

Research into the Sawtooth Effect published

News story

The Sawtooth Effect examines the patterns seen in student exam performance when assessments are reformed.



Ofqual has today [published further research](#) on the student exam performance pattern known as the 'sawtooth effect.'

The sawtooth effect is the pattern in student performance that can be seen when assessments, such as GCSEs and A levels, are reformed. Performance tends to dip, then improves over time as students and teachers become more familiar with the new content and the new assessments.

In 2016, our [research on the sawtooth effect](#) enabled us to better predict how performance might change over the years following reformed qualifications and ensure fairness to students while the reforms were rolled out.

This new research, [published with an overview](#), brings together ideas that explain the sawtooth effect, alongside ideas that explain how we maintain standards more generally, including the comparable outcomes principle.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has created conditions that are far less consistent or predictable than periods of qualification reform, but very similar considerations arise, especially the need to be fair to candidates. We can use some similar methods to address this.

The effects of COVID-19 will, however, be far more severe for some learners than for others. Applying the comparable outcomes principle can only represent a partial solution to the problem of teaching or learning loss attributable to COVID-19.

Published 23 November 2020

Distribution firm's collapse uncovers director's previous ban

Daniel Ross Patchett (32) received a 10-year ban for managing a company when bankrupt, while his wife, Yasmin Patchett (30) has been disqualified for 6 years.

Husband and wife, from Kingthorpe, Lincolnshire, are banned from acting as directors or directly or indirectly becoming involved, without the permission of the court, in the promotion, formation or management of a company.

DRP Distribution Ltd was incorporated on 25 November 2016, providing storage and distribution services, working with several courier companies.

The company, however, was wound up by the courts in May 2019. The Official Receiver was appointed as Liquidator before uncovering that Daniel Patchett had been running the company whilst being an undischarged bankrupt, in breach of his bankruptcy order.

Investigators established that Daniel Patchett was an appointed de jure director of DRP Distribution Ltd in November 2016. He resigned his position in February 2018 after being made bankrupt a month earlier, which precluded him from managing companies.

Daniel Patchett confirmed to the Official Receiver that he had full involvement in the day-to-day running of the company and continued with these duties during the period of his bankruptcy.

Yasmin Patchett was appointed as a de jure director of the distribution company in August 2017 but left the day-to-day running of the business to her husband from the outset, including the period of his bankruptcy when she knew Daniel Patchett was not allowed to do so.

Further enquiries established that DRP Distribution Ltd owed the tax authorities more than £157,000 when the company went into liquidation, as well as just over £51,000 to other creditors.

Yasmin Patchett had her 6-year disqualification undertaking accepted by the Secretary of State in October 2020 after she did not dispute that she allowed a person to act as director of DRP Distribution Ltd whilst knowing they were an un-discharged bankrupt.

On 12 October 2020, the Secretary of State accepted a 10-year disqualification undertaking from Daniel Patchett after he did not dispute that he acted as a director of DRP Distribution Ltd in contravention of his bankruptcy.

Husband and wife's bans were effective from 2 November 2020.

Rob Clarke, Chief Investigator for the Insolvency Services, said:

When Daniel Patchett's company collapsed, his misconduct was uncovered and it was highlighted that he was running the company whilst being an un-discharged bankrupt. He took no notice of his bankruptcy restriction and his wife, Yasmin Patchett, knew he was unable to act as a director and covered for him.

We will investigate those who try and get around bans while having their spouse as an appointed director whilst continuing to run the business themselves, as the length of this ban shows.

Daniel Ross Patchett is from Kingthorpe, Market Rasen and his date of birth is October 1988.

Yasmin Patchett is from Kingthorpe, Market Rasen and her date of birth is October 1990.

DRP Distribution Ltd (Company Number 10496605)

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings. Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of restrictions](#).

[Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week 2020](#)

Carbon monoxide awareness week

Today is the start of carbon monoxide awareness week 2020. MAIB recently published a safety bulletin about the tragic deaths of two sailors on board [Diversión](#) due to carbon monoxide poisoning. As we continue our investigation it is vital that we remain alert to the silent danger carbon monoxide poses to the maritime community and the steps we can take to protect ourselves.

