

LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE PARAMEDIC PROGRAMME ASSESSMENT CENTRE
EDUCATION CENTRE FULHAM : 17TH & 19TH NOVEMBER 2015

Vince CLARKE : Senior Para-Medic Tutor
Jane Thomas : Clinical Tutor
Chi Chi : HR Recruitment Manager
Lauren Murphy : PPI & Public Education Co-ordinator (Mentor for me)
Jan Marriott : LAS Patient Forum Member

I was pleased to attend this Assessment Day in response for volunteer involvement
All staff I met at the Centre introduced themselves and welcomed me.

We began by both staff and the five applicants assembling together where Vince gave a clear and informative brief of the course and to the agenda of the day.

One written paper : one interview : and two practical sessions

Each Tutor gave a brief but detailed account of each session

I felt it was very clear as to what would happen and what was expected of them and on what they would be marked.

So clear 'How could they fail' ?

We then moved to the interview room and Vince explained our role as observers and would welcome any comments on the questions and procedure after the marking was complete.

We commented that the applicants should be given the option of our being present , and it was felt that it shouldn't be a problem as they as LAS crews would have the general public observing them during their daily duties.

We were present at two interviews and two practical sessions.

Before the first interview started I commented to Lauren that I thought Question 3 might need rewording.

After each interview we listened to the panel discussing and marking each applicant.

It was here that I felt my pre-conceived ideas of a prospective para-medical candidate changed very markedly. What I had thought and then perceived was needed changed by listening to the panel's expectations and why they held their particular approach.

When the marks had been dealt with Vince then asked for our comments.

It was a very easy and free to speak and I felt quite relaxed as an outsider to offer my comments and opinion.

We attended two interviews and they differed as chalk from cheese .

Both interviews gave a very clear insight to just what qualities and abilities are required of a Para-medical candidate : - (particularly by answers to Q.3)

a) by the LAS

b) what the applicants understanding was of this role

c) from within the new NHS Professional Health Status
and (in my opinion)

as to how candidates addressed these points throughout the interview.

These are some of the following comments and observations that Lauren and I agreed to expressed to Vince and the panel.

- 1) Vince was very generous in his dealing with the first applicant concerning a set Requirement.
- 2) Listening to their assessment and how it was marked was enlightening and very different to what I had expected.
- 3) The interview structure seemed a little inflexible
- 4) Question three : How Vince & Jane discussed this - and our agreement it needed rewording.
5. The expectations of the panel in specific requirements that they felt the answers should contain.
- 6) All applicants were drawn from LAS crews and experience was important but not the qualifying factor but just a start to the para-medical role.
- 7) It had changed my previous idea of qualities and abilities that a para-medical needed
- 8) When Forum members queried 'Why the LAS didn't employ more candidates for the vacancies in this role's
I quite understood their reply ' That candidates lack the necessary qualities needed '

I came to the conclusion that out of the five candidates only one was a possible
BUT PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS WAS ONLY MY OPINION.

My concluding comment was that the LAS would continue the confidence of the public that any para-medical holding position as a result of completing this new training course within the LAS could be trusted to give trustworthy and confident treatment to patients.

My thanks to all concerned and I was appreciative of being part of a very interesting processing event.

Jan Marriott

Patient's Forum

21st November 2015