**Internationalising Research Methods Teaching of Undergraduate Health Professionals**

**Introduction**

**Research methods teaching**

Evidence based practice is at the centre of modern, patient-centred healthcare [1-4], with research training a key component in developing professional practice [5,6] and supporting the changing scope of practice of allied health professionals [7,8]. “Research methods” training aims to provide students with understanding of the many research designs and techniques for data collection and analysis. Review of the literature suggests that although research education has been a part of the nursing and health sciences curricula for many years [8], students frequently lack enthusiasm for research methods [9-11] and can struggle to apply knowledge to practice [3,12]. Anxiety regarding the difficulty of the subject is a common theme in the barriers to student learning [9], as is the student perception of irrelevance to their clinical training and practice [3,7,13,14].

The early view in health research education that didactic instruction was the appropriate strategy for core material delivery [12] has progressed, and it is now accepted that lecture, discussion, problem based learning [8,15,16] and active student involvement in research activity are all key to engagement and fostering understanding [3,9,13,14,17]. As a core component of the undergraduate health sciences degree programmes, “research methods” modules support students to learn basic terminology and research principles in order to prepare them for formal proposal development and project completion. This scaffolding approach enables emerging health professionals to be active participants in research rather than purely consumers of published research [7].

Using a range of teaching methods acknowledges differences in the individual student’s ability and desire for learning [9]. Innovative video resources developed by Callaghan [3] were received well by students; they helped to clarify concepts of research for students and enlivened the presentation method of materials. With the use of virtual classrooms becoming ever more popular, Giddings [18] investigated the transitional process of student health professionals’ engagement in online learning. The latter approach is often chosen primarily due to the flexibility in time and place rather than the opportunity for a new pedagogical approach. Despite Giddings describing the student’s positive transition from “enduring” to “enjoying” [18], as a methodology it may be more suited to higher performing, motivated students with developed organisational skills [19], and may therefore not be ideal for the initial introduction of research to undergraduate health science students due to the potential for isolation [11].

A primary aim in integrating research methods is to embed enthusiasm and engagement in a new subject [20], and the delivery method needs to reflect this. Participatory involvement in research has been shown to generate interest, and a factor emerging from the qualitative study of experiential learning in undergraduate research is the positive influence of faculty members as role models [2,21]. August-Brady [10] noted that incorporating a clinical component into research education in health professional courses also enables students to appreciate the connection between research and practice [22]; and identify active engagement as a means of increasing research knowledge and the understanding of research concepts and process [20]. A developed understanding of the importance of research can translate into learner motivation and confidence in self-judgement [1,11], and using relatable data has been demonstrated to promote student engagement [2]. Project based learning activities whereby students participated in clinically themed research [21-23], demonstrated the phases of a research process, with students acting as both researchers and research subjects, collecting, analysing and presenting findings.

Despite a paucity of evidence in relation to the academic outcomes of research education delivery methods [9], there are identified gains from undergraduate research experiences which include enhanced educational outcome and career development, the ability to discuss research findings with lay and professional audiences, and motivation for research activity within a future career [20, 24-26].

**Curriculum internationalisation**

With political and economic globalisation increasing over the last decade [27], Higher Education Institutes (HEI) are now embedding internationalisation into mainstream curriculum development. For health profession courses this is particularly relevant. A recent discussion paper [28] highlighted the value of internationalisation to Medical Radiation Science (MRS) education for developing students into both “global professionals and citizens”. The aims of internationalisation in Higher Education focus on both of these aspects by promoting a general cultural awareness while preparing students for specific international aspects of their own professional practice.

Internationalisation of curricula can be implemented in different ways, but all maintain a focus on building cultural awareness into knowledge and finally skills, as seen in the 2012 European Curriculum in Cultural Care [29]. Clearly the strongest internationalisation activities arise from overseas clinical placement [30], however this is logistically challenging and usually restricted to brief placement opportunities. On-campus curriculum activities can also provide insight into cultural issues, such as within the field of Global Health which is of particular significance to health professional students [31]. More active collaborative learning has been successfully utilised with small group projects. Ambrose [32] reported success with Australian and Indonesian medical students working in small teams on global health projects.

