



10th November 2025

ASiT's response to the BMA Report "Sexism and sexual violence towards medical students"

The Association of Surgeons in Training (ASiT) notes with serious concern the findings of the British Medical Association's 2025 report Sexism and Sexual Violence Towards Medical Students.

The report reveals that 41% of female medical students and 19% of male students have experienced sexual harassment or assault at university, with 18% reporting incidents on clinical placement. Alarming, 69% of female students reported sexism on placements, frequently within surgical environments.

The Working Party on Sexual Misconduct in Surgery has previously identified the endemic nature of sexual misconduct in surgical settings, and this new report confirms that these issues persist within the surgical workforce, impacting students during their earliest clinical experiences.

ASiT was among the earliest organisations to actively promote better standards of behaviour and professionalism within surgery. We have actively encouraged medical students and trainees to speak up and report concerns, and we continue to offer support and guidance to those who do. However, we do recognise when individuals have no trust in reporting mechanisms, they often do not feel empowered to speak up. Our focus remains on creating a culture in which everyone feels safe, supported, and respected.

ASiT supports the BMA's recommendations, including a statutory duty of care, robust reporting mechanisms, and consistent sanctions for perpetrators. Every medical student has the right to learn in a safe, respectful environment. ASiT calls for coordinated action from medical schools, NHS trusts, and regulators to deliver the systemic and cultural change required to protect our future workforce.

There is no place for these behaviours in surgery.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Enya Costin' in a cursive style.

Miss Enya Costin
Medical Student Representative
Association of Surgeons in Training

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Raiyyan Aftab' in a cursive style.

Mr Raiyyan Aftab
President
Association of Surgeons in Training