

# Student Perspectives on Peer Observation of Teaching

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## BACKGROUND & METHODS

Peer Observation of Teaching (POT) is a useful and effective method to facilitate educators' development. We trialed POT in a group of 30 medical students carrying out virtual near-peer teaching. All participants completed a survey and took part in a focus group. We carried out descriptive and thematic analysis.

More info: [bit.ly/POTinfo](http://bit.ly/POTinfo)

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How do medical students experience their teaching being observed by and receiving feedback from their peers?
2. How do medical students experience being a peer observer?
3. How do medical students feel such a programme has impacted on their teaching practice?



## Key Findings:

Medical students can benefit from observing and being observed in peer observation of teaching. However, many observers lack confidence in their **credibility**.



### OBSERVEE SURVEY

100% felt comfortable in receiving feedback and 90% felt they learnt more about good teaching practice and were helped in reflecting on their own teaching.

86% felt their observer had the experience and expertise to provide peer feedback

Perceived confidence in peer teaching increased from mean 2.9/5 to 4.2/5.

### OBSERVEE FOCUS GROUP

#### VALUE OF FEEDBACK

Observees found feedback valuable; learning about, reflecting on and increasing confidence in teaching practice.

#### EXPERIENCE BEING OBSERVED

They felt comfortable in receiving feedback and reported positively about the observers in terms of: expertise, relatability, non-intimidating presence and good awareness of the target audience.

*"The feedback [...gave] pointers which I would just have never thought of in the first place"*

*"We were on the same level... So we wanted to help each other out."*

*"Peers comments can definitely be as valid as more professional people"*

### OBSERVER SURVEY

40% felt comfortable in giving feedback, though 100% felt they learnt more about good teaching practice.

Just 20% felt they had the experience and expertise to provide peer feedback.

### OBSERVER FOCUS GROUP

#### BENEFITS

Observers reported learning more about good teaching practice.

#### EXPERIENCE OBSERVING

While most found it enjoyable, several observers found some aspects of giving feedback uncomfortable.

#### PEER DYNAMIC

Most found it difficult to establish a satisfactory dynamic, citing lack of credibility and difficulty in eliminating a hierarchy. Pre-existing friendships were reported as both helping and hindering the dynamic.

*"I don't know more what I'm talking about than them"*

*"My [feedback] session may have turned into more like me acting. So I don't know if that's just imposter syndrome"*