

# Module 1: File formats, QC and Data Processing

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**Cancer Genome Analysis**

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# Data Formats

## FASTQ

- Unaligned read sequences with base qualities

## SAM/BAM

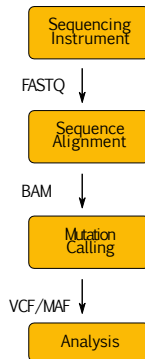
- Unaligned or aligned reads
- Text and binary formats

## CRAM

- Better compression than BAM

## VCF/BCF or MAF

- Flexible variant call format
- Arbitrary types of sequence variation
- SNPs, indels, structural variations



BAM/VCF specifications maintained by the Global Alliance for Genomics and Health  
MAF documentation can be found in NCI's Genomic Data Commons

# FASTA – reference genome

```
>1 dna:chromosome chromosome:GRCh37:1:1:249250621:1
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN
TATTCAAAAATTGAGAATTTCTGACCACTTAACAAACCCACAGAAAATCCACCCGAGTG
CACTGAGCACGCCAGAAATCAGGTGGCCTCAAAGAGCTGCTCCACCTGAAGGAGACGCG
CTGCTGCTGCTGTCGTCCTGCCTGGCGCCTTGGCCTACAGGGGCCGCGGTTGAGGGTGGG
AGTGGGGGTGCACTGGCCAGCACCTCAGGAGCTGGGGGTGGTGGTGGGGGCGGTGGGGGT
GGTGTTAGTACCCCATCTTGTAGGTCTGAAACACAAAGTGTGGGGTGTCTAGGGAAGAAG
>2
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN
AAAAGCATTTATGCTACAAATTACTATGGTAATTATGCTACAAATTTATGGTACCATAAA
TTACCATAGTAATTTGTAGCATAAATTTGTACTATGGTACAAATTACATGGGAGAGTGAA
GGTGGGTTAAACATTCAATTAAGAACTTCCACTCAGATTGCAAGAAAAGAGAGAGGA
ATGGAGATGGTAGCACAAAGTCCCTACAATAAAAGTAGATGTTTTGAGATCAGTTCTATTT
```

# FASTA – reference genome

```
>1 dna:chromosome chromosome:GRCh37:1:1:249250621:1
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN
TATTCAAAAATTGAGAATTTCTGACCACTTAACAAACCCACAGAAAATCCACCCGAGTG
CACTGAGCACGCCAGAAATCAGGTGGCCTCAAAGAGCTGCTCCACCTGAAGGAGACGCG
CTGCTGCTGCTGTCGCTCGCTGGCGCCTTGGCCTACAGGGGCCGCGGTTGAGGGTGGG
AGTGGGGGTGCACTGGCCAGCACCTCAGGAGCTGGGGGTGGTGGTGGGGGCGGTGGGGGT
GGTGTAGTACCCCATCTTGTAGGTCTGAAACACAAAGTGTGGGGTGTCTAGGGAAGAAG
>2
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN
AAAAGCATTTATGCTACAAATTACTATGGTAATTATGCTACAAATTTATGGTACCATAAA
TTACCATAGTAATTTGTAGCATAAATTTGTACTATGGTACAAATTACATGGGAGAGTGAA
GGTGGGTAAACATTCATATTAAGAAGTTCCTCAGATTGCAAGAAAAGAGAGAGGA
ATGGAGATGGTAGCACAAAGTCCCTACAATAAAAGTAGATGTTTTGAGATCAGTTCTATTT
```

2003	NCBI Build 34	hg16
2004	NCBI Build 35	hg17
2006	NCBI Build 36.1	hg18
2009	GRCh37	hg19
2013	GRCh38	hg38

- Simple format for raw unaligned sequencing reads
- Extension to the FASTA file format
- Sequence and an associated per base quality score

```
@ERR007731.739 IL16_2979:6:1:9:1684/1
CTTGACGACTTGAAAAATGACGAAATCACTAAAAACGTGAAAAATGAGAAATG
+
BBCBCBBBBBBBBABBABBBBBBBABBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBABAAAABBBBBB=>B
@ERR007731.740 IL16_2979:6:1:9:1419/1
AAAAAAAAAAGATGTCATCAGCACATCAGAAAAGAAGCAACTTTAAACTTTTC
+
BBABBBABABABABABBBBAAA>@B@BBAA@4AAA>.>BAA@779:AAA@A
```

- Quality encoded in ASCII characters with decimal codes 33-126
  - ASCII code of “A” is 65, the corresponding quality is  $Q=65-33=32$
  - Phred quality score:  $P = 10^{-Q/10}$   

```
perl -e 'printf "%d\n",ord("A")-33;'
```

- Simple format for raw unaligned sequencing reads
- Extension to the FASTA file format
- Sequence and an associated per base quality score

```
@ERR007731.739 IL16_2979:6:1:9:1684/1
CTTGACGACTTGAAAAATGACGAAATCACTAAAAACGTGAAAAATGAGAAATG
+
BBCBCBBBBBBBABBBABBBBBBABBBBBBBBBBBBBBABAAAABBBBB=>B
@ERR007731.740 IL16_2979:6:1:9:1419/1
AAAAAAAAAAGATGTCATCAGCACATCAGAAAAGAAGCAACTTTAAACTTTTC
+
BBABBBABABABABABBBBAAA>@B@BBAA@4AAA>.>BAA@779:AAA@A
```

