

You can't assess ethics?
You can with a student feedback sheet!!

Joyce Overfield

Senior Learning & Teaching Fellow
Manchester Metropolitan University

Background to ethics teaching in Faculty of Science & Engineering at MMU

- Postgraduate students across Faculty (n=30)
- Taught postgraduate students: Biomedical Science & Clinical Physiology (n=40)
- Undergraduates: Biology and Biomedical Science, Clinical Physiology programmes (n=120)

Blended learning approach

- Presented to HEA, 2005,
- ‘Ethics in Healthcare Science, 20 credit, level 7
- MLE based information & resources
- Face to face introductory lectures
- Support tutorials
- Ethics study linked to a ‘specialist’ topic within Biomedical/Healthcare science
- At least 6 tutors involved

Student feedback proformas

- Have been developed and evaluated by the School of Biology & Health Science as HEA funded project
- Ethics in Healthcare Science has been identified as a piloted unit
- Strategy was to design marking proformas based on the unit learning outcomes

Assessment strategy based on learning outcomes

- A critical awareness of:
 - 1.the experimental design, results, findings of published experiments, studies or reports.
 - 2.the nature, history and development of ethical considerations in healthcare science
 3. the variations in moral values in different cultures
 4. the moral/ethical issues highlighted by developments in biomedical/healthcare science
 5. the nature of honesty and dishonesty in scientific research and communication
 6. a framework for ethical decision-making.

Example 1

Ethical review of published journal paper

Statements below are rated either exc/good/some improvement/significant improvement/poor
Has a piece of research been performed ethically?

- *Explanation of ethical principles, deontology/utilitarian*
- *Discussion of ethical approval /systems used, if relevant*
- *Clarity, honesty, integrity of chosen paper and the work described*
- *Awareness of ethical issues if raised by the paper*
- *Link of moral/ethical issues to the practice of current ethical approval*
- *Overall critical appraisal of paper / conclusions*
- *Appropriate references sourced*

Example 2

Ethical review of case study relating to ethical issue

- *Clearly described background to case*
- *Ethical concerns identified*
- *Relevant individuals/bodies identified; how they may be affected*
- *Application of ethical principles of deontology/utilitarianism*
- *Awareness of moral values of different cultures and religious beliefs*
- *Role of external/regulatory bodies, in UK and globally
(impact of decisions, for and against viewpoint)*
- *Overall conclusions, references to support reading of ethics*

Benefits of marking schedules

- ▣ Parity of assessment across 6 tutors in 6 disciplines
- ▣ Enables marking of large student cohort
- ▣ Students are clear about what is required
- ▣ Rapid feedback to students
- ▣ Clear, 'student friendly' statements used to aid student understanding
- ▣ Clear link to learning outcomes for Ethics
- ▣ Electronic feedback possible
- ▣ Ensures quality of feedback

References

- Overfield, J.A. (2005) Bioethics: a self managed module within a taught biomedical specialism. Oral presentation, SIG for Ethics, HEA Centre for Bioscience.