

## **Bridging the Gap: A Program to Enhance Medical Students' Learning Experience in the Foundation Year**

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**Objective:** To evaluate students' perceptions of the intervention program based on small group teaching, regular continuous assessment, science-based tailored study skills program and recorded attendance on students' enhanced learning experience in the first year of study in an outcome-based medical course.

**Design:** Descriptive study.

**Setting:** RCSI Bahrain.

**Method:** A Twenty-seven-item questionnaire was administered to foundation year students at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland – Medical University of Bahrain (RCSI Bahrain) after the completion of the first semester to explore whether these interventions enriched the students' learning experience or not. Comparisons of pass rates in all modules over the four years were also included. Students' perceptions of the academic study skills course were collected through a questionnaire activity (version 2007120102) via the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

**Result:** The results suggest that local adaptations of undergraduate programs may lead to pedagogical expertise that contribute to enhanced learning experience of students and better integration of pre-university and third-level courses. The majority of questionnaire items were rated positively and the comparison of pass rates showed the highest results in the year the intervention was implemented.

**Conclusion:** Making local adaptations to medical programs without changing the core curriculum can mark good academic practice. Considering specific socio-cultural frameworks of students may lead to improvements in the delivery of programs in universities.

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