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Teacher, gatekeeper, or team member: Supervisor positioning in programmatic assessment

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Abstract

Competency-based assessment is undergoing an evolution with the popularisation of programmatic assessment. Fundamental to programmatic assessment are the attributes and buy-in of the people participating in the system. Our previous research revealed unspoken, yet influential, cultural and relationship dynamics that interact with programmatic assessment to influence success. Pulling at this thread, we conducted secondary analysis of focus groups and interviews (n=44 supervisors) using the critical lens of Positioning Theory to explore how workplace supervisors experienced and perceived their positioning within programmatic assessment. We found that supervisors positioned themselves in two of three ways. First, supervisors universally positioned themselves as a *Teacher*, describing an inherent duty to educate students. Enactment of this position was dichotomous, with some supervisors ascribing a passive and disempowered position onto students while others empowered students by cultivating an egalitarian teaching relationship. Second, two mutually exclusive positions were described – either *Gatekeeper* or *Team Member*. Supervisors positioning themselves as *Gatekeepers* had a duty to protect the community and were vigilant to the detection of inadequate student performance. Programmatic assessment challenged this positioning by reorientating supervisor rights and duties which diminished their perceived authority and led to frustration and resistance. In contrast, *Team Members* enacted a right to make a valuable contribution to programmatic assessment and felt liberated from the burden of assessment, enabling them to assent power shifts towards students and the university. Identifying supervisor positions revealed how programmatic assessment challenged traditional structures and ideologies, impeding success, and provides insights into supporting supervisors in programmatic assessment.

Key words

Introduction

Programmatic assessment is now firmly established as the prevailing approach to competency-based assessment within medical education (Pearce and Tavares, 2021) and is gaining traction in other disciplines (Palermo et al., 2017; Bok et al., 2018). Programmatic assessment strives to maximise student learning (assessment *for* learning) whilst simultaneously providing information about the learner to enable credible assessment decisions (Torre et al., 2021). This is achieved using pedologically informed low-stakes assessment moments, collected over time from multiple stakeholders (student, supervisor, care recipient, educator), that provide tailored and meaningful feedback to the student and promotes a dialogue that drives learning. These low-stakes data points are purposefully aggregated to give a holistic picture of the learner and inform high-stakes assessment decisions. High-stakes assessment decisions are achieved through consensus building by a collection of experts which improves the credibility and transparency (Heeneman et al., 2021). These principles provide the foundation on which to create a bespoke assessment system that is responsive to unique contextual factors (Torre et al., 2022).

Programmatic assessment has resonated with the health professional education community as it has the potential to remedy challenges encountered with operationalising competency-based assessment. Emerging research indicates that programmatic assessment can achieve the dual purpose of credible high-stakes assessment decisions while also promoting student learning. It supports early detection and remediation of underperformance, notably in the areas of communication and professionalism, and gives insight into student comprehension of their own learning (Schut et al., 2021). There are challenges for programmatic assessment, with a tendency for over-assessment that burdens supervisors, threatens to trivialise the system, and negates feedback-seeking behaviours in students. The quantity of assessment data should not supersede quality, as this is paramount to credible high-stakes assessment decisions (Schut et al., 2021). These challenges are surmountable with careful planning and critical evaluation. The exigent issue for programmatic assessment is resistance to change encountered from stakeholders, particularly supervisors, during implementation (Torre et al., 2021; Schut et al., 2021). Such resistance is commonplace in paradigm shifts for complex and often unvoiced reasons (Watling et al., 2020) and yet there is a need to unify the varied stakeholders to achieve successful educational change (van der Vleuten et al., 2015; Torre et al., 2021). Programmatic assessment was founded on the principle that buy-in, and belief by the people involved is crucial and that success is contingent on validation by all stakeholders (van der Vleuten et al., 2012; Pearce and Tavares, 2021). Understanding supervisors' perceived positions and reactions to programmatic assessment is necessary to support implementation. There is a need to illuminate factors that enable or inhibit implementation of programmatic assessment (Torre et al., 2021; Torre et al., 2022; Schut et al., 2021)

and how stakeholders operating within the system influence the adoption and use of assessment information (Watling and Ginsburg, 2019; Telio et al., 2016).

Assessment that occurs in the workplace relies on the participation of practitioners, as workplace supervisors, who have a crucial role in undertaking assessment processes and embodying the philosophies. Teachers have a powerful influence on the learner that holds true across the educational spectrum (Hattie, 2009; Stenfors-Hayes et al., 2010) and their attributes and skills are critical determinants to student learning (Cantillon et al., 2019; Rees et al., 2020b). The role of a supervisor is further elevated within the assessment *for* learning context as there is a need to develop a supportive student-supervisor relationship to cultivate a safe learning environment (Konopasek et al., 2016). In health professional education, these relationships are forged over short durations and are complicated by extraneous workplace demands. Our previous research revealed unspoken, yet influential, cultural and relationship dynamics that interacted with programmatic assessment to influence success (Jamieson et al., 2021). We therefore sought to understand how supervisors experienced programmatic assessment and elucidate potential influences on implementation.

Positioning Theory

Positioning Theory is a branch of social psychology which seeks to explore and explain how people and groups use discourse to situate themselves, relative to others, within social interactions (Green et al., 2020). The approach, grounded in social constructionism, arose from a collaboration between Davies and Harré (1990) and is rooted in the philosophy of language, and linguistics and speech act theory (McVee et al., 2018). Positions are responsive to the individual and how they enact their role within their environment. People are perceived as having inherent but fluid positions with reference to their own experience (McVee et al., 2018). Positioning Theory encompasses three interrelated pillars, conceptualised as a triangle – positions, actions, and storylines. *Positions* are a group of disputable rights and duties either adopted or assigned to individuals. A duty is an obligation owed by one person or group, who holds power, to another person or group due to their inherent vulnerability. Rights are the entitlements of a vulnerable person or group with respect to the power held by another person or group. Positioning (rights and duties) can be both granted or imposed to or by others and adopted by individuals (Harré and Moghaddam, 2003). *Actions* are the practices and narratives undertaken by individuals related to their position. They are meaningful and can manifest as speech, movement, and gestures. Actions can be interpreted differently dependent on the social episode and the individual. *Storylines* are logics and conventions, a collection of narratives, underpinning and dictating social interactions (Davies and Harré, 1990; Harré, 2012). The perceived

rights of a person or group can incite the duties of another, which is expressed as actions within the context of a storyline. The three pillars recursively interact so that one's positioning within a social situation is a dynamic interplay between what they are capable and willing to do, and what they are permitted to do within the specific context (Bourgeois-Law et al., 2020).

Positioning Theory has been applied to health profession education to explore training initiatives (Møller and Malling, 2019), peer remediation (Bourgeois-Law et al., 2020), practitioner positioning within specific health services (Andreassen and Christensen, 2018; Williams et al., 2015), student identity formation (Monrouxe, 2010), simulation learning (Sargeant et al., 2016; Christensen et al., 2017), feedback (Clarke and Molloy, 2005), and medical educator responsibilities (Hu et al., 2019). To our knowledge, Positioning Theory has not yet been applied to programmatic assessment. When used as an explanatory tool, Positioning Theory allows examination of everyday social episodes for power, influence, institutional, cultural, and social norms, values, and inherent and granted status. This provides insight into why people uniquely respond to social situations which can then be used to understand interventions and address conflict, which in turn can be used to affect positive change (Green et al., 2020). As such, Positioning Theory is a well suited, and novel, lens to explore programmatic assessment as it provides critical insight into the positions and responsibility, and the influence of personal values and cultural practices. Informed by Positioning Theory, we sought to understand how supervisors experienced and perceived their positioning within recently implemented programmatic assessment.

