

BPNA Paediatric Neurology Grid Application Support 1: Written Applications

Mark Atherton and Eusra Hassan

Chair and Deputy Chair- Paediatric Neurology Grid Trainees Special Interest Group

Philip Levine

BPNA Professional Support Officer

September 2020

Aims and objectives

- To discuss the application process when applying for paediatric neurology Grid training
- Understand how to tailor your application to paediatric neurology
- Signpost further support available from the BPNA and regional paediatric neurology centres
- (Note: further support available through the BPNA regarding the Grid interviews, not covered in this presentation)



BPNA

British Paediatric Neurology Association

Paediatric neurology Grid Applications

- Applications run through Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH)
 - [Link to RCPCH application guide](#)
 - (Open in presentation mode to access hyperlink)
- Annual application process, timeline for each year published around July-August on RCPCH website
- Usually have three weeks to complete the online application
- Questions and scoring criteria are **very similar each year for each specialty** therefore you can begin thinking about your application answers in advance!
- Application questions currently constitute 25% of total score and interview score 75% of total score



BPNA

British Paediatric Neurology Association

Timeline (for 2020)

- Monday 24 August, 12:00: Grid adverts (i.e. posts) published on NHS jobs and RCPCH websites
- Monday 07 September, 12:00: applications open on RCPCH website
- Monday 14 September: deadline for confirmation of eligibility forms to be sent to deanery contact (usually your current Head of School of Paediatrics in the deanery in which you **currently** work)
- Monday 28 September, 12:00: applications close
- Week commencing Monday 02 November: invitations to interview and shortlisting outcomes released

Timeline (for 2020)

- 16 November – 01 December: RCPCH Grid interview dates
 - Monday 16 – Tuesday 17 November for Paediatric Neurology and Neurodisability this year
- Monday 30 November: deadline for confirmation of preference choices (i.e. ranking of jobs)
- From Wednesday 09 December: offers made
- January 2021: clearing round (if applicable)



BPNA

British Paediatric Neurology Association

Application criteria

- Check Grid eligibility criteria
 - [Link to eligibility criteria](#)
 - (Open in presentation mode to access hyperlink)
- Typically can make 2 applications (i.e. two years). A third application can be made if certain criteria are met- see eligibility criteria
- Your CCT date cannot be moved to accommodate Grid training
- Must specify in the application if you wish to be considered for LTFT training (although can apply during Grid training)
- You can apply for a maximum 2 specialties each year



BPNA

British Paediatric Neurology Association

Preferences

- Will depend upon the rotations available each year
- Some centres will have posts every year, others less frequently
- Can rank as many or as few as you wish
- Only rank posts you are willing to accept- if you are offered a post and you decline it, you will not be offered another
- If you only rank 1 or 2 posts and other candidates score more highly than you, they will be offered the post(s) first (if they have indicated these as their first choice) and you may then not be offered a post despite being deemed appointable

Posts available 2020



BPNA

British Paediatric Neurology Association

(to start August or September 2021)

- [Link to Paediatric Neurology Grid Posts \(to start 2021\)](#)
- (Open in presentation mode to access hyperlink)
- Posts available vary each year- these are released usually in August each year



BPNA

British Paediatric Neurology Association

Application questions

- Read the scoring criteria beforehand and tailor your answers accordingly! (See later slide for link)
- Always answer the questions with relevance to paediatric neurology
 - If you have presented/published in other fields, these will count in the publication/presentation/posters section
 - If you have an audit/QI project from another specialty that would score highly then use this to illustrate your transferable skills
- If you are ST1-4, you can view the questions and scoring criteria **now** and work on areas to improve your scores. If you need help ask your educational supervisor, the BPNA or your regional paediatric neurology centre



BPNA

British Paediatric Neurology Association

Application questions

- Tips:
 - Read the questions carefully and plan your answers ensuring you cover **all** the points in the questions!
 - Mirror the words used in the scoring criteria in your answers



BPNA

British Paediatric Neurology Association

Questions

- You will be asked questions in the written application on:
 - Clinical experience
 - Quality improvement/audit
 - Management experience
 - Research achievements
 - Publications/presentations/posters
 - Education/teaching
 - Statement to support application
- Ensure all answers are relevant to paediatric neurology wherever possible, unless other projects would score more highly on the scoring criteria.
- Demonstrate what you have learnt and any transferable skills in all answers
- Always check your answers against the scoring criteria to maximise your score!



BPNA

British Paediatric Neurology Association

Longlisting and shortlisting scoring

- [Scoring criteria link \(2020\)](#)
- (Open in presentation mode to access hyperlink)
- Always refer to this document when answering the questions!
This is how your answers will be scored.



Scoring criteria- Clinical experience

Clinical experience relevant to application level and experience of applicant

No evidence	0
Examples with little relevance to the sub-specialty and/or little attempt to explain relevance of skills	1
Examples limited in scope and/or somewhat vague/unspecific with limited/superficial attempt to link examples to specialty	2
One significant and specific example of skills, with relevance to specialty and own development clearly explained (e.g. content or transferable skills)	3
More than one specific and significant example of skills, with relevance to specialty	4

- 4 points for **two examples** which are **relevant to neurology** where you can demonstrate how this contributed to your development



Scoring criteria- QI/Audit

Quality Improvement/Audit experience relevant to application level and experience of applicant

No projects undertaken	0
Participation in relevant clinical projects, but has not designed or led QIP/audit	1
Evidence of having designed and led projects(s)	2
Evidence of having designed, led and presented a good quality projects, describing the project cycle process, and participated in regular useful projects involvement throughout training	3
Evidence of having designed led and presented good quality projects. Has a good record of significant regular useful project involvement throughout training, being involved in the cycle process describing subsequent service change.	4

- 4 points for **designing/leading and presenting** projects and **describing subsequent service change**.
- **Describe where your project fits into the audit cycle** (and use examples of projects in different stages of the cycle to illustrate your knowledge of this)



Scoring criteria- Research

Research achievements relevant to application level and experience of applicant

No research	0
Poor description of research experience and/or limited to required undergraduate experience	1
Good description of postgraduate research project of a high standard, with some input by applicant	2
Good description of postgraduate research of a high standard with significant input by applicant, which has achieved local recognition	3
Clear precise description of postgraduate research, with significant input by applicant, which has achieved national recognition	4

- Can be difficult to increase your score quickly before submitting an application!
- Can get involved in local trials- completing Good Clinical Practice course allows you to consent for clinical trials etc.



