

Designing assessment to enhance consistency and competency in clinical, professional and employment skills

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The Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) is a method of assessment that has been utilised internationally in Medical Education for over 40 years. The OSCE examination assesses professional skills, traits, and characteristics that traditional written examinations do not. Clinical skills and professional attributes in Medical Imaging (MI) education within Australia are commonly assessed by clinical radiographers. This type of assessment is often complicated by the differing presentations of the patients at different clinical sites, as well as variation in examiner marking styles. Reliability is difficult to achieve in these high-stake professional competency examinations, therefore the results are not reproducible or comparable across the student cohort. The structured nature of the OSCE provides a student cohort with an equal and unbiased assessment experience that allows a student to demonstrate acquired clinical skills and professional attributes, over a series of planned stations. A team of examiners use a standardised marking scheme that removes the subjectivity of judgements thus improving reliability and allowing for the objective assessment of relevant clinical competencies. This was the first time our institution conducted a MI OSCE. Our stations were designed and implemented using expertise from different health-related disciplines within our School, and an overseas consultant who has successfully implemented OSCEs in MI in New Zealand. We 'blueprinted' the content of each station to ensure alignment with the clinical skills and professional attributes required by our accrediting body, the unit and course learning outcomes, and institution's graduate attributes. This presentation will outline the 'blueprinting' process and examine the initial findings of student's perceptions of the learning and teaching activities that led up to the OSCE, their experiences of the OSCE, and how well OSCE stations reflected their experiences on clinical placement. The findings suggest ways in which we can effectively align OSCEs to desired learning outcomes and design curriculum to better support students undertaking OSCEs.