

INTRODUCING LEARNING WORKSHOPS INTO THE BIOSCIENCES: A STUDENT-STAFF PARTNERSHIP

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BACKGROUND

The biosciences can be difficult for nursing and midwifery students, and embedding study skills into the curriculum may help overcome this challenge (McVicar, Andrew & Kemble, 2015). This project aimed to evaluate students' perceptions of pass/fail 'learning workshops' introduced into a first-year anatomy and physiology course.

METHODS

The learning workshops were co-designed and co-facilitated by past students and teaching staff. The first workshop (prior to the mid-semester examination) covered effective learning strategies, while the second (prior to the final examination) covered examination strategies. Consenting students' ($n=165$) perceptions were measured using an open-ended question, which was coded using inductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Most students (80%) found the workshops to be useful, citing their value for learning study tips and new strategies (57%) and gaining insights into examination marking (38%). The workshops also facilitated a sense of connection with others in the course (14%). Of the students who did not find the workshops useful, many stated already knowing effective learning strategies (39%). Learning workshops are low-stakes activities that can be easily embedded within the curriculum. By focusing on how to learn, these workshops may reduce inequality between students with different levels of academic preparedness.

REFERENCES

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