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Title

Introducing the use of a semi-structured video diary room to investigate students' learning experiences during an outdoor adventure education groupwork skills course / Sam J. Cooley ...

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Abstract

Outdoor adventure education courses are used in higher education to develop transferable skills such as groupwork and problem-solving skills. There is a need for exploratory investigation into students' perceptions of this experience. This study aimed to develop an innovative qualitative data collection method, and to use it to explore students' perceived learning processes and developmental outcomes when taking part in an outdoor groupwork skills course. Participants (n = 40) were undergraduate engineering students who were taking part in the 3 day residential course as part of their degree course. Students' experiences were captured whilst immersed in the course, using a semi-structured video diary room. Participants entered the diary room at different time points throughout the course and responded to openended questions. Following a thematic analysis, students were found to arrive on the course with mixed feelings towards groupwork and expected learning outcomes. Activities were enjoyable yet challenging, revealing students' weaknesses and demanding a range of skills and coping methods. The outdoor environment added novelty, risk and natural consequences. Students

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reported developing a range of skills in groupwork, adaptability, persistence, planning, problem-solving, time-management, communication, leadership, cooperation, group reflection and team spirit, as well as benefits to physical activity, self-confidence, self-awareness, peer and staff relationships and internationalisation. These findings provide a base for future investigation into the long-term impact on student development and skill transfer. The semi-structured video diary room yielded rich data, contributing to the literature by offering a simple, yet effective, qualitative research method that can be implemented in a variety of contexts. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Cooley, Sam J., E-Mail: sjc829@bham.ac.uk