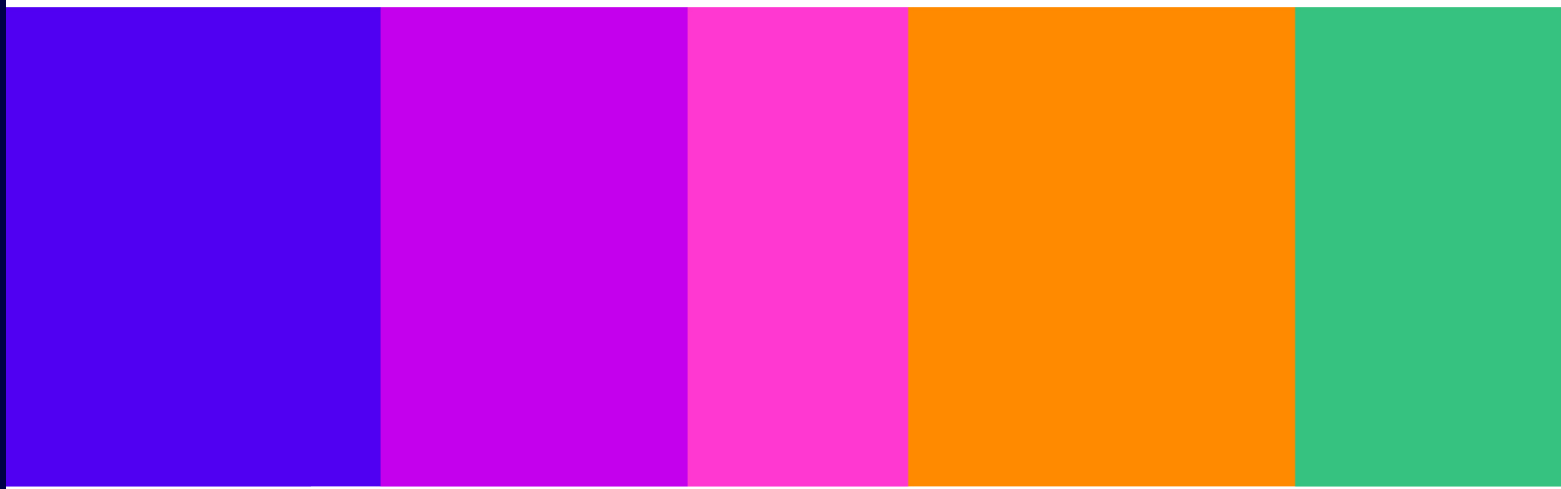


Ofcom research into consumer experience of suspicious calls and texts

Requesting feedback on proposed
questionnaire changes for 2025

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Overview

Ofcom research into consumer experience of suspicious calls and texts is Ofcom's key data source on people's experiences of receiving suspicious calls and texts on their mobile and landline phones. Since 2021 Ofcom has run several surveys among UK adults to measure people's experience of scams through text and calls on their mobile and landline.

Topics include the use of call screening services on landlines and mobiles, the likelihood of picking up calls from unfamiliar numbers, the incidence of receiving and reporting suspicious calls, text messages and messages on apps and the awareness of '7726' to report suspicious calls and texts.

The data received from these studies became an official statistic in 2024 as it was the third time we had asked these research questions. There are some questions that have been asked multiple times and have had very similar answers every year they are asked. For 2025 survey we are proposing we remove some of these questions from the questionnaire.

Ofcom is named in the Official Statistics Order 2023 as a producer of official statistics. As a producer of Official Statistics, Ofcom has a responsibility to follow the Code of Practice for Statistics which ensures that published statistics have public value, are high quality, and are produced by people and organisations that are trustworthy. As a producer of official statistics, Ofcom follows the guidance set out in Changing or ceasing to publish official statistics – Government Analysis Function (civilservice.gov.uk). In line with this guidance, where substantial changes are made to a piece of research that is established as an official statistic, we notify stakeholders of the changes that are planned to be made and allow a period of time for stakeholders to provide feedback if they wish to do so.

