



## Evidence from the PASS project

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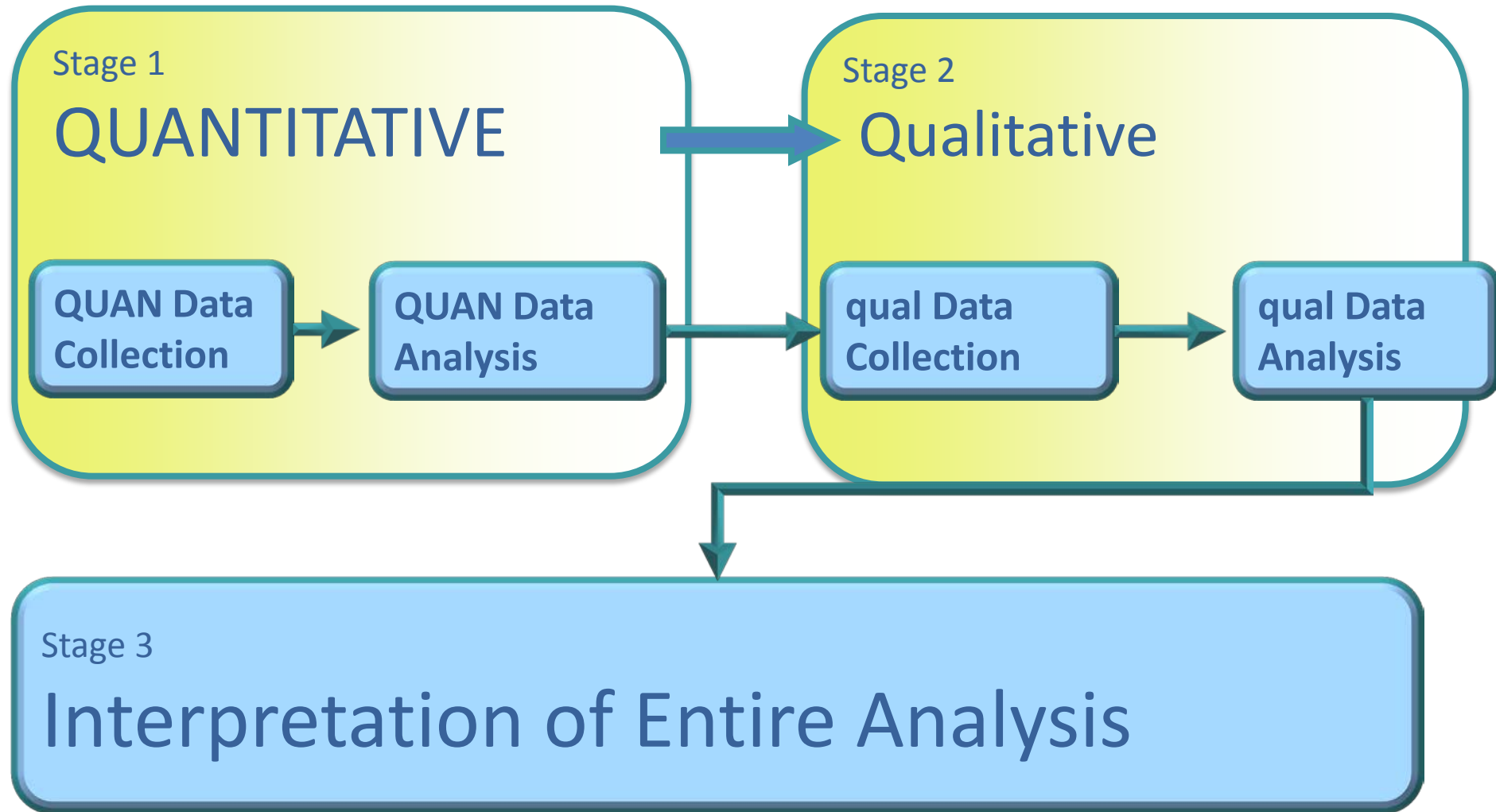


Health Education North West





# Sequential Explanatory Study



# Qualitative analysis

- Stage one – Initial data collection from current students via online survey.
- Stage two – Interviews with current and discontinued students.
- Stage three – Transcription & thematic analysis.
- Stage four – Integrate analysis with quantitative data analysis.

