

How can RSS best serve the academic community?

Peter J Diggle

Lancaster University and University of Liverpool

COPS annual meeting, September 2014



Strengthening the supply-chain

Fragile state of statistics groups in many universities

- a long-standing problem
- exacerbated by RAE/REF and by EPSRC policies

The rise of data science: threat or opportunity?

- data science = statistics + computing + maths + ...
- statistical mathematics or statistical science?
- curriculum implications: computing, communication, science

Training the next generation of academic statisticians

- conversion from other disciplines...best done through PGT, PGR or PDRA?
- trend towards more investment in multi-disciplinary research initiatives

RCUK policies wrt statistics

EPSRC

- focus on statistical mathematics: appropriate if balanced by cross-Council initiatives
- excessive concentration of PhD funding

MRC, ESRC

- both make very substantial investments in statistics, including methodological research
- **MRC**: strategic skills fellowships in biostatistics, bioinformatics, population health sciences
- **ESRC**: PhD studentships in Advanced Quantitative Methods open to all nationalities

BBSRC, NERC,...?

RSS conference

- attendance: slow but steady rise over several years
- programme: tension between specialist and generalist
- non-traditional session formats: panel discussion, debate,...
- currently under review: Jen Rogers
(Jennifer.Rodgers@lshtm.ac.uk)

RSS read papers

- research section
- non-research section