- Quality encoded in ASCII characters with decimal codes 33-126
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```
perl -e 'printf "%d\n",ord("A")-33;'
```

Quality	Probability of error	Accuracy
10 (Q10)	1 in 10	90%
20 (Q20)	1 in 100	99%
30 (Q30)	1 in 1000	99.9%
40 (Q40)	1 in 10000	99.99%

## ASCII Table

0	NUL	'\0' (null character)
1	SOH	(start of heading)
2	STX	(start of text)
3	ETX	(end of text)
4	EOT	(end of transmission)
5	ENQ	(enquiry)
6	ACK	(acknowledge)
7	BEL	'\a' (bell)
8	BS	'\b' (backspace)
9	HT	'\t' (horizontal tab)
10	LF	'\n' (new line)
11	VT	'\v' (vertical tab)
12	FF	'\f' (form feed)
13	CR	'\r' (carriage ret)
14	SO	(shift out)
15	SI	(shift in)
16	DLE	(data link escape)
17	DC1	(device control 1)
18	DC2	(device control 2)
19	DC3	(device control 3)
20	DC4	(device control 4)
21	NAK	(negative ack.)
22	SYN	(synchronous idle)
23	ETB	(end of trans. blk)
24	CAN	(cancel)
25	EM	(end of medium)
26	SUB	(substitute)
27	ESC	(escape)
28	FS	(file separator)
29	GS	(group separator)
30	RS	(record separator)
31	US	(unit separator)
32	SPACE	

33	!	66	B	99	c
34	"	67	C	100	d
35	#	68	D	101	e
36	\$	69	E	102	f
37	%	70	F	103	g
38	&	71	G	104	h
39	'	72	H	105	i
40	(	73	I	106	j
41	)	74	J	107	k
42	*	75	K	108	l
43	+	76	L	109	m
44	,	77	M	110	n
45	-	78	N	111	o
46	.	79	O	112	p
47	/	80	P	113	q
48	0	81	Q	114	r
49	1	82	R	115	s
50	2	83	S	116	t
51	3	84	T	117	u
52	4	85	U	118	v
53	5	86	V	119	w
54	6	87	W	120	x
55	7	88	X	121	y
56	8	89	Y	122	z
57	9	90	Z	123	{
58	:	91	[	124	
59	;	92	\	125	}
60	<	93	]	126	~
61	=	94	^	127	DEL
62	>	95	_		
63	?	96	`		
64	@	97	a		
65	A	98	b		

- Simple format for raw unaligned sequencing reads
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```
@ERR007731.739 IL16_2979:6:1:9:1684/1
CTTGACGACTTGAAAAATGACGAAATCACTAAAAACGTGAAAAATGAGAAATG
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@ERR007731.740 IL16_2979:6:1:9:1419/1
AAAAAAAAAAGATGTCATCAGCACATCAGAAAAGAAGCAACTTTAAACTTTTC
+
BBABBBABABABABABBBBAAA>@B@BBAA@4AAA>.>BAA@779:AAA@A
```

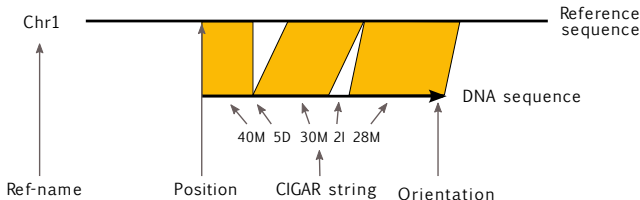
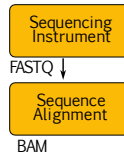
- Quality encoded in ASCII characters with decimal codes 33-126
  - ASCII code of “A” is 65, the corresponding quality is  $Q=65-33=32$
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```
perl -e 'printf "%d\n",ord("A")-33;'
```
- Beware: multiple quality scores were in use!
  - Sanger, Solexa, Illumina 1.3+
- Paired-end sequencing produces two FASTQ files



## SAM (Sequence Alignment/Map) format

- Unified format for storing read alignments to a reference genome
- Developed by the 1000 Genomes Project group (2009)
- One record (a single DNA fragment alignment) per line describing alignment between fragment and reference
- 11 fixed columns + optional key:type:value tuples



Note that BAM can contain

- unmapped reads
- multiple alignments of the same read
- supplementary (chimeric) reads

```
$ samtools view -h file.bam | less
```

```
@HD VN:1.0 GO:none SO:coordinate
```

```
@SQ SN:1 LN:249250621 UR:hs37d5.fa.gz AS:NCBI37 M5:1b22b98cdeb4a9304cb5dc48026a85128 SP:Human
@SQ SN:2 LN:243199373 UR:hs37d5.fa.gz AS:NCBI37 M5:a0d9851da0040dec1098a9255ac712e SP:Human
@RG ID:1 PL:ILLUMINA PU:13350_1 LB:13350_1 SM:13350_1 CN:SC
@PG ID:bwa FN:bwa VN:0.7.10-r806 CL:bwa mem hs37d5.fa.gz 13350_1_1.fq 13350_1_1.fq
1:2203:10256:56986 97 1 9998 0 106M4S = 10335 0 \
      CCATAAACCTTAACCCCTAACCTTAACCATAGCCCTAACCCCTAAACCTTAACCTTAACCTT[...]CAAAACCCACCCCACAAACCCAAACCTCACAC\
      FFFFFJJJJJJJJJJJJJJJAJJJJJ-JJAAAJJJJJJJJFJJFJJFJJJJJJJJJJF[...]<--F-----A-J-K-A---77AF---J7- \
MD:Z:1G24C2A76 PG:J:MarkDuplicates R:2 L NM:i:3 MO:i:0 AS:i:94 XS:i:94
```

## SAM fields

1	QNAME	Query NAME of the read or the read pair
2	FLAG	Bitwise FLAG (pairing, strand, mate strand, etc.)
3	RNAME	Reference sequence NAME
4	POS	1-Based leftmost POSITION of clipped alignment
5	MAPQ	MAPPING Quality (Phred-scaled)
6	CIGAR	Extended CIGAR string (operations: MIDNSHPX=)
7	MRNM	Mate Reference NaMe ('=' if same as RNAME)
8	MPOS	1-Based leftmost Mate POSITION
9	ISIZE	Inferred Insert SIZE
10	SEQ	Query SEQUENCE on the same strand as the reference
11	QUAL	Query QUALity (ASCII-33=Phred base quality)
12-	OTHER	Optional fields

# CIGAR string

## Compact representation of sequence alignment

- M alignment match or mismatch
- = sequence match
- X sequence mismatch
- I insertion to the reference
- D deletion from the reference
- S soft clipping (clipped sequences present in SEQ)
- H hard clipping (clipped sequences NOT present in SEQ)
- N skipped region from the reference
- P padding (silent deletion from padded reference)

## Examples:

