

UNITED COUNCIL  
FOR  
NEUROLOGIC  
SUBSPECIALTIES

**Information for Applicants and Eligibility Requirements  
for Certification in  
Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry**

**2016 Examination**

Last Revised: 1/21/16

# Table of Contents

- I. Eligibility Criteria and Practice Track**
  - A. General
  - B. Pathways
  
- II. Application for Certification in Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry**
  - A. Application
  - B. Deadlines and Fees
  - C. Refunds
  - D. Withdrawals
  - E. Template Letters
  
- III. Examination Process for Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry**
  - A. General Information
  - B. Initial Examination Format
  - C. Recertification Examination Format
  
- IV. Applicants with Disabilities and Qualifications for Testing Accommodations**
  - A. General Information
  - B. Review of Documentation
  
- V. Policies**
  - A. Refunds
  - B. Certification and Maintenance of Certification
  - C. Revocation of Certificates
  - D. Irregular Behavior Including Unethical Behavior of Candidates
  - E. Appeals
  
- VI. Contact Information**

## I. **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND PRACTICE TRACK**

The following are eligibility criteria in the subspecialty of Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry (BNNP) and can be found at <http://www.ucns.org/go/subspecialty/behavioral/certification>. There are general requirements that must be fulfilled by all applicants as well as requirements for each specific pathway of application.

### A. **General**

General eligibility criteria:

1. Applicants must be a Diplomate in good standing of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology (ABPN) or equivalent certification by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC).\*
2. Applicants must hold a current, active, valid, unrestricted, and unqualified license to practice medicine in at least one jurisdiction in the United States, its territories, or Canada, and in each jurisdiction in which they practice.

A license to practice medicine is not “current, active, valid, unrestricted, and unqualified” if, in any manner to any extent whatsoever, one or more of the following applies. The license is:

- a. under probation;
- b. conditioned, e.g., the physician is required to practice under supervision or with modification, or to obtain continuing education;
- c. limited, e.g., to specific practice settings;
- d. institutional, temporary, or educational; or
- e. inactive as a result of an action taken by or a request made by a medical licensing board.

### **Policy on Medical Licensure**

If any license currently held by an applicant participating in the application process is restricted or qualified in any way, full details must be provided to the UCNS. The UCNS may, at its sole discretion, determine whether to investigate the license and the information provided. The UCNS reserves the right to determine if the license fulfills the policy. Licenses that have been revoked, suspended, surrendered, or not renewed in order to terminate or settle disciplinary proceedings do not qualify as meeting the requirements for medical licensure, and all such licenses must be reported for review and consideration. The UCNS will determine if the situation is cause to deny an applicant’s certification application, deny a candidate access to an examination, or revoke a diplomate’s certificate.

\*Candidates who have qualified for examination by the ABPN or the RCPSC, but have not yet been certified, may sit for the BNNP examination but may not receive notification of the results until the criterion in I.A.1 has been satisfied. Candidates must sit for the ABPN or RCPSC examination in the same year as the UCNS BNNP examination.

## B. Pathways

Applicants must have completed **one of four** eligibility pathways. The pathways are:

1. UCNS-Accredited Fellowship
2. Faculty Diplomate
3. Practice Track
4. Recertification

### 1. UCNS-Accredited Fellowship

An applicant must have successfully completed a fellowship in BNNP that is **accredited by the UCNS**. The fellowship must be 12 or more months in length. The applicant must satisfactorily complete the fellowship training by the date of the application. The applicant must apply within 36 months of completing the fellowship.

Applicants currently in a fellowship that will not be completed prior to the application deadline may still apply. **The applicant must have successfully completed the fellowship training a minimum of 45 days prior to examination week. Confirmation from the fellowship program director stating applicant has successfully completed the UCNS accredited fellowship program must be received within 30 days of the fellowship program completion date.**

### 2. Faculty Diplomate

Faculty Diplomate applicants must have an active, full-time appointment as a faculty member of a UCNS-accredited training program or have evidence of a current offer of such an appointment. Such an offer must be written by the chairperson of the appropriate department of the academic institution and state: 1) when the appointment began or will begin, 2) that the appointment is contingent upon the applicant sitting for, and passing, the next available UCNS certification examination, and 3) that retention or recruitment of the applicant is considered by the institution to be essential to the quality of the fellowship program.

### 3. Practice Track – Reexamination Only

The BNNP practice track closed after the 2014 certification examination. Only those who have taken and failed a prior examination (not to exceed three examinations) are eligible to apply for reexamination under the practice track pathway.

