

UK Statistics Authority

National Statistician's Committee for Advice on Standards for Economic Statistics

Terms of reference

Overview

1. The National Statistician's Committee for Advice on Standards for Economic Statistics (NSCASE) will play a central role in the governance of economic statistics, by supporting decisions about the guidance used in the compilation of these statistics.

Introduction

2. At the UK Statistics Authority Board meeting on 30 September 2021, the Authority Board agreed to establish NSCASE, which would be advisory to the National Statistician.
3. NSCASE was established in June 2022. Its function is to support the National Statistician in ensuring its processes for influencing, adopting, and monitoring progress against international statistical standards are of a high standard.

Roles and Responsibilities

4. On issues identified by the National Statistician, NSCASE is responsible for providing strategic, independent advice to the National Statistician on standards, guidelines, and classifications to produce economic statistics.
5. Specifically, NSCASE is responsible for providing advice to the National Statistician on:
 - The suitability of current standards across the Office for National Statistics (ONS) suite of economic statistics.
 - The methods by which the UK should influence the development of future international statistical standards and guidelines.
 - Which standards the UK should adopt in future, to meet the specific measurement needs of the UK economy, while seeking to ensure appropriate international comparability.
6. NSCASE will provide advice by consensus where possible or by majority vote.
7. To facilitate timely advice, NSCASE can consider proposals via correspondence. Advice on these projects will be provided by consensus once the stated period for consideration has expired.

Reporting and Governance

8. NSCASE provides strategic advice to the National Statistician, who is also the Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, leader of the Analysis Function and head of the Government Statistical Service.

9. The Chair of NSCASE provides regular, public advice to the National Statistician on Committee discussions. The National Statistician in turn responds publicly to NSCASE and decides whether specific matters need to be discussed by the UK Statistics Authority Board, in line with the provisions of the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*.
10. The agenda will be prepared by the Secretariat in accordance with any determination of the National Statistician and the Chair.
11. The NSCASE Secretariat will provide reports following each of its meetings to the National Statistician. At least seven days prior to its meetings, NSCASE will receive reports on:
 - proposals for new ONS statistical methodology or guidance, or amendments to existing standards
 - relevant projects and programmes and other information as it requires; and
 - reports from any sub-committees.
12. Where expedited review is sought and NSCASE approve the proposal by correspondence, a minute of the discussion via correspondence will be presented at NSCASE's next meeting and published on the UK Statistics Authority website.
13. NSCASE will operate transparently. Meeting minutes and a list of projects considered will be made publicly available on the UK Statistics Authority website.
14. NSCASE will provide an annual report on its activities in the National Statistician's annual report.

Chairing

15. The Chair of NSCASE is appointed via open competition for a three-year term. The position of the Chair is remunerated via a formal contract. Reappointment is permitted.
16. The Chair also represents NSCASE publicly, as necessary.
17. The Committee may appoint a Deputy Chair from among its members.
18. The Deputy Chair may fulfil the functions of the Chair if the latter is unavailable.

Membership

19. The Committee will comprise independent and trusted experts, with varied experience and skills. Members will be remunerated via a formal contract.

20. Members of the panel are appointed via open competition for fixed terms of three years, by the Chair and the National Statistician. As this is a new Committee, members' end dates will be staggered to ensure continuity of work and experience. Reappointments are permitted. The composition of the Panel will be reviewed periodically by the Chair, in partnership with the National Statistician.
21. The role of each member of NSCASE is to participate in consideration of the full range of issues within the Committee's remit.
22. The Chair may invite other relevant experts as appropriate to advise NSCASE and/or observers to attend.

Meetings

23. NSCASE will meet at least four times a year. The Chair of NSCASE may convene additional meetings as necessary.
24. NSCASE meetings will be considered quorate when four or more members are present, including the Chair or the Deputy Chair.
 - Substitutes will not be permitted to attend meetings.
 - For a proposal to be formally approved at a meeting a quorum the Chair (or the Deputy Chair) and three members must be present.
 - For a proposal to be formally approved by correspondence a quorum the Chair (or the Deputy Chair) and three members would need to respond.

Secretariat

25. The Secretariat will be provided by representatives of the UK Statistics Authority's Central Policy Secretariat.

Transparency and confidentiality

26. NSCASE will operate transparently. Meeting agenda, papers and minutes will be published shortly after each meeting. Papers that are draft versions of scheduled publications, or which include pre-released data, will not be published ahead of their scheduled date, but the minutes will clearly state when the final document is expected to be published. Papers that are deemed to be market sensitive will be withheld from publication.
27. Panel members will have the opportunity to comment on minutes before their publication, on issues of accuracy. The NSCASE Chair will have the final approval of minutes. Minutes will be made publicly available within six weeks of the meeting date.

Inclusion and Diversity

28. NSCASE are committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in the running of the committee and their advice.
29. The Committee will seek the advice and involvement of ONS's diversity networks in their work. This will include inviting representatives to attend meetings or sections of

meetings, should this be relevant, and sharing minutes or papers, as agreed by the committee.

30. The Secretariat will ensure that all meetings and materials are accessible.

Review

31. The Committee will review the effectiveness of its meetings and its Terms of Reference annually. These reviews are published.

16th November 2022