

Medical student survey

BMA



28 July, 2022

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Respondents

We received **1,119** qualified responses, with 874 completing the survey to the end (78.1% completion rate).

We had responses from every medical school in the UK. Most respondents are currently studying in England (**756, 70.1%**), with **15.0% (162)** studying in Scotland, **10.4% (112)** in Wales and **4.5% (48)** studying in Northern Ireland.

1,059 respondents provided information on their funding status, 5.9% (63) of respondents reported that they were an international student, with 72.4% domiciled in England (767), 9.1% domiciled in Scotland (96), 6.3% in Wales (67), 4.3% in Northern Ireland (46) and 1.9% (20) EU/EEA students treated as 'home' students .

Caveats

Respondents to this survey were self-selecting and it was open to anyone who met the criteria rather than a specific representative sample or a random sampling and is best described as an opportunity sample.

2018 HESA data suggests that students studying in Wales are slightly overrepresented in our survey respondents while those studying in England are underrepresented. We do need to be cautious here though as new medical schools have opened during this period.

The 2018 HESA data also suggests that white respondents are significantly overrepresented in the sample while Asian/Asian British are underrepresented, and that women are slightly overrepresented.

Student finances

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Student finance

- Most of the respondent's report using a maintenance loan (**75.7%, 765**) and/or tuition fee (**75.5%, 763**) loan to fund costs associated with university.
- **57.4% (580)** reported they received help from their parents. However respondents domiciled in the UK/home students who reported they received free school meals at some point during their education are less likely to report help from parents (**32.6%, 45**) compared to **61.4% (459)** of respondents who didn't receive free school meals.
- Respondents domiciled in the UK/home students report a mean average of **£50,258** and a median average of **£50,000**, and for those studying towards their first degree it was **£44,021** (mean) and **£37,175** (median) .

Domiciled country	Mean	Median	N
England	£54,342	£54,151	577
Wales	£51,248	£53,210	53
Scotland	£24,059	£20,000	63

We asked respondents domiciled in the UK studying in England, Wales and Northern Ireland about if they were qualified for a NHS bursary in this academic year, and if they did what proportion of their living costs were covered by the bursary

- **39.5% (306)** of them reported they did qualify for the NHS bursary.
- Respondents reported that the bursary covers less than a third of their living costs, with a mean average of **32.1%** and a median average of **30% (301)**.

Government policy changes

We asked all respondents domiciled in the UK about the impact of future changes in repayment of student finance.

From 2023, students who take out loans from the Student loan company (SLC)/Student Finance Wales/ Student FinanceNI/SAAS will have to pay back loans over 40 years instead of 30 years, and start repaying loans once they earn £25K instead of £27K, if you were subject to these changes would they have impacted your choice to study medicine?

- Nearly **60% (59.7%, 540)** of them said it would have no impact.
- Respondents in receipt of free school meals were more likely to say these changes would have discouraged them from studying medicine (**37.1%, 49**) compared to **24.3% (174)** of those not in receipt

Return of service bursary

We asked respondents studying in Scotland about the potential for more bursaries in return for service committee;

- Overwhelmingly respondents want to see more of these (**87.7%, 128** saying yes, they want to see more of these)
- Nearly all respondents said that it would either significantly or slightly improve their financial situation (**90.6%, 116**)

Hardship funding

We asked all respondents about their experience of applying for hardship/discretionary funding:

- Around 1 in 7 respondents reported that they had applied for hardship funding **(13.7%, 131)**
- Just over 50% of these said **(51.5%, 67)** they received the full amount they requested, while a further **18.5% (24)** said they received part of the amount the requested.
- Respondents in receipt of free school meals were more likely to report they had applied for hardship/discretionary funding **(29.5%, 34)** compared to those not in receipt **(10.7%, 76)**.

Working alongside studying

- More than three quarters of respondents reported working either during in term time and/or during the holidays (**75.7%, 720**).
- **53.6% (510)** of respondents reported they worked during term time, and **57.7% (549)** reporting they worked during the holidays.
- We asked respondents who said they had either worked during term-time or during the holidays the impact of working during that time, and of those that work in term time, **73.1% (373)** reported it has a negative or very negative impact.

