



UK Statistics
Authority



Office for
National Statistics

Appointment of

National Statistician

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Foreword from Cat Little, Permanent Secretary, Cabinet Office

The UK Statistics Authority is seeking an outstanding, internationally respected statistician to take on the pivotal role of National Statistician. This is an opportunity to lead a system at the heart of public service, helping government, business, and society to make informed decisions through trusted statistics.

Working in partnership with the ONS Permanent Secretary and reporting directly to me, you will set standards for statistical excellence and foster collaboration across the Government Statistical Service.

We are looking for someone who brings deep expertise, energy, and vision - someone who can build strong relationships with users and stakeholders both at home and abroad, and be a passionate advocate for the value of official statistics.

The National Statistician will inspire confidence and lead the profession with integrity, supporting a culture of openness and continuous improvement. If you are ready to help shape the future of UK statistics, we look forward to hearing from you.



Foreword from Penny Young, Deputy Chair, UK Statistics Authority

The UK Statistics Authority is recruiting for the challenging and vital role of National Statistician. You will lead the Government Statistical Service as head of the statistical profession; advise ministers, the Cabinet Secretary and senior officials on the production, dissemination and use of statistics across government; and work in partnership with the Permanent Secretary of the ONS on statistical quality and methodology. You will also be a member of the UK Statistics Authority Board and its principal advisor on official statistics.

You can find out more about the statistical system and the role of National Statistician in this pack. In essence, we are looking for someone that can demonstrate three main qualities:

- Credibility with producers and users in the statistical system.
- Proactivity in building strong relationships across a complex system.
- Energetic advocacy for official statistics, their importance and use.

The context is challenging, but that means someone with expertise, experience and motivation can make a real difference. We look forward to hearing from you.



Background

Official statistics are for the benefit of society and the economy as a whole; not only in government policymaking and the evaluation of government performance but also informing the direction of economic and commercial activities. Statistics provide valuable data and evidence for academics, analysts, researchers, public and voluntary bodies, enabling the public to hold to account organisations that spend public money, and informing wider public debate. The UK Statistics Authority wants to see official statistics enabling sound policy decisions, and providing a firm, trusted, evidence base for decision-making both inside and outside of government.

The UK Statistics Authority

The UK Statistics Authority ('the Authority') was established under the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007. The Authority is an independent statutory body. It operates at arm's length from government as a non-ministerial department and reports directly to the UK Parliament, the Scottish Parliament, the Welsh Parliament and the Northern Ireland Assembly. The work of the Authority is further defined under secondary legislation made under the Act by the UK Parliament or the devolved legislatures.

The Authority has a statutory objective of promoting and safeguarding the production and publication of official statistics that 'serve the public good'. The public good includes:

- informing the public about social and economic matters;
- assisting in the development and evaluation of public policy; and
- regulating quality and publicly challenging the misuse of statistics.

The Authority has two executive arms – the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR).

The ONS is the UK's largest independent producer of official statistics and the UK's recognised national statistical institute. It is responsible for collecting and publishing statistics related to the economy, population and society at national, regional and local levels. The ONS also conducts the census in England and Wales every 10 years. Its main responsibilities are collecting, analysing and disseminating statistics about the UK's economy, society and population.

OSR is the UK's official statistics regulator which provides independent regulation of all official statistics produced in the UK and aims to enhance public confidence in the trustworthiness, quality and value of statistics produced by government. It sets the standards that official statistics must meet through its Code of Practice for Statistics and ensures that producers of official statistics uphold these standards by conducting assessments against the Code. Those which meet the standards are given Accredited Official Statistics status, indicating that they meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and value. OSR also reports publicly on system-wide issues and on the way that statistics are being used, celebrating when the standards are upheld and challenging publicly when they are not.


The Government Statistical System (GSS)

The majority of official statistics are produced by statisticians operating under the umbrella of the GSS, working in either the ONS, UK government departments, agencies and arms-length bodies, or one of the three devolved Governments in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Every public body with a significant GSS presence (in terms of statisticians involved in the production or use of official statistics) has its own designated Head of Profession for Statistics, and each of the three devolved governments has its own Chief Statistician. The Heads of Profession and their staff in each organisation are accountable to the National Statistician acting in their capacity as the Head of the GSS.

Context to the role

Earlier in 2025, the Cabinet Office and Authority Board commissioned Sir Robert Devereux to review the performance and culture of the ONS. Sir Robert Devereux's review can be read [here](#).

