



Peer Power: Student-Led Mock Osces to Demystify Feedback And Build Confidence

Jawad Ahmad¹, Sebastian Yim², Marianne Morgan³

Sandwell West Birmingham Hospital Trusts, UK

Abstract

Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) are high-stakes assessments that often induce anxiety and uncertainty for learners. These established examination models rely heavily on staff and provide inconsistent feedback. In response to the call for more sustainable and student-centred methods, we trialled a peer-led mock OSCE aimed at demystifying assessment criteria, encouraging peer-to-peer feedback exchange, and decreasing reliance on staff. Year 3 and Year 4 medical students were paired within their own year groups, completing six stations (two case-based discussions, two communication histories, two clinical examinations) while alternating roles as candidate and examiner. Each station involved a structured sequence of two minutes' reading, eight minutes' performance, and three minutes' feedback, supported by mark sheets and OSCE briefs to promote accuracy of real OSCE stations. Surveys conducted before and after the exercise (N=21 pre; N=23 post) showed confidence scores rose by 70%, with high ratings for skills gained (4.30/5), peer-examiner format (4.13/5), and usefulness of feedback (4.35/5). All respondents would recommend the model, quoting the value of practising under exam conditions and gaining real-time feedback. Key lessons include clarity of marking, safe peer challenge, and efficiency once resources are established. By alternating roles, students developed feedback literacy and reflective skills as core elements of the exercise, encouraging independence in line with adult learning principles. This model is low-cost, low-carbon, and scalable, supporting sustainable, student-led preparation that enhances self-regulated learning, workforce readiness, and retention in healthcare education.

Keywords: adult learning; assessment literacy; feedback; OSCEs; sustainability