

Finding the Gaps - Development of an Online 'day one' skills Logbook

Final Report 2012

Background

All UK Veterinary students are expected to have attained a basic level of clinical competence by graduation, to ensure that they are safe to practice. This requires that they are able to perform, under supervision, a number of 'day one' skills by the end of their course. BVetMed students at the Royal Veterinary College (RVC) acquire these skills during the course and especially during clinical placements on intra-mural rotations (IMR) at RVC hospitals and clinics, as well as during extra-mural studies (EMS) with a range of external practices.

In the past RVC students have been provided with a pamphlet outlining the 'day one' skills that they are required to obtain competence in. This RVC Day One Skills list is based on the RCVS Day One Competencies that was refined and further enhanced in consultation with RVC staff (Welsh et al., 2009).

A recent RVC undergraduate Research 2 Project (Duncan, 2009) highlighted that while most students are aware of the Day One Skills booklet, many had not achieved competence in all the skills listed by the time they graduate. In addition, students were not clear about how to use the booklet in helping them work towards competence although, when asked, they recognised that it could be very useful for them in planning and monitoring their learning.

This project set out to address these issues by introducing an online logbook for students to record where and when they advance in a particular skill, enabling them to track their personal progress and to visually identify their 'gaps'.

Development

Version 1 of the 'day one' skills (D1S) Logbook was completed in 2011 and can be accessed on- and off-site via <http://mylearning.rvc.ac.uk/d1s> using the standard RVC email and password.

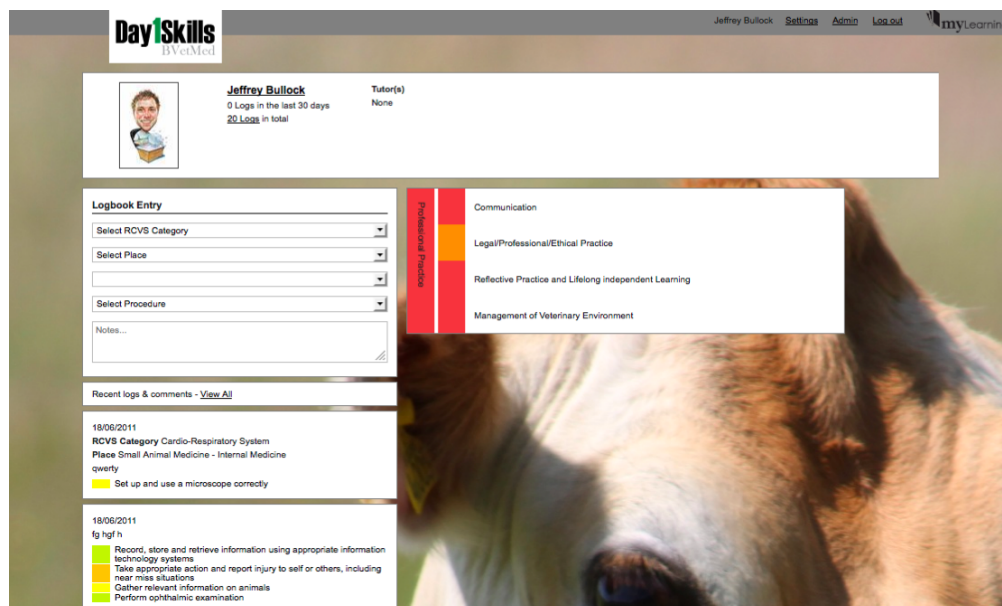
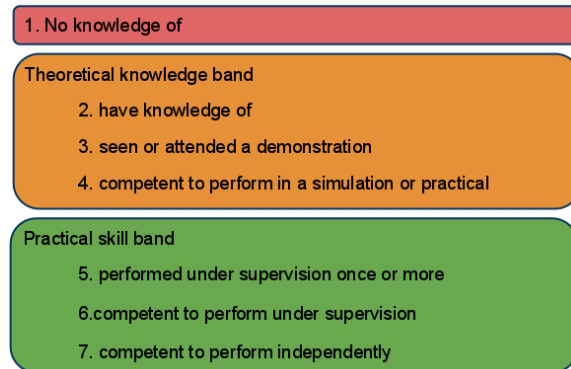


