

BREACH OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

This document reports a breach of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, or the relevant Pre-release Access to Official Statistics Orders, to which the Code applies as if it included these orders.

1. Background information

Name of Statistical Output (including weblink to the relevant output or 'landing page')

24+ advanced loans application information: May 2016

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/24-advanced-learning-loans-application-information-may-2016>

Name of Producer Organisation

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)

Name and contact details of the statistical Head of Profession (Lead Official in an Arm's Length Body) submitting this report, and date of report

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1 June 2016

2. Circumstances of breach

Relevant Principle/Protocol and Practice

Protocol 2: Release Practices

Practice 4: Issue statistical releases at the standard time of 09:30 on a weekday, to maintain consistency and to permit time for users to understand and respond to the information during normal working hours.

Date of occurrence

26 May 2016

Nature of breach (including links with previous breaches, if any)

The statistics were due to be released at 09:30 on Thursday 26 May 2016, but were instead released at 17:15.

Reasons for breach

The official who prepared and uploaded the release ready for publication was providing cover for the usual person responsible. He was not aware of a new requirement to raise a call with the Digital Communications team to provide final approval to publish, and it was not included in the handover notes. As a result the release was not included in the Digital Communications team schedule for the day.

The failure to publish was spotted quickly by the production statistician who contacted the Digital Publication team to get the release published, but they were busy with pre-Purdah publications and so could not publish the release until late afternoon.

3. Reactions and impact (both within the producer body and outside)

None known.

4. Corrective actions taken to prevent reoccurrence of such a breach (include short-term actions, and long-term changes made to procedures)

The handover notes will be refreshed, and more officials trained on the procedure to prepare releases for publication. More formal procedures for production statisticians will also be introduced, to provide more notice of upcoming publication work.