



Arrangements for protecting the confidentiality of information used for statistical purposes

Cabinet Office produced Official Statistics are governed by the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#). One of the main principles under the pillar of 'Trustworthiness' is that of Data Governance:

T6.1 All statutory obligations governing the collection of data, confidentiality, data sharing, data linking and release should be followed. Relevant nationally- and internationally-endorsed guidelines should be considered as appropriate. Transparent data management arrangements should be established and relevant [data ethics standards](#) met.

T6.2 The rights of [data subjects](#) must be considered and managed at all times, in ways that are consistent with data protection legislation. When collecting data for statistical purposes, those providing their information should be informed in a clear and open way about how that information will be used and protected.

T6.3 Organisations, and those acting on their behalf, should apply best practice in the management of data and [data services](#), including collection, storage, transmission, access, and analysis. Personal information should be kept safe and secure, applying relevant [security standards](#) and keeping pace with changing circumstances such as advances in technology.

T6.4 Organisations should be transparent and accountable about the procedures used to protect personal data when preparing the statistics and data including the choices made in balancing competing interests. Appropriate disclosure control methods should be applied before releasing statistics and data. Appropriate protocols should be applied to [approved researchers](#) accessing [statistical microdata](#).

T6.5 Regular reviews should be conducted across the organisation, to ensure that data management and sharing arrangements are appropriately robust.

Definition

Data are defined as containing confidential information when the information:

- Relates to an identifiable entity (including members of the public or corporate organisations); and
- Is not in the public domain; and



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- If disclosed would cause them damage, harm or distress.

Policy

All Cabinet Office staff are required to complete *Responsible for information*, an online course designed to make sure that all civil servants are aware of their responsibilities when it comes to handling information. And where staff have access to sensitive statistical data they may also be required to complete further training.

Within the Cabinet Office there are statisticians and other analytical staff that produce analyses and compile statistical releases using administrative or statistical data where some of the data contain confidential information relating to individuals or organisations. All access and use of these confidential data for statistical purposes is in line with the principles and practices laid out in the Code of Practice. In particular:

- All confidential data for statistics are stored on separate areas of the internal network and access is strictly restricted to a limited number of statistical staff who need it for statistical purposes and who undergo the training and sign the declaration described below.
- All statistical staff involved in the production of statistical analyses and Official Statistics from data-sets that include any confidential data are required to familiarise themselves and understand the confidentiality aspects of the Code of Practice, and to confirm that they will uphold the principles and practices of the Code in relation to confidentiality. Additionally, relevant staff are required to keep up-to-date with relevant regulatory guidance e.g. Office for Statistics Regulation [Building confidence in the handling and use of data](#)
- All statistical staff ensure that no confidential information is disclosed in any release of Official Statistics or underlying data, or in response to any request for further information.

Where requests for information are dealt with under the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts, then Sections 41 and 43 of the Freedom of Information Act protect information provided in confidence or where release would prejudice commercial interests. Compliance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) is observed in respect of all relevant personal data sets.

Further information on how Cabinet Office collect, hold or use personal information can be found on our [Personal Information Charter](#) web page. This contains links to relevant [Privacy Notices](#) and other important information on how we will ensure that



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we treat all personal information in accordance with data protection legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018.

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