A13 Interview Audio

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year, people, bit, exams, questions, chiropractor, lectures, university, study, part, mental health, difficult, uni, medicine, grades, stressful, work, learning, campus, clinic

**SPEAKERS**

Participant A13, Philip Dewhurst

**ANONYMISATION**

Pseudonyms used in place of real names. Locations redacted or names changed. Personal information redacted.

**Philip Dewhurst** 00:28

Tell me why you decided to be a chiropractor. Okay.

**Participant A13** 00:33

Um, so, I had always wanted to work in healthcare since about I was 11. And that started with an interest in paramedic, from TV programmes wanting to become like a helicopter hero. And then I went to like, all these fairs with emergency response people. And then as I progressed through school, and I was getting good grades, my dad was like, Well, why don't you turn your focus more towards medicine? Because, you know, it's, yeah, there's, there's a bit more scope in it. So yeah, I just dove into that, really, and spent, you know, my high school and college years really aiming for medicine. And then I missed out on a, A in chemistry, for which I got a B. And I was like, No, but I just, I could not do another year of college. I just my brain was fried. I was super burnt out. And I was just like, Absolutely not, I cannot. And so I took a gap year. And in about the October of the gap year, or perhaps the September, something like that I had looked up NHS jobs, and I just wanted to find something else, to give me some kind of direction because I've just felt completely lost. You know, I've not really imagined my life past any point of not getting into medicine. So I looked into Midwifery, I looked into paramedics I looked into osteo physio and Chiro went to loads of uni open days, I think like I went to like 11 uni open days or something stupid. And I know with my parents taking me everywhere. And yeah, I just was really drawn to this university. Anyway. And then, as part of the requirements to get in here, you had to shadow a chiropractor. So just to preface this as well, no one in my family has ever had any chiropractic treatment. Like I didn't know it existed before I found it off that NHS page. And that was finding through osteopath. And my mum was like, oh, what's the difference between osteopath and chiropractors? I don't know. So then I looked up both of those. And now then what happened? So then I then I went and shadowed a chiropractor to even find out what this even was. And that and that was amazing. I really loved it. And the reason I chose chiropractic was because when I emailed out to shadow chiropractors osteopaths, because that's what I got stuck between, only the chiropractors replied, and I just thought, Okay, well, this is some kind of like calling or whatever you want to call it, you know, and the profession just seems so welcoming. And those individual chiropractors that I did observe, they were really passionate and really helped me to like, give me any pointers or come back anytime and observe and one of them took me to like a conference with them to so it was just really like an open door and I was like, okay, cool. Let's go for this

**Philip Dewhurst** 03:40

So really good positive experience with a chiropractor, and then and then who you are. That's really interesting. So So why did you choose AECC for your degree?

**Participant A13** 03:54

Sure. I think it was a big part was the open day itself speaking to all the students the staff and you go in and it was all nice and sunny and lecturers were there just showing us like different postural indications and imbalances and I was like wow, this is so cool. And just the idea of how hands on it was going to be that it was like a full and intensive course but I was already in that mindset from medicine anyway, like that didn't bother me. And and yeah, I like the campus as well. And then conversely, I went to another choice and I went to some osteopathic ones as well. And one chiropractic university was absolutely pouring it down. And we had to walk all the way up from the accommodation all the way down. And it just felt very that building in particular felt very separate from the main campus, which I wasn't so keen on. And just the facilities here looks more modern, more upgraded. Everything was a bit more open. I don't know, I just I clicked with the campus more than with others, I don't think anything within the course content swayed me like I think they seemed very similar wasn't particularly what the students were saying either because again, like both of them, obviously were quite passionate for where they were. I actually just think it was the feel of the open day.

**Philip Dewhurst** 05:29

Okay. All right. Interesting. So, so you arrived at university. And now you've you've gone through the course. Looking back over your years here, what do you think has been your biggest challenge?

05:46

As in personal or course related?

**Philip Dewhurst** 05:52

Anything at all. Anything that in relation to the, I suppose, the biggest challenges that you've faced whilst on the course, but whether it's, you know, from within the university or outside the university up to you.

