

Summary

In 2010 the Society of Radiographers surveyed students in the second, third and, where applicable, fourth years of studying radiography to elicit their experiences whilst on clinical placement. It formed part of the Society and College of Radiographers' commitment to tackle bullying in the workplace as a whole. This campaign and work continues to ascertain the true extent of the problem amongst students. This latest document will present the results of the 2016 survey.

Executive summary

It is acknowledged that some students on clinical placement experience bullying and harassment. The Society and College of Radiographers believes that any form of bullying and harassment is unacceptable. Thankfully the vast majority of students experience both a rewarding and supportive academic and clinical placement, which is facilitated by supportive teaching teams and clinical lecturers/educators.

The following bullet points highlight the main findings from the survey:

- 62.9% (161) of respondents felt they had been subjected to bullying whilst on their clinical placement
- 63.8% of respondents have witnessed another student being subjected to bullying and harassment whilst on their clinical placement
- Respondents identified at least one of the following symptoms during their clinical placement:
 - 93.4% experienced self doubt and loss of confidence, an significant increase of 25.4% from the 2010 survey 68% cited
 - 65.4% had the inability to relax or switch off from study. In 2010 this figure stood at 49%, which sees an increase of 16.4%
 - 57.8% suffered from sleeplessness, this has risen from 41%, a 16.8% rise, although these figures could result also from the inability to relax or switch off
 - 44.3% cited being depressed. This has more than doubled in five years from 21%, a significantly worrying increase. Employers have a legal duty to ensure the health safety and wellbeing (including mental health of employees)
 - 51.8% experienced feelings of isolation: students will flourish with inclusion support and guidance.
- Two thirds of respondents have been absent from work on at least one occasion owing to poor clinical placement experience
- When questioned on the number of incidents to which respondents had been subjected:
 - 49.3% (120) had experienced between two and five separate incidents
 - 16.8% (41) reported experiencing between five and ten separate incidents,
 - 17.2% (42) reported being subjected to more than 10 separate incidents,
- 60.2% of respondents were bullied and harassed during the day, which would raise the question, why during the busiest times in a department is this type of behaviour not challenged?

Introduction.

Bullying can gradually wear a person down. It can leave the individual feeling inadequate, demeaned and hopeless, believing they can never get anything right. The symptoms and signs may creep up on the victim long before they are able to appreciate what is happening or indeed

how ill it is making them feel. Bullying will not only affect the victim's work environment, but can spill over into their domestic life.

Bullying has no simple definition; it can take many forms. Bullying can take place in a variety of situations, and crosses gender, race, age, disability and sexual orientation. Bullying can involve a number of individuals or just one. For the purpose of this survey the Society of Radiographers defines bullying as:-

- unwarranted, humiliating, offensive behaviour towards an individual or group of employees
- such persistently negative malicious attacks on personal or professional performance; often unseen, unpredictable, unfair and irrational
- an abuse of power or position that can cause such anxiety that people gradually lose all belief in themselves, suffering physical ill health and mental distress as a direct result
- the abuse of the perpetrator's position or power, which can be used to coerce the victim by fear, persecution or to oppress them by force or threat of the loss of something
- a range from an extreme form such as violence and intimidation to less obvious actions, the simplest being deliberately ignoring someone whilst at work.

Strong management techniques or bullying?

Bullying is a sustained form of psychological abuse which often emanates from a senior member of a team, who believe they are taking a 'strong line' with employees. What we know however, is that a fine line exists between strong management and bullying.

The line is crossed when the victim is persistently belittled, hassled and singled out. The victim will begin to show signs they are distressed whilst becoming physically, mentally or psychologically hurt.

Identifying workplace bullying can be difficult Whilst we acknowledge it may not be the intention of the perpetrator, identifying the deed itself and the impact that it has on the victim is essential.

Experts have agreed that bullying will thrive where it is commonplace behaviour across management hierarchy. This is especially the case in competitive environments (patient-led services, teaching environments) where individuals consider bullying as an accepted way of motivating staff.

The SoR has produced in-depth guidance on the subject of Bullying and Harassment ¹ which can be found at <https://www.sor.org/learning/document-library/bullying-and-harassment-achieving-dignity-work-all-our-members>

This document presents the analysis from an online survey of students who have been on clinical placement.