The applicant must submit the following documentation **for one of the three** following areas in BNNP:

- a. Satisfactory completion of 12 months of formal training (non-accredited) in BNNP that have taken place after the completion of formal residency training in neurology and/or psychiatry. Training or exposure to BNNP given to neurology or psychiatry residents as part of their neurology or psychiatry curriculum will not count toward the 12 months of training. The applicant must provide documentation from the appropriate program director at each institution where the training occurred.

OR

- b. At least 50 hours of Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) approved category 1 CME specifically related to Behavioral Neurology and/or Neuropsychiatry that were earned within 60 months prior to application. **Specification of programs attended and relevance to the field of BNNP must be provided.**

OR

- c. A letter from the applicant's current Department Chair that states he/she has an active, full-time academic appointment in which his/her teaching responsibilities include instructing one or more of the following in Behavioral Neurology and/or Neuropsychiatry: medical students, residents or fellows.

**AND (in addition to one of a, b or c above)**

- d. Documentation of a 36-month period\* of time in which the applicant has spent a minimum of 25% of his/her time in the practice of BNNP. The practice must:
- i. Include the direct diagnosis and management of persons with neurobehavioral and neuropsychiatric conditions. The applicant's practice must include persons with conditions in at least two of the following areas listed in Section IV of the UCNS BNNP Core Curriculum document:
    - Focal Neurobehavioral Syndromes
    - Neuropsychiatric Syndromes
    - Cognitive, Emotional, and Behavioral Manifestations of Neurological Disorders
  - ii. Have occurred in the United States, its territories, or in Canada.
  - iii. Have occurred in the 60-month interval immediately preceding application for certification but need not be continuous.

The application must contain letters from **two** physicians familiar with the applicant's practice pattern during the practice time submitted in the application. The letters must together address the entire period of practice time submitted.

\*If the applicant has completed BNNP fellowship training that has not been accredited by the UCNS, this may count towards the 36-month period of time. For example, if the applicant completed 12 months of unaccredited training in Behavioral Neurology and/or Neuropsychiatry, the UCNS will count these 12 months towards the 36-month period of time. Documentation of an additional 24-month period of time would then be required.

This Practice Track pathway of application closed on the last day of the application cycle for the 2014 BNNP examination. To apply via this pathway, physicians must have previously sat for and failed a UCNS certification examination in BNNP.

4. Recertification applicants are required to submit evidence of 300 ACCME-approved Category 1 CME, 20% (60) of which are specific to Neuroimaging, that were earned during their certification cycle.

Diplomates certified prior to the January 1, 2011, effective date of the policy on maintaining certification have prorated CME requirements. Diplomates certified in 2006 are required to submit evidence of 180 total CME, 36 of which are subspecialty specific. Diplomates certified in 2007 are required to submit evidence of 210 total CME, 42 of which are subspecialty specific. The full policy on maintaining certification can be found on the UCNS website at <http://www.ucns.org/globals/axon/assets/11915.pdf>.

Recertification applicants will sit for the UCNS recertification examination offered closest to the expiration date of his or her current UCNS certification. If no recertification examination in the diplomate's subspecialty is offered in the year when his or her certificate expires, he or she shall take the examination offered in the prior year. **Because no BNNP exam will be offered in 2017, 2007 BNNP diplomates will need to recertify in 2016.**

## II. APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION IN BEHAVIORAL NEUROLOGY & NEUROPSYCHIATRY

### A. Application

UCNS uses an online application system. All applications must be completed online, and all supporting documentation must be uploaded through the online application system where requested. Application sections must be completed sequentially, and some application sections require you to upload documentation before proceeding to the next section. Paper applications are no longer available. A personal logon is required to access the application. You must request your personal logon information no later than 4:00 pm Central time on the application deadline date in order to apply for the examination. You are encouraged to work on your application prior to 4:00 pm Central time on the application deadline date as technical support will not be available and logon requests will not be granted after 4:00 pm Central.

In order to have your application processed you must finalize your completed application by 11:59 pm Central time on the application deadline date. Any application that is not finalized by this time will not be accepted. In addition to a finalized application, UCNS must receive the examination fee postmarked on or before the application deadline date if paying by check or money order. Check or money order payments are the only application items that may be mailed to the UCNS office.

Applicants who have taken the exam in a previous year but were not successful and wish to reapply must submit a new application, provide current supporting documentation, and pay the current reexamination fee. Documentation submitted with a previous application will not be accepted.

## B. Deadlines and Fees

For the 2016 subspecialty examination, a completed application, supporting documentation, and all appropriate fees must be received in the UCNS Executive Office by **May 16, 2016**. Applications received after May 16 will not be accepted.