Most work reviewed in the evidence has focussed either on facilitating joint international collaborative working [28,33] or on increasing awareness of other cultures through investigation [31]. It should also be acknowledged that the findings in the literature mostly relate to studies within the nursing or medical professions. The rationale behind this project was to combine these two aspects and engage medical radiation science students in active teams specifically working to identify cultural differences and similarities.

**Aims**

This project aimed to introduce a new international collaborative peer learning activity into undergraduate research methods teaching. The activity was a practical research exercise designed to aid understanding of essential research methods concepts. Rather than providing students with a fictional research context, students were tasked with designing, executing and analysing a simple, yet potentially valuable, primary research project in collaboration with an overseas peer group. The project also aimed to promote a reciprocal [34] international perspective in these students by facilitating a collaborative mutual peer learning opportunity. The project had two overarching aims. The first was to identify the pedagogical impact of collaborative practical experience on student understanding of research methods. The second aimed to evaluate the perceived value of providing students with an international perspective on their professional practice.

**Methods**

**Research design**

A simple sequential explanatory mixed methods design was adopted utilising a survey tool comprising both quantitative (Likert) and qualitative (Open) questions. Likert stems can be seen in Table 1 while Open questions related to students’ perceptions of learning, impact and potential improvements to the initiative. Likert questions were designed to elicit quantitative data concerning the intervention while the open questions gathered qualitative data to triangulate with this. Triangulation of both datasets was intended to provide evidence relating to intervention impact as well as student perceptions in order to gain more in-depth understanding,

**Participants**

Student cohorts from year 1 of the University of Liverpool (UoL) and year 2 of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University (RMIT) undergraduate Medical Radiation Science (MRS) degree programmes participated in the intervention as part of their module teaching. Although it would have been ideal to engage students in the same year, differences in Course structure made this challenging; both cohorts had experienced similar clinical placement time which was felt to be most important for this project. The UK and Australian cohorts were chosen as there are key differences in practice and health service models between the two countries. Australian health care is provided by a rich mixture of public and private institutions which affords a good contrast to the UK where the NHS still provides the majority of medical imaging and radiotherapy services. Professional roles between the two countries are also different with the UK Advanced Practice model being well established [35], while the Australian system is currently emerging [36]. There are also differences in scope of practice and training models between MRS practitioners in each country. Despite these differences there remain many areas of common ground including language, culture and standards of practice.

**Intervention**

Students from both institutions were tasked with designing, deploying and analysing data from survey-based research projects in order to gain understanding of key aspects of overseas practice while also learning about research methods and process. Each cohort worked as a research group while concurrently acting as participants for their overseas peers. Volunteers from the two cohorts were invited to an out-of-hours online meeting to identify broad mutual similarities and differences, for example teaching, health care delivery and student experiences that could contribute to creating interesting research questions. This meeting was conducted at a mutually convenient time according to the 9-hour time difference; catering incentives were provided to encourage participation. After this meeting, each cohort worked in small seminar groups to devise research questions and design a survey for deployment to their overseas peers via Survey Monkey. Students were tasked to collect data relating to cultural and professional issues of interest to themselves. This stage was followed by additional seminars where students collated the data, performed thematic analysis and developed conclusions. For UoL students these activities were formative in nature but for RMIT students the write-up of the project constituted a summative assessment. Alongside the project, students were encouraged to engage in mutual social media activities via WhatsApp groups with their overseas peers in order to facilitate additional peer interaction outside the project.

