\[ |V_{cb}| \text{ from the } \bar{B}^0 \to D^{*+} \ell^- \bar{\nu} \text{ zero-recoil form factor using } 2+1+1 \text{ flavour HISQ and NRQCD} \]

\[ |V_{cb}| \]

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We present the status of our ongoing calculation of the zero-recoil form factor for the semileptonic decay \( \bar{B}^0 \to D^{*+} \ell^- \bar{\nu} \) using lattice QCD with 2+1+1 flavours of highly improved staggered quarks in the sea (the MILC HISQ configurations) and using non-relativistic QCD for the bottom quark. We combine our result for \( F(1) \) with the latest HFAG average of \( \eta_{EW} F(1) |V_{cb}| \) to get a preliminary value for \( |V_{cb}| \).

**34th annual International Symposium on Lattice Field Theory**
24-30 July 2016
University of Southampton, UK

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1. Introduction

Tests of the unitarity of the Cabibbo-Kobayashi-Maskawa (CKM) matrix form a key check of the consistency of the standard model of particle physics. The unitarity conditions require that the elements of the CKM matrix satisfy $\sum_j V_{ij} V_{kj}^* = \delta_{ik}$ where, following the usual notation, $i$ and $k$ take values $u, c, t$ and $j$ takes values $d, s, b$. Currently the elements involved in transitions between third generation quarks and the lighter quarks are least well determined [1]. Of these elements, all with roughly commensurate errors, we focus on the exclusive determination of $|V_{cb}|$ using the semileptonic $B \rightarrow D^* \ell^- \bar{\nu}_\ell$ decay. The 2014 edition of the Review of Particle Physics [1] by the Particle Data Group notes that the value of $|V_{cb}|$ determined via exclusive decays of the $B$ meson to either a $D$ or $D^*$ and the inclusive determination, using all $B$ decays involving a $b \rightarrow c$ transition, are only marginally consistent. The most recent determination from lattice QCD using the Fermilab action for both $c$ and $b$ quarks reveals some tension [2]. We have therefore undertaken here a new calculation which differs significantly in approach. Our calculation uses a relativistic HISQ valence $c$ quark, a perturbatively improved nonrelativistic action for the $d$ quark and improved gauge field configurations [3, 4] that include highly improved staggered quarks (HISQ) in the sea with reduced taste-exchange violations [5] and physical light, strange and charm quark masses.

The decay rate can be parametrised as

$$\frac{d\Gamma}{d\omega}(B^0 \rightarrow D^{*+} \ell^- \bar{\nu}_\ell) = (1 + \pi \alpha) \frac{G_F^2 M_B}{4\pi^3} (M_B - M_{D^*})^2 (\omega^2 - 1)^{1/2} \chi(\omega) |V_{cb}|^2 |\eta_{EW} F(\omega)|^2$$

where $\omega = \nu \cdot \nu'$ is the product of the $B$ and $D^*$ four-velocities, $\chi(\omega)$ is a phase space factor, $\eta_{EW}$ accounts for electroweak corrections due to box diagrams in which a photon or $Z$ boson is exchanged in addition to a $W$ boson, $1 + \pi \alpha$ accounts for the Coulomb attraction of the final-state charged particles and $F(\omega)$ is the form factor coming from QCD. Many experiments have measured the differential rate as a function of $\omega$. One output of fits to such data is $|\eta_{EW} F(1)| V_{cb} | = 35.81(11)(44) \times 10^{-3}$ [6]. $\eta_{EW}$ can be estimated perturbatively with an error at least an order of magnitude smaller than we are concerned with [7]. All that is then needed for an accurate determination of $V_{cb}$ is the value of $F(1)$. Current lattice predictions give $F(1) = 0.902 \pm 0.017$ [1] which, combined with the experimental result and value for $\eta_{EW}$, yields $|V_{cb}| = 39.48(50)_{\text{exp}}(74)_{\text{theory}} \times 10^{-3}$, in tension with the inclusive result $|V_{cb}| = 42.2(0.7) \times 10^{-3}$.

2. Lattice Setup

The gluon field configurations that we use were generated by the MILC collaboration and include 2+1+1 flavours of dynamical HISQ quarks in the sea. The $u$ and $d$ quarks have equal mass, $m_u = m_d = m_l$, and we use the values $m_l/m_s = 0.2, 0.1$ and the physical value $1/27.4$ [8]. The $s$ and $c$ quarks in the sea are also well-tuned [9] and included using the HISQ action. The gauge action is the Symanzik improved gluon action [10] with coefficients correct to $O(\alpha_s a^2, n_f \alpha_s a^2)$. The $b$ quark is simulated using non-relativistic QCD [11, 12], which takes advantage of the non-relativistic nature of the $b$ quark dynamics in $B$ mesons and produces very good control over discretisation uncertainties.
recoil is from the axial vector current $\bar{\psi}\gamma_\mu\gamma_5\psi$ the perturbatively improved coefficients appearing in the NRQCD action correct through use light quarks with their physical masses.