```
Ref:      ACGTACGTACGTACGT
Read:     ACGT----ACGTACGA
Cigar:    4M 4D 8M
```

```
Ref:      ACGT----ACGTACGT
Read:     ACGTACGTACGTACGT
Cigar:    4M 4I 8M
```

```
Ref:      ACTCAGTG--GT
Read:     ACGCA-TGCAGTtagacgt
Cigar:    5M 1D 2M 2I 2M 7S
```

# Flags

Hex	Dec	Flag	Description
0x1	1	PAIRED	paired-end (or multiple-segment) sequencing technology
0x2	2	PROPER_PAIR	each segment properly aligned according to the aligner
0x4	4	UNMAP	segment unmapped
0x8	8	MUNMAP	next segment in the template unmapped
0x10	16	REVERSE	SEQ is reverse complemented
0x20	32	MREVERSE	SEQ of the next segment in the template is reversed
0x40	64	READ1	the first segment in the template
0x80	128	READ2	the last segment in the template
0x100	256	SECONDARY	secondary alignment
0x200	512	QCFAIL	not passing quality controls
0x400	1024	DUP	PCR or optical duplicate
0x800	2048	SUPPLEMENTARY	supplementary alignment

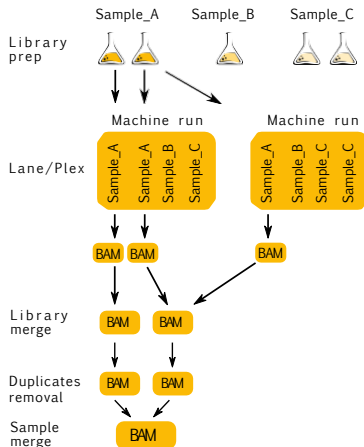
Bit operations made easy

- python  
0x1 | 0x2 | 0x20 | 0x80 .. 163  
bin(163) .. 10100011
- samtools flags  
0xa3 163 PAIRED,PROPER\_PAIR,MREVERSE,READ2

# Optional tags

Each lane has a unique RG tag that contains meta-data for the lane RG tags

- ID: SRR/ERR number
- PL: Sequencing platform
- PU: Run name
- LB: Library name
- PI: Insert fragment size
- SM: Individual
- CN: Sequencing center



BAM (Binary Alignment/Map) format

- Binary version of SAM
- Developed for fast processing and random access
  - BGZF (Block GZIP) compression for indexing

Key features

- Can store alignments from most mappers
- Supports multiple sequencing technologies
- Supports indexing for quick retrieval/viewing
- Compact size (e.g. 112Gbp Illumina = 116GB disk space)
- Reads can be grouped into logical groups e.g. lanes, libraries, samples
- Widely supported by variant calling packages and viewers

SAM/BAM tools

Several tools and programs for interacting with SAM/BAM files:

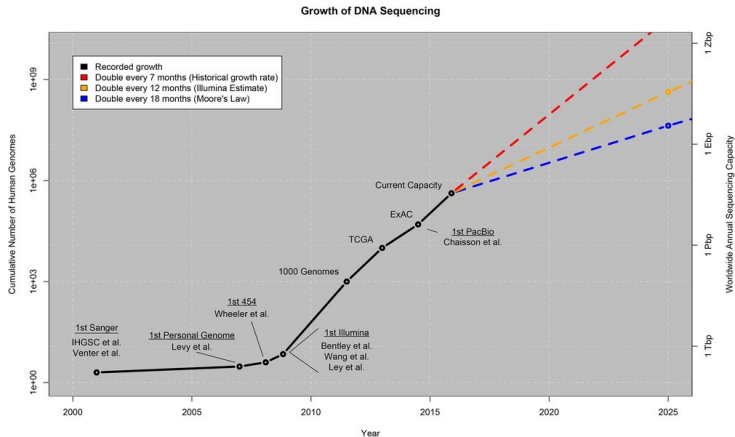
- Samtools (Wellcome Sanger Institute)
- Picard tools (Broad Institute)
- Visualisation: IGV, Ensembl, UCSC

# Reference-based Compression

BAM files are too large

- ~1.5-2 bytes per base pair

Increases in disk capacity are being far outstripped by sequencing technologies



# Reference-based Compression

BAM files are too large

- ~1.5-2 bytes per base pair

Increases in disk capacity are being far outstripped by sequencing technologies

BAM stores all of the data

- Every read base
- Every base quality
- Using a single conventional compression technique for all types of data

```
Reference sequence: ACGTACGTACGTACGTACGTACGTACGTACGTAC
read 1:             ACGTACGTACGTACGTACGTGC
read 2:             TACGTACGCACGTACGTGCGTA
read 3:             CGTACGCACGTACGTACGTACG
read 4:             TACGTACGTACGTGCGTACGTA
read 5:             CGCACGTACGTACGTACGTACG
read 6:             TACGTGCGTACGTACGTAC
```



# Reference-based Compression

BAM files are too large

- ~1.5-2 bytes per base pair

Increases in disk capacity are being far outstripped by sequencing technologies

BAM stores all of the data

- Every read base
- Every base quality
- Using a single conventional compression technique for all types of data