Over the past ten years MAIB has investigated six incidents involving carbon monoxide poisoning resulting in the tragic loss of ten lives. The majority of these incidents occurred on board motor cruisers used for recreation. In this time safety action has been taken and MAIB has made 12 safety recommendations focussed on preventing further, needless loss of life.

As well as the need to improve awareness of the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning and the groups most at risk, the investigations we have carried out reveal three common safety lessons that are worth highlighting.

Fit a carbon monoxide alarm and ensure it works

Due to the odourless, colourless nature of carbon monoxide, fitting a detector remains the only effective warning that the poisonous gas may be present. In all of the cases we investigated, the boats' occupants were not alerted to the presence of carbon monoxide either because there was no carbon monoxide alarm, or because the one fitted was not working. Our investigation into the fatal accident on board [Love for Lydia](#) highlights the importance of fitting a carbon monoxide alarm.

Install and maintain onboard equipment properly

The tragic incident which occurred on board [Arniston](#) raises the importance of ensuring equipment or modifications to boats are undertaken in accordance with the manufacturers guidelines. All safety critical work on boats should be undertaken by a competent marine engineer using the correct materials and all installations and modifications should be fit for purpose. Even a gas cooker, if not burning efficiently, can generate enough carbon monoxide to kill. [Eshcol](#) was a small commercial fishing vessel, and two crew lost their lives on board when they left the gas grill on overnight to warm the cabin.

Service engines regularly

Our investigation into carbon monoxide poisoning on motor cruiser [Vasquez](#) highlighted the importance of regularly servicing a boat's engine to ensure it remains reliable and safe to use. The investigation found that the engine on board Vasquez had not been regularly serviced and there was evidence that the exhaust system of the engine had been modified during the boat's life.

Ultimately, the only way that boat owners can take potentially lifesaving action when exposed to carbon monoxide is by being alerted to the presence of this poisonous gas. Carbon monoxide alarms are readily available, inexpensive and simple to fit. I urge boat owners to fit one as soon as possible.

[Read more about CO safety on the Boat Safety Scheme website](#)

[New courtroom protections for vulnerable victims available nationwide](#)

- Pre-recorded cross-examination now available throughout England and

Wales

- Reduces stress for vulnerable victims and witnesses who can give better evidence
- Pilot for victims of sexual and trafficking offences ongoing

New technology which spares vulnerable victims and witnesses the trauma of attending court is now available in every Crown Court across England and Wales.

Available immediately, it allows the likes of children or those who suffer from a debilitating condition to have their cross-examination video-recorded and played during the trial. The recording takes place as close to the time of the offence as possible in order to help memory recall and reduce the stress of giving evidence in a courtroom setting, which many find intimidating.

More than 350 victims and witnesses have benefited from the technology since regional rollouts began earlier this year.

The completion of national implementation comes as a similar process is being piloted for victims of sexual and modern slavery offences at Crown Courts in Liverpool, Leeds, and Kingston-Upon-Thames. Subject to an evaluation, the measure could be introduced at other courts.

Justice Minister, Alex Chalk MP, said:

The court process can be a harrowing experience for vulnerable victims and witnesses.

This technology seeks to minimise stress and ensure they can provide their best evidence, without reducing a defendant's right to a fair trial.

This is part of our efforts to drive improvement for victims at every stage of the justice system.

Andrew Penhale, Chief Crown Prosecutor and CPS lead for Section 28 said:

The CPS is very conscious that being cross-examined at trial is particularly difficult for children and other vulnerable witnesses, many of whom have been exposed to very distressing and unpleasant crimes.

Waiting for the trial process can inevitably add to their anxiety so the fact this measure can significantly reduce the time they have to wait to give evidence will make a huge difference. In the current circumstances, we know reducing delay is more important than ever.

Dame Vera Baird QC, Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales said:

I very much welcome this national roll-out, ensuring more vulnerable victims and witnesses have the option to pre-record their evidence. Giving evidence and being cross-examined in court can be a distressing and re-traumatising experience. This is especially true for a child or a vulnerable witness. This roll-out will enable more victims to put their experiences behind them sooner, rather than wait in anticipation for the trial which may be many months away.

I congratulate HMCTS and the Ministry of Justice in driving this forward and being so responsive. This has the potential to transform the criminal justice experience for so many vulnerable victims.

