

# **Assessment and Difficult Situations in Clinical / Fieldwork Education**

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# Learning Outcomes:

- By the end of this session you should be able to
- Discuss reasons for carrying out assessments.
- Identify different types of assessment format.
- Explore difficult situations that may be encountered on placement.
- Discuss how to manage students who are failing the placement.

# What is Assessment ?

“Assessment in education can be thought of as occurring whenever one person, in *some kind of interaction*, direct or indirect, with another, *is conscious* of *obtaining and interpreting* information about the *knowledge and understanding*, or *abilities and attitudes* of another person.”

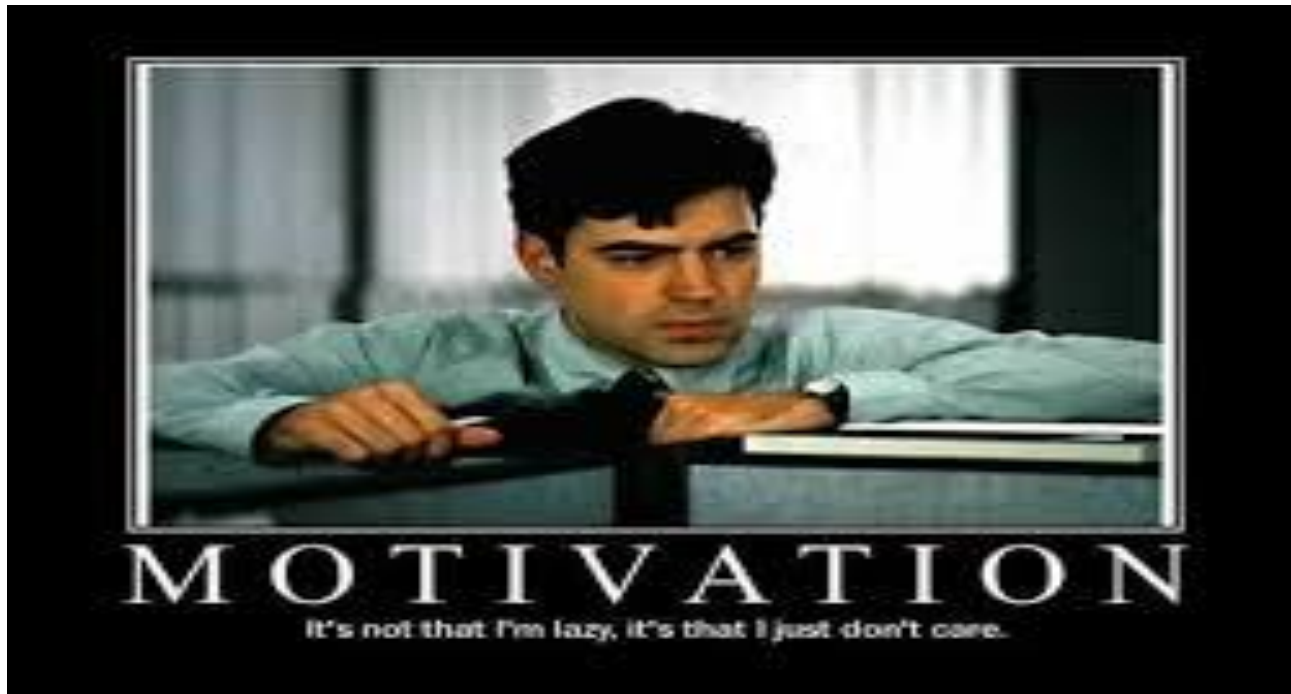
(Rowntree, 1987)

# An alternative interpretation:

When one person makes a judgement on the skills, knowledge, values or behaviour of another person.



