ABN Specialty Specific Requirements

**Standard Application:** For candidates who received their degree within the last 15 years.

The following is a brief summary of minimum necessary criteria for a successful Standard Application. This summary is intended to answer some of the most common questions posed by prospective applicants. See the Applicant Manual and Standard Application for more information.

1. Doctoral degree in psychology from an APA or CPA accredited program.
2. Completion of an APA, CPA or APPIC approved internship program, or equivalent year of supervised experience as recognized by the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology, the Canadian Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology, or the Certificate of Professional Qualification in Psychology (CPQ) (ASPPB).
3. Completion of postgraduate training in Clinical Neuropsychology, as described above and approved by the ABN Application Committee. Detailed postdoctoral requirements, as are adjusted according to date of doctoral program graduation, are outlined, below.

Postgraduate training time will constitute a minimum of 2 years full time equivalent, including practice at not less than 500 hours per year during the last 5 years providing neuropsychological services. Years in preparation must include completion of combined systematic didactic and supervised experiential training in neuropsychology and neuroscience at an appropriately accredited university or professional school program, in supervised clinical settings, and in continuing education that is approved by APA or state psychological association or otherwise deemed by the ABN to be comparable. Recognizing that the availability of institutional-based training opportunities is limited in contrast to the demand for skilled practitioners, core knowledge and skills may be acquired through multiple pathways, not limited to formal courses (i.e., as is preferred), and may come through other documentable didactic methods that will be reviewed on an individual basis. See ‘Requirements of all Applicants,’ below, and the application for elaboration of these criteria.

4. Minimum of 3 years professional experience in neuropsychology of which 1 year may be a supervised neuropsychology internship, (i.e., with 1 year APA or National Register approved internship required).
5. Current licensure/certification to practice psychology in a state/territory.
6. Involvement in continuing education in neuropsychology either through having taken or taught continuing education programs equivalent to those approved by the American Psychological Association or a state, province, or territory.

For those completing the doctoral degree after 1/1/05, Applicants are required to have completed the equivalent of 2 years of full-time postdoctoral education and training on at least a half-time basis, in addition to 1 year of predoctoral training that includes neuropsychology. Limited exceptions to the intensity of training years (e.g., a hiatus during the training time, less than half time programming) may be submitted for review, as may occur with health or professional factors, etc. The required training experiences are outlined in the ABN application and below, to be confirmed by the program director or supervisor(s) whose correspondence must indicate: Successful completion of all requirements, and attainment of skills and knowledgebase according to the Houston Conference Guidelines. The 2-year postdoctoral program or equivalent must be organized according to a structured set of experiential and didactic requirements, including supervision on all program casework. All supervisors are not required to be board certified in neuropsychology, though supervision by staff board certified by ABN, ABCN and/or ABPdN is strongly encouraged.

**Senior Application:** For candidates who received their doctoral degree 15 or more years ago.
The training achievements remain the same as for recent graduates, with the exception that postdoctoral training and supervision may be attained through combined formal training and/or peer supervision which is documented and specific (i.e., in the Application for the ABN Diplomate) to address all core areas of requirement for the standard application, including: Core knowledge, specialty skills, and specific neuropsychology experience as outlined in the ABN Application.

This process allows for some greater flexibility of the methods for achieving eligibility criteria, and for modifications of the work sample requirements. A formal neuropsychology respecialization program or 1600 hours documented supervised neuropsychology training which matches the content areas of the Houston Conference Guidelines is accepted as meeting the didactic postdoctoral training requirement. Where deficiencies in the Applicant’s training and experience are identified during the application review, the Applicant may work with an assigned mentor to address those (e.g., specific additional coursework and/or training). Neuropsychologists who already hold the Diplomate from a neuropsychology specialty board that meets or exceeds the requirements proposed by the APA for recognition of specialty boards are deemed eligible as applicants for the ABN Diplomate.

