

# The Professionals:

Students on placement



national union of students



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# Introduction

## Welcome to our new briefing – The Professionals: students on placement

This briefing is designed to support unions to understand students on placement and their student experiences better. Of course the people who know about these experiences best are placement students themselves and so this briefing also seeks to provide some thoughts and ideas about how unions can engage placement students and ensure they are able to have their views taken into account by institutions.

In 2010 NUS National Conference passed the following policy:

1. To mandate NUS to conduct research into the problems faced by students on placement and work-based learning.
2. To create an NUS Placement Students' campaign to address and tackle the problems faced by students on placement and work-based learning.
3. To mandate the Vice President Higher Education to provide a briefing to students' unions on how best to engage with and represent students whilst they are on placement.

This briefing is the start, not the end, of our work on placement students, and we look forward to sharing ideas and practice with you all over the coming months and years.

In unity,



**Usman Ali**

Vice President (Higher Education)



**Pete Mercer**

Vice President (Welfare)



**Ed Marsh**

Vice President (Union Development)



# 1. Definition

The term 'placement student' is frequently used to describe a student who undertakes a portion of their learning experience outside of their awarding institution. It covers a wide variety of opportunities including, but not exclusively:

1. A year abroad
2. A year in industry
3. Summer placements/internships
4. Assessed/self-assessed placements
5. Credit-bearing work-based learning
6. Professionally accredited work-based learning
7. Structured professional experience outside of University while still a registered student

Such variations in delivery make it difficult to provide a precise and formal definition to the term 'placement student'. It could be argued that the provision of a formal definition might even be counter-productive and act as a constraint to the further development of innovative practice. As a result it should be left to institutions to decide what it means by the term 'placement student' and to ensure that all partners involved understand what is intended, including the students' union.

The aim of this briefing is to improve the ability of students' unions to understand, engage with and represent students who are on professionally accredited courses with integrated work-based learning as a part of their curriculum.

Unfortunately, there is currently no formal grouping of this type of student by any national sector body, so for the purpose of this briefing, we have defined this as any degree course or student that receives funding by the National Health Service or the Department for Education or their equivalents in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

These students are:

- Medics
- Dentists
- Nurses
- Midwives
- Allied health professionals (physiotherapists, occupational therapists etc)
- Social workers
- Teachers\*

We recognise that these are not the only students that have this type of student experience, and hope that unions will be able to use this briefing as a starting point to gain a better understanding of all their professional placement students. We also recognise that within this group of students there will be a range of different experiences. NUS will be looking into these in more detail in the future, but for now, this briefing provides a broad overview.

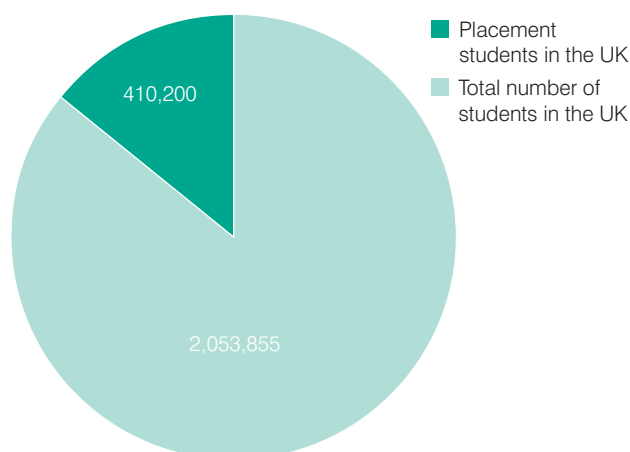
*\* for this briefing teachers are defined as students on courses accredited by a higher education institution and that are Qualified Teachers Status (QTS) accredited.*

## 2. Who they are

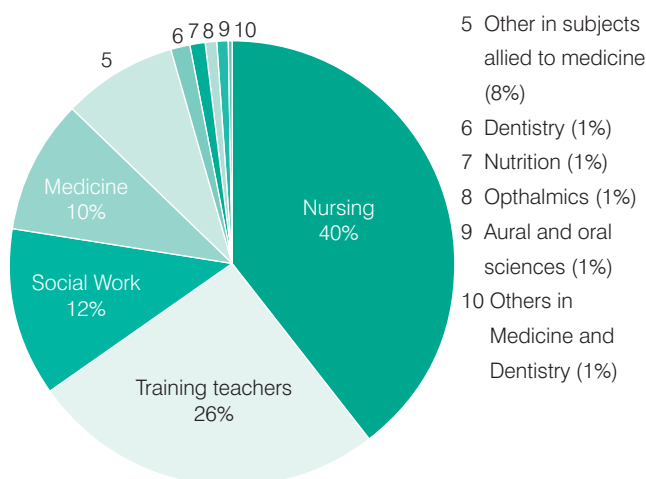
It is vital that you know who your students are, as it helps you understand what their needs might be. This section will highlight some national facts and statistics about professional placement students. As this is national data, it provides a backdrop to your local situation and will help inform you about the general picture across the UK.

Every institution and every course is different and some information about these students that would be helpful to know is not available nationally.

Graph 1: Number of placement students as a proportion of the total number of UK students<sup>1</sup>

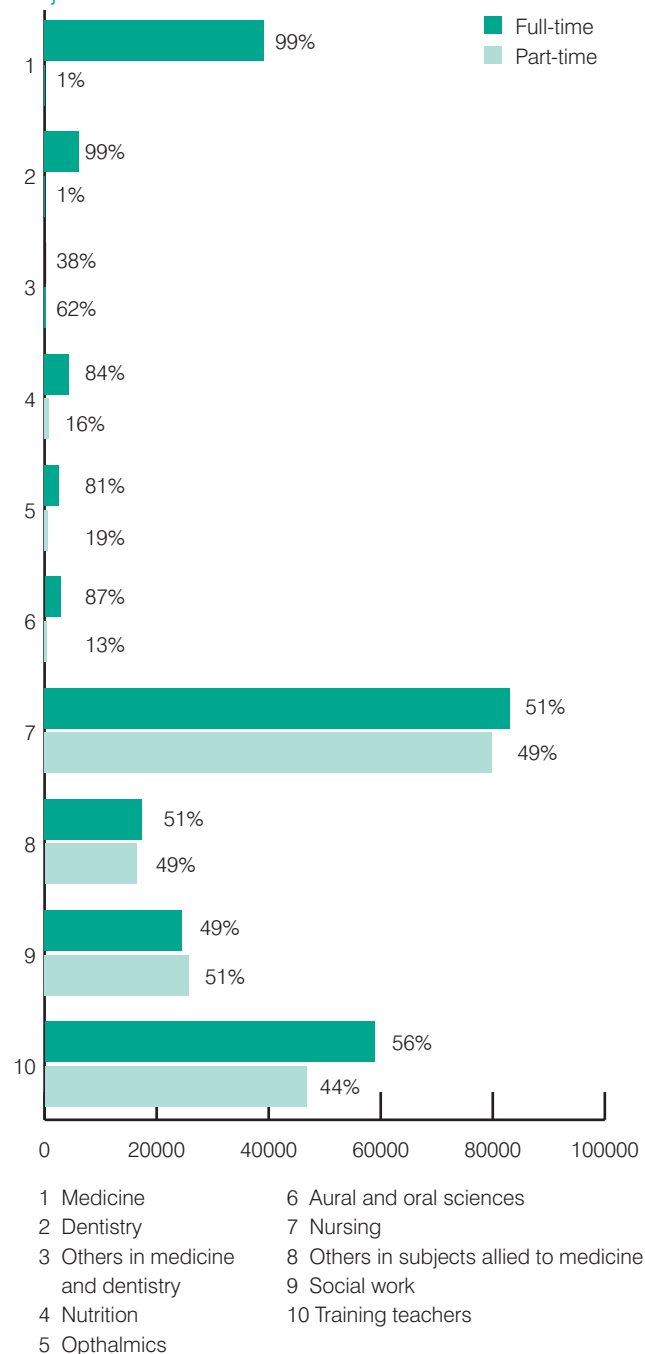


Graph 2: Subject areas studied by placement students



With 16 per cent of the UK undergraduate and postgraduate student body studying on a professional placement course, these students are clearly a significant section of students' unions' membership.

Graph 3: Comparison of full- and part-time students by subject





Overall, 42 per cent of professional placement students study part-time. The experiences and support needs of part-time students are equally as complex as they are for placement students. Part-time students are not one homogenous group and they choose to study part-time for many different reasons. Some of these reasons are:

- Upskilling while still working full- or part-time alongside study
- Having caring responsibilities or other life demands that need to be balanced with study
- Costs of study

Having so many part-time students on professional courses adds another layer of complexity when trying to engage with them. NUS has produced the Part Time Students Briefing<sup>2</sup> in order to inform students' unions about the experiences of this group on campus.

