## GOLDSMITHS
## University Of London

## A CORPORATE FRAMEWORK FOR THE ASSURANCE OF DATA QUALITY

## INTRODUCTION

This framework sets out the management arrangements in place to secure the quality of the data we use to manage and report on our activities. The framework distils the principles and practices identified in existing guidance, advice and good practice.

The purpose of the Data Quality Framework is to support a culture of valuing high quality data and ensuring that all data are accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant and complete. The framework is intended to be used flexibly and proportionately to promote better data quality, recognising local risks and circumstances, rather than as a rigid set of requirements or as a checklist. This means the standards set out intentionally provide high level descriptions, recognising that the detail of their implementation is a matter for local judgement.

## DATA QUALITY STATEMENT

Goldsmiths is committed to assuring and continually seeking to improve the high quality of its data. In particular, the College recognises its importance with regard to funding, reputation and service delivery.

The College is committed to ensuring good data quality through its:

- Governance, People and Skills – ensuring that the importance of data quality is recognised and promoted at all levels within the institution and that staff are adequately trained to perform data-related tasks
- Systems and Processes – ensuring that College has invested in and maintains systems and processes for the collection, recording, analysis and reporting of data, and that processes are in place to assure the quality and accuracy of the data held within these systems
- Data use and Reporting – ensuring that the data is relied upon and used regularly to inform decision-making and planning.

## ROLES

### Council

Council has overall responsibility for the College. Council needs good and reliable management information to inform its consideration of strategy and to effectively scrutinise the leadership, management and performance of the College. It has a crucial role in determining high level strategy. It receives, in accordance with its business needs, reports on College's performance, including data on Key Performance Indicators. It is advised by Audit Committee on the quality and robustness of the College's procedures. It endorses the reports to HEFCE and other funders on the use of public funds.

### Audit Committee

In accordance with the HEFCE Financial Memorandum and Accountability and Audit Code of Practice, Audit Committee is required to give, as part of its annual opinion, an assurance about the management and quality assurance of data provided by the College to HEFCE, the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and other public bodies. Audit Committee receives reports from SMT and other senior officers, and will be advised by Internal Audit who conduct an annual review of arrangements for the assurance of data quality and the preparation of external data returns

**Senior Management Team**

The Senior Management Team approves the Data Quality Statement and is responsible for the implementation of policies relating to data quality. It will seek assurance from the Risk Management Sub-Committee that the risks associated with data quality have been properly assessed and that the appropriate controls are in place.

The Registrar and Secretary has overall strategic responsibility for data quality within the institution, including assigning responsibility for the guardianship and maintenance of corporate systems and datasets to individual managers as appropriate.

**Heads of support services**

Heads of support services are responsible for the quality of data collected, input and maintained within their department; for ensuring that the systems and processes in place are fit for purpose and sufficiently robust; for ensuring that the procedures relating to data collection and maintenance are documented and widely communicated; and for ensuring that members of staff tasked to input, check and maintain data have received adequate training to perform their duties.

Heads of Services who have been nominated by the Registrar and Secretary as guardians of corporate systems or the data held within such systems are responsible for ensuring that the College is able to comply with all its statutory reporting requirements, that all processes related to the creation, maintenance, reporting and security of data are documented and widely communicated to all relevant staff, and that staff have received adequate training to perform data-related tasks.

**Heads of Academic Departments**

Heads of Academic Departments are responsible for the quality of data collected and maintained locally and for ensuring that, wherever possible, data is only entered on corporate systems in accordance with agreed processes and standards. They are also responsible for ensuring that data and any changes to data are notified to the appropriate central service in a timely way.

**SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES**

The College will put in place systems and processes which secure the quality of data as part of the normal business activity of the body.

Key components:
- There are systems and processes in place for the collection, recording, analysis and reporting of data which are focused on securing data which are accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant and complete.
- Systems and processes work according to the principle of right first time, rather than employing extensive data correction, cleansing or manipulation processes to produce the information required.
- Each key system has a designated systems manager who is responsible for managing system access and user training. In consultation with senior users of the system, the systems manager will put processes in place to ensure that all users given access to the system are aware of their data quality role and responsibilities and that users are trained appropriately.
- Where possible, information systems have built-in controls to minimise the scope for human error or manipulation and prevent erroneous data entry, missing data, or unauthorised data changes.
- Corporate security and recovery arrangements are in place. The College regularly tests its business critical systems to ensure that processes are secure, and results are reported to top management.

**PEOPLE AND SKILLS**

The College will put in place arrangements to ensure that staff have the knowledge, competencies and capacity for their roles in relation to data quality.

Key components:
- Roles and responsibilities in relation to data quality are clearly defined and documented, and incorporated, where appropriate, into job descriptions.
- All relevant staff have access to policies, guidance and support on data quality, and on the collection, recording, analysis, and reporting of data. Where possible this is supported by information systems.
- There is a programme of training for data quality, tailored to needs. This includes regular updates for staff to ensure that changes in data quality procedures are disseminated and acted on. Reported data, and the way they are used, will be fed back to those who create them to reinforce understanding of their wider role and importance.
- There are arrangements in place to ensure that training provision is periodically evaluated and adapted to respond to changing needs.

**DATA USE AND REPORTING**

The College will put in place arrangements that are focused on ensuring that data supporting reported information are actively used in the decision making process, and are subject to a system of internal control and validation.

Key components:
- Internal and external reporting requirements have been critically assessed. Data provision is reviewed regularly to ensure it is aligned to these needs.
- Data used for reporting to those charged with governance are also used for day-to-day management of the College's business.
- Data are used appropriately to support the levels of reporting and decision making needed (for example, forecasting achievement, monitoring service delivery and outcomes, and identifying corrective actions).
- Polices and procedures meet the requirements of any relevant national standards, rules, definitions or guidance, for example the Data Protection Act, as well as defining local practices and monitoring arrangements.
- Data which are used for external reporting are subject to rigorous verification, and to senior management approval.
- All data returns are prepared and submitted on a timely basis, and are supported by a clear and complete audit trail.
- Arrangements for the preparation, submission and scrutiny of external data returns are set out in the External Data Returns policy.

**REVIEW**

The College will establish a framework to monitor and review data quality, and the programme will be proportionate to risk. Where applicable, the College has taken action to address the results of previous internal and external reviews of data quality.

Data quality is embedded in risk management arrangements, with regular assessment of the risks associated with unreliable or inaccurate data.

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