

Agenda for fourth meeting of APTS Advisory Committee (AC4)

1400, 16 September 2010, University of Warwick
Room A1.01, Zeeman Building (Maths and Statistics),
central campus

(coffee available in the Statistics common room from about 1320)

Welcome

Apologies: Leonid Bogachev, Adrian Bowman, Caitlin Buck, William Deans, Vanessa Didelez, David Elston, Paul Garthwaite, Berthold Lausen, Kanchan Mukherjee, John Newell, Phil O'Neill, David Saad, Richard Samworth, Jian Qing Shi, Julian Stander, Simon Wilson, Simon Wood

Known substitutes: Paul Fearnhead, Jeremy Oakley, Susan Pitts, Cathal Walsh

1. Minutes of third meeting (17 September 2009)
2. Matters arising
3. Report on APTS 2009–2010
4. Programme for APTS 2010–2011
5. Arrangements for APTS in years 2011–2012 and following
6. Election of APTS AC representative to APTS Executive Committee
To replace Brendan Murphy (UCD) brendan.murphy@ucd.ie, who may choose to stand again.
7. Any other business and general feedback

Paper for 3. APTS year 3 (2009–10): Summary report to Advisory Committee

Member Institutions

In 2009–10, APTS had 25 Member Institutions (21 in UK, 4 in Ireland). Of those, 24 have renewed their Member Institution status for 2010–11; two new Member Institutions were added in the Summer 2010 registration period, for academic year 2010–11.

APTS weeks, academic year 2009–10

Week 1, January 2010, Cambridge:

- *Statistical Computing* (S N Wood)
- *Statistical Inference* (D Firth)

Week 2, April 2010, Nottingham:

- *Statistical Modelling* (J J Forster)
- *Statistical Asymptotics* (G A Young)

Week 3, July 2010, Bristol:

- *Applied Stochastic Processes* (W S Kendall)
- *Computer Intensive Statistics* (B D Ripley)

Week 4, September 2010, Lancaster:

- *Spatial and Longitudinal Data Analysis* (P J Diggle)
- *Nonparametric Smoothing* (R J Samworth)

Registrations

All four APTS weeks were over-subscribed at the close of registration in October 2009. The target (maximum) number for each APTS week in 2009–2010 was 60 students.

Applications were received for 125 students: for the four individual APTS weeks the respective numbers applying were 107, 96, 97 and 82.

Students applying to take part in all four APTS weeks numbered 71, of whom 45 actually attended all 4 weeks (compared with 33 in 2007–8, and 41 in 2008–9).

Of the 125 applications, 104 were for first-year students in statistics or probability; of those 104, 43 were EPSRC-funded. APTS Member Institutions made 97 of the 125 applications, and 112 came from within the UK.

All of the places at APTS in 2009–10 were taken by first-year PhD students in statistics or probability (the ‘core’ group for whom APTS was created). The

demand this year was such that applications made for students further on in their careers, and students in other disciplines, could not be met. Even after enlarging the APTS weeks this year to accommodate around 80 students, there was unfortunately still not enough space to meet all of the applications made for first-year students from departments that are not APTS Member Institutions.

Unsuccessful applications were held on a priority-ordered reserve list, in case of cancellations.

Student feedback

The following summarizes student responses to an anonymous questionnaire completed at the end of each training week.

A. Preparation for APTS

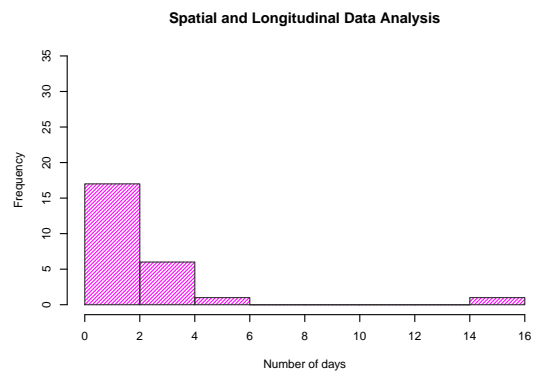
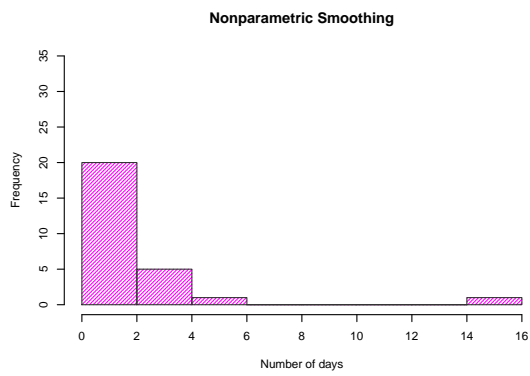
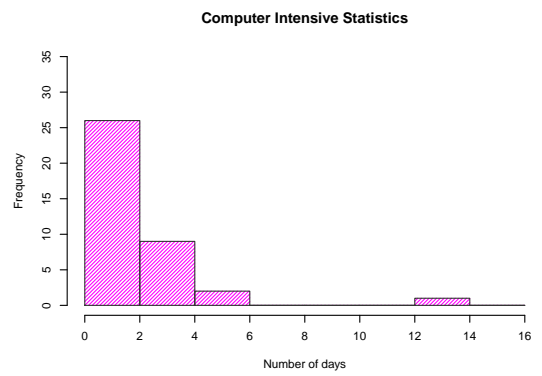
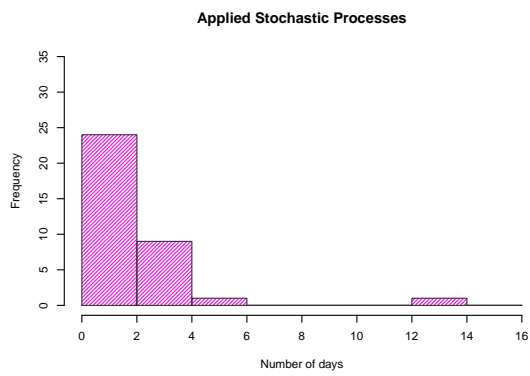
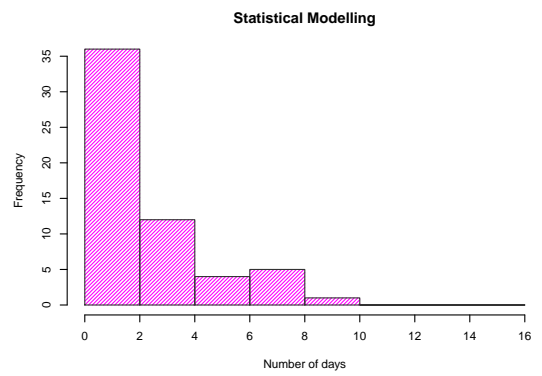
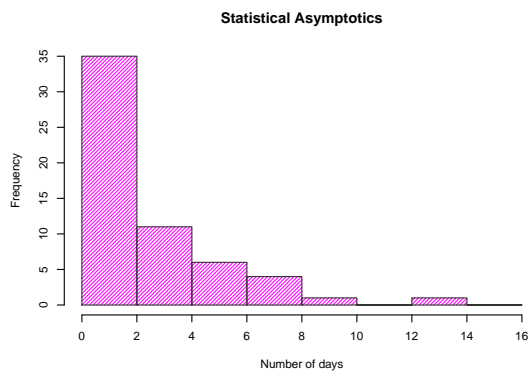
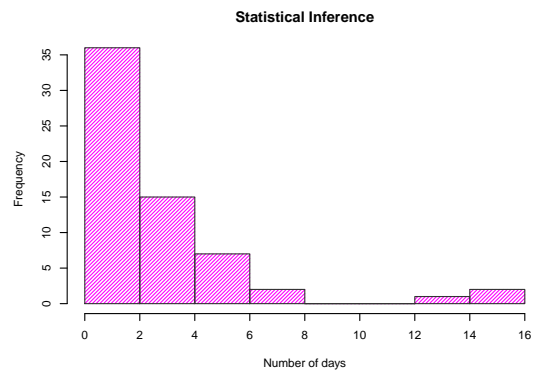
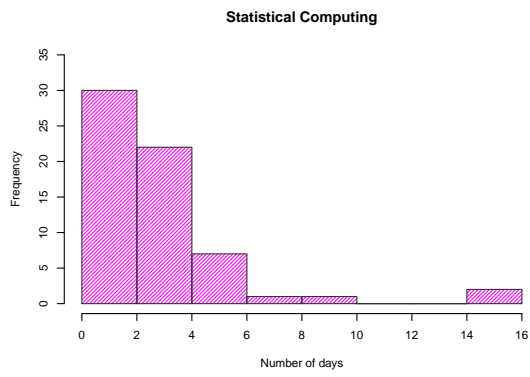
1. Did you find the APTS web site useful?

	Yes	No	Didn't use
Week 1	61	0	3
Week 2	56	0	2
Week 3	41	1	3
Week 4	32	1	0

2. Was it clear exactly what was expected of you in the weeks leading up to this APTS week? (e.g., making travel arrangements, looking at preliminary material, registering your meal choice, etc.)

