



GSS Methodology Advisory Committee





Purpose

The Methodology Advisory Committee (MAC) is a free service providing departments across the Government Statistical Service (GSS) with methodological advice, facilitating access to a pool of subject matter experts spanning academia, private sector, GSS and other National Statistical Institutes.

GSS MAC can advise on all parts of the statistical production process, covering areas such as, but not limited to:

- Survey methods
- Administrative data methods
- Data linkage
- Data science
- Innovation and development of new methods

Our offer

GSS MAC supports the GSS to shape and improve standards for methods, contributing to the credibility and usefulness of government statistics, offering:

- Expert advice and peer-review on individual research and methodology work at various stages, from preliminary methods and ideas to more advanced work, providing advice on next steps
- Scoping and engagement work on developing new methods, including workshops and extraordinary meetings to tackle specific methodological challenges
- Independent state-of-the-art expert methods reviews
- A collaborative approach to addressing methodological issues, encouraging knowledge sharing, and increasing ties between GSS and the wider expert community



When to ask for help

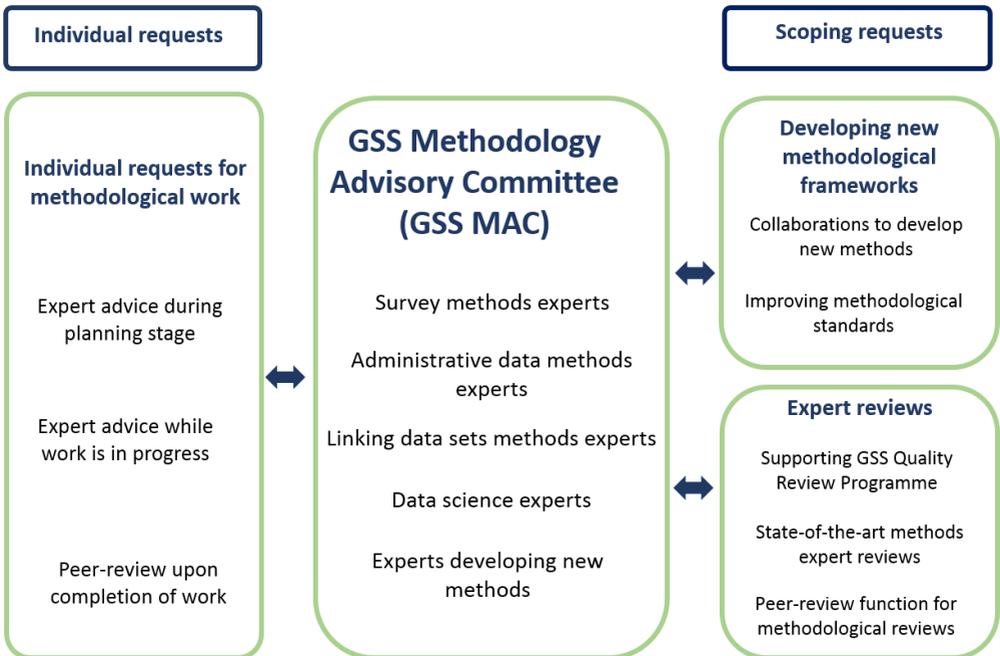
GSS MAC respond to two main types of requests:

- 1. Individual requests for expert advice and/or peer-review on specific projects**

Example: A GSS statistician developing a new methodology for weighting a survey can ask GSS MAC for direct and tailored expert advice during the planning stage, while work is in progress, or obtain peer-review upon completion.

