

[ESFA Update: 19 May 2021](#)

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[UK Safety Alert issued for small high-powered magnetic products](#)

- Businesses reminded they must identify and remove products containing small magnets from the market if they breach safety requirements
- The Office for Product Safety and Standards is working with local authority Trading Standards to take appropriate action against any products where magnets may be ingested by a child
- The public is urged to protect children from the risk of ingestion, which can cause fatal injury

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), the UK's national product safety regulator, has issued a Safety Alert to warn of the risk of serious injury and death from swallowing small high-powered magnets.

The OPSS Safety Alert follows increasing reports of injuries from ingestion of magnets, particularly among children and young people. OPSS has identified a particular hazard arising from the use of high-powered magnets in products, where the magnets can be swallowed, such as fridge magnets, earrings, tongue piercings and drink charms.

Businesses and online platforms have been reminded of their obligations under product safety law. They must remove from the market products containing small magnets which breach the safety requirements of the Toy Safety Regulations or the General Product Safety Regulations.

Specifically, businesses and retail platforms are advised to remove from the market any products that breach the magnetic flux index where there is a risk that magnets may be ingested by a child. They must also ensure that clear

warnings are included with any products that contain magnets, where there is a risk of ingestion.

The public is being asked to take appropriate steps to keep these products away from children as ingestion could result in a serious or fatal injury. Parents or guardians should understand the signs of magnetic ingestion and act quickly to get immediate medical treatment if they believe a magnet has been swallowed.

OPSS is working with local authority Trading Standards to identify and take appropriate action against any products where magnets that breach the required level of magnetic flux may be ingested by a child.

This represents the latest action by OPSS on magnetic products in recent months. In March 2021, an awareness campaign was launched to highlight the dangers of small, high powered magnets, in conjunction with Child Accident Prevention Trust, Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the Chartered Trading Standards Institute.

OPSS Chief Executive Graham Russell said:

“OPSS has taken this important step because the magnets market is changing, with an increasing number being incorporated into a wider range of products, including jewellery and other novelty items. There have been several incidents involving children and young people swallowing small magnets and there is a very real risk of serious injury or worse.

OPSS is working closely with stakeholders and local authorities to gather detailed evidence of the market as a whole and is now taking action against these specific products.”

Further information can be found on GOV.UK [Product Safety Database page with alerts and risk summary](#)

[The Code for everyone](#)

Good analysis is inherently multi-disciplinary. It draws on a range of professional perspectives and it is driven by providing insight into problems, and answers to questions.

So too is the work of the Office for Statistics Regulation(OSR). We support the entire analysis function.

We do this in two ways.

First, through the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#). This Code is not a set of rules for rigid application to official statistics. It is a philosophy, built around three principles: trustworthiness, quality and value; and it is a

philosophy that focuses on how to support confidence in analytical work.

These concepts of trustworthiness, quality and value should underpin all analytical work. Trustworthiness is about providing evidence of how you've followed a rigorous process, had rigorous governance. It aligns closely with other sources of guidance, like [the Aqua Book](#). Quality is about ensuring that the figures that you produce are not misleading – that they represent the best estimate based on the data available. Quality is consistent with professional guides like the Green Book. And value is about ensuring that your analysis addresses the questions raised by your customer – whether that be a Minister, a policy team, or a Parliamentary committee.

Indeed, the idea of value that is a core part of the Code is central to good analysis. Good analysis enables the relevant department or agency to make good policy, deliver good services, address risks and create opportunities. The analysis will provide value to an organisation – it is needing the analysis to support some activities – which in turn provides benefits to society.

So the Code has wide applicability. But OSR wouldn't take a role in reviewing or commenting on internal advice within government. Our support, through the Code, is therefore indirect – but no less valuable for that.

But OSR does support the whole analysis function more directly in a second way: we stand up for appropriate use of analysis in the public domain. This is because a lot of the analysis function's work is published in one form or another, and informs public debate. When the Government communicates policy or delivery, it does so not just using the regularly published official statistics. It draws on a wider range of analytical outputs – economic modelling, social research, operational research, data science.

For example during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, we have stepped in on several occasions to encourage departments to publish information that Ministers have referred to in their explanations of policy. We've done this on rough sleeping, Universal Credit, as well as a range of more directly health-related issues. We have also sought to protect analysis from inappropriate interpretation – to ensure that the analysis is fairly represented. We did this for example on analysis in Scotland of the impact on care homes of discharging people from hospital.

When we do this, we are quite deliberately standing up for the analysis function – we want your work to be used appropriately and fairly.

That's because we're not a regulator of statisticians as a professional group. We're a regulator that supports the publication of statistics to serve the public good – and the focus is not just on official statistics, but a broader range of outputs that draw on numerical analysis. They should all be trustworthy, high quality and high value. These goals of the Code of Practice – trustworthiness, quality and value – are also the goals that sit at the heart of the public use of analysis.

Most importantly, we always defend the principle of equality of access. If

the Government refers to a model or a piece of research, it should be easy for the public to access the underlying information.

