



Association of British Neurologists

Making an ACCEA application

Follow the guide

It is really important not to put information in the wrong place or in the wrong box, and it annoys the marker if you fill out the research box as well as the special research form.

First impressions are really important

In practice, these are scored at local and RCP level along with many tens of other applications, in the evening by an overworked physician. In the early sifting stage, each application may take a scorer only two or three minutes, and first impressions will really matter. Remember also that some key people along the way will be lay members, with no medical training, so you must write the application to be understood by them too.

Work hard on the Royal College form

The RCP selection is more important than the ABN selection, and it is rare to be successful overall unless there is RCP support. So it is worth putting a lot of effort into the College application.

Write out all the form in Word before transferring to the form.

The ACCEA form may not have a spell check and it is difficult to change words in the format presented: you cannot risk putting information directly into it.

Split each box into paragraphs (perhaps 4 per box)

Solid text is hard to read and does not show you off to best effect. Far better to consolidate your achievements into four clearly labelled domains for each box.

Write in full sentences

Write in full sentences rather than in notes, but be very economical with words.

Include dates

Include dates of everything you mention. If you can squeeze a reference into the box, then this proves there was a genuine product to the work you are mentioning.

Avoid abbreviations

Avoid all abbreviations, even RCP or BMA, or spell them out at first mention. Headings are important, to indicate the topic of each paragraph. Because the RCP application puts everything into plain single spaced text without bullets, you need capital letters to make the paragraph headings stand out.

Check the spelling very carefully

Because there may be no spell checker on the actual form, it is easy to overlook a misspelling, which will grate with the assessor.

Fill in all the boxes completely

Fill all the boxes, using the full permitted word count: it is important to look as if you could have written far more if only space had allowed. Even if there is a genuine gap (e.g. the box asking for research on teaching and training in the detailed teaching form) you must fill the box with something.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

The Personal statement is not marked, but is going to be read by all scorers and so will set the mindset of the scorer. Also, it will be published if your application is successful so it is important to get it absolutely right. It might have four headings such as:

1. LOCAL PROFILE
2. WIDER PROFILE
3. TEACHING AND TRAINING
4. RESEARCH

JOB PLAN

The **job plan** is important, even though it is not scored, and it needs to be completely clear how many sessions you are paid and how much NHS work you are contracted for. Again this is an opportunity use the full permitted word count to include information about what you do over and above your contracted time. People on 15 sessions already are often considered (rightly or wrongly) to be getting appropriate remuneration and so can only demonstrate 'over and above' with some difficulty.

This is my job plan and could easily be yours:

*I deliver **11 PAID SESSIONS** and **5 UNPAID SESSIONS** per week.*

PAID SESSIONS: *Nine are as NHS Consultant Neurologist—6 of Direct Clinical Care (DCC), 3 as Supporting Professional Activity (SPA)—and two for the University Deanery. I have no uncontracted time, and do no private practice or private medico-legal work. I have two general neurology outpatient clinics weekly, invariably overbooked and combined with additional training/teaching duties; I regularly undertake a third and even fourth clinic per week voluntarily to maintain follow-up waiting lists and help to meet Directorate targets. I supervise and discuss cases from several specialist nurse-led epilepsy clinics per week. Ward and neurological emergencies cover is 1 in 6 during weekdays. Out of hours and weekend cover from home is 1 in 12, and includes (since 2010) being one of five neurologists delivering acute cover for regional stroke thrombolysis.*

*My **5 UNPAID SESSIONS** per week (evenings and weekends) reflect extra duties for... (if you include a timetable, make sure it includes Saturday and Sunday)*

DELIVERING A HIGH QUALITY SERVICE

This can again be four headings and must contain numbers, benchmark data and dates. It's also the place to include your patient survey data done for revalidation.

1. **SERVICE DELIVERY.** I maintain a high clinic workload, including...
2. **EXEMPLARY CLINICAL STANDARDS.** Excellent feedback in verified Equiniti360 survey 2013: colleagues (n=15) total score ... (..% of possible), UK benchmark ... (..%); patients (n=29) ...% 'very satisfied'.
3. **SERVICE LEADERSHIP.** I am Neurology Clinical Lead (2006–) for .. consultants..
4. **EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE.**

DEVELOPING A HIGH QUALITY SERVICE

Again, this must contain examples and dates. Examples of the four headings here might be:

1. **SERVICE INNOVATION.** I championed a unique service (2009–date) expediting specialist access (from mean 22 to 11 days) and improving patient experience. This service led to the Chief Executive Award 2012, and quotation, "...".
2. **PATIENT CENTREDNESS.** ...
3. **EDUCATIONAL APPROACHES.** I organised and chaired the
4. **LEADERSHIP AND TEAM BUILDING.**

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGING A HIGH QUALITY SERVICE

Examples of headings here might be

1. **POLICY DEVELOPMENT**
2. **HEALTH SERVICES LEADERSHIP**
3. **PROFESSIONAL SOCIETY LEADERSHIP**
4. **PUBLIC EDUCATION**

TEACHING AND TRAINING

Examples of headings here might be

1. **NATIONAL LEADERSHIP**
2. **LOCAL EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP**
3. **INNOVATIVE ASSESSMENT AND TRAINING**
4. **INVITED LECTURER**

RESEARCH

Examples of headings here might be

1. **UNDERGRADUATE ASSESSMENT**
2. **POSTGRADUATE SUPERVISION AND THESIS REFEREE**
3. **SUCCESSFUL GRANT APPLICATIONS**
4. **INVITED PEER REVIEW**