# Assessment is a significant motivator for learning!!

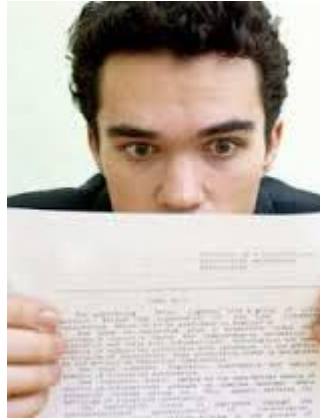


# Why do we assess ?

- To establish a baseline of competence to practice
- Provide a recognised standard or maintain standards – ‘fitness for award’
- Encourage self assessment.
- Satisfy the tutor / mentor that learning has occurred.
- Enables feedback to be given

# Types of assessment

- Formal
- Informal
- Continuous
- Peer
- Self-assessment



# Methods of assessment

- Observation of a specific skill or task
- Student feedback of a task / skill / situation / condition
- Discussion/presentation with educator / others
- Reflections

(Cade and Polglase, 2012)





# Tools for assessment

- Learning contract – sets out what needs to be learnt / demonstrated and achieved.
- Case studies / presentations to demonstrate knowledge and understanding.
- Portfolio / file to demonstrate collation of evidence-based practice.



# What to assess ?

- Knowledge - specific or applied
- Skills - independent, team
- Attitudes & behaviours
- Product and/or process



# Essential characteristics of assessment

- Should be specific standards against which student performance is measured.
- Should relate directly to learning outcomes.
- Students should be clear about how to fulfill each objective.
- Assessment should be valid, reliable, practical.

# Who should be aware of assessment criteria?

- Everyone involved in the assessment process
  - you
  - students
  - us
  - your colleagues who may be involved in giving feedback on the students performance.
  - \* **BEWARE** split/shared placements!



# Making accurate assessments



- Look at the video clip and follow the on- screen instructions...
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGQmdoK\\_ZfY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGQmdoK_ZfY)
- Might something like this occur during assessment in clinical education?

# Accurate assessment

**cont.**

- Halo effect



- Social influence



- Availability heuristic

(Kahneman, 2011)

- How can we guard against these influences to ensure more accurate judgment in our assessments of students' performance?

# Giving Feedback

- ✓ Encourage reflection & analysis
- ✓ Include suggestions for further development
- ✓ Students should be encouraged to state the kind of feedback they find most helpful
- ✓ Be objective, not personal
- ✓ Concentrate on changeable behaviors



# Managing Difficult Student Situations

What shall we do about that one?





# Scenarios

- Look at your given scenario and consider how you might deal with this situation.



- Feedback on the scenarios.

# Scenario 1

Michael is a second year student who is with you on clinical placement. The placement got off to a slow start but you put this down to him settling in. As the placement progresses, you realise that he is struggling to grasp even basic concepts regarding assessment and treatment of patients. By half way it is becoming increasingly apparent that he is going to fail the placement.

# Scenario 2

Moira is a second year student beginning her first formally assessed placement. During the placement you have noticed that she is increasingly distracted and preoccupied, to the point where it has started to affect her ability to cope with her placement. One day you walk into the changing rooms and find her sobbing in the corner.

# Scenario 3

A placement student James does not arrive at clinic and no one knows where he is. The educator speaks to the University to get a contact number for him but the number is unobtainable. The educator then tries all other possible contacts within the department where James could possibly be, but is unable to locate him anywhere.

# Key points for managing difficult situations:

- We need to be objective about the students performance and consider what they have achieved and what they have not achieved.
- Need to provide regular and constructive feedback to students.
- Have facts and examples to hand for work which is done well and that which is poor / not achieved.

# Key points cont.

- Document all supervision and conversations about performance.
- If going into a difficult situation, rehearse what you are going to say and how to say it.
- Notify tutors quickly when things are not going well on placement or if you have any queries or concerns.

## Key points cont.

- If a student is on line to fail - tell them that this is the situation and then tell them what they need to do to pass.
- If the student has not met the agreed objectives then they may well need to fail.
- Acknowledge that failing a student is difficult for both you and them.

# Key points cont.

- Be aware that it may be your professional responsibility to fail a student.
- Seek support from colleagues and the University when you are in this situation.

The end of one journey  
is the beginning of another



# Contact Details

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