



Model job description: consultant neuropathologist

Title of employing body

Title of post

Appointment

State whether the post is full or part time and state the number of programmed activities (PAs).

State whether the post is solely for NHS or a split contract between NHS and the university. If the contract is split, specify the PAs for each.

State whether the post is a new or replacement post.

State whether the post is temporary or substantive.

State whether the appointee is expected to have a special interest and/or expertise or is expected to develop such an interest and/or expertise to complement other consultants (for example, muscle pathology or paediatric neuropathology).

Any applicant who is unable, for personal reasons, to work full time will be eligible to be considered for the post. If such a person is appointed, modification of the job content will be discussed on a personal basis with the employing body in consultation with consultant colleagues.

General information

Describe the location: city/town and surrounding area, size of population, etc.

The employing body

Give a detailed description of the hospital(s) served and its/their work, including details of the clinical specialties, whether, or not there is an accident and emergency service, details of surgical, medical, paediatric, obstetrics and gynaecology, oncology units, etc. and any planned developments.

Describe hospital location, number of beds, range of clinical services, any planned changes or major developments, special features, management arrangements, etc.



Give an outline description of the pathology departments and their relationship with each other and with the rest of the hospital. Specify if the neuropathology unit or department is separate (and if so, in which directorate, e.g. clinical neurosciences) or part of general histopathology department. If relevant, describe the relationship with university/medical school departments or research units. This should include any planned or proposed changes in the provision of the pathology services. Detail the networked hospitals served by the laboratory. If relevant to the specialty, please provide an organisational structure/organogram if one is available.

The department

Describe the laboratory, giving a detailed description of the individual department including its facilities and major equipment. There should be information on access to special services, for example, molecular pathology, immunohistochemistry, electron microscopy, and paediatric pathology. Mention if neuropathology is a separate department or part of the histopathology lab.

Detail any current or intended foetal and perinatal neuropathology, in addition to purely paediatric neuropathology.

Specify the relationship of the neuropathology department/service to the other clinical neurosciences within the hospital/university and, in the case of regional centres, to other clinical neurosciences groupings within the region.

State whether the service is to be provided from a single laboratory facility or distributed across two or more centres, requiring travel between. Specify if a digital pathology solution, relevant for a multi-centre arrangement, is available, or in the process of procurement.

State the number of neurosurgeons, neurologists, and other clinicians (e.g. in paediatric neurosciences or psycho-geriatric medicine) in the local neurosciences centre and as well as the local area served by the department.

Information should be provided about research programmes, e.g. in dementia, neuro-oncology or muscle disease, especially if they generate a significant number of specimens and/or require special tissue handling or analysis.

Describe the involvement, if any, in brain banking activities and the relevant responsibilities, managerial arrangements and funding mechanisms. Indicate, if relevant, whether the programmed activities for brain banking are part of the NHS or of academic PA allocation.

Specify any standing arrangements for cover (annual, professional, maternity, paternity, sick, jury service, out-of-hours, coronial) and how this is provided (telepathology, physical presence). See also '[Duties of the post](#)', below.

The mechanism of funding for referred cases of post-mortem (PM) brain material from the region served should be stated.

Describe the neuromuscular facilities available including access to electron microscopy.

The facilities for archiving frozen tissues such as muscle biopsy samples should be specified. There should be information on access to other histopathology services as well as specialised pathology services, e.g. ophthalmic, and paediatric pathology.



The managerial relationship of the neuropathology service to local neurosciences or histopathology/laboratory services should be stated.

Where the neuropathology laboratory provision is integrated into a general histopathology laboratory, the management arrangements, and budgetary systems, the proportion of dedicated and shared laboratory/office space, equipment, technical staff, and support staff should be described.

Arrangements for access to mortuary facilities and appropriate support staff for the purpose of performing neuropathological autopsies should be described.

The job description should include a statement specifying if the laboratory space allocated to the neuropathology service has facilities for handling 'high risk' cases, including cases of HIV and prion disease, to approved health and safety standards. If such services are not available, the job description should detail the mechanisms in place to handle high-risk material/refer high-risk PMs outside the trust.

Specify whether brain/tissue bank is accredited by the Human Tissue Authority (HTA).

If the job description is for a single-handed consultant, then the arrangements for cover during leave and access to appropriate tertiary specialists should be specified.

State the month and year of [UKAS](#) Ltd accreditation, status of application or anticipated reply and/or completion. State participation in external quality assurance (EQA) schemes if applicable.