Table 1: Details of the gauge configurations used in this work. We give the values for $\alpha_v(2/a)$ used in the matching relations. We refer to sets 1, 2 and 3 as ‘very coarse’, sets 4, 5 and 6 as ‘coarse’ and sets 7 and 8 as ‘fine’. The lattice spacings were determined from the $Y(2S − 1S)$ splitting in [12]. Sets 3, 6 and 8 use light quarks with their physical masses. $u_0$ is the tadpole improvement factor, here we use the Landau gauge mean link. The final column specifies the total number of configurations multiplied by the number of different start times used for sources on each. In order to improve statistics we use random wall sources.

| Set | $a(\text{fm})$ | $L/a \times T/a$ | $am_t$ | $am_s$ | $am_c$ | $\alpha_v(2/a)$ | $u_0$ | $n_{cfg} \times n_i$ |
|-----|----------------|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|-----------------|------|-----------------|
| 1   | 0.1474         | 16 $\times$ 48  | 0.013  | 0.065  | 0.838  | 0.346           | 0.8195| 960$\times$16   |
| 2   | 0.1463         | 24 $\times$ 48  | 0.0064 | 0.064  | 0.828  | 0.344           | 0.8202| 480$\times$4     |
| 3   | 0.145          | 32 $\times$ 48  | 0.00235| 0.0647 | 0.831  | 0.343           | 0.8195| 960$\times$4     |
| 4   | 0.1219         | 24 $\times$ 64  | 0.0102 | 0.0509 | 0.635  | 0.307           | 0.8341| 720$\times$4     |
| 5   | 0.1195         | 32 $\times$ 64  | 0.00507| 0.0507 | 0.628  | 0.308           | 0.8349| 960$\times$4     |
| 6   | 0.1189         | 48 $\times$ 64  | 0.00184| 0.0507 | 0.628  | 0.307           | 0.8341| 720$\times$4     |
| 7   | 0.0884         | 32 $\times$ 96  | 0.0074 | 0.037  | 0.440  | 0.267           | 0.8525| 960$\times$4     |
| 8   | 0.08787        | 64 $\times$ 96  | 0.00120| 0.0363 | 0.432  | 0.267           | 0.8518| 540$\times$4     |

Table 2: Valence quark masses and parameters used to calculate propagators. The $s$ and $c$ valence masses are taken from [9] and the $b$ mass from [12]. $(1 + \epsilon_{\text{Naik}})$ is the coefficient of the charm Naik term and $c_i$ are the perturbatively improved coefficients appearing in the NRQCD action correct through $\mathcal{O}(\alpha_v^3)$ [12]. The last column gives the $T$ values used in three point functions.

| Set | $am_t^{\text{val}}$ | $am_s^{\text{val}}$ | $am_b$ | $\epsilon_{\text{Naik}}$ | $c_1$ | $c_2$ | $c_3$ | $T$               |
|-----|----------------------|----------------------|--------|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------------------|
| 1   | 0.0641               | 0.826                | 3.297  | -0.345                    | 1.36  | 1.21  | 1.22  | 10,11,12,13       |
| 2   | 0.0636               | 0.828                | 3.263  | -0.340                    | 1.36  | 1.21  | 1.22  | 10,11,12,13       |
| 3   | 0.0628               | 0.827                | 3.25   | -0.345                    | 1.36  | 1.21  | 1.22  | 10,11,12,13       |
| 4   | 0.0522               | 0.645                | 2.66   | -0.226                    | 1.31  | 1.16  | 1.20  | 10,11,12,13       |
| 5   | 0.0505               | 0.627                | 2.62   | -0.224                    | 1.31  | 1.16  | 1.20  | 10,11,12,13       |
| 6   | 0.0507               | 0.631                | 2.62   | -0.226                    | 1.31  | 1.16  | 1.20  | 10,11,12,13       |
| 7   | 0.0364               | 0.434                | 1.91   | -0.117                    | 1.21  | 1.12  | 1.16  | 15,18,21,24       |
| 8   | 0.0360               | 0.4305               | 1.89   | -0.115                    | 1.21  | 1.12  | 1.16  | 10,13,16,19       |