## Socio-economic and equalities backgrounds

Medicine and dentistry is not particularly diverse, consisting of mainly full-time students under 21 from relatively advantaged socio-economic backgrounds. In 2008 this was the age profile of students accepted to study medicine:

2008	20 and under	21–24	25–39	40 and over
Accepted applicants	77.9%	14.8%	7.0%	0.3%

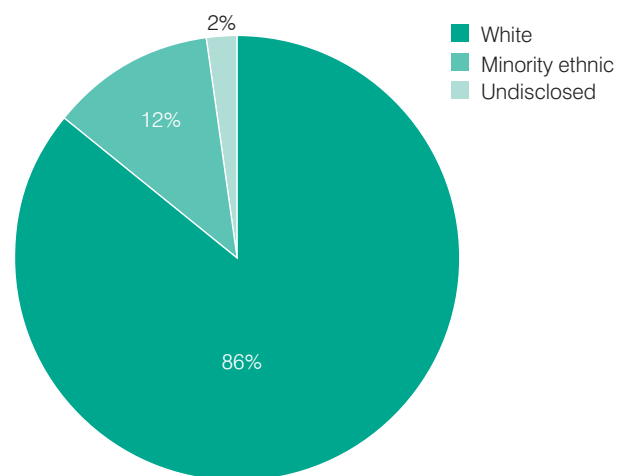
Table 1: Percentage of accepted applicants to medical schools in the UK

Socio-economic	2008
Higher managerial and professional occupations	77.9
Lower managerial and professional occupations	23.4
Intermediate occupations	10.3
Small employers and own account workers	3.2
Lower supervisory and technical occupations	1.9
Semi-routine occupations	8.3
Routine occupations	1.9
Unknown	13.4

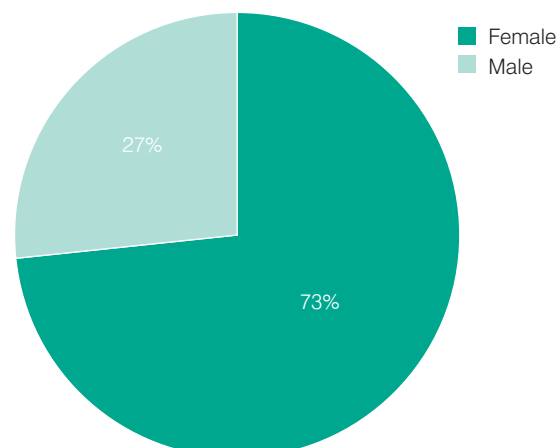
In 2008, 71 per cent of students accepted onto a medical degree were from the top three socio-economic classes. In 2005, 2006 and 2007, 70 per cent of the students accepted were from the top three socio-economic classes. Clearly, little improvement in widening participation to these subjects has been made over the past four years, despite efforts from the sector. Widening participation is a well-known issue for both medicine and dentistry.

The Teaching Development Agency (TDA), the sector body responsible for distributing funding to institutions for training teachers and monitoring the national picture on teacher training, holds data<sup>3</sup> about trainee teachers.

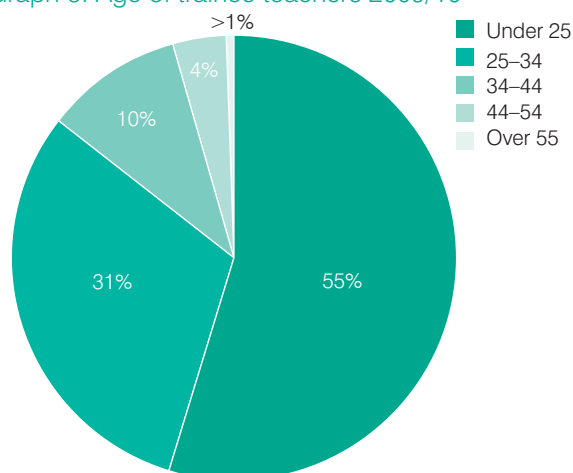
Graph 4: Ethnicity of trainee teachers 2009/10



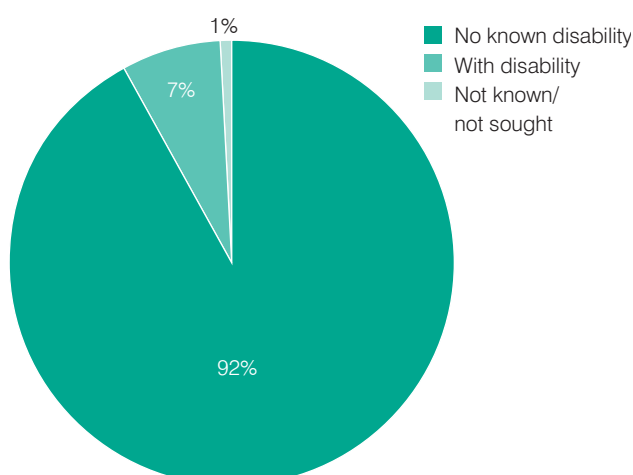
Graph 5: Gender of trainee teachers 2009/10



Graph 6: Age of trainee teachers 2009/10



Graph 7: Trainee teachers 2009/10 with a disability



In 2008 the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) conducted a study that provided an insight into student nurse demographics.<sup>4</sup>

47 per cent of nursing students were over 30, with 17 per cent between 35-40 and 19 per cent over 40. The average age of a nurse in 2008 was 42.

65 per cent of nursing students were in paid employment before starting the course, of which 21 per cent were in paid NHS employment.

In 2007 the General Social Care Council published a study about student progression in social work that included demographic data.<sup>5</sup>

Ethnicity (2006-07)	Number	Percentage
White (UK)	3391	69%
White (other)	88	2%
Asian	296	6%
Black	902	19%
Mixed	182	4%
Other	25	1%

Age (2005)	Number	Percentage
<20	836	16%
20-29	1885	36%
30-39	1654	31%
40+	895	17%

Gender (2005)	Number	Percentage
Women	4496	85%
Male	774	15%

The data shows that women are significantly over-represented on these courses, and for social work and nursing, students are also significantly more likely to be mature learners. Again, this will impact on the needs and experiences of these students. Women are more likely to have childcare or caring responsibilities and mature students are more likely to have greater financial obligations, such as mortgages and loans. For both these sets of students, the challenge of balancing work and study with the rest of life can be the main thing that defines their student experience. Early and clear information provision, with signposted support mechanisms can be a lifeline for these students.

**What could you do?** Speak to the university or college and ask if they can share this kind of data with you (many already do). Understanding the different breakdowns of these students can help you on your way to understanding what their particular needs might be.

# 3. Placement experience

A number of studies have examined the experiences of students whilst they are on placement, some of which are listed at the end of this briefing. This is because most professional bodies, trades unions and institutions consider placement to be the most crucial part of the experience, and so want to monitor it.

Overall, students value the opportunity to go on placement extremely highly. However, it is also clear that when things go wrong it can taint their entire student experience. Often issues that already exist are exacerbated by the stress of being on placement, but we also know that sometimes it is issues with the placement itself. Whether it is a lack of information and preparation time beforehand, a bad mentor or the distance from home.

There are some main themes when it comes to challenges with placements:

## Communication

When the communication flow breaks down things can go wrong quickly. The challenge is trying to manage this flow between three different bodies – the institution, the student and the placement. Facilitating communication between students during placement is important, as it can provide students with their own peer-based support network. Communicating what support is provided to the student during placement is also essential. There are often many different support systems in place but many students, due to the nature of their busy schedules, fall through the net in finding out about them.

**What could you do?** Bring together all the people involved with providing placement support and course reps/students from each placement course to talk about how communication could be improved during placement. You will need to make sure that any such meeting is at a time when students are not on placement and that it is in a location that is convenient to them. By facilitating this discussion, you will hopefully

learn more about the challenges, as well as come up with some solutions!

## Organisation

This is linked closely to communication. If a placement is poorly organised, for instance, confirmed late or changed last minute, major problems can be caused. Equally, things such as the placement not being prepared for the arrival of a student, or the student not knowing how many hours they are supposed to work is far too frequently an issue.

**What could you do?** Ask a placement co-ordinator (most courses will have someone responsible for organising placements) if you can shadow them for half a day. This is a great way to get a better understanding of the challenges departments face when trying to organise placements. You will be better informed and therefore more able to make recommendations for improvements. Plus, if you can show you care about the staff as well as the students, it might help in getting them on side for the changes you suggest.

## Mentors/supervisors

Providing training and support to mentors is crucial and keeping them informed about what is expected of them can make or break a placement. Policies and systems should be in place in case of issues regarding a breakdown in relationships between mentor and placement student – which of course will happen from time to time in any situation.

