

APPENDIX 4.6

Fictitious names have been used throughout the interviews

INTERVIEWS – STUDENTS 6

Margaret; Shelly; Leah; John

Started: 4:15:50

The recording is just so that I have a back up for when I start analysing the comments that you give me and when I start writing up. Names will be changed. (laughter) OK. Your identities will be protected. Ok does anybody want to start?

Well I think that the equipment in the Techniques lab we were ??given insufficient phantom heads for each student, they don't function or they are not there and then there is a problem with some of have to work on the bench and some have to work the head and then you have to swop around. So that's a bit of a problem, I find

What kind of problem?

Just with the heads

How then how does that proof a problem to your training?

I think because you obviously you don't get that training of working in the phantom head and obviously you have to swop all the time you don't get a constant you know, constantly get taught on the phantom head. Not that it's the actual clinical patient, but the way in which you sit and you handle all the instrumentation and look at the teeth you prepare. It's very easy to do it on the desk

Uhm

But when you do it in the mouth it's difficult

Especially given that the Techniques course is supposed to be training you towards - a simulation of the clinical setting –therefore training you towards being able to handle similarly in the clinic. Anything else?

****No, just that generally like ?? I've got to say that uh the Fixed Prosthodontic Course is most definitely the most challenging course that I've ever done. I think it's almost a credit to the way that it is run uh in that it is so thorough. They make sure that every student gets a uh everything thoroughly, completed and all the requirements ?? You know, it's very frustrating you know, throwing your toys out of the cot like everyday**

But with respect to how the Techniques course has been structured and how you're taught in the Techniques course how has, what challenges or good things have come out that?

****Uhm, I think, I think there is a problem in that uhm a lot of the stuff you invariably teach yourself. I Think that Pros or Dentistry as a whole you know and uh I think the supervisor will show you once**

and then we're sort of expected to go back and do it. But in saying that the supervisor still give you step wise sort of uhm uh instructions and uh they still want you to do things so in a way it's good that you kind of end it on your own, you know, that you, the way that things are, solve them for yourself, you know so no one is sort of holding your hand for you and anything, you know

But, would, just on that point have you experienced different super supervisory skills where you have certain supervisors that hold your hand through the procedure like show you what it is that they want and compared to those that uh they show you once and then expect you to do the procedure thereafter?

?? one of them in particular uh he always seems, he shows you how to use the handpiece which was something that we really haven't been you know, ?? one other person who directs you, you're supposed to do simple things like that you know which I think our supervisors just take it for granted that we already know

Yeah like we were taught how the chair actually functions. That there was actually two lights, that you could actually switch the lights overhead to change to a different intensity

Yeah

Which light?

On the actual dental chair

Ok

Yeah, and uh we weren't actually taught that, we were only actually told that in the 4th year. We didn't know till then and the bracket table actually can actually go according to the level or the height can be adjusted and that's in our 4th year

But then you started clinics in second year, third year?

Third year

Ok

Yeah

Interesting (shows duplication of teaching soft stuff that is subsumed by all departments – has not been centralised to one component. ? resource wastage)

And and uh Perio was actually quite good in showing you how to sit and you know encourage the patients to come sit down so they don't sit on the where the feet you know lie and that kind of stuff

And break the chair

Yeah, yeah

(Laughter) Yeah. Anything else with regard to the Techniques: the space; the schedule?

The schedule was fine, we were given enough time

Is it?

All talking at once

You know some of us aren't exactly the fastest, you know

Yeah

I'm thinking

I'm not

The ?? thing is like if you get it the first time like right then you're like on par and everything is fine. But the minute you get

You lag behind

You lag behind then you just

It gets frustrating and it became worried, you panic and nothing works

And once you're behind then it's hard to catch up because like the even the supervisors aren't there all the time like you to see whatever you haven't completed behind like to catch up so

And then in terms in terms of trying to catch up in your spare time how has that panned out?