What we are proposing – in brief

- Removing questions:
 - That do not need to be asked annually.
 - That are similar to other questions being asked.
- That have had similar answers over multiple years.
- Amending questions so that we can improve the flow of the questionnaire.
- Collecting some new information this year about RCS and iMessage users' experiences of suspicious calls and texts.
- Finally, we have also combined some questions.

Further information on our proposals can be found below. If you would like any further details or if not asking some of the questions from the Suspicious calls and texts 2024 questionnaire in the 2025 survey will cause any problems for your organisation, please email market.research@ofcom.org.uk by 20 January 2025.

Proposed changes to research into consumer experience of suspicious calls and texts questionnaire 2025.

Proposed questions for removal

We are proposing removing the below questions from the questionnaire ([Questionnaire 2024](#)) for the 2025 wave onwards. Please note that the question numbers refer to the 2024 questionnaire.

- Q2. This has been removed as we did not use the data from this question and do not envisage needing it in the future.
- Q6. We have removed this question as we do not feel that responses would significantly change year-on-year.
- Q10. We have removed this question as we do not feel that responses would significantly change year-on-year.
- Q16. We have removed this question as we do not feel that responses would significantly change year-on-year.
- Q17. We have removed this question as we do not feel that responses would significantly change year-on-year.
- Q19. We have removed this question as we do not feel that responses would significantly change year-on-year.
- Q23. We have removed this question, as it was hypothetical, and we feel the response to the previous question will give us sufficient information on the use of mobile screening services.
- Q19. This has been removed as we did not use the data from this question and do not envisage needing it in the future.
- Q26. This has been removed as we did not use the data from this question and do not envisage needing it in the future.
- Q28. We have removed this question as we do not feel that responses would change significantly year-on-year.
- Q33. We have removed this question as we do not feel that responses would significantly change year-on-year.
- Q34. We have removed this question as we do not feel that responses would significantly change year-on-year.
- Q35. This question has been removed as it was decided that it does not need to be asked annually.
- Q40 This question has been removed because it is no longer needed.

- Q41. We have removed this question as we do not feel that responses would significantly change year-on-year.
- Q45. We have removed this question as we do not feel that responses would change significantly year-on-year.
- Q46. We have removed this question as we do not feel that responses would change significantly year-on-year.

Proposed questions for amendment

Below is a list of questions we plan to amend for 2025 in order to; improve the flow of the questionnaire, streamline the questions and collect new information this year based on developments in the scams field.

- Q3. The response codes for this question have been, simplified to Android, iPhone and other, as we do not need to know the detail of makes of handset, just the operating system used.
- Q4. Whether a mobile is a smartphone, has been moved to before the revised question asking what operating system is used. This has now become Q2.
- Q13. This question has been simplified (dropping the differentiation between services used for incoming and outgoing communication) as we do not need to analyse the data by incoming/outgoing communication.
- Q21. The code list has been amended to include an option for 'no features.'
- Q25 This has had the introduction explanation updated.
- Q27. The question text has been amended to make it clear that the screening service may have been self-installed.
- Q36. We have split out iMessage from SMS/RCS in the response grid.
- Q37. We have split out iMessage from SMS/RCS in the response grid.
- Q42. We have split out iMessage from SMS/RCS in the response grid.
- Q43. We have split out iMessage from SMS/RCS in the response grid.
- Q44. We have split out iMessage from SMS/RCS in the response grid.

Proposed questions to add.

We are proposing to add in a question to identify ways people send messages and how well they recognise different kinds of numbers.

- Q10. We have added a question about awareness and use of SMS, RCS, iMessage and App-based messaging. This is to monitor the use of RCS messaging, which is increasingly being rolled out by mobile networks, and to ensure that respondents are asked about the messaging services they use at questions later in the questionnaire.
- Q19. We have added in this question, showing various types of telephone numbers and asked respondents to say what type of number they think each one is. This has been added in to ascertain whether participants can accurately differentiate between different types of UK numbers and an international number.