



SAMPLE ABSTRACT 1: EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Abstract No.	<p>A Case-control Study Evaluating the Effectiveness of an Extended Induction Programme in a Fully-integrated PBL Curriculum</p> <p>BRIDGES, S.M.*, McGRATH C., DYSON, J.E., LEUNG, W.K., WEBSTER, B. (The University of Hong Kong)</p>
<p>OBJECTIVE: Programme-level evaluations of student perceptions of the learning experiences in PBL curricula have found that the early years of the curriculum experience lower levels of satisfaction than the final years. This could be seen as a natural process of adjustment to university life in general and the demands of PBL curricula in particular. Additionally, generic student evaluations of university learning experiences can be problematic for a fully-integrated PBL curriculum. How, for example, can students comment on ‘courses’ when learning is fully integrated? Clear goals and standards scales may also provide problematic data for beginning students when problem scenarios are deliberately ‘ill-defined’. METHODS: University-wide data on first-year student evaluations of learning was used to inform curriculum design for one fully-integrated PBL programme. In particular, first-year student evaluation data from the 2006-07 academic year was used to review how the transition into university life and a PBL programme could be enhanced for first-year students. As a result, the established 1-week induction was further developed and extended across the first year. The system-generated student evaluation was repeated at the end of the 2007-08 academic year and results on items related to attainment of university goals items were compared. RESULTS: Comparison of the two groups found significant improvements in first-year students’ perceptions that the PBL programme was helping them achieve university-level educational outcomes. The greatest improvements, measured using Cohen’s <i>d</i>, were seen for items related to ‘intercultural understanding’ ($d=.77$); ‘critical self-reflection’ ($d=.60$); ‘global citizenship’ ($d=.52$); and ‘critical intellectual inquiry’ ($d=.51$). Additionally, items related to ‘greater understanding of others’ ($d=.36$), and ‘collaboration’ ($d=.33$) also showed improvements. CONCLUSION: An extended induction in a fully-integrated problem-based learning curriculum can assist first-year students’ transition into a PBL curriculum thereby improving programme-level evaluations of the first-year experience.</p>	



SAMPLE ABSTRACT 2: INNOVATIVE EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

Abstract No.	<p>Web-based Support of Learning in an Undergraduate Oral Rehabilitation Course</p> <p>DYSON, J.E. *, McGRATH, C. (The University of Hong Kong)</p>
<p>A web-based study guide using WebCT computer software was developed and implemented to support learning of 3rd year dental students in an introductory simulation laboratory, clinical and laboratory technology course on removable partial dentures. The website was released in September 2003 and provided this group of students with their first exposure to WebCT-based learning in the dental curriculum. The website includes the following modules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course information (including a calendar and schedule with direct links to study topics etc.). • Learning resources (including a glossary, direct links to selected e-journal articles and relevant websites, Powerpoint presentations, study topics and general reading recommendations). • Communication tools (discussion groups, text messaging and chat rooms [virtual seminar rooms] – the latter is anticipated to be useful if normal classes need to be suspended at any time in the future. • Self-test quizzes (Self-administered MCQs providing immediate feedback on student responses). • Utilities (facilities to download copies of printed course materials etc.). <p>Facilities are also provided for searching the site and taking/compiling individual notes. Proposals for development of the site include the addition of further learning resources and development of a reference library of short video clips demonstrating essential clinical procedures. All of the current 49 3rd year dental students accessed the site in the first 6 weeks of its release. However, there was considerable variation in number of site accesses per student (range 2–24, mean 13.1, sd 11.3) and number of content page accesses per student (range 2-208, mean 54.7, sd 47.2). The average time spent per student per content page was 11 min. 34 sec. Initial student feedback and reasonable access rate indicates that the site has been generally well received by students. Further work is currently underway to evaluate the site in more detail with respect to such issues as acceptability, appropriateness, accessibility, efficiency, and educational outcomes. This project was supported by a University of Hong Kong Teaching Development Grant.</p>	