Methods

Research context

This qualitative study sought to explore the research question using theory-informing inductive data analysis. In this approach, researchers apply a theory in the early stages of, or after, data collection to shape interpretation. Researchers have a preliminary understanding of the phenomenon and then apply a theory to deepen the exploration of the data (Varpio et al., 2020). The authors of the present study were involved in a previous evaluation of the implementation of programmatic assessment which revealed resistance among supervisors (Jamieson et al., 2021). Given the paucity of research regarding the challenges of implementing programmatic assessment, we believed this theme warranted further critical exploration by applying a theoretical lens to elucidate the data. Two authors (CP and SG) were involved in a separate evaluation of a programmatic assessment which also included supervisors (Dart et al., 2021). This provided a unique opportunity to combine the two

datasets, which had similar context and participants, and apply a theory-informing inductive approach to explore the data critically and rigorously using a larger sample size.

This research is situated within a constructionist epistemology. Constructionism posits that knowledge is variably formed through social interactions, influenced by context, that give rise to different constructs and behaviours (Rees et al., 2020a). Aligning with this epistemology, this research began with a curiosity to further understand the changes in positions that occurred with the introduction of programmatic assessment, as revealed in earlier research by the team. Participants were selected based on their intimate experience of programmatic assessment in their role as workplace supervisors. The selected qualitative data methods, focus groups and interviews, allowed for conversations, recounts of experiences, emotions, and responsibilities to be elucidated. Positioning Theory was applied to data analysis, consistent with a theory-informing inductive data analysis approach, to construct a pattern of understanding in accordance with the research question.

Setting

University A (Edith Cowan University) and University B (Monash University) are Australian institutions that have an accredited 2-year master dietetic course that included a mandatory 100-day placement program where students participated in authentic learning tasks under the supervision of workplace supervisors. Both courses engaged key stakeholders to progressively design their respective programmatic assessment approaches with subsequent implementation . The dietetic course at University A was established 10 years ago and has 15 to 20 students graduate each year. Programmatic assessment was developed for the 20-week placement component of the course using a participatory action research approach which engaged supervisors and academic staff (Jamieson et al., 2021). During the placement, students were required to collect performance evidence which included supervisor appraisals, learning task artefacts such as case notes and reports, self-reflections, peer feedback, and client perspectives. These items were considered low-stakes assessments and were compiled by the student, with support from university staff, into a portfolio. The portfolio formed the basis for the high-stakes assessment which was determined by a panel of university staff. The programmatic assessment was implemented in 2016 and continues in practice as described.

University B graduated 55 to 65 dietetic students each year at the time of data collection and has offered studies in dietetics for 20 years. The programmatic assessment was developed for the entirety of the 2-year masters, including the 22-week placement, using an iterative and consultative approach involving learners, university

faculty, and supervisors. The programmatic assessment was introduced in 2018 (Dart et al., 2021).. The programmatic assessment was comprised of 40 individual assessment tasks, all summative, low-stakes individually but when combined in various sequences were used by the university to judge student progression. Both courses evaluated their respective programmatic assessments within 2 years of implementation. Approval for the research, and the secondary analysis using University B data, was obtained at both institutions (Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee approval no. 19967 and Edith Cowan University Human Research Ethics Committee approval no. 12549).

Data collection

Participants from University A were supervisors who had engaged with the programmatic assessment for the first time in either 2016 or 2017. Participants were recruited using self-selection sampling whereby an email was sent inviting eligible individuals to participate (n=169). Written consent and demographic data were obtained at the commencement of the focus group. Semi-structured focus groups were held in 2016 and 2017 at the participants place of employment with one teleconference and one videoconference session for those living outside the metropolitan area. Focus groups questions were derived from the literature (van der Vleuten et al., 2012), working group priorities (Jamieson et al., 2021), and a questionnaire completed by the same cohort of supervisors. Focus groups were between 30 and 90 minutes in length and conducted by the first author. All sessions were audio recorded and the researcher took notes (Barbour and Flick, 2018), data was subsequently transcribed verbatim and de-identified.

The University B evaluation occurred in 2019 after the implementation of the programmatic assessment in the same year and included graduates, supervisors, and university staff. For the purposes of the present study, only the data collected from supervisors was included in accordance with the research question. Maximal variation sampling was used to recruit supervisors who had engaged with the programmatic assessment in the 22-week placement from across settings and supervision experience. Supervisors were invited to participate by email (n=60) and consented to participation upon agreeing to an interview. One-on-one telephone semi-structured interviews were conducted by the research team (which included author SG) commencing with demographic questions and then exploring participant understanding and experience of the programmatic assessment. The interviews were audio recorded, transcribed and de-identified for analysis. Supplementary Table 1 presents the inquiry logic aligning the University A focus group and University B interview questions.

Data analysis

The University B interview transcripts were imported into NVivo™ and analysed by one author using the same framework applied to the University A data in the original study. This preliminary analysis confirmed the presences of power, authority, and resistance codes within the University B dataset, warranting further analysis. The authors then conducted a search of the literature to identify a suitable theory. Positioning Theory was deemed an appropriate choice as it provided an explanatory tool to understand the rights and duties of programmatic assessment stakeholders and aligned with the underpinning constructionist approach that truth lies within language and actions and exists as a 'dialogic transaction between individuals' (Rees et al., 2020a). The data from both universities were imported into NVivo™ for analysis using the framework analysis method (Gale et al., 2013) and informed by Positioning Theory. One author inductively open coded five transcripts, including those from both universities, to develop an initial analytical framework which included descriptive statements and illustrative quotations. This was achieved by grouping the codes into categories with reference to positions, duties, rights, and responsibilities. This coding and framework were reviewed by a second author with several sub-codes collapsed into each other, others re-named to better align with the description, and the addition of four new sub-codes. These additional codes included gatekeeper, culture and discrimination, authority and control, and student as assessor, which were salient to the resultant positioning theory. The final framework included seven codes and 29 sub-codes [Supplementary Table 2]. The framework was then imported into NVivo™ and applied to all transcripts, including the five originally coded, by one author. A framework matrix containing all coded text across each transcript was generated using NVivo™ and exported to Microsoft Excel.

One author conducted a line-by-line reading of the framework matrix to identify discursive markers, illocutionary acts, divisive language, and emotions. Particular attention to the use of pronominal markers was given at this stage. Focusing on pronouns sought to illuminate the power balance as perceived by participants between themselves and others, with others commonly being students and the university staff. Switches in the use of pronouns were noted and recorded as these reveal changes to positioning relative to power (Loo et al., 2019; Harré and Moghaddam, 2013). The pronouns *I* and *me* were taken to indicate personal beliefs and ideas, a focus on the self, or distancing from others; *we* and *us* implied solidarity, group membership and an assumed authority to represent group members; *you* suggested excluding or distancing from a person, situation, or idea (Loo et al., 2019). The use of *you* also referred to the researcher and their affiliated university as interviews and focus groups were conducted by university staff. The heeding of pronouns provided valuable insight into how participants

positioning themselves relative to others and unspoken power dynamics which may have been otherwise overlooked. Where relevant, significant use of pronouns by participants has been indicated in bold in quotes within the results.