```
Reference sequence: ACGTACGTACGTACGTACGTACGTACGTAC
read 1:      .....G.
read 2:      .....C.....G....
read 3:      .....C.....
read 4:      .....G.....
read 5:      .....C.....
read 6:      .....G.....
```

# CRAM

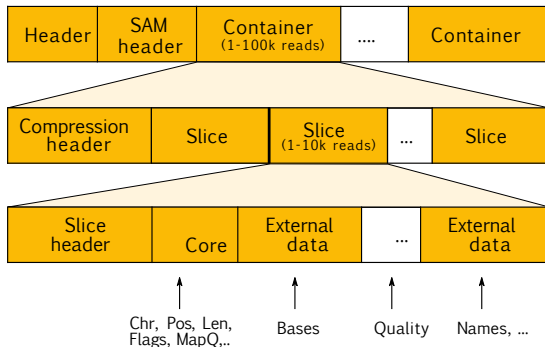
Three important concepts

- Reference-based compression
- Controlled loss of quality information
- Different compression methods to suit the type of data, e.g. base qualities vs. metadata vs. extra tags

In lossless mode: 60% of BAM size

CRAM is now mature and used in production pipelines

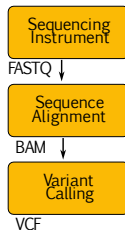
- Support for CRAM added to Samtools/HTSlib in 2014
- Added in Picard/GATK in 2015



# VCF: Variant Call Format

## File format for storing generic variation data

- Accommodate all types of variation: SNPs, short indels, large events
- Multiple samples



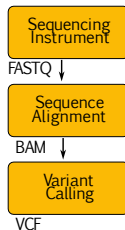
# VCF: Variant Call Format

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## Columns

- Chromosome and position
- Variant ID
- Quality of the call
- Soft filtering (*e.g.*, is the site low quality, low depth, etc)
- Optional per-site information in the INFO column
- Optional per-sample information in the FORMAT columns (one column per sample)
- Optional tags: DP (sequencing depth), GQ (genotype quality)



# VCF: Variant Call Format

## File format for storing generic variation data

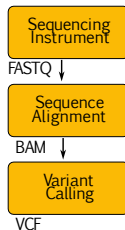
- Accommodate all types of variation: SNPs, short indels, large events
- Multiple samples

## Genotypes (for diploid individuals)

- Homozygous reference (e.g., A/A if the reference allele is A)
- Homozygous alternative (e.g., G/G if the reference allele is A)
- Heterozygous (e.g., C/T)

## Allele numbering (for VCF notation):

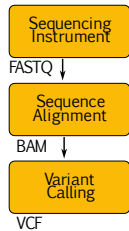
- Reference allele is 0, first alternative allele is 1, second is 2, etc
- Homozygous reference (0/0)
- Homozygous alternative (1/1, 2/2, etc.)
- Heterozygous (0/1, 1/2, etc)



## VCF: Variant Call Format

## File format for storing generic variation data

- Accommodate all types of variation: SNPs, short indels, large events
- Multiple samples
- Tab-delimited text, parsable by standard UNIX commands
- Flexible and user-extensible
- Compressed with BGZF (bgzip), indexed with TBI or CSI (tabix)



The diagram illustrates the structure of a VCF (Variant Call Format) file, divided into a **Header** and a **Body**.

**Header Section:**

- Mandatory header lines:** These are lines starting with `##` that provide file metadata. Examples include:
  - `##fileformat=VCFv4.0`
  - `##fileDate=20100707`
  - `##source=VCFtools`
  - `##reference=NCBI36`
- Optional header lines (meta-data):** These lines provide additional information about the annotations in the VCF body. Examples include:
  - `##INFO=<ID=AA,Number=1,Type=String,Description="Ancestral Allele">`
  - `##INFO=<ID=H2,Number=0,Type=Flag,Description="HapMap2 membership">`
  - `##FORMAT=<ID=GT,Number=1,Type=String,Description="Genotype">`
  - `##FORMAT=<ID=GQ,Number=1,Type=Integer,Description="Genotype Quality (phred score)">`
  - `##FORMAT=<ID=GL,Number=3,Type=Float,Description="Likelihoods for RR,RA,AA genotypes (R=ref,A=alt)">`
  - `##FORMAT=<ID=DP,Number=1,Type=Integer,Description="Read Depth">`
  - `##ALT=<ID=DEL,Description="Deletion">`
  - `##INFO=<ID=SVTYPE,Number=1,Type=String,Description="Type of structural variant">`
  - `##INFO=<ID=END,Number=1,Type=Integer,Description="End position of the variant">`

**Body Section:**

The body contains variant records. Each record is a line of tab-separated fields:

#CHROM	POS	ID	REF	ALT	QUAL	FILTER	INFO	FORMAT	SAMPLE1	SAMPLE2
1	1		ACG	A,AT	.	PASS	.	GT:DP	1/2:13	0/0:29
1	2	rs1	C	T,CT	.	PASS	H2;AA=T	GT:GQ	0 1:100	2/2:70
1	5		A	G	.	PASS	.	GT:GQ	1 0:77	1/1:95
1	100		T	<DEL>	.	PASS	SVTYPE=DEL;END=300	GT:GQ:DP	1/1:12:3	0/0:20

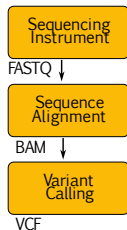
**Annotations for the Body:**

- Reference alleles (GT=0):** Indicated by a blue arrow pointing to the first column (REF) in the body.
- Alternate alleles (GT>0 is an index to the ALT column):** Indicated by a blue arrow pointing to the ALT column.
- Phased data (G and C above are on the same chromosome):** Indicated by a blue arrow pointing to the vertical bar in the SAMPLE1 genotype (0|1).
- Deletion:** Indicated by a blue arrow pointing to the <DEL> in the ALT column for the last record.
- SNP:** Indicated by a blue arrow pointing to the A/G variant in the ALT column for the third record.
- Large SV:** Indicated by a blue arrow pointing to the T/G variant in the ALT column for the second record.
- Insertion:** Indicated by a blue arrow pointing to the T,CT in the ALT column for the first record.
- Other event:** Indicated by a blue arrow pointing to the SVTYPE=DEL;END=300 in the INFO column for the last record.

# VCF: Variant Call Format

## File format for storing generic variation data

- Accommodate all types of variation: SNPs, short indels, large events
- Multiple samples
- Tab-delimited text, parsable by standard UNIX commands
- Flexible and user-extensible
- Compressed with BGZF (bgzip), indexed with TBI or CSI (tabix)



## Some annotations important in tumour VCFs:

- AF: Allelic fraction of alternate alleles in tumour sample
- GERMQ: Phred-scaled quality that ALT alleles are not germline
- PON: Site found in panel of normals

# VCF / BCF

VCFs can be very big

- compressed VCF with 3781 samples, human data:
  - 54 GB for chromosome 1
  - 680 GB whole genome

VCFs can be slow to parse

- text conversion is slow
- main bottleneck: FORMAT fields