**What could you do?** Review your institution's mentor/supervisor development policy (if they have one). Is training provided? Who gets to be a mentor and why? Who is responsible for supporting the mentors? What happens if a student has problem with their mentor? If the policies do not answer these questions adequately, you could start talking to the institution about how this can be improved.

# What does the research tell us?

Overall students on placement are reasonably satisfied with their experiences. However, there are clearly areas that can cause problems – particularly around the provision of information and support.

Graph 8: Student teachers' top three reasons for deferral of, and withdrawal from, completion of Initial Teacher Training<sup>6</sup>

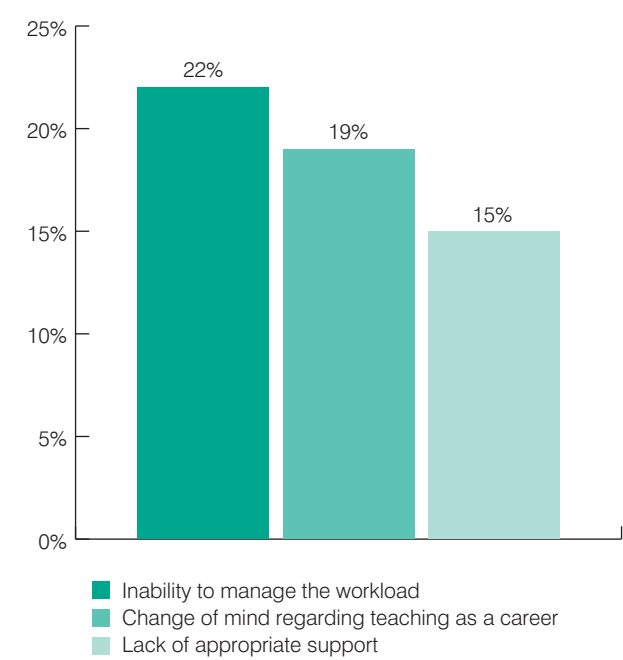


Table 2: Thinking about your Initial Teacher Training programme, how would you rate the support you received during your training?<sup>7</sup>

Route	Very good	Good	Neither poor nor good	Poor	Very poor	Can't generalise	Don't know
BEd	34%	47%	13%	4%	1%	2%	0%

Table 3: National Student Survey 2011 NHS funded student only questions

Question	Sector-wide % agree
NHS Practice Placements Summary	84
N3.1 I received sufficient preparatory information prior to my placement(s).	73
N3.2 I was allocated placement(s) suitable for my course.	89
N3.3 I received appropriate supervision on placement(s).	83
N3.4 I was given opportunities to meet my required practice learning outcomes/competences.	89
N3.5 My contribution during placement(s) as part of the clinical team was valued.	89
N3.6 My practice supervisor(s) understood how my placement(s) related to the broader requirements of my course.	83

61 per cent of Initial Teacher Training students said that their placement experiences were the most valuable part of their training.<sup>8</sup>

However, 39 per cent of nursing students surveyed in a Royal College of Nursing study who had considered leaving their course said their experience on placement was a factor, and of this group, 15 per cent said that the demands of travelling to placements were a factor.

## What do students say?

*"For me the actual placement itself was a really, really positive experience. I was treated as one of the team and I mucked in as much as everybody else. I was given every opportunity to go on training and things like that, so I could develop my knowledge and skills, but it wasn't the same across the board."*

(Female social work, yr 3)

*"The mentors you are allocated, some have an exceptional outlook on students, others see them as purely as a slave. So the learning experience really does vary dramatically even if you're in the same ward you can have completely different experiences with two separate students."* (Male, adult nursing, yr 2)

*"I think my experience, and the experience of other students, the communication from the university to the placements is poor. Attendance of lecturers to see us when we are on placement is supposed to happen. In the 2 years that I've been here I've never once seen a tutor on any placement that I've been in."* (Male, adult nursing, yr 2)

*"It really is the practice, getting up there and doing it. Until you get up there and do it regularly every single day, you know, do it every single day for ten weeks, that is it, it really is that that does it."* (Male, 35-39, BA QTS, secondary, Design & Technology (D&T))<sup>9</sup>

*"There's [sic] so many forms. At the beginning I was handed so many forms and it just threw me into a panic. I've done them all and I've got folders full of them but they don't go anywhere."* (Female, 25-29, PGCE, primary)<sup>10</sup>

*"I'd say it's difficult...to see each other outside of lectures sometimes...I did feel that I was becoming somewhat isolated from the group [on placement] because there wasn't much laid on in terms of bringing up back together socially, was there?"*

(Social work student)

**What could you do?** Supporting students during their placement is key. There are many different way of doing this. Contact other unions and find out what support systems are in place for their placement students.

Some common practices are:

- Reimbursing travel costs
- Giving students with caring responsibilities priority when matching students to placements
- Providing childcare bursaries
- Arranging a pre-placement meeting between student and mentor
- Buddy/peer support systems

In 2008 the Quality Assurance Agency published "Outcomes from institutional audit: Work-based and placement learning, and employability" which provides a selection of best practice and recommendations when it comes to placements, including the recommendation that there is a "need for clear and consistent policies for placement support across all parts of the institution".<sup>11</sup>

If your institution has some good practice make sure you share it.

## 4. Academic experience

As well as the challenges of going on placement, this group of students also needs to succeed academically and they face the same issues as non-vocational students. However, professional placement students are likely to have additional complications and support needs when it comes to issues such as feedback, lecture timetabling, accessing resources and access to advice and support services. In addition, many of these students may have been out of education for a long time and so adjusting to the academic environment and learning how to write and present ideas in an academic way can be an additional challenge.

Institutions need to develop flexible and supportive systems that enable a student to succeed instead of creating more barriers to an already challenging course.

The main issues relating to the academic experience for these students are:

### Organisation

Much the same as for the placement experience, ensuring that the academic aspect of the course is well organised is vital. It is this aspect that many courses score lowly in the National Student Survey. Institutions should consider the needs of students when arranging timetables – whilst there is often no way to please everyone, timetabling lectures to all be on the same day can be incredibly useful to part-time students for example. Last-minute cancellations or reschedulings of lectures are also a particular problem, as many students may have had to arrange childcare or travel, take time off work, or travel a long way to get to the teaching venue.

**What could you do?** Analyse your NSS results for organisation and management on your professional placement courses. Find out who scores the highest and go and speak to them to find out why. Taking a positive, sharing best practice approach can often prove more effective than targeting underperforming departments.

### Assessment and feedback

Some placement students have been out of education for a number of years and in any case the demands of a professional course may be different to educational environments the student has experienced before. Institutions should ensure that relevant and accessible academic support is available. Timing and appropriateness of assessments is also an important aspect to consider, for example setting group work tasks whilst students are on placement can create unnecessary difficulty. Requiring students to come onto campus to receive their marks and written feedback can also be problematic. Creative use of a virtual learning environment is helpful.

**What could you do?** Have a look at NUS' Feedback and Assessment Toolkit (FACT) and see if there are any ideas that you could implement in your institution.  
[www.nusconnect.org.uk/campaigns/highereducation/learning-and-teaching-hub/feedback/campaigntools/](http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/campaigns/highereducation/learning-and-teaching-hub/feedback/campaigntools/)

You might also wish to consult the NUS Charter on Technology in Higher Education and explore how ICT and virtual learning environments can be used to support students who are not frequently on campus.  
<http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/news/article/highereducation/2489/>

### Access to resources

Part-time students, and indeed, full-time students when on placement, are often unable to be on campus during the normal working day. This can create a number of issues when academic assignments are due. Accessing the library, a quiet study space and computer facilities can be a significant challenge, especially as students may have limited or no access to such resources at home. The same is true with regard to access to academic staff. These students often work unusual hours and therefore cannot contact and work with academic staff in a traditional way.



**What could you do?** Encourage your library to purchase more online publications so students can access them without having to be on campus. Talk with the relevant departments about developing a laptop loan scheme so students who do not own computers at home are still able to work.