Through repeated readings of the framework matrix and cross-referencing with the original transcripts, the data was synthesised into positions, duties, and responsibilities of supervisors. Attention was paid to the position (*first order, second order or third order)*, intentionality (*tacit, deliberate or force)*, and positioner (*self or others*) (Dennen, 2011; Hu et al., 2019). In *first order positioning* the individual accepts or assume the position without challenge; in *second order positioning* there is rejection or resistance, and re-positioning may occur; and *third order positioning* involves the recall of social episodes which may involve retrospective rejection or re-positioning. Positions can implicitly be assumed (*tacit intention*), arise actively and with intent (*deliberate intention*), or occur in response to another (*forceful intention*). The practice setting and affiliated university for each participant was recorded for interpretation of the results. The synthesis was reviewed by a second author with both authors coming together in discussion to reach agreement on the final analysis and theory.

Reflexivity

The first author (JJ) was a placement coordinator and lecturer at University A and was responsible, with other colleagues, for the development of the programmatic assessment. JJ had a professional and personal connection to the programmatic assessment at University A with the motivation to transform the assessment arising from her own experiences. CP and SG were academics at University B and, with their colleagues, led the development and implementation of programmatic assessment across the academic and work settings. This propinquity gives an intrinsic contextual understanding of the research topic (Berger, 2015). It also gives rise to aspirations and ideals, predetermined judgements, and biases. The person cannot, and (by our beliefs) should not, be excised from the research process. Rather the impact of this positioning on all aspects of the research should be recognised and reflexivity adopted to mitigate the impact (Soedirgo and Glas, 2020). Each focus group and interview commenced by reading aloud a statement that truthfulness was sought, and that the facilitator/ interviewer was, in that moment, not a university staff member but a curious researcher. The intent of this statement was two-fold. Firstly, it sought to make explicit between all parties the role of the researcher. The effectiveness of this and how it was interpreted by participants cannot be deduced. Participants frequently used the pronoun *you* when discussing the positioning of the university which suggests that they did not identify the facilitator or interviewer as a neutral party. Secondly, and most importantly, the statement served to bring awareness to the facilitator/ interviewer of their own

judgements and biases through the session. As authors we all had extensive experience in qualitative research and health professional education and challenged each other's interpretation of the data through all stages of the research.

Results

Nine focus groups (n=32 participants) were held with University A supervisors and 12 interviews for University B. This provided 44 supervisors voices across both institutions for data analysis. Participant characteristics are presented in Table 1. Participants were mostly experienced practitioners and assessors, employed in either the hospital (n=34) or primary prevention sector (e.g., not-for-profit, public health) (n=10). A greater proportion of participants identified as female reflecting the feminized Australian dietetic workforce (Health Workforce Australia, 2014).

Table 1. Participant characteristics.

	University A (n=32)	University B (n=12)
Age (years)	35 ± 11 (24 – 65)	Not collected
Gender		
Female	30	12
Male	2	0
Work sector		
Hospital	26	8
Primary prevention	6	4
Time since graduation (years)	10 ± 8 (2 – 31)	10 ± 4 (4 – 16)
Supervision experience		
Yes	29	12
No	2	0
Not reported	1	0

When discussing student supervision, within the context of programmatic assessment, supervisors positioned themselves in two of three ways. The first, *Teacher*, was described by all participants and reflected the core rights

and duties. Supervisors also positioned themselves as either a *Gatekeeper* or *Team Member;* two mutually exclusive positions which stood in opposition to one another. Figure 1 presents these three positions.
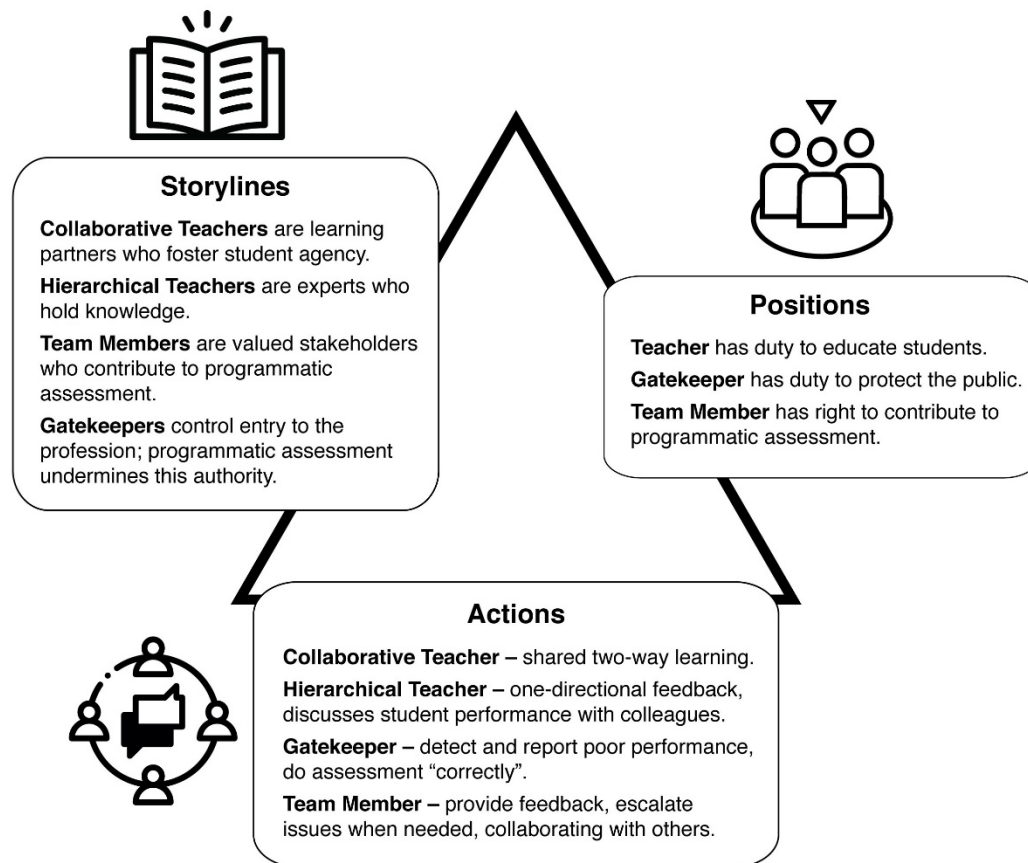

Storylines

Collaborative Teachers are learning partners who foster student agency.

Hierarchical Teachers are experts who hold knowledge.

Team Members are valued stakeholders who contribute to programmatic assessment.

Gatekeepers control entry to the profession; programmatic assessment undermines this authority.

Positions

Teacher has duty to educate students.

Gatekeeper has duty to protect the public.

Team Member has right to contribute to programmatic assessment.

