Author’s response to reviews

Title: The UK Medical Education Database (UKMED) What is it? Why and how might you use it?

Authors:
Jonathan Dowell (j.s.dowell@dundee.ac.uk)
Jennifer Cleland (jen.cleland@abdn.ac.uk)
Siobhan Fitzpatrick (siobhan.fitzpatrick@medschools.ac.uk)
Chris McManus (i.mcmanus@ucl.ac.uk)
Sandra Nicholson (s.nicholson@qmul.ac.uk)
Thomas Oppé (thomas.oppe@gmc-uk.org)
Katie Petty-Saphon (katie.petty-saphon@medschools.ac.uk)
Olga Sierocinska King (olga.sierocinskaking@medschools.ac.uk)
Daniel Smith (daniel.smith@gmc-uk.org)
Steve Thornton (steve.thornton@qmul.ac.uk)
Kirsty White (kirsty.white@gmc-uk.org)

Version: 1 Date: 20 Nov 2017

Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Liam,

Re: MEED-D-17-00177

Thank you for your email of 11/10/17, being willing to reconsider the relevance of this piece to your readership and inviting us to resubmit the article. I am very pleased to do so on behalf of my fellow authors who have all had opportunity to contribute to and review the changes made.

We have now reviewed the article, addressed the issues raised and been able update the piece with more current information on the now fully accessible database and online tools that facilitate this, such as a live data coverage tool. An additional second figure has been introduced to achieve this without increasing the word count.
We have added a further author Ms Olga Sierocinska King. This has the support of all existing authors.

In response to the reviewer’s comments.

Reviewer #1: Supportive and no specific comments or suggestions made.

Reviewer #2: ‘two broad but important suggestions’ were made regarding the writing style and length as well as the UK centric nature of the piece. We agree with these comments and in response have:

1. Revised the article to ensure a more logical flow, improved language throughout and reduced the word count by nearly 200 words despite the additions above.

2. We have ensured we have included full text at first citation for abbreviations and sought to emphasise the international relevance of and access to the resource throughout. Mindful of the need to shorten the piece we have not introduced an explanation or discussion of the UK undergraduate and postgraduate education systems or how these might relate to others around the world as this seems beyond the scope of article. In addition, all key bodies (such as: Academy of Medical Royal Colleges or Foundation Programme Application System) or elements (such as: National Training Survey or UK Clinical Aptitude Test) have extensive online information available and where relevant are linked to directly from within the UKMED data dictionary. So, an interested researcher can ascertain the details of any data element directly.

I hope that these changes meet your expectations but we would, of course, be delighted to consider any further reviewer’s comments or editors requests. I am aware of related work based on UKMED data (18 now complete or underway https://www.ukmed.ac.uk/accepted_applications) at least one of which has now been submitted to BMC Med Ed. All are keen to be able to refer to this paper as a summary document describing the source of their data. Hence, it would be hugely appreciated if it were possible to avoid the extended wait for reviewer’s comments that affected the first submission.

Kind regards

Jon