Working/volunteering in the NHS

We asked all respondents apart from respondents in their first year about working/volunteering in the NHS.

- Nearly half of respondents said they had worked in a paid position in the NHS **(45.2%, 325)**, and further **11.7% (84)** respondents saying they'd worked a volunteer or 'other', we then ask these respondents what the impact was on their medical education.
- Nearly three times as many respondents reported that it a positive experience working or volunteering the NHS compared to those that reported it was a negative experience **(48.3%, 197 compared to 17.4%, 71)**.

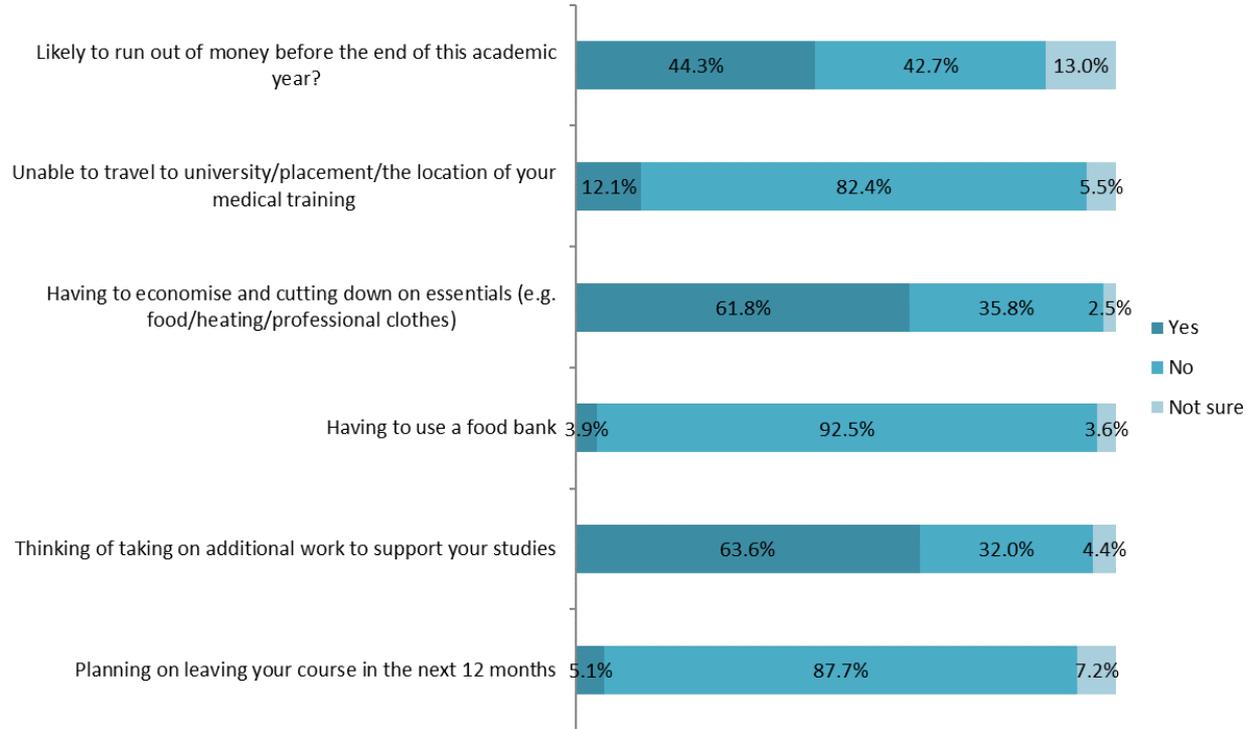
Travel costs

We asked all respondents about if their travel costs to placement were reimbursed;

- Nearly **60% (57.9%, 545)** of respondents that their university did reimburse at least some of their travel costs, while **28.5% (268)** reported that their university did not.

