish a revised statistical release as soon as possible or wait until the next planned release. This will be partly dependent on the frequency of releases for that output.

### Revisions due to changes to source systems or statistical methodology

This type of revision occurs when major changes to administrative systems or statistical methods are put in place. These usually result in improvements to the quality of the statistics and may be backdated to bring historical estimates up to the same standard. Again, the Head of Profession or senior statistician would decide whether a revised statistical release should be published immediately or wait until the next planned release.

### Revisions to correct errors in statistical systems and processes

Occasionally, errors will occur in our statistical processes. Precautions are taken to minimise these errors and we continually review our processes and procedures to minimise risk. Errors will be corrected promptly and users informed.

## **Handling revisions**

Our policy on handling revisions is to be transparent with users about:

- the reasons for the revisions;
- the effect of the revisions on the statistics;
- the timing of revisions when part of our standard processes;
- the processes by which other revisions will be communicated and published.

To meet these commitments our statisticians will:

- explain the revisions for the output;
- include a direct comparison of original and revised estimates;
- pre-announce on the [GOV.UK release calendar](#) when major or regular revisions are made;
- where practicable within timescales, invite user comments on revisions;
- for key National Statistics that are subject to a scheduled pattern of revisions, where appropriate, provide a specific revisions policy within that output;
- where revisions are significant, keep the Head of Profession and press and communications teams informed;
- keep users informed.

Note – rules on pre-release access will be followed where appropriate for the output.

Decisions on how to address any revisions to published statistics will be made by the Head of Profession or senior statistician in consultation with the National Statistician as appropriate.

### User consultation

We will, where possible, consult with key users on proposed changes to methodology and on the options for maintaining a consistent time series –

including any revisions of previously held data. We will also consult on any major changes to survey methodology.

Web versions of releases/publications/tables/articles/etc

As soon as possible after we establish that a revision is warranted, we will amend all electronic publications which contain the affected statistics, and remove superseded versions.

If a revision is minor or insignificant we may make the revision without alerting users but we will include a note in the publication about the revision.

If a revision is substantial or significant we will issue a prominent alert on the website to notify users about the revision and the reason for its occurrence. If the error is such that it could impact significantly on the use of the statistics, we will endeavour to alert key users prior to making the correction.

Paper versions of releases/publications/tables

No paper versions are currently produced. If production of paper versions of releases/publications/tables is re-instated, the following procedure will apply:

Unless there are compelling reasons, we will not attempt to recall/re-issue any paper versions of any release, publication or table etc 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 revisions 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.

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