**Part 1: GCTA-GREML tutorial** (L. Yengo – 10/06/2021)

Prepare folder for practical

mkdir GREML\_practical

cd GREML\_practical

Copy the data from Loic’s faculty directory

cp /faculty/loic/2021/scriptGREML\_practical.sh .

cp /faculty/loic/2021/GREML\_practical/mydata.\* .

ls -l

[the file “**scriptGREML\_practical.sh**” contains all the command to run for the practical]

Text

Description automatically generated

**Exercise 1**: Calculate the Genetic Relationship Matrix (GRM) using all SNPs

gcta64 --bfile mydata --make-grm-bin --out mydata\_allSNPs

*Questions:*

1. *How many individuals/SNPs do you have in the sample?*
2. *What is the mean of the diagonal elements of the GRM? Is that expected?*

**Exercise 2**: Calculate GRM using SNPs with MAF>0.05 and MAF<0.05

gcta64 --bfile mydata --maf 0.05 --make-grm-bin --out mydata\_maf\_above\_0.05

gcta64 --bfile mydata --max-maf 0.05 --make-grm-bin --out mydata\_maf\_below\_0.05

*Questions:*

1. *How many SNPs have a MAF<0.05?*
2. *Why is the variance of diagonal elements larger in the GRM based on SNPs with MAF<0.05?*

Some more data processing…

## Creating mgrm.txt file (with the "prefix" of the MAF stratified GRMs)

echo Creating mgrm.txt file

echo mydata\_maf\_below\_0.05 > mgrm.txt

echo mydata\_maf\_above\_0.05 >> mgrm.txt

[Note: in general it is preferable to use the full path for defining the mgrm.txt file]

**Exercise 3**: Identify (genetically) unrelated individuals

gcta64 --grm mydata\_allSNPs --grm-singleton 0.05 --out unrelated

*Questions:*

1. *How many individuals are unrelated in this sample? GRM cut-off 0.05? cut-off 0.025?*

**Exercise 4**: GREML estimation of heritability with and without relatives

gcta64 --grm mydata\_allSNPs --pheno mydata.phen --mpheno 1 \

--reml --out trait1\_with\_relatives

gcta64 --grm mydata\_allSNPs --pheno mydata.phen --mpheno 1 \

--reml --out trait1\_without\_relatives --grm-cutoff 0.05

*Questions:*

1. *Compare heritability estimates from these two analyses. What could explain the difference that you observe?*

**Exercise 5**: MAF-stratified heritability estimation

(Note: this is using a different phenotype than in Exercise 4)

gcta64 --grm mydata\_allSNPs --pheno mydata.phen --mpheno 2 \

--reml --keep unrelated.singleton.txt --out trait2\_allSNPs

gcta64 --mgrm mgrm.txt --pheno mydata.phen --mpheno 2 \

--reml --keep unrelated.singleton.txt --out trait2\_maf\_stratified

*Questions: Compare heritability estimates from these two analyses*

1. *What could explain the difference that you observe?*
2. *Which one of these estimates should you trust more? How can you be sure?*

**Part 2: LD score regression tutorial**  (S. Gazal – 10/06/2021)

Prepare folder for practical

mkdir LDSC\_practical

cd LDSC\_practical

Locate data to use for the practical (no need to copy them)

ls -l /data/LDSC\_REF

A picture containing text, scoreboard

Description automatically generated

In this tutorial we will apply LD score regression (LDSC) and Stratified LD score regression (S-LDSC) on summary statistics from height computed on UK Biobank.

See the Appendix to install ldsc software and to download all the files used in this tutorial.

**I/ LD score regression tutorial**

**I-a/ Some background**

LD score regression (LDSC) is an approach to quantify confounding from genome wide association studies (GWAS) summary statistics (Bulik-Sullivan et al. 2015a *Nat Genet*). Briefly, under certain assumptions, we can write the expected statistic of variant *j* as

where *N* is the GWAS sample size, *M* is the number of SNPs, such that /*M* is the average heritability explained per SNP; *b* measures the contribution of confounding biases, such as cryptic relatedness and population stratification; and is the LD Score of variant *j*, which measures the amount of genetic variation tagged by *j*. As are available through GWAS summary statistics, can be computed using a reference sequencing dataset (here 1000 Genomes), and *N* and *M* are known, the parameters and *b* can be estimated through a simple linear regression.