**Participant A13** 06:05

I think for me, there was just a lot of firsts, and a lot of new things. And that was quite overwhelming and quite stressful. Like, I'd never been on a train by myself. So going to and from uni was stressful. I've never, you know, really had to like cook or clean or do housework for myself. So time management was really hard. I've never done like food shopping for myself. I've never I wasn't allowed sleepovers growing up. This is my first time sleeping away from home. It was my first time drinking. It was my first time clubbing. It was my first time like anything, everything. It was very, like new. And I found that really stressful. Yeah, and just like adapting to university life I was not prepared for. Yeah. So I think that at the start, and then slowly that's gotten like, easier as time goes on. I think it was the whole independent learning thing as well. Obviously, you do do a certain extent of that at A levels. But it was just the whole you know, you've got so many lectures in one day, especially for first year. I think they've changed up the course timetabling a bit. I'm not sure. But I remember our first year was like every Friday, it was like seven hours. And it was like I cannot my brain does does not even compute for us, like four hours. And it was just we were there on a Friday evening like. So that was a lot. I think yeah, I think it was definitely time management was a big a big struggle for me. I just knowing where to put my energy into what as well.

**Philip Dewhurst** 08:01

You think that's got easier, or you've got better at it as the course has gone on?

**Participant A13** 08:08

It's difficult to say because as you go on through the years, the actual course content becomes less like intense. So yeah, I still think I still think I've got a long way to go with that, to be honest. But I definitely think it's gotten better. And I know things that don't work for me. So that's good.

**Philip Dewhurst** 08:33

So what have you learned that doesn't work for you?

**Participant A13** 08:37

Sure, so I tried first year all paper notes. And I was just because that's how I did a levels and GCSEs I just basically re copied and reinvented out everything. Which is so time consuming. And I'm a very visual learner as well. So I would spend hours you know, colour coordinating and everything nice fancy titles, neat handwriting, drawing illustrations in my notes. And now I'm like what were you doing. So now I've moved much more to just my iPad, I just download the PowerPoint and I write extra notes or points or bold things or highlight things that are you know, important. I tried flashcards, that whole spaced repetition memory situation. And I know there's been so many YouTube videos on how good it's meant to be for you by I've just never agreed with me. I just can't do it. I don't have the discipline for it. I don't think maybe if I did, maybe it would be a good but I see the flashcard I'm like yeah yeah, I'm not sure about that. Really. What else I know doing questions and answers like a tutor in first year would give us a set of questions before the exams. They would call them like cookies. So they used to help a lot. Labelling diagrams used to help a lot watching YouTube videos. So I could do a lecture, I could write my notes, but my quite a lot of my revision, as I've gone along is actually watching YouTube videos to consolidate everything and have quite a lot of YouTube videos will have the models there, and they'll be taking you through and pulling things off, or they'll have some kind of 3d animation thing. And that tends to really help me. I think just having multiple people explain it to you in different ways, but the same concepts as well. Yeah. I don't know if there's anything else?

**Philip Dewhurst** 10:44

Okay. No, that's, that's really good. That was gonna be one of my questions later on about how you approach your study. So that's really good. So what, just tell me as well, in terms of school and A level, what type of school did you go to as a state school? Grammar School, private school? What was that education background?

**Participant A13** 11:11

Yeah. So I just went to a normal state school. We were kind of an average, I think we like our OFSTED maybe was good. By the time I was like, in year 11. So we got there for Yeah. Just ordinary schooling, I don't know. I remember when I was doing my GCSEs they tried to introduce the E Bach back. So I had to do, I had to do humanities in a language in English, maths, science. So yeah, but then I chose to do some extra GCSE softer school that they offered, because I'm quite a creative person. So I did, they kind of put a big emphasis on like science and humanities, even though we had nice art departments and stuff. And so they, I did that after school to keep up with that, basically. And then I went to a normal college sixth form, it wasn't a join to my school is joined to a different school because my school didn't have college. And it was actually called sixth form college. And I know some people in other areas of the country, they're like, Oh, you went to college, it's like, well, we don't have that stigma, where I'm from that college and a sixth form is different they're the same thing. They're interchangeable where I'm from. So yeah, but that was a that was known for its art department, which is kind of why I went there. And also because it was my most most local, and the other one, I'd have to get like two buses. So I went there, and they had like a good science department, good art department. And they had like a med vet dent group as well to like, try and help you get into medicine. So I was part of that also.

