Reviewer’s report

Title: Undergraduate Educational Environment, Preparedness for Postgraduate Clinical Training, and Pass Rate on the National Medical Licensure Examination in Japan

Version: 1 Date: 21 December 2009

Reviewer: Phillip Cotton

Reviewer’s report:

1. Is the question posed well defined?
   This is not a question as such. It doesn’t matter. This is a very timely piece for medical education in the UK. The GMC are proposing the introduction of preparation for practice modules with student assistantships. *See 7 below.

2. Are methods appropriate and well described?
   Methods are appropriate. This was a very large study involving 80 medical schools. The coverage is impressive. The method is well described. The use of DREEM is similarly described.
   The arrangements for ethics could be described a little more – was St Luke’s a national ethics committee?

3. Are data sound?
   As far as the reader can tell. Some data comes from national databanks such as the NMLE results.

4. Does manuscript adhere to relevant standards?
   Yes.

5. Are conclusions well balanced and supported by data?
   Yes. These do not go beyond the data. Again this is highly relevant as we discuss funding streams for facilities in NHS institutions to support teaching.

6. Are limitations clearly stated?
   Yes. It is legitimate to deal with respondents perceptions of preparedness and I wouldn’t regard this as a limitation particularly. It is interesting that the authors suggest that final exams are an objective measure of preparedness.
   Is there a substantial difference between medical schools - are they all governed by the same agency?

7. Do authors acknowledge work they are building on or supporting?
   *There is a GMC report that is highly relevant titled: ‘How prepared are medical graduates to begin practice?’ . This will justify the study and set a UK context. The
GMC’s ‘Tomorrow’s Doctors 3’ is another source that could be quoted to create relevance for a UK audience. These should be included.

'A recent study' in para 2 of the abstract is 2003 - what is recent?

8. Do title and abstract convey what is found?
Yes.

9. Is writing acceptable?
Very few typos. First sentence of last paragraph needs re-working.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
'I declare that I have no competing interests'