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Recorded Crime and Official Statistics accreditation in the UK

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 This briefing note outlines the definition of official statistics in the UK, providing details of the levels of accreditation available.
- 1.2 This note also gives an up to date position on the status of recorded crime statistics published by relevant organisations in Scotland and England and Wales.

2. Official Statistics in the UK

- 2.1 Official statistics are statistics produced by Crown bodies and other organisations listed within an Official Statistics Order, on behalf of the UK government or devolved administrations. They provide a factual basis for assessment and decisions on economic, social and environmental issues at all levels of society.
- 2.2 Accredited official statistics are a sub-set of official statistics that have been independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) and confirmed as complying with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Statistics. Accredited official statistics are called National Statistics in the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007.
- 2.3 The OSR maintains the List of Accredited Official Statistics (previously known as the List of National Statistics), a comprehensive list of all statistical outputs that the OSR has reviewed and accredited. The table below provides examples of producers, but is not a complete list.

Producer	Coverage	Link
UK Government	UK	https://www.gov.uk/search/research-and-statistics
Office for National Statistics	UK	https://www.ons.gov.uk/
Scottish Government	Scotland	https://www.gov.scot/statistics-and-research/
Public Health Scotland	Scotland	https://www.publichealthscotland.scot/
National Records of Scotland	Scotland	https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data
Transport Scotland	Scotland	https://www.transport.gov.scot/
NHS Digital	England	https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information
Home Office	England and Wales	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office
Ministry of Defence	England and Wales	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-defence
Welsh Government	Wales	https://gov.wales/statistics-and-research
Northern Ireland Government	Northern Ireland	https://www.nisra.gov.uk/support/official-statistics/northern-ireland-official-statistics
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency	Northern Ireland	https://www.nisra.gov.uk/

3. Crime Statistics in Scotland

- 3.1 The Scottish Government's quarterly and annual [Recorded Crime bulletins](#) are designated as accredited official statistics, while Police Scotland's own [performance publications](#) are classed as management information only.
- 3.2 Police Scotland provide their data to the Scottish Government, where detailed quality assurance checks are carried out. Anything that requires further explanation is fed back to Police Scotland, with any required amendments then made.

- 3.3 Once both organisations are content that the figures are an accurate reflection of the dataset, they are officially signed off for publication. The bulletins are also then subjected to a secondary level of checking by statisticians who have not been involved in the production process.
- 3.4 The Scottish Government also produces [experimental statistics](#), this type of official statistics are going through a process of development and evaluation in line with the Code of Practice for Statistics.
- 3.5 In addition to police recorded crime statistics, the Scottish Government also separately publishes the [Scottish Crime and Justice Survey](#) (SCJS), a large-scale social survey that asks people about their experiences and perceptions of crime in Scotland. These figures are also accredited official statistics.

4. England and Wales

- 4.1 [Crime statistics in England and Wales](#) are published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). These are taken from data collected through police recorded crime and the Crime Survey for England & Wales (CSEW).
- 4.2 [Police recorded crime data](#) are supplied to the ONS by the Home Office, who are responsible for the collation of recorded crime data supplied by the 43 territorial police forces of England and Wales, plus British Transport Police. These data are supplied to the Home Office monthly for each crime within their notifiable offence list. The Recorded Crime publications are designated as official statistics, but not accredited official statistics. Accreditation was removed in 2014 following an assessment that the quality and consistency of the underlying data may not be reliable.
- 4.3 The [CSEW](#) is an interviewer-administered face-to-face victimisation survey that gathers information from a representative sample of residents aged 16 years and over, rather than from the whole population. The survey includes crimes that are not reported to/recorded by the police, but is limited to crimes against people resident in households and does not cover all crime types. Therefore, the estimates presented in the survey results contain some uncertainty and are not precise figures.
- 4.4 CSEW estimates have been temporarily suspended of their accredited official statistics status. The OSR is currently reviewing a request for reaccreditation following a [CSEW data quality review](#) that showed that the quality of CSEW data for year ending March 2023 was broadly similar to CSEW data for year ending March 2020, when they were last accredited official statistics.

5. Conclusion and Next Steps

- 5.1 As outlined above, recorded crime data published in the UK is currently only designated as accredited official statistics in Scotland. This accreditation provides assurance that the data used by Police Scotland, the Authority and partners is accurate, and that good arrangements are in place to produce, validate, and publish these figures in a way that is meaningful and easily understood.
- 5.2 A current focus in crime recording is consideration of the collection and reporting of data relating to sex and gender identity. It is not expected that any development in this area will impact on accreditation of reported statistics in Scotland. The Code of Practice for Statistics does not refer specifically to sex and gender, however its standards around accuracy, transparency and effective analysis of data will need to be adhered to when making any changes to current practice.
- 5.3 There is also specific [OSR guidance](#) in this area to be referred to, as well as an ongoing review of the Code of Practice with an updated version due to be published by May 2025 that may provide further information.