### Access to study

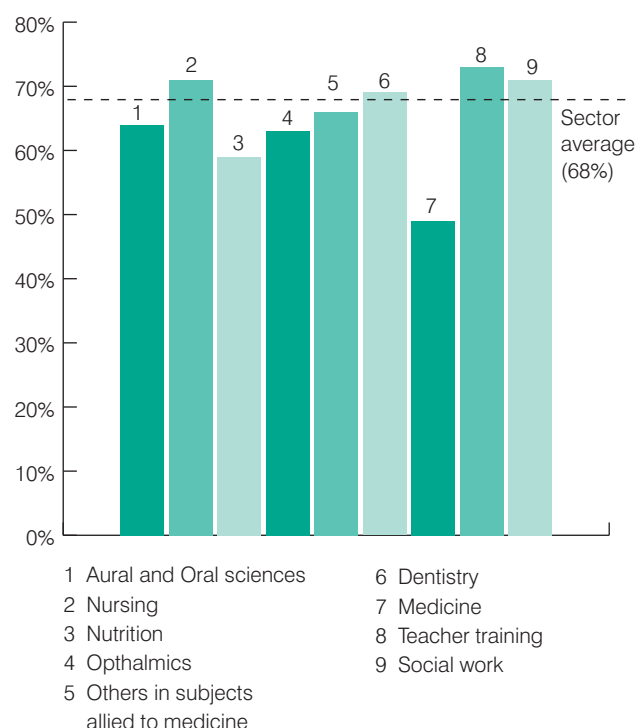
As shown in the demographics in the 'Who they are' section, access to courses for non-traditional students varies widely. It has been highlighted as a particular challenge for medicine and dentistry courses. These courses not only require very high A-level grades, but applicants usually need to show prior work experience and involvement in a range of extra-curricular activity. Also, many medical schools require students to take an extra UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT), which can create additional challenges to students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, where coaching and support for such tests is not as common.

**What could you do?** Use the development of your institution's Access Agreement to open up conversations about what is being done to widen participation in medicine and dentistry specifically. Many schools run various outreach programmes and access courses. Work with your institution to look at how they assess the impact of these programmes and how they can improve them.

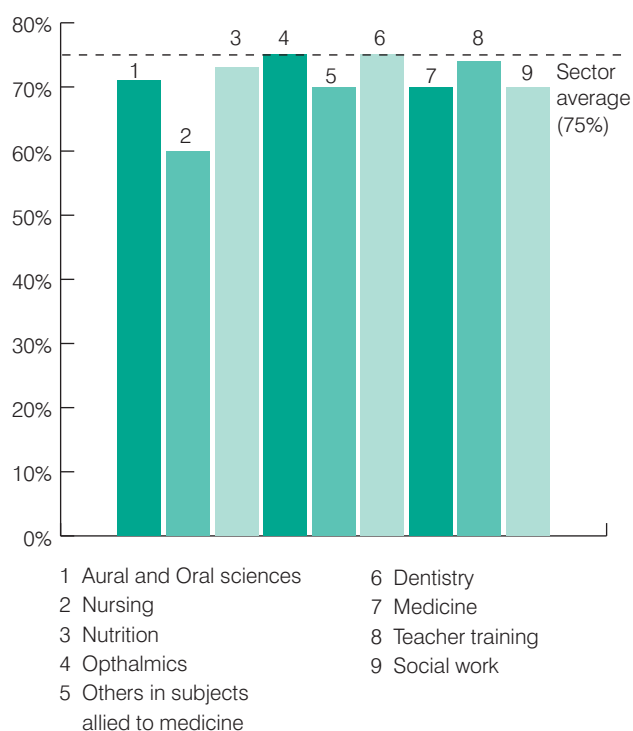
## What does the research tell us?

Overall, placement students were most satisfied with the teaching on their course, with an average of 88 per cent satisfaction across all the placement subjects. This compares with the national average of 84 per cent, with teaching also being the highest rated area of the across all students. The highest scoring question in this category was 'Staff are good at explaining things' while the lowest rated question was 'Staff have made the subject interesting'.

Graph 9: National Student Survey 2011 – Assessment and feedback



Graph 10: National Student Survey 2011 – Organisation and management



The question that received the highest score was 'My communication skills have improved' (94), in Northern Ireland. The lowest score was for 'Feedback on my work has been prompt' (48), in Scotland.

However, it is also positive to note that, on average in all sections, with the exceptions of Assessment and Feedback and Organisation and Management, placement students are more satisfied with their experiences than other, non-vocational students.

Like the rest of their peers, placement students gave assessment and feedback their lowest levels of satisfaction. The national average for assessment and feedback is 68 per cent; the placement student average is 65 per cent. The questions pertaining to feedback were particularly low-rated while the questions on assessment remained higher at 72 per cent for both clarity of the assessment criteria and fairness of assessment arrangements. The lowest scoring question was 'feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand' with just 59 per cent of placement students agreeing. When analysed by nation, NSS scores show that the most satisfied students are in Northern Ireland. The least satisfied students are in Wales and scored lowest in 17 out of the 28 questions.



Table 4: National Student Survey scores by course

National Student Survey 2011	The teaching on my course (%)	Academic support (%)	Learning resources (%)	Personal development (%)	Overall satisfaction (%)
Aural and Oral Sciences	90	77	78	85	85
Nursing	86	77	85	88	83
Nutrition	88	77	77	82	84
Ophthalmics	90	84	83	86	89
Others in subjects allied to medicine	86	76	79	83	82
Dentistry	93	86	91	93	93
Medicine	89	74	90	90	85
Teacher training	84	76	78	82	81
Social work	85	74	74	85	81
<b>Sector average</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>83</b>

Table 5: National Student Survey scores by nation

Institution	The teaching on my course (%)	Assessment and feedback (%)	Academic support (%)	Organisation and management (%)	Learning resources (%)	Personal development (%)	Overall satisfaction (%)
England	88	65	78	69	82	87	85
Scotland	91	63	83	71	88	89	89
Wales	88	59	79	66	79	88	86
Northern Ireland	90	66	82	83	89	90	90
<b>Placement sector average</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Sector wide average</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>83</b>

## What do students say?

*"I have the biggest amount of admiration for people with families... If I had a family, I just know I couldn't do this. Cos the demands of doing 39 hours a week of placement – which is three thirteen hour shifts, and hours travel there and back, and then you've got two days to write your assignment, which is a 3,000 word essay, which you've got to research and write. I struggle."* (Male, adult nursing, yr 2)

*"I had to drop hours at work, to make sure I could fit it all in in time. For me, I was being a parent, and being on placement and then I was studying, and I never had any respite between anything and it's been a full on year that I had one thing after the other."* (Female, social work, yr 3)

*"One girl is really struggling because the other people in her group refuse to meet up. I'm lucky I'm with a group. She was quiet and shy, whereas I got my elbows out straight away and said, right I'm with you and you and you!"* (Female, adult nursing, yr1)

*"Our essay, we've got a choice of infection control, and I can't remember the others but they are all to do with the placement. They are all relevant. It's brilliant this time, because we are going to work in groups, and do a presentation, then all do an individual essay on the presentation."* (Female, adult nursing, yr1)

## 5. Student experience and finance

The broader student experience is often a very different one for professional placement students. They are often required to be at work or study for long hours and are held to high standards of professional conduct, unlike your average non-vocational student. In addition to this, due to the personal situations of professional placement students, they are often prevented from participating in traditional student activities and experiences.

Often the financial arrangements of professional placement students are complex, especially for those who are part-time or have caring responsibilities. Arrangements can often comprise not only of university bursaries and government loans, but also of bursaries from other public bodies, such as the NHS or the Department for Education, tax credits, or social security benefits, such as child benefit or housing benefit. This can mean completing numerous forms and having to provide large quantities of evidence of personal circumstances to different agencies.

As with other students, they may also be eligible for support for additional needs, such as childcare. However, this may not always be appropriate; childcare funding is usually only available for OfSTED – or equivalent national body-registered childcare, which might not be available to a nursing student on night shift at a hospital.

Similarly, although most placement students can access extra funding to cover the costs of their placement – travel and, where necessary, accommodation – this funding is sometimes only paid retrospectively, which can create bureaucracy where they must keep receipts and fill out further forms, or can cause hardship if they need to find this funding upfront, even if it is reclaimed later.

It's also true that not all of the additional costs receive specific funding: the additional costs of the lab coats or

scrubs for medics, dentists and healthcare students, and the highly expensive textbooks for some of these subjects may be difficult for a student to meet.

Hardship in general can be an issue: for example, healthcare bursaries may not cover all the costs for a student, particularly if they have family responsibilities, and for this reason such students tend to apply for support hardship funds like the Access to Learning Fund, in disproportionate numbers.

For graduate-entry medicine and dentistry courses, the first year of study must be self-funded, and so these students may have to find the first year's fees upfront and without access to student loans.

Difficulty with finance can severely restrict a student's ability to participate in the traditional student experience, especially if a student ends up spending most of their spare time trying to find answers to simple questions.

While you do not need to know the minute details of every individual funding arrangement, it is important that students' union officers have a good understanding of the main ways in which students are funded and the issues that this can cause.

The main issues relating to the student experience and finance are:

### Information and advice

Not only do placement students usually have more complex financial arrangements than a traditional student, they are also more likely to have far less time to try and resolve any issues. Often, a student can find themselves being bounced between support services, as there is no central place that can answer all their questions.

