

# EXAM ANXIETIES

## Scenario:

You're a Phase 2B prepping for your OSCE and the idea of a practical exam is terrifying you. You've always been a bit of a worrier and hated exam time. Everyone is stressed so you've been dismissing your worries as normal but it's becoming unmanageable.

You haven't had a full night's sleep in weeks and you're finding you can't revise properly because you're so worried about the exam. On one hand, you don't want to admit how stressed out you are because you think you should be able to cope better and just want to get over to the other side; on the other hand, you think you're so stressed that you will likely fail and aren't sure how much longer you can cope.



## Solution:

Whilst it is true that many students will be feeling some element of "stress" as assessments approach, the impact that you feel that this is having on your preparation and revision would suggest that it would be a good idea to let someone know.

You can contact your Phase team who will be able to talk through your concerns with you and may be able

to offer some advice about strategies for OSCE preparation. If there are other contributing factors you may wish to consider whether you meet the criteria for submitting extenuating circumstances.

You can find more information about this process on your Phase Minerva page, under assessment related information.

# ILLNESS ABSENCE

## Scenario:

You caught glandular fever in the first term of phase 1, were hospitalised and missed 3 weeks of university. You received a sick note from your doctor to confirm the absence but are very worried you've missed too much content to catch up.

You are unsure if you will have to resit the year because of your attendance and don't know how to go about catching up with the content you missed. Although you are better now and really want to carry on with the year, you feel very stressed and unsure what to do or who can help.



## Solution:

You should arrange a meeting with your Phase Director who can discuss your circumstances with you. Every effort will be made to ensure that you can catch up what you have missed, and therefore to avoid any need for a formal period of leave from the course. In many instances students will continue with their studies and progress well.

There are exceptional cases when students have missed too much time and/or are too ill to continue at that time but these are unusual and every effort will be made to support a student to progress through the course.

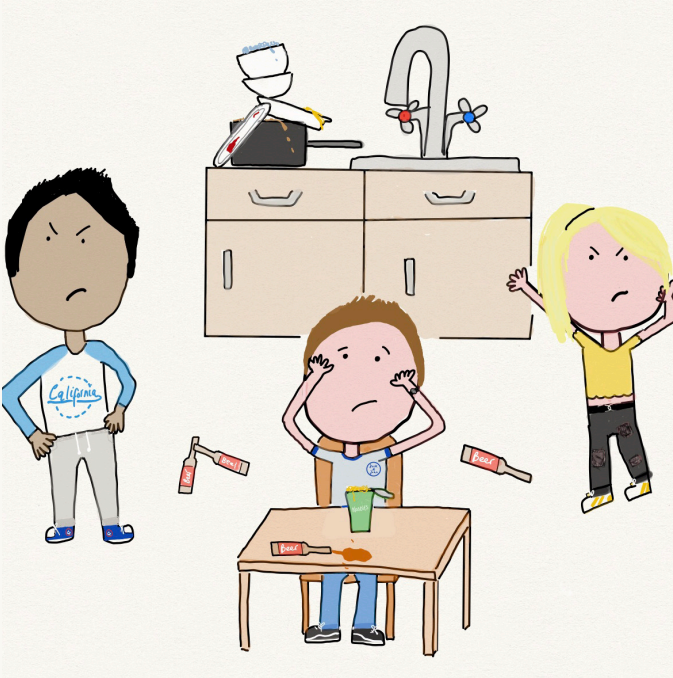
# FLATMATE FALL OUT

## Scenario:

You have lived with your 5 flatmates since first year and up until this point it has worked well, with any disagreements resolved easily.

However, recently there has been a major breakdown in the relationship between two of your flatmates. They are no longer able to be in the same room as one another, let alone hold a conversation and your other two flatmates have left you to be the mediator in what is rapidly becoming a toxic situation.

With exams in the next month you want the situation resolved however despite your best efforts, it appears it is unresolvable.



## Solution:

It is important that you have a safe space for relaxation and study and although admirable that you have tried to help resolve the situation, it is not for you to bear the brunt of the disagreement.

Explain to both of your housemates the negative impact that their behaviour is having on you. You may need to do this with them separately

and then repeat it when both of them are there at the same time. If the situation continues and you need advice, contact the Central Welfare and Guidance Team who can offer advice about difficult relationships in a shared house setting.

