

Academic skills development for undergraduate nursing students: Can the use of a tool designed to aid the co-production of academic action plans improve student engagement and enhance academic performance / confidence?

PAINTER, Jon <<http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1589-4054>> and FRANKLAND, Sharon

Available from Sheffield Hallam University Research Archive (SHURA) at:
<https://shura.shu.ac.uk/30427/>

This document is the Presentation

Citation:

PAINTER, Jon and FRANKLAND, Sharon (2018). Academic skills development for undergraduate nursing students: Can the use of a tool designed to aid the co-production of academic action plans improve student engagement and enhance academic performance / confidence? In: Net2018 (Networking for healthcare education) conference, Cambridge, England, 04-06 Sep 2018. Higher Education Academy. (Unpublished) [Conference or Workshop Item]

Copyright and re-use policy

See <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/information.html>

Academic skills development for undergraduate nursing students:

Can the use of a tool designed to aid the co-production of academic action plans improve student engagement and enhance academic performance / confidence?

Sharon Frankland
Jon Painter



**How can we get them
to make better use of our feedback?**

Sharon Frankland

Jon Painter

Background

- As a large nursing department that is committed to an inclusive approach we encounter a wide range of academic writing abilities.
- As part of the SEDA course I reflected upon how students could be assisted to better reflect on their previous academic work and assessment feedback.
- Experience suggested that students are asked to create a lot of action plans, some are used, others never see the light of day again and others are written as quickly as possible just to get out of the room.

Background

- I am relatively new to academia but in clinical practice I had seen lots of different ways to structure self-assessments, present findings and track treatment progress with people experiencing severe and complex MH problems.
- Took some of these principles and applied them to a different setting.
- To help students make better use of their feedback and create more productive development plans.

Primary aims & methods:

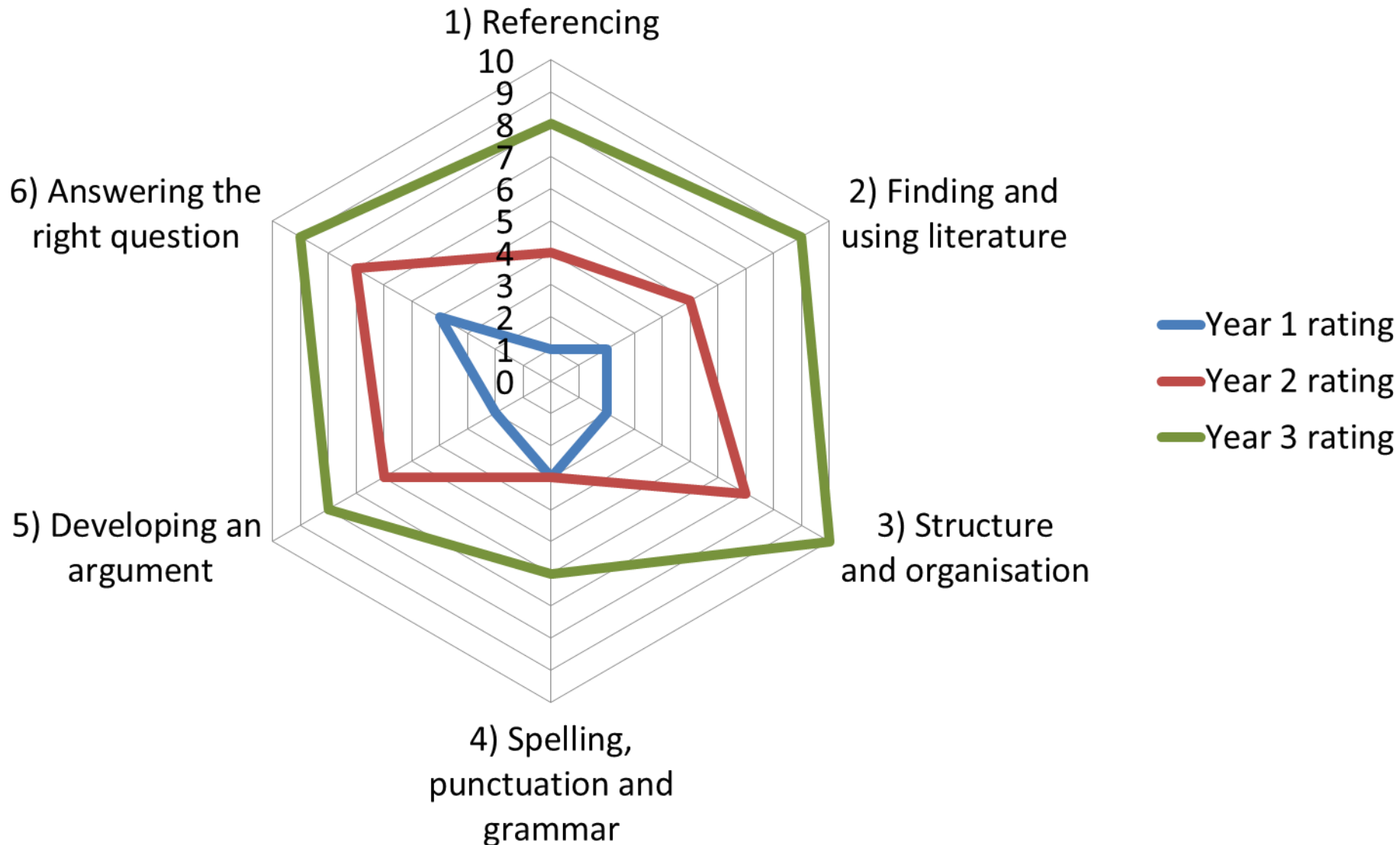
1. To develop a simple tool to facilitate academic development planning.
 2. Do staff value the tool when co-producing academic writing development plans in tutorials?
 3. Do students find the tool helpful when synthesising their assignment feedback and co-producing these plans?
- Action research approach to the tool's development.
 - Concept explained then staff focus groups used to identify domains and descriptors for anchor points
 - Presented at University LTA conference and Departmental LTA forum to obtain feedback.
 - Piloted with a small (March) intake and feedback obtained from the AAs and students.