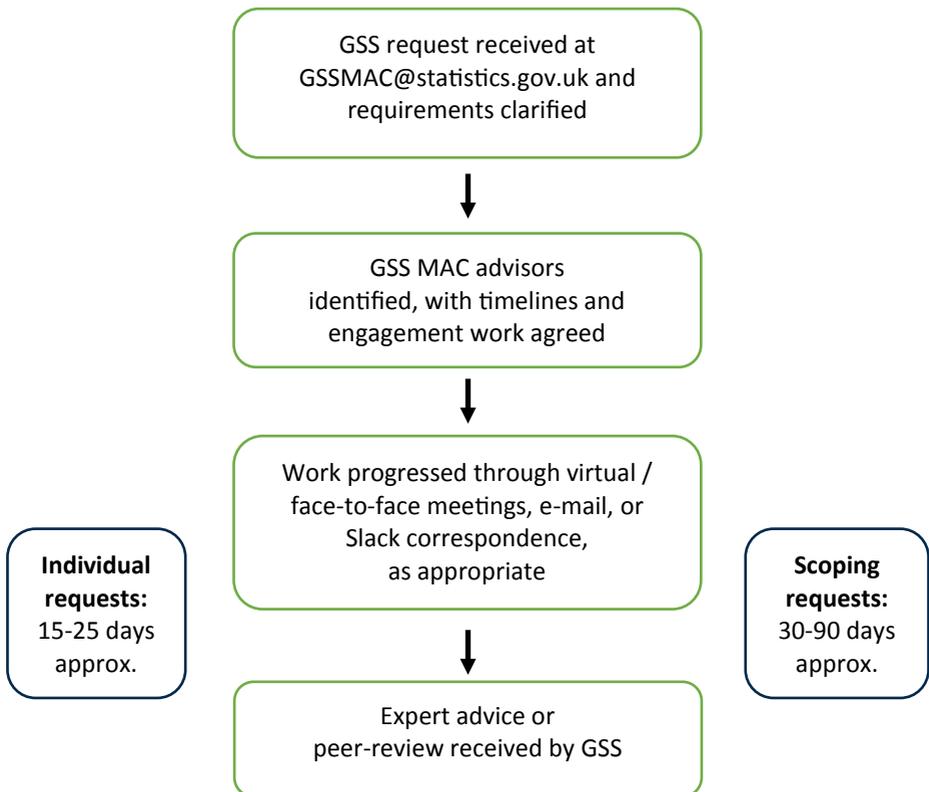
- 2. Scoping requests for developing new methodological frameworks and/or expert reviews in response to GSS priorities**

Example: A GSS department developing new methods for ensuring privacy and data confidentiality can gain a fresh insight into methodological innovations from outside GSS through a GSS MAC scoping meeting gathering leading subject matter experts, accompanied with continuous follow-up support and assurance from GSS MAC advisors.



How to ask for help

An overview of the user engagement timeline. GSS MAC takes a flexible approach tailored to the specifics of each case. Completion time will depend on request complexity and advisor availability.



Case Study

In response to the GSS priority to adapt to the increasing role of administrative data in statistics production, a GSS MAC extraordinary meeting and workshops were organised to gather 80 leading experts from academia, private sector, and the GSS to discuss challenges and set a strategic direction for the future development of administrative data methods across GSS.

Follow-up meetings and workshops were held across various GSS sites due to strong interest in the subject, and a specific Slack channel was established to facilitate continuous engagement and discussion of administrative data challenges.

Benefits for GSS departments

- Timely advice and support to resolve a specific methodological issue
- Expert advice and evidence to inform GSS strategy and resource prioritisation in developing existing and new methodologies
- Peer-review of work in progress
- Potential for follow-on research support from advisor or associates
- Value added from discussion and debate between experts in scoping meetings
- Opportunity to keep abreast of research and development taking place outside GSS in a focused manner
- Closer ties with non-GSS experts and institutions



Benefits for GSS MAC advisors

- Recognition for resolving a specific methodological case, or contribution for role in shaping government statistics, through news item or blogs published on GSS website
- Potential to include work in relevant conference and symposium papers and/or journal publications
- Invitations to follow-up GSS MAC workshops and meetings
- Greater insight into challenges faced by statisticians in government
- GSS-wide opportunities to shadow the end-to-end process to develop capability
- Closer ties with GSS statisticians and wider network of GSS MAC advisors





Governance



Communication

GSS MAC e-mail: GSSMAC@statistics.gov.uk

Main point of contact for GSS MAC requests or queries.

GSS MAC website: <https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/about-us/governance/methodology-advisory-committee/>

GSS MAC information page. Latest GSS MAC news and events will be published in the GSS newsletter.

GSS MAC Slack channel: <https://gssmac.slack.com>

A network for GSS MAC members to advise on and discuss statistical topics of interest.