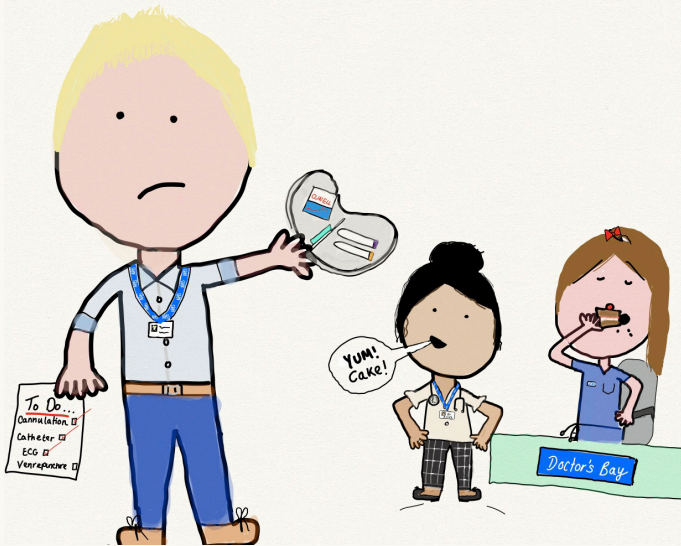
[www.sheffield.ac.uk/sss/ssg/cwag](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/sss/ssg/cwag)

# CLINICAL SKILL SIGN-OFFS

## Scenario:

You are on your final rotation of Phase 3B and have been trying to balance revision with placement commitments.

You are concerned that despite your best efforts, you are not being given the time or opportunity by your consultant to complete your clinical skills log book. You speak to a colleague on the same placement and they have had no such issue, with their consultant helping them to get skills signed off and make time for revision while on placement. You raise your concerns with your consultant however they are dismissive and accuse you of not making enough effort to complete your log book.



## Solution:

Try to speak with your supervisor again to try and understand why they do not feel you are making sufficient effort to complete the logbook, and ask what you can do to rectify this.

There may be other opportunities across the hospital or site that you are working in which you can explore ie. on another ward.

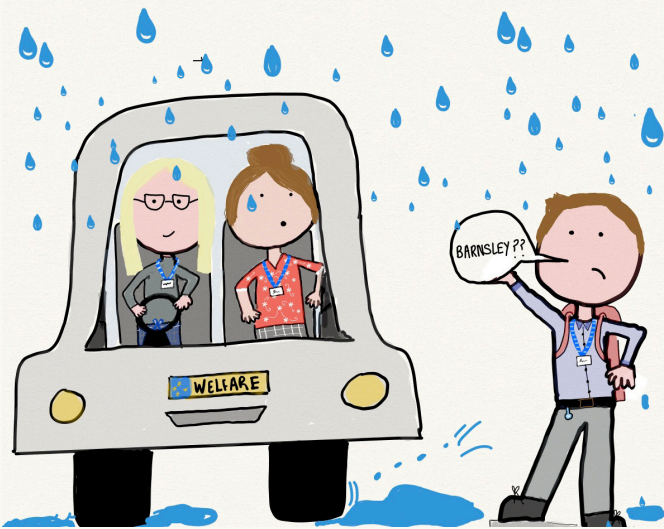
If you continue to have difficulties in sourcing such opportunities, you should get in touch with the clinical skills centre to discuss your concerns, or you could discuss with the placement Director of Teaching for help and advice.

# TRAVEL DISPUTE

## Scenario:

You are on a surgical placement in Doncaster and are getting a lift in for 8am with another student as you do not have a car of your own and public transport would not get you in on time. You get talking to a friend on placement who says their lift is asking them for less than half what you are currently contributing towards petrol.

You raise this with the student giving you a lift and tell them how you are struggling to afford this even with the travel allowance. However, they get aggressive and tell you to go with someone else if it is too expensive. You have to get in somehow and so you ask around but everybody else either doesn't have space or start at 9am each day.



## Solution:

Speak with the student who is currently giving you a lift again in a calm manner and explain that you value their help with transport but that is not sustainable for a long period of time.