**Data collection**

After completion of the teaching intervention, all students were invited to provide feedback about the project via an anonymous and voluntary online survey (UoL students) or an equivalent paper-based survey (RMIT students). A mixture of Likert-style and open questions gathered feedback concerning the effectiveness and impact of the project from both a “research teaching” and an “internationalisation” perspective.

**Data analysis**

All Likert data from both cohorts was combined with responses being collated for descriptive analysis. Open question responses were each assigned codes representing the underlying theme in an iterative process. This was performed independently by two members of the staff research team. Coding was compared and discrepancies were discussed in a collaborative process with a third researcher’s input. Once coding had been completed, emerging themes were identified and agreed via a similar process to establish qualitative findings.

**Ethical considerations**

Permission to gather project evaluation data was provided by the University of Liverpool Human Ethics Research Committee (Ref 1579) and subsequently accepted by the RMIT College Human Ethics Advisry Network. Data gathered by the students during the teaching exercise was not included in the ethics submission as this was performed as a teaching exercise and not as a research project.

**Results**

Student participation with the intervention was compulsory; for the UoL students although the activities were formative in nature, attendance was enforced via registers as per the School of Health Sciences’ attendance policy. At RMIT participation was part of a summative assessment task related to the project. A total of 128 RMIT students and 80 UoL students were enrolled on the medical radiation sciences modules and participated in the intervention. There were 147 responses (122 from RMIT and 25 from UoL). The higher response rate from the RMIT cohort arose from a timetabled paper-based data collection exercise whereas just over 30% of UoL students responded to the online data collection invitation.

Table 1 summarises the Likert data; it was clear that a large proportion (20% to 43%) of responses were “neither agree nor disagree”. It is hard to interpret these findings; this may indicate general apathy or a mixture of positive and negative aspects. Table 2 summarises the main themes related to the perceived impact of the project while Tables 3 and 4 present the themes relating to “Most useful aspects” and “Potential improvements” related to the project. These themes form the basis for the following discussion.

**Student enjoyment**

Over 42% of respondents agreed that they had enjoyed the opportunity to interact with overseas peers while only 14.7% did not. Of the 25 UoL responses, there were none in strong disagreement, with only 1 student disagreeing. The RMIT students generated a larger number of negative responses, with 17% either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. Responses within the qualitative data as seen in Table 4 suggested that students had wanted more contact with overseas peers within the project. It was, however, clear from these responses that students had not made much use of the social media support opportunity.

**Student learning**

Although student understanding of research methods was formally assessed within both cohorts, the data from this evaluation related to students’ perceived understanding. Table 1 demonstrates the impact students felt that the intervention had made on their understanding of research methods with over 40% agreeing that it had helped and only 28% that it had not. The UoL response was weighted towards a more positive view, with 80% either agreeing or strongly agreeing. In contrast, the RMIT students’ responses were more evenly distributed, with similar percentages for positive (32%), neutral (36%) and negative (31%) responses. A similar response pattern was seen when students were asked about how the project had improved their understanding of their profession overseas; 76% of the UoL students and 71% of the RMIT students responded positively. Neutral responses were received from16% of the UoL and 21% of the RMIT. Only 8% responded negatively. Table 1 also illustrates the project impact on student understanding of international practice in their profession with over 71% reporting it had helped and only 8% that it had not.

Table 3 summarises the main themes that students found useful about the project; with learning of the research process, team working skills, networking opportunities and understanding of cultural differences topping the list. Students found interpreting data from overseas students to be valuable for their learning and professional development (85%). When asked how useful they found the contact with their overseas peers, 28% overall felt it was of no use (27% RMIT and 29% UoL). The majority responded that this aspect was somewhat useful and only a minority felt this aspect was very useful (14%).

