

PRESS RELEASE

4 August 2015

Embargo: Immediate

RSS LAUNCHES JOURNALISM E-TRAINING COURSES

Journalists can boost their grasp of science and complex numbers through two online training courses launched by the Royal Statistical Society.

The journalism e-learning modules, funded by the Department of Business and Innovation (BIS), takes journalists through a range of real-life scenarios related to statistics, surveys, scientific research and uncertainty. They highlight questions to ask, pitfalls to look out for, and how to communicate clearly to an audience.

The courses are targeted at all journalists and journalism students, particularly those without scientific or statistical training. Both modules are available free of charge on the RSS website at <http://www.statslife.org.uk/resources/for-journalists>.

Science for journalists provides an overview of where scientific and health stories start - how science works and is communicated, key questions to ask, and how to find suitable experts.

Statistics for journalists helps journalists to question and report on basic statistics that are central to many everyday stories – including surveys and polls, percentages and uncertainty.

Each course takes around 20 – 30 minutes to complete at the user's own pace, and are self-guided.

The courses are based on presentations developed through the RSS Science Journalism Programme, developed and delivered by volunteers to journalists and journalism students across the UK from 2010-2015.

Commenting, RSS head of education and statistical literacy Scott Keir said:

“We want to support journalists covering science stories and give them extra confidence about the numbers. The e-learning modules go through a variety of real-life scenarios to help people understand the important numbers and dismiss the red herrings.”

ENDS

CONTACTS

For more information, contact William Summers, RSS Public Affairs and Press Manager, on 020 7614 3920 or at w.summers@rss.org.uk

The Royal Statistical Society (RSS) founded in 1834 is one of the world's most distinguished and renowned statistical societies. It is a learned society for statistics, a professional body for statisticians and a charity which promotes statistics, data and evidence for the public good. Today the Society has 6000 members around the world. www.rss.org.uk