LDSC analyses consider 3 sets of SNPs:

* Reference SNPs (M): this is the set of sequenced SNPs used to compute the LD scores. Here, we will use ~10M SNPs with an allele count ≥ 5 in the Europeans of 1000 Genomes.
* Regression SNPs: this is the set of GWAS SNPs used to perform the regression and to estimate the parameters and *b*. This set consists of ~1M SNPs that are in HapMap3 (used as a proxy for good imputation accuracy in the GWAS data), and not in the MHC region.
* Heritability SNPs: this is the set of reference SNPs used to estimate heritability. This set consists of ~6M SNPs with MAF ≥ 5%.

**I-b/ Reference files**

All the files requested for LDSC (and S-LDSC) analyses are in the /data/LDSC\_REF folder.

Reference files are in /data/LDSC\_REF/plink\_files, and LD scores are in /data/DSC\_REF/ldscores.

The /data/LDSC\_REF/plink\_files directory contains plink files (bed, bim, fam and frq files) for the reference genomes (~10M SNPs on ~500 individuals) on 22 chromosomes.

The /data/LDSC\_REF/ldscores directory contains LD scores (in l2.ldscore.gz files), number of reference SNPs (in l2.M files) and number of heritability SNPs (in l2.M\_5\_50 files) on 22 chromosomes.

Type the following commands:

more /data/LDSC\_REF/ldscores/LDscore.1.l2.M

more /data/LDSC\_REF/ldscores/LDscore.1.l2.M\_5\_50

zcat /data/LDSC\_REF/ldscores/LDscore.1.l2.ldscore.gz | head

zcat /data/LDSC\_REF/ldscores/LDscore.1.l2.ldscore.gz | wc -l

*Questions:*

1. *What is the number of reference SNPs on chromosome 1? What is the number of heritability SNPs on chromosome 1?*

[HINT – reference SNPs] Look here: ls -l /data/LDSC\_REF/ldscores/\*.M

[HINT – heritability SNPs] Look here: ls -l /data/LDSC\_REF/ldscores/\*.M\_5\_50

1. *For how many SNPs do we have LD scores?*   
   [HINT] LD score files: ls -l /data/LDSC\_REF/ldscores/\*.ldscore.gz

**I-c/ Run LDSC**

Type the following command:

ldsc --h2 /data/LDSC\_REF/UKB\_460K.body\_HEIGHTz.Neff.sumstats \

--ref-ld-chr /data/LDSC\_REF/ldscores/LDscore. \

--w-ld-chr /data/LDSC\_REF/weights\_hm3\_no\_MHC/weights.hm3\_noMHC. \

--out UKB\_460K.body\_HEIGHTz.ldsc

This command takes as inputs summary statistics (though --h2), LD scores (through --ref-ld-chr) and regression weights (through --w-ld-chr; these weights correct for the fact that we are running a regression on non-independent observations).

*Questions:* [HINT] cat UKB\_460K.body\_HEIGHTz.ldsc.log

1. *How many SNPs have been used in the regression?*
2. *What is the intercept? Is it significantly greater than 1?*
3. *What is the heritability estimate? (Note that this model assumes the same per-SNP heritability for every trait, which lead to underestimate of heritability estimates; see next section)*

**II/ Stratified LD score regression tutorial**

**II-a/ Some background**

Stratified LD score regression (S-LDSC) is an approach to partition heritability across functional annotations from GWAS summary statistics (Finucane et al. 2015 *Nat Genet*). Briefly, under certain assumptions, we can write the expected statistic of variant *j* as

where is the LD score of SNP with respect to continuous values of annotation , is the correlation between SNP and in a reference panel, and is the effect size of annotation on per-SNP heritability (conditioned on all other annotations). The recommended set of annotations to use with S-LDSC is called the baseline-LD model (Gazal et al. 2017 *Nat Genet*).