**Philip Dewhurst** 13:03

Okay, brilliant. So let's move on. So I've got the data that we've collected from, because you've consented to the first part of the study. We have the the data from our databases, and we have the survey data. So I've got a few questions relating to that, if that's okay, so, so the first one is, I can see across the US your your grades have been consistently high, been sort of 69% and above, which is excellent. And your attendance over the years has it has gone up. In year one. Your attendance was around 85%. Last year was 100%. So I was just wondering, do you see a link between your attendance and your grades? And and why do you think your attendances has gone up as you've gone through the course?

**Participant A13** 14:03

I'm actually quite surprised it was as low as 85. And first day, I don't remember missing time particularly. I think I've just grown up, especially at school and stuff, you just the day is that you just go to school. Like there was never any question about whether or not I went to school. And so I've always had 100% attendance since I was like five. So to me, it's just, you know, today's school you go in for school, and I've I've definitely kept mostly with that at university. And yeah, I'm sure there is definitely a correlation between how much your in, and I know people have different learning styles, but I know like I'll say and part of my time management, to have done all of that learning solely off my own back. I would have struggled with something like that. I liked having the separate learning environment where I went to school to learn, come home to relax, like I like going into there. So that works for me to show up anyway.

**Philip Dewhurst** 15:14

Okay, this is great. So from the data provided in the survey, you, I kind of sub classified people into those that were dependent on, like student loans and those that that sort of had their own money. And so you ticked the boxes for needing or having student loan? So what what's it been like? Knowing that you're, you're kind of financially dependent on that loan? And does that influence the way that you approach your studies in any way at all?

**Participant A13** 15:59

Yeah, for sure. I think it's kind of crazy to me almost that people don't have the view dependent on it. That blows my mind, at times. But I think for me, had I'd only had that student loan, I would have really struggled. That student loan basically covers my rent, anything else is all off my own. And thankfully, I went in my gap year, I worked a 45 hour job, like I, I've saved for a whole year to fund my way through university. So I haven't had to work at uni, thankfully. But like, part of that was like buying a laptop, part of that was buying an iPad to do my work on, there's no way I would have been able to afford it that without that gap year working. So that's not even really covered with the student loan. And it's interesting, the way the student loan is done also, because only my dad works, but I'm one of six children. So it's kind of like, they do take into account but they also don't. And it's kind of like if I was to ask my parents for money to support me, I wouldn't have felt comfortable in doing that. So there's kind of been this financial pressure of having to be independent, I suppose. And, and then also the last event during lockdown, my dad actually got made redundant. And then my student loan amount went down, because I'm now in fourth year. And it was like, okay, and then of course, my own financial resources are depleting because now I'm in my fourth year, living off of my year's worth of saving. So I definitely think there could be a lot more support, but I'm no, I'm not struggling in comparison to a lot of people. I've got enough to get me by. And if I was really desperate, my parents would help me out. But I wouldn't feel comfortable with it. Okay.

**Philip Dewhurst** 18:05

And do you feel any pressure knowing that you had a loan, you said that you had you had money that you saved up? That, you know, getting towards the end of the course. So presumably, that pot has got smaller now? Do you feel any any pressure from that dependence on those on those sources of money in terms of say like exams, and progressing from one year to the next? Is it? Does it come into putting the additional pressure on you at any time?

**Participant A13** 18:39

Not for me personally, but I could see that for people say with shorter housing contracts, like if they were then having to really take exams where are they going to live for that summer period where they don't have a house, that could be very stressful for people. I haven't had that situation because my housing contract is a year. So I don't I don't have to deal with that. I know. Like for me, going towards the end of the course, it's now kind of stressful for the GCC fees, the BCA fees that all the other fees. That's kind of something I'm now starting to worry about. That has then, what you call it, influenced the kind of things that people are offering me when I'm looking for a job, do I get a retainer, for example? Or do I get any financial help with those things? And if especially if I'm not, so if the job is not near my home that I can't commute to work, and I'm having to then try and finance myself again, completely independently. How much support would I get for that in those first few months?

**Philip Dewhurst** 19:57

So certainly we're at This stage of your training now it's possibly more important, or there's, you're more aware of it because of that step into the profession.

**Participant A13** 20:10

Yeah, absolutely. And the like the first, every year, my student loan amount has gone down. So it's kind of like my own financial resources are running out. And that's running out is kind of just becoming a bit of a squeeze.