One of the recommendations which has been jointly accepted by the Government and Authority Board is to, at least temporarily, change how the ONS is led. Since 2007 the National Statistician has also been the Permanent Secretary for the ONS. Instead, an ONS Permanent Secretary now leads the operations of the organisation (and is the Principal Accounting Officer) and the National Statistician will be the strategic head of the UK statistical system, leading the GSS and acting as the public face and chief advisor on statistical matters. The holders of both roles will be members of the UK Statistics Authority Board. As advisor to the Board, the National Statistician will work closely with the ONS and advise on strategic ONS methodological and statistical issues.



One mission
One purpose
One team

—
One ONS

What does the role involve?

The National Statistician is the expert adviser to the Government and the Authority Board on statistics and the head of the GSS. As set out in the 2007 Act, the National Statistician is the Board's principal adviser on the quality of official statistics, good practice in relation to official statistics, and the comprehensiveness of official statistics. The post has an important role in ensuring the trustworthiness of the statistical system used to inform UK government policy and leading the community of statisticians and analysts throughout government to deliver for the public good.

Specifically, the National Statistician will:

- Provide expert statistical and methodological advice to the UK Statistics Authority Board, ONS Permanent Secretary, Parliament, ministers, the Cabinet Secretary and other senior officials on the production, dissemination and use of statistics across government.
- Work in partnership with the UK Statistics Authority Board to deliver its strategic priorities. This will include working with the ONS Permanent Secretary to support the ONS's recovery plans for core economic statistics and surveys, restoring capability and user confidence in its outputs. The National Statistician will focus on strategic methodological and statistical issues within ONS.
- Set a clear vision and standards for the GSS, demonstrating integrity and commanding the confidence of its members and users alike. Embrace the GSS Vision and help build statistical and analytical capability across the system.
- Build and maintain excellent relations with the Authority's independent regulator, the OSR, and its Director General for Regulation, working collaboratively while respecting its independence. OSR sets the standards official statistics must meet in the Code of Practice for Statistics and provides public assurance on whether statistics comply with the Code.
- Promote best practice and compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics (and its pillars of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value) across the ONS and the GSS.
- Embrace innovation and address shared challenges across the UK and internationally (e.g. data gaps, statistical coherence, and technological advancements). Chairing the Inter-Administration Committee to work collaboratively with the Devolved Governments to deliver statistics the nation needs to support decision-making and you will represent the UK on the international statistical stage to share best practice and support the global good of statistics.
- Hold membership of the Civil Service top leadership cadre and the opportunity for strong networks with other senior advisers working in Government and the Civil Service.

What experience will you need?

The Civil Service is open to talented people from anywhere in the United Kingdom and internationally, and from any career background; we will always seek to identify transferable skills from the individual's experience. To help you succeed in this role, you must have a strong commitment to the Civil Service values of impartiality, honesty, integrity and objectivity, and be committed to the independence of statistical production from Government. You will have the following essential criteria:

- A statistical expert with extensive professional knowledge and experience of statistics: you should be a credible and passionate advocate for statistics and have a proven track record of sound knowledge and experience in statistics and/or methodology and statistical research.
- Excellent analytical skills at the strategic level coupled with a strong intellect, with a track record and established profile as an authority and leader in the field of evidence and analysis, and a good understanding of the changing digital environment.
- Evidence of deploying professional skills in a way that commands the respect of statisticians, a thorough understanding of official statistics and how they serve the needs of a range of users including the public, Parliament and government.
- Excellent communication skills, including the ability to explain and communicate the importance of statistics to a range of stakeholders including Parliamentarians, the media and the general public. Able to operate credibly on the international stage.
- Exceptional leadership and influencing skills, with a proven ability to manage complex, multi-stakeholder relationships and navigate potentially conflicting interests to gain confidence of ministers, Parliament, the public. This includes a track record of raising standards and improving services by effectively motivating others and ensuring the development of user-focused products while maintaining technical quality.

Our recruitment process

Civil Service recruitment processes at Permanent Secretary level are regulated by the [Civil Service Commission](#), and we follow clear guidelines to ensure that our recruitment is fair and open. We expect the process for this role to be as follows:

The closing date for applications will be **noon on Sunday 23 November**.

A longlist of the applications will take place in the week commencing **1 December**.

Saxton Bampfylde will interview long listed candidates during the weeks commencing **8 and 15 December**

A shortlist of the applications will take place in the week commencing **5 January**

Between **the weeks commencing 12 and 19 January**, shortlisted candidates will then:

- Undertake assessments which may include but are not limited to a stakeholder engagement exercise and a statistical exercise; and
- Meet a Cabinet Office minister (TBC)

Inputs from all of those steps will then form the basis of a panel interview, chaired by the First Civil Service Commissioner, Gisela Stuart, in the week commencing **26 January**. Other panel members at the interview will include Cat Little (Civil Service Chief Operating Officer and Permanent Secretary Cabinet Office), Penny Young (Deputy Chair of UK Statistics Authority), James Bowler (Permanent Secretary, HMT), and Clare Lombardelli (Deputy Governor for Monetary Policy, Bank of England).