**Social media support**

A surprising result from the evaluation related to the poor engagement with social media. Table 1 shows nearly 40% of students disagreeing that social media support provided value and only 27% finding it useful. There was a balanced response from the RMIT cohort with 31% responding positively, 33% neutrally and 36% negatively. In contrast the UoL students responded more negatively (60%), with a similar percentage to the RMIT cohort responding neutrally (32%) and only a minority responding positively (8%). Although not formally measured, qualitative data indicated that the actual uptake and engagement with the social media was minimal and that this may have been related to the choice of format (WhatsApp) and students’ reluctance to share mobile numbers or engage beyond the initial meeting.

**Team working and research**

Students were asked about their perceptions of the value of team working in relation to their learning and professional development. Responses were overall positive, with only a minority overall (19%) and only 1 UoL student suggesting no value at all. Overall 52% found this aspect ‘somewhat’ useful, with majority percentages for both the RMIT (48%) and UoL (68%) cohorts.

**Challenges**

Table 4 shows the main identified issues suggested by students in response to an Open Question. Most of the reported issues related to the need for more organisation and guidance (especially from the RMIT students) and improved timings. Many of these represent the initial teething problems of any new teaching innovation coupled with the challenges of the time difference and conflicting timetables. It should also be acknowledged that, for the RMIT students, some of these comments may be related more to concerns around their assessment than with the actual project. There were also many comments related to desire for increased opportunities for contact with overseas students from both cohorts which is confusing when compared to the poor uptake of social media. This was evident from both cohorts and while it was pleasing to note that many students were keen for overseas contact there was a subset of responses suggesting the project be run with home students or not at all. Other common issues arose from the students’ apparent dislike of working in multi-professional groups.

**Future plans**

When asked about repeating the initiative next year in the same module the overall response was slightly favourable, with similar percentages responding positively (41%) or neutrally (38%), and fewer responding negatively (22%). There were, however, significant differences between the two cohorts, as the majority (54%) of RMIT students responded negatively while the majority of UoL (64%) students responded positively. This may relate to the different use of the project as summative assessment (RMIT) and formative learning (UoL); further work is ongoing to determine the impact of this on the student experience.

**Discussion**

**Research skills learning**

One of the main findings from the thematic analysis was the extent to which students felt they had learned about the research process. For the professional groups within this project, this has helped support the evident growth in research culture over that last 10 years [37-39]. Research activity was identified as a “fundamental requirement of the professional role” over 20 years ago [40] and the reliance on evidence based practice in healthcare mandates these skills [37].

Successful participation in research project development such as the activities within this project can not only provide teaching of research methods but also nurture the development of a research culture among students. Whilst education and training has been identified as one of many barriers to research involvement amongst radiation therapists in the workforce [37], Rosewall [39] highlighted that workplace culture was more likely to have a detrimental effect on participation than lack of education. A grass roots approach to embedding active and collaborative participation in research into education programmes is likely to engender a positive effect on the workplace research culture for these professional groups.

A 2008 study investigating radiation therapists’ perspectives of clinical trials research [41], identified a key enabler as being opportunities to actively participate. It can, therefore, be assumed that providing students with an opportunity to work together actively participating in research will build their research knowledge and skills. This form of active learning experience has been identified as useful to student development in terms of behaviours, critical thinking and writing [42-44]. It is therefore encouraging to see learning of the “research process” feature as the most useful aspect of the project within the thematic analysis (64 comments) in Table 2. Associated research skills such as teamwork and networking also featured strongly in the themes as seen in Table 2.

**Internationalisation**

The ability to collaborate with a global perspective is a key graduate attribute in today’s international community of practice in medical radiations. The concept of global citizenship in healthcare [45] is a driver in the development of an internationalised tertiary curriculum in MRS. The appreciation of the similarity and variance in the professional practice of medical radiations internationally, is a learning outcome frequently achieved with inter-university exchange (global mobility) programmes. The connection that is afforded via the online environment, could potentially allow students to develop an understanding without direct immersion in an international clinical environment.