```
##fileformat=VCFv4.0
##fileDate=20100707
##source=VCFtools
##ALT=<ID=DEL,Description="Deletion">
##INFO=<ID=END,Number=1,Type=Integer,Description="End position of the variant">
#CHROM POS ID REF ALT QUAL FILTER INFO FORMAT SAMPLE1 SAMPLE2
1 3 . A G . PASS AC=67;AN=5400;DP=2809 GT:PL:DP:GQ 1/1:0,9,73:26:22 0/0:0,9,73:13:31 0/0:0,9,73:48:99 1/0:255,0,75:32:15 1/0:255,0,75:32:15
1 4 . A T . PASS AC=15;AN=6800;DP=6056 GT:PL:DP:GQ 0/0:0,9,73:13:31 1/0:255,0,75:32:15 0/0:0,2,80:14:90 1/1:0,9,73:26:22 0/0:0,9,73:13:31
1 5 . C T . PASS AC=20;AN=6701;DP=5234 GT:PL:DP:GQ 1/0:255,0,75:32:15 0/0:0,2,170:14:90 1/1:0,9,73:13:31 0/0:0,6,50:13:80 0/0:0,2,80:14:90
1 6 . A G . PASS AC=67;AN=5400;DP=2809 GT:PL:DP:GQ 1/1:0,9,73:26:22 0/0:0,9,73:13:31 0/0:0,9,73:48:99 1/0:255,0,75:32:15 1/0:255,0,75:32:15
1 7 . A T . PASS AC=15;AN=6800;DP=6056 GT:PL:DP:GQ 0/0:0,9,73:13:31 1/0:255,0,75:32:15 0/0:0,2,80:14:90 1/1:0,9,73:26:22 0/0:0,9,73:13:31
```

BCF

- binary representation of VCF
- fields rearranged for fast access

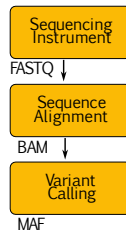
#CHROM	POS	ID	REF	ALT	QUAL	FILTER	INFO	FORMAT	SAMPLE1	SAMPLE2	SAMPLE3	SAMPLE4	SAMPLE5
1	6	.	A	G	.	PASS	AC=67;AN=540	GT:PL:DP:GQ	1/1:0,9,73:26:22	0/0:0,9,73:13:31	0/0:0,9,73:48:99	1/0:255,0,75:32:15	1/0:255,0,75:32:15
1	6	.	A	G	.	PASS	AC=67;AN=540	GT:1:1:0:0:0:0:1/0:1/0	PL:0,9,73:0,9,73:0,9,73:255,0,75:255,0,75	DP:26:13:48:32:32	GQ:22:31:99:15:15		



## File format for storing aggregated variation data

- Stands for “Mutation-Annotation Format” and is a tab-delimited text file containing aggregated information from VCF files (NCI-GDC)
- It aggregates lots of information – 120+ fields per mutation! You can review all these at:

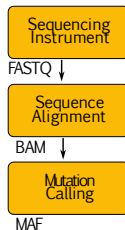
[https://docs.gdc.cancer.gov/Data/File\\_Formats/MAF\\_Format/](https://docs.gdc.cancer.gov/Data/File_Formats/MAF_Format/)



Column				
1 - Hugo_Symbol	13 - Tumor_Seq_Allele2	25 - Validation_Status	41 - t_ref_count	56 - Amino_acids
	14 - dbSNP_RS	26 - Mutation_Status	42 - t_alt_count	57 - Codons
			43 - n_depth	58 - Existing_variation
	15 - dbSNP_Val_Status		44 - n_ref_count	59 - ALLELE_NUM
2 - Entrez_Gene_Id		27 - Sequencing_Phase	45 - n_alt_count	60 - DISTANCE
	16 - Tumor_Sample_Barcode		46 - all_effects	61 - TRANSCRIPT_STRAND
3 - Center	17 - Matched_Norm_Sample_Barcode	28 - Sequence_Source		62 - SYMBOL
4 - NCBI_Build	18 - Match_Norm_Seq_Allele1		47 - Allele	63 - SYMBOL_SOURCE
5 - Chromosome		29 - Validation_Method	48 - Gene	64 - HGNC_ID
6 - Start_Position	19 - Match_Norm_Seq_Allele2	30 - Score	49 - Feature	65 - BIOTYPE
7 - End_Position	20 - Tumor_Validation_Allele1	31 - BAM_File	50 - Feature_type	66 - CANONICAL
8 - Strand		32 - Sequencer	51 - One_Consequence	67 - CCDS
	21 - Tumor_Validation_Allele2	33 - Tumor_Sample_UUID	52 - Consequence	68 - ENSP
9 - Variant_Classification	22 - Match_Norm_Validation_Allele1	34 - Matched_Norm_Sample_UUID	53 - cDNA_position	69 - SWISSPROT
10 - Variant_Type		35 - HGVSc		70 - TREMBL
		36 - HGVSp	54 - CDS_position	71 - UNIPARC
	23 - Match_Norm_Validation_Allele2	37 - HGVSp_Short		72 - RefSeq
11 - Reference_Allele		38 - Transcript_ID	55 - Protein_position	73 - SIFT
12 - Tumor_Seq_Allele1	24 - Verification_Status	39 - Exon_Number		74 - PolyPhen
		40 - t_depth		75 - EXON
				76 - INTRON
				77 - DOMAINS
				78 - GMAF

## You can convert between VCF and MAF via vcf2maf tools!