In the case of the pseudoscalar to vector decay the only contribution to the form factor at zero recoil is from the axial vector current $\bar{\psi}\gamma_\mu\gamma_5\psi$:

$$
\langle V(p', \epsilon) | \bar{\psi}\gamma_\mu\gamma_5 Q | P(p) \rangle = 2M_V A_0(q^2) \epsilon^*_\mu \cdot q / q^2 q^\mu + (M_P + M_V) A_1(q^2) \left[ \epsilon^*_\mu - \epsilon^*_\epsilon \cdot q / q^2 q^\mu \right]
$$

$$
- A_2(q^2) \frac{\epsilon^*_\mu \cdot q}{M_B + M_V} \left[ \rho^\mu + \rho'^\mu - \frac{M_B^2 - M_V^2}{q^2} q^\mu \right]
$$

(2.1)

This reduces to

$$
\langle V(p' = 0, \epsilon) | \bar{\psi}\gamma_\mu\gamma_5 Q | P(\bar{p} = 0) \rangle = (M_P + M_V) A_1(q^2_{\omega = 1}) \epsilon^*_j
$$

(2.2)

for $j = 1, 2, 3$ where also

$$
F(1) = h_{A_1}(1) = \frac{M_P + M_V}{(2M_P 2M_V)^{1/2}} A_1(q^2_{\omega = 1})
$$

(2.3)
In order to extract this quantity from lattice calculations we compute the set of Euclidean correlation functions

\[
\begin{align*}
C_{B_{2\mu}}(t)_{ij} &= \langle \mathcal{O}(t)_{B_i} \mathcal{O}^\dagger(0)_{B_j} \rangle \\
C_{D_{2\mu}}(t)_{ij} &= \langle \mathcal{O}^{\mu}(t)_{D_i} \mathcal{O}^{\dagger\nu}(0)_{D_j} \rangle \\
C_{3_{\mu\kappa}}(T,t)_{ij} &= \langle \mathcal{O}^{\mu}(T)_{D_i} \mathcal{J}^{\kappa}(t) \mathcal{O}^{\dagger}(0)_{B_j} \rangle
\end{align*}
\]

where each operator \( \mathcal{O}_i \) is projected onto zero spatial momentum by summing over spatial lattice points and the current \( \mathcal{J}^{\kappa} \) is formed from appropriate combinations of NRQCD-HISQ lattice currents [13]. \( i \) and \( j \) label different smearing functions. These correlation functions can be expressed in terms of amplitudes and decaying exponentials by inserting a complete basis of states. Projecting onto zero momentum and setting \( q = (M_B - M_{D'}, 0, 0, 0) \) this gives

\[
\begin{align*}
C_{B_{2\mu}}(t)_{ij} &= \sum_{n} \sum_{\alpha = 0, 1} (-1)^{\alpha} \sqrt{Z_{L, B_n}^{(n)}} Z_{L, B_n}^{(n)} e^{-M_{B_n}^{(\alpha)} t} \\
C_{D_{2\mu}}(t)_{ij} &= \sum_{n,s} \sum_{\alpha = 0, 1} (-1)^{\alpha} \sqrt{Z_{L, B_n}^{(n)}} Z_{L, B_n}^{(n)} e^{-M_{B_n}^{(\alpha)} t} \varepsilon_s^{\mu} \varepsilon_s^{\nu} \left[ e^{-M_{B_n}^{(\alpha)} (L_s - t)} + e^{-M_{B_n}^{(\alpha)} (L_s - t)} \right] \\
C_{3_{\mu\kappa}}(T,t)_{ij} &= \sum_{n,m,s,a,b=0,1} \sqrt{Z_{L, B_n}^{(n)}} Z_{L, B_n}^{(n)} e^{-M_{B_n}^{(a)} t} \varepsilon_s^{\mu} \varepsilon_s^{\nu} \\
&\quad \times (M_{B_n}^{(a)} + M_{D_n}^{(b)}) A_{1, ba}^{(nm)} (q^2) e^{-M_{B_n}^{(a)} (T - t) - M_{B_n}^{(b)} t} (-1)^{a(T - t) + b t}
\end{align*}
\]

where \( n \) and \( m \) label excited states, \( s \) is a spin index and we have included the dependence upon time doubled states, labeled by \( a \) and \( b \), that result from using staggered quarks [5]. It can be shown that the \( Z^{1/2} \) and \( A_{1, ba}^{(nm)} \) factors, given our choice of operators, are real [14]. The spin-sum rules for the polarisation vectors \( \varepsilon \) then require us to take \( \nu = \mu = \kappa \neq 0 \). We extract \( h_{1, i} = (M_{B_i}^{(0)} + M_{D_i}^{(0)}) / (2M_{B_i}^{(0)} - 2M_{B_i}^{(0)}/A_{1, i}^{(0)})^{1/2} A_{1, i}^{(0)} \) using Bayesian fitting techniques [15].