**Philip Dewhurst** 20:24

Yeah. Okay. Interesting. So, you on the survey as well, there was a question around being involved in different in clubs. And you said you weren't involved in any clubs or anything like that? Is is that a personal preference? Was there any reason why? And also how, how do you sort of unwind when you're not at university?

**Participant A13** 20:52

Yeah, sure. So I think partly, part of it was when I was looking around in that open day, I was under the impression we were still partnered with another uni, and I'd have access to all of their societies as well. And then when I came here, there was like, four. And none of which were, I don't know the word. I didn't fancy any of them. I'm I'm not hugely sporty. I'm more of a artsy creative person, which is why I kind of liked the idea of that we were partnered I was kind of hoping then I'd have all like, the art side I could explore and that sort of thing. Yeah, I've not really been one for sports, since GCSEs, when they made us do PE. Well, that's not entirely true, but definitely not the sports that were on offer. And so yeah, that was a bit difficult, because then they didn't really feel like anything on campus that I wanted to do. As I said, coming to uni, this was my first time drinking as well. So anything society related, also, at the time had those initiations where you have to drink to like read and sign up. I know they've gotten rid of them now. Not that I was actually interested in joining the sports anyway, but that could have been a putting off factor for some people, which is good to have they got rid of them, I guess. But yeah, that was just very limited. Anything to do on campus that didn't involve drinking or didn't involve those four spots. So there's literally nothing that took my fancy so that's probably why I haven't done anything and then unwinding wise. Well, mostly creative hobbies to be honest drawing painting. piano, a bit of Tarot reading. A bit random but you know, whatever. Going for walks, going to the gym. That sort of thing.

**Philip Dewhurst** 23:07

Okay, so with those, the painting, the reading, etc. are you spending as much time doing that now, as you were at the start of the course? Have you noticed that you've had to, you could have spent more time doing that less time doing that? How has that kind of been influenced as you've gone through the training.

**Participant A13** 23:31

Um, so that's kind of a bit difficult as in the sense that I've had depression the whole time at university. And so that obviously, part of that is a loss of interest in your hobbies. So I don't know how much of that was due to the degree or how much of that was due to my mental health. But I know in first year, I basically didn't do any of my hobbies. That and there was didn't really seem to be anyone on the course that were interested in the same hobbies I was. And I think that was the kind of the wake up call in first year that how sporty our university actually is. And I think I kind of misinterpret that I didn't really realise that going into chiropractic that it is this huge kind of health and fitness profession, which part of that might have been because I've never seen a chiropractor never really done anything like that. So maybe that was partly my fault also. And then, as I've gone through the course, it was only this year that I actually went and got myself sorted out for mental health. So this last maybe like, four or five months, I've definitely been reconnecting with hobbies.

**Philip Dewhurst** 24:55

So, I'm just gonna explore that a little bit more if that's okay. So how would you think having that the depression affected you? Because obviously looking at your grades you've achieved quite highly. So how is it? How do you think it's affected you at all? And if so, in what way has it done that?

**Participant A13** 25:21

Yes, that's really interesting because to me with it, it was really important for me to be able to hide it. And my way of hiding it to everyone was to have high grades. And those high grades came at her quite a large cost to a lot of myself. So, yeah, there was definitely healthier ways I could have gotten those grades for sure. That was a lot of cramming, hardcore cramming towards the end. And a lot of very poor time management and mental health management in between, basically. Yeah.

**Philip Dewhurst** 26:06

Are you happy talking about that?

**Participant A13** 26:11

Yeah. Yeah.

**Philip Dewhurst** 26:13

Because I was just going to ask, because from your your record, you You never submitted mitigating circumstance, or exceptional personal circumstances for that. So do you? Do you think there's anything that the university could have done? Do you think there was any any way that we could have seen that, that maybe you were struggling and helped at all?