Actions

Collaborative Teacher – shared two-way learning.

Hierarchical Teacher – one-directional feedback, discusses student performance with colleagues.

Gatekeeper – detect and report poor performance, do assessment "correctly".

Team Member – provide feedback, escalate issues when needed, collaborating with others.

Figure 1. Overview of Positioning Theory of supervisors within programmatic assessment (adapted from Harré et al. (2009)).

Teacher

The Teacher positioning was described by all participants across both hospital and primary prevention sectors and was inherent to the identity of supervisors. In this position, supervisors described a duty to support student learning and competence development. This was enacted by teaching professional knowledge and skills, providing feedback, evaluating performance, and coordinating learning opportunities for students. Supervisors had a responsibility to abide by the programmatic assessment process as directed by the university. Supervisors positioned the university as having a duty to assist supervisors to enact their *Teacher* positioning. This was

achieved in a range of actions including the university confirming and supporting supervisors in their evaluations through consensus building discussions, holding responsibility for difficult conversations with students, sharing their expertise and experience with supervisors, and developing a remediation plan for underperforming students. Positioning the university as an expert advisor and helper contributed to the confidence the supervisors experience in their own *Teaching* position. The university was perceived as being receptive and accepting of this positioning.

> "**I** always flag the issues with **you** guys [the university], and I feel perfectly comfortable calling…because I also trust you guys that if I flag something it doesn't mean the student's going to be booted out. It's just flagging…"Do I need to be concerned…what do you recommend?" I also kind of come from the position that I'm not the expert, I will be guided by you [the university] and what you [the university] recommend." (Supervisor 9, University B).

Students were positioned as having a duty to accept and act on the feedback provided by supervisors in their *Teacher* position. Students were perceived to either accept or reject the supervisor's *Teacher* positioning based on personal attributes. Those students who were engaged and had initiative in their learning were preferred and seen to accept this positioning.

While the *Teacher* positioning was common across supervisors and practice sectors, it was enacted in two distinct ways. The first, observed only in hospital-employed supervisors, was a hierarchical approach. This group of supervisors describe a one-directional dialogue whereby they communicated their opinions to the student. Students were positioned as passive recipients of assessment feedback and decisions. Within the data, this sub-position was revealed in the subtle use of language when talking about students and in overt statements.

> "**I'm** going to have to assess **your** [the student's] ability…" (Supervisor 1, University B)

> "one of **my** students…just popped… "Entrusted." And **I'm** like, "Well, no, that's all next year." Things like that they didn't know… "No, **you're** not entrusted, not yet; **you're** at the bottom of the spectrum, sorry." (Supervisors 4, University B)

> "… [programmatic assessment] empowers the students more…which sometimes feels good but sometimes...is a…bone of a contention…because at the end of the day **we** [the supervisors] are assessing a student and…**their** perception of how they're doing might be quite different to your [the supervisor's] perception…I think it's important that you continuously give them feedback so that you are on the same page. But sometimes students, even with that feedback, will still have a different perception…so that can

be interesting in this kind of model [programmatic assessment] …the student has a little bit more power than they did before…it was a bit more black and white…and this one seems a little bit more grey…" (Focus group 2, University A)

Supervisors enacted this sub-position by discussing student performance with their colleagues which excluded the student. These discussions brought confidence to their interpretations and judgements. For these supervisors, the focus was on their duty to identify student performance, and this became particularly true when underperformance was a concern.

"I'd always bring that [a performance issue] up with the student so that they can know that **I've** almost got **them** on notice and that they are to demonstrate competency in those areas that **I** think **they** might not be great at between that mid-assessment and the final assessment." (Supervisor 9, University B)

A different approach to the *Teacher* positioning was observed in a smaller number of both hospital and primary prevention sector supervisors. This sub-positioning described a collaborative *Teacher* involving a dynamic student-supervisor relationship, underpinned by a two-way dialogue. Both the supervisor and the student held a shared duty to engage in the learning process. Students were positioned as being leaders in their assessment and having a right to this responsibility. These supervisors placed value on the participation of students as it provided them with insight into the student's performance. This helped the supervisor enact their *Teacher* positioning as it revealed unspoken expectation and student reasoning which allowed the *Teacher* to better respond to student learning needs.

"…letting **them** [the student] know that **we're** [the supervisors] not here to judge them. We're here to support them and nurture them and mentor and that…the more information you have…the more you are able to lead and guide and help them progress" (Supervisor 3, University B)

"…it helps **us** [supervisors] to help **them** [students] to identify their areas for development and develop learning goals and then try and help them to continue to move forward and help them put some strategies in place to do that..." (Focus group 3, University A)

Gatekeeper

A *Gatekeeper* position was strongly identified in a sub-group of supervisors who described a duty to uphold professional standards and ensure that students entering the workforce were safe and competent practitioners. This positioning was particularly evident for supervisors working in the hospital sector. These supervisors perceived

that failure to fail carried a great risk to the public, with the hospital sector viewed as the benchmark for competence.

> "if you're not competent at something in clinical, then **I** feel like **you're** not competent." (Focus group 8, University A)

In this position, the supervisors had a duty to keep the public safe and the public had a right to be protected. Supervisors achieved this positioning by being vigilant to the detection of underperformance. This group of supervisors resisted the introduction of programmatic assessment by the university.

> "they [supervisors] didn't necessarily feel like their feedback…to the university was validated by that two-way response, in that I think the organisation and the university were on different pages about where the student sat. I think their [the supervisors] feedback is that they are a bit disheartened that they are not being given that responsibility of…being the person who makes that [high-stakes] assessment…At the end of the day, it didn't come down to their assessment. It went a different way." (Supervisor 2, University B)

Programmatic assessment transferred the responsibility for high-stake assessment decisions from supervisors to the university. In this way, the university positioned themselves as the *Gatekeeper* which left supervisors disempowered and disenfranchised, invoking frustration. This change diminished their authority and power and threatened their professional identity. This group of supervisors rejected this positioning by the university and expressed concern for compromised practice standards when they felt excluded from the assessment decisions.

> "what made **you** [the interviewer] change the model completely? Because before, in the past, **we** used to be the decision makers. We used to give our feedback, work with the uni [university] supervisors, but now it's totally the other way around." (Focus group 6, University A)

These supervisors expressed concern that students would be 'pushed through' to graduation which threated their duty to the public and their own professional reputation and credibility. This shift in authority and power, and subsequent positioning, with the introduction of programmatic assessment created a flashpoint between supervisors and the university.

> "…it just makes me feel a bit anxious and a little bit pushed. A little bit pushed that **we're** giving …[students]…degrees to work in dietetics. And I think that that should be of quite a high standard. And I think having my name next to that [assessment] makes me feel a bit uncomfortable, because I

don't want that to come back on me at any point." (Supervisor 7, University B)

The supervisors spoke of getting the assessment correct and were preoccupied with avoiding errors or mistakes as they sought to do assessment 'right'. Supervisors expressed concern that they would miss assessment moments and forms or would not write sufficient detail on their observations of student performance. Supervisors speculated that their error would have significant ramifications for the university and student. This responsibility weighed heavily on some supervisors and was an inhibitory factor in allowing students to be empowered within programmatic assessment.