**What could you do?** Create some scenarios, perhaps from real advice cases, and try and find out the answers to the questions just through using the union's and institution's websites. If you can't do it, then get together with your institution's support services and see how you can make it better. Many institutions offer financial literacy training through Money Doctors or similar projects. In addition, NUS publishes the Student Support and Benefits Handbook. A free copy is sent to all member unions so you should ensure this is given to your advice centre or wherever else is appropriate.

### Hidden course costs

For many professional courses there may be a number of hidden course costs related to, for example, purchasing specific clothing or equipment, or very expensive textbooks, and these may not be understood by new students, or may present financial barriers for students during the course.

**What could you do?** How much information does your university offer students on the course costs for students on placement courses? Explore how this can be better presented, and how the use of second-hand books and other such initiatives might help remove barriers where they exist. NUS has also produced a hidden course costs toolkit: [www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/come-clean/Hidden-Costs-toolkit/](http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/come-clean/Hidden-Costs-toolkit/)

### Not being on campus

Professional placement students, of course, spend a significant amount of their degrees off campus. This means that they are often unable to be involved in many union and university activities – be that a mature student coffee morning, a child-friendly society activity or a drop-in advice service. This can contribute to students feeling isolated from university and barring them from accessing important support services.

**What could you do?** What activities to you do in your union that can be shared online? Voting? Student Council? Gigs? Plays? Advice? If you can create a space online that replicates what you do on campus then you are a few steps closer to getting to know these students.

### Balancing commitments

Many placement students are likely to have lives outside their degree and therefore may consider their student identity to be one of a number of potentially competing self-identifications. Balancing commitments can be a significant challenge for these students, especially as the courses that they are on are highly demanding. With already full and busy lives, these students often do not feel any need to engage with their degree or the union anymore than is necessary.

**What could you do?** Alleviate the pressure. Anything that the union or the university can do to reduce barriers should be done. Many institutions have nurseries for staff, so why not see if some places can be reserved for students whilst they are on placement? Also, instead of worrying about why these students never come to your union club night, find out what it is they are passionate about and help them out with it. If they are part of the local choir, why not offer a room in the union for them? If the thing they care most about is their course and making it excellent, then help them become course reps.

## Case Studies – what can go wrong?

These are real cases that students' union advice centres have dealt with over the past year. While all focus on the placement experience, there are also many other factors from the wider student experience that contribute to the issues.

1. A social work student was given a placement which was too far away from her home to be manageable. She had told the school of family problems/responsibilities before the placement began but this placement was still given. The student also had difficulties with the mentor on placement and the placement was ended early, meaning another placement had to be found and re-started. This added extra time to the student's period of study and indirectly increased financial costs.
2. A teaching student was given a placement with a mentor who was part-time. The student felt the mentor wasn't as available as she ought to be due to her part-time working. The student advised the institution of her problems and believed the institution had promised to move her after a set period if things did not improve, but the promise wasn't kept.

A meeting between the student, mentor and a member of institutional staff took place where the mentor was told what paperwork she needed to complete and what she was required to do as a mentor. The student said this resulted in the placement mentor and other staff being hostile towards her and she took the decision not to return. This left her with the only option of suspension of studies, with a return date of this time next year, meaning her course will be an extra year longer than originally planned.

3. A social work student failed her most recent placement. She felt that she was bullied and harassed during the placement. After reporting this to her university tutor, she was advised to report it to her placement mentor.

Consequently, the student felt isolated from staff and students at her placement and felt that this contributed significantly to her poor performance. She will now have to complete another placement in order to be allowed to progress to the next year, which has put a significant financial burden on her.

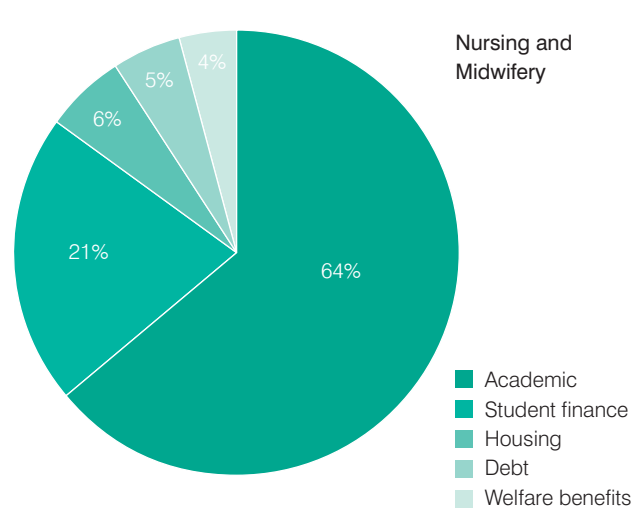
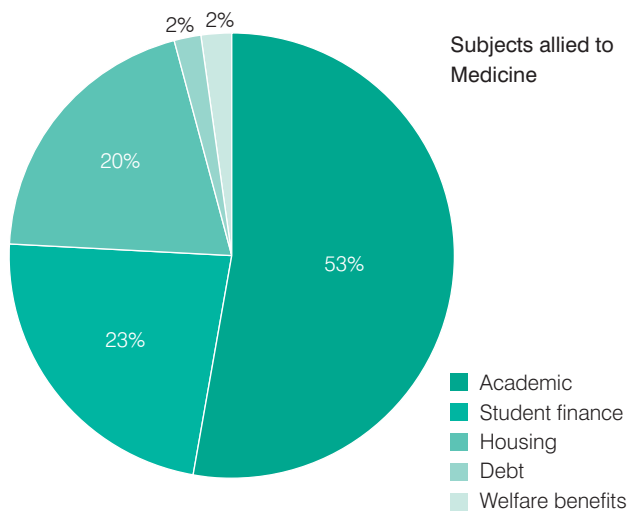
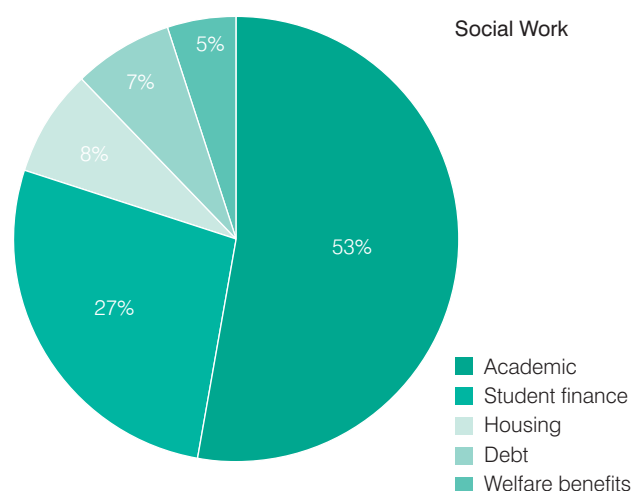
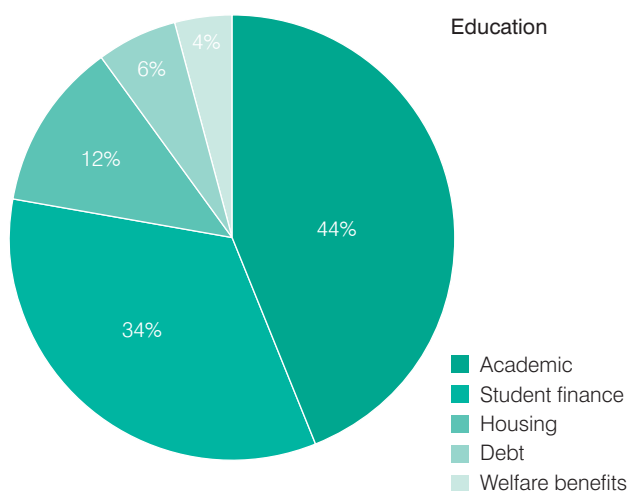
**What could you do?** As well as providing independent advice and representation for each of these students the students' union can use these cases to make changes within the institution. By combining individual stories, like those above, and solid statistics from your advice centre, you can build up a strong evidence base to lobby your institution. Even if your students' union does not have an advice centre, and it is the student officer that gives advice, cases should be recorded and reported, so there can be a body of evidence.

## What does the research tell us?

### National case work statistics:

NUS has been working with unions over the past three years to roll out a national electronic case recording system called AdvicePro. This allows NUS to gather together national statistics about what issues students are coming to advice centres for. Below is data from 2008 until January 2012.

Graphs 11–15: Issues for placement students, Advice Pro



Academic issues are the most common reason for a placement student to come to the union advice centre. Unsurprisingly, this is followed by student finance issues. In fact, issues relating to finance make up three of the five most common issues.

