Title: **The Development of Assertion Reason Questions (ARQ) for the Assessment of Level 7 Graduate Entry Nurses**

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Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Identify the process to develop ARQs
- Understand the implementation of ARQs as a form of assessment
- Understand how ARQs differ to MCQs and the rationale behind their implementation
- Understand the difficulty in defining 'objective questioning' in developing ARQs
- Provide a summary of student experience

Session Outline

In order to make safe and sound decisions in a fast-changing and unpredictable clinical environment, nurses need knowledge that has a solid theoretical foundation, which is situationally relevant and clinically appropriate. Describing this as functioning knowledge, Biggs (2003) argues that it can only be acquired through a deep approach to learning and not a surface one. The need for nursing students to adopt a deep approach is therefore obvious.

Graduate Entry Nursing Programmes pose a challenge at assessing students at Level 7 on their understanding, application and reasoning of theoretical knowledge (Siler et al 2008, Kohn and Trugi-Londrigan 2007). Multiple Choice Questions are only able to assess the retention of factual knowledge and therefore not appropriate for post-graduate education. By contrast, Assertion Reason Questions (ARQs) allow the student to demonstrate high order thinking and thus a deeper level of understanding (Williams 2006).

This session aims to provide attendees with a reflection on the development of ARQs that were 'fit for practice', addressed university assessment guidelines, and assessed module content in a balanced way.

The session will provide a keynote presentation on 'how to' develop an ARQ along with the rationale for their use.

Participants in the workshop will be split into two groups – one group will have the chance to develop a small examination using ARQs and the other group will 'sit' a small prepared ARQ examination (nobody will see the work other than the participant)

A group feedback discussion following the activity

Question and Answer Session

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

The outline of the workshop is a follows;

Keynote Lecture – 15 minutes
Activity Group A (half the group) – Develop ARQ exam (15 minutes) to run concurrently
Activity Group B (half the group) – 'Sit' an ARQ Exam (15 minutes) to run concurrently
Discussion with Questions and Answers – 15 minutes

References

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B. Siler, N. DeBasio, K. Roberts (2008) Profile of non-nurse college graduates enrolled in accelerated baccalaureate curricula: results of a national study. Nursing Education Perspectives, 29 (6) (2008), pp. 336–341

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