Revisions

This Statement is issued in accordance with the requirements set out under Principle 2 of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and sets out Department of Education (DE) Analytical Services Unit intention to be open and transparent about any revisions it makes to Official or National Statistics and to ensure that users of statistics produced by DE Analytical Services Unit (ASU) have easy access to comprehensive information about those revisions.

ASU endeavours to produce the best figures it can, in light of the available information and resources. However, improvements and consequential revisions can result, as the Unit continually strives to improve the methods and sources.

Some series are more subject to revisions, for example, when early or provisional estimates are produced. In such cases, ASU will make it clear which Official or National Statistics are provisional and subject to a scheduled pattern of revision. ASU methods will be kept under review to minimise the scale of revisions. Where there has been a revision to a table, this will be recorded as a footnote to that table. Where a publication has been revised, only the most recent version will be available on the DE website and the title will indicate whether this is a revised publication.

Where a substantial methodological change is planned, ASU will announce its intentions before the release of the statistics based on the new methods. For any key Official or National Statistics, ASU will provide background information and an explanation about the changes.
Errors

Many of the revisions ASU make are a normal, unremarkable and inevitable feature of statistical life and users are able to absorb and plan for those revisions accordingly. They reflect the receipt of fuller and more complete information.

However, some revisions are ‘avoidable’, in the sense that they are the consequence of errors or weaknesses in procedures or systems, or are the result of errors in source material. Regardless of whether the responsibility is ASU’s or others, the Unit will follow the procedures described below.

Announcement of impending corrections
ASU will be open and transparent about the need for any unscheduled corrections. Once the need for a correction that warrants customer notification is ascertained, ASU will announce its intention to issue corrections, and the planned date of issue.

Dissemination of corrections
Decisions relating to the dissemination of unscheduled corrections will be made by The senior statistician within DE. In general terms:

Web versions of releases/publications/tables/articles/etc
As soon as possible after ASU ascertain that a correction is necessary and warranted, it will amend all current electronic versions of any release, publication, table, article, etc which contains the affected statistics or text, and re-populate the website as soon as possible with those amended versions. If the correction is minor, or insignificant, in the sense of being inconsequential and hardly noticeable, ASU will insert the necessary changes without alerting anyone. Alternatively, the Unit may accumulate minor corrections and make an update at the time of the next scheduled web publication to avoid making too many frequent but minor changes.

Paper versions of releases/publications/tables
Unless there are compelling reasons, ASU will not attempt to recall/re-issue any paper versions of any release, publication or table etc. that contains the affected statistics or text if it has already been distributed. ASU will, of course, ensure that when further paper copies are issued, they will include any corrections that have been incorporated in the electronic versions.

However, if the error is substantial or significant, ASU will, where practicable, notify the recipients of paper versions by telephone or e-mail, and point them to the revised version available on the web. If the release or publication has a long shelf-life, the Team will consider re-issuing a revised paper version.

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