10 per cent of social work students reported themselves as having a disability.<sup>12</sup>

'Personal circumstances' accounted for 27.8 per cent of the overall attrition rate [of student nurses and midwives]. The reasons bundled together under the heading 'Personal circumstances' included emotional problems, family commitments, pregnancy and financial circumstances.<sup>13</sup>

Half of students within the health field have considered leaving their course due to financial difficulties.<sup>14</sup>

18 per cent of student parents have run out of money at certain times of the year.<sup>15</sup>

94.2 per cent of student parents responding to the NUS student parents survey said they would like information about their financial entitlements on their students' union website.<sup>16</sup>

60 per cent of health care professionals surveyed said they have supplemented their income through extra paid employment. Of these, 62 per cent said that this additional employment accounts for more than 11 hours per week, and 92 per cent said that this has had a detrimental affect on the time they can devote to their studies.<sup>17</sup>

77 per cent of students responding to the NUS student parents survey said they were in debt, with 44 per cent saying that this debt was in excess of £5000.<sup>18</sup>

71 per cent of student parents felt that attending university has been a positive experience for their family.<sup>19</sup>

## What do students say?

*"Academic staff need to be aware of additional difficulties faced by students who are not receiving bursaries or who are not seconded; putting in place early possible interventions, such as contact with student welfare services or local money or debt advice agencies, and making sure these are known and available to students."* (Social work student)<sup>20</sup>

*"My husband was laid off and we were unable to make a family claim because I was studying, I was told that I would have to give up to make a claim. Therefore my husband only had the minimum of benefit to replace his income."* (Student survey, 2009)

*"I've found it very hard to find an Ofsted registered child minder for my children. It's so difficult.... honestly it was a nightmare. If they're Ofsted registered then you can get some money back from the NHS bursary, if you manage to fulfil the requirements....I had managed to find one, well she's not, she's a nanny, so I had to pay out of my own pocket, which all adds up....but there are only three apparently in the area... and I'm new to the area, so I'm having to ask people from the church. So it is a struggle."* (Female, adult nursing, 1st year)

*"Last year... it wasn't really a problem...This year I'm finding it a bit more difficult, especially...working in my placement...It almost feels like I'm doing two jobs, and this degree."*<sup>21</sup> (Social work student)

*"(We were told) work placements will be during term times within (the local area). So off I go organising my childcare and...now I'm on my first-year work placement now (during holidays) working nine to five, Monday to Friday, with a half day off."*<sup>22</sup> (Social work student)



## 6. Representation

Placements can provide many opportunities for students but can also be seen as a contentious issue when it comes to representing these students from a students' union perspective. Is it the students' union, the trade union, their employer or the institution that deals with issues? The answer is not always obvious but this section aims to give you the tools to represent placement students to the University and to understand when and why you might not be best placed to represent a placement student.

### Representation from the students' union

Engagement of placement students in students' unions is traditionally low. However, there are lots of union projects across the country that aim to improve this situation. There are a few examples below, and an example SWOT analysis to help unions start thinking about how they could improve their work with placement students. The main points are:

- It takes hard work
- You have to go to the students, don't expect them to come to you
- Make yourself relevant to their lives – why should they engage with you?

This is an example SWOT analysis to help you evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats when it comes to developing how you represent your placement students. It is important to note that the lists are not exhaustive and you may come up with more points specific to your particular institutional context.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A stronger and diverse student voice</li><li>• Improved relationships with institution, trade unions and professional accrediting bodies</li><li>• A wider picture of the student experience at Institution</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Irregular levels of engagement from this type of student</li><li>• Lack of knowledge/expertise in the placement student experience</li><li>• Lack of confidence in what organisation deals with what issue</li></ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased profile of the students' union</li><li>• Improved representation structures</li><li>• Stronger links with non-traditional external bodies</li><li>• Higher levels of engagement from a diverse range of members</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Other representative bodies e.g. trades unions</li><li>• Placement students not recognising the value of their Students' Union</li><li>• Funding to enable effective representation of this group of students</li></ul>



## Case Study: Bucks Students' Union

Over the last 18 months, Bucks Students' Union have put placement students at the heart of their education campaign. They conducted a large piece of research, involving a survey and focus groups, as well as actively visiting students whilst they were on placement. This gave the union a comprehensive understanding of the main issues for placement students, so they can now include them in their campaigns.

### What/who sparked your campaign and what were you trying to achieve?

- To improve engagement from student nurses in representation and activities.
- To find any issues students were having on placements and resolve them.
- To make sure students know they are able to access Union support services while on placement.

### What evidence had you collected and how had you done this?

- Held focus groups before students went out to placement and again when they come back to see the difference between perceptions and actual experience.
- Ran a survey asking how hard-to-reach students (including students on placements) like to be communicated with and what their biggest issues are.

### What resources did you use during the campaign?

- A lot of staff time. A researcher and the student engagement coordinator both worked on the project.

### What activities did you use? How were they received?

- Held a road show of visits to placement partner

hospitals to meet with students on placement and let them know what they can access from the union whilst away from campus.

### Other than students, who helped with the campaign?

- Students' union staff
- University Placement Officer
- Placement partners
- Link lecturers

### How did you evaluate your campaign?

- Number of nursing student representatives
- Number of students involved in SU activities on nursing courses.

## Canterbury Christchurch Students' Union

CCSU are part of NUS' Student Engagement pilot projects and chose to specifically look at how to improve engagement with their PGCE students. They decided to improve their course rep structure in the department by creating 'champions' on PGCE courses who would develop resources to support PGCE students to engage more with representation systems.

### What/who sparked your campaign and what were you trying to achieve?

- Lack of PCGE engagement in the union
- Growing numbers of PGCE students at the university

### What evidence had you collected and how had you done this?

- Demographic data of the student population (30.7 per cent PGCE students)
- Information on who engages in our representation structures

### What resources did you use during the campaign?

- NUS/HEA Student Engagement Toolkit
- University staff support
- Promotional materials
- Training space

### What activities did you use? How were they received?

- Lecture shout outs for promotion
- Training sessions for the reps
- Development of resources for handover of reps
- A virtual forum for PGCE students
- Celebration event at the end of the project

### Other than students, who helped with the campaign?

- University staff
- Union staff

### How did you evaluate your campaign?

- Final reports were submitted by the reps.

CCSU also provided some advice to anybody wanting to work with hard to reach groups:

- Those you think are difficult to engage actually aren't – you just have to find the right tools that work for them.
- Work in collaboration towards a goal with your institution and academic staff – you'll be more likely to achieve it.
- Don't underestimate the power of online social networking in bringing people together.
- Even within a department, programmes are very different and work in very different ways – make sure you consider this when developing new practice.
- Students will lead the way if you ask them to!

