

Evaluation Report: Standardised Client Initiative January Pilot 2012

Total respondents: 22

General Themes:

- Very positive
- A more useful learning experience than interviewing other students
- Practical opportunity to develop interviewing skills in a 'safe' environment
- Gain an understanding of personal strengths and weaknesses
- Thoroughly recommended to be introduced to the entire program.


Student Responses:

2. How authentic was the interview experience?						
	not authentic	mixed	authentic	very authentic	Rating Average	Response Count
*	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	72.7% (16)	27.3% (6)	3.27	22
answered question						22

3. How realistic was your client in conveying their concerns?						
	not realistic	mixed	realistic	very realistic	Rating Average	Response Count
*	0.0% (0)	9.1% (2)	54.5% (12)	36.4% (8)	3.27	22
answered question						22

4. How useful do you feel this experience was in preparing you for 'real' client interviews?						
	not useful	mixed	useful	very useful	Rating Average	Response Count
*	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	23.8% (5)	76.2% (16)	3.76	21
answered question						21


5. Do you feel that using Standardised Clients was more beneficial to your learning than practising only on other students?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		100.0%	22
No		0.0%	0
Comment			13
answered question			22

Comments (13):

Much more useful. The age difference was intimidating but given that is what it will be like in reality (at least in early career) it was a very useful exercise.
Because there was no familiarity with the client whereas there was with other students.
The client was very emotional and she conducted herself as if she is really in that situation.
It gave the experience more gravity and reality. There was no option of stopping to ask questions etc, or breaking character.
Not having other students watching made it more realistic, and less role-played, it felt more real.
When practising on students it is hard to take it seriously and it is far less realistic!!
You do not have a familiarity with the person, which makes the process a little more real.
Having a client fully in character was very useful. When practising only on students you tend not to remain in character for the duration.
There was more of an element of the unknown involved, so although it was still an artificial environment, it was a more challenging one.
The interview felt a lot more real, and I found the client's responses more difficult to predict.
Mentally it made me really use my learnings and try to apply that better
It was a very good experience, especially the fact that it we started as soon as we went in, and ended when we left. This made for a very complete experience and made you really think about what it would be like to do it with a real client.
It allowed both role players to be less self-conscious and focus on their tasks more than the acting.

6. In your judgment, was this a worthwhile learning opportunity?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		100.0%	22
No		0.0%	0
Comment			10
answered question			22

6. Comments (10):

Highly recommended!
It showed me that it wasn't as easy as I imagined.
I didn't prepare anything and I'm feeling very good because I'm very pleased with my feedback.
Extremely useful. I recommend that this pilot be launched into the interview workshop as a task for all students to complete. Very useful, very good idea. Viewing the video was most helpful, and I think the best way to critique oneself.
Very worthwhile!! Much closer to the real deal than practising on students
The experience got you to apply the skills you would use in a true client situation. And because it was authentic, it allowed you to gauge your abilities, and eventually helped to identify your strengths and weaknesses.
It allowed me to identify my weaknesses in my interviewing technique, even before receiving feedback.
Any opportunity to practice a skill is valuable; in this case it was particularly valuable because it was closer to a 'real' experience than is achievable just using other students in the classroom.
Certainly besides the invaluable practical experience it did reinforce everything that I have learnt all that I have gained from this course thus far and externally
Yes, as above, it makes for a very good experience and allowed us to make mistake that we couldn't in real life.

