
Ethical pinch-points: Effectively communicating ethical consideration in research design

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“The establishment of the **National Statistician’s Data Ethics Advisory Committee**, the Data Science Campus, and the Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence have all increased the statistical system’s ability to be proactive and to react more quickly to issues of the day...”

Statistics for the public good, UK Statistics Authority, Five year strategy 2020 to 2025

Why is ethics important?



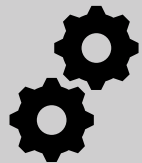
Reduce potential harm to all individuals involved in research.



Key factor in maintaining public acceptability around the collection and use of public information.



Enables researchers to efficiently access and harness data that supports the production of statistics for the public good.



Providing solutions to ethical issues helps to enable data to be used in radical, ambitious, inclusive and sustainable ways.



A focus on the application of ethics is more important than discussion without consequence.

Applying ethical principles



A principle-based approach

National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee

Ethical principles

Public Good

The use of data has clear benefits for users and serves the public good.



Confidentiality, data security

The data subject's identity (whether person or organisation) is protected, information is kept confidential and secure, and the issue of consent is considered appropriately.



Methods and Quality

The risks and limits of new technologies are considered and there is sufficient human oversight so that methods employed are consistent with recognised standards of integrity and quality.



Legal Compliance

Data used and methods employed are consistent with legal requirements such as Data Protection Legislation, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, public equalities duty and the common law duty of confidence.



Public views & engagement

The views of the public are considered in light of the data used and the perceived benefits of the research.



Transparency

The access, use and sharing of data is transparent, and is communicated clearly and accessibly to the public.



Our ambition

To be recognised leaders in the **practical application of data ethics for statistics and research.**

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY



Ethics Self-Assessment Tool

Over **1,000 projects** using the framework.

Supporting research and statistics across **all sectors**.

Over half of projects considered are **linking data** or are using admin data.

One day average turnaround time.

Self-Assessment – Adding Value



The risks and importance of responsible stewardship



Effective ethics relies on **contextual factors** being identified and considered.



Good ethical practice needs **collaboration**, nationally and internationally.



There is a **shared responsibility** to use all technology ethically and appropriately.



Continuous learning and sharing of applied considerations.

What does this mean for your research?

Identify

- There is a need to consider ethical practice when using any tool or method to produce research and statistics.

Articulate

- This consideration should be articulated to maintain transparency and ensure standards are upheld.

Reflect

- How can advice be tailored and received to facilitate more ethically appropriate analysis across a wider programme of work, at a faster pace?

Contact us: **data.ethics@statistics.gov.uk**

Or visit our website:

<https://uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/data-ethics/>
