

Evaluative judgement; A key capability for student success in practice education placements

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Why this study?

- Practice education placements are essential
(Bissett et al., 2020)
- Placements are resource intensive
(Lambert et al., 2024)
- Under-performance is challenging for all
(Larocque & Luhanga, 2013; Nicola-Richmond, et al., 2017)
- Evaluative judgement may be key
(Nicola-Richmond et al, 2024)





Evaluative judgement



- Evaluative judgement is “the capability to make decisions about the quality of work of self and others” (Tai et al., 2017, p. 5).
- To demonstrate evaluative judgement learners must understand what constitutes quality and make judgements about the quality of specific instances of work
(Boud et al., 2018; Naidoo et al., 2022)
- Evaluative judgement is vital in order to work and learn in context during and beyond higher education settings
(Boud et al., 2018)

Study Aims

To:

- explore academic, student and placement supervisor experiences of performance difficulties,
- identify the factors that contribute to, and strategies that support students who underperform,
- describe how universities & placement supervisors support development of evaluative judgement.



Method

Qualitative exploratory study

Participants:

- Year 3&4 occupational therapy students (n=4)
- Placement supervisors (n=11)
- University academic staff in placement roles (n=8)

Data Analysis:

Reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022)



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Themes



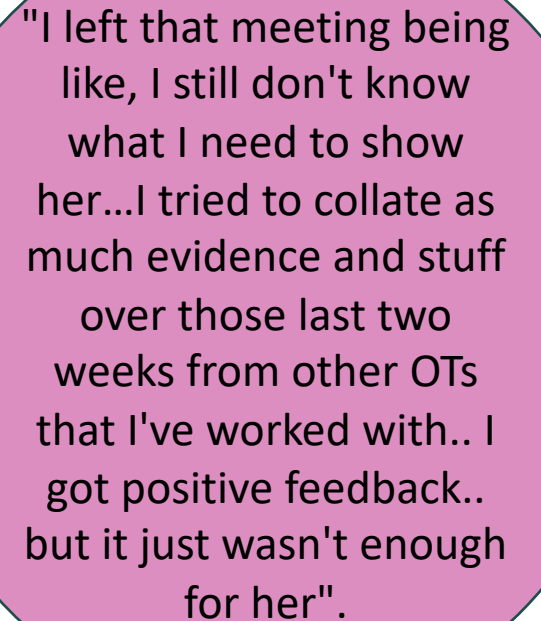
- Barriers and facilitators to placement success
- Behaviours that represent underperformance
- The importance of communication
- The pressure of placement
- Complex and multiple student challenges
- Strategies to support students who underperform
- Student ability to address underperformance.
- **Clear expectations and standards**
- **Quality relationships**
- **Evaluative judgement**



Clear expectations and standards



- Clear expectations and structure enhance student performance
- Effective communication about performance criteria, including explicit discussions about goals and assessment standards helps
- Students reported feeling unclear about the expected standards
- Differences in supervisor expectations leads to student anxiety and confusion.
- Supervisors and the university are crucial in clarifying standards during underperformance



"I left that meeting being like, I still don't know what I need to show her...I tried to collate as much evidence and stuff over those last two weeks from other OTs that I've worked with.. I got positive feedback.. but it just wasn't enough for her".

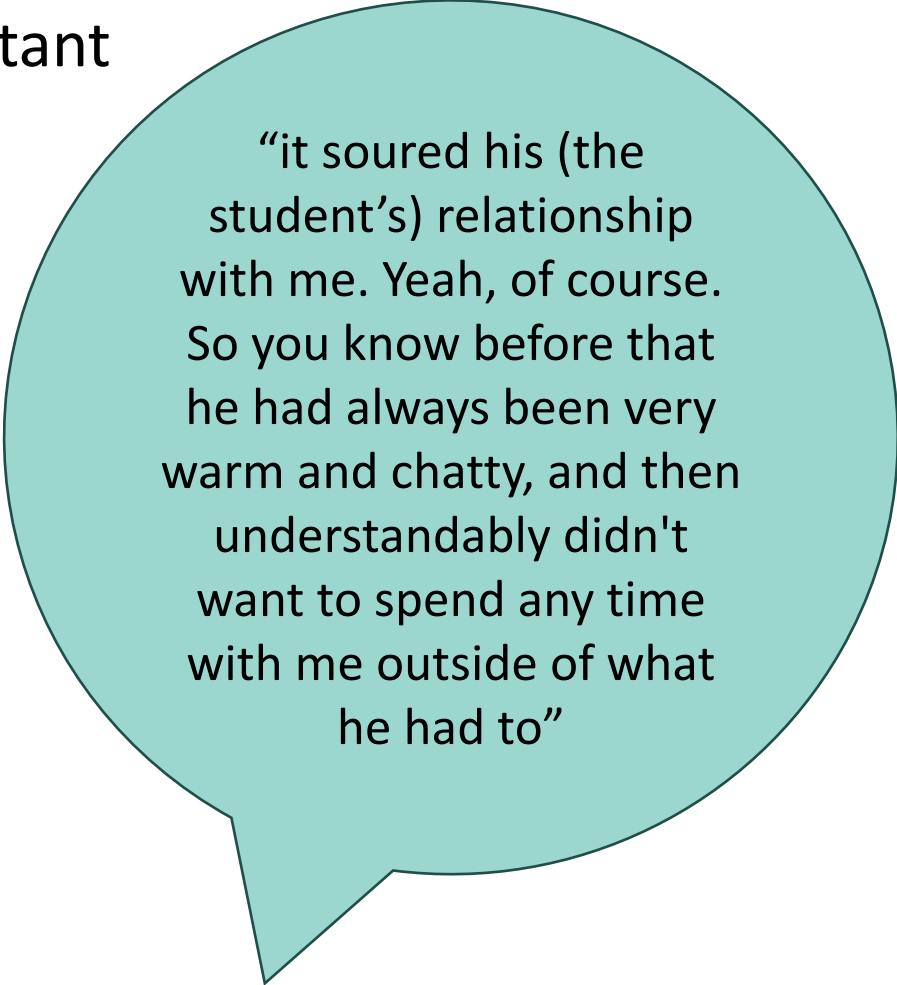
How do we ensure that expectations and the expected standard are clear for students?