```
perl vcf2maf.pl --input-vcf [vcf_file] --output-maf  
[maf_file] --vep-path /cm/shared/apps/vep/ensembl-vep-  
release-106.1/ --vep-data /mnt/Archives/vep/106/38/ --ref-  
fasta [fasta_file] --tumor-id [tumor] --normal-id [normal]
```



# Global Alliance for Genomics and Health

International coalition dedicated to improving human health

Mission

- establish a common framework to enable sharing of genomic and clinical data

Working groups

- clinical
- regulatory and ethics
- security
- data



**Global Alliance**  
for Genomics & Health

Data working group

- beacon project .. test the willingness of international sites to share genetic data
- BRCA challenge .. advance understanding of the genetic basis of breast and other cancers
- matchmaker exchange .. locate data on rare phenotypes or genotypes
- reference variation .. describe how genomes differ so researchers can assemble and interpret them
- benchmarking .. develop variant calling benchmark toolkits for germline, cancer, and transcripts
- file formats .. CRAM, SAM/BAM, VCF/BCF

File formats

- <http://samtools.github.io/hts-specs/>

## Biases in sequencing

- Base calling accuracy
- Read cycle vs. base content
- GC vs. depth
- Indel ratio

## Biases in mapping

## Genotype checking

- Sample swaps
- Contaminations

## Read coverage / depth

- Is every genomic position covered to a sufficient depth?
- Average depth: number of reads / target size
  - Whole human genome: 3Gb
  - Human exome: 50Mb

## Exomes

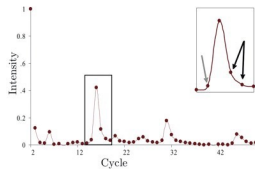
- Be careful to distinguish between the total sequencing yield and on-target bases

## Useful coverage:

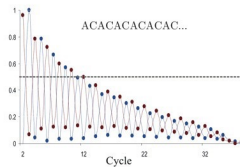
- 15x OK for common germline variants
- 30x OK for most things
- 100-200x for low VAF variants in tumours

# Base calling errors

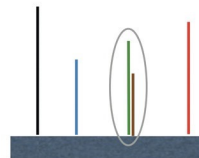
Phasing noise  $\phi$



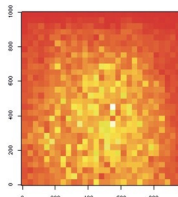
Signal Decay  $\delta$



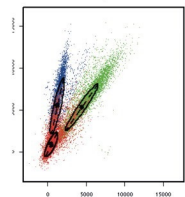
Mixed Cluster  $\mu$



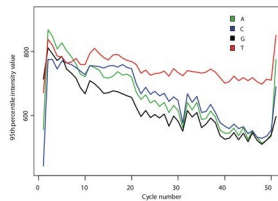
Boundary effects  $\omega$



Cross-talk  $\Sigma$



T fluophore accumulation  $\mathcal{T}$

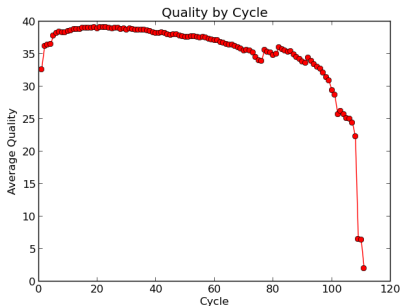


