Opening the door: empowering trainees to know themselves and take personal responsibility for learning

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Overview

• Part 1: Introduction to the self-assessment exercise (SAE)
• Part 2: Feedback from stakeholders
• Conclusions
Self-assessment exercise: aims

• Designed to help trainees to identify their strengths and development needs right from the start
• Designed to enable trainees to become an active and engaged participant in their own learning and development
• Provides trainees the opportunity to engage in different exercises to better understand themselves and their needs
• Enables discussions of previous and current experiences and additional needs to be part of training from the start
• Designed with input from external stakeholders, experts by experience, trainees and staff
Self-assessment exercise: overview

• 4 parts to the assignment
• Part 1 – Initial self-appraisal (500 words)
• Part 2 – Self-assessment exercises
• Part 3 – Written assignment on strengths and development needs (1000 words)
• Part 4 – 40 minute viva with tutor pair (clinical and research tutor)
• Those with additional needs get 20% more words and time
Part 1 – Initial self-appraisal

- Designed to help trainees think broadly about the skills/knowledge/expertise they bring and their developmental needs
- Trainees complete an initial self-appraisal exercise which they share with their clinical tutor in the first month of training
- Exercise includes prompts about different skills and expertise
- A summary contributes 500 words of final report
Part 2 – Self-assessment exercises

*Essential exercises*

- Academic writing exercise
- Statistics exercise
- Demonstrate knowledge of HCPC code of conduct
- Quick scan (online test of possible specific learning difficulties – outcome does not have to be shared)
- Formative role play
- Placement contract
Part 2 – Self-assessment exercises

Optional exercises

• Trainees can complete any exercises they feel would be useful for their self-reflection and learning
• Some suggestions include questionnaires on team roles, influencing styles and conflict resolution
• Could also get feedback from clients on placement
Part 3 – Outcome of self-assessment exercises

• 1000 words on a structured form
• Section on strengths
• Table of key challenges and development needs and how they will be addressed during training
• Appendices including evidence of all of the essential and optional activities
Part 4 – Viva

- Up to 40 minutes (48 minutes additional needs) with tutor pair
- Tutors read report prior to viva
- Viva based on report asking about strengths and areas for development
- More conversation than interrogation
- Viva is recorded for moderation
The assignment is marked as a whole. Five main domains are assessed and trainees must pass them all to pass overall.

- Collating information and knowledge
- Critical analysis and synthesis
- Strategy for application (how trainee has made decisions)
- Responsive to impact and learning from experience
- Communicating information effectively

Possible grades

- Pass, Pass with conditions (e.g., minor additions needed or appendix missing), Fail
Different trainees found different exercises useful

Some found the statistical and academic writing exercises useful, but learnt less from the reflective questionnaires

Some found the more academic exercises unnecessary but found the questionnaires useful to reflect on themselves and their relationships with others
Feedback from trainees: completing the form

Generally appraised positively
[Quotes redacted]
Feedback from trainees: completing the form

• Hard to fit into word count
• Would like more guidance about how many areas for development are typical
• One person found such discussions so early on “awkward”.
Feedback from trainees: viva

- Positives: Enlightening, helpful, encouraged deeper thinking & new perspective, helped develop new strategies
- Negatives: Could be difficult sharing personal detail in an assessment situation, anxiety-provoking at the start

[Quotes redacted]
• Worked well in practice
• Addresses fundamental competencies at an early stage
• Described as “sensitive, suitably challenging and [...] able to discriminate well.”
• Some areas for development included:
  • Limit number of optional activities
  • More active experimentation in developmental plans
  • Some additional prompt questions in initial appraisal
Conclusions

• Generally the assignment was appraised positively for those involved (trainees, staff, external examiner)
• Some small adjustments needed for this year (e.g. limiting number of optional exercises, being more clear about what viva involves, giving more guidance on how many developmental points needed)
• It seems to be working well in achieving its aims so far
• Will see whether has longer term effect
Thanks for listening!

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