The survey was anonymous: 3015 members, who were identified as either SoR student members or lecturers were emailed and asked if they would complete the online questionnaire. A link was sent for the Survey Monkey® tool; the potential subjects were identified from the

¹ Society of Radiographers: (2009), Bullying and Harassment: Achieving dignity at work for all our members

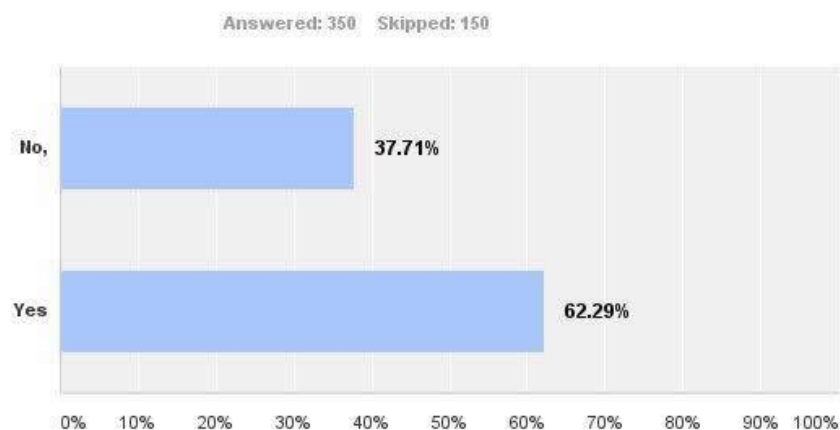
SoR student database. Respondents were also offered the option of entering a prize draw if they completed the online survey.

500 students completed the online survey. The survey was open from November 2015 to coincide with anti bullying month. The survey closed on January 14th 2016.

The respondents were asked questions about their clinical placement, whether students had been informed of any anti bullying policies, experiences, which procedures were in place to aide and support students and details of any bullying experience. Further questions were asked regarding how the issue was dealt with.

A free anonymous text response box at the end of the survey allowed students or lecturers to provide more in-depth details, should they wish to do so. This resulted in a number of clinical placements who will remain nameless being identified. The SoR will be working closely with these departments and accredited representatives to raise and deal with the issues identified.

Do you feel that you have been subjected to bullying during your clinical placement?



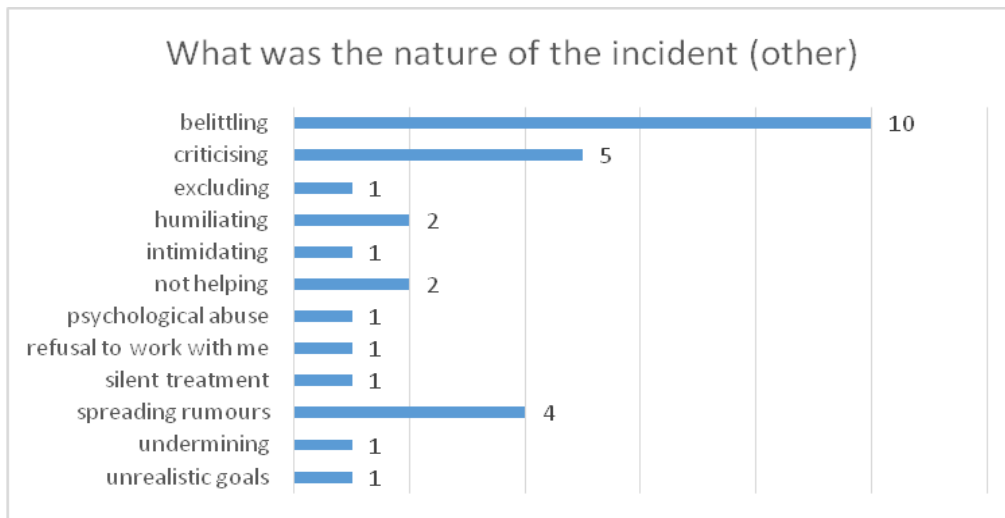
62.2% of respondents felt they had been subjected to bullying whilst on their clinical placement. When further questioned regarding the form the bullying takes, 85.1% of respondents identified being subjected to humiliation and belittling, 73.4% experienced excessive criticism whilst 66.2% cited being ignored or ostracised.

One respondent commented "Although most people would not consider it "serious" bullying, but the staff have been degrading and patronizing, and have also left me feeling out of place and isolated. I have heard members of staff insulting the capabilities of other students, and I have been degraded and isolated myself. It makes you feel depressed, lonely and de-motivated. And it is not the first time that it has happened at this placement".