# Base quality

Sequencing by synthesis: dephasing

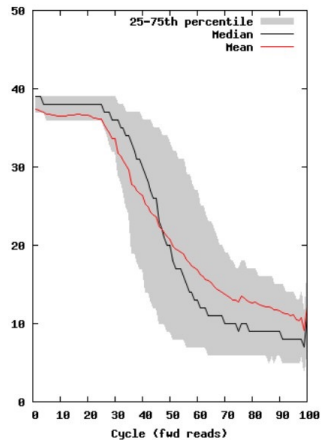
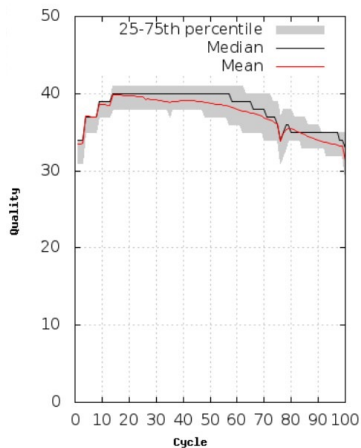
- growing sequences in a cluster gradually desynchronize
- error rate increases with read length

Calculate the average quality at each position across all reads



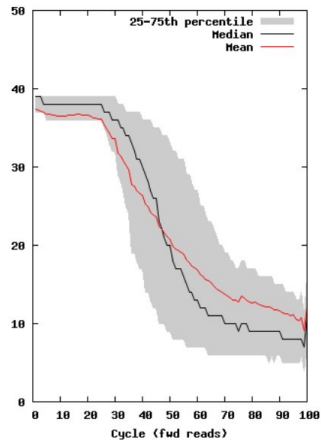
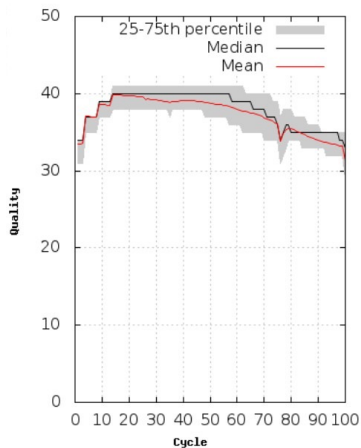
Quality	Probability of error	Call Accuracy
10 (Q10)	1 in 10	90%
20 (Q20)	1 in 100	99%
30 (Q30)	1 in 1000	99.9%
40 (Q40)	1 in 10000	99.99%

# Base quality





# Base quality



### **Experiments start with small amounts of DNA**

- A PCR amplification step is necessary for Illumina sequencing: one molecule → many identical molecules

### **Problem:**

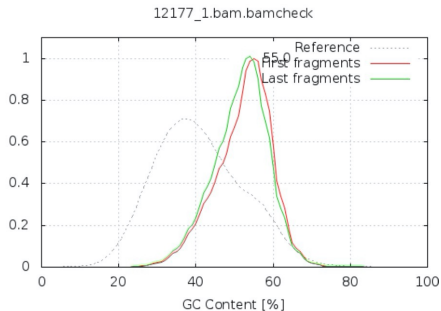
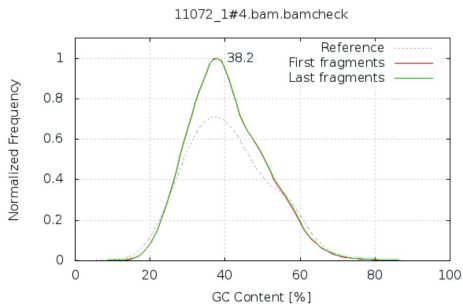
- Additional PCR copy molecules are not informative

### **Solution:**

- Infer and mark PCR duplicates, discount in later analysis
  - Mark if reads and their mates start at the same position
- Use Picard MarkDuplicates or samtools markdup
- Typical duplication rates: Exomes 15-20%, Genomes < 5%

GC- and AT-rich regions are more difficult to amplify

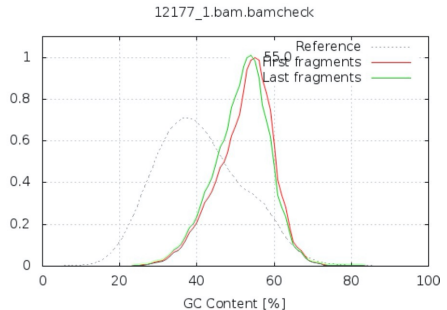
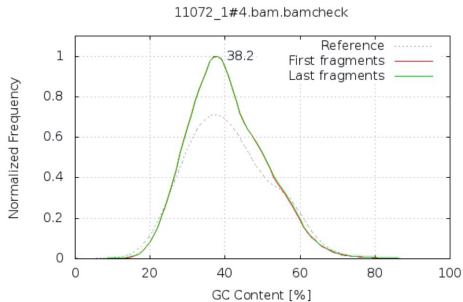
- compare the GC content against the expected distribution (reference sequence)



# GC bias

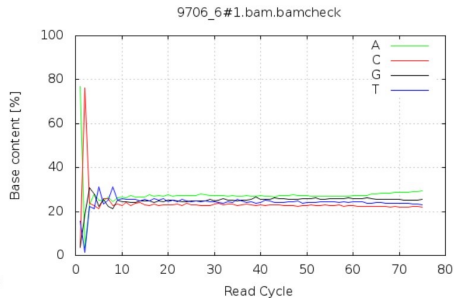
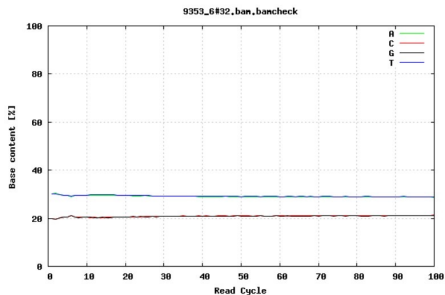
GC- and AT-rich regions are more difficult to amplify

- compare the GC content against the expected distribution (reference sequence)



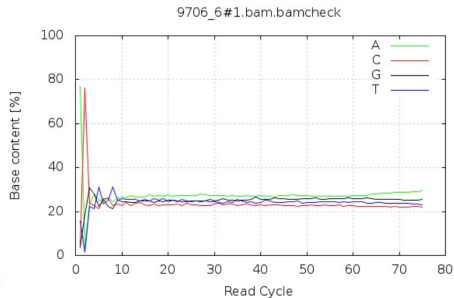
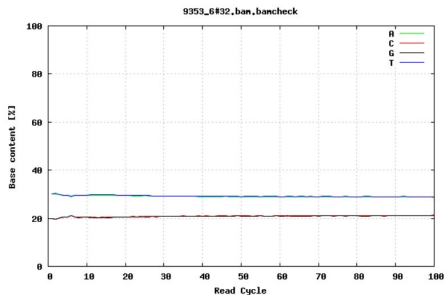
# QC content by cycle

Was the adapter sequence trimmed?



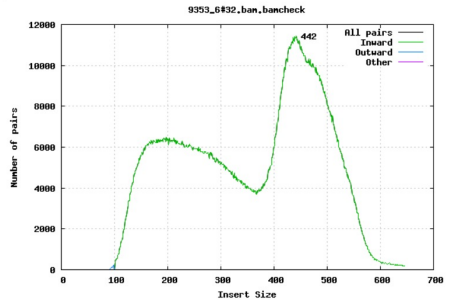
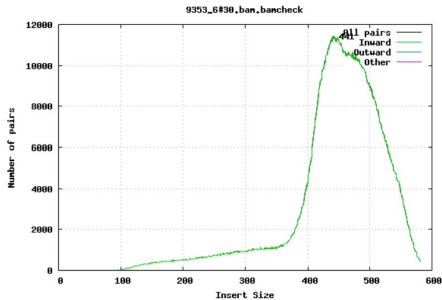
# CC content by cycle

Was the adapter sequence trimmed?



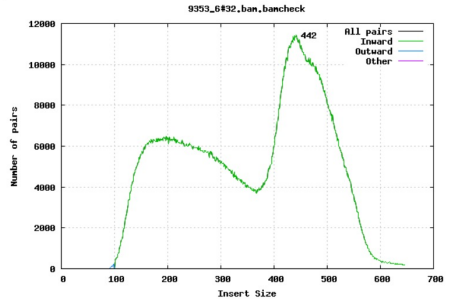
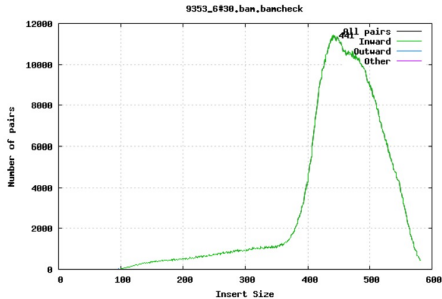
# Fragment size

Paired-end sequencing: the size of DNA fragments matters



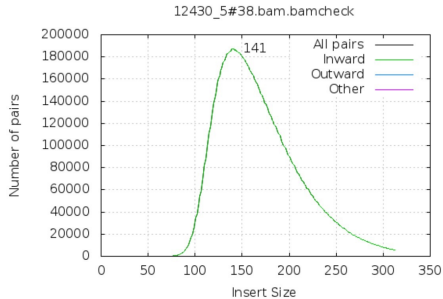
# Fragment size

Paired-end sequencing: the size of DNA fragments matters