Also state the outcome of the last Care Quality Commission (CQC) for the hospital trust, and where applicable, for specific services.

Laboratory accommodation and equipment

Describe where the laboratory is in relation to reporting office(s), how much space there is, and any specialised equipment and laboratory computer system.

Describe any links for reporting laboratory data to regional and national public health surveillance systems. Describe if remote digital pathology, for example for intraoperative frozen sections/smears is available and part of the service.

Information Technology: Please indicate the current laboratory information management system (LIMS) being used in the department including how this sits within the wider hospital IT infrastructure, and details of integration with the current hospital information system (HIS) and, if any, the provision of results to external requesters. Please indicate whether the department uses voice recognition and any macropathology imaging systems and whether these are integrated with the LIMS. Describe if the pathology department is equipped with a digital image reporting system, and if so, if all cases are reported digitally, or specific case types, and specify the vendor of the image management system (IMS). Indicate if any of the hospital systems can be accessed remotely, for example via a virtual private network (VPN) solution.

Digital pathology

Please indicate if there is a plan for digital pathology service provision. If so, whether this is at planning or implementation stage, the timescale, and the vision for future service provision. Please



indicate whether this is envisaged to have a result on the job and workload allocation activities for the appointee and the facilities that may be made available for the appointee (for example, viewing stations, screens, remote login and reporting).

Tabulate workload (indicate proportion from GPs)

These figures should be as up to date as possible.

Type of activity	Requests in year (state year)
Neurosurgical biopsies	
Intraoperative smears/frozen sections	
Cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) cytology	
Adult autopsies	
Perinatal/paediatric autopsies	
Brain cuts*	
PM block samples	
Muscle biopsies**	
Nerve biopsies**	
Ophthalmic specimens (if relevant)	
Molecular pathology, indicate type if relevant, e.g. next-generation sequencing, methylation array, small panel, etc.	
Specimens requiring electron microscopy	
Telepathology (remote digital pathology)	
Group foetal, perinatal and paediatric autopsy work	

*Indicate whether any of these are at other hospitals and, if so, the number and location.

**Indicate whether any of these biopsy procedures are performed by the neuropathologist(s).

If so, provide information as to the numbers of biopsies involved, the management, funding, and clinical arrangements (including preoperative assessment and follow-up), whether the biopsies are performed under local or general anaesthesia, whether open or closed, the operating facilities and support staff.

Specify upper limit to time available for coronial work (if relevant).



Specify any telepathology.

Specify any ringfenced time for internal quality assurance of reporting.

Facilities for clinicopathological/multidisciplinary team meetings (MDTs) should be described. Specify the number of MDTs held each week and how the MDTs will be divided up between the consultants.

Staffing

List the consultant staff – full first names and titles, their sessional commitment (whole or part time) and any/all subspecialty responsibilities.

Title, first name, surname	Whole or part time	Subspecialty interest(s)

State the number and status of trainees and rotational arrangements for junior staff from both local and regional centres for training in neuropathology:

- specialty
- as part of general pathology
- as part of clinical neurosciences.

State the arrangements for both stratified independent reporting of surgical biopsies, and supervised/independent conduct of autopsies, by trainees.

State the number and grading of biomedical scientists, medical laboratory assistants, anatomical pathology technologist and professional support staff (including any advanced practitioners who may involve in reporting)

If relevant, state the arrangements for leading and managing specialist services, such as muscle and nerve biopsies or brain banking, and give information about the dedicated staffing of these services and facilities.

Management arrangements and administrative duties

State how the pathology service is managed.

Name the current head of service/clinical lead for the specialty.



Summarise the process by which leadership is determined, for example: Since one of the functions of the Head of Service post is regarded as being to facilitate the development of management skills, it is anticipated that this role will rotate, with annual review, between colleagues with an interest in and aptitude for management.

Duties of the post

State that the appointee, together with consultant/clinical academic colleagues, will be responsible for the provision of [list the range of specific service responsibilities]. The appointee will be expected to participate in the management of the service.

The configuration of responsibilities will be reviewed annually, and the appointee will be expected to work with consultant/clinical academic colleagues to provide a reliable and expeditious service.

This employing body/university supports clinical audit and EQA and, by providing time and resources, encourages all consultants to participate in these activities.

State the local arrangements for medicolegal PMs. If applicable, it should be, pointed out that medicolegal PMs are not part of the NHS contract and are performed at the behest of the coroner, however the likely arrangements with respect to the appointee should be indicated, including their relationship to job plans.

