Reviewer's report

Title: A survey of factors influencing career preference in new-entrant and exiting medical students from four UK medical schools

Version: 2
Date: 21 March 2014
Reviewer: Chris McManus

Reviewer's report:

I am happy with many but not all of the responses and changes. However:

Minor Essential Revisions

a) Point 6. “We are not convinced that the key point is whether or not these are increasing by the same amount at each school and so have not tested school x year”. Fine, but in that case you should not say in the text that, “interest in O&G was statistically significantly more popular with year 5 students in three medical schools (not Aberdeen)”. Is Aberdeen different or not? That requires testing the interaction. If you do not test the interaction then you cannot make the statement.

b) Point 10. I’m not convinced that a bald claim that ‘everything is different’ really justifies ignoring everything before a certain date. If it does, then i) say that explicitly in print, and ii) say what is the sell-by-date of the current findings, particularly given that the paper says that Shape of Training could change everything …

c) Point 14 and letter to Editor. “Given this is an online journal, the space used to present this data is unimportant.” That is a fair argument, so how about applying it to the regression models?

d) The Supp2 file. No reference in text but described in letter to editor. This has eight regression models and is presumably related to text Table 3 for Year 1. How many more are there? Another set of eight for year 2 (equivalent to Table 4), and a third set of eight for table 5. Unless I have misunderstood, this doesn’t seem ‘vast’. They might be a little tedious, that I accept, but they are more informative than the synopses in text tables 3 to 5. I would suggest that they are included and described in the text.

Chris McManus

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.
Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'