Reviewer's report

Title: Evaluation of a longitudinal consultation skills course at a new UK medical school

Version: 2 Date: 17 June 2011

Reviewer: Anne M Cushing

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Q1. These are clearer now.
Q2. Yes
Q3. p9. The response rates by year are now presented. However because as the authors state actual attendance figures are not available for each session it would be more accurate to state rather than 'we have to assume a 100% attendance at all of the teaching sessions ..........'
   something like: -'So, the response rates for year of study refers to the proportion of student session units evaluated not response rate from attendees.'

Q4. Yes except there are sections that are presented in the summary section that belong in discussion and could be shifted. see below Q5.

Q5. The first sentence of the discussion - 'The results of the consultation skills course evaluation confirm that the longitudinal approach that was taken on theoretical grounds is well accepted by the students.'- is not exactly accurate and could mislead if quoted. The students were not asked about the acceptability of a longitudinal programme.

   It would be more accurate to state: 'The study shows that students positively evaluated the teaching in all years of the curriculum and were able to identify the skills they thought they had developed as stated in curriculum outcomes. These skills increasingly built upon those practiced in earlier years.'

6. There is no discussion of % of questionnaires available for each year which is lower in first and last. This may be inexplicable or the researchers may have some thoughts.

   There are sections that are presented in the summary section that belong in discussion. They include:
   p16 'The timing ......student ratings'. and p17 'there is clearly ......anonymously'.
   The summary then starts on p15 'In summary....'

Q7 Yes
Q8. The title remains for me misleading and I think it should be re-stated as something like:
Cross-sectional evaluation of a longitudinal consultation skills course at a new UK medical school

Q9. Authors will need some final checking of grammar needed once track revisions accepted