The word public is crucial here. We do not want to over-reach. We focus on numbers in the public eye. So much of the work of analysts is in fact in support of policy and operational decisions within Government – for example, looking at the potential impact of different policy options. There are fantastic tools available to support this work – [the Green Book](#) and [the Aqua Book](#) for example. We don't see OSR as having a role in this crucial aspect of analysis.

But when analysis goes into the public domain, the Code's principles are all triggered. And especially the principle of equality of access.

So perhaps the message of this blog is this. It doesn't matter if you're a social researcher or a geographer; an operational researcher or an actuary. The Code is a framework to support confidence in your work no matter what the audience. And whether or not your analysis goes public, think TQV: trustworthiness, quality and value!

Written by Ed Humpherson, Office for Statistics Regulation

[Use the online testing service to help APHA tackle animal disease](#)

News story

Join the other Vet practices and start submitting animal sample data and request laboratory tests online.



Since the introduction of our well-established digital service, Vets have been able to submit animal sample data and request laboratory tests online from wherever they are in the field via the APHA's Animal Disease Testing

Service.

It has saved time and work for vets, supported earlier diagnosis of diseases and improved access to sample results.

It has also helped vets support their farm clients and tackle animal disease faster. Costs have been reduced due to the new free postage feature.

It has enabled APHA to receive vital disease surveillance information quicker.

The service was designed and built around the needs of vets themselves following user acceptance testing which was carried out by a selection of veterinary practices. More than a quarter of practices in England and Wales are already experiencing the benefits of ADTS.

Dr Kirsty Line, Head of Surveillance and Laboratory Services said:

“Since its introduction, ADTS has provided practices better flexibility to submit animal sample data and improved access to results.

“This supports APHA by diagnosing animal diseases faster.

“The free postage feature, introduced in 2019, further reduces costs and additional work carried out by practices.

Private Vets who would like to use this service can register at <https://www.gov.uk/animal-disease-testing>. Alternatively, vets can email AnimalDiseaseTesting@apha.gov.uk or contact their Veterinary Investigation Centre.

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Supporting the IT industry – DVLA launch the second Business Analysis Development Programme

It's been two years since we launched recruitment for our [first Business Analysis Development Programme](#). When we originally came up with the concept and design of the programme it was a voyage into the unknown. We'd never done anything like this before so it was exciting to see what we could achieve.

The two-year programme has been specifically designed to provide a fantastic foundation to individuals to start a career in IT. It gives them the opportunity to develop skills, gain real-world experience and the

qualifications needed to be fully 'job ready' to apply for an entry-level Business Analyst (BA) position on completion, with industry recognised qualifications.

The formal learning is supported by practical experience, with mentors and support networks to help students and guide them. It gives students the opportunity to gain experience working on delivering some of the most important digital services within government, allowing them to put into practice their learning in a real-world environment.

The programme so far

We've been lucky that our first group has fully immersed themselves in the role and DVLA. They're almost at the end of their journey now, with one module of the programme left to complete.



During their time on the programme they've already achieved the British Computer Society (BCS) International Diploma in Business Analysis and APMG Foundation and Practitioner in Business Analysis. They've also picked up other skills on their way, [including hands on experience of programming](#) and building their own websites, as well as day to day work with our business units and the development squads.

Nikki Hayes, student, had this to say about the current programme:

"This role comes with plenty of opportunities to develop your skillset in a safe learning environment with lots of support along the way. I've not only achieved a diploma but with on the job learning I've now developed a wide range of skills. Starting out I would shadow existing BAs, now I'm taking on my own pieces of work.

"I work closely with stakeholders and development teams on a daily basis and work on continuous improvement and legislative changes for various services in DVLA."

As the first group nears graduation, the programme is open again for new recruits and we're excited to see who is on the next group.

What's new to the next programme?

Firstly, we are looking at how the programme will run remotely. The last year has shown that this is possible and our range of collaboration tools support remote working too. We will also be recording sessions so that students can go back and re-watch them.

Secondly, we're taking on board the feedback from our first group for all the learning and improvements, so that we can implement it to make the programme even better the second time around. This includes finding solutions to the challenges remote working brings with catering to learning styles.

But best of all, we've got even more [digital services](#) that we want to build for the motoring public, so there will be plenty of opportunities to get our next group involved in making these happen.

What does the programme offer?

You're given the opportunity to study for a recognised qualification – the BCS International Diploma in Business Analysis. You will also be given a personal mentor to help you through your time.

But perhaps more importantly, the programme gives you the chance to gain experience working on some of the most important digital services within government, putting into practice your learning in a real-world environment right here in DVLA.

The offer and how to apply

The scheme is now open for applications, until 7 June 2021 and again it offers a fantastic opportunity to learn digital skills while you earn.

The programme is open to anyone with an interest in developing their skills, with no specific academic entry requirements.

We have 6 positions available on our programme. They run for 24 months with a salary of £26,126, giving you the opportunity to earn while you learn. It offers a real alternative to some of the more traditional routes, such as university.



Jodie Lewis, [one of our current business analysts](#), said:

“The advice that I would give to someone applying for the Business Analysis Development Programme would be that if you are committed to developing yourself, not afraid to ask questions and have an inquisitive mind, then go for it, definitely apply.”

To find out more about the roles, entry requirements and application process, [please visit our current vacancies page](#).

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