Scoring criteria- Teaching

Education - Involvement in teaching relevant to application level and experience of applicant

- The first 3 points are to be awarded for involvement in teaching. A further point can be gained if a formal qualification in teaching/education has been completed. The maximum points that can be achieved in this area of assessment is 4.
- Candidates must have completed the course/qualification, not just registered.
- Candidates should already have received further points for their specific postgraduate qualification.

No experience of delivered teaching	0
Very limited participation in some local teaching	1
Contributed to local teaching (but did not lead)	2
Designed and led local/regional teaching	3

- The point for formal teaching is awarded on top of the score for the above criteria - i.e. it does not automatically guarantee a total score of 4 in this area

Also has formal teaching qualifications: e.g. completion of Generic Instructor Course (GIC), Teach the Teacher's or equivalent or Postgraduate qualification in medical education	+1
---	----

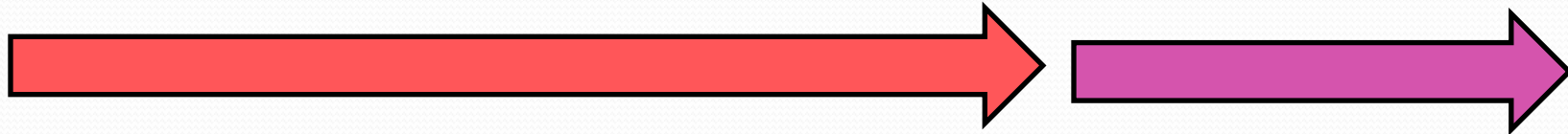
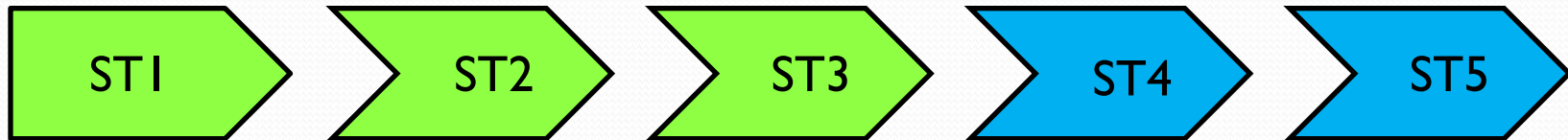
- Highest points for **designing and leading** local teaching- ask to get involved in your department!
- Extra point for formal qualification, e.g. APLS/NLS instructor etc.



BPNA

British Paediatric Neurology Association

How can I maximise my score and show interest in neurology?



Attend clinics

Design local teaching-departmental, medical students

Begin planning your application early

Neurology QI/audit projects

Join BPNA

Instructor/teaching courses

Abstracts for BPNA/EPNS conferences

Good clinical practice course/ neurology research projects

Contact the BPNA for support



BPNA

British Paediatric Neurology Association

How can I maximise my score and show interest in neurology?

- Use phrases from scoring criteria to illustrate how your examples meet the criteria for high marks
- Ask to attend paediatric neurology clinics
- Join the BPNA (need nominations from two current members- contact your regional neurology centre)
- Paediatric epilepsy training (PET) courses- particularly PET₁
- Submit abstract to BPNA or EPNS (European Paediatric Neurology Society) conferences.
- Undertake an audit/quality improvement project in paediatric neurology- contact your regional neurology centre



BPNA

British Paediatric Neurology Association

Further support

- Ask your educational supervisor (although remember that projects in paediatric neurology may allow you to show your interest more than those in other specialties- beware doing projects your supervisor wants doing more for their personal or departmental gain!)
- Support available through the BPNA website (including accompanying recorded webinar)
- Your regional paediatric neurology centre will be happy to help support your application- contact them early! They will have projects if you ask!
- If unsure, contact the head of department, any Grid trainees in the centre, or the BPNA will be able to advise on consultants in the region
- If in doubt, please contact Mark, Eusra or Philip for further details:
 - m.atherton@doctors.net.uk
 - eusra.hassan@nhs.net
 - philip.levine@bpna.org.uk

Don't forget

- Start your written application early once the applications open (only have 3 weeks)
- Tailor your answers to paediatric neurology where possible (unless other examples score more highly)
- Always answer questions using scoring criteria
- Ask for your answers to be reviewed before submitting- give people time to do this!
- Need to ensure your Head of School completes the eligibility form (this is usually very straightforward and a formality to confirm you are eligible to apply). *Do not leave this until the day before the submission deadline. Most deaneries ask for at least 2 weeks notice- they will be doing lots of these forms!*

Summary

- Paediatric neurology is an interesting and varied career
- The application process runs to a similar timeline each year
- The questions asked are similar each year and will cover the same general topics
- Ask for support with your application- the BPNA and your regional neurology centre will be happy to help you



BPNA

British Paediatric Neurology Association

Thank you



For questions and further support please
contact Mark, Eusra or Philip

m.atherton@doctors.net.uk

eusra.hassan@nhs.net

philip.levine@bpna.org.uk