Should travel difficulties be causing financial hardship, the university may be able to provide assistance. Please contact the student affairs and support team who will be able to advise further at:

[medical\\_student\\_affairs@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:medical_student_affairs@sheffield.ac.uk)

# CONCERNED ABOUT A COLLEAGUE

## Scenario:

You're halfway through LICP with a girl in your year that you don't know too well. You've got to know each other a bit during this placement but you're not exactly friends.

Over the last two weeks, you've noticed she's only come in 3 times and always looks exhausted.

You're on a very busy ward so don't think anybody has noticed. Because you don't know her well, you don't feel comfortable asking her if anything is wrong and you don't want to report your concerns in case she thinks you're ratting on her for poor attendance.



## Solution:

Even though you don't know the student too well, it is reasonable and acceptable for you to ask her if everything is OK at the moment and if there is anything you can do to help out; she may well open up to you and just having someone to talk to may help.

If she doesn't wish to talk or you are concerned about her, it is important

that you let your supervisor or a member of the student affairs and support team know.

There are many reasons why your colleague may be disengaging and the SAST would explore these in a sensitive way with the student concerned, providing appropriate support and/or guidance as required.

# STRUGGLING WITH MOTIVATION

## Scenario:

You were excited to start Medicine but as time goes by, you realise that you struggle to find the motivation to go to placement.

You find the wards an uninspiring place to be and don't enjoy the teaching on placement. You are now in 3A and all your friends are coming back from placements talking about something they have genuinely enjoyed or found interesting.

This has never happened to you and you are beginning to wonder whether there is something wrong with you. You want to talk to someone about this but don't know who.



## Solution:

It is very common for students to have dips in motivation at some stage of their undergraduate medical training and even more common for certain elements of the programme to be more inspiring for you than others. A good place to start is to think about your initial reasons for wishing to study medicine; do these still apply? It is really useful to discuss your thoughts through with someone

who understands the programme but also the demands and challenges of clinical medicine; such as a senior member of the Student Affairs and Support Team.

You can book an appointment by emailing [med-school@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:med-school@sheffield.ac.uk) or [medical\\_student\\_affairs@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:medical_student_affairs@sheffield.ac.uk)

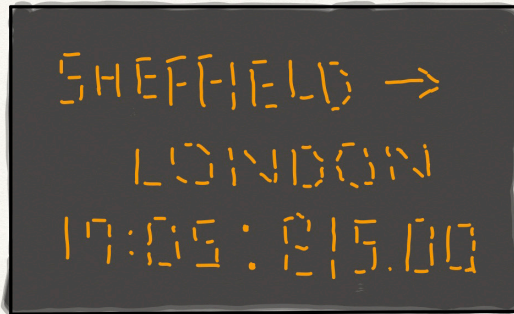
# FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES

## Scenario:

Studying medicine has been your dream for years. You've managed to scrape together enough help to fund this journey. A student loan covers your tuition, but your parents' income precludes you from getting much of a bursary.

The cost of getting to placement, paying rent and living costs mean you must work at the SU for extra cash. In the next few months you know you are going to struggle more. Your parents are not rich and cannot spare you much.

You need advice on where you can get financial help but also want to talk to people who are in a similar situation to you.



## Solution:

The Student Advice Centre are an excellent source of information and can offer useful advice for you if you are experiencing financial worries; they are impartial and can direct you to the most appropriate service.

You may also find the Money Planner tool useful at <https://ssid.sheffield.ac.uk/money-planner>

There is a University hardship fund you can apply to at [www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/finance/application](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/finance/application)

The Medical School also has further funding advice here: [www.minerva.shf.ac.uk/minerva/med/pages/student\\_affairs/sa\\_home.php](http://www.minerva.shf.ac.uk/minerva/med/pages/student_affairs/sa_home.php)