	Yes	No
Week 1	63	1
Week 2	56	1
Week 3	44	1
Week 4	31	1

3. Roughly, how many days did you spend on the preliminary material?



4. Did the preliminary material help you to understand the lectures this week?

	Yes	No	Didn't use
Statistical Computing	54	2	8
Statistical Inference	55	3	6
Statistical Asymptotics	37	8	12
Statistical Modelling	43	4	10
Stochastic Processes	28	6	11
Computer Intensive	34	3	8
Nonparametric Smoothing	22	4	7
Spatial and Longitudinal	23	1	9

B. The APTS week: material covered

1. How would you rate the level of the module lectures?

	Too easy	Just right	Too hard
Statistical Computing	0	52	11
Statistical Inference	1	53	7
Statistical Asymptotics	1	33	21
Statistical Modelling	0	52	4
Stochastic Processes	0	30	14
Computer Intensive	1	38	5
Nonparametric Smoothing	0	27	6
Spatial and Longitudinal	0	30	3

2. Did the Oxford R lectures help you with the computer sessions during the week?

	Yes	No	Didn't use
Week 1	29	4	30
Week 2	15	4	39
Week 3	15	4	25
Week 4	10	0	23

3. Did you find the computer sessions helpful?

	Yes	No	Didn't attend
Statistical Computing	48	12	2
Statistical Modelling	48	3	6
Computer Intensive	36	7	2
Nonparametric Smoothing	22	2	8

Student costs

The following table summarizes, in aggregate form (£), the invoices received by APTS sending institutions for the four APTS weeks in 2009–10:

	Registration fees	Accommodation and food	EPSRC rebate (accom/food)	EPSRC travel allowance
Cambridge	7100	16635	-8720	-2955
Nottingham	7100	18750	-8750	-2137
Bristol	7430	20020	-9100	-2521
Lancaster	6600	16110	-7100	-1792
TOTAL	28230	71515	-33670	-9405

Registration for APTS


Student registration for APTS academic year 2010-11 opens on 27 September 2010, and **closes at noon on 22 October 2010**. Registration applications made after that date are kept in a priority-ordered reserve list, in case of any cancellations.

Students can only be registered for APTS weeks by their "sending institution" (i.e., their home department): a list of these institutions appears below.

- If your department wishes to register as a sending institution, then please [click here](#);
- If your department wishes to commit to being a full Member Institution of APTS, then please [click here](#). (All Member Institutions are automatically "sending institutions".)

If your department is included in the list below, the APTS contact has been provided with a password enabling him/her to complete the [student registration form](#) for 2010-11 APTS weeks. (The student registration form also gives full information on cost.)

The principles and practicalities of student registration and payments include:

- date of application within the registration period is unimportant --- it is not used in determining the allocation of APTS places to students (see the APTS [Constitution](#)  for the list of priorities)
- sending institutions are invoiced by APTS for the registration fee, and for accommodation/meal costs in the case of non-EP SRC students, of their students who are allocated APTS places
- for EP SRC-funded students taking an APTS week away from home, an allowance is made by APTS to the sending institution to cover the cost of travel
- in the case of a student taking all four APTS weeks in the same academic year a 20% rebate of registration fees is made
- all financial transactions with individual APTS students, including travel expense claims, are handled by the sending institution

Please see the [FAQ](#) and the [Billing and Cancellation policy](#) for more specific information.

List of sending institutions

Billing and cancellation

This page gives details of the way in which the accounts of sending institutions will be handled, and of the APTS cancellation policy.

Billing

APTS will maintain an account for each sending institution. Charges made against this account will be:

- registration fee for all students
- cost of the specified accommodation and food requirements

Rebates to the account will normally be made for EPSRC-funded students. For each APTS week in which such a student actually participates, the rebates will be:

- allowance for travel cost (at cheap rail rates)
- full cost of accommodation and food

In addition, for students who participate in all four APTS weeks in the same academic year, 20% of registration fees will be rebated.

Invoices will be issued to sending institutions **at the end of each APTS week**, for the amounts relating to participation in that APTS week. Registration rebates for students attending all four weeks are made on the invoice for APTS week 4.

Cancellation policy

A statement of this policy will appear also on the form that is signed by sending institutions, to confirm their accepted registrations for APTS, immediately after the closing date for registering students.

1. Registration fees are payable for all students accepted for an APTS week, and are not normally refunded in the event of cancellation.
2. In the event of cancellation of a student's participation in an APTS week, the charges made for accommodation and food will be reduced by
 - **100%** if the cancellation is received **before noon of the Monday six weeks prior to the Monday of APTS week**
 - **50%** if the cancellation is received after that but **before noon of the Monday four weeks prior to the Monday of APTS week**.