When we have spare time even if we come then we do our work and we try to do it but then there's no like guidance also then and then when you go back and you ask for guidance like you'll ask if its right and then there's something wrong then ?? free time will stop and not like we have much of free time

No no free time

And then even like, I don't know I feel like Fixed Pros should have started in the beginning of the year last year. Like it would have been much more easier and much more like like now we're just so stressed out like. It's not like any ??

At at the beginning of the year, did you have time in your in your School schedule to allow for the

Oh yeah, with regards ???. I think ??

?? Endo was like, Pros

?? Oral Bio

What I'm trying to ask is in the first half of the year, your time table could there have been time to put it in?

?? towards the end of the year our schedule became very stressful and then we started getting much more tests coming through

?? to worry about

?? It was almost like every week. So our kind of ?? we do in our theory and our practical and that's where a lot of people actually fell behind in Fixed Pros because we were constantly worried we have an exam after this. And I think that if the Fixed Pros Lab schedule was issued at the beginning of the year, and something like Oral Bio was the second half of the year people would be able to concentrate much more on Fixed Pros at the beginning of the year because they would be more fresh and less stressed

Than at the end of the year

Because ??

That goes to the yearbook, remember that one of inclusions in the yearbook is that the assessment dates need to be sorted out at the beginning of the programme. Did you have that or was that not there

We tried last year to do have it ?? confirmed dates with our respective lecturers right. Towards the end we were just told that: no, we need another assessment and things were just added here

We had 3 more Pros assessments

?? the last 4 months we didn't know what was going on ??

?? during the week was like something new ??

There was a week that within the year planner there were 5 tests scheduled every single day we wrote ?? by Thursday you were so finished that people were like on Friday we couldn't write

Following on that when you look at the role of the student reps and the Dental Council for that was did you take it up with the Student Reps or the Council to make the Departments aware of the strain you were under, if it was not included in the yearbook?

We tried

We did

****Say for example we had one subject where ??one department to write any more tests and seemingly they said: No, we are not writing anymore tests and then at the end of the year it came up: no we had to write 3 more and we were told that, that was already early in December we were not, and then started writing ?? the we had ?? coz we had our own little time table on the board, and it was so you know to try and find space. We just reached a stage where ??**

It was difficult then coz people had set dates and they didn't wanna change and it was very difficult to set it to fit it in

Because I'm thinking as well on with the programme this year with the dates already being set for the tests

So now we can plan around what has been set, you know

This year already concerning like seeing what happened last year we said that this year the same thing will not happen. We've just had an EDUCOM meeting today where we raised the issue

OK

****By the end of February we would like ALL the tests or anything that we need to be assessed on has to be confirmed, the dates need to be confirmed, not only for the 5th years, but for the 4th years and 3rd years so that we can plan around it and be prepared well in advance and everyone agreed on that and it was said that by the end of February everything needs to be done**

The recourse if it doesn't get done? What was the recourse from EDUCOM?

Oh ?? they just said for now they're gonna try and make sure that everything gets

So from the Council side or from the Student Reps' side, what would you like to happen to see happen if that doesn't happen?

If it doesn't happen obviously what happened last year cannot be repeated. It was very hectic

That's where I'm coming from. It could happen, so knowing what you went through last year and you've already pre-empted that not happening, but if it was to happen with that hindsight what would you do this year? What would you like to see happen this year, if by February that is not done?

If by February if everything is not confirmed I would think that any further dates that any lecturer wants to schedule needs to be done then with the entire class. In order ??

What's suitable for us because they haven't

Yeah

Whichever date we set because it can't ?? another test. It needs to be

But then they are considering Pharmacology for example and all the others because we never have a meeting and schedule on the ?? 9th it's gonna be Pharmacist it's gonna be a

Dentistry

A Health Sciences and then the Health Sciences department they are all on the 9th because they have a separate ?? and then we have a clash and then it's already set, we're not moving any more tests, anymore than we do

Obviously they must ?? read the year planner ?? it's gotta be fair because we already have ?? the year planner is there for everyone to see this is where

What we're going to ?? Pharmacology for example before you ?? obviously you can even Pharmacology is a bit of a department which is ??