Figure 1: The D1S opening page showing two logbook entries

The D1S Logbook covers the following functionality:

- The 'day one' skills list is available to browse online.
- Users can view further information about any skill and where it can be practiced.
- Users are able to add a Logbook entry containing one or more skills.
- Users can add where and when they gained experience in the skill(s).
- Users are able to rate themselves on a particular skill using the following scale (based on Beukelen & van der Maazen, 2006)



- Users can view a colour-coded matrix representing the stage they are at with mastering all the skills.
- Tutors are able to view their tutees 'day one' skills map. This can be used as the basis for tutor meetings, and to provide feedback and guidance to the tutee on their progress.
- Additionally, tutors are able to comment on tutees entries.

All tutor/tutee information is imported from the RVC student record system (SITS) each night. Tutors can also be manually assigned to a tutor in the administration section. Student pictures are also captured, although students have the option to change their own picture if they wish. When a tutor logs in, they see their tutees grouped by cohort and are able to browse a tutees skills and make comments.

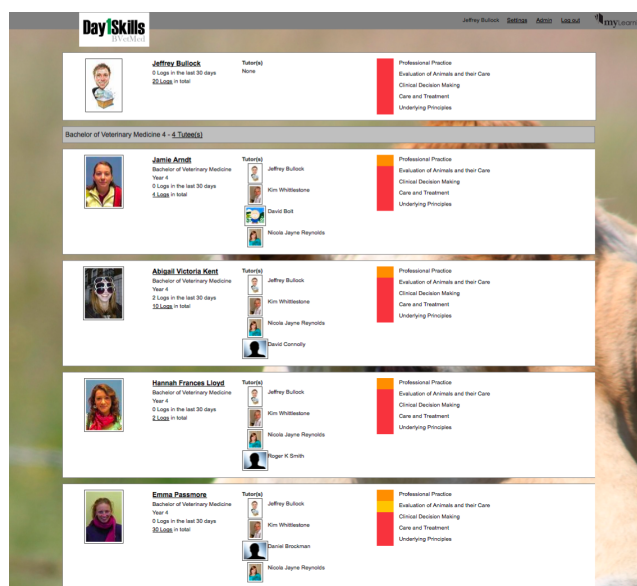


Figure 2: Tutors view of their tutees progress towards Day One Skills

Evaluation

Following positive feedback from BVetMed Year 3 focus groups with paper and then actual prototypes of the proposed application in 2010/11, a pilot study was conducted with students on the Beaumont Small Animal rotation in 2011. This pilot was part of a Research 2 Project being undertaken by Nicola Reynolds and was completed in February 2012 (Reynolds, 2012). The D1S application was well-received by students monitoring their progress towards Day One Skills and was shown to help them plan more effectively for their rotation and more accurately assess their progress than students not using the logbook – key attributes of a reflective practitioner.

Embedding & Dissemination

The D1S application is being rolled out with 1st and 3rd year BVetMed students in 2011/12 as a replacement to the existing PDP tutoring software, integrated into the professional studies strand. Students in these year groups have been asked to use the D1S in association with their Easter AHEMS/EMS placements and tutors will be involved in discussing their tutees progression as part of the existing tutorial system.

An online help system is available to support users in adding Logbook entries but additional support will be offered for students and tutors. This version of the D1S application will also be developed further to enhance functionality for tutors once the initial testing and feedback cycle has been completed in 2011/12.

In addition, the application will be adapted to integrate with the RCVS EMS recording system currently in development to allow data to be shared between the two systems so that students from the RVC can continue to benefit from monitoring their progress towards Year One Skills once they have left the RVC.

Acknowledgments

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References

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