# Online Survey

- Available to all current students via the PASS project website.
- All students invited to participate in the survey via an email from either their Dean or Head of Department.
- Survey open to students April – June 2015.
- Statistical analysis of closed questions and thematic analysis of open comments.

# Online survey by institution

- 1983 completions

Institution	Number of students
Edge Hill	85
UCLAN	280
Chester	276
Cumbria	157
LJM	6
Liverpool	140
MMU	187
Manchester	394
Salford	265

# Online survey by programme

- 1983 completions

Institution	Number of students
Adult nursing	941
Child nursing	170
MH & LD nursing	314
Midwifery	101
Physiotherapy	90
OT & SALT	143
Radiography	62
Paramedic & ODP	36
Other	0

# Interviews

- 9 interviews completed with discontinued students.
- 31 interviews completed with current students including students from across professions and institutions.
- Verbatim transcription of all interviews.
- Thematic analysis of data.

# Survey analysis

- There was little difference overall between the attitudes of males and females.
- Younger students (26 & younger) were more likely to find issue with the academic experience.
- BME students were more concerned about workload & meeting assignment deadlines; but are more positive about their academic experience.
- Disabled students were less likely to find the experience to be positive & staff less helpful.
- It appears that BTEC students are less prepared for the academic workload.

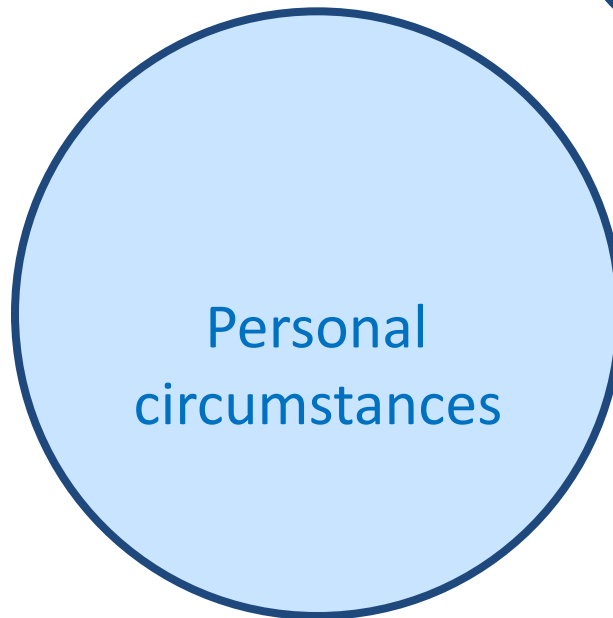
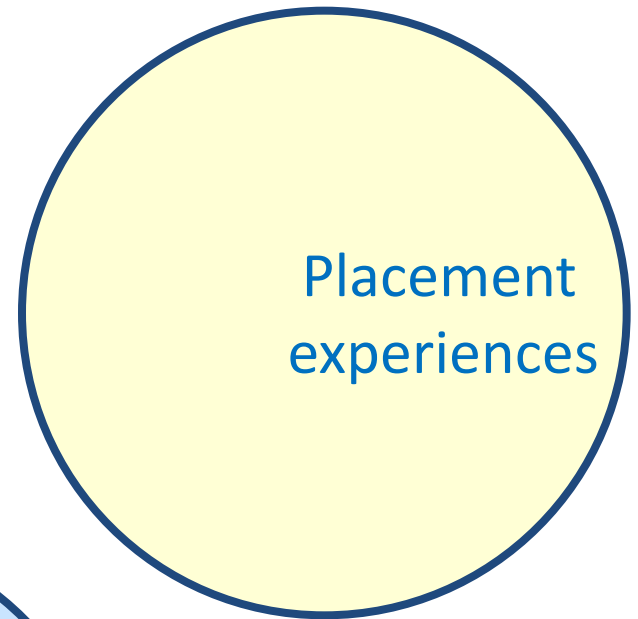
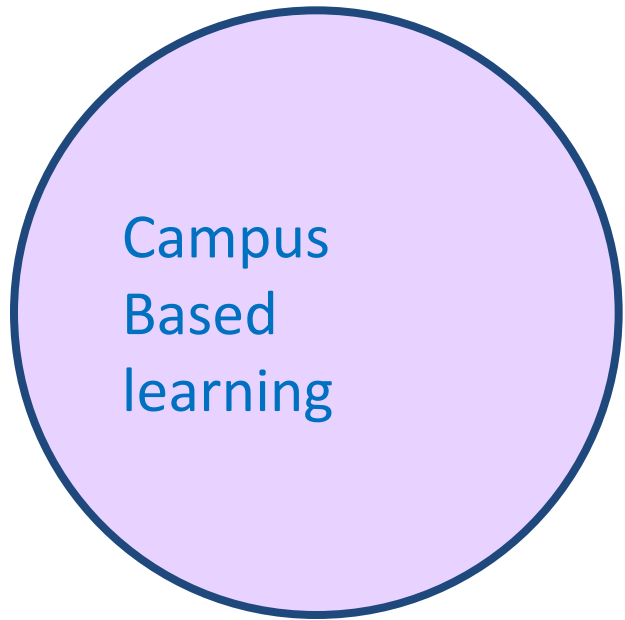


# Survey analysis

- Students who were struggling with commitments and who lacked personal support had a more negative view of their academic activity and their placements.
- Some students struggle more with the 'commitment' of placements, especially younger students with more academic backgrounds.
- The attitudes of students in their first year was markedly more positive than for subsequent years, indicating that first year students may be somewhat protected from the realities of their degrees.

# Themes from written responses

- Campus based learning
  - Student support
  - Learning resources
  - Organisation & management
- Placement learning
  - Mentors
  - Learning experiences
- Personal circumstances
  - Finances
  - Family commitments



# Campus based learning

- 88% of students felt that they were 'well supported by academic staff' and 81% felt 'supported by their personal tutors'.
- 89% of students agreed that 'the online learning resources were good'.
- 85% preferred small group teaching sessions.
- 87% of students felt that their experience had 'generally been a positive one'.
- 67% of students agreed that 'the academic workload was a bit of a shock at first'.
- 69% of students agreed that 'the programme feels a bit disorganised at times'.

# Campus based support

*“Staff are very supportive and will support you through any problems you may be having.”*

*“A lot of students experience a lack of support by staff, a lack of compassion and empathy. This is a common feeling shared amongst most of my colleagues and we seem to be in a constant state of frustration.”*

# Learning resources

*“The online resources that are available are good, but they don’t cover everything I feel they should.”*

*“For many of the essay topics there are core books which we should read and only 20ish copies in the library. For a cohort of 400 this isn’t great especially as they are not available online and expensive to buy!”*

# Programme organisation & management

*“If the programmes were organised better to spread out assignment due dates and placements, students may find it easier to distribute their time and priorities and therefore have a more positive experience both theoretically and practically.”*

*“The expectation of having us complete placement shifts then go home and do uni work is completely unrealistic and doesn’t work.”*

# Personal circumstances

- 42% of students felt unprepared for the amount of work that they had to do.
- 55% agreed that they were constantly worried about getting into debt.
- 33% spent a lot of time caring for a family member.
- 46% struggled to complete work on time.
- However almost all students (97%) agreed that the end goal motivated them to continue with their course.



# Personal circumstances

*“The toll on relationships with family is immense, combined with the lack of respect from so many on placement and lack of compassion from tutors that many mature students have dropped an income [to study], so need to work alongside full study hours plus placement, plus exams, plus being a mum/dad/wife/daughter.”*

# Personal circumstances

*“Placement does not take into consideration a mature student’s life arrangements. I have asked for two days in a week to be a tiny bit flexible (instead of doing an early shift, could I do a late shift), they said I am a student and I am not in a position to dictate what I can do and what I can’t. At the time when my family member was dying I wasn’t given permission to stay with her so I had to take unauthorised leave, which got me into deep trouble.”*

# Finances

*“The money is poor and I am struggling to get by, yes, bursary covers rent (just) however this means a student finance loan of £2,300 (£44 per week) for years 1 and 2 with a MASSIVE decrease in year 3 to £1, 800 (£34 per week) to cover all other finances including gas and electric, phone bills, internet bills plus food to live on, travelling to and from uni/placement, and some form of social life is ridiculous! I do not want to try and squeeze in a part time job as this then takes up time spent on uni work and as a result my grades would suffer.”*

# Placement experiences

- Students were largely positive:
- 71% of students felt that they were 'respected on placements'.
- 64% agreed that they had 'enjoyed' all of their placements to date.
- Most notable:
  - almost every student (99%) agreed that a supportive mentor was essential to guide their learning.

# Less positive

- 54% agreed that their 'mentors did not have time to teach students'.
- Only 51% agreed that their mentors allowed students to 'start and finish their placements flexibly to fit around travel arrangements'.
- 53% felt that they were 'used as an extra pair of hands'.
- Over 61% of students felt that 'travelling to placements was hard work because it meant long days'.
- 79% of students agreed that 'paying for travel was a struggle', with 46% strongly agreeing.

# Current evidence

- Students can feel isolated and abandoned on placement (Young et al. 2010 and Young et al. 2006).
- A good working relationship with a supportive mentor is central to a positive placement experience (Gidman et al. 2011) and the mentor's human qualities and pedagogical skills are pivotal for this (Jokelainen et al. 2011).
- The creation of a positive mentorship culture in a student-centred atmosphere is essential (Emanuel and Pryce-Miller 2013; Jokelainen et al. 2013; Jokelainen et al. 2011; Hamshire et al 2011).
- Experiences in clinical practice have the greatest influence on students' desire to stay on a programme (Crombie et al. 2013).

# Mentors

*“Many mentors are great. I have had some which have been truly amazing! But there are also mentors/staff and placement areas where you gain nothing but dread about going to placement. Students are very often seen as somebody to do the dirty work.”*

*“...some of them [mentors] love teaching, others have been chosen to be mentors due to lack of them[mentors], but may not be as enthusiastic about it.”*

# Mentors

*“I think that placements are extremely subjective and it depends a lot on who your educator is – some of my educators have been fantastic and from those placements I have progressed, learned a lot and had very positive experiences.”*

*“Having a good mentor really makes a difference not only to how much you learn but whether you enjoy placement or not.”*



# Mentors

*“Mentors should be give more time and less workload when they have students to teach. Also not all nurses are mentors ..... most students drop out because of bad and rude mentors who go about bullying students. So nurses should only be allowed to mentor if they want to.”*

*“...I cannot praise her [my mentor] enough. Her taught sessions connect what is experienced in placement with what is taught in university.”*

# Learning experiences

*“The majority of the qualified healthcare professionals and healthcare assistants have been really supportive when on placement, but there have been times when I have experienced being spoken to in a disrespectful way and been belittled in front of patients and other staff. Although I am usually an assertive person, the anxiety has affected my confidence and my ability to be assertive.”*

# Learning experiences

*“I have had mostly positive experiences but I don’t appreciate being told to “get some work done” or similar statements from staff as I am not on the hospitals payroll and not an extra pair of hands. I am always more than happy to help out as this benefits me as well, my primary objective is to learn on placement and I feel some staff do not see this. My bursary works out at 55p an hour and I feel I put in as much work as other staff members therefore I find it demotivating to receive these comments.”*

# Learning experiences

*“Some placements don’t provide the learning experiences we need and some educators aren’t very clear with their expectations.”*

*“On the whole students are completely exploited as a ‘free’ member of staff. Very disrespectful practices in some places, completely ignore supernumerary status, even when management phone the wards to ask, ‘are you fully staffed?’.”*

# Learning experiences

*“Due to staffing being so low on wards the learning experience is lacking e.g. nurses not having time to let you do the medicine round because it takes a student longer to do it.”*

*“You meet some very wonderful people ready to teach you and some lazy and awful people too, who abuse the fact that the student will never say no to accomplishing excessive tasks.”*

# Travel

*“I have been expected to travel 1 and a half hours either way to placement meaning I am getting up at 4.30am for some shifts.”*

*“Something needs to be done about the placement shortage and how far we have to travel. Having had a previous career I would not travel more than one hour for a full time job so why are we expected to as students...plus the NHS bursary doesn't even cover my rent, yes we can claim travel expenses back but this can take over 6 weeks and the issue is having that money up front to begin with.”*

# Travel

*“My university seem to have no consideration for where you go to placement. I have been placed at (placement area) although I live in (home area). I’ve been trying to get this changed for two years. I cannot afford to drive and paying for buses and trains takes me into my overdraft whilst on placement. It also makes the days longer so you get home at 11 and have to wake up at 6. If I didn’t have this problem, I would enjoy placement more.”*



# Student support

*“I have had to leave a placement due to there being lack of staff and support for a first year student. The PEF was superb and the help I received from her was excellent. My new placement is wonderful and all members of staff are extremely helpful and supportive. Both placements that I have completed have provided me with support from every member of their team.”*

*“No lecturer or practice education facilitator has visited me on my placements. Some of the placements as a student I felt ignored and very unsupported especially as I had no previous experience in an acute hospital setting.”*



# Student support

*“I was only visited on placement once apart from when my mentor raised concerns about my progress. I was never contacted just for support – even when the university knew there were struggles due to the placement. Practice education facilitators made a token visit and asked how I was doing when I was in the middle of attending to a patient or in front of other staff members where I could not answer honestly.”*

*“Every educator on placement has been very supportive of me.”*

# Considered leaving

- 42% of the students reported that they had considered leaving their programme.
- Students frequently reported difficulties juggling personal circumstances, paid work, placements and assessed work.

*“The toll on relationships with family is immense, combined with the lack of respect from so many on placement and no compassion from tutors that many mature students have dropped an income, so need to work alongside full study hours plus placement, plus exams, plus being a mum/dad/wife/daughter.”*

# Considered leaving

*“Numerous times I have thought about leaving the course due to the lack of support and stress that is put on us. Tutors are rarely available to speak to and often you are left waiting over a week for a reply to an email.”*

*“I feel the amount of work and memory skill required to do the course was not made clear when applying and therefore I questioned my capability to complete the course. However I decided to continue as I did not want to disappoint others and felt I had a responsibility to complete it as the NHS fund the course.”*

# Considered leaving

*“I just felt like I had no support on placement as a lot of students do, and was just being used as a HCA and therefore learning no nursing skills. It was at a point when I thought that’s all there was to nursing, and I did not want to go in that direction with my career. I often think of leaving and the reason is usually problems with placement.”*

*“I considered leaving during a placement with an awful mentor who really knocked my confidence. Support from friends on my course helped me through, but it has continued to affect me for a long time.”*

# Considered leaving

*“When people on placement have no respect at all for students and make you do everything for them whilst they sit and drink tea, really makes you doubt the career you want to go into at times. I always just think of the end goals.”*

*“I honestly feel that student nurses are used to bridge the gap in the staffing shortages on most wards, and this problem needs to be addressed as it affects students learning experiences. And if student nurses try to broach this subject with staff, we are often thrown back with the saying that we are ‘too posh to wash’ which is a complete lie.”*

