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William Moy
Director of Full Fact

By email only

Dear Mr Moy,

Thank you for your email of 20 April. Updated guidance for the 2017 General Election has now been released and can be viewed here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/610239/general-election-guidance-2017.pdf

General elections have a number of implications for the work of departments and civil servants. Above all it is important to maintain, and be seen to maintain, the impartiality of the Civil Service during election campaigns, and to avoid any criticism of an inappropriate or unfair use of official resources.

The greatest care must be taken to ensure that information is presented impartially and objectively. Official statistics should continue to play an important role in informing the public debate during election periods. The same principles apply to research and analysis. As the guidance we have issued makes clear, requests for previously unpublished statistics, research or analysis should be handled in an even-handed manner, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

Regular pre-announced statistical releases will continue to be issued and published and the UK Statistics Authority will continue to fulfil its statutory function to safeguard and promote the production and publication of official statistics that serve the public good. Any other ad hoc statistical releases should be released only in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the National Statistician.

In addition, you will have seen that the Chair of the UK Statistics Authority has written to all political party leaders reminding them of the importance of accurate use of statistics. This letter can be found here:

<https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Letter-from-David-Norgrove-to-party-leaders-240417.pdf>

Yours sincerely,



Jeremy Heywood

