TEAMWORK SKILLS BUILDING AND REFLECTIVE PRACTICE IN THE MEDICAL SCIENCES USING EPORTFOLIO LEARNING AND AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT

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Abstract

Development of co-curricular professional skills and capabilities by undergraduates that are linked to formal academic learning is difficult to capture at the program level within higher education institutions. Feedback from employers, educators and students suggests that the teamwork graduate capability is highly sought after, but it is hard for students to prove mastery. In the Bachelor of Medical Science (BMedSci) program at UNSW Australia, we initiated a program-wide Comprehensive Teamwork Learning and Assessment (CTLA) model by aligning assessment tasks focused on building teamwork capabilities combined with self and peer evaluation of teamwork skills awareness and development, ePortfolio implementation and a teamwork satisfaction survey. These CTLA model elements support student reflective practice and awareness of teamwork skills attainment. Our CTLA model involved tracking, mapping and aligning assessment tasks that built relevant, authentic skills for teamwork and incorporated standards-based criteria that directly addressed teamwork skills development using an adapted Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) VALUE rubric for teamwork; the UNSW Teamwork Skills Development Framework. This process integrated content knowledge and technical skills that articulated with professional skills development across all the medical sciences disciplines. We implemented this system using Workshop UNSW in Moodle for teachers to monitor and students to evaluate teamwork skills progression for themselves and their peers. ePortfolio/reflective blogging using WordPress to document and reflect on their personal-professional development of teamwork skills was implemented as a key part of this approach. Student satisfaction was surveyed at the completion of the teamwork assessment tasks across the program. Study outcomes demonstrated the innovative CTLA model and assessment approaches improved teamwork skills awareness and attainment in the medical science program at UNSW. A cross-disciplinary skills awareness and development capture strategy developed as part of a UNSW Innovation Research Project will be presented. ePortfolio/reflective blogging coupled to the Teamwork Skills Development Framework, an adapted version of the AAC&U teamwork value rubric for use in the medical science program as well as application of the Reflective Rubric UNSW. There scope to implement this mechanism for extracting data across any ePortfolio platform for application as metadata that sits behind badges of skills recognition. This mechanism is useful for capturing, quantifying and recognising skills development when coupled to authentic assessment tasks in the sciences and beyond.

Keywords: Teamwork, Professional Skills, Reflective Practice, ePortfolio, Authentic Assessment, Evaluation.