Reviewer’s report

Title: Enhancing the defensibility of examiners' marks in high stake OSCEs

Version: 0 Date: 01 Nov 2017

Reviewer: Ingrid Philibert

Reviewer's report:

This high-quality article substantially adds to a small body of literature on how to improve the quality of high-stakes tests for individuals with performance at the margin.

I have virtually no comments to make on the manuscript. Here are my few:

page 3, line 34, the 2 statements 1) "uses all assessment interactions between assessors and candidates to determine whether a borderline grade should be reclassified as pass or fail" and, when applicable, 2) "the OBM can be used for determining cut scores for the entire examination" are at the heart of what this manuscript contributes to the literature, and deserve further elaboration, as this is the "knowledge gap" this study is trying to close. These 2 areas should be raised prominently in the findings and discussion sections.

page 12, lines 34-35 and 40-41, it would be helpful to clearly state the impact of the introduction of OBM2 on the "fail" percentage at UNSW cohort, in addition to the somewhat vague data from the literature. Eg, did it increase or reduce the overall fail rate (on page 11, it is stated that OBM2 increased the fail rate in 8 of 9 OSCE stations).


Grammatical nitpick:
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

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