

Q-step Internship at General Medical Council

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BA Politics, Philosophy and Economics

Processing of HESA A level Data

For 10 weeks during summer 2015 I worked as part of the evidence and education team at the General Medical Council in London. The team focuses on the development of medical education in the UK.

Key Skills

- Sampling techniques and sample sizes
- Data collection
- Data management
- Verifying and weighting data
- Bivariate and multivariate statistical analysis
- Data visualization
- Software: Excel, SPSS, SQL
- Database management
- Ethical approach to research
- Developing research methodology
- Processing large data sets

Project Outline

My work at the General Medical Council (GMC) was based on processing data available from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) on medical student's A level results from one row per qualification to one row per person. The aim being to try to standardise each medical student's A level results against the school that they attended before university.

Brief Summary of Steps

- Contacted UK Medical schools to obtain A level entry requirements (for entry in September 2015)
- Processed HESA data from one row per qualification to one row per person. This involved recoding data obtained from the Department of Education and HESA in SPSS.
- Linked in the results for the student's school and year of taking exams.
- Calculated Standardised tariff method by subtracting the Average UCAS tariff score of the respective school that a medical student attend from the total UCAS score that student obtained.
- Created analysis showing the changes in UCAS tariff over time and change in relative standardised tariff scores over time.

Chemistry

99.2%

Biology

98.6%

Maths

77.5%

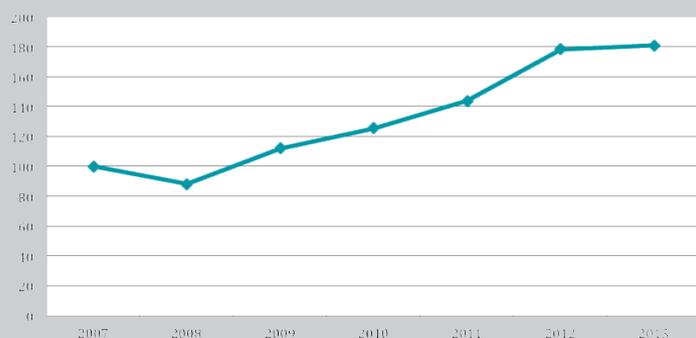
Physics

35.3%

Social Sciences

37.5%

Percentage of medical students taking five most popular courses in HESA data 2007 - 2013



Mean standardised UCAS tariff scores 2007-2013

What I Learned

During my time working for the GMC I carried out primary research which provided vital feedback on how to improve Medical School entry requirements, ultimately to improve medical practice in the UK. I then presented the information in a report. I created a syntax report in SPSS that could process datum from medical student's exam results and standardise this according to the school that they attended. From this I gained valuable experience in merging large data sets and re coding information to make the syntax run smoothly. I learned how to create my own dataset, how to analyse that data and how to present it in a report. I believe this has given me experience of many transferable skills which I could apply to several jobs I may consider upon graduation.