**Participant A13** 26:37

No, because I was adamant to hide it. I knew I knew student services were there. And I wrote up an email to send to them in first year, I think even first semester of first year, I wrote up an email. And I was really frightened, it was gonna go to everyone. And I, like, I don't know why it just completely put me off. Because I know like, you know, when sometimes they'd send out whole unit emails and that occasional person would accidentally reply to everyone. I was so frightened, that was gonna happen. And I was like, no, not everyone can know. And I didn't know how to write an email or what to put in the email or who necessarily it was going to like, it just said student services, but it's like, well, who is student services that is that SU as well, like is SU part of Student Services is this gonna get other students. So I was just far too nervous to even reach out really. And then, I think also first year, like I said, it was like my first time drinking, and then I had depression. And then I wasn't doing any of my hobbies, I wasn't connecting with anyone, either. There's a lot of social isolation, I was in halls, and a lot of the people in halls were very well, they were there to have a good time, as much as you know, did a little bit of study if you know what I mean. And so I just didn't connect with anyone. And in the second year, thankfully, I kind of found my tribe a bit more, I made some friends. And that definitely helped. But then it was kind of even harder to hide it because, you know, they were actually kind of caring for me a bit. Same with third year, but then third year was Covid, and, you know, everyone's basically, stressed anyway, and it's kind of rolling out with bed, coming downstairs, working on the Zoom, sitting there for hours going back out to bed. Rinse and repeat. So that wasn't great. And then in fourth year it all in started clinic, which having had depression and just about cleaning on all my grades and feeling completely burnt out and like, Oh my God, how can I now take on all of this extra responsibility on top of lectures and then also missing the summer holidays. Yeah, that was quite a lot to like have right at the start of placement. And then what was it. Oh, and then my flatmates. Two of them got Covid. So that was two sets of 10 days of isolating and that was just like really heavy and it's all nice weather outside and you're supposed to be in clinic and everyone's learning all these things and you're now falling behind and you haven't even started yet. And I think that just tipped me over the edge a bit. And then rather than actually reach out to university like an idiot I actually reached out to the well I just I was gonna go to the GP for so completely separate. And then on the phone it said to not call but to do it online, through the online. They just had like, different conditions and different services to access. And then there was just a section and it was just the section headings in mental health. And I just thought maybe they'll have some useful resources, clicked on that. And they have the steps to well being self referral. So I did that got referred to them, and had some CBT with them. Had some employment help with them, like I wasn't looking for a job, but it they helped me a lot of my CV, which was really lovely. And yeah, so I had CBT, I think I had like four sessions. But it was quite difficult because it was only over like a messaging service. There face to face chat had another two months waiting list. And I was like, No, I need, I need something now I'm in clinic now. So I did still have to wait a month or two, I think for that service. That's quite long. But I was glad I'd gotten the ball rolling. And then yeah, I had that as said it's over messaging was quite difficult. I felt like sometimes things didn't quite get through communication wise because of that format. And, and, and then I was like, well, they have services at uni. So I then, I've gotten a bit braver talking about it all through the steps to wellbeing. So I just thought, right, we're just going to give it a go. I know that this email is not going to everyone. So then got in touch with student services. And then basically the steps to well being as soon as I told them I was with uni, they'll be like, Well, okay, well, you don't need us anymore. So then kind of like cut my service. And then I was then handed over to student services.

**Philip Dewhurst** 31:47

And how's that all going?

**Participant A13** 31:49

Yeah, it's going well, it's, yeah. Great.

**Philip Dewhurst** 31:53

Excellent.

**Participant A13** 31:56

So this year has been, weirdly enough, the easiest.

**Philip Dewhurst** 32:01

Okay, well, that's good. Yeah, I'm pleased that you've taken control. And, and got that help. That's really good. Okay. So I'll move on, because I'm, we're going to run out of time. So my next question was going to be around from the survey said you, you study around 6 to 10 hours a week outside of normal class time. And I was just curious, with that 6 to 10 hours. How do you How would you use that time? And if you had done more or less, do you think it would have had any effect on your performance overall?

**Participant A13** 32:52

Yeah, so this was quite difficult to answer as well. Because the amount I can study out of lectures is also very dependent on my mental health. So it can really fluctuate. So like, for example, earlier this week, I was literally doing nothing. And then yesterday, I smashed out like, I don't know, seven hours in one day. So it's kind of a bit random, really. But yeah, in those hours, I'm mostly doing group presentation work or audit work or there's EBC's at the moment is basically coursework rather than like revision, for example. And revision will hopefully start next month when I've finished coursework, I suppose. But I know, first year, I did a lot of work, but it would be in big chunks at a time. Again, that was sort of like mental health dependent. And then that, you know, you do your big chunk get burnt out, do a big chunk get burnt out. I said, probably not the healthiest way of doing things. If I'd had a bit more of a structured time per day, I think that would have made things a lot easier. But I find it really difficult. For some days, like going to the library is really good for me. And other days, I cannot bring myself to get to the library. Or like some days I can just study in bed. And other days, I can't study in bed and it's just really, I don't have a singular place where I like to study, which I think some people do, like they have their little place and they go to it and that's their study time. So that's quite difficult. I know in first year I did use the library quite a lot. Second year, less so. I think first year because I was living in halls I had to get the bus back and forth. And so if you had a gap, it didn't make sense to go back home and not so I would just stay and study. So that was a bit easier. Whereas second year, I moved closer so I could just walk home. And sort of like with the depression and stuff that meant I could go home and go to sleep for three hours, and then walk back so that the studying became less than second year. And genuinely, I think I would have failed second year had it not been for the online exams. Just the truth of it, my mental health was not in a good enough place to have passed, I don't think. And then third year I got, I think, second year scabby a bit, because I knew I went off fast. And then I knew I wouldn't have been able to hide things as well. So I did a bit more third year. And now fourth year, this has kind of been my most evenly consistent studying, ish, getting the coursework done, and bits and bobs here and there. But again, I still don't really have an ideal place that I like to just sit down and work it I have to change up.

**Philip Dewhurst** 36:16

So, we'll move on to I've got a few questions left. Next, Next one's around motivation. So from your, your survey you, you seem to derive your motivation more for the good of doing something, you know, wanting to be a chiropractor, you're that intrinsic drive, rather than just meeting a deadline? Or because you've been told to do it. I'm just just curious to find out a little bit more about that. And if if you kind of relate that, that motivation to being more about you wanting to do as opposed to a deadline that has been imposed on you?

**Participant A13** 36:57

Yeah, I think part of that, again, was trying to hide that depression. And being like, well, if my grades are up, then clearly nothing's wrong. And so I think a lot of that has been internalised like stress, like trying to, like keep on top of things, and no one notices. But then, also, there is just that, you know, and I know that the deadline is coming up, I want to get it done before that, so I don't have to stress later. And on days, where I am feeling well, it's like, Okay, let's get this done for days that I'm not feeling well. And then other parts of it is just like, I don't know, I think I've done quite a lot of things off my own back previously, anyway. So like, for example, to get into medicine, I had to do volunteer work. That was just part of it in a healthcare setting for two weeks. But I ended up doing three, four years of voluntary work. So that's just all off my own back, that's just for the joy of of getting involved and helping people really. So I think part of that plays into it as well. And then part of it just like to, to really be able to answer a question on something or to pass the exam. I can't really just memorise it, like, I literally have to understand it. And so part of that is stress for exams, people not noticing my grades drop, I need to understand this and then working through it to get that understanding.

**Philip Dewhurst** 38:37

Okay. Okay. That's, that's great. That's brilliant. So, then it kind of, I suppose building on that is in terms of your, the community that you have in in the campus or on campus? So how do you find I mean, when when you come to your studies, are you somebody that studies alone? Do you like what you said about working with group presentations and audits at the moment? Do you prefer working with people given them help and them supporting you in your studies? How would you approach that? That part of the of the course in your education?

**Participant A13** 39:21

Yeah. So I think the general consensus is everyone hates group work. To be perfectly honest, yeah, it's a lot of managing people and getting parts together. And it drives me nuts. And it's a lot more stress than if you were just to do it yourself to be perfectly honest, but it does keep you on top of the work or it keeps me on top of the work because I don't want to let other people down. So that has been helpful. But yeah, studying wise, I'm, I like trying to study in a group but doing my own work, like, and then if I, if I'm doing my own work and come across something I don't understand, then I ask the group, does anyone get this, and then we can have a bit of discussion about it. And then we go back to our own work. That's kind of how I prefer to work. I don't like the whole, you know, or let's do this thing today. And let's do that thing today and work on the exact same thing doesn't work for me, really, I have to really process things myself.

**Philip Dewhurst** 40:30

And how about, do you ever get in a situation where you feel like you're the you're the expert in the group, and you're sort of teaching to others? Or there's somebody else that that, you know, is doing that to you? And you're learning from them? Do you have that kind of relationship with a group as well,

**Participant A13** 40:54

Absolutely. Um, yeah, I live with three others in my year group. And so we're always bouncing things off of each other. And I know, especially last year with Zoom, everything. All the lectures, being on Zoom, we sat in the front room with the zoom on the TV, and we all did the same lectures together. So that meant we could bounce off anything off each other, or explain things if someone got it and someone else didn't get it. Yeah, I get, I get asked a lot. People seem to just assume that I know things. And I'm like, I have this little idea. But it's fun trying to explain what what you do understand, because sometimes that might be the missing piece that they don't have, doesn't mean I understand all of it. But yeah, and then you kind of start to build a picture together. I do like that back and forth. Yeah, for sure.