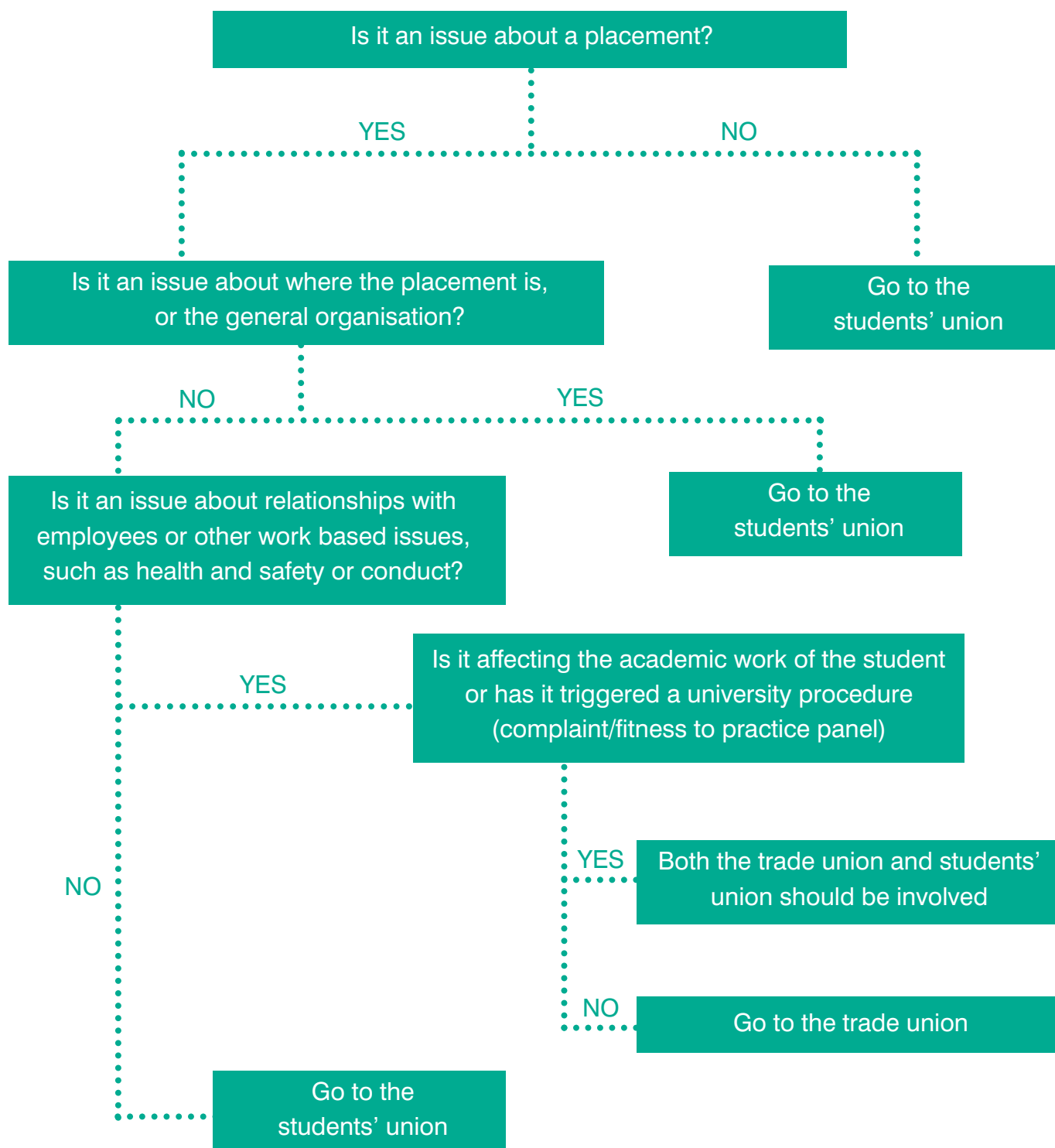
### Representation from a trade union

A trade union can provide representation for placement students for any issue that might arise whilst the student is in the workplace, be this a health and safety concern, or something as serious as a tribunal or disciplinary hearing. Many trades unions will give free or discounted membership to students studying for courses that fit under their remit. This is for three reasons:

1. It can encourage students to join the union as a full member on graduation.
2. Having the student voice as part of their membership makes trades unions stronger.
3. There may be situations where the trade union is the most appropriately placed to represent an individual student.

It is for this final reason that it is important that students' unions develop a good understanding of and relationship with the relevant trades unions for their students. This can begin with, but goes beyond, inviting unions to have a stall at fresher's fair.

Figure 1: Which union should I go to?



# 7. Professional bodies and fitness to practice

There is often more than one trade union for each profession, so it is a good idea to speak with teaching staff within departments and see which one is most common on your campuses. Some of the most common unions are:

## Teachers

[National Union of Teachers \(NUT\)](#)

[www.teachers.org.uk](http://www.teachers.org.uk)

[National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers \(NASUWT\)](#)

[www.nasuwt.org.uk](http://www.nasuwt.org.uk)

[Association of Lecturers and Teachers \(ALT\)](#)

[www.atl.org.uk](http://www.atl.org.uk)

[The Educational Institute of Scotland \(EIS\)](#)

[www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk)

[University College Union \(Further Education teachers\)](#)

[www.ucu.org.uk](http://www.ucu.org.uk)

## Nurses/Midwives

[Royal College of Nursing \(RCN\)](#)

[www.rcn.org.uk](http://www.rcn.org.uk)

[Royal College of Midwives](#)

[www.rcm.org.uk](http://www.rcm.org.uk)

[Unison](#)

[www.unison.org.uk](http://www.unison.org.uk)

## Allied Health Professionals

[Allied Health Professionals Federation](#)

[www.ahpf.org.uk](http://www.ahpf.org.uk)

This is the umbrella body for all the representative bodies for the allied health professions, which include, for example:

[The Society and College of Radiographers](#)

[www.sor.org](http://www.sor.org)

[The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy](#)

[www.csp.org.uk](http://www.csp.org.uk) and

[College of Occupational Therapists](#)

[www.cot.co.uk](http://www.cot.co.uk)

[Unison](#)

[www.unison.org.uk](http://www.unison.org.uk)

## Social Workers

[The Social Workers Union \(a branch of the British Association of Social Workers\)](#)

[www.basw.co.uk/swu](http://www.basw.co.uk/swu)

[Unison](#)

[www.unison.org.uk](http://www.unison.org.uk)

## Medics

[British Medical Association](#)

[www.bma.org.uk](http://www.bma.org.uk)

## Dentists

[British Dental Association](#)

[www.bda.org](http://www.bda.org)

In addition to a trade union, most placement students will be accredited by, and will have to register with, a professional body upon graduation. Often the professional body and trade union are closely linked. Professional bodies will set learning requirements for courses and have codes of practices for professional behavioural standards. If a student/graduate does not meet these requirements, often, the professional body will not allow them to register, and therefore they cannot practice in the UK.

Sometimes, if an institution is concerned that a student has not adhered to a code of practice or the students' personal circumstances change, the university may investigate the students' 'fitness to practice' or their 'fitness to train'.

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This is often a very complex procedure and is stressful for the student as it can result in them being barred from pursuing their desired career.

### Example:

The General Medical Council (the professional body for doctors) outlines these requirements for students:

In order to demonstrate that they are fit to practise, students should:

- a) recognise and work within the limits of their competence and ask for help when necessary
- b) accurately represent their position or abilities
- c) make sure they are supervised appropriately for any clinical task they perform
- d) respect the decisions and rights of patients
- e) be aware that treatment should be based on clinical need and the effectiveness of treatment options, and that decisions should be arrived at through assessment and discussion with the patient
- f) not unfairly discriminate against patients by allowing their personal views to affect adversely their professional relationship or the treatment they provide or arrange (this includes their views about a patient's age, colour, culture, disability, ethnic or national origin, gender, lifestyle, marital or parental status, race, religion or beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, and social or economic status)
- g) behave with courtesy
- h) report any concerns they have about patient safety to the appropriate person.<sup>23</sup>

**What could you do?** There are a number of things at a number of levels that the SU can do to ensure that any fitness to practice process is as smooth and as fair as possible. Below we have listed some of these, but it is not exhaustive.

- **Ensure that there is an advice (and individual representation) service available for students.** This can be within the students' union or outside it, but make sure you know where students can go for individual representation and advice. If the students' union is unable to provide this service, this is perhaps where developing strong links with relevant trades unions can be a significant advantage.
- **Talk to students.** Get feedback from students about how fitness to practice and the professional standards are communicated to them and how they feel about them. Make sure you have a full understanding of this before suggesting changes and developments to your institution, as something that seems wrong to you might be very important to the students that are actually affected by it.
- **Make sure the university's regulations are fair and appropriate.** Most institutions will have specific regulations and procedures regarding fitness to practice. Some times these can be at an institution-wide level, and sometimes it can be at a department level. Making sure these regulations are fair, transparent and easily accessible to students is vital. There is a national jiscmail for students' union advisers, [raws@jisc.ac.uk](mailto:raws@jisc.ac.uk). This is a good place for advisers to compare things like university regulations.

## Who are the professional bodies?

Here is a list of the relevant professional bodies for the courses in this briefing:

### Health Care

#### General Dental Council (GDC)

Dentists, dental therapists, dental hygienists.  
020 7887 3800 | [www.gdc-uk.org](http://www.gdc-uk.org)

#### General Medical Council (GMC)

Doctors  
0845 357 8001 | [www.gmc-uk.org](http://www.gmc-uk.org)

#### General Optical Council (GOC)

Opticians  
020 7580 3898 | [www.optical.org](http://www.optical.org)

#### Health Professions Council (HPC)

Arts therapists, biomedical scientists, chiroprodists, podiatrists, clinical scientists, dieticians, occupational therapists, operating department practitioners, orthoptists, paramedics, physiotherapists, prosthetists and orthotists, radiographers, speech and language therapists  
020 7582 0866 | [www.hpc-uk.org](http://www.hpc-uk.org)

#### Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)

Nurses, midwives and specialist community public health nurses  
020 7333 6622 | [www.nmc-uk.org](http://www.nmc-uk.org)

#### Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence

(CHRE) aims to protect the public, promote best practice and encourage excellence among the nine regulators of healthcare professionals listed above  
[www.chre.org.uk](http://www.chre.org.uk)

### Social Care

#### Care Council for Wales

Social care workers, qualified social workers, and social work students on approved degree courses in Wales  
0845 070 0399 | [www.ccwales.org.uk](http://www.ccwales.org.uk)

#### General Social Care Council (GSCC), as of summer 2012 the GSCC will be replaced by the Health Professions Council (see above)

Social care workers, qualified social workers, and social work students on approved degree courses in England  
020 7397 5100 | [www.gsccl.org.uk](http://www.gsccl.org.uk)

#### Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC)

Social care workers, qualified social workers, and social work students on approved degree courses in Northern Ireland  
02890 417600 | [www.niscc.info](http://www.niscc.info)

#### Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)

Social care workers, qualified social workers, and social work students on approved degree courses in Scotland  
0845 603 0891 | [www.sssc.uk.com](http://www.sssc.uk.com)

### Teaching

#### General Teaching Council for England (GTCE)

The GTCE will be abolished as of 31 March. At the time of writing, there is no decision about what will replace it.  
[www.gtce.org.uk](http://www.gtce.org.uk)

Institute for Learning (for FE teachers)  
[www.ifl.ac.uk](http://www.ifl.ac.uk)

General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI)  
[www.gtcni.org.uk](http://www.gtcni.org.uk)

General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)  
[www.gtcs.org.uk](http://www.gtcs.org.uk)

General Teaching Council for Wales (GTCW)  
[www.gtcw.org.uk](http://www.gtcw.org.uk)

## 8. Next steps

As mentioned in the introduction, this briefing is the start, not the end of our work on placement students. This was a broad briefing, looking to highlight the key aspects of placement students' experiences; however, each course will vary slightly and so NUS will be looking into these areas in more detail in the future.