The challenge is between the Dental components and the non Dental components. I think that's where Ms Wilson is coming in that the issue is that there is that clash

?? Actually I credit the Medical Components because by the end of January all the Medical Components have finalised their dates

Ok

And by the end of January last year we knew when our November exam was – Pharmacology,

Oh, so the challenge is mainly from the Dental side

The Dental side

Ok, but then technically then it should be easier to manage that coz it's within the School

Uhm

But I guess the reality is different (laughter) or has been different. There was something that I needed to, that I thought of, I should have made myself ?? when we were going on about the scheduling.. No, the EDUCOM: how has the representation of, by students on EDUCOM penned out, with respect to making it easier for the students or that interaction between students and School and the Lecturers?

Well, so far like uhm for as long as I've been on EDUCOM any uh matter that has risen we've really discussed on EDUCOM, like they allowed us to completely express ourselves, and they just don't put you down

Uh

And they listened to it. And with lot of the things they did naturally like, there was some kind of ?? forwarding that took place. With some of the matters they couldn't be but, say for example with uh Clinics when we complained that there weren't enough supervisors and that uhm, a month or two afterwards there were one or two ?? there was supervisors in the clinics. So it wasn't that we were ignored we were listened to and ?? EDUCOM does, it allows us to ?? ourselves, not biased, fair and it really does help as compared to when you like you go to individual

Yeah

Departments or Lecturers?

Uhm, I think Lecturers ?? yeah

OK. And then with regard to uhm the interaction between the class and the council, the Student Council, how, does the class meet regularly to put their concerns and views to the Council? Or is it on an adhoc basis?

From experience last year with the 4th year class because the council is predominantly from the 4th year class, I'd say that's the easiest one, but uhm with 5th years last year we had very little ?? communication uhm but with the 3rd and 2nd years we had a lot of communication throughout the year.?? Uhm I'd say that every few weeks or every month we like we call the class and ask: are there any issues that you that you're experiencing? And with the 2nd and 3rd years we were able to help them. We found the 5th years were very removed from us last year

Ok. And now, now that you you've just clarified the the interaction between the students and the class, how was the interaction between the Council and School Management, in terms of addressing, meeting: meeting with the Council, listening to the issues and addressing those issues and achieving the desired outcomes?

Uhm, well, last year with the Council we had to intercede for one of the classes. Uhm we were listened to on 8th floor. Uhm we were given like a plan of action, how we could proceed ? what could be the best outcome and it was concerning a specific department. And within that department they told us that: this is the Head of Department, you need to speak to him, he will then investigate the matter to see what you said is true. And that did happen, and I personally, I'm not sure what happened at the end of the year. Uhm Lukshana then forwarded it as the President of the Council.

Ok, so the interaction between the Council and the the School's management, the School management is fine?

Yeah, it was successful

It works?

Yeah

Ok. Any comment from anyone on that? (long pause). The yearbooks: are they helping you or you just get them, sign for them and just leave them on the top of your desks (laughter)?

I think I think they're good. It's just that last year it wasn't very user-friendly

Yeah

Because compared to like the years before. Uh it was like all crammed up and some of the Departments wasn't even in that yearbook. So if we have a full like a full, a yearbook with all the things given one time, then we also know what's happening and what our requirements in that. But we, it definitely helps to know what's the requirements, and the objectives of all courses and I do use it

Because that could also take out the stress of getting extra assessments because in the yearbook there is a map of how many assessments are needed for that particular programme. What's not there normally is the schedule because the schedule has to be, technically they want it uh uh arranged before the start of programmes by all by the year coordinator, that's why we have year coordinators. So that by the time the students get get say two weeks into the course or the first month into the course they have the plan of all the assessments of ALL the components including the non Med, the non Dental, coz that's one of the things that need, that we need to do as a

School yeah as the coordinators. Supervisors: how's the relationship between supervisors or the interaction with supervisors: approachability, motivation, the motivation, uhm

Uh on a personal level I've I'm very easily de-motivated by some

Is it?

