Reviewer's report

Title: Elective anatomy by whole body dissection course: what motivates students?

Version: 2 Date: 23 October 2014

Reviewer: elize archer

Reviewer's report:

- Major Compulsory Revisions

The author must respond to these before a decision on publication can be reached. For example additional necessary experiments or controls statistical mistakes errors in interpretation.

- Minor Essential Revisions (The author can be trusted to make these. For example missing labels on figures the wrong use of a term spelling mistakes.)

1. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?

Yes it appears to be. One thing that I want to highlight though, is the fact that the BMC journal targets an international reader population; and I therefore think it is important for the authors to state that this course and the way it is presented is taking place in circumstances where resources is not a problem (pre-selected students; an adequate lecture: student ratio, opportunity for repetitive assessments within the course). It would be very helpful to the broader group of readers if the authors can comment on how this type of course can be implemented in areas that are resource constrained.

2. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?

I do not agree with the fact that this study being a qualitative study need to be a limitation. In fact the research question was framed in a way that quantitative data would have been inappropriate.

It is a small study indeed; therefore one would not be able to generalize this data to other situations. The authors did not attempt to generalize; however this point was not mentioned anywhere. I think this should be added to the article.

3. Is the writing acceptable?

Yes. The article reads easily and there is a good flow of argument. One spelling mistake that was found is in table 1 in the block about “Team member’s collaboration”. The second quote

Having mini tutorial sin groups of 6....

The abbreviation SCORPIO that is used is not explained anywhere; this should be done in the text before the abbreviation is used.
- Discretionary Revisions (These are recommendations for improvement which the author can choose to ignore. For example clarifications data that would be useful but not essential.)

1. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
Yes qualitative methods are appropriate.
With regards to the description, however it is not clear at what time the questionnaires were given to the students as well as who gave it to the students. This should be made clear to the reader since a power issue (lecturer versus student) could influence what students answered.

2. Do the data appear to be genuine i.e. without evidence of manipulation?
Yes it seems to be.
What it noticed though is that there is no mention of any challenges/ potential areas to improve /adapt the course. Did the students not give any feedback that suggested areas that needs attention? If any was given I suggest it should be added as part of the article.

**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