

THE CAMBRIDGE STATISTICS DISCUSSION GROUP

Thursday 5th March 2015 7:15 for 7:45

Tom Ap Rees Lecture Theatre, Department of Plant Sciences,
Downing Site, Cambridge, CB2 3EA

Statistics and Examinations

Tom Bramley

Cambridge Assessment

Abstract: The world of educational testing and examinations makes contact with statistics in a number of places. I will give an overview of some of them, from the perspective of a researcher at an exam board. The talk will give particular prominence to two topics that regularly attract widespread interest: the setting and maintaining of standards; and the reliability of marking. I will also discuss the role of psychometrics (considered as a branch of applied statistics) in developing test questions and assessments; and in technologies of assessment such as computerised adaptive testing (CAT).

Speaker: Tom Bramley is the Deputy Director of Cambridge Assessment's Research Division. His main areas of expertise are Rasch measurement, and the psychometric issues associated with test development, standard setting, standard maintaining and comparability monitoring. He joined Cambridge Assessment in 1995 (when it was known as UCLES – the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate) and since then has worked on a wide range of projects, including:

- Test evaluation, equating and standard setting for National Curriculum Test development at Key Stage 3;
- Investigating the features of question papers and mark schemes that are associated with different levels of marker agreement;
- Developing and evaluating a method of linking mark scales on two or more tests based on experts' rank-ordering judgments;
- Conceptualising and evaluating the reliability of GCSEs and A levels.

He has a degree in Experimental Psychology from the University of Oxford and an MSc. in Operational Research from Lancaster University. Since 2011 he has been a member of the editorial board of the journal 'Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice'.

Directions: The Department of Plant Sciences is located on the Downing site situated between Downing Street and Tennis Court Road (Please see the map on the reverse). Go through the second door you come to in the building immediately on your left as you enter from Tennis Court Road. Once inside the building follow the arrows. Refreshments will be served in the first floor kitchen. It is not possible to park on the Downing site in the evening. The nearest car park is at Lion Yard. Arrivals after 7-45pm can gain admittance by contacting the secretary on 07761769436.

Provisional Next Meetings:

26th March – Richard Steward (Blyth Estuary Group) on 'Blyth abandoned: sound science or flawed policy?'

7th May – Donal McCarthy (RSPB).

13th October – Chris Rogers (Statistical Laboratory).

November – Yoryos Lyratzopoulos (Department of Public Health and Primary Care).

8th February 2016 – Anthony Edwards (Gonville & Caius) on 'My Fisher: Memories of R.A.Fisher by his last student'.

Supper: Some members eat regularly in the University Centre before each meeting at **6pm**. Feel free to join them.

Subscriptions: of 1 pound are now due for attending the 2014-2015 session.

Secretary: Peter Watson, MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit, 15 Chaucer Road, Cambridge CB2 7EF; telephone 01223 355294 Extension 801; E-mail peter.watson@mrc-cbu.cam.ac.uk

Slides and .mp3 files of old talks: <http://www.mrc-cbu.cam.ac.uk/people/peter.watson/csdg.html>

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