Yeah, so you know, some supervisors will say something that can easily get you down you know. You sort of have to pick yourself up you know

Yeah

Uhm, but generally I think uh I think most of them are quite uh approachable, you know

And do you do you even though you know that they're staff members, do you also look at them as being human as well – having off days and not try to take what they say to you personally?

Uh, yeah, I want to think that uh you know they understand that we have off days as well, so, because we have a lot of assessments throughout the year and a lot of clinical time as well and you could be quite good in the clinic you know. You could be quite decent and then out comes the assessments and you get a bit nervous, things go ?? terribly wrong uh so obviously it doesn't reflect your overall ability, you know

What quality do you think uh is good from the supervisors perspective in terms of encouraging you to learn?

Uhm, I think tolerance and to sort of uh, you know, I know that some supervisors what's clinically acceptable to them is not is not acceptable to another, you know and uh that's uh in Prosthodontics especially where there's like a sort of like a very subjective opinion about things, you know. So, one supervisor will say something is good and the other will say something is bad. Sometimes you're kind of in a sort of a lost, you don't know where to go, you don't know what's required of you, you know. It's written down in the requirements but even so, you know, a supervisor will have a different opinion about one particular point that's written in the criteria, so there's not much you can really do about it. ?? but so long as the supervisor can listen to the students and the student says: but uh, like Dr so and so says, you know, there is an advantage here - the other supervisor can look at it and Ok, I see your point of view, that's OK, you know

I'm just thinking that in Pros, the criteria are supposed to inform the supervisors and the students as to what is required of each procedure, so the e-books and the manuals are supposed to – even if the supervisors may have a different idea, or perspective of doing that – we have to go by what the manuals and e-books say. Have you been in a situation where, you know, the manuals and the e-books say different to what the supervisor says, how has that been handled?

Uh, I don't know, I think, I think everything is written. We all know what is expected of us, what we have to do. And we know what it's supposed to look like, but then say you've got something that you think does not have an overhang and in your opinion

OK

It's not an overhang, and then one supervisor says it's fine, the other supervisor says: you know you have an overhang here. And you can take it to two different supervisors and you could get different comments, even though everyone knows what's in writing and what is expected of us. So well I think, no matter how much you put in writing, no matter how much everybody knows the standard that is expected, there will always be slight differences in opinion as to the quality of the work. As much as I think the School tries to get it in writing and everything and to get the standards and everything, I think that's just the nature of the subject, you know

The quality that you started with was: tolerance – any other qualities? (laughter) – supervisory quality that eases the learning and

I think in a way there's some supervisors really make you feel relaxed. And if you're relaxed that brings out the lesson ?? in you, especially in the clinic, coz you've got a patient and the supervisor. You don't know who you're more scared of sometimes

Oh

You know, you've just got to like, if you could just be relaxed and then things could turn out that positive, you know. A lot of times you go into these things kind of negative about it and you think: Oh no, what am I going to do if I fail uh?

How then do you prepare for the clinics, to help it ?

Uh

Especially in the clinics, our clinic supervisors, their tone says a lot to us, because when we work, we're already like hypersensitive and anything will affect our mood and our own performance and supervisors like, those who like talk in a softer tone, they still demand, they demand perfection, but they're more understanding in how you do it. The thing with them we're actually

?? We're becoming too lenient, they're more easy to converse with ?? this is the problem, and you wouldn't approach someone who's you know, then you wouldn't wanna ask questions

You'd rather

You'd rather you know

?? if they're shouting

Yeah, and then you'd just like, you know

Ok, so: TOLERANCE; TONE; what else?

Uh sometimes a bit of motivation, you know

Like?

Just like uh: Alright, that's OK, alright, I'll give you the quota, that's ok, you know

Supervisors say that?

Yeah, and they do you know coz, sometimes, I mean to be honest, you sometimes, you just want the signature

?? the motivation is like ??