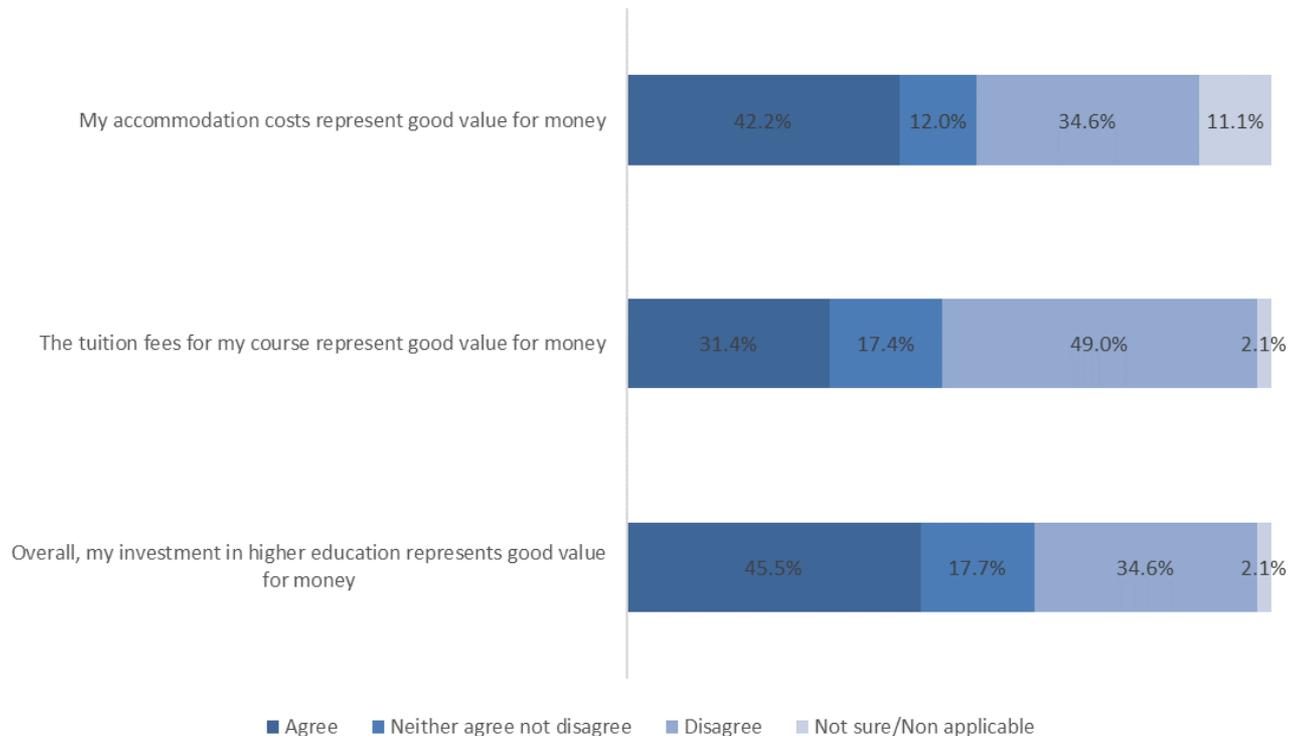
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes - my university fully covers my travel costs and generally reimburses them in a timely manner	9.78%	92
Yes - my university fully covers my travel costs, but generally reimburses them slowly or in a delayed manner	11.16%	105
Yes - but my university only partially reimburses my travel costs, but does generally reimburses them in a timely manner	14.35%	135
Yes - but my university only partially reimburses my travel costs and generally reimburses them slowly or in a delayed manner	22.64%	213
No	28.48%	268
Not sure	5.74%	54
I have not had any placements yet this year.	7.86%	74
TOTAL		941

Based on your current financial situation are you..?



Value for money

We asked all respondents do you agree or disagree with the following statements, with the exception of 'the tuition fees for my course represent good value for money', which was not asked to respondents domiciled in Scotland and also studying in Scotland.



