Reviewer’s report

Title: The social validity of a national assessment centre for selection into general practice training.

Version: 3 Date: 11 August 2014

Reviewer: Gill Norman

Reviewer's report:

1) The selection of individuals within medical education is of clear and lasting importance. Perceptions of fairness are clearly vital to the credibility of the process and this paper presents an interesting exploration of that.

Suggested substantive revisions

2) My major reservations about the work concern the relationship between candidate’s success and their experiences of the process, and any relationship that might have to equality or diversity related factors. It was not clear whether any attempt was made to link these, beyond the experiences of candidates for whom English was not their first language. If at all possible any data available on the different experiences of candidates with different outcomes of the selection procedure should be presented. Linking the qualitative analysis to quantitative outcomes would substantially strengthen and increase the interest of this paper.

3) Given the findings of recent work in the UK on diversity issues in the selection processes (http://www.bmj.com/content/347/bmj.f5662) it would be worth either expanding on any such findings in this paper or including a clear recommendation that this be the subject of subsequent research.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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