Specify arrangement for agreeing external duties.

Specify responsibilities for teaching and training of trainees, either dedicated neuropathology or rotating general histopathology, paediatric pathology or forensic pathology and training available to appointee to acquire/maintain skills as educational or clinical supervisor.

Department to commit to provision of time for such training.

Specify any non-clinical teaching intrinsic to the post.

Specify the various types of cover (annual, professional, maternity, paternity, sick, jury service, out-of-hours, coronial) for colleagues within the department or further afield entailed by the post, and how that cover would be provided (see section on ['Leave'](#)).

Continuing professional development

State that the appointee will be expected to participate in continuing professional development (CPD) and the employing body's policy on the provision of study leave and funding (number of days and amount of funding).

Clinical effectiveness (clinical governance/audit)

State the arrangements for clinical governance and clinical audit. The post holder's participation must be outlined.

Annual appraisal and revalidation

Include the name of the designated body and that a responsible officer will be allocated, together with arrangements for appraisal and the policy for annual appraisal and review of the job plan.



Research and development

If relevant, describe the relationship with any local university, particularly with respect to teaching and research, and whether an honorary academic title applies and with which body it will be.

Indicate the opportunities for research and development (R&D) and how much time will be available for these activities. This should include reference to the existing R&D portfolio or task-led funding of the institution.

Specify HTA oversight and management arrangements (if relevant).

Any particular research themes or objectives of the department and university should be noted.

Distinguish between service development, research, academic teaching and clinical teaching.

Teaching

State whether there are any commitments to undergraduate teaching and/or postgraduate training.

Any teaching commitments for undergraduates and responsibilities for postgraduate training should be specified.

In departments where specialist neuropathology registrars are trained, an indication that the department has been approved for this purpose should be given.

Division of work and job plan

Provide a description of the proposed rota arrangements and the division of work between the consultants/clinical academics in the department for each area of activity (neurosurgical biopsies, autopsies, muscle biopsies, etc). This will be subject to agreement between colleagues, but it is an area where disputes arise following appointment, and the arrangements should be clear.

Specify the number of clinical sessions and clinically related sessions in the full-time post.

The allocation of time between the various duties of the post will be open to some adjustment in consultation with consultant colleagues and the employing body and initially will be as follows.

Programmed activity	Average weekly number
Biopsies, CSF cytology and autopsies	
Teaching, research*	
EQA and audit	
CPD	
Administration	
Out-of-hours cover	



Programmed activity	Average weekly number
Total	

* For clinical academic posts, the expected PAs for teaching and for research should be listed separately.

An annual review of duties including fixed commitments will take place with the Clinical Director of Pathology and/or Medical Director of the employing body as part of the job plan process.

Job plan

Include a provisional job plan and give details for review. For example:

- direct clinical care (includes clinical activity and clinically related activity): 7.5 PAs on average per week
- supporting professional activities (includes CPD, continuous quality improvement, audit, teaching and research, and public engagement): 2.5 PAs on average per week.

Out of hours

There should be an indication of the on-call commitments (if significant, allocate one notional half-day in the table), Saturday and Sunday working, and whether time off in lieu is available.

This should include availability for clinical advice and/or provision of an out-of-hours service for smears/frozen sections, CSF cytology and other service work as appropriate.

Leave

Describe the arrangements for cover of annual and study leave, including whether locum cover is usually provided.

Unplanned leave

Describe the arrangements in place for cover when colleagues take unplanned leave.

Working from home and hybrid working

State if there is a hybrid working arrangement* in place for the post holder following discussion with head of department/lead.

*A hybrid working arrangement is when the post holder would split their time between the workplace and working remotely (usually from home).

Facilities for appointee

Describe the office, location of office and state if it is for the sole use of the appointee. The work space should be compatible with [RCPATH recommendations](#) with respect to the environment, lighting, temperature control, space, storage and flooring.



Describe the secretarial support and equipment provided for the appointee. The recommended minimum is an office, secretarial support, PC with appropriate software, internet and email access, access to necessary LIMS (state which package is used) and access to current books and journals. State the facilities used for report generation (for example, audiotapes, digital dictation and voice recognition).

State that a modern microscope (if relevant to the post) is available for the appointee and that it is suitable for the work that they will be required to perform. State that the microscope and seating is of ergonomic design.

A microscope with wide field optics is desirable, and a double-headed or multi-headed microscope for teaching. Describe the equipment available for photomicrography, electron microscopy, immunofluorescence or other techniques.