> "Once upon a time it was **our** name signing off and…I was very reluctant to sign off on a student. I felt that it wouldn't be safe, and you have that sense of responsibility..." (Focus group 6, University A)

> "Frequently I would be going home, or I would be eating dinner, talking to my partner about it. He's like, "It's not your problem." But I'm like, "But I feel like it is. **I** want them to do good and **I** want to be a good supervisor." So, it does play on your mind at all times." (Supervisor 7, University B)

This group of supervisors also describe using a measure of employment to determine if a student was ready to graduate and enter the profession.

Team Member

In contrast to the *Gatekeeper*, a different group of supervisors accepted the redistribution of responsibilities with the introduction of programmatic assessment and positioned themselves as *Team Members*. For some, this positioning did not occur immediately. Instead, they needed to become familiar with programmatic assessment and have confidence in the rigour before they accepted this positioning.

> "you do feel a little bit disempowered…when really I probably should have taken a step back and just let **them** [the students] have the initiative and come to me, but I think, yeah, just because it's just that change, isn't it? You're just not used to them [the students] having control…." (Focus group 1, University A).

Team Members used the principles and purpose of programmatic assessment to position themselves as an important part of a team which contributed to the construction of a holistic picture of a student's performance and competence. These supervisors relinquished authority and deferred power for high-stakes assessment decisions to the university and allowed the student to become empowered in their own learning. This positioning was enacted

by providing feedback to the student and the university using the provided resources, escalating issues to the university and senior colleagues, and teaching and supporting junior supervisors.

> "just because **we** [the supervisors] said **they're** [the student] not competent, doesn't necessarily mean that they're going to fail the entire course. It's a lot more of a process…and discussing and looking at the whole picture, which has definitely been something that I appreciated when I was supervising this particular [underperforming] student because it takes the pressure off the supervisor. It's not like we're saying to the student, "You've failed you [the] entire course". It's just saying, "In this particular section you haven't met competency and it's up to the uni [university] then to review their entire performance."
> (Supervisor 3, University B)

Supervisors described having a right to contribute to high-stake decisions and the university had a duty to value and include their opinions in decisions.

> "… it does boost my confidence that I just feel supported as a supervisor, that I don't have the last word…I don't want to have the last word but…I can have an opinion check it with you guys [the university] …" (Supervisor 9, University B)

These supervisors described the shift in authority and power as liberating as it reduced the burden and stress associated with high-stakes assessment decisions and enabled them to cultivate a supporting teaching relationship. There was recognition that responsibility for high-stakes assessment decisions was a conflict of interest and compromised the student-supervisor relationship, hindering their ability to teach students. This group of supervisors enabled students to enact their rights and duties within assessment and the university was given the duty to make high-stakes assessment decisions.

> "now that the university is making that final call on whether they've [the student] provided enough evidence, obviously in conjunction with site supervisors…I think it eases that stress a little bit..." (Focus group 5, University A)

Discussion

We applied the critical lens of Positioning Theory to understand how supervisors experienced and perceived their positioning within programmatic assessment. Supervisors positioned themselves in two of three ways: *Teacher*, and either a *Gatekeeper* or *Team Member*. All supervisors described an inherent duty to educate students, reflected in *Teacher*. This positioning was enacted dichotomously with some supervisors describing a collaborative

teaching relationship, while others adopted a hierarchical approach whereby students were disempowered passive recipients. Two alternative and mutually exclusive positions, the *Gatekeeper* and *Team Member*, were also identified. *Gatekeeper* supervisors described a duty to protect the wider community and focussed on the detection of inadequate student performance. In contrast, *Team Members* described a right to contribute to high-stakes outcomes and were liberated from the responsibility and burden of assessment.

Our research expounded the attributes of those who both resist and accept programmatic assessment. In our study, university staff, coupled with key stakeholders, led the programmatic assessment transitions whereby the duties of supervisors were reoriented to teaching and performance appraisal (*first order* positioning) where they contributed, but did not hold responsibility, for high-stakes assessment decisions. For some supervisors, this positioning by the university was rejected (*second order* and *third order* positioning) and revealed itself as the *Gatekeeper*. The *Gatekeepers* right to be vigilant to poor student performance, derived from a fervent duty to protect the public and their professional reputation, was incongruent with programmatic assessment. Such positioning has been described by others (O'Connor et al., 2019) and typifies a traditional psychometric-focussed approach that centres on objectivity (oft at the expense of subjectivity), standardisation, and reductionism (Hodges, 2013). Conversely, programmatic assessment embodies a collective and subjective constructivist-interpretivist epistemology which can be at odds with this psychometric approach (Govaerts et al., 2007; Hodges, 2013). It is this ideological dissonance that may account for observed tensions between the *Gatekeeper* positioning and programmatic assessment (Pearce and Tavares, 2021; Torre et al., 2022). Pragmatic strategies to ameliorate such tensions include involving and empowering all users, having strong leadership and vision, and patience and perseverance when implementing programmatic assessment (Schut et al., 2021; van der Vleuten et al., 2015; Torre et al., 2021; Roberts et al., 2021). While effective for the majority, such strategies may be insufficient to overcome staunch epistemological differences. Instead, explicit recognition and discourse of the views and beliefs held by all stakeholders, particularly those in opposition, is required (Pearce and Tavares, 2021). This may go some ways to improve the success of the aforementioned strategies through the identification of implicit assumptions, developing a common language, and building shared understanding (Tavares et al., 2021). Govaerts et al. (2019) presents a promising approach in Polarity Thinking™ which frames tensions as an inescapable trait of human behaviour and rather than trying to solve the conflict, differences are leveraged to optimise the system. While we have presented here a philosophical comparison to unpack our research findings, we acknowledge that reality is a nuanced continuum of ideologies influenced by socio-contextual factors (Pearce and Tavares, 2021; Schoenherr and Hamstra, 2015) and that positioning is a fluid construct, rather than fixed, responsive to the dynamic interplay

between a person's own experience and the social situation (McVee et al., 2018). This suggests that both current and evolving socio-cultural determinants have capacity to influence supervisor positioning within programmatic assessment. Those seeking to implement programmatic assessment would be wise to consider their own worldview and beliefs, and those of stakeholders, and employ strategies to bridge the gaps and create shared support for educational change.

