

Example of a former student making links to UKPSF in their writing

My Thoughts on Constructivism in relation to my Own Teaching Practice

In contrast to Behaviourism, constructivist theories influenced the way I designed my lecture content. The idea of cognitive schemas, with new learning being a processing of accommodation and assimilation feels intuitively accurate for me, mainly due to my own experiences of learning. For this reason, I felt it essential that I design my lecture content with prior knowledge as a core consideration (A5). Furthermore, as I was teaching 1st year student's with little knowledge of pharmacology (this isn't a topic area that is generally taught at A-level) and felt my lecture content should develop stable cognitive schemas that can be built upon in years 2 and 3. Early on in the year, before I started designed by lectures I had a discussion with a colleague who teaches ADME in year 2. He said the students really struggle with concepts around the influence of pH on the ionisation of different drugs with a range of pKa's. I wasn't surprised at this as these are very difficult concepts, requiring good knowledge of chemistry and maths. Looking at his lecture slides, with this being year 2 material, he introduced these concepts with the assumption that students had the appropriate chemistry and maths knowledge. Again, other content in his lectures could only be understood if the student had some level of understanding of basic chemistry (so in addition to pKa, pH and ionisation, students needed to know what terms like 'polarity', 'lipophilicity' and 'hydrophilicity'). I knew that some students on the course hasn't studied A-level chemistry (V1) was not a pre-requisite to study Pharmacology at Huddersfield therefore I felt it was important that my content helped develop schemas in order to bring everyone up to the same level. For this reason, introduced a lot of basic chemistry into my lectures (A1, A2. A4, K2,). This was identified by my colleague (who carried out a lesson observation as part of requirements of the School) as a particular strength to the lecture (P2. Peer Observation IH observes AM).