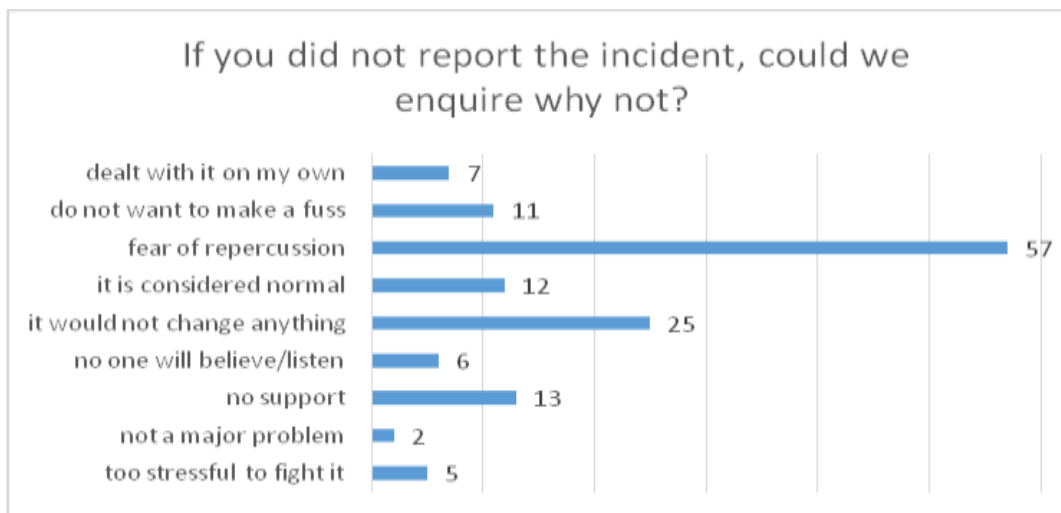
The student bullying working party uncovered disparities with persons acting as clinical tutors. A number had not attended the practice educators training. Understandably these members may find communication with students difficult.

The Society of Radiographers will work to ensure that when a course is subject to accreditation, the clinical placement will have at least one trained practice educator who will have attended

the practice educators' scheme and have received a formal qualification. We acknowledge this may take a number of years to implement. Educators in Wales are required to have achieved a formal qualification or they will not be attained the required pay banding.

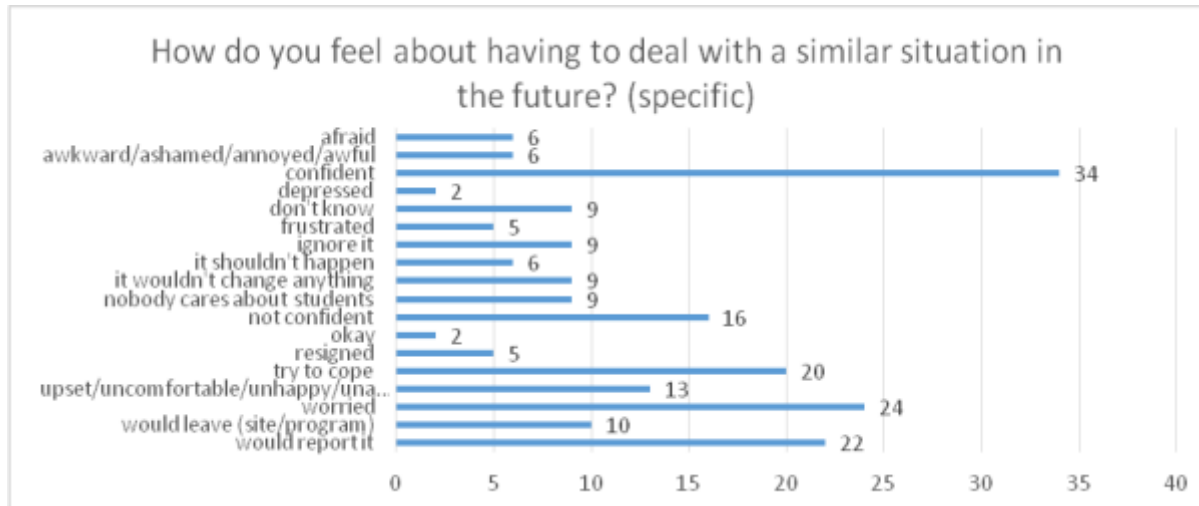


Throughout the survey and the free text responses, students repeatedly identified they had been belittled by various staff members whilst on their clinical placement. The Society of Radiographers has recently introduced "It's not what you say, it's how you say it", training which identified behaviour, body language, speech and interpretation. Health and Safety reps have already received the training; a number realised how their behaviour could be interpreted or indeed misinterpreted. This training will be delivered to all health and safety reps attending the advanced course from March 2016. The SoR is also currently working with departments identified in the survey to deal with the issue.

