

Peer Assessment In Veterinary OSCEs

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Glasgow Veterinary School administers a total of 7 OSCEs each year, costly in both time, and staff involvement. As a solution, senior students were recruited to peer assess junior undergraduates during their formative OSCEs.

Method

51 fourth year students peer assessed 354 undergraduates. It was essential that the fourth year PAs were competent both at assessment, and in giving constructive and useful feedback. The junior undergraduates should also have confidence in the PAs' assessment and feedback. PAs were trained not only in the skills to be assessed, but also in how to provide constructive feedback. Participant feedback was obtained by questionnaire.

Results

>97% students highly rated the PAs' ability to provide constructive feedback, believed they had been given helpful advice on improving future performance, and that they had been fairly assessed. >74% of students reported that they would accept peer assessors in a summative OSCE.

63% of PAs had little or no difficulty in giving negative feedback, although some reported disliking informing students that they had failed. 92% felt comfortable giving feedback. All of the PAs believed that peer assessing would benefit them in their own OSCEs, because of their inside knowledge of the OSCE scenarios, and that they would feel more confident. Some also reported that faculty assessors were now less intimidating, as they had an increased understanding of the assessment process.

Conclusion

Students appeared to welcome the much more relaxed experience, and peer assessors valued being part of the assessment. Most students felt they had been fairly assessed and were given helpful feedback. Currently, Peer Assessors are now used almost exclusively during first, second and third year formative OSCEs.