Through collaborative intellectual exchange, this project allowed the MRS students to consider the similarities and differences in the professional practices in Australia and the UK. Students identified that the project raised their awareness of the differences in university curricula and highlighted the different vocational roles in their relevant local professional practices. A total of 93 RMIT students and 15 UoL students identified positive learning outcomes with their involvement in the project. The most frequent theme amongst both groups was the difference in the university course structure and clinical practicum (46% RMIT, 33% UoL).

A deeper understanding of their vocational stream in medical radiations internationally was highlighted as a key gain from this project with 89% of students agreeing that this project improved their understanding of the profession overseas. This was further supported when students were asked the open question of what they thought they had learnt from the international collaboration, with 22% of RMIT and 27% of UoL students identifying the theme of the differences in professional role internationally as the key learning outcome of this collaborative project.

Although the project did not specifically focus on global mobility, it was noted that 16% of RMIT students considered the key project learning outcome as developing an understanding of job opportunities abroad. Surprisingly, this was not mentioned as a project learning outcome with the UoL cohort.

**Social media support**

The project intended to have students from both universities actively engaging with one another via social media. A recent discussion paper [28] highlighted the value of social media for delivering the “hidden curriculum” with strong links to professionalism but acknowledged the challenges of lack of control and accountability. In this project, the participating students were encouraged to use WhatsApp on their personal mobile phones in order to “chat” amongst themselves, without academics overseeing or censoring their conversations. Unfortunately, there was limited uptake of this.

The comments provided by the participants after the completion of their assignments were mostly negative, with many stating they never engaged or rarely engaged with their overseas counterparts via WhatsApp. This corresponds to the quantitative analysis, with less than 30% of the combined cohorts finding the social media aspect added any value to the project. Giving students guided topics to initiate discussion may have helped get the conversations started, allowing for deeper communication between the 2 groups and a greater sense of involvement in and connection to the project. A search of literature found other studies utilising social media such as “Facebook” and “ValuePulse” to facilitate collaboration between international student groups, made use of guided questions and topics to promote discussion and social connections [46,47].

These reported cases were found to have added more value to the social media aspect than this project. It may be that more support and guidance was required as in other aspects of the project; guided discussion questions may be a useful approach for future projects. It may also be worth investigating alternative social media platforms as students highlighted issues with the chosen social media platform in the survey responses. The use of WhatsApp involved downloading an app and divulging of student personal phone numbers. Although students were informed that this was an “opt-in” process, after the completion of the assignment, some students raised the issue of privacy and suggested other social media platforms be utilised in future international collaborations.

**Limitations**

The time difference and constraints of timetables did lead to some non-optimal timing with the intervention, and student comments related to poor organisation and restricted opportunities for mutual engagement certainly reflected this. This also clearly impacted on the opportunities for students to interact directly. Similar findings were reported recently by Ambrose [32] and future work will need to identify measures to overcome this.

The novelty of the intervention coupled with the aforementioned timing issues certainly led to many comments concerning guidance and support. This was a clear theme with the RMIT students, however with the activities comprising formative learning for the UoL students the pressures of summative assessment did not generate such strong concerns. While it is useful for engagement and reward to provide summative credit for these activities, in this case the assessment concerns may have over-ridden the potential social and collaborative gains.

Although MRS students are actively involved in inter-professional learning activities in preparation for their professional work, this was not identified as an area in which they felt the project benefitted them. Students instead reported that multi-professional grouping had inhibited their engagement with the project and impacted on their learning. Future work focussing on individual professions may help students to engage and result in more appropriate profession-specific learning opportunities.

**Conclusions**

This novel project successfully provided students with an active learning opportunity that enabled them to gain not only grounding in research skills but also an understanding of the international aspects of their professions. Students reported clear value of the innovation for learning research skills and process as well as a deeper understanding of the similarities and differences between themselves and their overseas peers.

Wider implementation of this project will bring gains to students relating to internationalisation and understanding of research methods. Tutors will need to overcome the challenges afforded by the time differences and timetabling issues arising from the two cohorts. Clearer expectations and guidelines for students particularly those undertaking summative assessment within the modules is also recommended. Investigation into optimal social media support and additional mechanisms to facilitate international collaboration would also strengthen the outcomes of future projects.

