



Royal Hospital for
Neuro-disability

A national medical charity

Information for Students and Applicants for Medicine and Therapy Courses

The Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability (RHN) welcomes the help of students from the age of 16 and can give practical experience in a well-supervised placement. We receive a high volume of applications, particularly from psychology students and applicants for medicine or therapy disciplines, and cannot always offer all applicants the experience they need. We have put together this list of tips to help your application.

Please note that all our placements are in recreational activities and we are not able to use volunteers in therapy departments or to offer opportunities to shadow psychologists or doctors.

Apply Early!

- Please apply as early as possible, especially if you want to include the experience on your UCAS form. It can take up to 6 months to start volunteers in the most popular placements, such as the weekend recreation groups, which always have a waiting list. We also have to run a record check with the Criminal Records Bureau so please allow 6 weeks for this.

- Our busiest time for applications is from August - November so your application will be processed more quickly if you apply outside these times. We are happy to set up a placement early and hold the place until a volunteer is ready to start. The sections below give advice on the best times to apply, depending on your circumstances.

Sixth Form Students:

- The best time to apply is at the beginning of year 12 and we will then offer you the earliest available weekend interview slot. Following a successful interview, the earliest we would start students is the January of their AS year and the latest is the September of their A2 year.

- Year 11 students can send in an application form, although this will not be processed until you are in the sixth form.

- Most placements become available between April - June, when our A2 students leave and many year 12 students need to focus on their AS exams. If you can start at this time, you will stand a much higher chance of gaining a placement.

Gap Year Students:

- Apply as early as possible to allow time for interview, CRB check etc. Most gap year students intend to travel, so we need to fix your 6-month availability before you go away. It is easier to place volunteers during the week as the weekend groups always have long waiting lists.

Graduate Medical Applicants:

- Apply well before the autumn of the year of your application to medical school and allow 6 months to start if you are only available at weekends. There are more opportunities available during the week.

Therapy Applicants:

- Apply early and we will try to give you as much relevant experience as possible, including "one to one" placements, which can only be entered into after gaining previous experience in another placement.

- Speech & Language Therapy students may be interested in our SLT Department's one day course on SLT as a career (further details on our website - www.rhn.org.uk)

- We can give a quicker start if you are available during the week.

Psychology Students and Graduates:

- We can give you a variety of experiences if you apply to us in your 1st or 2nd year. We can start you in a supported group and then move you to another relevant placement such as our Neuro-behavioural Rehabilitation Unit.

- Students who apply in their final year often find they have left it too late, as we avoid starting students in the second half of their final year when we know they will have many other major commitments. If you apply before you wish to start, we can hold your place until you are available.

- Applicants for postgraduate courses especially should apply early, due to high numbers of applicants looking for experience for these courses.

University Students:

- We may be able to take on undergraduate students for the summer vacation if you can give at least 12 weekly sessions: it is important to apply well in advance so you are ready start as soon as you break up.

Fill in the Application Form accurately

- Please read all the information carefully and let us have full and precise details of your available time - this will avoid delays and put your application ahead of the many applications that don't give us all the details we need! Please state how many months you are free for, when you would need to stop volunteering and any breaks you would need for exams.
- Please ensure that your available time matches the placements you are interested in.

Time Commitment

- Most placements ask for a 6 month commitment. We ask 6th form students for a weekly attendance but understand that students have other commitments such as exams, school trips, university open days etc.
- Please note that we are not able to give a month long break for AS exams or mocks if you have only recently started. We would try to start you after your exams.

Other Information

Sixth Form Students:

- Make the application yourself. We are looking for well-motivated volunteers who really want to give a 6 month commitment.
- Please ensure that you can get to the hospital independently.
- If you are downloading an information pack from our website, make sure you download the list of placements for under 18s.
- Once you are on the waiting list, please notify us if your email or phone number changes, otherwise we will not be able to contact you.
- Please note that we give priority to students living locally, as we hope this makes it easier to continue volunteering during exam time.

We are not able to take on 6th form students just for the summer holidays.

Criminal Record Bureau Checks (CRB):

All volunteers need a CRB check at enhanced level, which covers working with vulnerable adults. If you have been issued with this level of check within the last 3 months and have a copy of your disclosure, then we won't need to run a new check.

The Next Stage

An information pack containing a general leaflet, list of current opportunities and an application form can be downloaded from www.rhn.org.uk. If you prefer, we can send a pack in the post. Please return the application form to the Volunteer Co-ordinator at the address given on the form.

If we can match your available time to our existing placements we will contact you to arrange an informal interview. This will give you an opportunity to look around the hospital.

Contacting Us

If you have any queries please contact the Volunteer Department on 0208780 4500 ext 5019 or email: volunteers@rhn.org.uk

Visit our website at rhn.org.uk