Impact of COVID

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The impact of the pandemic

- **70.1% (662)** of respondents reported that the pandemic impacted their mental health either negatively or very negatively.
- Just under half said the same for the impact on their physical health (**48.6%, 454**)
- We asked all respondents apart from first years, how they felt the pandemic had impacted their medical education, and more than 9 out of 10 reported it has impacted it negatively or very negatively (**90.5%, 639**)

Catching up after COVID

We asked everyone apart from first year students if there was anything they needed to catch up on, just over **85% (601)** of respondents reported there are things they need to catch up on.

Areas identified:

- Clinical skills
- Lack of placements or missed placements
- Patient interactions
- Socialising

Remote learning

- Nearly **90% (87.9%, 810)** said they received at least some teaching remotely with half of respondents saying they had all or most of their teaching remotely (**50.0%, 461**)
- Just under half of respondents said they had the right balance (**47.7%, 440**), however nearly **40% (39.8%, 367)** said they wanted more in person teaching.
- The results suggest that the less remote teaching respondents had received the more satisfied they were with the balance between remote and in-person teaching.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I am happy with the amount of remote teaching; it is the right balance between remote and in-person teaching	47.72%	440
No, I am unhappy, and I would like the more of our teaching done remotely	7.16%	66
No, I am unhappy, and I would like more of our teaching done in-person	39.80%	367
Not sure	5.31%	49
TOTAL		922

Reasonable adjustments

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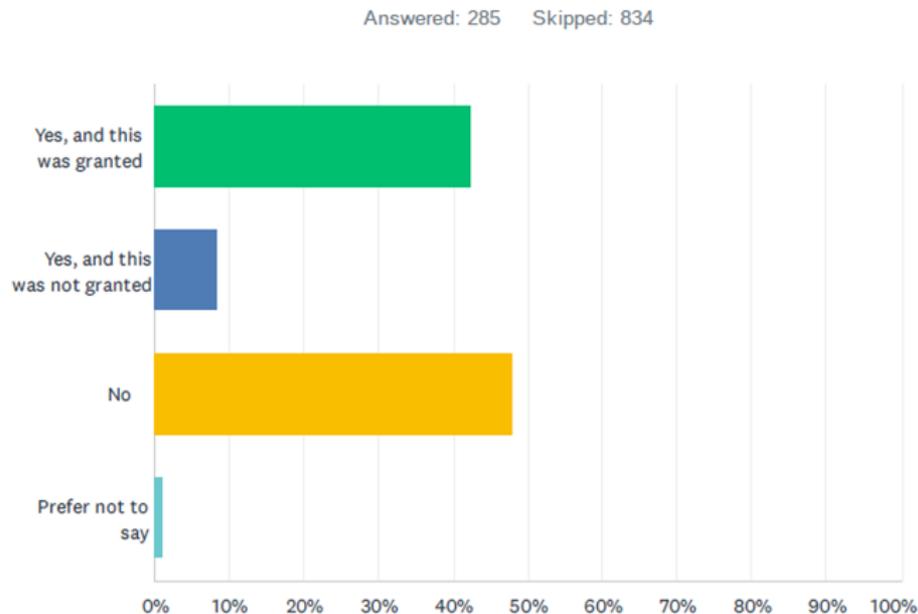


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Requesting reasonable adjustments

- We asked the **30% (29.5%, 314)** of respondents who said they had a long term physical or health condition about their experience of reasonable adjustments.
- Just over half had made a reasonable adjustment request (**50.1%, 145**).
- Looking at just those respondents who had requested a reasonable adjustment, the vast majority were granted (**83.4%, 121**).



