



Office for
National Statistics

Enabling Research Using the Digital Economy Act

Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007

- The UK Statistics Authority (and the Office for National Statistics) has the statutory objective to promote and safeguard the production and publication of official statistics to “**serve the public good**” ...
- ...And to **promote and assist statistical research**, in particular by providing access to data.



Digital Economy Act 2017

2017 CHAPTER 30

An Act to make provision about electronic communications infrastructure and services; to provide for restricting access to online pornography; to make provision about protection of intellectual property in connection with electronic communications; to make provision about data-sharing; to make provision in connection with section 68 of the Telecommunications Act 1984; to make provision about functions of OFCOM in relation to the BBC; to provide for determination by the BBC of age-related TV licence fee concessions; to make provision about the regulation of direct marketing; to make other provision about OFCOM and its functions; to make provision about internet filters; to make provision about preventing or restricting the use of communication devices in connection with drug dealing offences; to confer power to create an offence of breaching limits on ticket sales; to make provision about the payment of charges to the Information Commissioner; to make provision about payment systems and securities settlement systems; to make provision about qualifications in information technology; and for connected purposes. [27th April 2017]

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows: —

Digital Economy Act (Research)

- Legislation provides certainty and clarity for public authorities and researchers on data available for research
- Section 56 of the Bill (Act) creates a gateway for public authorities to data in the public interest
- Uses a trusted third party model where:
 - an **accredited** processor links, de-identifies, and makes securely available
 - to an **accredited** researcher
 - for an **accredited** project

