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## **Students' Views on Peer Evaluation & Professionalism: “Getting away with it”**

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Background** This study describes how undergraduate medical students perceive professionalism and their views on peer evaluation as a tool for measuring professionalism.

**Summary of work** 12 undergraduate medical students participated in focus groups after completing a peer evaluation. Focus groups were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Transcripts were coded using a grounded theory approach. This study has since been expanded to include Durham University's current cohort and the University of Liverpool students.

**Summary of results** Two main themes emerged; students' perceptions of how professionalism relates to them (subthemes were attributes, (ir)relevance to students and teaching & learning of professionalism) and views of the design of a peer evaluation tool (subthemes were; online environment, eliminating anonymity, justifying choices and promoting reflection).

**Conclusions** Students appear to know professionalism should be shown in an academic situation; however they feel that as students they should be able to “get away with it”. Thus, students regard professionalism as only relevant in a clinical context, and call for leniency in preclinical years. Students are accepting of peer evaluation for measuring professionalism; preferring an online environment, with the opportunity to justify their decisions. Students report peer evaluation as a driver for reflection on their own behaviour.

**Take-home message** Students view professionalism as irrelevant outside of the clinical environment