Support services

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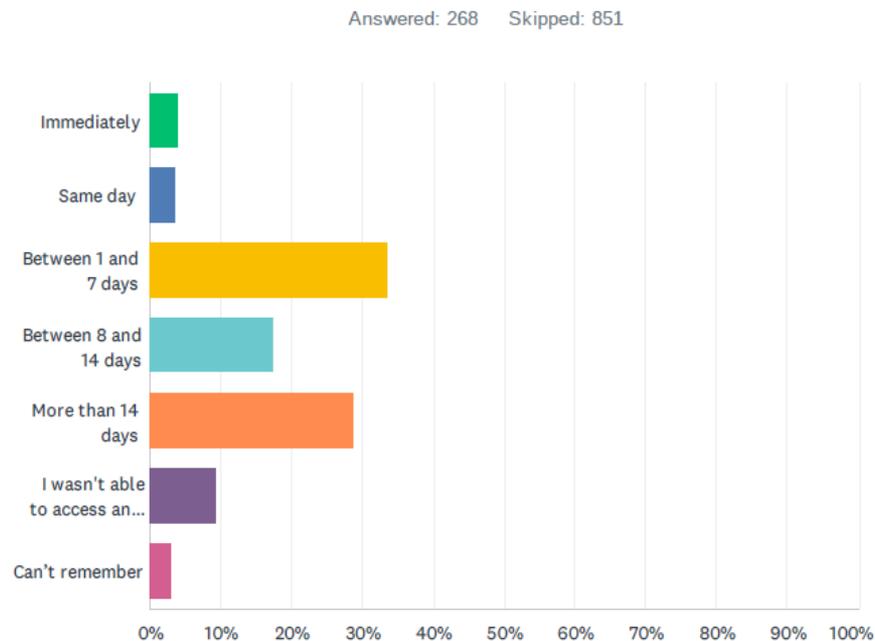
Mental health support services

- Less than **1 in 5** respondents said they didn't know how to access mental health support services **(19.0%, 171)**
- Respondents were much more confident in how to access services on campus **(79.5%, 717)** compared to while on placement **(19.2%, 173)**
- We asked respondents about what services were available at their university:

	BOTH ON CAMPUS & ON PLACEMENT	ONLY ON PLACEMENT	ONLY ON CAMPUS	NEITHER ON CAMPUS NOR ON PLACEMENT	TOTAL
Telephone counselling	35.33% 266	1.20% 9	49.80% 375	13.68% 103	753
In person counselling	21.30% 164	1.04% 8	64.29% 495	13.38% 103	770
Helpline	45.17% 337	0.94% 7	38.20% 285	15.68% 117	746
Website	54.00% 405	0.40% 3	34.93% 262	10.67% 80	750

Accessing mental health services

- Nearly a third of respondents (**29.7%, 269**) reported having tried to access mental health support services on placement (**8.5%, 77**) and (or either) on campus (**25.2%, 228**)
- **57.6% (155)** reported they had been able to access the services they needed
- The graph shows how long respondents had to wait, with nearly **30% (28.7%, 77)** saying they had to wait more than 14 days.
- We asked non-first year respondents if they had had to wait longer, and of those that has accessed services before, **54.2%, 71**) reported they had.



Bullying, harassment, or victimisation

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Bullying, harassment, or victimisation

Experiencing

- We asked respondents if they had experienced bullying, harassment, or victimisation while on placement and/or at university and **19.1% (172)** said they had. **7.6% (68)** said this happened while at university and **14.2% (128)** said this happened while on placement.
- Asking about the latest incident less than 30% (**27.2%, 47**) of respondents said they thought the incident has been reported.
- We asked respondents what characteristics they thought the bullying, harassment or victimisation might be linked to (they were able to select more than one answer). **38.4% (66)** reported they thought it was linked to their sex, **27.9% (48)** their ethnic/racial background and **25.6% (44)** to their grade.

Bullying, harassment, or victimisation

Witnessing

- We also asked respondents if they had witnessed bullying, harassment, or victimisation while on placement and/or at university, and **26.8% (241)** of them reported they had. **10.9% (98)** said this happened while at university and **21.2% (190)** said it occurred while on placement.
- Asking about the latest incident less that **40.2% (96)** of respondents said they thought the incident has been reported.
- We asked respondents what characteristics they thought the bullying, harassment or victimisation might be linked to. **44.9% (109)** reported they thought it was linked to the ethnic/racial background, **36.2% (88)** linked to the sex of the victim, **29.6% (72)** to grade and **22.6% (55)** to the victim's accent or not speaking English as a first language.

Awareness & training

We asked respondents about their understanding of the terms microaggression & unconscious bias:

- **85.1% (759)** have heard of and understand what microaggressions means
- **94.9% (844)** have heard of and understand what unconscious bias means

We also asked respondents if they had received active bystander training:

- Just over half reported they had (**50.8%, 454**).

Extracurricular activities

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Understanding access to extracurricular opportunities

We asked respondents if they had undertaken or were planning to undertake the following activities

	YES - I'VE ALREADY DONE THIS OR AM WORKING ON THIS	YES - I AM PLANNING TO DO THIS IN THIS ACADEMIC YEAR	NO - I HAVE NO PLANS TO DO THIS IN THIS ACADEMIC YEAR	TOTAL
Publish/co-publish an academic research paper in a peer reviewed journal	16.49% 144	15.12% 132	68.38% 597	873
Oral or poster presentation at a national/ international conference	15.81% 138	10.65% 93	73.54% 642	873
Being mentored yourself (mentee)	29.87% 259	6.57% 57	63.55% 551	867
Mentoring someone else (mentor)	27.87% 243	8.94% 78	63.19% 551	872
Taster days in research	5.53% 48	7.03% 61	87.44% 759	868
Studentships	5.65% 49	5.07% 44	89.29% 775	868
Additional courses or accreditations	13.89% 121	11.25% 98	74.86% 652	871
Other student leadership roles and opportunities (i.e. BMA representative role or equivalent)	18.44% 161	8.02% 70	73.54% 642	873

Barriers to extracurricular activities

We wanted to understand what barriers there might be to doing certain extracurricular activities

	I WASN'T AWARE THIS WAS AN OPTION	I DON'T KNOW WHO TO ASK, OR HOW TO GET STARTED DOING THIS	I DON'T HAVE TIME TO DO THIS	I DON'T HAVE THE MONEY TO DO THIS/THERE WAS NO FUNDING AVAILABLE	I AM NOT INTERESTED IN DOING THIS	TOTAL
Publish/co-publish an academic research paper in a peer reviewed journal	7.22% 42	45.70% 266	28.18% 164	4.81% 28	14.09% 82	582
Oral or poster presentation at a national/international conference	7.83% 49	43.13% 270	27.96% 175	4.63% 29	16.45% 103	626
Being mentored yourself (mentee)	26.90% 145	32.84% 177	13.91% 75	2.23% 12	24.12% 130	539
Mentoring someone else (mentor)	16.91% 91	24.72% 133	38.48% 207	1.86% 10	18.03% 97	538
Taster days in research	30.42% 226	18.98% 141	17.63% 131	4.31% 32	28.67% 213	743
Studentships	44.89% 338	17.93% 135	16.20% 122	5.31% 40	15.67% 118	753
Additional courses or accreditations	20.31% 129	19.21% 122	31.02% 197	18.11% 115	11.34% 72	635
Other student leadership roles and opportunities (i.e. BMA representative role or equivalent)	7.35% 46	21.25% 133	39.14% 245	3.35% 21	28.91% 181	626

Speciality

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What speciality to pursue

- We asked all final year students, and **88.3% (166)** said they had thought about it.
- Of these we asked what speciality they were considering (general practice & Obstetrics and gynaecology were the most popular but response numbers were spread very thinly across the range of options).
- We then asked what factors has affected their decision, and over **80% (83.0%, 137)** selected experience on a clinical placement

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Experience on a clinical placement	83.03%	137
Workload/working hours	78.79%	130
Culture of the speciality	71.52%	118
Morale of doctors in the speciality	65.45%	108
Flexibility in taking time out or part time working	59.39%	98
Length of training	52.73%	87
Academic interests	51.52%	85
Teaching by a senior NHS doctor in the speciality	43.03%	71
Salary	42.42%	70
Teaching by someone like me in the speciality	40.61%	67
Diversity of doctors and trainees within the speciality	35.76%	59
Competences	31.52%	52
Teaching by a medical academic in the speciality	26.06%	43
Costs associated with speciality (i.e. membership or exams)	21.82%	36
Concerns around potential discrimination relating to specific specialties	15.76%	26
Student debt	13.94%	23
Prestige	13.33%	22
Other (please specify)	Responses 7.88%	13
None of the above	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 165		

Living our values

Our behaviour principles:

