

HEE Reporting Radiography Upskilling Programme – Year 1

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What was the reason for the programme?

NHS England committed to improve outcomes for cancer patients, with recommendations made by the Independent Cancer Taskforce¹ reinforced in the Long Term Plan.² Rapid diagnosis is one way to improve outcomes and experience for patients who present with a potential cancer diagnosis. However, a shortage of consultant radiologists means there are delays in the provision of timely and accurate imaging reports. Radiographer reporting is one method to increase diagnostic capacity,³ in a safe,⁴⁻⁶ effective⁷⁻⁸ and efficient way.⁹⁻¹⁰ As part of the Phase 1 Cancer Workforce Plan, Health Education England (HEE) committed to train 300 Reporting Radiographers (RRs) by the end of 2020 (2018-2020).¹¹

What action was taken?

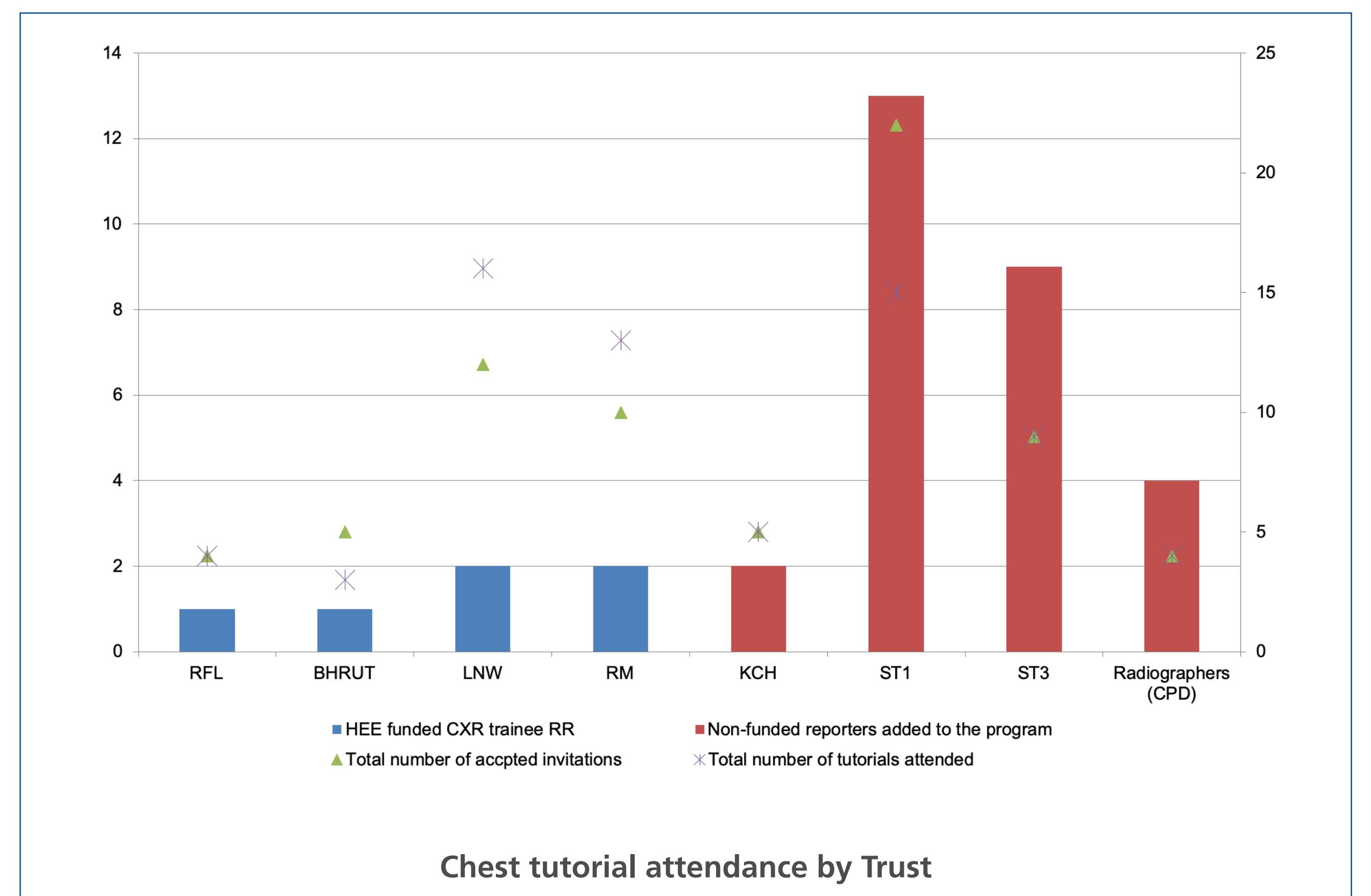
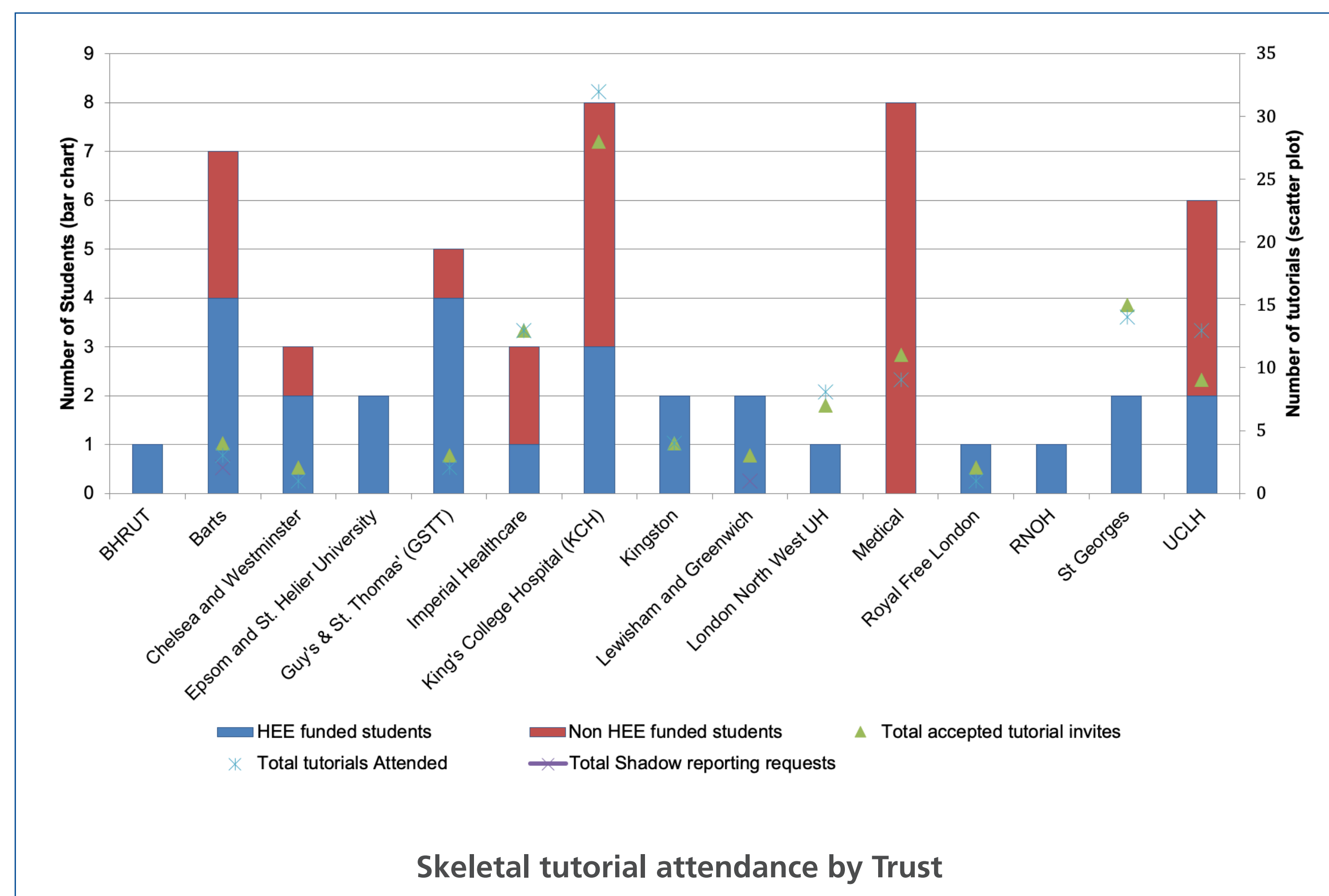
A total of 42 training places were allocated to London in Year 1 (2018-19). A call for expressions of interest was made to radiology departments in June 2018. Training places were oversubscribed, with places allocated by Cancer Alliance and HEE workforce leads as an equal distribution across the five London STPs.