We work with an NRQCD-HISQ current which is perturbatively matched to the continuum current, the method for which is outlined in [13]. To \( \mathcal{O}^i (A/B) \) we only need

\[
J_{\text{lat}}^0 i (x) = \bar{c} \gamma^\rho Q, \quad J_{\text{lat}}^1 i (x) = -\frac{1}{2am_b} \bar{c} \gamma^\rho \gamma^\rho Q \Delta Q
\]

although we also compute matrix elements of

\[
J_{\text{lat}}^a i (x) = -\frac{1}{2am_b} \bar{c} \gamma^\rho \cdot \Delta \gamma^a \gamma^\rho Q, \quad J_{\text{lat}}^a i (x) = -\frac{1}{2am_b} \bar{c} \gamma^0 \gamma^a \Delta Q.
\]

Through \( \mathcal{O}^i (\alpha_s, A/B) \) the matched current is given by

\[
\mathcal{J}^i = Z((1 + \alpha_s(\eta - \tau))) J_{\text{lat}}^0 i + J_{\text{lat}}^1 i
\]

where \( Z \) is the multiplicative factor coming from the tree level massive HISQ wavefunction renormalisation. In order to do this matching an appropriate scale for \( \alpha_s \) must be chosen. We use \( \alpha_s(q^2 = 2/a) \).

3
3. Chiral-Continuum Extrapolation and Results

| $\langle J^0_{\text{Latt}} \rangle$ | $\langle J^1_{\text{Latt}} \rangle$ | $Z$ | $\eta$ | $\tau$ | $\alpha_{\text{r}}$ | $F(1)$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0.952(13) | 0.00208(84) | 0.9930 | -0.260(3) | 0.0163(1) | 0.346 | 0.857(12) |
| 2 | 0.965(19) | 0.00111(13) | 0.9933 | -0.260(3) | 0.0165(1) | 0.344 | 0.869(17) |
| 3 | 0.923(12) | 0.00047(89) | 0.9930 | -0.260(3) | 0.0165(1) | 0.343 | 0.830(11) |
| 4 | 0.901(20) | 0.00132(94) | 0.9972 | -0.191(3) | 0.0216(1) | 0.311 | 0.840(19) |
| 5 | 0.914(17) | 0.00220(75) | 0.9974 | -0.185(3) | 0.0221(1) | 0.308 | 0.856(16) |
| 6 | 0.943(12) | 0.00236(71) | 0.9974 | -0.185(3) | 0.0221(1) | 0.307 | 0.883(11) |
| 7 | 0.873(11) | 0.00248(48) | 0.9994 | -0.091(3) | 0.033(1) | 0.267 | 0.846(11) |
| 8 | 0.9049(66) | 0.00475(55) | 0.9994 | -0.091(3) | 0.033(1) | 0.267 | 0.8791(65) |

Table 3: Fit results for the matrix elements of each lattice current together with the relevant matching parameters, computed in [13], used to compute $F(1)$ on each set.

Figure 1: A preliminary fit to our data using staggered chiral perturbation theory [16]. The grey band is the continuum chiral perturbation theory result extrapolated from our lattice data. It includes systematic errors coming from matching uncertainties and hence has a much larger error than any of the data points, which are only shown with their statistical error. We are working to investigate the apparent deviation of the very coarse result from the other two results at the physical pion mass.

Taking the result from this preliminary fit and combining it with the latest HFAG result [6], $\eta_{\text{EW}} \frac{F(1)}{V_{cb}} = 35.81(11)(44) \times 10^{-3}$, we find $V_{cb} = 41.5(17) \times 10^{-3}$ where we have taken $\eta_{\text{EW}} = 1.00662(16)$. Our result shows a slight tension with the determination by the Fermilab.
Lattice and MILC Collaborations [2] and is consistent with the inclusive result, with our error being dominated by the $\mathcal{O}(\alpha_s)$ matching uncertainty. It has also been suggested that this leading error could be constrained somewhat using semileptonic $B_c \to J/\psi \ell \nu$ decays and comparing to results from heavy-HISQ $b$ quarks on ultrafine lattices with $a = 0.045$ fm and $m_b a < 1$ [17].

Acknowledgements

This work used the DiRAC Data Analytic system at the University of Cambridge, operated by the University of Cambridge High Performance Computing Service on behalf of the STFC DiRAC HPC Facility (www.dirac.ac.uk). This equipment was funded by BIS National E-infrastructure capital grant (ST/K001590/1), STFC capital grants ST/H008861/1 and ST/H00887X/1, and STFC DiRAC Operations grant ST/K00333X/1. DiRAC is part of the National E-Infrastructure.

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