Main conditions of service

Insert the standard wording for all consultant posts in the employing body.

Terms and conditions of service

The appointee will be required to maintain General Medical Council (GMC) full and specialist registration with a licence to practise and revalidation, and should follow the [GMC's guidance](#) on *Good Medical Practice*.

The appointment will be covered by the [NHS's Terms and Conditions of Service](#) for Hospital, Medical and Dental Staff (England and Wales) and the [General Whitley Council Conditions of Service](#).

Include the standard terms and conditions of service provided by the employing body.

Disclosure and Barring Service checks

To include [statement](#) on [application](#) or otherwise of DBS checks (Disclosure and Barring Service, formerly known as CRB, Criminal Records Bureau).

For Northern Ireland it is [access NI criminal](#) disclosure check.

UK visa and immigration

Applicants should be aware that regardless of country of origin, their ability to communicate in written and spoken English to the standard required to carry out the post will be [assessed](#) during the selection process.

Applications from job seekers who require [Skilled Worker](#) sponsorship to work in the UK are welcome and will be considered alongside all other applications.

Condition of appointment

The appointment will be made in accordance with the NHS (Appointment of Consultants) Regulations ([England and Wales](#)) or ([Northern Ireland](#)).

Canvassing of any member of the Advisory Appointments Committee will disqualify the applicant.



Visiting arrangements

Give the arrangements for visiting the employing body, either prior to shortlisting or prior to interview.

List the personnel who may be contacted by candidates. This should include the chief executive, medical director, laboratory medicine director and/or head of service. Provide contact details such as telephone number and/or email address, and the name of a personal assistant or secretary if applicable.

Travelling expenses

Travelling expenses are paid in accordance with the terms and conditions of the employing body.

Potential applicants wishing to visit the employing body will be reimbursed for two preliminary visits (one informal visit prior to application and one formal visit before interview), plus actual interview expenses. **If a post is offered and subsequently refused, expenses will not be reimbursed.**

Interviewed candidates travelling from outside the UK will be entitled to travelling and subsistence expenses; however, these only apply in respect of the journey from the point of entry in the UK to the interview location.



Person specification

Category	Essential	Desirable
Qualification and training	<p>Full and specialist registration, and with a licence to practise with the GMC (or be eligible for registration within six months of interview).</p> <p>Applicants that are UK trained must also be a holder of a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) or be within six months of award of CCT by date of interview.</p> <p>Applicants that are non-UK trained will be required to show evidence of equivalence to the UK CCT.</p> <p>FRCPATH or evidence of equivalent qualification.</p>	Other relevant higher qualification.
Experience	<p>Evidence of thorough and broad training and experience in the relevant specialty.</p> <p>Able to take responsibility for delivering service without direct supervision.</p>	Evidence of a special interest and expertise that complements those of other consultants in the department.
Knowledge and skills	<p>Knowledge and experience of relevant specialty.</p> <p>Broad range of IT skills.</p> <p>Knowledge of evidence-based practice.</p>	
Communication and language skills	<p>Ability to communicate effectively with clinical colleagues, colleagues in pathology and support staff.</p> <p>Good knowledge of, and ability to use, spoken and written English.</p> <p>Ability to present effectively to an audience, using a variety of methods, and to respond to questions and queries.</p>	
Teaching, audit and research	<p>Evidence in participation of clinical audits.</p> <p>Evidence of an interest and commitment to teaching.</p> <p>Understanding of the principles of research.</p> <p>Evidence of participation in audit.</p>	<p>Recognised teaching qualification.</p> <p>Research experience.</p> <p>Publications.</p> <p>Prizes and honours.</p>



Category	Essential	Desirable
Management skills	Evidence of managerial skills: achievements/course attended.	
Personal skills	<p>Practice in accordance with the GMC's guidance on <i>Good Medical Practice</i> to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good communication skills, both oral and written • honesty and reliability • decisiveness/accountability • excellent and effective interpersonal skills • energy and enthusiasm and the ability to work under pressure • an enquiring and critical approach to work • a caring attitude to patients • non-judgemental approach to patients • evidence of ability to work independently and as part of a team • an ability to organise and prioritise work effectively • flexibility • resilience • thoroughness • initiative/drive/enthusiasm • team working • situational awareness • dealing with stress and fatigue • leadership skills • evidence of logical thinking/problem solving/decision-making • effective, confident presentation ability • demonstrates behaviours and attitudes that support the trust's mission and values. 	

