

Characteristic Curves (ICCs), ideally based on points plotted at each possible score on the test (when enough data are available), could be much more useful.

- Scripts for the award meeting could be screened to eliminate 'misfitting' examinees with unusual response patterns, or positively selected to aim for responses which conform as well as possible to the Guttman pattern.
- An explicit rationale should be provided for how the item level data will be used in making decisions about grade boundaries – for example, the 'prescriptive' and 'maintaining' rationales described in this article.

References

- Black, B. & Bramley, T. (2008). Investigating a judgemental rank-ordering method for maintaining standards in UK examinations. *Research Papers in Education*, **23**, 3, 357–373.
- Bond, T. & Fox, C. (2001). *Applying the Rasch model: Fundamental measurement in the human sciences*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Wright, B. D. & Stone, M. (1979). *Best Test Design*. Chicago: MESA Press.

EXAMINATIONS RESEARCH

Statistics Reports Series

The Statistics Team Research Division

The ongoing 'Statistics Reports Series' provides statistical summaries of various aspects of the English examination system such as trends in pupil attainment, qualifications choice, combinations of subjects and subject provision at school. These reports, produced using national-level examination data, are available in .pdf format on the Cambridge Assessment website: http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/ca/Our_Services/Research/Statistical_Reports

In 2009, the following reports were produced:

- Statistics Report Series No.8: Uptake of GCSE AS level subjects in England, 2001–2007
- Statistics Report Series No.9: Numbers achieving 3 A grades in specific A-level combinations by school type and LEA
- Statistics Report Series No.10: Some issues on the uptake of Modern Foreign Languages at GCSE
- Statistics Report Series No.11: Uptake of GCSE and A-level subjects in England by Ethnic Group, 2007
- Statistics Report Series No.12: A-level uptake and results by gender, 2002–2007

- Statistics Report Series No.13: GCSE uptake and results by gender, 2002–2007

Other statistical reports also available on the Cambridge Assessment website are:

- Statistics Report Series No.1: Provision of GCE A-level subjects
- Statistics Report Series No.2: Provision of GCSE subjects
- Statistics Report Series No.3: Uptake of GCE A-level subjects in England, 2001–2005
- Statistics Report Series No.4: Uptake of GCSE subjects, 2000–2006
- Statistics Report Series No.5: Uptake of GCE A-level subjects in England, 2006
- Statistics Report Series No.6: Numbers of A-level examinations taken by candidates in England 2006 and the percentages attaining 3 or more A grades
- Statistics Report Series No.7: The relationship between A-level grade and GCSE grade by subject

Factsheets

The Statistics Team Research Division

In order to make our research accessible to a wider audience we have produced a series of easy-to-read factsheets. The objective of these factsheets is to 'headline' the main findings of some research projects.

They are available in .pdf format on the Cambridge Assessment website: http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/ca/Our_Services/Research

The full research reports can be found in the 'Conference Papers' section of the same website.

As of December 2009, factsheets on the following subjects have been produced:

- AS and A-level choice: Ten factsheets based on the project entitled 'A-level subject choice in England: Patterns of uptake and factors affecting subject references'.
- Emotional Intelligence: Three factsheets based on the project entitled 'Can trait Emotional Intelligence predict differences in attainment and progress in secondary school?'