Applications submitted without the appropriate fees will not be processed or submitted for review. Fees received without applications will be returned. **The application fee is not refundable. All fees are nontransferable.**

### Fee Schedule\*†

Application fee (non-refundable)	\$680
Examination fee	\$1020
<b>Total Certification fee</b>	<b>\$1700</b>
Reexamination fee	\$1020
Recertification Application Fee (non-refundable)	\$600
Recertification examination fee	\$900
<b>Total Recertification fee</b>	<b>\$1500</b>
Duplicate Certificate fee	\$150
NSF check or declined credit card fee	\$50

*\* All fees must be submitted in U.S. currency.*

*† For exams beginning in 2016.*

**The UCNS reserves the right to revise fee schedules at any time.**

UCNS accepts personal checks, cashier's checks, money orders, Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express as payment. Applications submitted without the appropriate fees will not be processed. Fees received without applications will be returned.

## C. Refunds

Application fees are non-refundable. Refunds will be issued in the same method in which the original payment was received. The complete policy regarding refunds can be found at <http://www.ucns.org/globals/axon/assets/11915.pdf>.

## D. Withdrawals

The complete policy regarding withdrawal from the examination is located on the UCNS website at <http://www.ucns.org/globals/axon/assets/11915.pdf>.

#### **E. Template Letters**

Template letters must be used for the necessary application attachments. The template letters are located on the UCNS website at <http://www.ucns.org/go/subspecialty/behavioral/certification> and are available during the application cycle or upon request.

### **III. EXAMINATION PROCESS FOR BEHAVIORAL NEUROLOGY & NEUROPSYCHIATRY**

#### **A. General Information and Timeline**

1. Submit completed application, supporting documents, and payment by May 16, 2016.
2. UCNS will review the application for completeness.
3. UCNS will send notice of approval or non-approval to sit for the examination only after the Certification Council has reviewed all applications.
4. If you are approved for the examination, the UCNS will provide information on:
  - a. scheduling at test locations via Pearson VUE;
  - b. admission to test locations; and
  - c. preparing for a computer-based examination.
5. Candidates must contact Pearson VUE directly for scheduling.
6. **Sit for examination on November 14, 15, 16, 17, or 18, 2016.**
7. Results will be mailed approximately eight to ten weeks following the examination. In the interest of maintaining confidentiality, examination results are not given by telephone, facsimile transmission, or e-mail.

#### **B. Examination Format**

The UCNS Initial examination format is:

- Computer-based
- 200 multiple-choice questions
- 4 hours

The UCNS Recertification examination format is:

- Computer-based
- 150 multiple-choice questions that are clinically based
- 4 hours

### **IV. APPLICANTS WITH DISABILITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS**

#### **A. General Information**

The UCNS recognizes that physicians with disabilities may wish to take the certifying examinations and will attempt to make accommodations for applicants with verified disabilities. The Board supports the intent of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will provide reasonable accommodations during testing to provide equal opportunity for persons with disabilities. Applicants are reminded, however, that “auxiliary aids (and services) can only be offered if they do not fundamentally alter the measurement of skills or knowledge the examination is intended to test” (Americans with Disabilities Act, Public



Law 101-336 & 309 [b][3]). To this extent, the UCNS will provide reasonable accommodations during testing to provide equal opportunity for persons with disabilities. Documentation requesting reasonable accommodations must identify the disability and provide a rationale for specified modifications to standard testing procedures.

**Applicants who request accommodations because of a disability must do so at the time of application. The application and documentation substantiating the disability must be included with the examination application, and be submitted no later than May 16, 2016.**

If the UCNS deems it necessary, an independent assessment may be requested at the expense of the UCNS. Documentation and other evidence substantiating the disability includes, but is not limited to, each of the following:

- A report diagnosing the applicant's disability written by a professional appropriately qualified to evaluate the disability. The report must be printed on the certified examiner's letterhead, with the examiner's credentials, address, and telephone number given in the letterhead or title. The report must include the candidate's name, date of birth, date of testing, and it must be signed by the examiner.
- A history of the disability, including previous settings in which accommodations have been granted. Having had prior accommodations granted does not necessarily influence the decision of the UCNS to grant or deny a current request for accommodation. If there is no history of prior accommodations, the examiner must explain why current circumstances necessitate accommodations.
- Diagnostic information about the specified disability using standard nomenclature from sources such as the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) and the APA Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV (DSM-IV).
- Specific recommended accommodations with a rationale for why each accommodation is needed. A description of any functional limitations associated with the disability is important to the UCNS's evaluation of the request.

The UCNS does not discriminate among applicants on the basis of age, sex, race, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or marital status.

## **B. Review of Documentation**

Each report is reviewed carefully before accommodations are provided. If the UCNS does not find appropriate and sufficient evidence to grant accommodations, the applicant will be informed that the request has been denied. If a request has been denied, a written appeal may be submitted in accordance with the UCNS Certification Appeals Policies and Procedures, which can be found at <http://www.ucns.org/globals/axon/assets/11915.pdf>.

