**Author’s response to reviews**

**Title:** Students with specific learning disabilities experiences of pre-registration physiotherapy education: A qualitative study

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Response to the comments by the reviewer 9/9/19

Thankyou for the further review of this article and comments. We appreciate the opportunity to reflect again on its content. For ease of responding to the reviewer comments, we have included them and have responded by adding a bullet point after the comment. Also the changes have been made to the draft with significant or specific amendments highlighted in green.

**PEER REVIEWER COMMENTS:**

**GENERAL COMMENTS:** This ms addresses a very timely topic within physiotherapy education. This is often a difficult population to access so the authors should be commended on their efforts to understand student experiences from an exploratory qualitative perspective. The authors have addressed the reviewers' concerns but not in all areas. There is a tendency to "over-interpret" the data - expressing findings definitively.

• We have responded to your specific points below and have gone through the whole ms to see if there are other places and made several revisions

The ms needs to include an explicit para on strengths and limitations of their work

• Added now.

articulate what this adds to the literature

• This has been added to the end of the conclusion p25

and reflect on the directions for future research.
• P 25 added sentences to focus on this

There are instances of "informal" writing
• We have gone through the whole ms to identify any changes and made them as appropriate

REQUESTED REVISIONS:

There is a tendency to "over-interpret" the data by expressing findings definitively both in the results and discussion - for example pg 18 ln 58.
• See above comment.
• Also modified this specific example

There is a need to more explicitly relate the findings to the purpose (to explore experiences to elucidate what factors might be relevant…").
• Within the discussion specific comments have been added to link the findings with factors which may promote success specifically aligning them to the aims of the study.

The 4th theme title is not reflective of the description and quotes; some of these could be incorporated into the other themes as there is some repetition.
• Thank you for this – initially we were concerned methodologically with this, but after re-reading and considering your comments we have now incorporated theme 4 with the other themes (in particular theme 3). We can see how this continues to demonstrate the key findings of the study and links the quotes more closely to the theme. Therefore there are modifications throughout the ms including:
o in the introduction to the themes on p 9, para 1
o in the presentation of the themes on p 15 – the title of the new theme has merged previous themes 3 and 4.
o In the results section on p 17-18

ADDITIONAL REQUESTS/SUGGESTIONS:
The ms needs to be proof read. Acronyms or short form needs to be spelled out at first usage (eg UK, HEI). Do not use capital letters inappropriately (e.g. pg 4 ln 20).
• We have gone through to address any acronyms and capitalisation.

Lack of clarity in writing at times.
Pg 4 ln 10-13 replace "people" with university personnel or faculty.
• Modified, thanks

Pg 4 ln 52-54 - I could not understand this statement " for clarity…” The final statement of this para pg 5 ln 28-30 - is strong and perhaps adding this to the beginning of the para would help the reader understand your perspective.
• Thank you – this has been helpful and therefore have modified the introduction to the paragraph bottom of p4
Pg 6 ln 14-16. Confusing. Do you mean the prevalence estimate of PT students with a disability is 12% - pls clarify.
• Yes, we have modified the text accordingly

Pg 10 ln 31-36 - challenging sentence - "As the participant above indicates" - recommend rewording
• Reworded and simplified. Thanks for highlighting this.

Pg 11 ln 57 - I do not understand "this source of reliability" - challenging sentence. Do you mean the key is early identification of learning disabilities lays in better awareness of the conditions at a number of levels?
• We see your point – we have modified the sentence to clarify

Pg 12 ln 24-32 Adding a summary para is excellent but I struggles to understand the meaning of the first sentence. Not sure what "this" refers to in the second sentence.
• We see your point. We have modified this summary and hopefully this is greater clarity

Pg 12 ln 45 "unpicks" ?? perhaps unpacks. Same with pg 15 ln 52
• Ok – we have modified both occasions to unpack

Pg 13 ln 1 - example of informal writing - delete " a little"
• Ok – we have deleted.

Pg 13 ln 54 - reform?? Should be reframe??
• We see the potential for ambiguity – we have modified to regather

Pg 19 ln 59 sentence beginning with "While there may be…." - should be deleted and added to limitations.
• Sentence modified and the limitation added to a later paragraph on limitations

Pg 20 ln 13- 18 - overinterpretation of findings.
• Thanks for this suggestion, which we have modified. Also throughout the discussion we have modified sentences to make sure that they are based on the findings in this study, or the particular participants in this study.

Pg 21 ln 5-13 - check grammar, not a sentence
• Thanks, this is modified now.

Pg 24 para 1 - watch overinterpretation here
• Modified many of the sentences to clarify perceptions rather than fact.

Consider title change to better reflect the focus on learning disabilities and not disabilities in general."
• Modified.