

The Index of Sources of Stress in Nursing students

- Stress is any demand that leads to a physiological and psychological response. Some of the demands you have experienced while you have been a student have led to a level of stress that actually enhances your performance, increases your satisfaction and helps you achieve, such as an experience that helps you master clinical skills. We call these ‘uplifting’ experiences.
- Some experiences, however, lead to distress, for example, the difficulties you might have had in dealing with a colleague. We call these sources of stress ‘hassles’.
- The same experience can often be a source of distress, a hassle, *and* an uplift, an experience that helps you to achieve. A placement, for example, may be distressing but also an experience where you achieved some important clinical skills.
- You are likely to have had a number of experiences that relate to each item you will be asked about but it is your *overall* response that we are asking you to consider in your reply.
- If the item asks about an experience that does not apply to you please do not add any numerical value under hassle or uplift and click on the non-applicable option.
- You will be shown a series of items and we would like you to rate each twice – once as a hassle and once as an uplift. When rating the item as a hassle, 0 represents no hassle, 5 represents a significant source of distress.
- When rating the item as an uplift, 0 indicates that the item represents no source of satisfaction or influence that helps you achieve, 5 represents an influence that really helps you achieve and gives you a strong sense of satisfaction. For example:

Hassle		Uplift	
0-5	Item	0-5	Non-applicable
3	My placement experience.	5	

The above scores would indicate that the person believes that their placement experience provides them with a moderate amount of distress (hassle = 3) but also provides them with a strong sense of satisfaction and achievement (uplift = 5)

Hassle		Uplift	Non-applicable
0-5	Item	0-5	
	1. The quality of tutorials.		
	2. Building and sustaining a relationship with patients.		
	3. How clinical skills are practised on placement compared to how we are expected to practise them.		
	4. What happens when classes are cancelled.		
	5. Learning on placement.		
	6. The suitability of the course to prepare me to be a nurse.		
	7. Learning by preparing to give presentations in tutorials.		
	8. Developing the ability to critically analyse and evaluate.		
	9. Tutorial leader's response to student-led presentations in tutorials.		
	10. Placement experience.		
	11. The behaviour of other students in lectures.		
	12. Timing of feedback on my assignments.		
	13. Learning by listening to others present in tutorials.		
	14. The clinical examples and additional information, beyond the power-point slides, offered by lecturers.		
	15. Question and answer sessions in tutorials.		
	16. The learning I engage in outside class.		
	17. The support of other students on this course.		
	18. How nursing colleagues treat me on placement.		
	19. Lecturers who occasionally use their authority to retain order.		
	20. The number of presentations students give in tutorials.		

Hassle 0-5		Uplift 0-5	Non- applicable
	21. The extent to which the course helps me manage new problems		
	22. My experience with placement mentors.		
	23. The typical volume of material we are expected to grasp in a lecture.		
	24. Voicing my concerns through my student representative.		
	25. The balance of time given to lectures and tutorials.		
	26. My experience with link lecturers.		
	27. The pace and intensity of the course.		
	28. How much I am valued by tutorial leaders.		
	29. The OSCEs.		
	30. The level of organisation on the course.		
	31. Portfolio feedback.		
	32. My experience of guest lecturers.		
	33. Guidance and practise in preparation for OSCEs.		
	34. The level of support offered by my personal tutor.		

Scoring key

Items 1-34 include the 29 item ISSN and the five items measuring support (17, 18, 22, 26, 34)

Factor	Item number
Learning and teaching hassles	1, 6, 7, 8, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24, 25, 27, 29
Learning and teaching uplifts	7, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28
Placement-related hassles	2, 3, 5, 6, 10
Placement-related uplifts	2, 3, 5, 6, 10
Course organisation hassles	4, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 19, 21, 22, 26, 28

Scores on the items for the prescribed variable should be computed for each of the five factors. You then compute the scores on the items for 'support hassles' and for 'support uplifts'.

Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were carried out using the ISSN to arrive at these factor loadings and reference for the associated articles are listed below:

Gibbons, C., Dempster, M. and Moutray, M. (2009), Surveying nursing students on their sources of stress: A validation study, *Nursing Education Today*. (29) 867-872.

Gibbons, C., Dempster, M. and Moutray, M. (2009), Index of sources of stress in nursing students: a confirmatory factor analysis. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, Vol. 65 (5), 1095-1102.

Chris Gibbons is Chair of the Association for Psychology Teachers in Northern Ireland, a support group for teachers and lecturers in psychology and which runs CPD events and conferences for students and teachers. For educational purposes you can freely access a selection of articles from studies he and his colleagues have carried out in the area of stress and coping. If interested visit:

<http://www.associationforpsychologyteachers.com/research.html>