**II-b/ The baseline-LD model**

The annotations and corresponding LD scores from the baseline-LD model are in /data/LDSC\_REF/baselineLD\_v2.2. This directory contains annotations (in annot.gz files), LD scores (in l2.ldscore.gz files), number of reference SNPs (in l2.M files) and number of heritability SNPs (in l2.M\_5\_50 files) on 22 chromosomes.

Type the following commands:

zcat /data/LDSC\_REF/baselineLD\_v2.2/baselineLD.1.annot.gz | head | less -S

zcat /data/LDSC\_REF/baselineLD\_v2.2/baselineLD.1.annot.gz | head -1 | sed s/\\t/\\n/g   
zcat /data/LDSC\_REF/baselineLD\_v2.2/baselineLD.1.annot.gz | head -1 | sed s/\\t/\\n/g | wc -l

zcat /data/LDSC\_REF/baselineLD\_v2.2/baselineLD.1.annot.gz | wc -l

*Questions:*

1. *What is the number of annotations in the baseline-LD model?*
2. *What is the number of SNPs annotated on chromosome 1?*

**II-c/ Run S-LDSC**

Type the following command:

ldsc --h2 /data/LDSC\_REF/UKB\_460K.body\_HEIGHTz.Neff.sumstats \

--ref-ld-chr /data/LDSC\_REF/baselineLD\_v2.2/baselineLD. \

--w-ld-chr /data/LDSC\_REF/weights\_hm3\_no\_MHC/weights.hm3\_noMHC. \

--frqfile-chr /data/LDSC\_REF/plink\_files/1000G.EUR.QC. \

--overlap-annot \

--print-coefficients \

--out UKB\_460K.body\_HEIGHTz.sldsc

This command takes as inputs summary statistics (though --h2), LD scores (through --ref-ld-chr), regression weights (through --w-ld-chr), frequency files (through –frqfile-chr; these files are used to partition heritability for SNPs with MAF >= 5%), and compulsory options (--overlap-annot and --print-coefficients).

*Questions:* [HINT] less -S UKB\_460K.body\_HEIGHTz.ldsc.log and column -t UKB\_460K.body\_HEIGHTz.ldsc.results | less -S

1. *How many SNPs have been used in the regression*
2. *What is the intercept? Is it significantly greater than 1?*
3. *What is the heritability? How does it compare to the one of LDSC? Which one should you trust more?*
4. *What annotation is most enriched in heritability? (Be careful, enrichment outputs make sense only for binary or probabilistic annotations)*
5. *What is the annotation with the most significant regression coefficient?*

**Bonus - Commands to compute genetic correlation:**

**Using GCTA:**

(Details here: <https://cnsgenomics.com/software/gcta/#BivariateGREMLanalysis>)

gcta64 --grm mydata\_allSNPs --pheno mydata.phen --reml-bivar 1 2

**Using LDSC:**

ldsc \

--rg /data/LDSC\_REF/PASS\_Schizophrenia.sumstats,/data/LDSC\_REF/PASS\_Bipolar\_Disorder.sumstats \

--ref-ld-chr /data/LDSC\_REF/ldscores/LDscore. \

--w-ld-chr /data/LDSC\_REF/weights\_hm3\_no\_MHC/weights.hm3\_noMHC. \

--out Schizophrenia\_BipolarDisorder

**Appendix – installing ldsc and downloading LDSC files**

\*\*\* This is NOT required for the practical as both GCTA and LDSC (and reference files) are already installed on the workshop server \*\*\*

The tutorial to install ldsc software is at <https://github.com/bulik/ldsc>. To download all the files used in this tutorial, copy the following lines:

