

Supporting a place for better judgement in oral and practice-based assessment

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In practice-based settings the reliance on oral and observation-based assessment is unavoidable, yet there is concern about subjectivity/unreliability. These could be counteracted through a large number of assessors and assessments but this is usually not feasible. An alternative is increasing the assessors' expertise. Increasing expertise is associated with better management of judgement biases. Judgement biases in assessment are not prejudices; instead they are incorrect representations in the assessor's mind of what has occurred during the assessment. These biases cannot be trained away but should be enriched into performance and person scripts. Such (performance) scripts are the result of extensive experience and the exposure to many individual occasions, and enable the expert assessor to compare the situation at hand with existing scripts and to reach a correct decision quickly. The Office for Learning and Teaching funded 'Better Judgement' project produced a training package and set of resources to help assessors to recognise biases and develop strategies to prevent biases from unduly influencing their overall judgement. The training package provides background knowledge on judgement biases, exercises in recognising biases in well-defined and ill-defined situations, activities to link the training content to the participants' own contexts, and a collaboratively developed compendium of practical strategies. We will showcase the package and present the findings concerning the effectiveness of the resources.