Our research revealed that supervisors working within the clinical hospital sector had a propensity to describe the hierarchical *Teacher* and the *Gatekeeper* positionings. Culture, defined as the shared and unique ideologies and values held by a particular group of people (Peterson and Spencer, 1990), is a significant contributor to the viability of medical educational change as it shapes the attitudes and behaviours of individuals and teams (Watling et al., 2020; Pearce and Tavares, 2021; Govaerts et al., 2007; van der Vleuten et al., 2015; Bearman et al., 2021). Culture is a complex and often poorly understood phenomenon within health professions education. Recently Sheehan and Wilkinson (2022) presented a multilayered conceptualisation of the learning environment culture which encompasses society, organisational, practice, self and identity, professional and education providers that broadens our understanding. This work highlights the complexities facing health professions education initiatives which need to accommodate cultural demands of both the educational institution and the health care workplace or risk cultural misalignment and discordance (Govaerts et al., 2019; Sheehan and Wilkinson, 2022). Mitigating against such risks involves understanding, embracing, and working within the spectrum of cultures that exist for a particular context rather than simply holding culture accountable for observed problems. This recognises the reciprocal partnership that exists between culture and the people that make up a culture (Sheehan and Wilkinson, 2022; Bearman et al., 2021). Short term attempts at change, led by cultural outsiders, will likely be met with limited success. Rather, advocacy and leadership from the people who constitute a particular culture are needed to create a context for successful change (Torre et al., 2021; Pearce and Tavares, 2021; Watling et al., 2020). 'Cultural reflexivity' is also required whereby we come to understand the nuances of a particular culture by engaging the people over time, within their structures, to reveal the conditions that moderate behaviours (Aronowitz et al., 2015). Our findings suggest that in some workplaces the educational institution priorities and beliefs about programmatic assessment may have been misaligned with established social and cultural attitudes leading to observed tensions. Such challenges have been observed by others (Torre et al., 2021) and illustrate the need for 'cultural reflexivity' when implementing programmatic assessment. Recently, Torre et al. (2022) described 'knowledge brokers' that could navigate, and be responsive to, complex contextual factors that enabled them to drive the implementation of programmatic assessment. These results highlight how the malleable

principles of programmatic assessment can be uniquely implemented to accommodate and leverage nuanced cultural factors to support successful implementation.

In a recent literature review, Schut et al. (2021) demonstrated that for the most part, supervisors embraced programmatic assessment as it created effective learning environments and resolved role conflicts. In *Team Members* positioning, we also found a similar pattern whereby supervisors described a feeling of liberation from the burden of role conflict and felt valued within the system. This positioning enabled an alliance between supervisor and student that created a safe and optimal learning experience, which has been observed as a necessity for learning (Telio et al., 2015). For a minority of supervisors, the *Gatekeepers*, programmatic assessment diminished their authority over high-stakes assessment decisions and challenged their professional identity, leading to frustration and resistance. Power is a significant factor shaping the student-supervisor relationship through its complex influence on an individual's behaviours and actions (Janss et al., 2012; Rees et al., 2020b). Power is broadly defined as the 'relative ability of an individual to control or influence others' (Janss et al., 2012). The prevailing belief that students are powerless and acquiesce their authority to supervisors has recently been challenged with research revealing the nuanced dynamics and ways by which students exert power (and resistance) using a range of covert and overt actions (Rees et al., 2020b). Shared power and co-constructed learning create valuable interpersonal relationships which form productive learning environments. Shared power is achieved through student self-reflection, feedback dialogue, empathetic supervisors (with attributes including friendliness, vulnerability, and honesty) who are receptive to receiving feedback on their own performance (Rees et al., 2020b; O'Connor et al., 2018; Castanelli et al., 2022). These strategies are reflected in the principles of programmatic assessment (Heeneman et al., 2021; van der Vleuten et al., 2012; Torre et al., 2020). On this basis, we theorise that the introduction of programmatic assessment disrupted the prevailing 'power asymmetry' within the student-supervisor relationship and precipitated a redistribution of authority and responsibility, favouring student agency and mutuality which optimises educational outcomes (de Jonge et al., 2017; Torre et al., 2021; Meeuwissen et al., 2019; Cantillon et al., 2016). Our research, and that of others (Schut et al., 2021; Bok et al., 2013) has revealed the subset of supervisors that resist this shift, the *Gatekeepers,* who mistrust the assessment system and present an ongoing challenge to programmatic assessment (Schut et al., 2021; Cantillon et al., 2016). Those implementing programmatic assessment may need to consider the role, if any, that *Gatekeepers* have in programmatic assessment.

To our knowledge, this is the first study that has used Positioning Theory as a framework to explore programmatic assessment. We have contributed to the limited, but insightful, pool of research that uses Positioning Theory more

broadly within health professional education and advocate for its potential. The interpretive, or theory-informing inductive data analysis, pragmatic approach applied in this research enabled a theoretical lens at data analysis to give depth to the findings (Varpio et al., 2020). We recognised that this limits the potential influence of the theory on the earlier stages of the research process and we echo calls for theory to be adopted in health education to provide greater insight into challenges (Varprio et al., 2017). Transferability was limited as participants were derived from two institutions in one country, although this provided a larger sample size for the research. We have provided the reader with a rich description to assist understanding of the context and enhance transferability to their own settings. Although the courses were similar in placement structure and setting, and utilisation of a stakeholder-based approach to design the programmatic assessments, it is feasible that other unique contextual factors may have influenced the findings. This highlights a need for further exploration into the influence of culture on the design and adoption of programmatic assessment across different settings. Inclusion of supervisors tells only part of the programmatic assessment story. Future research that includes the voices of all stakeholders including students, university, and care recipients, will expand our understanding.

Conclusion

Positioning Theory revealed how programmatic assessment reorientated supervisor rights and duties which challenged traditional medical education structures and ideologies, and influenced success. Programmatic assessment does not occur in a vacuum. Rather, it inhabits a culturally complex space that requires a symphony of stakeholders, with differing beliefs and values, to succeed. Stakeholders are shaped by individual and cultural factors, warranting a considered, flexible, and context-sensitive approach to implementing programmatic assessment that is sustained over time and in the face of resistance. This research provides new insights into how to support and engage supervisors when moving towards programmatic assessment.

Appendices

Supplementary Table 1: Inquiry logic aligning the University A focus group and University B interview questions

Inquiry logic	University A	University B
Experience and perspective	Thinking back on your experience of the placement…what thoughts, feelings and words come to mind?	Can you describe to me your experience of being involved in assessment of students in the Masters of Dietetics program?

	How does the new [programmatic] assessment model compare to the previous model? Thinking about other dietetics training program in which you have been involved, how does the new placement model compare?	
Influence on supervisor beliefs and duties	Has there been a change in your student supervision role with the new assessment model? OR The new assessment model aims to separate the roles of teacher and assessor. What are your thoughts on this approach? Has there been a change in the way you spend your time during student supervision with the new assessment model?	If you could describe the effect this assessment has had on you, how would you explain this effect? Why specifically do you think it has had this effect?
Influence on student experience and duties	What does the term *student led* learning mean to you? How do you relate this concept, *student led* to the new assessment model?	Thinking back to your other experience of assessment - either with University B students in the past or other university students, do you think the program of assessment identified struggling students earlier than previous assessments and if so, how? Have the mechanisms put into place through the program of assessment supported these students to succeed?
Determination of student competence	The literature states that placement assessment models should enable accurate decisions to be made regarding student performance.	Has the program of assessment increased confidence in assessment decisions?

	a. What are your thoughts on the ability of the new assessment model to allow accurate decisions to be made about student performance? b. What aspects of the assessment model allow these decisions to be made? AND/ OR What needs to change in the assessment model to allow these decisions to be made?	Do you think the program of assessment provides a mechanism for more defensible competency-based assessment decisions? In other words, do you think that the assessment program provides a valid and reliable determination of entry-level competence?
Further insights	Is there anything else you would like to add?	Do you have any further comments about assessment in the University B?

Supplementary Table 2: Data analysis framework

Categories			Code			Illustrative quotation
Code	Title	Explanation	Code	Title	Definition	
1	*Supervisor*	Those charged (by the university) with overseeing, providing feedback, and making assessment interpretations of students whilst on placement.	1.1	*Supervisor as colleague or friend*	Supervisor(s) assume/ are assigned the position of colleague or friend to student(s) or others (i.e., university).	"I found myself being more open to, I guess other things. Like what did you guys do on the weekend? … Because there wasn't that sort of black and white, maintain that strict persona of supervisor and student."
			1.2	*Supervisor as detector*	Supervisors assume/ are assigned the position of identifying (or detecting) issues or problems with student performance/ competence/ ability.	"supervisor picks up quite soon that something is not right with a student if they are challenging. And it's very hard to – and we're only going by the pre-placement forms and I can sort of – you can get some judgement of the student maybe doesn't understand what will happen on a placement from some of the ways they answer the questions… unfortunately a lot of the time they're [students] not forthcoming in informing and I feel that they're wanting to sort of hide it and pass through, but the supervisors are realising this."

				1.3	*Supervisor as learner*	Supervisors assume/ are assigned the position of learner (along with students) with the implementation of programmatic assessment.	"I feel like I have a better understanding of that [entry level competence] now, but certainly at the beginning of the process, and when you have students who you don't think are probably competent, but you want to make sure that you're not being too hard… to kind of come to grips with what do we actually mean by that [entry-level competence]"
				1.4	*Supervisor as learning co-ordinator*	Supervisors assume/ are assigned the position of coach/ manager/ facilitator/ supporter/ guider/ co-ordinator for others (usually students) rather than being an administrator who 'calls the shots' (i.e., providing learning opportunities). For some participants, they were positioned into this role by students assuming/ being assigned a leader in their own learning (Code 2.2).	"…you're doing the same thing, you're bringing them up to speed, you're giving them experience in certain areas and guiding them through that, if it's something they haven't had much experience in"
				1.5	*Supervisor as evaluator and assessor*	Supervisors assume/ are assigned the position of evaluating student performance which encompasses formal and informal feedback (verbal and written), assessment, and moderation. There is	"…I'm going to have to assess your ability to do this." "At the end of the day we are assessing a student and you know, their perception of how their doing might be quite

						a subtle difference as to how participants enact this duty, some adopt an expert approach and others an interpretative approach.	different to your perception…I think it's important that you continuous give them feedback so that you are on the same page. But sometimes students, even with that feedback, will still have a different perception to you…so that can be interesting in this kind of model."
				1.6	*Supervisors as teacher*	Supervisors assume/ are assigned the position of educators and teachers for students.	"I think before it was more that you were an assessor and now, I feel like now I am <u>just</u> their teacher, I guess, like a preceptor and that's what that model is trying to achieve so that is definitely why I tried to embrace while we were doing it"
				1.7	*Supervisor as team member*	Supervisors assume/ are assigned a position within the programmatic assessment team – participants are identifying that there is a team which involves others. The team are seen to have a shared responsibility for student outcomes (teaching, feedback, assessment) with some members holding multiple positions i.e., Clinical Educator can be a mentor and teacher for supervisors, a mediator for problems, moderate for assessment interpretations.	"good for us to sit and come to some…as we're kind of working through we're all comfortable that we're giving the students what they need at the time that they kind of need it" "…you [I] obviously have the opportunity to provide comment and feedback and obviously we would hope that the university [you] takes the comments and

						feedback on board when making the ultimate decision…"
			1.8	*Supervisors as the student*	Supervisors assume/ are assigned a position as a sympathiser for students who understand their experience ('in their shoes') and they attempt to gain insight into the student experience, thoughts, and feelings.	"I see from the student's perspective that there's a power imbalance there…that their supervisor is the one that passes or fails them, when in a way I'd like them to see it as they're here on placement, they've learnt a lot of theory and they're here to apply it. And the supervisor is there to provide them…with the patients and that practical skill to up-skill them ready to enter the workforce as a dietician." "I guess for the students, they're quite nervous when they come in for the assessment"
			1.9	*Supervisors as gatekeepers for the profession*	Supervisors assume/ are assigned a position as 'gate keepers' or guardian/ defender for the profession, often with reference to ensuring a particular standard is upheld by students or preventing unsafe students from progressing to the workforce.	"I still think clinical needs to be the focus of dietetic training and if you're not passing clinical, you're not qualified to pass dietetics." "Once upon a time it was our name signing off and I was very particular - not particular, but I was very reluctant

							to sign off on a student. I felt that it wouldn't be safe, and you have that sense of responsibility and if they do go to a workplace and they say, "Where did you do your prac and who was your supervisor?" and it's like, "Oh, they're not very good," or, "They didn't know much," or whatever it is. You feel that's a reflection on your own teaching styles and supervision and mentoring. So, we do take it personally, and a responsibility. It's not whether I'm good or not, it's more just that it's a sense of responsibility. You want them to do well in the workplace and have that reflection on where they did their prac." "Although the weaker student could fly under the radar."
2	*Students*	Individuals who are participating in a dietetic course as a learner and	2.1	*Student as recipient*	Students assume/ are assigned a position of (passive) recipient for the acts and actions performed by others (usually the supervisor). The actual or implied outcomes can be beneficial or		"we have is [sic] weekly meetings with the students and ask them to lead the meetings and to each have a turn at chairing the meeting and doing the agenda… I guess for the students, they're quite nervous when they come in for the assessment… It's a good opportunity for them to

| | | | | | unfavourable for the student(s), as perceived by supervisors. | reflect then they're really at ease…I think we've given them an opportunity to shine, I guess, and they often do."

"You do so much of orientation and teaching and whatnot, and then, week eight, you ask them a question. If they don't answer in GDM we get worried. What is this? What am I doing? I told you what it is." |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | engaging in programmatic assessment in the "student" role. | | | | |
| | | | 2.2 | *Student as leader* | Students assume/ are assigned a position of master of their own learning/ performance/ assessment/ communication which, from the perspective of supervisors, can be either positive or negative. | "… shows them [students] that they are responsible for their own learning and that there won't be some[one] standing next to you saying you need to go read that journal, go check those bloods, you need to go and do this… they have to do it themselves. They need to come up with that. I think that is really positive because once you are in the workforce you are on your own…so I think that is definitely teaching them to be proactive and independent and empowering them for their own learning" |
| | | | 2.3 | *Student as assessor* | Students assume/ are assigned a position as self-evaluator and assessor. | *This is a new code and has not yet been identified within the initial transcripts.* |

3	*University/ Academic assessors*	Those representing or employed by tertiary educator who manage placements and make final assessment decisions.	3.1	*University as detector*	University staff assume/ are assigned a position of identifying (or detecting) issues or problems with student performance/ competence/ ability (usually prior to a placement). The university is perceived to have greater knowledge about students and a duty (or responsibility) to share this with supervisors who are 'vulnerable' without the knowledge.	"…if there could be something like…identification of students that are facing challenges in their previous assessments and like a workshop"
			3.2	*University as teacher*	University staff assume/ are assigned the position of educator and teacher for students, often in collaboration to supervisors who also hold this position.	"if more insight can be built in those students [by the University] that are facing challenging because we can spend a lot of time with those students on placement, but if they don't have the insight, they're not going to accept the feedback so it's really, really challenging."
			3.3	*University as evaluator and assessor*	University staff assume/ are assigned the position of evaluating student performance which encompasses formal and informal feedback (verbal and written), assessment, and moderation. There is emphasis on the university acting as a moderator for the evaluations and assessments of others	"it's good that the university is more involved in that [assessment] and they're the ones who…ultimately decide but whilst we have heavy input into it. I think that often created a bit of tension or it may have been you could find they'd be at a different site and some supervisors would say, "Yep, they're fine," but at this

