

Teaching Medical Students

As a doctor in training at Salford Royal Foundation Trust you will come into contact with medical students regularly. There are many opportunities to be involved in their education from practical advice on the wards to formal lectures. Teaching and training medical students is an important part of each doctor's work, as has been so since Hippocrates wrote his oath.

The value of being a good teacher is clearly highlighted both in the GMC's Good Medical Practice, as quoted below.

'Teaching, training, appraising and assessing doctors and students are important for the care of patients now and in the future...If you are involved in teaching you must develop the skills, attitudes and practices of a competent teacher.'

Developing your skills in teaching and training is as much a part of your skills development as developing your ability to perform procedures. But what makes a good teacher? Below we have given a little guidance for preparing for an interactive tutorial for a small group of medical students and we hope it will be of some help to you in preparing for such an event. This is obviously an introduction, and there is extensive literature available on education, and courses which we would advise you to consider applying for as you progress through your training (see welcome page of website).

Firstly we cover the different aspects that add up to making a good teacher, then give an example timeline of how to prepare for a teaching session, and finally give you an example feedback sheet you could use during your session.

What Makes a Good teacher?

Knowledge

- It seems obvious but a good teacher must be knowledgeable about and up-to-date on their subject area but doesn't pretend to know it all. Do not be afraid or embarrassed to admit you don't know the answer to a question- you could offer to find out the answer and get back to the student, or direct the student to where the answer may be found.

As a person

- Try to be a warm and open teacher who is approachable and understanding.
- Never make a student feel intimidated or ridiculed. Answer every question seriously.
- Continually observe the students watching out for any signs of boredom or failure to keep up and act upon these if they are noted.
- Try to be flexible in your teaching style to keep students interested. Be willing to change.
- Encourage participation throughout from all members of the group. Take time to help a student work through a problem in detail if they have any difficulties.
- Show empathy with the students and how they may think.
- Be enthusiastic.
- Want the students to learn.

The Session

- Foremost- ensure that patient care is never affected by a teaching session.
- Make the purpose and content of the session very explicit- many teachers do this by outlining learning objectives e.g. “By the end of this session you should be able to”.
- Give the students signposts e.g. “Firstly today we will discuss interpreting ECGs, then you will interpret some examples from patients I have looked after, and then we will discuss some common pitfalls.”
- When teaching on a subject encourage the students to engage and think for themselves.
- Understand that within a group there will be a spectrum of previous experience and knowledge. Aim your sessions to include a range of questions and topics of differing complexity so that it includes those who are less familiar with the topic but also stretches the more advanced students.
- Try to give feedback throughout the session which is positive and encouraging.
- Consider using different teaching methods throughout the session eg power point, handouts, practical elements and case studies.
- Return to your learning objectives at the end of the session.
- Leave time for questions.

An Example Timeline- how to plan a teaching session

1. Identify a **subject area** that would benefit the medical students. Use your own experience of what you found useful as a student, or discuss with the students to identify their learning needs.
2. Think about the best **way to deliver** a session on the chosen topic which encourages as much student participation as possible and makes the students think for themselves. This is likely going to involve various teaching methods and resources which will need to be prepared in advance.
3. **Research** the topic thoroughly. Gain up-to-date guidelines to ensure you are teaching evidence-based up-to-date best practice wherever possible.
4. **Book** an appropriate teaching **venue**. If this is going to be the ward try to gain any patient consent before the session and avoid meal times to prevent your session being interrupted.
5. Ask a **peer or senior** to **appraise** the session to both improve your teaching and as evidence for your portfolio.
6. **Deliver** the session- and keep to time.
7. Hand out **feedback** sheets (an example sheet is attached).
8. Give **handouts** to back up the teaching you have just provided.
9. **Reflect** on the session. Think about what went well, what didn't go so well, why that happened and what you might change next time. **Make an action plan** for this and keep a copy of all of this in your **portfolio**.

Feedback Form

Date:

Session:

Tutor:

Feedback

How do you rate this session:

Usefulness	1-10	(1 poor, 10 excellent)
Content/relevance	1-10	
Teaching	1-10	
Overall	1-10	

Do you feel more confident on the subject? Yes / No / Unsure

What were the good points?

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What could the tutor improve on for the future?

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Any additional comments?.....

Many thanks for completing this feedback form, please return it to your tutor.