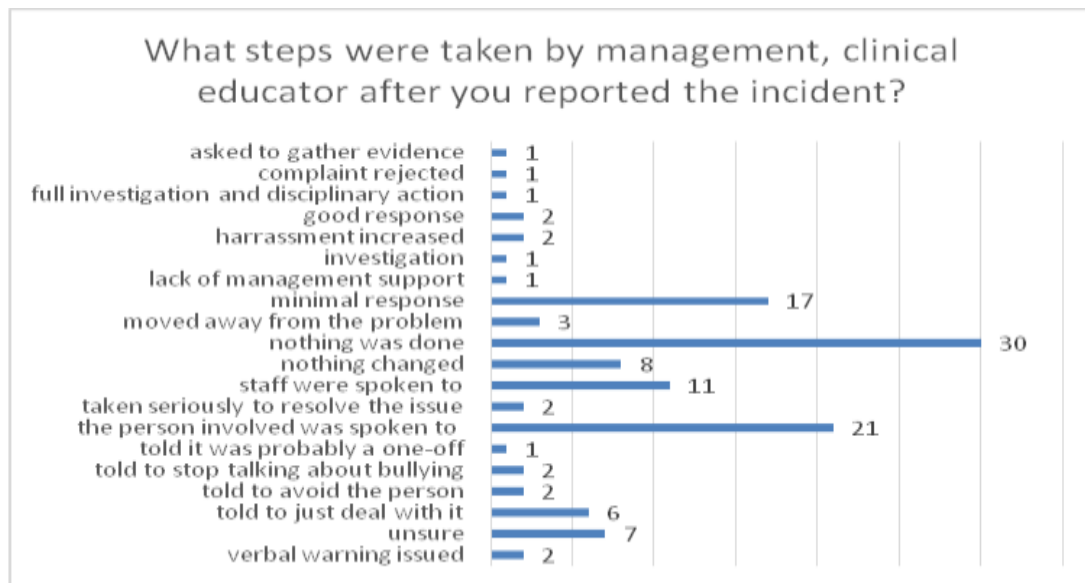


A common theme went through the answers to this question. In the free text box which accompanied the question, students feared repercussion and a number commented they were told they would not 'get the required signatures', 'would make the situation worse', 'reporting the issue wouldnt change anything', 'the fear of being made to look silly or singled out as the troublemaker'.

The SoR must work together with clinical placements/tutors, universities and the students union to ensure that there is support available for students who are being subjected to bullying without fear of retribution.



Whilst we would aim for there to be no further incidents, work must be done to ensure students are confident in approaching relevant parties for support to deal with the issue. We must work together to remove the feeling of awkwardness and embarrassment that students have identified. Work is currently being undertaken to engage students and encourage them to report any incidents, through student talks, updated web pages and a planned conference that will discuss scheduled for 2016.



A number of students who reported the problem felt that '*nothing had been done*' to resolve the situation. Universities and clinical placements are required to have bullying policies which will obtain clear guidance and identify the procedural steps which will be taken. The policy should also identify who has responsibility for dealing with such issues, thus identifying the person who can be held accountable should nothing happen. A flowchart is being produced to identify the pathway students should follow when they believe they are being subjected to bullying,

whilst taking into account the policy of the HEI including the Samaritans contact number (people who are being bullied may feel more isolated during the night, when there may be no one available to speak to. The Samaritans is a 24 hour helpline. The Samaritans freecall number is 116123, free whether on landline or mobile. Note – no details are made on phone bill so students sharing phones can do so in utmost confidence with no paper trail.

58.8% of respondents had thought about leaving their clinical placement owing to bullying. Radiography is suffering from decreasing levels of students; we simply cannot afford to lose students who wish to train to be radiographers. One student commented:

I was locked in room with male radiographer who was aggressive, abusive, stood in front of the door and refused to let me leave. Many other incidents of inappropriate behaviour by clinical staff resulted in me moving to a different clinical placement in final year.

This is unacceptable behaviour on every level.

