

4th June 2026

## **ASiT's response to the Manchester University Campaign against sexual harassment of medical students**

The Association of Surgeons in Training (ASiT) is deeply concerned to hear of the reports of sexual harassment, spanning years, affecting medical students at the Manchester University medical school.

Due to the courage displayed by Charlotte Buttercase and other medical students, who have been leading the campaign, several incidents of sexual harassment have been reported to date. Allegations have been made against other students, as well as medical professionals, including practising surgeons. Although this behaviour has been publicly reported at Manchester University, the evidence shows us this is not an isolated problem. The position of ASiT is clear, this behaviour has no place in our society, nor within surgery.

The Working Party on Sexual Misconduct in Surgery has advocated extensively for a national anonymous reporting mechanism for sexual harassment and misconduct. This mechanism needs to be extended to medical students, who often sit on the border of University and Hospital organisational responsibilities, leaving them vulnerable and without clear reporting mechanisms. Furthermore, it is both the university and the hospitals responsibilities to ensure that medical students are able to learn in a safe environment free from sexual harassment.

Meaningful change will only come through coordinated action, with medical schools collectively taking a clear stance that this type of misconduct has no place among our students or future healthcare professionals. By doing so, the next generation of medical students can train in a safer, more supportive environment. Furthermore, students who perpetrate or instigate such behaviour should be removed from a profession that places them in positions of trust and direct responsibility for patient care.

ASiT reiterates the need to highlight greater support for students who experience misconduct and for all Medical Schools to sign up to the Sexual Safety Charter. Medical schools must ensure robust systems are in place so that students can raise concerns safely. Institutions have a responsibility to foster environments in which individuals feel protected from retaliation, supported throughout reporting processes, and empowered to speak up without fear.

We stand alongside the medical student and wider healthcare professional community in fostering an environment where concerns are taken seriously, individuals feel protected, and everyone can train and work in a culture of safety, respect, and professionalism.



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