Reviewer’s report

Title: How to set the bar in Competency-Based Medical Education: Standard setting after an objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)

Version: 0 Date: 02 Sep 2015

Reviewer: Jennifer Weller

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to read this manuscript which provides new knowledge about standard setting for OSCEs.

The description of the problem is clear i.e. can you use the same OSCE station for trainees of different standards and generate acceptable pass rates for both groups, appropriate to their level of training. The description of the three different methods is clear.

There are a number of interesting findings - including the proposal that the content experts may generate higher cut scores.

The study raised the question of restriction of range for me. This OSCE is looking a little bit like Progress Testing. For the junior trainees, the range of scores accessible to them would be restricted, in comparison to the range of scores for an OSCE where they could be expected to score 100%. Could this be a problem in reliability of the OSCE or ability to discriminate between trainees?

Minor point for clarification

Page 6 line 34 - after conclusion of the study - does the "study" refer to the OSCE examination?

There is a bit of inconsistency in the use of terms e.g. setting bar / pass mark / cut score. Or are they intended to mean something different? Consistent use of terminology, where possible, could reduce confusion

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes
**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

**Declaration of competing interests**
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?
6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below.
If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal