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Letter to Editor of Medical Teacher

Response to: Feedback to support examiners' understanding of the standard-setting process and the performance of students: AMEE Guide No. 145

Dear Editor

I was interested to read the AMEE Guide No. 145, in which Tavakol and colleagues described theoretical and hypothetical methods for delivering feedback to OSCE examiners about their stringency or leniency (Tavakol et al., 2021). Unfortunately, when very similar feedback has been delivered to examiners in real life, the impact has been modest, with assessors struggling to fully understand the data or distancing themselves from it (Crossley et al., 2019). Given our understanding of feedback, this is understandable and predictable. Numerically-based or complex feedback, based on comparisons with others, has often been unhelpful for feedback recipients (Shute 2008).

These methods may prove useful for assessment designers who wish to review the quality of their assessment, though they need to remember that examiners who are outliers are not necessarily the ones who are problematical (Fuller et al., 2017). But when it comes to feedback to examiners, we need to be led by the empirical evidence. Feedback is likely to benefit examiners most when we focus on their developmental needs via a process of meaningful dialogue and engagement. We need to recognise the importance of examiners' emotions and ensure that we create a supportive atmosphere with appropriate mentoring to promote the development of their role (Harrison et al, 2016, Spooner et al., 2021).

Crossley, J.G., Groves, J., Croke, D. and Brennan, P.A., 2019. Examiner training: A study of examiners making sense of norm-referenced feedback. *Medical Teacher*, 41(7), pp.787-794.

Fuller, R., Homer, M., Pell, G. and Hallam, J., 2017. Managing extremes of assessor judgment within the OSCE. *Medical Teacher*, 39(1), pp.58-66.

Harrison, C.J., Könings, K.D., Dannefer, E.F., Schuwirth, L.W., Wass, V. and van der Vleuten, C.P., 2016. Factors influencing students' receptivity to formative feedback emerging from different assessment cultures. *Perspectives on Medical Education*, 5(5), pp.276-284.

Shute, V.J., 2008. Focus on formative feedback. *Review of educational research*, 78(1), pp.153-189.

Spooner, M., Duane, C., Uygur, J., Smyth, E., Marron, B., Murphy, P.J. and Pawlikowska, T., 2021. Self-regulatory learning theory as a lens on how undergraduate and postgraduate learners respond to feedback: A BEME scoping review: BEME Guide No. 66. *Medical Teacher*, pp.1-16.

Tavakol, M., Scammell, B.E. and Wetzel, A.P., 2021. Feedback to support examiners' understanding of the standard-setting process and the performance of students: AMEE Guide No. 145. *Medical Teacher*, pp.1-14.