

To leaders of major political parties in advance of the May 2026 Elections*(via email)*

24 March 2026

I am writing to ask for your support and commitment in ensuring the appropriate and transparent use of statistics during the election campaigns taking place across England, Scotland and Wales.

Statistics and data are the lifeblood of democratic debate, and so it is vital that they are used in a way that serves the public good. This is particularly important during election campaigns, when statistics play a role in informing decisions made by the electorate.

The Standards for the Public Use of Statistics, Data and Wider Analysis¹ (within the Code of Practice for Statistics) set out the UK Statistics Authority's expectations for how statistics, data and wider analysis should be used in the public domain.

They encourage that statistical claims are presented clearly and transparently so that the public can test the arguments that political candidates make. This means not using numbers in a misleading way such as cherry-picking figures, taking figures out of context or placing undue certainty on them. The test is to consider how a reasonable person would interpret the statement being made and ensure that this is not likely to be misleading in the absence of additional information.

Public confidence is best enabled when people can verify and understand what they hear. Adhering to these standards not only upholds confidence in statistics and the claims based on them, but it avoids the need for subsequent clarifications and possible loss of trust in future claims. Statements should also refer only to statistics and data that are already in the public domain and not those to which governing ministers have privileged access.

On behalf of the public, the Office for Statistics Regulation will make statements as needed during the election campaigns to clarify the appropriate use of statistics.

I am sending identical letters to the leaders of the main political parties across England, Scotland and Wales.

Yours sincerely,



Penny Young
Interim Chair

¹ [Standards for the Public Use of Statistics, Data and Wider Analysis](#), Office for Statistics Regulation, November 2025