

Simon George Brook Cowan

Date of Birth: 1 May 1964

Nationality: British

Addresses:

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Current Post

Wigmore Clarendon Fellow and Tutor in Economics at Worcester College, Oxford, and Associate Professor in Economics, Department of Economics.

Previous Post

Management Consultant with Deloitte Haskins + Sells, London (1988-89).

Education

1983-86 Merton College, Oxford
BA in Philosophy, Politics and Economics (First Class).
Winner of University Prize (George Webb Medley) for best performance in economics finals

1986-88 Nuffield College, Oxford
MPhil in Economics
Winner of George Webb Medley prizes for best exam performance and best thesis.

1995 DPhil in Economics, Worcester College, Oxford
“Topics in Price-Cap Regulation”
Supervisor: Professor J. Vickers
Examiners: Professor P. Klemperer (Oxford) and Professor M. Waterson (Warwick)

Research interests

Industrial organization: regulation of utilities, price regulation, price discrimination, competition policy. Environmental policy.

Publications

Book

Regulatory Reform: Economic Analysis and British Experience, with Mark Armstrong and John Vickers, Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1994.

Articles in refereed journals

[“An increase in a firm’s marginal cost can raise its profit”](#), *Economics Letters*, Volume 255, Article Number 112529, 2025.

[“Welfare-Increasing Monopolization”](#), *Journal of Industrial Economics*, 73(1), 167-185, 2025.

[“New directions in competition policy: an overview”](#), with Peter Ormosi and Joe Perkins, *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, Volume 40, Issue 4, Pages 687–695, Winter 2024.

[“Regulating Monopoly Price Discrimination”](#), *Journal of Regulatory Economics* 54(1), 1-13, 2018.

[“How to mix per-flight and per-passenger based airport charges: The oligopoly case”](#), with Czerny, Achim and Anming Zhang. *Transportation Research Part B*, 104, 483-500, 2017.

[“Welfare-increasing third-degree price discrimination”](#), *RAND Journal of Economics*, 47: 326–340, 2016.

“Monopoly Price Discrimination with Constant Elasticity Demand”, with Iñaki Aguirre, *Economic Theory Bulletin*, 3(2), 329-340, 2015.

[“Third-Degree Price Discrimination and Consumer Surplus”](#), *Journal of Industrial Economics*, 60(2), 333-345, 2012.

[“Monopoly Price Discrimination and Demand Curvature”](#), with Iñaki Aguirre and John Vickers, *American Economic Review*, 100(4), 1601-1615, 2010.

[“The welfare economics of optional water metering”](#), *Economic Journal*, 120 (545), 800-815, 2010.

[“Competition can harm consumers”](#), with Xiangkang Yin, *Australian Economic Papers*, 47, 264-271, 2008.

[“The welfare effects of third-degree price discrimination with non-linear demand functions”](#), *RAND Journal of Economics*, 32(2), 419-428, 2007.

- [“Network Regulation”](#), *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 22: 248-259, 2006.
- [“Competition in Regulated Industries: Some Reflections”](#), *Agenda*, 12(4), 351-362, 2005.
- [“Utility regulation and risk allocation: The roles of marginal cost pricing and futures markets”](#), *Journal of Regulatory Economics*, 26(1), 23-40, 2004.
- [“Optimal risk allocation for regulated monopolies and consumers”](#), *Journal of Public Economics*, 88:1-2, 285-303, January 2004.
- “Price Cap Regulation”, *Swedish Review of Economic Policy*, 9(2), pp. 167-188, Fall 2002.
- [“Trade, Technology and Growth: an introduction”](#), with P. Sinclair, *Oxford Economic Papers*, 51, pp. 1-3, 1999.
- [“Water Pollution and Abstraction and Economic Instruments”](#), *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 14(4), pp. 40-49, Winter 1998.
- [“Oxford Economic Papers: 50 and 60 years – a double anniversary”](#), with M. Slater, *Oxford Economic Papers*, 50, pp. 531-533, 1998.
- [“Welfare Consequences of Tight Price-Cap Regulation”](#), *Bulletin of Economic Research*, 50(2), pp. 105-116, 1998.
- [“Price-Cap Regulation and Inefficiency in Relative Pricing”](#), *Journal of Regulatory Economics*, 12(1), pp. 53-70, 1997.
- [“Competition in the Water Industry”](#), *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 13(1), pp. 83-92, 1997.
- [“Tight Average Revenue Regulation Can Be Worse than No Regulation”](#), *Journal of Industrial Economics*, 45, pp. 75-88, 1997.
- [“Nonlinear Pricing and Price Cap Regulation”](#), with Mark Armstrong and John Vickers, *Journal of Public Economics*, 58, 1, pp. 33-55, 1995.
- [“Regulation of Several Market Failures: The Water Industry in England and Wales”](#), *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, Vol 9, No 4, pp. 14-23, 1993.
- “Trade and Competition Policies for Oligopolies”, *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv*, Vol 125, pp. 464-483, 1989.