Anna Edmundson, NSPCC Head of Policy and Public Affairs said:

This is a welcome development from HMCTS and the Ministry of Justice. The NSPCC has campaigned for the introduction of pre-recorded cross-examination so that young people can give their evidence sooner rather than later and then start to look to the future and rebuild their lives.

Waiting for long periods to take part in court proceedings can be a traumatic experience for young witnesses so this national rollout is an important step towards protecting the best interests of children.

Alongside ensuring young victims and witnesses receive tailored support throughout the process, these changes should mean that children's experiences of the criminal justice system are transformed.

Any decision to pre-record evidence is made by a judge on a case-by case basis.

The move is part of the government's wider efforts to improve the support on offer at every stage of the justice system. These include a new Victims' Code published last week which outlines the key information and level of service they should receive from the police, courts and other criminal justice agencies.

Meanwhile, more than £76m has been made available to support the most vulnerable during the pandemic – with a further £11m recently provided to help rape and domestic abuse services cope with a spike in demand expected this winter.

Since February 2020, more than 350 recordings have taken place across England

and Wales.

Vulnerable witnesses and victims are defined as all child witnesses under 18 and any witness whose quality of evidence is likely to be diminished because they are suffering from a mental disorder or physical disability or has significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning.

Both the defence and prosecution lawyers will be present in court during the pre-recording as will the judge and the defendant.

Pre-recording cross-examination preserves a defendant's right to a fair trial.

Feedback from the courts already operating the system shows that victims felt less stress and that witnesses were better able to recall events.

The full list of crown courts who have commenced pre-recording evidence sessions today are:

- Birmingham Crown Court
- Bournemouth Crown Court
- Cambridge Crown Court
- Coventry Crown Court
- Derby Crown Court
- Grimsby Crown Court
- Hereford Crown Court
- Hove Crown Court
- Isle of Wight Crown Court
- Kingston-Upon-Hull Crown Court
- Lincoln Crown Court
- Luton Crown Court
- Newcastle-upon-Tyne Crown Court
- Nottingham Crown Court
- Peterborough Crown Court
- Shrewsbury Crown Court
- Southend Crown Court
- Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court
- Taunton Crown Court
- Truro Crown Court
- Warwick Crown Court

Pre-recorded video evidence is already available at Crown Courts in Amersham, Aylesbury, Basildon, Bolton, Bradford, Bristol, Burnley, Canterbury, Caernarfon, Cardiff, Carlisle, Central Criminal Court, Chelmsford, Chester, Croydon, Doncaster, Durham, Exeter, Gloucester, Guildford, Harrow, Inner London, Ipswich, Isleworth, King's Lynn, Kingston-upon-Thames, Lancaster, Leeds, Leicester, Lewes, Liverpool, Maidstone, Manchester Crown Square, Manchester Minshull Street, Merthyr Tydfil, Mold, Newport (Wales), Newcastle Moot Hall, Northampton, Norwich, Oxford, Plymouth, Preston, Portsmouth, Reading, Salisbury, Sheffield, Snaresbrook, Southwark, Southampton, Stafford, St Albans Swansea, Swindon, Teesside, Warrington, Winchester Wolverhampton, Wood Green, Woolwich, Worcester, York.

UK Government and Devolved Administrations Meeting: 21 November 2020

Press release

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster held a discussion with devolved administrations on 21 November 2020 on shared arrangements for the festive period.



The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the First Minister of Scotland, the First Minister of Wales, and the First and Deputy First Ministers of Northern Ireland held a further discussion yesterday on shared arrangements for the festive period.

Welcoming the good progress made by all administrations over the past few days to design a single set of arrangements that can apply across the UK, Ministers reiterated the importance of allowing families and friends to meet in a careful and limited way, while recognising that this will not be a normal festive period and the risks of transmission remain very real.

As such, Ministers endorsed a shared objective of facilitating some limited additional household bubbling for a small number of days, but also emphasised that the public will be advised to remain cautious, and that wherever possible people should avoid travelling and minimise social contact. In respect of Northern Ireland, Ministers also recognised that people will want to see family and friends across the island of Ireland, and this is the subject of discussions with the Irish Government.

Work is continuing to finalise the arrangements, including relating to travel. The UK Government, Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Executive hope to conclude this work this week, subject to agreement by each administration.

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