

Repeating Final-Year Medical Students: Lessons from an Academic Year Programme

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Introduction

Final-year medical students who do not meet the standard required to graduate can repeat their final year of study at the University of Aberdeen.

Additional support for this group is often provided on an *ad hoc* basis.

Aim

This project aims to establish and to evaluate a programme of activities targeted at this group.

It aims to define the role of repeating final-year medical students in the design of this programme.

Methods

Individual meetings were offered to students in this group ($n = 6$) to facilitate reflection and to establish learning needs.

Sessions were designed and deployed along themes.

Evaluation of each session was performed by the analysis of questionnaire results.

Feedback obtained from these questionnaires then informed the contents of further sessions.

Results

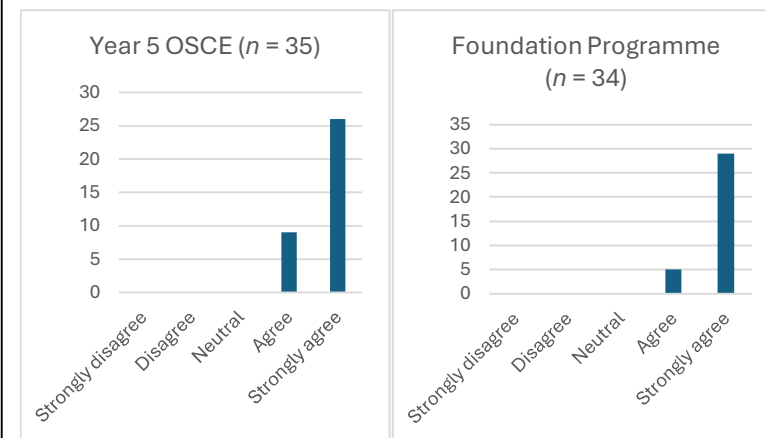
The programme comprised of 25 newly designed items:

- Ten 'deteriorating patient' simulation scenarios
- Four communication skills sessions
- Four investigation interpretation sessions
- Three prescribing sessions
- Four distance learning sessions (delivered via Microsoft Teams)

A timetable of sessions was created:

1. To provide regular support and input throughout the academic year
2. To create resource within the elective block (a block of the year whereby students complete projects with supervisors – students do not do this again if they are repeating their final year of study)

Participants were asked if their self-rated readiness for both the OSCE and the Foundation Programme had increased as a result of the sessions. Composite values across the sessions are displayed below:



The mean summative rating across all sessions in the programme was 4.89/5.00.

Conclusions

A bespoke programme has been successfully designed and deployed for a cohort of medical students repeating their final year of study. Suggestions from students in the cohort have been integrated into this programme successfully. This integration has addressed the learning needs identified in the initial meetings with the cohort.

Self-ratings of confidence with regards to both the OSCE (the practical exam taken at the end of the academic year) and the Foundation Programme (a common next career step for final-year medical students) have increased as a result of participation with this programme.

This work proves that a tailored approach to the support of skills development is valued by its participants.

A tailored approach is feasible and does yield positive feedback. The immediate next step is to correlate participation in this programme with exam outcomes at the conclusion of the academic year.

By design (and by the creation of new resources) this programme could be replicated – with appropriate tailoring to the needs of its participants - in future years.