

REPORTING A BREACH OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR STATISTICS

1. Core Information

Title and link to statistical output	Vocational and other qualifications quarterly: October to December 2017 https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/vocational-and-other-qualifications-quarterly-october-to-december-2017
Name of statistical producer	The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)
Name and contact details of person dealing with report	Vikas Dhawan Vikas.dhawan@ofqual.gov.uk 02476 716824
Link to published statement about the breach (if relevant)	
Date of report	13 March 2018

2. Circumstances of breach

Relevant principle and practice	Trustworthiness (T3.6) Statistics should be released to all users at 9.30am on a weekday.
Date of occurrence of breach	8 March 2018

This statistical release, and documents related to it, could not be published at the scheduled time 9:30am on the GOV.UK statistics page.

This happened due to some technical issue with GOV.UK. Ofqual's communications team (Comms) promptly made the release available to users via an alternative GOV.UK link before 10am, published the documents as a news story on Ofqual's webpage and informed our users via Twitter and LinkedIn. The Comms team raised this with the GOV.UK User Support team at 10:08am.

The actual link started working before 11am. All the documents have been available as normal from that point onwards.

Continuing technical issues with GOV.UK this year have delayed other statistical releases published by Ofqual. The GOV.UK User Support team informed us at 13:49 that they had found a different cause this time which led to the delay. We were further informed by the team on March 12 that they have put together a fix for the problem that occurred and have deployed it. And that they were going to monitor scheduled publications over the coming days to check there weren't any other issues outside the one that they had discovered.

3. Impact of the breach

Users did not get access to the release at 9:30am.
Access to the release was delayed by less than 30 minutes.

4. Corrective actions (taken or planned) to prevent re-occurrence

Ofqual uploaded the report to a different part of GOV.UK at 9:57am, and published a link to the release via Twitter and LinkedIn immediately. The documents were also published as a news story on Ofqual's webpage around the same time.

The Good Practice Team has informed us that GDS has submitted a draft breach report covering the period July 2017 to February 2018, detailing the delays to statistical publications over that period, explaining the nature of the wider problem they have identified on GOV.UK, and their ongoing corrective actions. This will be published shortly.