In the meantime, we need to gather a better understanding of what work is going on in unions and institutions. There are suggestions throughout this briefing about what unions could do, and we would love to hear about it. Please email [higher-education@nus.org.uk](mailto:higher-education@nus.org.uk).

### What could you do? In summary:

- Find out more about your students
- Hold a workshop or forum about communications while on placement
- Shadow a placement coordinator
- Find out what support is available for students on placement at your own and other institutions
- Review your institution's mentor/supervisor appointment, development and complaints policy
- Analyse your NSS results for organisation and management on your professional placement courses
- Have a look at the many resources created by NUS around higher education teaching and learning issues, such as assessment and feedback, course organisation and management, academic support and technology and ICT and work with placement students to see where and how these can be applied
- Work to ensure placement students have IT access when off-campus
- Get placement students, especially medics and dentists, into your institution's access agreement
- Imagine you are a placement student, and see whether your likely questions could easily be answered via your or your institution's website

- Hidden costs!
- Create a space online that replicates elements of what the students' union does on campus
- Instead of worrying about why placement students never come to your union club night, find out what it is they are passionate about and help them out with it
- Combine NSS stats, advice stats and individual case stories to make the case for the changes your students want to see
- Ensure that there is an advice (and individual representation) service available for students who are undergoing fitness to practice review
- Get feedback from students about how fitness to practice and the professional standards are communicated to them and how they feel about them
- Make sure the university's regulations on fitness to practice are fair and appropriate

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In addition, NUS is currently offering half- or full-day policy facilitation sessions with a Consultant in the higher education team. You can use the day to analyse available evidence, both national and local, work with your team (officers and/or staff) to identify the key issues affecting students at your institution. They can provide training to support officers and reps to deliver change and help develop campaign plans to win real improvements in students' learning experiences.

For 2012–2013, the HE Consultants will be offering, in addition to the above, the chance for 20 unions to receive 3 days of bespoke support. These 3 days will focus on a specific area identified by the union as being relevant, important and in need of external facilitation and will take the form of an information-gathering session, a full diagnostic of the higher education issue with a report and recommended next steps session concluding the process. Places will be limited to 20 unions and will be considered on an application basis over the summer.

Due to the separate legislation and subsequent policy differences, the half- and full-day policy facilitation sessions are currently only available to unions at English higher education institutions through the Consultants. Support can be found from the individual NUS Nations or the Higher Education Unit on education issues and you should contact the appropriate staff member for more information.

If you would like further information, please contact **Kathryn Sullivan, Senior Higher Education Consultant**, who will be happy to send you more details or discuss this process with you and your specific needs in mind: [kathryn.sullivan@nus.org.uk](mailto:kathryn.sullivan@nus.org.uk)



## 9. Bibliography and recommended reading

*Nursing our Future: An RCN study into the challenges facing today's nursing students in the UK:*

[http://www.rcn.org.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/197756/003306.pdf](http://www.rcn.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/197756/003306.pdf)

*QAA Outcomes from institutional audit: Work-based and placement learning, and employability:*

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Partners/Employers/Documents/PlacementLearning.pdf>

*Medical students: Professional values and fitness to practice Education: Guidance from the GMC and the MSC:*

[www.gmcuk.org/education/.../professional\\_behaviour.asp](http://www.gmcuk.org/education/.../professional_behaviour.asp)

*Diversity and Progression in Social Work Education in England:*

[http://www.gsc.org.uk/cmsFiles/Publications/GSCC\\_Diversity\\_Progression\\_Report\\_Apr\\_08.pdf](http://www.gsc.org.uk/cmsFiles/Publications/GSCC_Diversity_Progression_Report_Apr_08.pdf)

*Variations in Progression of Social Work Students in England:*

[http://www.gsc.org.uk/cmsFiles/Publications/GSCC\\_Variations\\_In\\_The\\_Progression\\_Of\\_SW\\_Progression\\_Analysis\\_09.pdf](http://www.gsc.org.uk/cmsFiles/Publications/GSCC_Variations_In_The_Progression_Of_SW_Progression_Analysis_09.pdf)

*Crying Out for Help: Student Financial Survey – Unison Health Care in partnership with NUS (2009)*

<http://www.unison.org.uk/file/student%20survey%20report%202009%20December%20unison.pdf>

*Meet the Parents: National Union of Students (2010)*

[http://www.nus.org.uk/Global/NUS\\_SP\\_report\\_web.pdf](http://www.nus.org.uk/Global/NUS_SP_report_web.pdf)

*Part Time Students Briefing: National Union of Students*

<http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resourcehandler/909f64b4-9c09-4751-849c-aefb8d7171c1/>

*Managing Attrition Rates for Student Nurses and Midwives: A Guide to Good Practice for Strategic Health Authorities and Higher Education Institutions:*

[http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_073230](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_073230)

*BMA Medical Students' Finance Survey*

[http://www.bma.org.uk/careers/medical\\_education/student\\_finance/mscfinesurvey.jsp](http://www.bma.org.uk/careers/medical_education/student_finance/mscfinesurvey.jsp)

*BDA Student debt*

[surveyhttp://www.bda.org/dentists/policy-campaigns/research/workforce-finance/students-young/student-debt-survey.aspx](http://www.bda.org/dentists/policy-campaigns/research/workforce-finance/students-young/student-debt-survey.aspx)

*Becoming a Teacher: Student Teachers' Experiences of Initial Teacher Training in England:*

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/RR744.pdf>

*Student Engagement in Practice Report: National Union of Students*

<http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/highereducation/Student-Engagement-in-Practice/>

**Teaching Development Agency**

[www.tda.gov.uk](http://www.tda.gov.uk)

**UCAS**

[www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk)

**Higher Education Statistics Agency**

[www.hesa.ac.uk](http://www.hesa.ac.uk)

# Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> HESA 2009/10
- <sup>2</sup> <http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/highereducation/Part-time-students-briefing/>
- <sup>3</sup> We would like to thank the TDA for sharing this data with us, as it is not available on their website.
- <sup>4</sup> *Nursing our future: An RCN study into the challenges facing today's nursing students in the UK*
- <sup>5</sup> *Variations in Progression of Social Work Students in England, 2009*
- <sup>6</sup> *Becoming a Teacher: Student Teachers' Experiences of Initial Teacher Training in England*
- <sup>7</sup> *Becoming a Teacher: Student Teachers' Experiences of Initial Teacher Training in England*
- <sup>8</sup> *Becoming a Teacher: Student Teachers' Experiences of Initial Teacher Training in England*
- <sup>9</sup> *Becoming a Teacher: Student Teachers' Experiences of Initial Teacher Training in England*
- <sup>10</sup> *Becoming a Teacher: Student Teachers' Experiences of Initial Teacher Training in England*
- <sup>11</sup> *Diversity and Progression in Social Work Education in England*
- <sup>12</sup> *Variations in Progression of Social Work Students in England*
- <sup>13</sup> *Managing Attrition Rates for Student Nurses and Midwives: A Guide to Good Practice for Strategic Health Authorities and Higher Education Institutions*
- <sup>14</sup> "Crying Out for Help" 2009 Student Financial Survey – Unison Health Care in partnership with NUS
- <sup>15</sup> NUS Student Parents survey, 2009
- <sup>16</sup> NUS Student Parents survey, 2009
- <sup>17</sup> "Crying Out for Help" 2009 Student Financial Survey – Unison Health Care in partnership with NUS
- <sup>18</sup> "Crying Out for Help" 2009 Student Financial Survey – Unison Health Care in partnership with NUS
- <sup>19</sup> NUS Student Parents survey, 2009
- <sup>20</sup> *Variations in Progression of Social Work Students in England*
- <sup>21</sup> *Diversity and Progression in Social Work Education in England*
- <sup>22</sup> *Diversity and Progression in Social Work Education in England*
- <sup>23</sup> *Medical students: professional values and fitness to practise Education: Guidance from the GMC and the MSC, p.8*



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