Findings #1 - The tool

- A walk through the PowerPoint and Excel version of the tool.....

Level of competence (example statements)				Self ratings (0-10)			
Aspect of academic development	Low	Moderate	High	Column1	Year 1 rating	Year 2 rating	Year 3 rating
1) Referencing	I am unsure about how to reference according to APA guidelines	I am able to correctly cite and reference books and journals	I am able to correctly cite and reference all types of material	1) Referencing	1	4	8
2) Finding and using literature	I struggle to find suitable papers and am unsure how to use other people's work to support the points I want to make	I find and use references that are relevant to the topic but pay little attention to their quality	I can search effectively and use a wide range of high quality, contemporary literature that is relevant to the topic.	2) Finding and using literature	2	5	9
3) Structure and organisation	My work has an introduction, middle and end but tends to 'bounce around' rather than flowing smoothly.	My assignments are organised and structured but I do not always balance my word count across the learning outcomes.	My work is logically structured. I include a brief introduction to set the scene and a conclusion that does not introduce any new information.	3) Structure and organisation	2	7	10
4) Spelling, punctuation and grammar	My work contains a lot of spelling, grammar and punctuation errors and I tend to use informal language	My use of language is always clear but my work does contain a number of minor errors of this kind.	I proof read my work so that it contains very few errors of this kind.	4) Spelling, punctuation and grammar	3	3	6
5) Developing an argument	My essays contain descriptions of other people's views, or of my own opinions.	I try to use other people's work to support my arguments but do not always get this right.	My work shows evidence of critical thinking i.e. I present opposing perspectives on an issue before drawing a conclusion which has a sound rationale.	5) Developing an argument	2	6	8
6) Answering the right question	I tend to write about the topic without fully understanding what the assignment brief is asking for.	I tend to cover all the learning outcomes but can drift off topic or write too little or too much about each.	I always meet the learning outcomes and take account of their weighting.	6) Answering the right question	4	7	9

Self-assessment of academic development



Findings #2 - Preliminary feedback

Staff

- Useful in helping students to reflect upon their strengths and weaknesses
- Useful for AAs working with students who would not engage with formal skills development workshops
- Useful to open up a dialogue about anxieties re academic writing.
- Will help students understand what is required of them academically.

Students

- Helps to prioritise what you need to improve
- Makes you actually use your feedback rather than forget it as soon as the next assignment is due
- It will be good to look back at how far I have come on the course
- Didn't realise my AA could help with developing my academic writing.

Secondary aims & methods:

1. Is there an association between self-ratings and objective academic performance?
 2. Is the tool able to detect an impact from attendance at our academic writing skills workshops?
- Obtain ethical approval
 - Convert the Microsoft version of the tool into a web-based version.
 - Collect data and undertake cross-sectional analyses
 - Continue to gather data and begin longitudinal analysis

Discussion

- Benefits
 - Clearly articulates the "rules of the game"
 - Encourages students to re-read their feedback
 - To look for emergent themes
 - The lack of descriptors for all ratings encourages more carefully considered rating
- Limitations
 - The lack of descriptors for all ratings probably leads to variable inter-rater reliability!
 - As yet the tool has unknown reliability and validity
 - The 6 domains primarily developed through focus group
 - Relies on staff buy-in
- Next steps
 - Tool has now been converted to web-based
 - Advantage that pseudonymised data is held and will be collected from Sept
 - Use data to ascertain reliability and validity once repeated assessments are entered
 - Link these data to grades, workshop attendance etc. etc.
 - The design has already been 'stolen' for other applications!