

# Using podcasts to teach Dermatological education

Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences | Division of Dermatology

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## Context

There were over 200 students enrolled for the The Skin 471 module in 2014. Dermatological education students have two weeks of formal lectures and two weeks clinical rotation. The two weeks of lectures adds up to 40 lectures that are divided between lecturers. These lectures followed structured themes according to the textbook.

## The challenge

The lecturer received great feedback in the past, but wanted to change the module. The lecturer questioned if traditional lectures was the best way to teach students. It does not encourage self-directed learning and can be labour and time intensive for the lecturers. Many students also did not attend the lectures.

## Learning and assessment activities

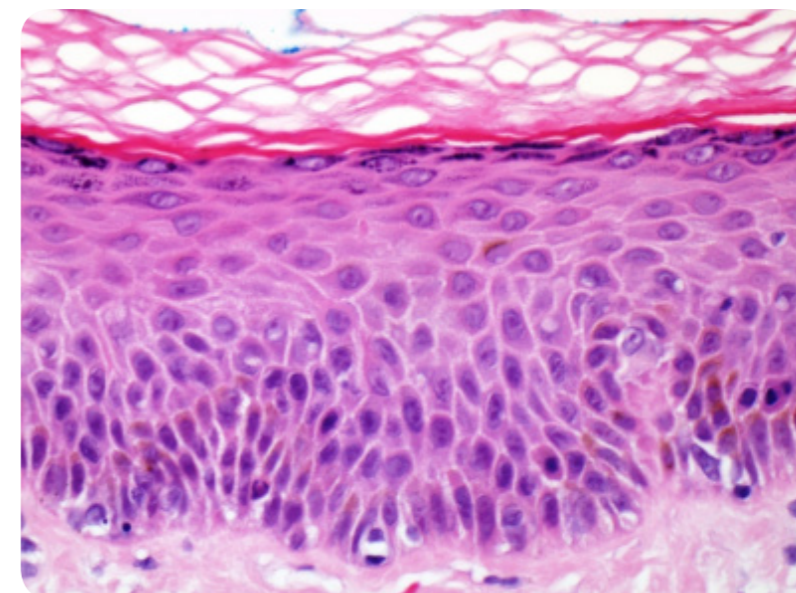
### Educational approach

The lecturer drew motivation by recent studies of McCleskey (2013) and Jenkins, Goel and Morrell (2008) and worked towards adapting this module to a more blended learning approach.

### Learning activities

The lecturer made a few focused changes. All previous lectures were podcasted and contact sessions were reduced to two days. During the first week students had an opportunity to work through all the podcast lectures in their own time. The language used in the podcast was a mixture of Afrikaans and English. If students were English speaking they would pair up with an Afrikaans student to make sure that they understood everything. While working through the lectures students were required to make lists of conditions that may be present with various symptoms. Students still had the textbook and study guide available to guide their learning experiences. The study guide contained a timeline or program for students to plan their time appropriately.

The plan was to let students build up a basic knowledge with the podcasts and then integrate this knowledge with practice during the contact sessions.



## Student experience

### Student feedback

Students reacted positively towards this new teaching approach. They felt that having the podcasts available allowed them to take responsibility for their own learning. Students felt that the module was well organised and they know exactly what was expected of them. Some students did experience difficulty in downloading the podcasts.

### General

#### Advice

For lecturers that wish to implement a similar teaching approach in the future, the lecturer has the following advice:

- The language in which the podcasts are recorded is very important.
- Technical aspects will arise and must be addressed effectively.
- Podcasts should be adequate to convey a message.
- Contact sessions are still important for deep learning.
- If this approach is followed, the lecturer must have an "open door" via e-mail for questions.



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## Conclusion

Teaching and assessment techniques should constantly be re-evaluated to ensure optimal teaching and learning. Lecturers must rethink the use of PowerPoint lectures and use the available technology to enhance their teaching and assessment. This can also be done by combining different teaching and assessment methods.

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McCleskey, P.E. 2013. Clinical teaching made easy: A prospective study of the American Academy of Dermatology core curriculum in primary care learners. *Journal of American Academy of Dermatology*, 69(2):273-279.

