Reviewer’s report

Title: Determining the quality of educational climate across multiple undergraduate teaching sites using the DREEM measure.

Version: 1 Date: 13 December 2004

Reviewer: Ian Symonds

Reviewer’s report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Background

Please clarify if there were any significant differences in way the curriculum was delivered between centres.

Please clarify that the null hypothesis being tested here was that ‘there would be no difference in the learning environment between different centres’ and the reasons, if any, for asking the question (e.g. unsure of impact of new curriculum, results of summative assessments, student feedback, anecdotal evidence)

Methods

Please state when during the student attachment the DREEM was administered. If this was at the end of the year there may be a need to discuss effect of recall bias. If at the end of each block did the authors look to see if the overall ratings changed as the year progressed?

Results

If the Tukey-Kramer comparison is superior why present the results of the T test and ANOVA as well? Does this mean that the authors consider that the lower scores for learning and teaching at some units do not need to be addressed?

Discussion

In the discussion the authors state that the overall DREEM score was less than they expected, despite being greater than previous studies. Would the authors please expand on the reasons for this and provide a one-sentence summary of the findings from previous surveys for comparison.

Could the authors give specific examples of how the results of this study have been used to improve the delivery of medical education?

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
Should the legend for Table 3 read 'no statistically significant differences..' (rather than comparisons)?

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Can the authors provide any evidence from the literature linking learning styles with student perceptions of the learning environment?

It would be helpful to include examples of questions from the DREEM to illustrate each of the topics listed in Table 2.

A key finding is the low academic self-perception – do the authors have any data from the formative true/false papers on confidence of answers that might correlate with the DREEM results?

It seems unlikely that the topic areas in the DREEM are independent variables – it might be worth commenting on this in the discussion.

**What next?:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests