

# A Review of AHP (Allied Health Professional) Student Forum at Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH)

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**References:**  
NHS England (2024), *Safe Learning Environment Charter – what good looks like*, available at: [NHS England » Safe Learning Environment Charter – what good looks like](#) (last accessed 24.02.2026)

## Aims

To improve student attendance and engagement with the AHP Student Forums at GOSH.

## Background

The GOSH AHP Student Forum is a monthly one-hour session for pre-registration placement students/apprentices. It provides opportunities to network, seek support, and learn from Trust speakers. Low engagement and anecdotal feedback from educators suggested that session timing conflicted with placement structures and clinical caseloads. The Safe Learning Environment Charter (SLEC), (2024) emphasises the need for “accessible sessions for learners to provide feedback regarding their placement experience.” A review of the forum was therefore undertaken to improve attendance.

## Methods

Two surveys (one for educators and one for students) were developed using Smart Survey (online survey tool). Questions explored preferences for frequency, day, time, session length, and interest in 18 suggested topics, alongside space for comments. The results were analysed for trends and shared with the AHP Education Team to determine improvements to the current format.

## Results

- Five students and seven educators responded across the AHP professions.
- Four students (80%) and four educators (57%) preferred in-person delivery.
- Most respondents (80% of both groups) favoured one-hour sessions.
- Preferences differed on timing: Educators (86%) generally preferred Wednesday, while all students (100%) favoured Monday.
- Students leaned towards morning sessions (80%), whereas educators preferred afternoons (86%).
- Both groups strongly supported 6 out of the 18 suggested topics (Figure 1)
- Students expressed stronger interest in career-focused topics such as job applications, interview skills, HCPC portfolio and CPD, and leadership styles, while educator responses varied.
- All educators agreed or strongly agreed on including the “Four Pillars of Practice,” whereas student responses were mixed.
- 100% of the students agreed it was important to be able to attend the forum sessions.
- Qualitative feedback highlighted the forum’s value as a space for informal peer and pastoral support, particularly given the demands of clinical work in a specialist tertiary centre (Figure 2).

**Figure 1 – Topics strongly supported by Educators and Students**

- Communication skills
- Psychological safety
- Patient safety
- Difficult conversations
- Active listening
- Multi-professional simulation

**Figure 2 – Qualitative feedback**

“Supervision for students on healthcare placement (not by Student’s educator / manager) so they have a space of support”

“We feel the student forum is really beneficial, however the current timings mid afternoon mean that the students miss a whole afternoon of clinical work”

“Compulsory weekly sessions would be great”

“...high turn around of students... they only attend 4-5 days so their time at GOSH is limited. Attending the student forum unfortunately takes away from their placement time”

## Recommendations

Survey findings highlight the importance of the forum in providing peer/ pastoral support outside of placement settings. Differences in preferences between students and educators emphasised the need for balance in delivery to improve attendance, engagement and support for learners on placement.

Recommendations for the revised forum structure include:

- Scheduling sessions on Wednesday (4–5pm) to minimise conflict with educator timetables.
- 12-week rolling programme of popular topics to accommodate varying placement lengths and avoid repetition.
- Sessions made compulsory (except for AHP groups with short placements) and incorporate dedicated wellbeing sessions every four weeks to enhance pastoral support and account for placement structure variability.