Reviewer's report

Title: Medical theses as part of the scientific training in basic medical and dental education

Version: 6 Date: 31 October 2007

Reviewer: Titus K Schleyer

Reviewer's report:

General

In general, the revisions follow the suggestions in the earlier review quite closely. Current suggestions are, therefore, relatively minor.

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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):

- Page 4: focussed -> focused

- In reading the description of how the authors determined that a thesis had been published, it may be worthwhile to mention what probability existed that a published thesis was missed, e.g. if it was indexed in a journal that was not contained in the authors’ search space.

- Page 6: “In most cases the supervisor was a professor or adjunct professor … “ Table 1, however, mentions only professors and associate professors. This discrepancy should be corrected.

- Bottom of Page 6/top of Page 7: The manuscript describes the level of technical quality; the availability as a printed publication and whether theses were written according to the instructions of a journal; and common shortcomings in technical quality. The description of shortcomings should follow immediately after the description of the level of technical quality. In addition, it would help the reader if the description of results paralleled the description of the methods, which is not the case here.

- Bottom of Page 8/top of Page 9: “No instructions are available supervisors.” -> sentence fragment.

- Page 10: “programmes” would be written as “programs” in the US.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

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