

The use of podcasting in teaching physiology

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Abstract

The Oxford English Dictionary defines podcasting as 'The use of the Internet to make available digital recordings of broadcasts for downloading to a computer or personal audio player'. There are several reasons for using podcasting in teaching, including: improved engagement with students; improved learning for students and finally, given the technological awareness of students, such developments are almost expected. The use of podcasting in the teaching of physiology to speech therapy students was investigated. Podcasts were recorded and modified using Audacity and subsequently posted on the module WebCT area. In total 9 podcasts were produced each one summarizing a topic covered in the lecture series delivered to the students. A survey on the use of and value of the podcasts was delivered by WebCT and 30 out of 60 students responded. 18/30 students listened to all podcasts produced. The modal number of listens to an individual podcast was 3–4 times with the majority (24/30) of them listening to them on a PC. The majority (25/30) of students used them primarily off-campus whilst doing university work. When asked whether the podcasts had increased their motivation for study 25/30 agreed it had whilst 24/30 agreed that it stimulated their interest in the subject. Podcasts appear to represent a relatively quick, effective and reusable strategy to improve the teaching and learning of physiology.