

Designing resources for online collaborative learning on a medical programme– the Students’ Voice

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Introduction: The MBChB at Three Counties Medical School (TCMS) is a new graduate entry medical degree centred around problem-based learning (PBL). The PBL model, emphasising collaborative, student-centred, self-directed learning, is widely used in medical education (1). This educational approach has been shown to develop critical skills in preparation for practice, and students enjoy this style of autonomous, inquiry-led learning (2). However, PBL’s differences from traditional classroom teaching mean it requires resources that support self-directed group learning outside the classroom. Current online resources include narrated presentations, videos, e-books, and forums in subject-specific areas.

Results: Results of an initial survey (84% response rate) revealed that videos and podcasts summarising medically related information (including physiology) were primarily ranked highly as useful for weekly learning in preparation for PBL. Question banks, flashcards and the ability to practice questions were rated as most useful for exam preparation. 29 (out of 32 respondents) customise and make their own study materials. Psychosocial concepts, anatomy, and public health were the curriculum areas that ranked highest for inclusion in developing new online resources.

Conclusion: Based on the survey results, resources like weekly collaborative mindmaps will be shared with students via the VLE (Blackboard) to populate concepts, link resources, and layer throughout their degree. The extent to which these resources support student learning will be reassessed at the end of the academic year. By using the student perspective to generate online learning resources to support self-directed learning, we hope to create innovative tools that can be shared more widely within the educational community

