

CETL-MSOR Conference 2015

Jonathan Gillard and Rob Wilson: A statistical analysis of student feedback and the NSS: what do students really evaluate?.

At the end of a module or programme of study students are typically asked to review their experience by giving numerical responses to questions posed in an often lengthy questionnaire. However, what do students really evaluate? This talk will describe statistical analyses performed on student feedback received from undergraduates at Cardiff School of Mathematics to try to unpick the latent factors which have motivated students to respond in the way that they did. The primary tool used is Factor Analysis. Factor analysis is a statistical method used to describe variability among observed, correlated variables in terms of a potentially lower number of unobserved variables called factors. For example, it is possible that variations in twenty questionnaire questions mainly reflect the variations in two or three unobserved variables. This work is a follow-on and update of work presented at the previous CETL-MSOR conference, with additional emphasis on some recent findings in relation to student feedback and the NSS. Here we use regression analyses in an attempt to unpick what influences overall satisfaction..