General comments:

Survey respondents were asked if they wanted to add any comments related to the survey. Comments were:

Being on placement in a hospital where I have been in the minority race caused a lot of issues. The superintendent was abusive and unrealistic with the way she treated me and my colleague because we were in the minority,

The behaviour of the bully made me extremely depressed to the extent that I feel I am not worth of anything. Other student members and clinical staff also expressed the same feeling but no one has ever tried to challenge the perpetrator as it is widely tolerated within the department.

As I have qualified in August as a PgDip Therapy radiographer, I no longer wish to discuss the matter. I am still not working, I am not actively looking for work as a therapy radiographer and to be honest I don't feel like I want to work as a radiographer as I don't want to be in that environment every day. The experience was very bad.

The radiographer was intimidating and very confrontational. She was shouting while I was not present how (sic) a horrible and useless person I was and the clinical coordinator and Department Supervisor where (sic) laughing while she was badmouthing me. She also talked bad about me in front of me by pointing at me and humiliating me in front of the Supervisor and at the time the Supervisor was laughing again about her comments.

XXXX hospital was the worst 8 weeks I have ever experienced! I would be happy to give statements as lecturers did not take seriously.

These incidents happen on a regular basis and leave me feeling embarrassed and upset. As a student it is hard to fight back and change what is happening so I am trying to ignore (sic) what is happening and focus on the reason I am at clinical placement. There are only a few weeks left of clinical placement so I will just struggle through and focus on the end where they can stop treating me like this because I'm a student.

Lack of support from clinical tutor, criticism of students in front of others, singling out one student, unfair rotation, criticism without opportunity for discussion or explanation, made to feel worthless, incompetent and disliked by the person supposed to be looking after us in placement.

My course finished in 2012, I did not become a professional radiographer due to back problems and the bullying issue, which was so severe, and it was practically unbelievable. I knew 1 student who left the course, and several of us moved to other hospitals. It felt like a military training centre, where students were shouted and yelled at, made to look ridiculous, and at other times completely ignored. The x-ray department contained too many aggressive, hostile, resentful staff that loathed students and seemed obsessed with issues such as status and low pay. I thank God that I shall never have to train or work there again

There were more than one clinical staff who treating (sic) the students badly. As well as being subjected to bullying in the form of humiliation, belittling, being ignored, given bad feedback, I also witnesses (sic) discrimination towards a student of a difficult (sic) culture, had the radiographers make rude comments and some of the students and heard radiographers make rude comments about other hospital staff outside the department. Having worked in a hospital previously, this was the worst case of bullying I have seen/been subjected to. I felt completely unsupported by the university and was told if I make a formal complaint then I would have to deal with the consequences on placement.

We have has (sic) several quite challenging cases of bullying in the least two years. These have not been isolated to one dept, they have occurred in different placements. Managers have been very receptive when informed, and responded appropriately. However attitudes "on the shop floor" in depts seem slow to change.

Main issue seems to be clinical educators (lecturer practitioners and clinical tutors) are more thinly stretched year on year. They are given more tasks, more students in some cases than the previous year, with the same or less resources. If and when they are available for one-to-one discussion/support (often preferring to have group meetings) the student is under a great deal of pressure to tell their side accurately, concisely, and confidently, otherwise the student's abilities are called into question.

Post survey:

On completion of the online survey, respondents were advised that if they were affected by any of the questions or wanted to discuss any issues to contact the SoR directly.

Future actions and recommendations:

The students' section of the SCoR webpage will be updated, offering the following information:

- a document for the students purpose
 - what students can expect on clinical placement and
 - what is expected of students on clinical placement
 - case studies demonstrating the difference between critically analysing and rude, unnecessary bullying.
- a flowchart identifying the pathway students should follow when they believe they are being subjected to bullying, whilst taking into account the policy of the HEI (including Samaritans contact number).
- the requirement that when a course is subject to reaccreditation, the clinical placement will have at least one practice educator who has attended the practice educator's scheme and received a formal qualification. Educators in Wales have to have achieved a qualification or they will not attain the required pay banding (The SCoR acknowledges this will take a number of years).
 - UK Council have submitted a motion at this year's Annual Delegates Conference to enable this to take place.
- the identification of three main areas that require in-depth work from all parties:
 - supporting students in a crisis
 - raising concerns on behalf of colleagues
 - encouraging and supporting managers to implement and change cultures.
- The SCoR will hold a one day conference, working together with universities, clinical placement tutors and students to find a solution to bullying and harassment in the department.