**Philip Dewhurst** 41:58

So I think that we just go back to my other questions here. So just a couple of final questions. In terms of the now you'll towards the end of the course. Has it been what you expected?

**Participant A13** 42:20

No, not even a million miles close. But that's because I don't think I knew what I was getting into. And I don't know, what did I expect? I, I had no idea we were going to learn that much anatomy. I don't know what I thought we were going to learn. To be honest. But that was the first year I think because I was a direct entry. It was just crazy. The volume that we were covering from A levels and I did for a level. So I was used to doing more work than I did extra GCSEs. I was used to doing a lot of work. But this was like, oh my god, what am I doing. And so that was a shock. But maybe it's because I had a gap year. So maybe I'd lost that continuity, I don't know. So that was like, yeah. And that set the pace for the rest of the course, really, the second year was just as intense. Third year was a lot more chill bt obviously it's all on Zoom. So then you kind of get that less. I don't know, Zoom was difficult. Just because there was no change of scene, I think I think that really does make a difference to walk from one classroom to another, kind of like, resets you again. Whereas you're just kind of like slumped there on the sofa, and you you kind of got your cup packet of crisps or drink or whatever is it's not the same learning environment at all. You know, and everyone's there. And when you go into uni, you've kind of got these little breaks of people talking in between or asking questions you wouldn't have thought of or, you know, they kind of break up with the learning or sometimes they just stand up and do weird stuff. I don't know. So yeah, and I missed the physical them presenting it on the screen and sometimes the gestures and trying to explain things or like a model or, you know, that was all sort of missed over zoom. I did like over Zoom though, that people's confidence increased to ask questions, because there was the chat function. Yeah, so that was good. But, yeah no, it just wasn't what I expected at all. But then, you know, at the same time, we have had a global pandemic halfway through. So I don't even think it's what the course providers expected for us either. To be honest, so yeah, I don't know. I think I think I have very much enjoyed the core I think there are a lot of things that Yep, was kind of what I was hoping to kind of like the practical and stuff, you know, you see it and you're like, Yeah, that's what I want to do. I just don't, I just was completely blown away by how in depth it is. I just did not get that indication. I don't know why. I think maybe a bit of snobbery of when you only focus on trying to get into medicine. And then the only other course you kind of really know about is physiotherapy. And I do feel like sometimes people look down on the bid on physios. Like it's easy. You're just teaching exercises, whatever. And then in my mind, Chiro was kind of somewhere in between that. So I kind of thought, oh, yeah, it won't be that hard. But I still made it through and I very much enjoyed it. But yeah, definitely took me by surprise.

**Philip Dewhurst** 45:59

And during during your studies overall, how, how important? Has it been for you to have that friends and family supporting you?

**Participant A13** 46:09

Yeah, definitely. Well, that first year was was pretty crap. And it did take it did take me a whole year pretty much to find my tribe really. And once I had my group of friends in second year, that eased off a lot of the anxiety and worry. Um, and then also, like, part of my sort of mental health struggles in first year was eating. And then the second year, I had a friend who would literally invite herself round to cook with me. So definitely, the friends support kept me through my family have not known anything about my mental health at all, not even now. So they haven't really been able to support me with that. But I know, for me, I do get very homesick. And so like, this February, I booked myself a reading week because I knew I wouldn't be able to go all the way to April without going home. So that was good. Yeah, I miss time off, but I needed it as a reset. And that was really hard in third year with the pandemic, not going home for three, four months at a time. That was really difficult. And you just, I just feel so stale. Like I just need that change of scene to go home to reset to clear my mind to get out of this scene that you're surrounded in all of the time. Yeah, it was a shame they got rid of reading week. So I did really appreciate those. Oh, my goodness. But yeah, friendship and family support been super important. And I'm quite lucky that my family aren't too far away. They're only two hours away. So they're quite, they're quite accessible by train really?

**Philip Dewhurst** 48:09

All right, I won't keep you too much longer. What, what do you think the university has done to support your education?