The Senior Option requires, at minimum:
1. Doctoral degree in psychology from an APA, CPA, or regionally accredited program.
2. Minimum of fifteen (15) years professional experience in neuropsychology of which 1 year may be a supervised neuropsychology internship, (i.e., with 1 year APA, CPA or APPIC approved internship program, or equivalent year of supervised experience as recognized by the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology, the Canadian Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology, or the Certificate of Professional Qualification in Psychology (CPQ) (ASPPB).
3. Current licensure/certification to practice psychology in a state/territory.
5. Postdoctoral training and experience, as described in the Specialty Guidelines.
6. Minimum of 500 hours per year during the last 5 years providing neuropsychological services.
7. Involvement in continuing education in neuropsychology through having taken and/or taught in a continuing education program equivalent to one approved by the American Psychological Association or a state, province or territory.

Requirements of All Applicants:

Each applicant is required to complete and submit an application package that includes the names of at least 3 Endorsers, 2 of whom must be neuropsychologists. The Endorsers are supervisors or neuropsychological colleagues who can comment on your training and/or professional practice and abilities. They will be informed that their recommendations may be released in response to any inquiries regarding the applicant in the future. Applications are reviewed by the ABN Examination Committee for compliance with Licensure status, training history, as well as clinical practice experience and other items noted in the Application.

Systematic didactic and experiential training in neuropsychology and neuroscience must include:
- Basic Neurosciences
- Clinical Neurology
-Clinical Neuropsychological Assessment
- Neuroanatomy
- Neuropathology
- Psychological Assessment
- Psychological Intervention
- Psychopathology
Applicable areas of The Training Model of the Houston Conference (Hannay et al. 1998) follow:

**Professional and Scientific Activity**

The core domains of professional activity include: Assessment, intervention, consultation, supervision, research and inquiry, consumer protection, and professional development. Scientific activities are broad and variable. Procedural and ethical competence corresponds to professional activities (e.g., cultural, ethnic, and linguistic populations). Knowledge and skill base competencies are below.

**Knowledge**

Core knowledge may be acquired through varied training and experiences (e.g., didactics, research, clinical training).

1. **General Psychology Core:** Statistics and methodology; Learning, cognition and perception; Social psychology and personality; Biological bases of behavior; Life span development; History; Cultural and individual differences and diversity.

2. **Generic Clinical Core:** Psychopathology; Psychometric theory; Interview and assessment techniques; Intervention techniques; Professional ethics.

3. **Foundations for the study of brain-behavior relationships:** Functional neuroanatomy; Neurological and related disorders; Non-neurologic conditions affecting CNS functioning; Neuroimaging and other neurodiagnostic techniques; Neurochemistry of behavior (e.g., psychopharmacology); Neuropsychology of behavior.

4. **Foundations for the practice of clinical neuropsychology:** Specialized neuropsychological assessment techniques; Specialized neuropsychological intervention techniques; Research design and analysis in neuropsychology; Professional issues and ethics in neuropsychology; Practical implications of neuropsychological conditions.

**Skills**

Core skills in professional clinical neuropsychology may be acquired through varied training and experiences (e.g., didactics, research, rehabilitation, and service provision). Skill domains include:

1. **Assessment:** Information gathering, History taking, Tests and measures selection, Test administration and interpretation, Diagnostic formulation, Treatment planning, Report writing, Feedback, Recognition of multicultural and individual differences issues.

2. **Treatment and Interventions:** Identification and specification of intervention needs, Formulation of intervention plan, Plan implementation, Plan monitoring and adjustment, Outcome assessment, Recognition of multicultural and individual differences issues.
3. Consultation (patients, families, colleagues, agencies, etc.): Effective communication, Identifying referral issues, Educating referral sources about neuropsychological services, Communicating evaluation findings and recommendations, Educating patients and families about services and findings.

4. Research: Selection of appropriate research topics, Review of relevant literature, Research design, Research operations (e.g., initiation and oversight), Evaluation of outcome, Presenting results.

