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**Director General for Regulation**

Iain Bell  
Director for Education and Data Standards Analysis  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT

5 August 2015

Dear Iain

**ASSESSMENT REPORT 289: SCHOOL-LEVEL EXAMINATION STATISTICS FOR ENGLAND**

Thank you for providing evidence demonstrating the actions that you have taken to address the requirements in Assessment Report number 289 on School-level examination statistics for England, as reported in the school and college performance tables.

On behalf of the Board of the Statistics Authority, the Regulation Committee has reviewed these on the advice of the Assessment team and I am pleased to confirm the designation of School-level examination statistics for England as National Statistics. The Regulation Committee acknowledges the constructive way that DfE has approached this assessment and appreciates the opportunity it provided for the Authority to develop its interpretation of the *Code of Practice* for a set of statistics that are presented as part of an interactive, web-based tool. In particular we welcome the enhanced resource that you made available and the commitment that the DfE team has demonstrated to achieving National Statistics status and to continuing the programme of improvements. In particular the Authority commends your response to its publication: *Administrative Data Quality Assurance Toolkit*<sup>1</sup> and we consider that your published *Statement of Administrative Sources*<sup>2</sup> might serve as a helpful model for others.

It is a requirement of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 that compliance with the Code of Practice must be maintained. We would invite you to display the National Statistics Logo on the pages of the school and college performance tables for England containing the statistics. We would also invite you to display the logo and attached text within the performance tables. This text may only be used where National Statistics designation has been awarded following an Assessment. It is intended to convey a strong and independent endorsement for the statistical publication.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/administrative-data-and-official-statistics/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/performance/aboutadmindata.html>

Please feel free to discuss any aspect of this with us at any time. I am copying this letter to Chris Wormald, Permanent Secretary, Tim Leunig and Donna Ward, Chief Analysts at DfE and John Pullinger, the National Statistician. Sir Andrew Dilnot CBE, Chair of the UK Statistics Authority, has written separately to Rt. Hon. Nick Gibb MP, the Minister of State for Schools, about this designation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Humpherson', with a stylized, cursive script.

Ed Humpherson

**Text that may only be used in publications that carry the National Statistics logo following assessment and designation:**

## **NATIONAL STATISTICS STATUS**

The UK Statistics Authority has designated the school-level examination statistics for England – that are published as part of the school and college performance tables – as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.



National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is a producer's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics, and to improve its statistics on a continuous basis. If a producer becomes concerned about whether its statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, it should discuss its concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.