



Summary report of the LHCSTN Pre-Registration Clinical Scientist Survey 2025

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Introduction

In August 2025, the London Healthcare Science Trainee Network (LHCSTN) Pre-Registration sub-committee developed and distributed a Pre-Registration Clinical Scientist Survey. The purpose of this survey was to identify the professional development and training needs of non-STP Healthcare Scientists across all specialisms in London.

The survey was shared with all 606 network members via email, as well as with training leads and practice educators within the North Thames and South East Genomic Laboratory Hubs (GLHs).

The LHCSTN Pre-Reg committee has since reviewed and compiled all responses into this report. The insights gathered are intended to inform and guide the future work of the LHCSTN, ensuring that the network continues to provide effective, relevant and targeted support to its members.

The committee extends sincere thanks to all those who participated in the survey. Your contributions have been invaluable in helping the LHCSTN better understand the current landscape of training and development for pre-registration clinical scientists across London.

The following report presents a summary of responses to each of the 6 questions included in the survey. Please note: all personal identifiers (e.g., name, employer/NHS Trust and specialism) have been removed to protect participant confidentiality.

The following sections outline the key responses collected from the survey:

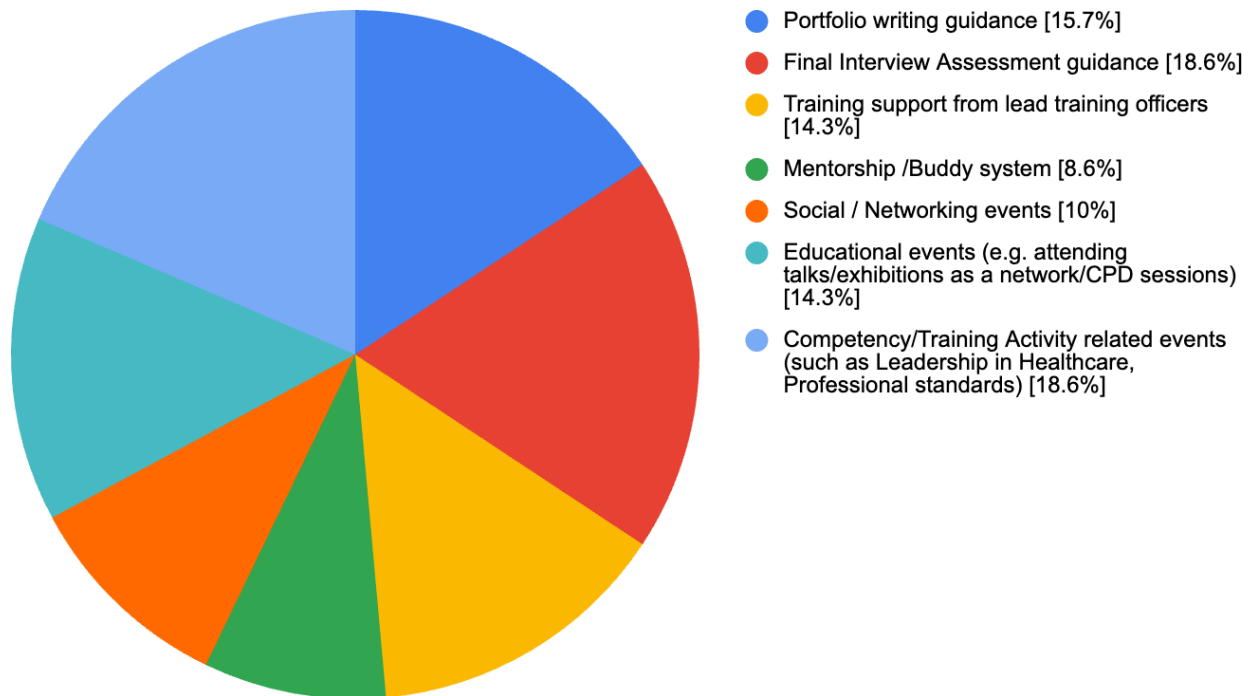
Section 1: Participant Demographics by Registration Route