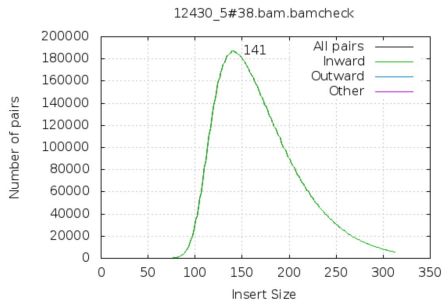


# Quiz



This is 100bp paired-end sequencing. Can you spot any problems??

# Quiz



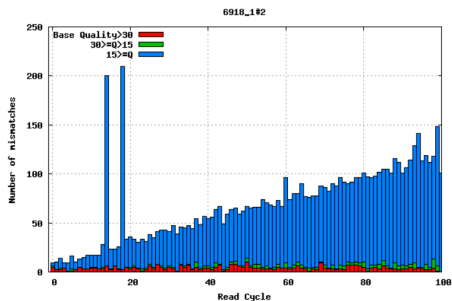
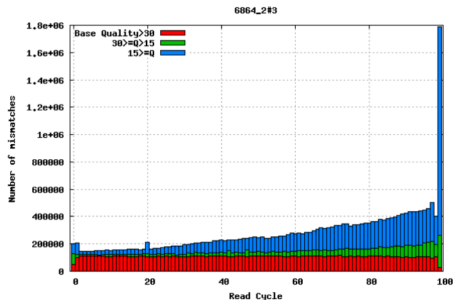
This is 100bp paired-end sequencing. Can you spot any problems??

The insert size should be at least 200bp for the mates not to overlap.

# Mismatches per cycle

Mismatches in aligned reads (requires reference sequence)

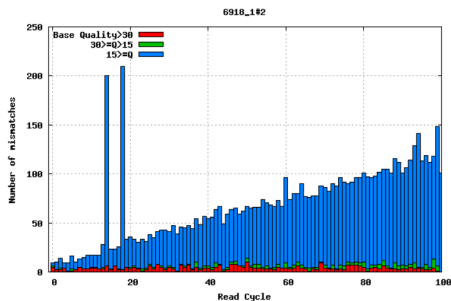
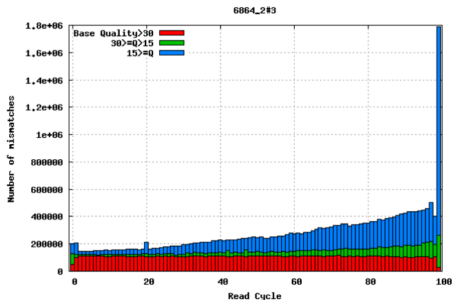
- detect cycle-specific errors
- Base qualities are informative!



# Mismatches per cycle

Mismatches in aligned reads (requires reference sequence)

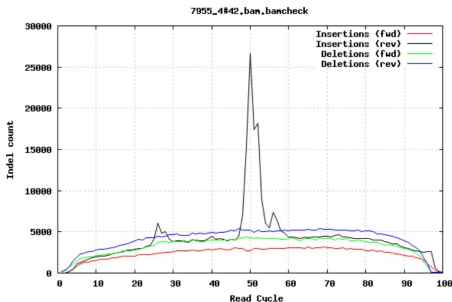
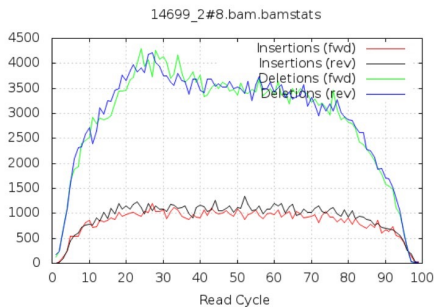
- detect cycle-specific errors
- Base qualities are informative!



# Insertions / Deletions per cycle

## False indels

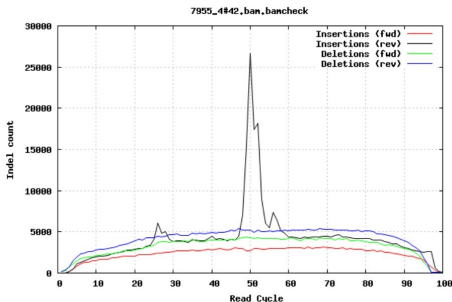
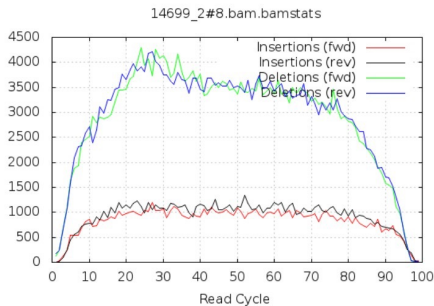
- air bubbles in the flow cell can manifest as false indels



# Insertions / Deletions per cycle

## False indels

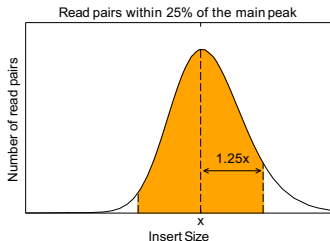
- air bubbles in the flow cell can manifest as false indels



# Auto QC tests

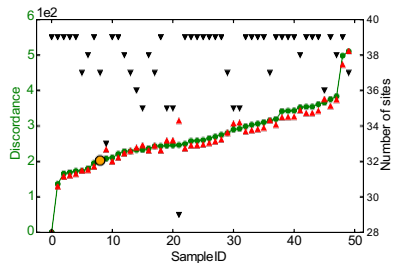
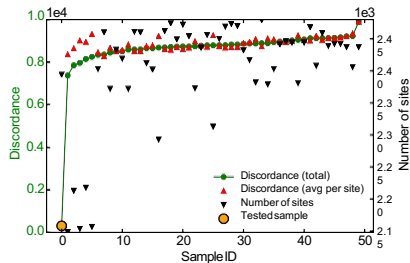
A suggestion for human data:

Minimum number of mapped bases	90%
Maximum error rate	0.02%
Maximum number of duplicate reads	5%
Minimum number of mapped reads which are properly paired	80%
Maximum number of duplicated bases due to overlapping read pairs	4%
Maximum in/del ratio	0.82
Minimum in/del ratio	0.68
Maximum indels per cycle, factor above median	8
Minimum number of reads within 25% of the main peak	80%



# Detecting sample swaps

Check the identity against a known set of variants





Software used to produce graphs in these slides

- `samtools stats` and `plot-bamstats`
- `bcftools gtcheck`
- `matplotlib`

## Exercise time!

- ▶ Open your VM
- ▶ Open a terminal window.
- ▶ Go to the Module 1 folder:

```
cd /home/manager/Module_1
```

- ▶ Open the exercises, which are in the GitHub  
Data formats and QC
- ▶ Follow the instructions!

## Exercise time!

- ▶ Solutions will be shared through Slack!