Appendix – Survey questionnaire: (PDF Version)

Students survey into bullying and harassment 2015

1. Bullying: the true extent of the problem

Bullying and Harassment is a major problem that exists within workplaces today and everyday.

In 2013 the Society of Radiographers conducted a survey amongst our members which identified that this subject is a major issue of concern.

Building upon the findings we have published guidance for both employers and SoR representatives, health and safety representatives have received training on the issues around bullying and how behavior, tone and body language can be interpreted.

The SoR has also launched a "Stop Bullying Campaign" which departments can sign up to. We have successfully held a bullying conference which was attended by health and safety representatives and their managers.

Bullying and harassment at work, makes life intolerable for SoR members - one SoR member who is being subjected to bullying at work, is one member too many.

Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect whilst at work, but too often this is not the case. One in four adults have been subjected to bullying within the last 5 years.

Bullying is often misunderstood and definitions drawn too narrowly.. It is therefore important to have an agreed definition of bullying when raising the issue at work.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) define bullying as: "Offensive, intimidating, malicious, or insulting behavior, an abuse or misuse of power through means to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient"

"Bullying or harassment may be an individual against an individual (perhaps by someone in a position of authority such as a superintendent or manager) or involve groups of people"

The SoR has dealt with a number of cases over the last 18 months from students on clinical placements who believe they are being bullied due to the treatment they have received (Ignored, belittled, made to feel worthless, told to get on with it, as this was how the person training was trained back in the day)

In order to determine the true extent of the problem amongst our students it would be very helpful if you could complete this questionnaire.

We would also welcome the responses from clinical lecturers and university lecturers if they have witnessed incidents or indeed been involved in incidents.

The findings of this survey will be used to gather information and identify any trends which may be occurring.

Please be assured that all information will be regarded in strictest confidence.

If you are currently being bullied and would like advice, support and guidance please contact the Society of Radiographers directly on 0207 740 7200

Would students complete the whole survey.

Lyn West-Wigley: Health and Safety Officer

1. Are you ?

- First year student,
- Second year student,
- Third year student,
- Fourth year student (Scotland),
- Clinical Lecturer,
- University lecturer

Other (please specify)

2. Do you have clinical lecturers who are employed by the university working with students on a daily basis?

(A practice educator is based in the clinical department, the role supports students and facilitates their learning. It may be referred to as a clinical lecturer, practice teacher, lecturer practitioner, clinical educator for example - it does not include daily supervisors, assessors or mentors)

- No,
- Yes.

Other (please specify)

3. Which Region/Country are you in?

- Eastern,
- London,
- Midlands,
- Northern,
- Northern Ireland,
- North Western,
- Scotland,
- South Eastern,
- South Western,
- Wales,
- Yorkshire & North Trent.

1. Which University are you currently studying at?

- Bangor University,
- Birmingham City University,
- Canterbury Christ Church University,
- Cardiff University,
- City University, London,
- Glasgow Caledonian University,
- Kingston University & St George's Medical School,
- London South Bank University,
- Queen Margaret University,
- Sheffield Hallam University,
- Teesside University,
- The Robert Gordon University (Aberdeen),
- University Campus Suffolk,
- University of Bradford,
- University of Cumbria,
- University of Derby,
- University of Exeter,
- University of Hertfordshire (Hatfield),
- University of Leeds,
- University of Liverpool,
- University of Portsmouth,
- University of Salford,
- University of Ulster,
- University of West of England (Bristol),

2. Have you been made aware of the bullying and harassment policy at your university?

- No,
- Yes.

Other (please specify)

3. What is your perception of bullying at university?

- Non-Existent,
- Minor issue,
- Serious issue,
- Very serious issue

4. Have you been subjected to any incidents of bullying and harassment during your time at university?

- No
- Yes,

Other (please specify)

5. During your time at university have you ever experienced the following symptoms? (please tick all that apply)

- Self-doubt and loss of confidence,
- Inability to relax or switch off from work or study,
- Sleeplessness,
- Depression,
- Isolation.

Other (please specify)

6. Has your experience during your time at university led you to be absent?

- No,
- Yes,
- Yes - On more than one occasion,
- Yes - Frequently

Other (please specify)

Students survey into bullying and harassment 2015

3. Clinical placement:

Clinical placements are pivotal to students learning and progress, this is when the theory becomes reality, under the same time pressures, issues and constraints full time members of staff experience daily.

