

QUESTIONS FOR DATA USERS



How to decide if data are suitable
for your use

NATURE OF THE DATA

Data properties

- How are the data collected?
- Are they quantitative vs qualitative?
- What form do they take (e.g. price, population)?
- What time period and frequency of collection?
- What level of aggregation?
- Are the data adjusted or in raw form?
- What information is collected?

DATA QUALITY

Fit for purpose

- How well do the data match the concept you wish to measure?
- Are the results reliable?
- How representative are the data?
- What are the levels of completeness, duplication, known sources of error ?

DATA PROCESSING AND THE PROVIDER

Provenance

- Who has collected and provided the data?
- Is the organisation independent and authoritative?
- What are the security arrangements governing access?
- Do the data overlap with other similar sources and can they be compared?
- What explanation about the data and commentary are given?

PUBLIC VALUE OF THE DATA

Value to society

- What is the relevance of the data to public debate and private decisions?
- How can you access the data?
- What engagement occurs with users and bodies outside the data provider?
- What burden is there on respondents?

FURTHER INFORMATION

Guide to quality assuring data

Check out the toolkit on quality assuring administrative data:
<https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/guidance/administrative-data-and-official-statistics/>

