Author's response to reviews

Title: Cumulative assessment: strategic choices to influence students' study effort

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

We would like to submit our manuscript ‘Cumulative assessment: strategic choices to influence students’ study effort’ for publication in BMC Medical Education.

Medical education literature increasingly addresses theory and research on the effect of assessment on student learning. In this study, we present a cumulative assessment program which is part of a formal curriculum and is specifically designed to influence students’ study effort through frequent testing, repetition of content, and compensation among tests. Furthermore, we explored test performance of initially low and high-scoring students’ in the program as a proxy for study effort. Our results suggest that the cumulative assessment program may be effective in stimulating students to remedy initial poor results and to maintain initial good results as hypothesized, at least in the first part of the program.

We feel that our study serves as a good example of how principles of assessment can be combined into an assessment program that benefits student learning. The results of our study contribute to the evidence that assessment drives learning and indicate that cumulative assessment may positively influence learning in a naturalistic setting.

We feel this manuscript is especially relevant to the readership of BMC Medical Education, since it is of interest to an international audience of medical educators and educationalists and BMC Medical Education has a special focus on curriculum development. We hope you will consider publishing our manuscript and look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Wouter Kerdijk