- AHCS STP Certificate of Equivalence [57.1%] ● ACS Route Two Certificate of Attainment [28.6%]
● HCPC International Route [14.3%]



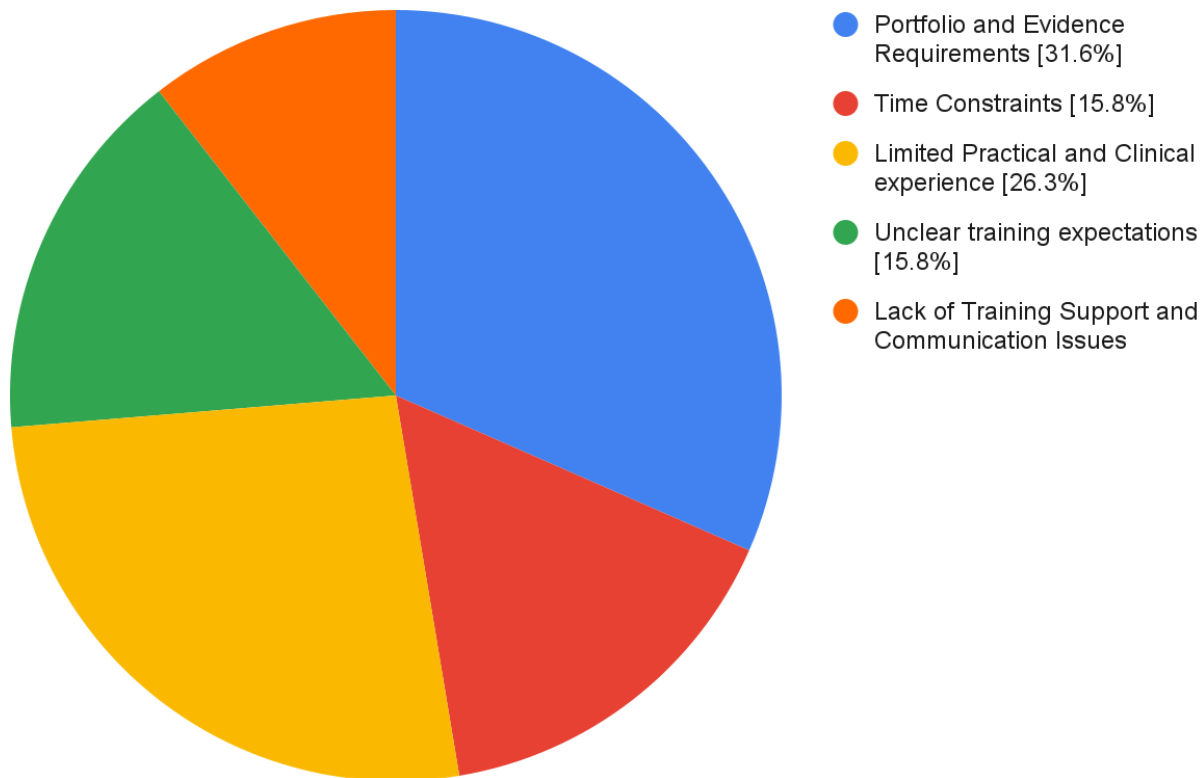
The majority of survey participants are on the AHCS STP Certificate of Equivalence training route, accounting for 57.1% of responses. The other half are made up of pre-regs following the ACS Route Two Certificate of Attainment (28.6%) and the HCPC International Route (14.3%). Overall, these findings highlight the diversity of pathways into Clinical Scientist registration across London.

Section 2: How best pre-regs would like to be supported



Survey respondents highlighted a variety of preferences for support throughout their pre-registration training. Final Interview Assessment guidance and Competency/Training Activity-related events received the most votes (both 18.6%) closely followed by the need for portfolio guidance, support from lead training officers and access to more educational events. These results show a strong demand for structured preparation, training and professional development support.