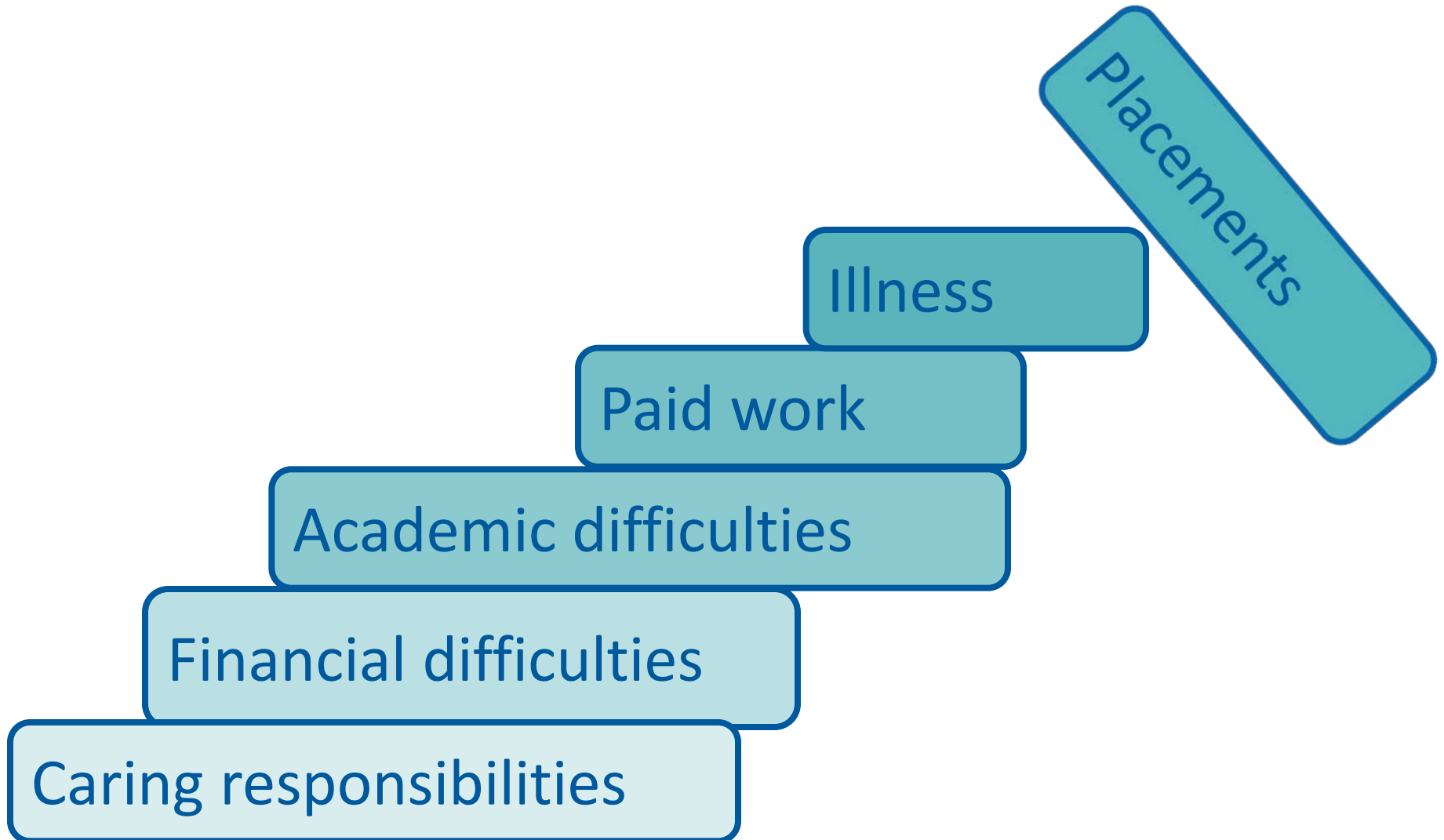
# It's a challenge but it's worth it

*“Not for the faint hearted. Challenging but extremely rewarding.”*

*“You have to be committed. Health courses require a huge amount of work and commitment to placement and travel. Therefore it is fair to say your social life, compared to other people at uni, suffers. But in the long run it will be worth it, when you get a good grade on placement.”*

*“The hours are challenging and the workload can be stressful and definitely for me my biggest motivator is the job at the end of this course!”*

# Interview Narratives





# Interviews placement data

*“... the biggest struggle I know I have, and a lot of my friends have, is that because we don’t get a lot of the funding anymore ..... you have to work a lot of extra shifts otherwise you just can’t pay your bills ..... So I’d be on placement doing 37.5 hours a week on placement ... and then doing extra 12 hour shifts every week and doing odd jobs here and there ... and it was just ... it was just exhausting ‘cos you’ve got so much work to do and no one has any spare time to do it ..... and that I think ... that’s the biggest difficulty ... is time management and trying to fit everything in ... and we have much longer terms than any other student that makes it a lot more difficult as well.”*



# Interviews placement data

*“I recently just finished with the \*\*\* team and they were brilliant all of the nurses there were so amazing ... they would always just make sure they would have something that you were doing ... and they’d take you out on assessment ... and really encourage you and give you tasks to do and give you feedback and it was just really nice and they valued your ability to do things ... so they didn’t make you feel like oh you’re just a student nurse you can’t do this ... they were like ‘oh well go away, give it a go and tell me what you think or show me what you’ve done’ ... so they give you a lots of responsibilities within it ... and it was nice cos you kind of felt like part of a team..”*

# Conclusions

- Students are positive about their experiences overall.
- A supportive mentor is considered to be essential for a good placement experience.
- Students believe that they learn best when they are welcomed and supported by both academic staff/ placement teams and given opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills.
- Both academic and personal issues can impact upon students perceptions of their experiences.

# Acknowledgements

PASS project team

Health Education North West

Healthcare students who participated in the survey & interviews.



Questions?



Health Education North West