Trainee radiographers were enrolled on five programmes at four higher education institutions. Given the distribution of trainees, centralised tutorial support was provided for chest (CXR) and skeletal (MSK) reporting, with stream leads overseeing the development and delivery of sessions. A clinical director was appointed to oversee the programme, working with the programme team and liaising with the Head of School for London Radiology to provide shared learning for the first year specialist trainees (ST1s) in clinical radiology.

Trainee distribution

HEI	Modality					Total
	MSK	Chest	Abdo	Mammo	Paed Oncol MRI	
CCCU	12	8	3	-	-	23
LSBU	7	-	-	1	-	8
Herts	8	-	-	-	1	9
Kingston	-	-	-	2	-	2
Total	27	8	3	3	1	42

Trainee engagement

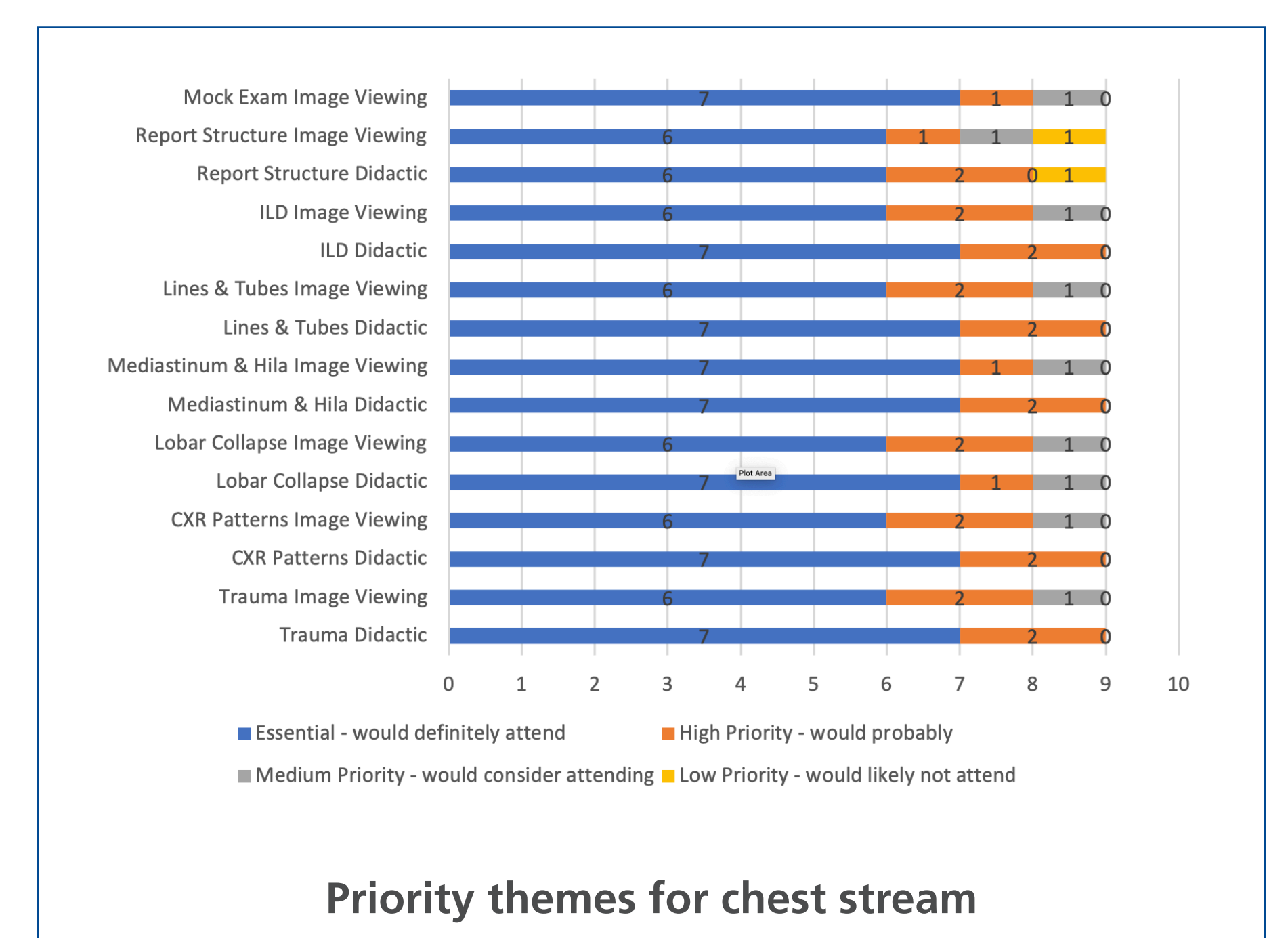
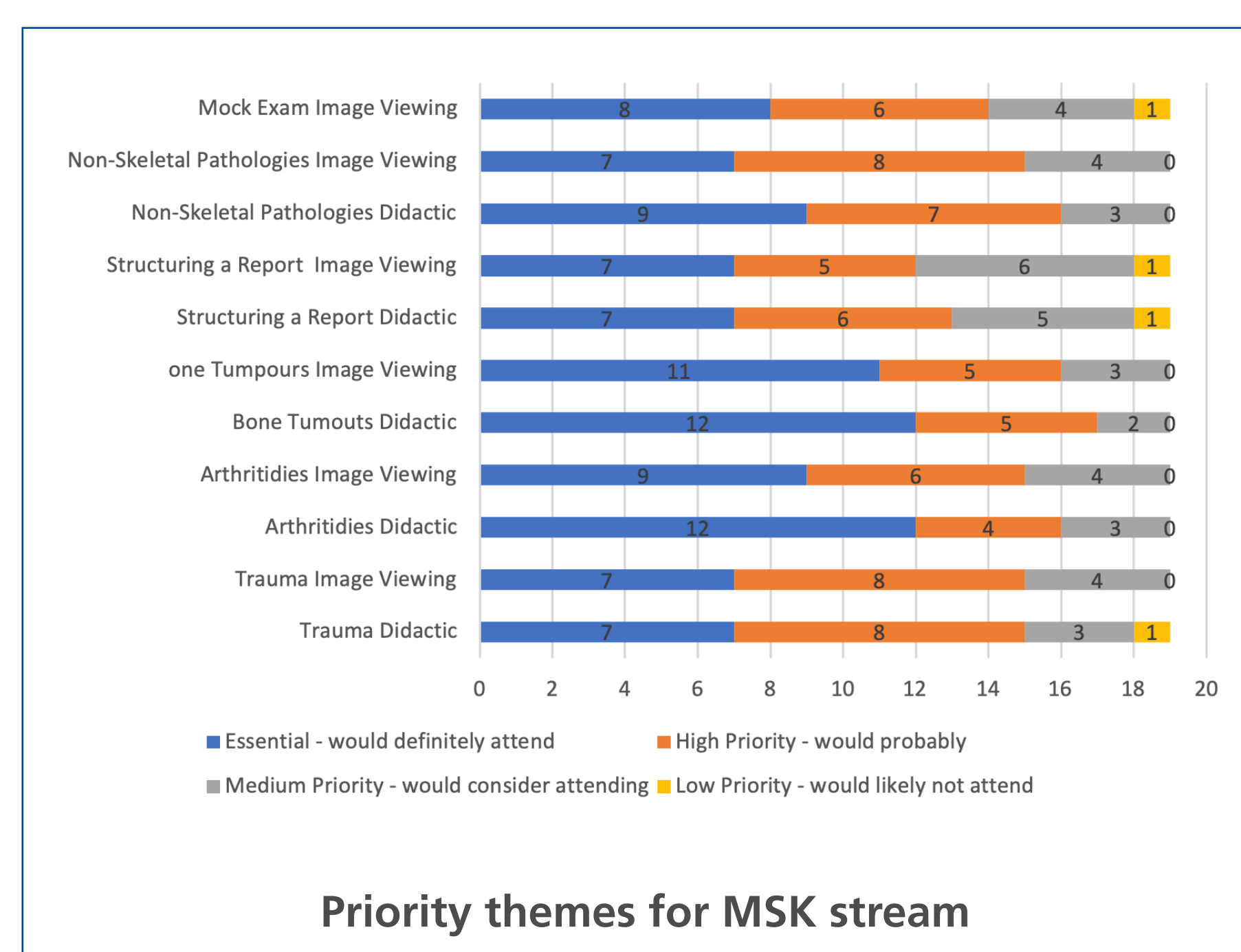


