

ELECTIVE (SSC5b) REPORT (1200 words)

A report that addresses the above four objectives should be written below. Your Elective supervisor will assess this.

1) To plan and organise a revision schedule for first year medical students that reflects their learning needs and the time available

The first step in organising this revision course was to consider the learning needs of the students. This included assessing their perceived needs, i.e. what topics they wanted to cover, my impressions of what they need to know for their exams, based on areas that came up when I sat these exams and that previous students have struggled with, and finally the thoughts of their head of year, who was able to suggest the areas that tended to be ignored and therefore would be good to cover. The learning needs assessment highlighted basic anatomy and physiology relating to OSCE exams was a key area that students tend to struggle on, and the OSCE exam in general that worries first years, as they've never sat this style exam before.

The second step was to appreciate the time scale I had – only 5 weeks until their first exam. This sounds like a long time but this included their fixed lectures, other revision groups sessions (such as MESS and CLASS) and outside interests. Therefore I decided one session a week would be accessible but not too much of a toll on their time.

Initially I planned to do 5 sessions, with each one based on a different system; cardiology, respiratory, metabolism, locomotor and neurology. This worked for the first two sessions but while planning for the third session I realised an overlap with MESS as they were running a similar session that same day. I didn't want to compete with their session so cancelled mine. It became clear that there was more of an overlap than I expected and I decided to ask the first years directly what topics they would like me to cover as to avoid this repetition.

Looking back, I should have formally discussed with MESS my plans for my sessions. I'd stayed knowledgeable on their teaching based on their Facebook page, which was a mistake because they didn't update this as soon as they'd planned sessions so I wasn't always up to date. While our two sessions almost clashing was unfortunate, I'm glad it happened because it allowed me to take a more flexible, learner-based approach to the rest of my sessions. These sessions included reviewing the new PBLs with them, and a practical OSCE session.

2) To run sessions (lecture based or OSCE based, depending on student learning needs) to help guide first year students through the pertinent topics of this year and give them exam question practice and advice

I'm really glad the course changed direction because it gave me a wider variety of teaching styles to practice. My initial two sessions were quite didactic – they were focused on covering quite a lot of content in a short space of time. I feel this is a hard format to teach in, as you need to get all the content across but similarly don't want to be talking constantly and having the learning be very passive (if it's happening at all!). I think I did reasonably well at this – but I couldn't be as interactive as I would have liked to be. This was acknowledged in my feedback from the students in those

sessions. Following the first session I did try to be more interactive; I included a quiz at the start of the session recapping the previous session and I asked a lot more questions. I didn't always receive answers but I hope students were thinking the answers through at least.

Following those lectures, I did a session on the previously unseen PBL scenarios. Initially this was meant to be spread over two sessions but the students requested we did all three in one session – which I was happy to do providing people weren't falling asleep by the end! This lecture was probably my favourite because a lot of the content was new to them so it was more focused on ensuring they understood concepts as opposed to revising knowledge they've previously been taught. This session went at a slower pace and allowed for the students to interact more and ask more questions. This also had my highest turn out with around 50 students attending. The feedback was great – really helped me see areas to improve such as speaking a little slower in places and offering more questions for them to try, but also showed me that the students really enjoyed the session and seemed to find it useful.

My final session was OSCE exam based – with a focus on me talking less and the students actually practicing the exams and questions. I thought this was the best approach as their exam was 2 days after so the time for talking through the exams had passed. Instead I gave a quick overview of the exam – highlighting techniques and what we were looking/listening for and then they practiced in pairs. I then was able to go around the room giving feedback on their exams. This session really focused on my demonstration skills, I tried to use the skills I'd learnt in my Medical Education BSc including breaking the examination down and showing each part separately before putting it all together. I think this teaching worked well because luckily we only had around 12 students attend – had it been a bigger group I'm not sure I would have been able to give everyone the attention they needed. Again, the feedback for this session was good – people seemed to like the practical focus and my ability to give them help for the questions between practical stations.

3) To collect a bank of teaching resources that I have created that I can use in further teaching projects

In total, I created four PowerPoint presentations used throughout the sessions. This style presentation did tend to anchor me to the lectern instead of being more interactive but that is something that could perhaps be improved if I were to invest in a portable slide changer. I still think PowerPoint presentations provide the best format for bigger groups of students where you can't suit your pace to everyone, the ability to go back to the presentation after the lecture means students may learn more. These presentations were also used by many people who joined my Facebook revision group but were unable to attend the lectures. I've had feedback and messages from many students thanking me for making the presentations available for them to use – and while that feedback isn't formal, it was still lovely to hear it was helpful.

I also created a further PowerPoint presentation on ECGs as I thought this would be really helpful and relevant to all students even though we did not have time to devote a whole session to it. Again this was received well and students seemed to find it useful even without an accompanying lecture. Overall, I think the Cardiology, Respiratory and ECG lectures could easily be used again if I taught pre-clinical students again, and would be a good basis for expanding with more clinical content for

students further along in their training, who I am more likely to see while teaching throughout my foundation years.

I also created a question and answer sheet for the unseen PBLs on areas that I thought may be relevant and come up in the exam. This allowed students to test their knowledge and practice exam technique. In the future I would like to try to create more resources that weren't PowerPoint presentations such as summary handouts or quizzes as I think this is more active way for students to learn. Perhaps I could try designing clinical case summary cards that students could use as a basic revision of common presentations and their management.

4) To continue to develop my teaching style and gain further confidence in presenting and teaching

Running this revision course has been a great experience for me; I've learnt a lot more than I have when doing impromptu sessions with friends. I think this stems from starting from a learning needs assessment and building teaching from there as opposed to teaching students the content I alone think they need to know. Having said that, I also think having a certain degree of flexibility allowed the sessions to be so much more useful than they would have been had I stuck to my original plan. The PBL session and the OSCE session were the two where I felt I conveyed the most understanding to the students.

In terms of my teaching style, I think I've accepted that I will always be a fairly informal teacher and that's OK as long as students are still focused and are learning something from you. For example, I did have times where we got a little off tangent or had a bit of a laugh and I always thought that would undermine me as a teacher (especially since I'm only a few years older than them), but it really didn't. The students would still focus down when we needed to and we always covered what we aimed to cover in the session. My confidence has definitely increased – the PBL session was for around 50 students and while I was nervous at the start, once I got going I actually felt fine.

I really have appreciated all the feedback I received from each of my sessions and those based on my teaching materials. It has been overwhelmingly positive with most students rating my teaching as above 8/10 and the usefulness of the sessions to be above 9/10. The key areas for improvement have been to slow my speech down a little, to provide the lecture slides/handout in advance and to provide a bit more interaction and questions to test their knowledge. These are all areas I can address and improve on, and I have created a plan to do so moving forward;

1) I hope my speech will slow when I get more experience and am therefore less nervous but I will keep it in mind in the future

2) Will try to provide my slides in advance or design a summary handout that students can then annotate for their own revision

3) Integrate more questions into the presentations but also questions that students can take home with them and try for themselves.

Hopefully using this experience I can continue to improve as a teacher and this will help me when I apply for the Southend FY1 teaching position.