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# Crynoldebau / abstracts

Using the Cornell Notetaking system to enhance student’s notetaking skills and revision techniques

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Introduction

Notetaking and revision techniques substantially influence student learning and interventions to assist these are warranted (Kobayashi et al., 2006).

This study aimed to:

• Encourage students to self-assess notetaking and revision techniques.

• Assess the effect of an intervention to enhance student notetaking skills and revision techniques.

It was hypothesised that a notetaking intervention would increase students’ routine use of notetaking for module learning and exam revision.

Methods

Questionnaires were delivered in a year 3 undergraduate module at Aberystwyth University in semester weeks 1 (Pre) and 10 (Post). Students (n = 8) reflected upon their routine notetaking on academic modules and using notes to aid learning and revision, on a Likert scale from 1, never, to 6, always, and gave qualitative description. Additionally, the Post questionnaire asked for feedback on the intervention and future study techniques. The Cornell notetaking system was introduced to students in week 1, with a discussion of effective notetaking. Quizzes were used in weeks 3, 6 and 9, encouraging group discussion on lecture content, and identifying areas for revision.

Results

The Cornell notetaking system was inconsistently used with students citing unfamiliarity with the procedures, and favouring their own technique. Median score describing the extent of routine notetaking at Pre was 3.5 (range, 3.0) and was unchanged by the intervention [median = 4.0 (4.0), P = 0.342]. Mean (± SD) hours spent routinely reviewing notes after lectures (n = 4) increased from Pre (0.9 ± 0.9 h) to Post (1.3 ± 1.0 h), with a strong tendency for increased use for exam revision (P = 0.059). Students reported the quizzes aided understanding of module content and exam revision [median = 6.0 (2.0)]. Quizzes provided an “overview of previous weeks and highlighting key areas to focus on” and “..demonstrated where my weaknesses are”. Students reported the likelihood they would use the intervention study techniques in future was “Somewhat frequently” [median = 4.0 (4.0)].

Discussion

A simple intervention improves students’ perceptions of learning and encourages notetaking and exam revision techniques. More in-depth introduction is required for novel notetaking techniques. A follow-up study could assess longer term adoption of techniques.