

The Evaluation of a Programmed Learning Course

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British Journal of Medical Education, 1969, **3**, 151-154.

When students are admitted from school directly into the first year of the Second MB course, it is found that the standard and knowledge of the students vary considerably, depending on the syllabus and the teaching methods employed at the school they attended. In order to remedy this situation as soon as possible after entry to university, the Middlesex Hospital Medical School has been experimenting with teaching programmes on important selected topics.

An assessment has been made of the use of such a programme on organic nomenclature. The programme was devised in the Biochemistry Department of the Middlesex Hospital (Smith, unpublished), used in that department, and also in the Department of Biochemistry of St Mary's Hospital Medical School, and the evaluation was carried out by the Department of Biology at the Middlesex.

The programme is of linear format, but is self-contained and does not assume previous knowledge. Many of the frames carry explanatory or reinforcing material and a minimum of two hours is required to complete the programme for the first time. The programme had been developed and tried in the preceding year. The results were sufficiently encouraging to suggest this fuller study.

Conclusion.

The administration of a programmed learning course in organic nomenclature to a group of students starting their Second MB course resulted in a considerable improvement in their performance when compared with a similar group of students who were not supplied with the course. Performance was controlled and assessed by use of multiple-choice question techniques.