Stuart Pedley-Smith is the Head of Learning for Kaplan Financial. He has been involved with training and educating finance professionals for over 20 years.

He is the author of two books, ‘The E word’ about how to pass exams’ and ’A student’s guide to writing Business Reports.’
Outline

Evidence based

Process and scope

What did we learn?
Evidence based - Education, why not!
The “what works” agenda,

Evidence based learning
The use of the best available evidence to bring about desirable outcomes or prevent undesirable ones.
Process and scope
Recruiting expertise

Data analysts
Insight manager
Psychometricians
Database architects
Data manager
Business Intelligence analyst
Online examinations

The move to online examinations and the introduction of objective tests has resulted in more data becoming available.

The data can be mined to provide a valuable and rich source of information.
Capturing data from the LMS

Kaplan’s LMS captures data about how students learn from the very start of their course to just before the exam.

By combining the data from Kaplan and CIMA we are able to identify the behaviours of successful students.

Which in turn helps us improve the advice we give to students as to the best way to learn, study and prepare for the exam.
Organising your data
What do you want to know?

Find the answer to what questions?

- What do successful students do?
- What is a successful student?
- Is fast better than slow?
- Are pass rates the best way of measuring success?
- How important is a student's past academic record?
- Does the method of study make a difference?

State the hypothesis - prove it or not
Getting the message out - change behaviours

One of the hardest parts in the process

Information - blogs, emails, presentations, infographics etc

Changing behaviours! - Nudge
Scope

- Data from both Kaplan and CIMA

- The data covers the period from October 2016 to September 2017 and includes 6,415 students

- Success has been defined as passing the exam first time

- The results are for all objective test subjects and does not include case study
What did we learn?
What questions did we ask?

Top four

• How long should you take before sitting the exam?
• How long after the course should you take the exam?
• Does using MyKaplan (LMS) affect pass rates?
• Does rescheduling the exam affect pass rates?

Others

• Does seasonality affect pass rates?
• Do exemptions influence pass rates?
• Does the method of study have an impact?
How long should you take before sitting the exam?

Results:

The average pass rate for students sitting the exam in the first 12 weeks is 77%. In the next 8 weeks this falls to 61%.

Taking the exam after 12 weeks reduces the pass rate by 16%.

Conclusions:

Because the data differs for individual subjects, the advice is to take the exam between 10-12 weeks after the start of the course. Students should book the exam once the course start date is known.
How long after the course should you take the exam?

Results:

The data shows a steady decline in pass rates from the end of the course to sitting the exam.

Conclusions:

Taking the exam within a relatively short period of time, 1 - 3 weeks after the course improves the chances of exam success. The time can vary for subjects dependant on confidence and exam readiness.
Does practising questions affect pass rates?

**Results:**
Students who attempted both short tests and mock exams had a 5% higher pass rate than students who did neither.

Students who only attempted knowledge checks had pass rates 8% lower.

**Conclusions:**
Attempting both knowledge checks and mock exams increase pass rates by 5%. Students should take as many opportunities to test their understanding to improve long term retention.
Does rescheduling the exam affect pass rates?

**Results:**
Students who reschedule the exam have a 16% less chance of passing than those that book the exam and stay with the original exam date.

**Conclusions:**
Students should book the exam early and not reschedule.
Findings

1. On average the time from the start of a course to when the students sit the exam should be between 10 and 12 weeks.

2. On average the time from the end of the course to when the students sit the exam should be between 1 and 3 weeks.

3. To improve chances of passing, students should book the exam early and not reschedule.

4. To improve chances of passing, students should take tests shortly after studying and sit a mock exam.
Questions?