Section 3: Areas of difficulty in training



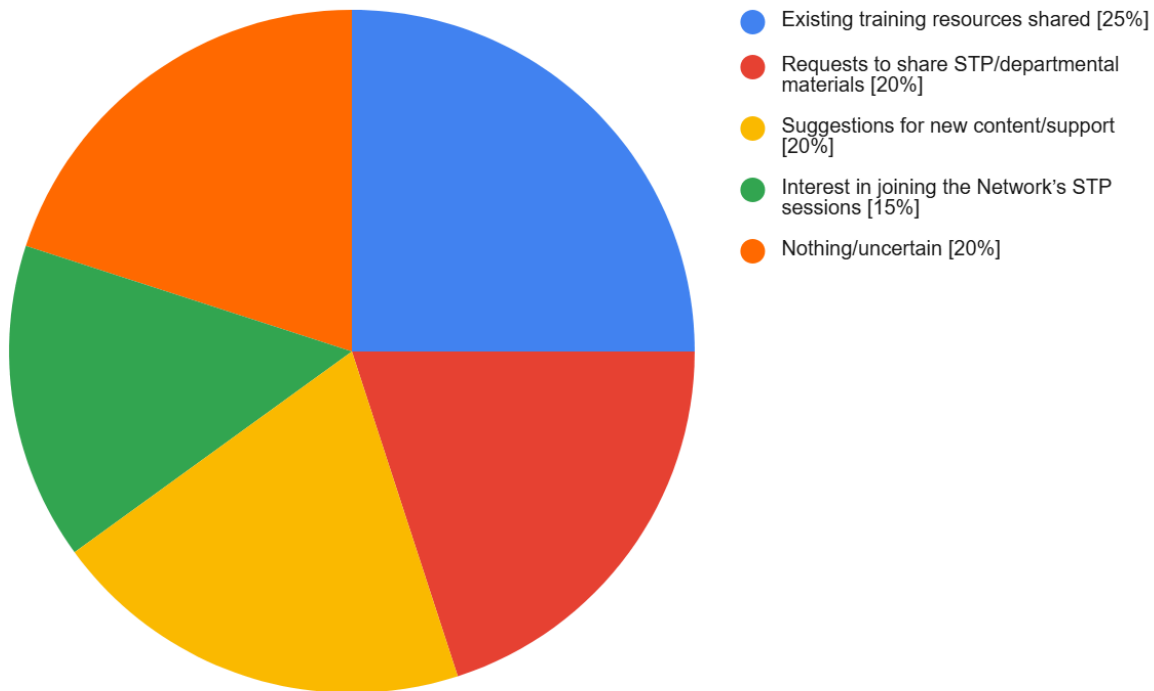
The main difficulties pre-reg trainees face during their training are related to portfolio and evidence requirements. This suggests that many pre-regs struggle with understanding what is required in their portfolio and meeting evidence expectations. The second most common challenge, identified by 26.3% of respondents, is limited practical and clinical experience indicating a need for more training opportunities. Time constraints, unclear training expectations and a lack of training support and communication issues were also identified as areas of difficulty. Better guidance, support and hands-on learning opportunities could help address these issues.

Section 4: Suggested ways the London HCSTN can support pre-reg during their training

This section was set up to understand what we, the London HCSTN, can do to strengthen support for pre-registration trainees across London. Several initiatives were proposed by respondents to enhance communication, resource sharing and professional development.

- Create a shared folder or document
 - a. Set up a shared Google Drive or OneDrive folder to upload useful resources (NEQAS videos links, lecture slides, model portfolios, handbooks).
 - b. Encourage members to add any new or useful materials they come across.
 - c. In future, collaborate with AHCS and ACS to provide example portfolios or sections of portfolios for trainees to look at.
- Promote existing opportunities & improve access to STP training resources across the trainee network
 - a. Current STP sessions like clubs or presentations can be promoted and encouraged for attendance and presentation by pre-reg via email or a section of the newsletter.
 - b. Sharing lecture slides and STP presentations more widely, especially with pre-reg, to improve accessibility.
 - c. The London HCSTN would like to encourage collaboration and networking across all training programmes in London and as such, resource sharing would be valuable
- Create a handbook, including official resources and websites, training timeline and key stage checklists and an FAQ section addressing common training knowledge gaps and signposting to resources where necessary.
- Have regular pre-reg team meetings across London including:
 - a. An informal coffee morning or coach cafe where trainees can connect with each other and mentors for guidance and support and to share resources and ideas
 - b. A formal annual pre-reg development meeting to offer more specific guidance on portfolio writing and interview preparation tips.