(For an APTS week starting on Tuesday or Wednesday, "the Monday of APTS week" means the preceding Monday.) After four weeks prior to an APTS week, charges relating to that APTS week are not normally refunded.

Notice of any cancellation should be sent (by the APTS Academic Contact for the student's home department, NOT by the student concerned) by email to admin@aps.ac.uk.

Paper for 4. Programme for APTS 2010–2011

- APTS module weeks 2010-2011:
 - Cambridge: Tuesday, 4th January to Saturday, 8th January 2011.
Statistical Computing (S N Wood)
Statistical Inference (D Firth)
 - Warwick: Monday, 21st March to Friday, 25th March 2011.
Statistical Modelling (J J Forster)
Statistical Asymptotics (G A Young)
 - Southampton: Monday, 11th July to Friday, 15th July 2011.
Applied Stochastic Processes (S B Connor and W S Kendall)
Computer Intensive Statistics (B D Ripley)
 - Lancaster: Monday, 5th September to Friday, 9th September 2011.
Spatial and Longitudinal Data Analysis (P J Diggle)
Nonparametric Smoothing (R J Samworth)
- Key dates:
 - Mon, 4th October, 2010
Underwriting institutions to pay subscriptions.
 - Mon, 27th September, 2010
Student registration for 2010–11 opens.
Closes at noon on 22 October, 2010
Registration at go.warwick.ac.uk/apts/register/student (password required for completion)
Students can only be registered for APTS weeks by their “sending institution” (i.e., their home department): all Member Institutions are automatically “sending institutions”; others register at go.warwick.ac.uk/apts/register/si.
 - Billing and cancellation policy at go.warwick.ac.uk/apts/register/billing-cancellation.
- registration fee levels (set at EC January 2010): £120, 20% rebate in case of each student attending all four weeks.
- A preview of 2011–2012 dates:
 - Cambridge: 9–13 January, 2012
 - Nottingham: 16–20 April, 2012
 - Warwick: 2–6 July, 2012
 - Glasgow: 2–7 September, 2012 (nb: arrival on Sunday)
- Oxford University Statistics Department will continue their course introducing *R*, again available in web-lecture form to APTS students.
- Based on student feedback, for the last 3 APTS weeks preliminary material was made available 5 weeks in advance, not 4. This change has not caused problems and therefore we propose to continue this in 2010-2011.

Paper for 5. Arrangements for APTS in years 2011–2012 and following

This brief paper summarizes four matters relating to arrangements for the running of APTS after the conclusion of the EPSRC grant (which is to say, in years 2011–2012 and following).

- **Revised constitution**

The EC meeting in January 2010 approved a new Constitution, now to be found on the APTS webpages and attached to this document. This has been modified to introduce the new category of *Underwriting Institution*, from which the membership of the Executive Committee will be drawn in academic years 2011-2012 and following.

- **Underwriting Institutions** pay a subscription at the start of each academic year n , which will be used to pay deposits for accommodation booked for academic year $n + 1$. Deposits will be set against expenses of APTS weeks in year $n + 1$. *We propose that this should occur in respect of the expenses of the final week of year $n + 1$, as APTS will need to cover against risks up to that point.*

- **Legal formalities**

Warwick University administration have instructed us that it will be necessary for APTS Executive Committee member institutions (and possibly APTS Underwriting Institutions) to sign up to a standard legal document at the commencement of their tenure from 2011-2012 onwards. This is required (a) as a matter of standard process of transactions between universities, (b) to ensure that APTS funds are treated as belonging to APTS rather than to the university hosting APTS (Warwick in the first instance). The APTS Directors are presently discussing with Warwick Administration a suitable form for this legal document. We will present the document to APTS Executive Committee for discussion at its next meeting in January 2011.

- **Business plan**

We attach an Excel spreadsheet (which can also be opened in OpenOffice), which gives the most recent version of the business plan for continuation of APTS in 2011–2012 and beyond. This version has been slightly modified in format but not in substance from that discussed at APTS Executive Committee January 2010; the current version was presented to Debenham Tie Leung Limited (DTZ), hired by EPSRC to review all taught-course centres. Note that the business plan discusses two contingencies: (a) possible further support from EPSRC (dependent on favourable review but also other financial factors); (b) no further support from EPSRC. We are awaiting the result of the DTZ report. We believe that the report on APTS will be favourable, but prudence dictates that the current business plan should span for the full range of financial possibilities.