						(supervisors and students) and making high-stake decisions – this is not always supported by participants.	particular one they wouldn't, so I think it helps with that point of view as well."
				3.4	*University as mediator*	University staff assume/ are assigned the position of mediator between different actors (usually student and supervisor) when an issue arises.	"If a student continues to struggle, do you communicate this with your colleagues and/or [University]? And at what point would you do this and how would you communicate this?"
				3.5	*University as helper*	University staff assume/ are assigned the position of supportive aide for supervisors and students, going beyond education to encompasses pastoral care and problem management.	"…it's accepted that I'd be able to have email and phone support for whenever I needed it, just for some suggestions perhaps on a different way to manage it…coming out to the placement site as well and more regularly meeting with the student because there may be issues that the student doesn't want to share with myself, particularly, and they may be more willing to share it with their university or they may be more familiar with their lecturer…and they may confide more in them"

4	*Client*	Recipients of care from students and supervisors.	4.1		Clients assume/ are assigned a position of care receivers from both students and supervisors. Recognises that supervisors and students have a role in supporting provision of health care while engaging in the process of learning.	"…And often…patients say to you, "I hope you pass them. They're so lovely," …they are obviously aware that they're students and they're trying to, yeah, be supportive"
5	*Power and control*	The ability and influence to affect change in others or events.	5.1	*Disempowerment*	Actors (supervisors, students, university, clients) have (or are perceived to have) a limit or reduction to their authority, influence, control, responsibility, or power (typically over others and decisions). This can include supervisors (in reaction to the programmatic assessment) and students (due to the way supervisors enact their role) and often has an emotive aspect.	"I was relying on them to be coming to me with the forms, but then also thinking I needed to be reminding them of the forms…it was a bit disempowering for me…getting my head around it, but, hopefully, that will improve in future years when I'm a bit more used to the new model." "Participant 2: I think a lot of the time it comes down to us as supervisors having some difficulty giving up the control we usually have… I think it's a good thing that it's student led. It's just because we've gone years of having the control and now suddenly they do… in my mind, I do still see us as supervisors. I know we're actually considered mentors, but, yeah, it's hard to sort

							of give that up and not see yourself as someone who is always assessing them. And as the assessor, normally you are the one that's got the power and control… Participant 4: But I think actually…we kind of like to know that we're doing it right and that - Participant 1: Diligent? Participant 4: Yeah… Participant 4: And that everything is okay… Participant 2: Yeah. We like to make sure every box has been ticked"
				5.2	*Empowerment*	Actors (supervisors, students, university, clients) are granted or gain (or are perceived to have) authority, influence, control, responsibility, or power (typically over others and decisions). This can include supervisors and students.	"…to encourage them to take on more of their own learning and development, which was quite good." "I think it helps us to help them to identify their areas for development and develop learning goals and then try and help them to continue to move forward and help them put some strategies in place to do that, whereas if we're looking at the check boxes and saying, "Hey, you're not doing this, you're not doing that…" it's

								probably a little more overwhelming for the student and maybe a little bit harder for them to focus on those areas and move forward. But if it's an area that they identify, then it's easy for them to maybe move forward on that."
,				**5.3**		*Authority and control*	Supervisors assume/ are assigned a position of power, control, and authority in relation to others (usually student(s)). This could be overt or covert within the transcript. For covert, this could be participants assigning a position of subordinate onto students which makes them a powerless and passive recipient of the enactment of rights and duties by the supervisor.	"For student that I've got real concerns about, I would be providing more regular feedback - like, say, weekly feedback to the uni to say, "This is where we're [*supervisors & student*] at this week". And, honestly, I'd be wanting to flag it to the student as early as possible, my concern, just so it's not a shock to them if we're suggesting extra time at end of placement." ← *interesting swapping between pronouns (and positions) within this sentence* "It's [the programmatic assessment] still good but we would like the student to understand that site supervisor's feedback is really important for the final decision. Do you guys [other participants] agree with that?"

6	*Emotions and feelings*	Emotive language that illustrates participant feelings.	6.1	*Anxious and concern*	Self-orientated feelings of anxiety, worry, concern; often underpinned by a sense of responsibility and duty.	"…just confirming it's not me, it is right that I'm seeing these gaps, rather than blindly sort of encountering these issues that the students are having and not knowing why… is that me or have they not got that concept yet?"
			6.2	*Enjoyment and contentment*	Self-orientated feelings of joy, contentment, happiness (positive emotions).	"Investigator: …does that make your experience more enjoyable when you can let down your guard a little because you're not having to assess at the end? Participant: Yeah, definitely"
			6.3	*Stress and burden*	The pressures and tensions related to assessment and students.	"I think if one site gets a lot of always challenging students, there is a large burnout that occurs. And the excitement and the challenges that come with students, they get worn down very quickly."
			6.4	*Optimistic*	The expression of hope and confidence that the future will be better and improved.	"it was a bit disempowering for me, I think, getting my head around it, but, hopefully, that will improve in future years when I'm a bit more used to the new model."
			6.5	*Pessimistic*	A dominant negative view, and/or that the future will be worse.	"As a student, you come from an extremely structured environment, to then come to clinical practice and just drop everything and see how you go, type thing. And I think it seems to have gone from one extreme to the

						other and I think we could find some middle ground where we meet both those needs"
			6.6	*Confidence*	The expression of confidence, or lack of, regarding assessment.	
7	*Other*	Codes not fitting into other categories.	7.1	*Culture*	Descriptions of the culture and/ or how it has changed. Includes implications (both positive and negative).	"…the culture change in the cohorts of students…and the ways that they are learning, and then the ways that they are practicing, are changing a lot, and people aren't necessarily moving with the change..the way that healthcare has changed – we can't expect students to be learning and practicing the way that we did 20 years ago, either. So, if you have got someone who is supervising like that and a student who is trying to be progressive, that can be a bit difficult, so to moderate that a bit."
			7.2	*Discrimination*	Discrimination or bias towards a particular group of people ("othering").	"Participant 2: …there was a clear difference in maturity, and one appeared to have more confidence…on surface, but in reality… it was less evident in her practice. And the other way round, the other student was - probably lacks self-confidence but was very competent…

						Interviewer: …is that unusual to other students you've had before or is that something you've seen previously? Participant 1: No, it was pretty typical." "…it's easy to identify the international students…The only concern is when I've had those students who have done that is that they sometimes use excuses for why they can't do things, rather than thinking of [solutions or strategies???] – they say, "Well that's my culture, I can't – I don't do that." And so it's very difficult to them to unpack that and say, "Well if you just tell the patient what they need to do, in this culture it's not going to work."
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