

Introduction to Quality Assurance of Administrative Data

What is QAAD?

Quality Assurance of Administrative Data (QAAD) is a framework created by the [UK Statistics Authority](#). The framework is a way of assessing quality issues associated with administrative data used in the production of Official Statistics.

The QAAD framework identifies four practice areas associated with data quality:

- Operational context and administrative data collection
- Communication with data supply partners
- Quality assurance principles, standards and checks applied by data suppliers
- Producer's quality assurance investigations and documentation

What is the QAAD toolkit?

The UK Statistics Authority published the [Administrative Data Quality Assurance Toolkit](#) to support the framework. The QAAD toolkit provides guidance to statistical producers to assess the quality of administrative data sources used in the production of official statistics. It can also support statistical producers to provide appropriate documentation to aid users understanding of the strengths and limitations of statistics.

Risk/Profile Matrix

The QAAD Toolkit sets out a Risk/Profile Matrix, shown in [Figure 1](#). This is used to inform statistical producer's decisions on the level of assurance of administrative data. Quality assurance should be proportionate to the risk of quality concerns in the data and the public interest in the statistics. Both the level of risk of data quality concerns and public interest in the statistics are assessed as being low, medium or high.

Figure 1: Risk/Profile Matrix

Level of risk of quality concerns	Public interest profile		
	Lower	Medium	Higher
Low	Statistics of lower quality concern and lower public interest [A1]	Statistics of low quality concern and medium public interest [A1/A2]	Statistics of low quality concern and higher public interest [A1/A2]
Medium	Statistics of medium quality concern and lower public interest [A1/A2]	Statistics of medium quality concern and medium public interest [A2]	Statistics of medium quality concern and higher public interest [A2/A3]
High	Statistics of higher quality concern and lower public interest [A1/A2/A3]	Statistics of higher quality concern and medium public interest [A3]	Statistics of higher quality concern and higher public interest [A3]

A1 to A3 = Levels of assurance in the QA Matrix

Source: UK Statistics Authority - Administrative Data Quality Assurance Toolkit

Levels of assurance

The outcome of the Risk/Profile Matrix informs the level of assurance statistical producers should provide for each administrative data source. The QAAD Toolkit outlines four levels of assurance:

- A0: No assurance – this level is not compliant with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics
- A1: Basic assurance - the statistical producer has reviewed and published a summary of the administrative data quality assurance arrangements
- A2: Enhanced assurance - the statistical producer has evaluated the administrative data quality assurance arrangements and published a fuller description of the assurance
- A3: Comprehensive assurance – the statistical producer has investigated the administrative data quality assurance arrangements, identified the results of independent audit and published detailed documentation about the assurance and audit

NRS population statistics

NRS have used the QAAD Toolkit to inform the levels of assurance provided for each of the administrative data sources used to produce our population statistics. Reports will be published for each of the administrative data sources providing information on:

- The four areas associated with data quality
- A risk/profile matrix of the data source
- Justification for the level of assurance provided