

Dear Member,

You will all, I hope, have read my e-mail last week regarding the change in ST3 application eligibility criteria. Thank you to those of you who replied.

Your concerns have been raised by me, Phil Smith (ABN President), Tom Hughes (Neurology SAC Chair) and senior officials from the RCP, at JRCPTB regarding these changes. JRCPTB have not changed the criteria but have responded with updated advice, available in full on the ST3 recruitment website <http://www.st3recruitment.org.uk/recruitment-process/am-i-eligible/core-competences> (select the "Alternative" tab).

In practice, if you are applying for ST3 this year and your CMT sign-off was before 1st Jan 2013, you should:

1. Get in touch with JRCPTB for advice on your own personal situation by emailing them at st3recruitment@jrcptb.org.uk.
2. Download the "Alternative Certificate of Core Competence" form from the ST3 recruitment website: <http://www.st3recruitment.org.uk/documents>.
3. Discuss all the competencies on the form with your primary clinical supervisor as soon as possible, and tick off what you can together. You do not need to have practised all competences within the three-year period but whoever is signing the form needs to be satisfied that there is no reason why these competences are in doubt and that they believe you are sufficiently core medical competent to progress to ST3.
4. Contact any consultants who supervise you during on-calls and other clinical activities for any competencies they can vouch for and put your current clinical supervisor in touch with them. It is permissible for a supervisor to sign off competences which they have not personally witnessed, provided they have satisfactory assurance from a colleague that the competence has been gained.
5. Contact your CMT supervisor and put your current supervisor in touch with them. Again, it is permissible for a supervisor to sign off competences which they have not personally witnessed, provided they have satisfactory assurance from a colleague that the competence has been gained. If you are unable to get in touch with your CMT supervisor, review your CMT ePortfolio with your current clinical supervisor.
6. Discuss with whoever is signing your form whether you should do a few courses to brush up on acute skills: eg ALS, procedures, etc. Even if the courses are after the application date, your clinical supervisor may feel more comfortable signing off your competencies if they know you will be doing these courses before starting your ST3 post.
7. Consider a covering letter from your clinical supervisor outlining your general competencies and how you have maintained/refreshed them, your attitude to CPD, etc. The form itself remains very rigid and a covering letter may help explain any apparent gaps or inconsistencies.
8. Collate a list of all your regular clinical activities in order to demonstrate that you have had at least three months full-time equivalent clinical work during the past three years. A regular weekly clinic is sufficient to meet this requirement.

Do please let me know if you encounter further difficulties during the application process. The new criteria will be reviewed after this round of applications and the more I hear back from you about how it went, the better able we are able to represent trainees' views during the review process.

With best wishes,

Alexander Foulkes

Chair, Association of British Neurologists Trainees