Chapters in books and articles in non-refereed journals

- “Quantitative Techniques for Competition Policy Analysis”, *The Utilities Journal*, pp. 42-43, Volume 6, May 2003.

[“Developments in Regulatory Principles: The UK Experience”](#), Chapter 2 in Henry, C., M. Matheu and A. Jeunemaître, eds., *Regulation of Network Utilities: The European Experience*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.39-53, 2001.

“Water Pollution, Water Abstraction and Economic Instruments”, Chapter 9 in D. Helm and T. Jenkinson, eds. *Environmental Policy: Objectives, Instruments and Implementation*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 203-215, 2000.

“Reforming Urban Water Systems in Developing Countries”, jointly with R. Noll and M. Shirley, in A.O. Krueger, ed., *Economic Policy Reform: The Second Stage*, University of Chicago Press, pp. 243-291, 2000.

“The Water Industry”, in D. Helm and T. Jenkinson, eds., *Competition in Regulated Industries*, Oxford, OUP, pp. 160-174, 1998.

“Market and Regulatory Failure in the Water Sector” in U. Collier, ed., *Deregulation in the European Union: Environmental Perspectives*, London, Routledge, pp. 131-144, 1998.

“Privatization and Regulation of the Water Industry in England and Wales”, in M. Bishop, J. Kay and C. Mayer, eds. *Privatization and Economic Performance*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 112-136, 1994.

“Social Obligations and the Utilities”, *Utility Finance*, pp. 13-14, June 1994.

Working papers

“A Model of Third-Degree Price Discrimination with Positive Welfare Effects”, Department of Economics Discussion Paper, No. 829, July 2017.

Work in progress, available on request

Input price discrimination

Invited lectures

1. Keynote address, Australian Centre of Regulatory Economics Regulatory Forum, Australian National University, Canberra, October 2005.
2. “Alternative approaches to regulation: an economic analysis of light-handed regulation” Australian Competition and Consumer Commission Regulatory Conference, 26 July 2007

Other activities

Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Economics, 2012-2015

Head of Department, Department of Economics, 2019-2020

Deputy Head of Department, Department of Economics 2001-2003

Course Director for Philosophy, Politics and Economics, and Chair of the PPE Committee 2005-2007

Vice Provost, Worcester College, Oxford. 2006-2010; 2015-2016, 2021-2023.

Tutor for Admissions, Worcester College, Oxford (2001-02; 2004-05)

Managing Editor (1996-2005), Associate Editor (2005-2011), *Oxford Economic Papers*.

Chair of the Board of Oxford Economic Papers Association, 2016-2019
Trustee, Oxford Economic Papers Association, 2024-

Editorial Board, *Fiscal Studies*, 2000-2010

Editorial Board, *Journal of Regulatory Economics*, 2005-

Editorial Board, *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 2011-
Associate Editor, *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 2023-

Tutor (1994-96, 1999-2000, 2012-16) and Senior Tutor (1997-98) for the Oxford University Business Economics Programme.

Consultancy work for Coopers & Lybrand, Oxford Economic Research Associates, the World Bank, Isis Innovation, National Audit Office.

Referee for:

American Economic Review, American Economic Journal: Microeconomics, Bulletin of Economic Research, Economic Journal, Economic Modelling, Economics of Transition, Energy Journal, European Economic Review, Fiscal Studies, Information Economics and Policy, International Journal of the Economics of Business, International Journal of Industrial Organization, Journal of Economics, Journal of Industrial Economics, Journal of Political Economy, Journal of Public Economics, Journal of Regulatory Economics, Manchester School, Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics, Oxford Economic Papers, Oxford Review of Economic Policy, Rand Journal of Economics, Resource and Energy Economics, Review of Economic Studies, Southern Economic Journal.

External examining: University College London, MSc in Environmental and Resource Economics, 2005-2009; London Business School Masters in Management programme 2009-2013; London School of Economics, Masters in Management programme since 2017.