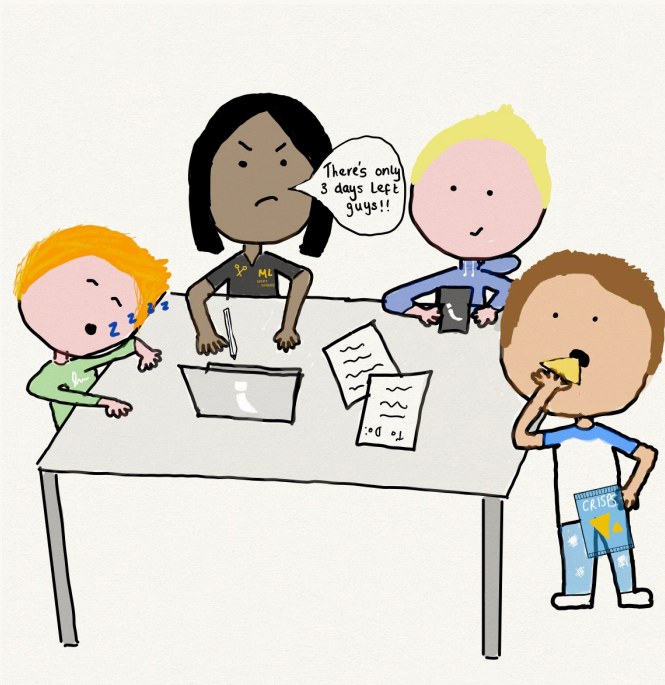


# GROUP WORK CONCERNS

## Scenario:

You're coming to the end of your Early Years GP Placement. All year you have felt that many members of your group have been unprofessional. They often do not complete work for the sessions, have been absent for many sessions and as you travel as a group you are often made late as a result of people coming late to the meeting point for your lift.

You have tried your best to complete work to a high standard and look professional to your GP tutor, however you are worried that as a result of their poorer effort it will reflect badly on you. You want to know who you can talk to about this. Should you speak to the GP tutor? Would someone on your Phase team be better? Is this a professionalism issue that needs bringing to the medical school's attention?



## Solution:

Ideally, any issues should be flagged to your GP tutor as soon as possible so that the matter could be explored and managed at an earlier stage.

In this situation, your GP tutor is still the most appropriate person to approach initially, but if you are immediately concerned about your colleagues professionalism you can get in touch with your phase team who will look into the matter further.

# CONCERNS ABOUT COLLEAGUES (with Social Media involvement)

## Scenario:

Upon starting your LICP placement, you opened a WhatsApp group chat with a few of your colleagues to help each other out with travelling and to ease settling into your clinical years. Over the past few weeks, you have got along fairly well with these colleagues, but gradually the focus of this chat has shifted from work-related matters to mentioning patient cases with potentially identifiable, sensitive details alongside inappropriate comments. You are concerned about your colleagues and the potential consequences of their actions.

You have attempted to speak to one of them personally about your concerns, but your colleague thinks that you're taking their comments too seriously. You understand that conscientious social media use and the maintenance of confidentiality and data security is important but you are hesitant to report this issue at the risk of being outcasted amongst your LICP colleagues whom you've just gotten to know.



## Solution:

All students have a duty to ensure that you use social media in a responsible way and similarly should you encounter or be made aware of such a breach of confidentiality you will be expected to report this to a member of the medical school office.

You can talk to your phase team or a member of the student affairs team and any concerns raised

would be dealt with sensitively and appropriately. The Medical School operates a social media policy ([www.minerva.shef.ac.uk/minerva/med/documents/all\\_phases/all\\_19/social%20media%20policyfinal.pdf](http://www.minerva.shef.ac.uk/minerva/med/documents/all_phases/all_19/social%20media%20policyfinal.pdf)) and the GMC guidance on professional values clearly outlines the responsibility and care to be taken when using social media.