URL=https://storage.googleapis.com/broad-alkesgroup-public/LDSCORE

#Download reference files

wget $URL/1000G\_Phase3\_frq.tgz

wget $URL/1000G\_Phase3\_plinkfiles.tgz

wget $URL/1000G\_Phase3\_weights\_hm3\_no\_MHC.tgz

wget $URL/1000G\_Phase3\_ldscores.tgz

wget $URL/1000G\_Phase3\_baselineLD\_v2.2\_ldscores.tgz

#Untar the files

tar zxvf 1000G\_Phase3\_frq.tgz

tar zxvf 1000G\_Phase3\_plinkfiles.tgz

tar zxvf 1000G\_Phase3\_weights\_hm3\_no\_MHC.tgz

tar zxvf 1000G\_Phase3\_ldscores.tgz

tar zxvf 1000G\_Phase3\_baselineLD\_v2.2\_ldscores.tgz

rm \*tgz

#Organize and rename directories

mv 1000G\_EUR\_Phase3\_plink plink\_files

mv 1000G\_Phase3\_frq/\* plink\_files; rm -rf 1000G\_Phase3\_frq

mv 1000G\_Phase3\_weights\_hm3\_no\_MHC weights\_hm3\_no\_MHC

mv LDscore ldscores

mkdir baselineLD\_v2.2; mv baselineLD.\* baselineLD\_v2.2

#Download summary statistics

wget $URL/all\_sumstats/UKB\_460K.body\_HEIGHTz.sumstats  
wget $URL/all\_sumstats/PASS\_Schizophrenia.sumstats

wget $URL/all\_sumstats/PASS\_Bipolar\_Disorder.sumstats

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS + MORE Q&A**

**Part 1: GCTA-GREML tutorial**

**Exercise 1**: Calculate the Genetic Relationship Matrix (GRM) using all SNPs

1. *How many individuals/SNPs do you have in the sample*: N=6,000 individuals and M=12,000 SNPs
2. *What is the mean of the diagonal elements of the GRM? Is that expected?*

Mean diagonal of GRM = 1.00012. Yes, it is expected to be around 1, as this measures the genetic relationship of an individual with themselves.

**Exercise 2**: Calculate GRM using SNPs with MAF>0.05 and MAF<0.05

1. *How many SNPs have a MAF<0.05?* There 797 SNPs with MAF<0.05.
2. *Why is the variance of diagonal elements larger in the GRM based on SNPs with MAF<0.05?* The variance of GRM terms depends on the number of SNPs used to calculate it. The variance is larger because fewer SNPs were used.

**Exercise 3**: Identify (genetically) unrelated individuals

1. *How many individuals are unrelated in this sample? GRM cut-off 0.05? cut-off 0.025?* There are N=4808 unrelated individuals at a 0.05 GRM cut-off and N=92 unrelated individuals at a 0.025 GRM cut-off.

**Exercise 4**: GREML estimation of heritability with and without relatives

1. *Compare heritability estimates from these two analyses. What could explain the difference that you observe?* The heritability estimate is ~0.4 when relatives are included and ~0.25 without relatives. This could be explained by 1) unaccounted shared environmental effects between relatives which are inflating estimates of heritability. In practice other explanation may include 1) non-additive genetic effects or 2) partially tagging of causal variants by SNPs used to calculate the GRM.

**Exercise 5**: MAF-stratified heritability estimation

*Questions: Compare heritability estimates from these two analyses*

1. *What could explain the difference that you observe?* The difference between these two estimates can be explained by the fact that the MAF distribution of causal variants is different from that of SNPs used to calculate the GRM (Lecture – part 4).
2. *Which one of these estimates should you trust more? How can you be sure?* The heritability estimate from the stratified analysis should be trusted more because it is designed to minimize the MAF and LD heterogeneity between SNPs and causal variants. One potential strategy to check if we’ve done enough correction is to stratify SNPs into further MAF or LD bins and repeat the analysis.

**Part 2: LD score regression tutorial**

**Command lines to answer the in the case of the UKBB height summary statistics 458K questions:**

*What is the number of reference SNPs? What is the number of heritability SNPs?*wc -l /data/LDSC\_REF/plink\_files/\*bim # 9997231  
awk '{if($5>=0.05) {print $0} }' /data/LDSC\_REF/plink\_files/1000G.EUR.QC.\*.frq | wc -l # 5961181-22

*How many reference SNPs there are on chromosome 1? For how many SNPs do we have LD scores?*wc -l /data/LDSC\_REF/plink\_files/1000G.EUR.QC.1.bim # 779354  
zcat /data/LDSC\_REF/ldscores/LDscore.1.l2.ldscore.gz | wc -l # 98643-1

*How many SNPs have been used in the regression?*1187056

*What is the intercept? Is it significantly greater than 1?*1.8704 (0.0433). Yes, as the confidence interval (1.8704+/-1.96\*0.0433) does not include 1.

