23 October 2015

Your request for information

You requested disclosure of information about databases that we use for our school inspection related data. You requested that this include: the name and purpose of each database, the format of each database and the time frames covered by each database.

The Freedom of Information Act

We have dealt with your request in accordance with the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000. The FOI Act is primarily concerned with the disclosure of information to the public at large, and does not take account of who the requester is or the purpose for which the request has been made.

The first requirement of the Act is that we should confirm whether or not we hold information of the description set out in your request. We are then under a duty to provide you with all the information we hold which falls within the scope of your request, provided it is not 'exempt' information.

In this instance I can confirm that we hold the information you have requested, and it can be disclosed to you under the FOI Act. I have consulted with our Information Services and Data & Insight Teams to produce the answer below:

We have defined database in its broadest terms to be the database systems which hold information in an organized format.

Ofsted data on schools is principally held in two database systems:

1. Inspection Tracking System (ITS) - database system tracking and collating schools and their inspection details which can be broadly categorized into the following:

Schools information (mainly from Edubase);
Schedule of inspection events;
Inspection details;
Inspection judgements;
Inspection Evidence outcomes and notes;
Inspectors details;
Inspection reports
– includes events from 1993 to 31 August 2015

2. Officebase - database of inspection events and outcomes – events from 1 September 2005 to present.

Includes selected judgements and information that were transferred over from the ITS database for inspections between 2005 to 2015, plus details of inspections under the new inspection framework from 1 September 2015. The details held are similar to those in ITS above

Underpinning these systems we use database management systems (DBMS) such as SQL and Business objects to produce various views or extracted tables from these 2 sources for reporting purposes.