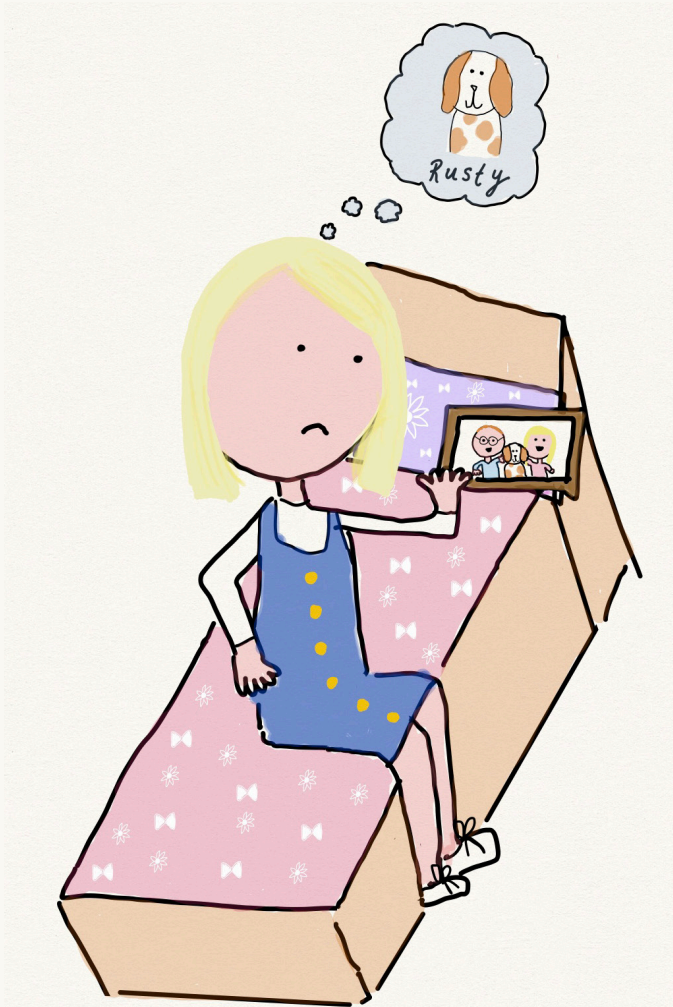
# HOMESICK

## Scenario:

You have recently moved to Sheffield and are in the first few weeks of Phase 1. The workload is steady, you are settling into your flat, and making new friends.

However, you feel out of place and aren't always comfortable taking part. You aren't sure whether this is normal to feel in the first term of your time at university. Your GP tutor notices that you are reluctant to engage in group discussions and after a short conversation you confide in them that you feel homesick.

You're disappointed that the previous excitement for university has been replaced by a longing to be back home. You want to know if there is any support at university for you.



## Solution:

There are a lot of factors that can result in feelings of homesickness. The important thing to remember is that feeling homesick is totally normal - plenty of students feel the same way as you and you are not alone.

The feelings are usually temporary and will pass after your first few weeks. If after a few weeks you still feel homesick you can contact your

Phase team and they would be happy to discuss your concerns with you.

The University also have some comprehensive advice on how to manage homesickness on their webpages: [www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/sos/homesickness](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/sos/homesickness)

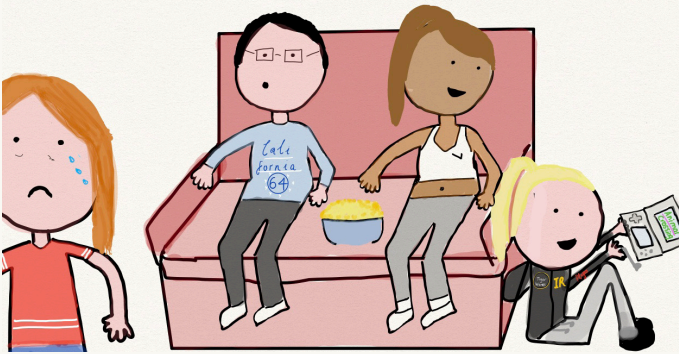
# FLATMATE WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

## Scenario:

You've just moved into a flat with a number of lovely flatmates, some of whom you've only met a handful of times before. Everyone gets along, although one of them seems to have a tad more "off" days.

This flatmate occasionally complains of feeling isolated from others but frequently stays indoors, avoiding contact with other flatmates. This raises some concerns, especially when you notice your flatmate skipping placements frequently and seeming forlorn at the dinner table. This all comes to a head when your flatmate shares with you their struggles with serious mental health problems; you're worried that your flatmate might attempt suicide.

You encourage your flatmate to seek help; an NHS crisis team is arranged, and your flatmate is provided with all necessary help to tide over until appropriate talk therapy can be arranged. In the meantime, you're left with a conundrum: how should I best support my flatmate?



## Solution:

The University Counselling Service can offer support and information about problems your friend may be experiencing.

They can also offer practical information or links to outside organisations that you may wish to pass on to your friend or follow up for yourself. The Student Advice Centre can also offer information

and guidance. If you are in University accommodation then your Residential Mentor can act as a good confidant.

[www.shef.ac.uk/counselling](http://www.shef.ac.uk/counselling) and  
[www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/contacts/advice](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/contacts/advice)