You just say well, you see this is the problem, uh but don't worry, you just do this, you'll get it right. You know a bit of that and you just think OK I, they actually think I can do it. And then you got that, it's almost like a mental thing and then you go say: right, now I know how to do it

?? you're almost confident in things

And then you feel they care for you, like they want to teach you

Yeah

?? *(all talking at once and inaudible)*

Like sometimes maybe supervisors will say: it's not good work, but OK we'll give it to you. It's not, I haven't got one that done and says: OK your work is ?? we'll give you a . They will say, you know uh: fix it here, you're getting... I've had a supervisor ?? but next time, improve on this over here to go up a step and they will show you what's the problem and then next time they give you full marks and you eventually get your E because it is getting better you know ??

Yeah

That's interesting

And then ?? because sometimes you'll come and ?? coz you're not really learning what they're saying; they're like Oh no, you know. Then you're actually afraid of asking a question anymore and then ??

Yeah.

OK

But I know it's a bit it's difficult in the environment to have patients who sometimes will ?? students ?? like patients because you also like you know I wanna get this done, supervisor will say: no, it's not right and you'll go back.?? Useful to chat to you, you know uh

Is there a lot of preparation that happens before - hand from your side for the clinics?

******I think it depends on the supervisor

Is it?

I really think so because what happens with uh well I actually so that view with uh Rem Pros for example if like as we said if you have positive feedback ?? build your interest and next time you'll want to ?? oh but you know I uh ?? whereas if the lecturer or supervisor was negative about it you gonna be as quiet as you can in that session.

You're not gonna ask questions

Yeah, you're just gonna like you know uh ?? do what you need to do, but you'll be as quiet as possible, you won't ask any questions and you'll just want make sure that your work, hoping that they're gonna say: OK it's fine, you know and get finished as quick as possible. Whereas with the positive feedback even if it's wrong, they'll tell you that you need you to correct this and you'll be like: Ok you go back, go correct it and then you take it back to them, and when it's correct at the end of the session right you'll still discuss it with them. Think OK yeah, that was more, this is what I did right, why didn't it work, whereas if they're negative about it, the minute they say it's right: that's it; you pack up, dismiss the patient and gone!

You learn more in the other way

You learn more

You're more interested

And then

You're not so scared you're gonna stuff up

And everything works better

I find, if I'm relaxed and if the supervisor is relaxed then I'm not saying that they must become you know easy on you and let standards drop, but it's just the way in which we interact. Because students in themselves probably have a, you know they don't think they're doing well and just that bit of motivation will improve their work

Now in terms of the techniques preparing you for the clinics, doesn't that help – that transitioning from techniques to clinic?

I think it's kinda scary to think now you're going to finish your techniques course in Fixed Pros and now you're going to do the REAL patients where there's real gingival and real interproximal areas that are really tight and you know just you pass the turbine its BRRRR??? and now you can't pop any teeth out because it's now life and and that is a bit scary because you know, you're

And you don't

You try to practise, I mean you could only do so many because there are only so many teeth available to get out to practice. You don't ?? the one that really needs ?? to try and get that angulation correct or whatever and again time issue, you try and come on a Saturday once before to try and practice or that test or whatever and you know when you're in a relaxed environment, it's Ok it goes nice and then the next time you come in and you're writing a test everybody is stressed and then, you know, it's terrible! But now when you think you're going to do it on a real patient it's scary

It's actually easier on patients

Yeah

Like you said you can't pop the tooth out to check where the undercut is; but Ok then if it's severe the undercut will show up on the casting because it won't fit, but it's much easier on patients

Oh is it?

The only challenge that you need to work with is the tongue and the cheeks and having an assistant there to do it for you. I mean to assist you, not do it for you. Ok, any comments? Anything you want me to take note of with regard to the programme for my research? Coz what's going to happen is the finding that I get I'm going to feed, even though it's for my Education Masters, I'm going to feed them to the department and that will help in uh modifying the prog or modifying the programme coz it's always a work in progress so the good points that come out as to the quality of the programme the Head of Department will choose to implement so it's not all in vain, even though I'm doing it for my own personal benefit, the School also benefits coz I'm part of the School. Ok, thank you.

Ended: 4:43:29

(4:16:30-4:21:55-4:25:53-4:32:57)