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**Table 1: Likert responses (n = 148 both; n = 123 RMIT only; n = 25 UoL only)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Likert Stem** | **Cohort(s)** | **SA (%)** | **A (%)** | **N (%)** | **D (%)** | **SD (%)** |
| I enjoyed the opportunity to interact with my peers from overseas | Both | 7.4 | 34.9 | 43 | 11.4 | 3.3 |
| RMIT | 8.1 | 32.3 | 42.7 | 12.9 | 4.0 |
| UoL | 4.0 | 48.0 | 44.0 | 4.0 | 0.0 |
| Being able to engage in research helped me understand the module better  | Both | 6.7 | 33.7 | 31.6 | 22 | 6 |
| RMIT | 1.6 | 30.6 | 36.3 | 24.2 | 7.3 |
| UoL | 32.0 | 48.0 | 8.0 | 12.0 | 0.0 |
| This project has given me an improved understanding of my profession overseas | Both | 6.7 | 65 | 20.3 | 6.7 | 1.3 |
| RMIT | 5.6 | 64.5 | 21.0 | 6.5 | 1.6 |
| UoL | 12.0 | 64.0 | 16.0 | 8.0 | 0.0 |
| I found the social media support for this initiative to be valuable | Both | 4.1 | 23 | 33.1 | 29 | 10.8 |
| RMIT | 4.8 | 25.8 | 33.1 | 25.0 | 10.5 |
| UoL | 0.0 | 8.0 | 32.0 | 48.0 | 12.0 |
| I would recommend this be repeated next year in this module | Both | 1.9 | 25.6 | 25.6 | 26.9 | 20 |
| RMIT | 1.6 | 18.7 | 26 | 30.9 | 22.8 |
| UoL | 4 | 60 | 24 | 8 | 4 |

Key: SA = “Strongly agree”; A = “Agree”; N = “Neither agree nor disagree”; D = “Disagree”; SD = “Strongly disagree”

**Table 2: Project impact on learning**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Total** | **RMIT** | **UoL** | **Indicative comments** |
| University and course differences  | 45 | 40 | 5 | That although we are all doing a radiography/ radiotherapy course, the course structures are completely different. (UoL) |
| A good idea, it is interesting to see how other countries learn similar things (RMIT) |
| I feel like I now have a better understanding of how my peers overseas learn and hence some understanding about how their practice may differ (RMIT) |
| Research skills | 28 | 19 | 9 | How important it is to get your research questions worded correctly to get the most accurate answers to your questions (UoL) |
| I think that I have learned just how much effort goes into research and in particular the amount of time required to create a research question and subsequent survey questions. (RMIT) |
| Professional differences | 27 | 25 | 2 | It helped me to see how practice works overseas (UoL) |
| How practice can vary between countries that have similar facilities and opportunities (RMIT) |
| I gained a broadened perspective on the medical radiations profession internationally (RMIT) |
| Cultural differences | 14 | 13 | 1 | It was also interesting to find out a little bit more about what university students enjoyed spending their time doing. (UoL) |
| Differences with different communities (RMIT) |
| No impact at all | 14 | 10 | 4 | Nothing, I did not think it was necessary (RMIT) |
| Nothing google wouldn't tell me (RMIT) |
| Personally I think it could have been as well or better achieved collaborating with other radiography students within the uk or even students from another course. (UoL) |
| Overseas working | 10 | 10 | 0 | About overseas Medical Radiation, and the possible opportunities in the future (RMIT) |
| Gained valuable insight into what it would be like working overseas (RMIT) |
| Placement experiences | 8 | 8 | 0 | We are fortunate to be able to attend placements at different clinical sites as this allows us to better develop our technical competency and communication skills (RMIT) |
| Team working | 3 | 3 | 0 | Takes two entity to make a research project work (RMIT) |
| Not to work with people (RMIT) |