5. Teaching and Supervision: Methods of effective instruction, Curriculum design, Use of technology, Supervision methods.

ABN acknowledges that programs and training experiences differ according to the program and the candidate’s interests, such that the candidate’s knowledge and skills may be greater in some areas than others. Regardless, basic competence requires broad familiarity.

**Educational Preparation Criteria**

**Doctoral Education**
Doctoral training must include attainment of a doctoral degree from a program in professional psychology, which at the time the degree was granted, was accredited by the APA or CPA accredited program.

**Internship training and clinical neuropsychology**
The purpose of the internship is to complete training in the general practice of professional psychology, with extended specialty preparation clinical neuropsychology. Other criteria are noted above.

**Postdoctoral or Residency education and training in clinical neuropsychology**
Postdoctoral and/or Residency education and training include clinical, didactic, and academic training to achieve advanced competence in the independent provision of clinical neuropsychology services.

ABN prefers in an aspirational sense the model of 2 years formal, full time training, such as may be offered in some APPIC neuropsychology programs, but recognizes that there are insufficient numbers and locations of these programs to meet the combined needs of practitioners and consumers of neuropsychological services. The post-2005 criteria understood as required by ABCN (e.g., Application, page 1, with any exceptions that may apply) is further recognized as substantially exceeding the requirements of other ABPP member boards. It represents an effectively closed process with ABCN directors (i.e., not identified to regularly invite hiring of directors other than those from ABPP and ABCN). This effort which appears lead by an emphasis on promoting specific training centers and a limited diversity of directors, creates what we perceive as a tremendous shortage of formal training programs for qualified graduates to obtain needed post doctoral training. ABN believes that, as an absolute requirement, a formal 2-year fellowship is a laudable aspiration, but does not adequately meet the needs of the public or the profession. ABN sees that model as not practical as a sole-recognized pathway to attainment of neuropsychology skills and recognition by board certification within the
current practitioner and consumer environment at this time. Hence, ABN’s process described herein is to recognize the Applicant’s specialty training on the same core criteria for knowledge and skills, but with flexibility for methods and training timelines.

Thus, ABN Applicants are required to fulfill all of the content guidelines as defined by the Houston Conference, though are allowed specified areas of flexibility in doing so. ABN Candidates are required to produce in the ABN Application and responses to any corresponding inquiries from the Credentials Committee detailed evidence of their having satisfied these requirements. Although individual neuropsychologists can meet these requirements through a variety of experiences, at no time are so-called "week end" CE programs an acceptable method of satisfying training criteria, otherwise with note that some CE programs (e.g., the NAN sponsored distance course in Neuroanatomy and Physiology) are deemed to satisfy specific requirements or to remediate training deficiencies, as will courses taken independently in doctoral programs by Applicants as part of, prior to or after their more traditional postdoctoral training time. The goal of our postdoctoral training requirements is to be as inclusive as possible while still ensuring that candidates demonstrate adequate post doctoral specialty training.

Training program criteria are described above, with the following added descriptors:

1. Supervision is by clinical neuropsychologist(s). If the primary supervisor is not boarded by ABN, ABPdN or ABCN, the supervisor may be asked to show evidence of his/her qualifications.
2. Training and supervision occurs at specified sites, with supervision promptly available.
3. Access is provided to training in medical, allied health, and rehabilitation services.
4. Opportunities are provided for peer activity and collaboration with other specialty providers;
5. Activities include: Clinical service provision, research activity, educational activities, other activities appropriate to developing core knowledge and skill development, professional identity, and professional practice competence and advocacy skills.

Exit criteria include:
1. Attainment of competency in neuropsychological evaluation, treatment and consultation at an independent level, as indicated by the professional references.
2. Formal documentation of training requirements, including satisfaction of ABN Application requirements.
3. Licensure for the independent practice of psychology.
4. Eligibility for board certification in clinical neuropsychology by the American Board of Professional Neuropsychology.