

National Centre for Vocational Education Research Data quality policy

Background

1. As the national agency for Australian vocational education and training statistics, NCVER strives to ensure the accuracy of its published statistics.

Aim

2. To promote public confidence in its published statistics.

Policy

3. NCVER has put stringent quality assurance procedures in place. These comprise the following elements.

Setting statistical standards

4. NCVER oversees the Australian VET Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS) which defines the statistical measures and sets out the rules for data submitters.

Data validation

5. NCVER provides specialist software to assist data submitters compile their data in order to help them satisfy the AVETMISS requirements.

Active engagement with data submitters

6. NCVER encourages submitters to take responsibility for providing high quality data. We help them by issuing data quality reports and allowing them to re-submit data if necessary.

Resolution of data queries

7. NCVER thoroughly checks data before using it for any output. We also raise any queries directly with data submitters, document any revisions made, and can replicate these changes if required.

Automation of data output

8. NCVER produces its regular statistical output and most data requests without having to manually manipulate data. This process reduces the possibility of human error. We have developed carefully checked software codes and data cubes to provide these services.

Cross-checking of data output before release

9. NCVER cross-checks all data before it is published. A person other than the originator of the data always cross-checks the output and signs it off as appropriate. Where possible, we also cross-check data using different means from those used to generate it initially.

Documentation of sources, concepts and caveats

10. NCVER gives information in all publications on how the data were collected and what they cover, defines key terms and notes any issues.
11. NCVER encourages staff and users to report errors in its published statistics if they do occur. We then correct the public record as soon as possible and review our quality

assurance procedures to prevent the error recurring. Specifically, we undertake the following measures:

- revise any publications and tables on the NCVER website and clearly indicate where publications or supporting tables have been changed
- include an erratum with remaining hard copies
- advise relevant stakeholders and, where necessary, issue a media release to correct the public record
- institute an internal review to identify how the error occurred, and refine our quality assurance arrangements as necessary.