2018-19 trainee survey

- Examined engagement with the programme, local mentorship support and to prioritise themes for tutorials
- Circulated to all HEE supported trainee RRs, qualified RRs and ST1s who had attended at least one session and all departmental leads
- 25 responses received

Results

- Most local mentorship involved a consultant radiologist. Some RR trainees were supported by a RR only
- MSK trainee RRs rated local mentorship more highly than chest trainees
- Most trainees (44%) regularly had 1-2 hours a week with their local mentor, involving case-based discussions and marking practice reports
- 32% of trainees indicated that they did not have any regular time with their mentor (seven consultant radiologists, one RR)



Barriers and recommendations

- Lack of departmental release was frequently reported as a barrier - virtual tutorials were identified by 40% of respondents as a method to increase participation. Virtual streaming sessions have now been successfully delivered (from July 2019) and will continue to be run into the 2019-20 cohort.
- External mentorship for practice reporting could be beneficial - access to case-mix and difficulties with mentors marking practice reports were often seen to be a challenge.

Other achievements and future steps

- Cross-trust mentorship – As a result of the network, trainees from a specialist cancer hospital, who did not have access to CXRs from primary care, emergency/acute referrals or non-oncology outpatients were able to gain access, via the leadership team, to cases at a suitable co-host clinical site for practice reporting, complementing the mentorship provided by local radiologists. This has worked well and will be continued into year 2.
- Cross-trust support - The HEE mentorship programme has acted as a catalyst for a community of practice of trainee and qualified RRs and, to a lesser extent, imaging managers. For example, peer advice and support has extended beyond teaching and has included sharing and collaboration of standard operating procedures, reporting radiographer peer review templates and protocols and scopes of practice. This will continue to be developed.
- Benchmarking - An online tool (RAIQC) has been developed at Oxford to benchmark performance in CXR interpretation. As part of the initial assessment and ongoing evaluation, this was offered to current CXR trainees. It is hoped that RAIQC can be used to track performance over time, both through training and post-qualification, as well as one aspect of assurance of ongoing competence.