48:22

Well, loads, you know, got all the online, well, I was speaking about earlier years or now.

**Philip Dewhurst** 48:32

anytime throughout the course,

**Participant A13** 48:33

just just just feel like every year has been so different. Because half of its COVID and a half. It's not and it's just a bit crazy, really. earlier years, you know, you'd go in for the lectures and you could ask anything and lecturers were more than happy to stay behind after and go through anything. They had this sort of open door, like come to office, if you have any questions or send an email, if you have any questions. I'm not usually one of those people that will go to a lecturer, I usually just try and find out the answer myself. I don't know maybe anxiety, whatever. But that there was always that option. You know, we always had those booklets. I know, we weren't meant to print them out at uni, but we used to take them to the shop and get them printed. And they were great. All the questions they have that week before exams, where they kind of give you a few hints and tips or things you really might want to have another look at which was helpful. Yeah, I think something that would have been useful would be examples of past papers. That would be cool. That was my main learning method for GCSE and A levels to then not have that and degree is quite difficult, but I do appreciate that some of those questions are recycled into the actual exam. So that is difficult. But yeah, those would have been really helpful. So that was all through first and the second year. Third year Corona, you know, the Zoom calls, I think that was much more difficult. Because you didn't have that in person access. And like, for example, my dissertation or report or whatever they wanted to call it, that was really hard to write up. Without going in and seeing anyone talking about it. Without that pre read as well. Like in years above us, they used to get their stuff proof read first, then they could edit it had I had that, I would have changed my whole dissertation because I got like a crap arse grade for it. But I didn't know, I didn't know I was doing it wrong. If I'd known I was doing it wrong, I would have asked for help. I didn't even know what was doing it wrong to have asked for help. So that was difficult. And I think had someone being there. And like actually checking in on me, as I was doing it, it would have been fairly obvious I was doing it completely wrong. I don't know how I got such the wrong end of the stick, but there we go. So yeah, fourth year, fourth year has been really lovely for clinic placement, the clinical tutors, just really taken on board our knowledge level when not being judgmental, and more than happy to help and point you in the right direction. super supportive. Yeah, it's been really great actually in clinic a lot better than I thought it would be. I think throughout the years, there's been quite a lot of scare mongering as you climb closer to clinic, like, oh, you need to know this, this and this. And when I was a student, I knew this, this and this, and then you get into clinic and you're like, I know nothing. And then they're like, Yeah, we know, you know, nothing, it's fine. We know nothing as well. It's like you don't know nothing. But you know, it's much more of a level playing field a bit, I guess.

**Philip Dewhurst** 51:59

All right. Is there anything that we haven't covered that you you'd like to say or talk about or discuss in the context of your experiences over the over the course?

**Participant A13** 52:20

It's really difficult because like, we give a lot of feedback for the course, design wise anyway. And I feel like are you? Well, my years particularly vocal about that. But then also, you know, the difficulty is last two years haven't gone to anyone's plan. So it's really hard to say if how it would have gone differently had it not been like that. Yeah, I think hopefully, our feedback has made things easier for other user groups anyway. Cuz I know they do respond to the feedback. It's just usually for other people. Yeah, so at least at least it's making changes. Yeah.

**Philip Dewhurst** 53:10

And my last question, then, is, what do you think after this discussion, and done some reflection, what do you think are the key things that can affect or have affected your, your education or your performance when it comes to your assessments? Was there? Is there one particular standout thing or a group of things that you think whether positively or negatively had an impact on on your on your overall performance?

**Participant A13** 53:46

Yeah, so I like to go in and for lectures. It's interesting that there's still that online lecture format. I don't know how the university is going forward with that or not. But definitely the in person lectures helped me a lot and it helped me a lot, especially having mental health problems that I had to get out of bed to go to lectures, and had I not been people would have asked where I was. I think that could definitely be missed, if that's not going to be continued. So definitely being on campus in person as much as possible helped me.

**Philip Dewhurst** 54:35

Is there anything you'd like to ask me now we've come to the end of my question. So is there anything you want to ask me at all?

**Participant A13** 54:47

I don't know. Not really Sure.

**Philip Dewhurst** 55:00

No, you don't have to just given giving you the option. Sometimes people when they, you know, as I said at the beginning, you know how the data is going to be used. But, um, but yeah, I mean, you've been brilliant. And thank you for opening up and, and being honest.