**Table 3: Most useful aspects**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Total** | **RMIT** | **UoL** | **Indicative comments** |
| Research process | 64 | 50 | 14 | Actually carrying out the research made it easier to understand and learn some of the content of this module, the survey method in particular (UoL) |
| Having an understanding of the basics of research design through implementing it ourselves (RMIT) |
| Team work | 34 | 28 | 6 | Group discussions helped to listen to other ideas I personally didn't think of, and helped me to remember different aspects of research. (UoL) |
| Collaborating with others to put together a survey (RMIT) |
| Group work is not always ideal (RMIT) |
| Networking | 21 | 20 | 1 | Collaboration with overseas students made it a lot more interesting (UoL) |
| Interacting with overseas students (even if indirectly) (RMIT) |
| Cultural differences | 18 | 18 | 0 | Insight gained into the experience of our peers overseas (RMIT) |
| Ability to communicate and learn from international students and see how we compare (RMIT) |
| Course structure | 17 | 14 | 3 | It was interesting to compare course structures. (UoL) |
| Drawing parallels across courses (RMIT) |
| Professional differences | 17 | 16 | 1 | It was interesting to see the differences in practice in Australia; this helped me gain a greater understanding of practice as a whole (UoL) |
| Learning about the global standard for MR students (RMIT) |
| Academic skills | 10 | 10 | 0 | Learning how to write a research article (RMIT) |
| Increased engagement | 6 | 4 | 2 | Having the ongoing group project definitely made me more engaged with the module objectives. (UoL) |
| Provided a different perspective…engaged students in the course |
| Overseas working | 6 | 6 | 0 | Future career aspects and opportunities broadened (RMIT) |
| Placement experiences | 3 | 3 | 0 | Understanding the difference in our clinical placements (RMIT) |

**Table 4: Project improvements**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Total** | **RMIT** | **UoL** | **Indicative comments** |
| Guidance | 59 | 57 | 2 | A clearer outline of the expectations for the written assignment, so that research questions and survey questions can be designed that actually answered and are relevant/ Maybe being able to use different analytical methods such as statistics in the results (RMIT) |
| More overseas contact | 33 | 25 | 8 | Encourage more communication between the Australian students and us. (UoL) |
| More interaction/ use of social medial platform eg Facebook group or chat site (RMIT) |
| Timings | 21 | 19 | 2 | To allow time for a pilot survey in order to maximise the research potential. (UoL) |
| receive results earlier, more time to work on written assignment (RMIT) |
| Better organisation | 15 | 13 | 2 | Organisation - most of us didn't even understand what was required of us = a lot of confusion (RMIT) |
| Separate professions | 15 | 14 | 1 | Course specific contact between Aus/UK students, RT/MI students matched with their counterparts. (UoL) |
| Working within the RT students rather than students of the other radiation fields, as this caused our research to be less focussed and specific (RMIT) |
| Assessment issues | 14 | 14 | 0 | Less weighting on the assessment (RMIT) |
| Group work | 13 | 13 | 0 | Please make it individual project that does not require a group (RMIT) |
| I don't think this assignment had enough of a group work element. It needs to have no group aspect or more (RMIT) |
| Survey issues | 8 | 5 | 3 | Survey was too long hence low response rate (RMIT) |
| Don't repeat | 5 | 4 | 1 | This project could have been eliminated. It was not useful at all except for the fact that we learnt some very minor details about our profession in England (RMIT) |
| Relevance | 4 | 4 | 0 | Making it more relevant to clinical practice (RMIT) |
| Use home students | 4 | 2 | 2 | Maybe use peers from Australia instead of overseas - we have more chance of networking (RMIT) |
| Overseas exchange | 2 | 2 | 0 | Overseas placement as an option (RMIT) |