## **C. Testing Accommodations**

Testing accommodations may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Assistance in indicating answers
- Extended testing time

- Large screen font
- Large print examination
- Separate examination room
- Reader
- Use of assistive devices

## V. POLICIES

### A. Refunds

Application fees are non-refundable. Refunds will be issued in the same method in which the original payment was received. The complete policy regarding refunds can be found at <http://www.ucns.org/globals/axon/assets/11915.pdf>.

### B. Certification and Recertification

Subspecialty certification in BNNP is awarded to all candidates who meet the necessary requirements and who successfully pass a proctored examination in the subspecialty.

Subspecialty certification is a voluntary process by which the UCNS grants recognition to a physician subspecialist who has met predetermined qualifications specified by the UCNS. Subspecialty certification and the certificate recognize those physician subspecialists who have successfully completed the UCNS's requirements and demonstrated their skills and abilities at the time of evaluation. Certification is not a guarantee of the competence of the physician subspecialist.

Certificates issued in the subspecialty of BNNP are ten-year, time-limited certificates. All UCNS time-limited certificates, regardless of their exact dates of issuance, are considered to expire on December 31 following the tenth anniversary of the date of issuance.

**Diplomates with certificates in the subspecialty of BNNP must also maintain certification in their primary specialty. If certification in the primary specialty lapses, certification in the subspecialty is no longer valid.**

Diplomates who are not recertified before their certificates expire are no longer UCNS-certified in that area of certification. Once a former diplomate completes the maintenance of certification process, however, he or she will regain certification status. Diplomates with certificates in the subspecialty of BNNP must also maintain certification in their primary specialty in order to apply for recertification in the area of subspecialization.

### C. Revocation of Certificates

The UCNS has the authority to revoke any certificate issued by it for cause or to place a certificate holder on probation for a fixed or indefinite period of time. If a certificate is revoked, a written appeal may be submitted in accordance with the UCNS Certification Appeals Policies and Procedures, which can be found at <http://www.ucns.org/globals/axon/assets/11915.pdf>.

#### **D. Irregular Behavior Including Unethical Behavior of Candidates**

The UCNS believes that the ethics of candidates for certification are of concern. The following rules apply:

- Falsification of credentials will be cause for the UCNS refusal to admit a candidate to examination for up to five years.
- The UCNS will consider legal action against anyone who forges a UCNS certificate, copies a UCNS examination, or otherwise uses them in conflict with copyright laws or in any other way violates the legal prerogatives of the UCNS. Such activities will cause for the UCNS's refusal to admit a candidate to examination for up to five years.
- Scores on examinations may be invalidated for reasons of irregular behavior. Statistical analyses may be used to confirm suspected cheating. If an examination score is invalidated, the candidate may submit a written appeal within 30 days of the notice of invalidation in accordance with the appeal policy located at <http://www.ucns.org/globals/axon/assets/11915.pdf>. If an examination score is invalidated because of irregular behavior, the UCNS will not consider the candidate for examination for a period of up to five years, depending on the irregular behavior. A new application, current application, and examination fees will be required.
- Irregular behavior shall include, but not be limited to, the following conduct:
  - Copying answers from another candidate's examination.
  - Knowingly permitting another candidate to copy one's answers on an examination.
  - Unauthorized possession, reproduction, or disclosure of examination materials or content at any time.
  - Offering any financial benefit or other benefit to any director, officer, employee, proctor, diplomate, or other agent or representative of the UCNS in return for any right, privilege, or benefit that is not granted by the UCNS to other similarly situated candidates or persons.
  - Not complying with proctors' instructions.
  - Disregarding time limits.
  - Bringing food, drink, cellular phones, pagers, books, study materials, personal belongings, or other prohibited material into an examination.
  - Making telephone calls during an examination.
  - Any other form of disruptive behavior, including repeated or excessive verbal complaints.
- Notification of the UCNS action may be sent to legitimately interested third parties, including the American Medical Association, state medical societies, medical licensing boards, and appropriate specialty societies.

#### **E. APPEAL OF DECISIONS**

An appeal process is available to individuals who disagree with the UCNS's decisions regarding their admissibility to the examination, request for special accommodations, accuracy of scoring procedure, or revocation of certification. Policies can be found on the UCNS Website at <http://www.ucns.org/globals/axon/assets/11915.pdf>.

**VI. CONTACT INFORMATION**

For more information about certification, contact:

Todd A. Bulson  
Certification Manager  
United Council for Neurologic Subspecialties  
201 Chicago Ave  
Minneapolis, MN 55415  
Telephone: 612-928-6067  
Fax: 612-454-2750  
E-mail: [tbulson@ucns.org](mailto:tbulson@ucns.org)