Section 5: Suggested useful training resources



Survey responses highlighted the need to improve access to and awareness of useful training materials for pre-registration trainees. Pre-reg participants suggested wider sharing of existing resources, the development of new materials to support key competencies and more opportunities to build professional skills.

Examples of existing useful training resources which can be shared/signposted to include NEQAS videos on YouTube, London Imaging Academy's modality overviews and Clinical handbooks such as the Pathology Portal and GTAC Academy.

Suggestions for further resource development can include generating materials supporting specific competencies like model portfolios or journal club sessions to build presentation skills.

Some additional needs identified included early-stage guidance on financial management and available support services and clearer advice on the equivalence process. Educating managers and mentors to signpost trainees to existing resources would also be very beneficial.

Section 6: Improving LHCSTN Outreach to Pre-Registration Trainees

Theme	Recommendations
Increase visibility and presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greater presence at lab-based or hospital events (e.g., National Science Week) - Engage more with training officers through attendance at check-ins or departmental meetings - Encourage collaboration between LHCSTN and individual teams/departments
Improve communication and clarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide clearer information on what LHCSTN offers, especially compared to other support bodies - Increase the frequency of communications
Support at the start of the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide a welcome pack for new pre-regs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training handbook • Stress management tips • Local support contacts • Expectations of trainees
Create Pre-Reg specific opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dedicated drop-in sessions for Pre-Regs - Team meetings exclusively for Pre-Regs - Structured training programme similar to the STP model
National engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Host more national events for Pre-Regs

The majority of survey results suggest that LHCSTN could better support pre-registration trainees by increasing its visibility and engagement and also by strengthening links with training officers and departments.



Conclusion

Overall, the results of the 2025 Pre-Registration Clinical Scientist Survey make it clear that pre-registration trainees across London share a strong desire for more structured, accessible and collaborative support. Across all specialisms and registration routes, pre-registration clinical scientists identified common challenges, where respondents highlighted that additional guidance, clearer expectations and better access to training opportunities would significantly improve their development. Importantly, trainees also offered practical, achievable suggestions, ranging from shared resource hubs to enhanced communication and more tailored educational events, which help provide a clear roadmap for future action.

These findings not only deepen our understanding of the trainee experience but also emphasise the crucial role of the LHCSTN in bridging gaps and strengthening the support landscape. It has allowed the pre-reg sub-committee to create some next steps and action some of these outcomes with the relevant practice educators, training leads, professional bodies or involve external stakeholders. The first initiative we plan to introduce is a dedicated pre-reg section on the London HCSTN website, where we will progressively add useful, relevant content and promote opportunities where possible. We also intend to develop a pre-reg handbook that will include training guidance, wellbeing and stress-management support, local contacts and advice from recently registered peers. In addition, the LHCSTN pre-reg committee plans to facilitate regular pre-reg meetings, both online and in person, to enable pre-reg to share resources, ideas, and experiences, and to offer guidance and support to one another. Lastly, we aim to increase our visibility and presence through events and collaboration with other bodies to strengthen communication.

By acting on the recommendations put forward, the pre-reg committee has the opportunity to foster a more consistent, equitable, and engaging training environment for all pre-registration scientists. We understand how the journey may be difficult sometimes, hence we would like to become the movement for change to help bring about more guidance and clarity.

Due to its insight, it is likely that the pre-registration survey will continue to take place annually which will allow the LHCSTN to monitor progress, remain responsive to emerging needs and continue shaping a supportive, trainee-centred community.