**Neuropsychology**

Job Summary

As a Neuropsychologist you would use your knowledge of the relationship between the brain and neuropsychological function as a basis for investigation into the cognitive functioning of patients with suspected or established brain damage. You would carry out assessments and rehabilitation to help in diagnosis and to advise on coping in everyday situations. Furthermore, Neuropsychologists may also be called on to provide reports for courts or insurers regarding issues such as loss of capacity or function.

Typically, your work would involve…

* Working with other professions such as neurologists and neurosurgeons
* Working in a rehabilitation centre involving training, assessment and support to patients and minimise further problems
* Research (eg: developing new drugs)
* Some work in the forensic field – they help to assess suspects and can be expert witnesses in courts

Neuropsychologists usually get paid a similar amount to Clinical Psychologists depending on whether they work in public or private settings and how experienced they are.

Qualifications – How do I become a Neuropsychologist?

1. You will need a 3-year degree in Psychology that meets the standards of accreditation by the British Psychological Society. Qualification with a 2i or more gives you eligibility to apply for a **GBC** (**G**raduate **B**asis for **C**hartered Membership of BPS).
2. You will need to obtain relevant work experience
3. To be a Neuropsychologist, you will need to undertake accredited postgraduate training for eligibility to apply for status for a Chartered Psychologist through either a Clinical or Educational training route.
4. You will need to complete the BPS Qualification in Clinical Neuropsychology

What relevant work experience would I need?

Improvements in brain imaging techniques have led to a higher demand for Neuropsychologists. To become a Neuropsychologist you have to go through either a Clinical or Educational route, which are both highly competitive areas. Therefore, it is essential to be able to show postgraduate selectors your work experience skills as well as your degree qualifications. Work experience is also an excellent way to apply your knowledge of the course to the real world!

Shadowing a Clinical Psychologist may be an effective way to pick up some of the skills and qualities needed. Psychologists can be found in your local area through the BPS website - <http://www.bps.org.uk/psychology-public/find-psychologist/find-psychologist>.

The following points include examples of relevant work experience; some include jobs in the local area.

* Voluntary or paid Research Assistant - The University of Southampton runs a programme for a Voluntary Research Assistant (VRA). This is unpaid and usually runs over the summer or a few hours a week during term time. It is a great opportunity to increase your chances of achieving a place on a postgraduate course. In addition, the researchers could write a letter of reference for you.
* Voluntary work with people with disabilities/ mental health issues/ learning difficulties. Volunteer Coordinator for The Rainbow Centre - <http://www.susu.org/community-volunteering/opportunities-detail.html?opportunity=Volunteer+Coordinator>
* Voluntary work for UK charities for people with brain injuries at Headway Southampton - <http://www.headway-soton.co.uk/volunteering/>. There are currently two opportunities available: one is supporting the individuals with activities and the other is working as a volunteer mentor.
* Working with the NHS <http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/explore_teachers_students.shtml>.
* Local volunteering at hospitals in Southampton. Eg: Royal South Hants Hospital
* Solent Mind work all around the Southampton area, supporting people in their local communities or in hospital settings. They work with a range of different people with mental health issues. <http://www.solentmind.org.uk/supporting-us.aspx>
* Visitor for the Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Association http://www.susu.org/community-volunteering/opportunities-detail.html?opportunity=Association+Visitor
* [Brain Injury Support](http://www.teambraininjury.co.uk/) offer paid support worker roles. They employ mostly postgraduates but do have some undergraduates working for them. http://www.teambraininjury.co.uk/
* The Southampton University’s Students Union provides Community Volunteering opportunities including working with people with disabilities. <http://www.susu.org/community-volunteering/opportunities.html>
* Assistant Psychologist role – easier to obtain after graduation and relevant voluntary work experience has been undertaken. These roles can be found in the Psychologist Appointments which is part of The Psychologist (the BPS monthly magazine) http://www.psychapp.co.uk/, in newspapers or in specialist publications.

**If you are working with children or sensitive information you will need a CRB check.**

To find out more about life as a Neuropsychologist, take a look at the BPS video:

http://www.youtube.com/user/bpsmediacentre#p/u/2/k0U-0VY6YVw