Full details will be provided to shortlisted candidates and recognising that there are a number of steps in the process, we will do our best to arrange the sessions in a way that works for you. We hope that this process will be conducted in face-to-face sessions, but if you need any adjustments do let us know.



How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to the Office for National Statistics on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **OBWBA**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload the following documents:

- Your CV, with educational and professional qualifications and full employment history, including an explanation of any gaps in your employment history, and details where possible of budgets and numbers of people.
- A short covering statement of no more than two A4 sized pages (1000 words) explaining why this appointment interests you and how you can evidence your suitability for the role, with particular reference to the criteria in the 'relevant experience' section.
- A Diversity Questionnaire: The Civil Service is committed to achieving a workforce that reflects the society it serves, at all levels including the most senior. Collecting this information enables us to identify whether we are recruiting from the widest possible pool of talent and check that all groups are being treated fairly throughout the process. This form will not be disclosed to anyone involved in assessing your application. Please note that applications will not be accepted unless the form is completed. If you do not wish to provide a response to a particular question, you should complete the 'prefer not to say' option.

- A completed Declaration of Interests form. Please note that applications will not be accepted unless the form is returned.
- Details of two referees - these will only be contacted for shortlisted candidates, and not without prior notice.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Sunday 23 November**.

We operate a Disability Confident Scheme (DCS). We are committed to making reasonable adjustments in order to support disabled job applicants and ensure that you are not disadvantaged in the recruitment and assessment process. All monitoring data will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not affect your application in any way.

Please note that references and open-source due diligence checks (including into social media accounts) will be undertaken for all short-listed candidates.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

Detailed terms and conditions

- The successful candidate will hold this post for up to five years from the date of appointment. There is no presumption in favour of renewal, but renewals for a shorter period than five years may be possible where performance has been strong, following consultation with the Cabinet Secretary and at the discretion of the Prime Minister.
- If you are successful, you can expect your salary on appointment to be £200,000 annum. If you're an existing civil servant, your salary will be agreed in line with the Civil Service pay rules in place on the date of your appointment.
- This is a full-time role, but flexible working arrangements will be considered in line with the role portfolio (including existing job share arrangements). This role is available on secondment. The role will also require regular presence in Newport and London.

Please note that:

- Civil Service pension arrangements will apply, and you will have the option of joining the Civil Service Alpha Pension Scheme, a defined benefit (DB) pension scheme. The current employer contribution rate for this salary level of almost 30% of salary as explained at [Civil Service Pension Scheme](#)
- The role includes 30 days annual leave - this is in addition to 8 public holidays and one privilege day.
- If successful you must hold, or be willing to obtain, security clearance up to DV level which requires a 10 year residence history in the UK. More information about the vetting process can be found [here](#).
- You will need to hold the right immigration status and nationality requirements for this role. This is a non-reserved post - please ask Maria.Dodson@saxbam.com if you have any questions.
- Unfortunately, we will not be able to reimburse you for any expenses incurred as part of this recruitment process.

Restrictions

During the period of appointment there will be certain restrictions on political activities.

Business Appointments

Candidates should also note that on completion of the appointment, the post holder will be subject to the government's Business Appointments Rules, with the possibility of restrictions on future employment imposed by the Prime Minister. If you would like to discuss what this means, please get in touch with joanne.whitehead1@cabinetoffice.gov.uk. Further information about the Rules and restrictions likely to be imposed on former Permanent Secretaries can be found [here](#).

Equality and Diversity

We are committed to supporting the principle that everybody should have the same opportunities for employment, development and progression. This should be based on their ability, competence and suitability for the role. This means that no applicant should receive less favourable treatment on grounds of their ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, religion, transgender status, family or domestic responsibilities, or working patterns. Also, nobody should be disadvantaged by any specific conditions or requirements, unless it can be justified that these could affect their ability to undertake the role.

Complaints

The law requires that selection for appointment to the Civil Service is on merit on the basis of fair and open competition as outlined in the Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles, which can be found at <https://civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk/recruitment/recruitment-principles/>. If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with the Recruitment Principles, and you wish to make a complaint, you should contact Jo Whitehead in the first instance. joanne.whitehead1@cabinetoffice.gov.uk If you are not satisfied with the response you receive from the department, you can contact the Civil Service Commission at the address below: info@csc.gov.uk

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