The quality of the supervisor student relationship matters always, and particularly when students underperform

- A strong student supervisor relationship is an important facilitator
- when underperformance occurs, trust and communication are important aspects
- However, underperformance may impact a strong relationship

What can we do to better support investment in strong student supervisor relationships?



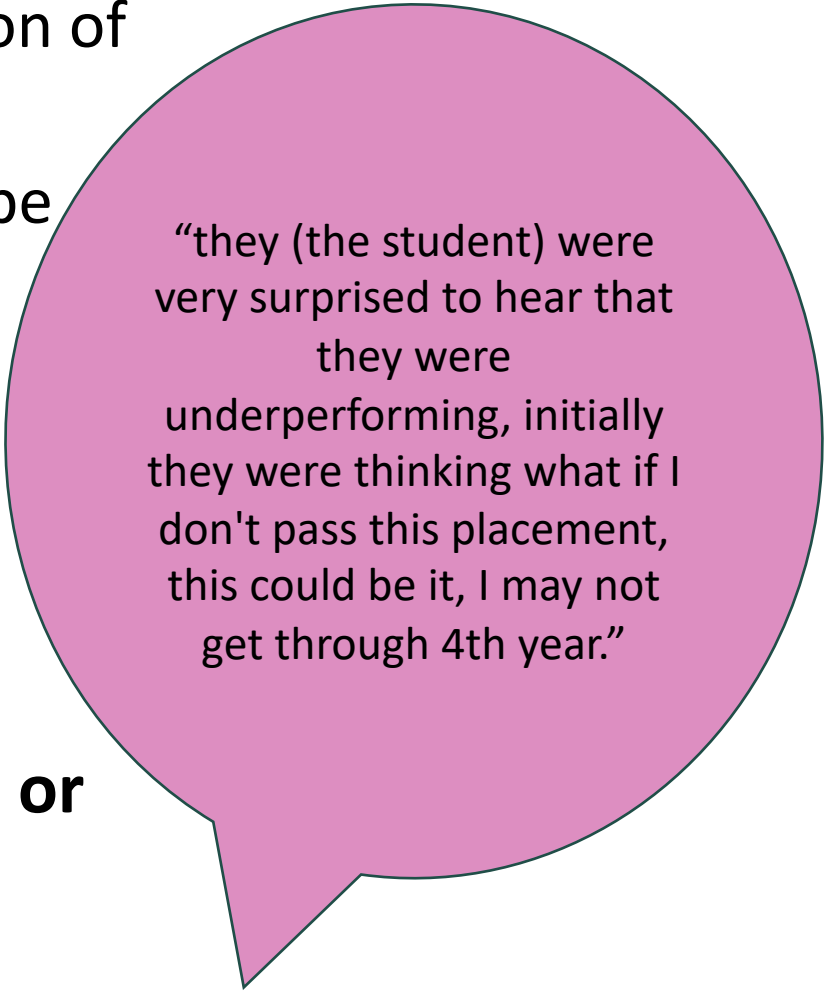
“it soured his (the student’s) relationship with me. Yeah, of course. So you know before that he had always been very warm and chatty, and then understandably didn't want to spend any time with me outside of what he had to”



Evaluative judgement



- Poor EJ and underperformance do appear to often be linked
- Supervisors also need to exercise EJ in their supervision of students
- In context of underperformance, two attributes may be needed:
 - ✓ Understanding the quality of one's own performance (effectively exercising EJ)
 - ✓ Being able to act on this



“they (the student) were very surprised to hear that they were underperforming, initially they were thinking what if I don't pass this placement, this could be it, I may not get through 4th year.”

Where does the student's responsibility for EJ start or stop? Is developing EJ everyone's responsibility?



What can I do to support the development of evaluative judgement?



- Message clarity and alignment
- Feedback timing and specificity
- Creating emotionally safe placements supports evaluative judgment
- Supervision structures that scaffold action on feedback

Thank you!

Use the QR code to access contact details of the authors for the resources as well as the reference list for this presentation.