7. What aspects of this experience did you find most useful? Why?**Comments (20):**

Recording was beneficial - it provides a rare opportunity to be able to assess your own performance.
Having an older and emotional client challenged me.
Using a standardised client with showing emotions and unable to remember any official documents.
Client was not a law student so they remained in character (making it more difficult to elicit information)
It was more realistic to know very little of the client's situation beforehand. I found the client acted very realistically with the willingness to communicate some things and not others. I think the video will also prove useful to revisit the way I conducted the interview.
The reality of the situation.
It was a realistic example of what it would be like to interview a real client. I think that the client was very believable and realistic.
The ordinary person. It made the experience more realistic and created a scenario that is very similar to that any lawyer will deal with on a daily basis - emotions, confusions, lack of knowledge of the law etc etc
I FOUND THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE VERY USEFUL, PARTICULARLY THE RECORDING.
the fact that there was an opportunity to interview a 'client' who had a better knowledge of the facts of the scenario
The authentic nature of the interview.
The authentic client. It allowed me to treat the interview as legitimate. It also encouraged me to do more preparation than I would have done for a student acting as a client.
The enhanced authenticity of interviewing someone I hadn't ever met before.
Recorded interview.
I found the challenging circumstances of the client and the context of their legal issue very engaging. The interview felt like it encapsulated all the principles we had learnt earlier in the BAP.
helps you identify your strengths and weaknesses i certainly walked away thinking oh i should have said this and i should have asked this and i forgot to mention this...
the 'real' nature of the experience. It made you nervous enough that you put the effort in and felt challenged.
The opportunity to hear unknown facts, which allows you to test your response more naturally. Having a client who was of a different age, rather than another peer, was more authentic and allowed me to practice my manner of talking more realistically.
The 'not-knowing' what might be coming experience. The ability to interview someone who was not a legal practitioner or student (I assume)
Getting to practice on a 'real person' makes you feel more like you are a 'real lawyer' rather than just roleplaying with other students and with other people watching you

8. What aspects of this experience did you find least useful? Why?

Comments (16):

Client seemed particularly reticent to reveal information which to my mind, made it seem less realistic and turned it into more of a game / interrogation
None.
I can't think of anything in particular.
I didn't like having to enter the room after the client - for instance didn't hear the client say come in so was standing outside the door for a bit until she had to open the door
n/a
It was a bit awkward walking in holding my bags and having to put them down, maybe having a spot for students to leave their things before going in would be better. It was a bit distracting.
NIL
n/a
The only issue I had was the location of the interview. To make it more realistic, I would have the interview in either a conference room or the solicitor's office.
I didn't find any aspect of this not useful, overall I found the entire experience very useful.
It's absolutely unavoidable at this stage of the course that we are interviewing without being able to provide substantive advice, but it does add a further unreality to the situation.
Lack of guidance on topics to cover.
not having a lot of information to work with but i guess that is the reality of it
None it was great.
none

9. Do you have any further comments or suggestions for the use of Standardised Clients in the GDLP?

Comments (17):

Make it compulsory. My more valuable than student - student interviews
Generally the lawyer would know the approximate age of the client so perhaps students should be told before they walk into the room.
Every student should get this opportunity and it is not a bad idea to assess student's competency as part of GDLP.
Very useful, should definitely keep doing it.
I highly recommend it!
I think it should be a compulsory element - if not for assessment purposes, at least for education purposes and further interviewing practice for the students.
THIS ASSESSMENT METHOD IS SOMETHING THAT I HAVE ALWAYS THOROUGHLY SUPPORTED; KEEP IT GOING.
recording software needs to be upgraded as it is out of sync and therefore hard to follow
My standardised client was very professional and did extremely well in her role. Generally, I would recommend more emotion, but this is a minor point.
I think this is a good programme to continue running for future GDLP students.
Perhaps the interview was 5 or 10 minutes too short.
glad to be apart of it thank you for supporting my development
Make it compulsory for all. That way, students that do not have much experience and more importantly are not confident in these environments can demonstrate to themselves what they are capable of!
I would always have a glass of water in my office or conference room. I also think that it is often hard when you don't know about the law itself, because it undermines your confidence on other things. Maybe it would be good to say it's a repossession matter and maybe give a bit of the possible outcomes, for example I didn't know what the bankruptcy situation would entail, which is what I would have wanted to reassure her about that process in some way - it would have also effected my next actions etc. Basically knowing that would have made me less anxious in other aspects as well.
I think it's a great idea. Helped me more than the student interviews and I came out of it really excited to try and help clients in future cases