Students have listed bullying and harassment on their clinical placement as the main reason they have chosen to leave the course, replacing financial hardship.

All information will be collated for the purpose of this survey and is confidential

1. Have you been made aware of the bullying and harassment policy at your clinical placement?

- No.
- Yes.

2. When you commenced your clinical placement, did you receive information and training showing you how to deal with bullying and harassment?

- Yes
- No
- Can't remember/Don't know

3. What is your perception of bullying within your clinical placement?

- Non-Existent within the department,
- Minor issue within the department,
- Serious issue within the department,
- Very serious issue within the department.

Other (please specify)

4. Have you witnessed another student being subjected to bullying or harassment whilst on your clinical placement?

- No.
- Yes.

Other (please specify)

5. Do you feel that you have been subjected to bullying during your clinical placement?

No,

Yes

Other (please specify)

6. During your clinical placement have you ever experienced any of the following symptoms? (please select all that apply)

Self-doubt and loss of confidence,

Inability to relax or switch off from work or study,

Sleeplessness

Depression,

Isolation

Other (please specify)

7. Has your experience during clinical placement led you to be absent from the department?

No,

Yes,

Yes - on more than one occasion,

Yes - Frequently

Other (please specify)

Students survey into bullying and harassment 2015

4. Are you currently being bullied?

Whether at clinical placement or university?

1. Are you currently being bullied?

- No,
- Yes.

Other (please specify)

2. Where are the incidents happening

- University,
- Clinical placement.

Other (please specify)

3. If you have been subjected to bullying behaviour, how often has it happened?

- Once,
- 2-5 incidents,
- 5-10 incidents,
- above 10 incidents.

Other (please specify)

4. How often do the incidents happen?

- Daily,
- Weekly,

5. When do the incidents happen?

- During the day?
- During the evenings?
- During shifts?
- When management are not around?

Students survey into bullying and harassment 2015

5. The perpetrator

We would like to gather details of the person who is doing the bullying.

1. Are you being bullied by?

- Clinical Staff,
- Department Manager,
- Practice Educators
- Lecturers
- Student.

Other (please specify)

2. Are you aware of anyone else on clinical placement who is being subjected to bullying from the same perpetrator?

- No,
- Yes.

3. Does this take place on?

- Campus,
- Clinical placement

4. To your knowledge has the bully been challenged about their behaviour?

- No,
- Yes.

5. If so, by whom?

- You,
- Colleagues,
- Management,
- Practice educator,
- Reps.

6. is the perpetrator?

- Male,
- Female.

Students survey into bullying and harassment 2015

6. The incident

We understand that this part of the survey may be difficult to discuss, but any information that you provide would be most helpful

1. What form does the bullying take (tick all relevant)

- Threats and abuse?
- Intimidation?
- Humiliation and belittling?
- Setting unrealistic tasks,
- Excessive criticism?
- Ignoring or ostracising you?
- Threatening you with loss of your placement?
- Spreading lies or rumours?
- shouting at you?
- Discussing other students in front of you?

Other (please specify)

2. What was the nature of the incident?

- Verbal abuse
- Harassment
- Threats
- Physical assault
- Rude Gestures

Other (please specify)

3. What are your thoughts on the way the incident was handled?

5 Very poor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 Poor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 Satisfactory	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 Good	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1 Excellent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

4. Have you ever thought about leaving university due to the bullying?

No,

Yes

Other (please specify)

5. Have you thought about leaving your clinical placement due to the bullying?

Yes,

No.

6. If you wish to provide more details about the incident/s.

Students survey into bullying and harassment 2015

7. Reporting of the incidents

1. Have you reported the incidents of bullying?

Yes,

No.

2. If you did not report the incident, could we enquire why not?

3. How do you feel about having to deal with a similar situation in the future?

4. What steps were taken by management, clinical educator after you reported the incident?

Students survey into bullying and harassment 2015

8. Further information

All responses are treated in the strictest confidence

1. If you wish to describe in greater detail any issue, your university or clinical placement name, please feel free to use this section:

Students survey into bullying and harassment 2015

9. Prize

Thank you for taking time to complete the survey, There is a prize of an iPad for one person chosen from participants.

If you wish to enter, please add your name at the end, if you do not wish to enter then please do not add your name.

Any information gathered is in the strictest confidence, names entered will not be used for any other purpose than the prize draw.

1. Please fill in your name below if you wish to be entered into the prize draw