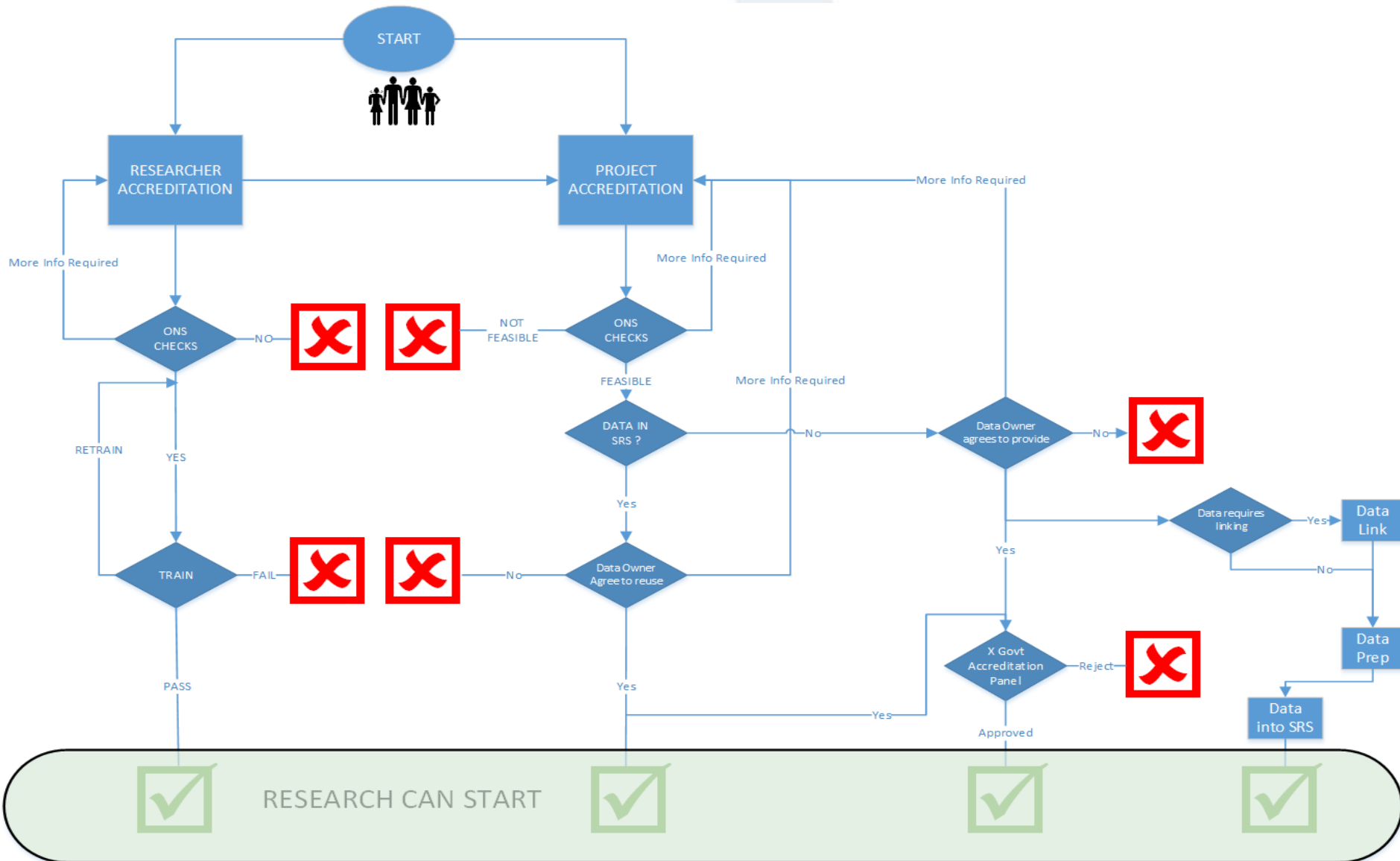
Supporting UK Research

- UKSA as the Accreditor (Section 61 of the Act)
 - Accredited **Researchers and Projects**
 - Consistent with ONS Approved Researcher scheme
 - Accredited **Data Processors**
 - Data linking/matching/preparation; and/or
 - Provision of secure research facility
 - ONS will be A Processor, not THE Processor

Research using the DEA

- Comparable to existing ONS “Approved Researcher” process
 - All existing Approved Researchers will be automatically accredited under the DEA
 - Project applications will require approval by data owner(s) AND Independent Accreditation Panel
 - Project proposals requiring additional ethical scrutiny will be reviewed by NSDEC
- ONS will develop and manage accreditation processes

High-level accreditation process



UKSA Accreditation Panel – Potential makeup

Independent Chair

(To be appointed by National Statistician)

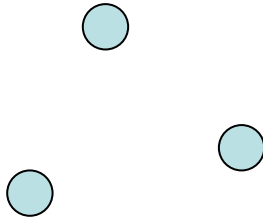
- Data Providers
 - Two Central Government
 - One Local Government
- Changed on (annual?) rotation

- Two Lay members
- Devolved Governments
- One ONS Director
- ADR –UK representative

- Senior Researchers
 - Different specialisms, e.g. one each of:
 - Statistician
 - Economist
 - Data Scientist
 - Social Researcher

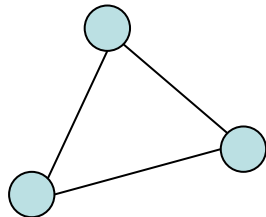
- Supported by UKSA/ONS
 - UKSA Secretariat
 - ONS team to collate and present applications
 - Referral to NSDEC possible

Research Data Types



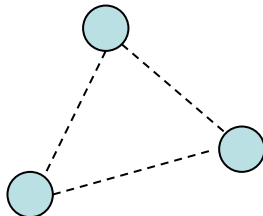
Single Source Analysis

- Data already in SRS / safe setting



Linked Data Analysis – already linked

- Data already in SRS / safe setting
- Linked data already in SRS / safe setting



Linked Data Analysis – new linked

- Data already in SRS / safe setting

Digital Economy Act Progress

- The Digital Economy Act (DEA) 2017 gained Royal Assent on the 27th April 2017
- Makes substantial amendments to the Statistics and Registration Service Act (SRSA) 2007
- Codes of Practice and Accreditation Criteria (Research):
 - Draft principles published 19 October 2016
 - Revised version published 21 September 2017
 - Consultation closed 3 November 2017
- Regulations laid before Parliament alongside codes and statement of principles in early 2018

Code of Practice / Accreditation Criteria (Research)

- Governing principles on disclosure of data:
 - Legal, Accreditation, Data security/confidentiality, Public interest, Ethical, Proportionality, Retention, Transparency
- Accreditation Criteria
 - Processors
 - Projects
 - Researchers