*What is the heritability estimate? (Note that this model assumes the same per-SNP heritability for every trait, which lead to underestimate of heritability estimates; see next section)*0.3811 (0.0191)

*What is the number of annotations in the baseline-LD model?*zcat /data/LDSC\_REF/baselineLD\_v2.2/baselineLD.1.annot.gz | head -1 | sed s/\\t/\\n/g | wc -l # 101-4=97

*What is the number of SNPs annotated on chromosome 1?*zcat /data/LDSC\_REF/baselineLD\_v2.2/baselineLD.1.annot.gz | wc -l # 779355-1

*How many SNPs have been used in the regression*1186575

*What is the intercept? Is it significantly greater than 1?*1.4527 (0.0595). Yes, as the confidence interval does not include 1.

*What is the heritability? How does it compare to the one of LDSC? Which one should you trust more?*0.471 (0.0188). Higher. This one.

*What annotation is most enriched in heritability? (Be careful, enrichment outputs make sense only for binary or probabilistic annotations)*column -t UKB\_460K.body\_HEIGHTz.sldsc.results | less -S > non\_synonymous (Enrichment=17.06)

*What is the annotation with the most significant regression coefficient?*MAFbin7 (Coefficient\_z-score=5.71)

**More Q&A about LDSC**

**Why are we performing regression on HapMap 3 SNPs?**

GWAS used to release summary statistics for imputed SNPs without information about imputation accuracy. The early LD score papers made the hypothesis that SNPs available in HapMap3 are likely to have been genotyped in the GWAS study, or imputed with good accuracy.

**Why do we have LD scores only for ~1M SNPs?**

As it is recommended to perform a regression on HapMap3 SNPs (~1M SNPs), it is not necessary to store LD scores for all reference SNPs (~10M SNPs). However, LD scores of these 1M SNPs are computed using the 10M reference SNPs.

**What are the weights used in the regression?**

Regressions need to be performed on independent observations. As regression SNPs are in LD with each other, weights are needed to correct this effect, and are computed here as the inverse LD score computed on regression SNPs.

**What does Neff mean?**

Some summary statistics are computed with linear mixed model, which increases the association power and thus association statistics. The sample size N used in LD score regression should thus not be the sample size that has been used to compute the summary statistics (in the case of the UKBB height summary statistics 458K) but the effective sample size (in the case of the UKBB height summary statistics 674K).

**Can we use heritability estimates from ldsc?**

The authors of ldsc do not recommend to use heritability estimates outputted by vanilla ldsc, as these estimates are based under an unrealistic model leading to downward biases of heritability. However, using the baseline-LD model correct for most of these biases and can be used with extreme caution.

**Should we expect to have the same heritability estimates between GCTA and ldsc?**

No. GCTA estimates the heritability tagged by SNPs used in the analyses, whereas ldsc estimates the heritability causally explained by common reference SNPs (i.e. removes the effect of low-frequency variants tagged by common SNPs).

**Why some numbers are extremely high in the .results file?**

S-LDSC can include continuous annotations that improve model fit (i.e. LD-related annotations to model LD architectures). For these annotations, the outputs in some of the columns in the .results file does not make sense (i.e. Prop.\_SNPs, Prop.\_h2, or Enrichment), unless the annotation is probabilistic (i.e. values between 0 and 1). However, the columns related to the regression coefficients make sense.

**Why some annotations have significant enrichment but non-significant regression coefficients?**

Some annotations have significant enrichment but non-significant regression coefficients, for example coding. This can be explained by the fact that coding regions are enriched in heritability, but that this enrichment is due to its high overlap with other annotations, such as conserved or non-synonymous variants. This is useful do determine how informative is an enriched annotation compared to the other ones.