

Biographies



Morag Dorward

Morag Dorward is the Chair of the RCSLT Board of Trustees

Sessions:

Chair of morning sessions

Welcome and introduction

What skills and knowledge will be in demand? Tips and Q&A: A guide to finding your first job

Q&A Panel with the day's presenters

Plenary and close

Morag qualified as an SLT from Glasgow University in 1981. She then worked in Midlothian in a generic community post for three years before working in New Zealand for six months in an acute adult post. Morag then settled in Tayside, working generically initially and then, becoming a clinical specialist for ASD and mental health in children's services.

Morag moved into management in 2002, heading up speech and language therapy services in Angus and then Dundee. She took three years out from this, one year as a secondee to Scottish Government, working as a development officer to support implementation of the Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act (2004). This was followed by two years as a secondee in Tayside to lead on development of integrated services for families and individuals who have long-term conditions with a strong focus on self-management. She returned to speech and language therapy management in Dundee in 2007, and for the past four years has worked as allied health professional lead for children's services in Tayside.

Morag has been an active member of the RCSLT over the years, but becoming Scotland councilor in October 2013 was her first official post with the RCSLT at UK level. She became deputy chair of the Board of Trustees in September 2014 and chair of the Board of Trustees in September 2015.



@DorwardMorag

My top tip for students becoming NQPs:

You have to look outwards beyond your clinical practice to pay attention to policies and politics. Talk with your manager of your interest and arrange work shadow to gain further understanding. Read/attend training on leadership and change.



Denise Bain

Denise Bain is a final year student at Birmingham City University

Session:

Your RCSLT National Student Study Day

Denise is a final year speech and language therapy student studying at Birmingham City University. Her first degree was a BA (Hons) Linguistics and Early Childhood Studies. After some time working in early years she saw the remarkable difference early intervention can make and it was one of the things that inspired her to pursue a career in speech and language therapy.

University life has really kept Denise embracing every opportunity possible. She has taken on the roles of student academic leader, Level-Up mentor (welcoming new students into university), and student ambassador. Most recently Denise participated in an international conference for speech and language therapy students in Belgium.

When she's not in the library Denise enjoys traveling, outdoor activities, socialising with friends and volunteering with children and young people. Now she looks forward to graduation and although she enjoys working with children is remaining open-minded about the future.



@DenBain



Léonore Evans

Léonore Evans is a final year student at Birmingham City University

Session:

Your RCSLT National Student Study Day

Léonore is a final year student at Birmingham City University. She has previously studied at St. Bartholomew's School and Reading College before attending university. Léonore is a member of the BCU Speech and Language Therapy Society and helps to organise the events that are carried out by the society; the most recent one being a charity ball to raise money for the Stroke Association.

Léonore has also taken part in IP Light, which was an international exchange programme for European speech and language therapy students. This event allowed for everyone to see how the service delivery for speech and language therapy differs across countries.

As part of the course at BCU, Léonore has been on one clinical placement at the start of her second year. She now has experience working with mainstream pre-school and primary school aged children. Next year she will go on a second clinical placement which will provide her with valuable experience in working with adult stroke survivors in hospital. Léonore has also completed two observational experiences: one week in a nursery and four days in an adult voice clinic.



@ LeonoreEvansSLT



Dominique Lowenthal

Dominique Lowenthal is the Head of Professional Development at the RCSLT

Sessions:

Departure lounge: Supporting your career journey – information, resources and networks
Q&A panel with the day's presenters

Dominique oversees a varied and experienced professional development team who support members with research skills and dissemination, building and implementing the evidence base; producing professional guidance and position papers; developing e-learning and other Continuing Professional Development (CPD) resources; and providing members with one-to-one professional enquiry support.

Dominique is also passionate about supporting the RCSLT to take advantage of technology to bring members closer together, currently including the development of a new RCSLT website and online services.



My top tip for students becoming NQPs:

Be confident, think outside the box and don't be afraid to put yourself out there. Be aware of your own strengths and weaknesses, and don't be afraid to ask questions.



Amit Kulkarni

Amit Kulkarni is the Research Manager at the RCSLT

Sessions:

Departure lounge: Supporting your career journey – information, resources and networks
Q&A panel with the day's presenters

Amit is a highly specialist SLT with experience across a range of paediatric settings, from community clinics to mainstream schools, special schools and language units. This includes work with early years, primary and secondary aged children. He is a specialist in Developmental Language Disorder and has carried out qualitative and quantitative research projects in this area. This research has focused on the use of evidence-based interventions in everyday clinical practice.

Amit's role at the RCSLT is to continue supporting the development of research culture and capacity within the profession. This involves supporting members to use an evidence-based approach to practice. It also involves supporting members who are actively involved in research, as well as those who are spearheading the development of the evidence base.



My top tip for students becoming NQPs:

Just do it.



Najmul Hussain

Najmul Hussain is a Policy Officer at the RCSLT

Sessions:

Departure lounge: Supporting your career journey – information, resources and networks
Q&A panel with the day’s presenters

Naj is an ex-civil servant with a background in policy development ranging from human rights, energy and infrastructure, international engagement and health and social care. He received his undergraduate degree at Sheffield Hallam University and has recently completed a masters degree from Lancaster University in diplomacy and international law.



@RCSLTPolicy

My top tip for students becoming NQPs:

Recognise the importance of policy and engage where you can.



Kaleigh Maietta

Kaleigh Maietta is the Events and Member Engagement Officer at the RCSLT

Session:

Departure lounge: Supporting your career journey – information, resources and networks
Q&A panel with the day’s presenters

Kaleigh has been working at the RCSLT since 2014. She holds a BA in English Language and Literature from King’s College London, and an MA in Public Policy from Queen Mary, University of London. Kaleigh’s primary role is to support the UK-wide Hubs communities and activities within the Hubs. She is passionate about building resilience and leadership capacity within communities and volunteer groups.

Prior to working at the RCSLT, Kaleigh worked for the NHS in various administration capacities and as a researcher and reporter for the Sambhavana Society in Mumbai.



@RCSLThubs

My top tip for students becoming NQPs:

Decide on a goal and then run with it with confidence and enthusiasm. Sometimes making the decision is the hardest part.



Zoe Hayes

Zoe Hayes is an SLT at Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Partnership NHS Trust

Sessions:

Take off: NQP Panel
Q&A panel with the day's presenters

Zoe is a married mum of three who entered education later on in life. Prior to studying speech and language therapy, she was a full-time stay at home mum. Zoe became interested in speech and language therapy when her son accessed the local speech and language therapy service and she saw the positive impact this had on his development.

Zoe qualified as an SLT from De Montfort University in July 2015. Although jobs were advertised, there were none that immediately fit the profile of what she was looking for. Unable to find anything at that time she started working at her local ASDA – all the time still looking for positions in speech and language therapy. In November 2015 her 'dream job' was advertised at Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Partnership NHS Trust working as part of a 'school readiness' team. This was a fixed term, three year post. She was successful at interview and has been working in the team since January 2016.

Zoe completed her competencies within 18 months and has had a range of experiences and CPD as part of the role, including speaking to more than 200 people at a 'school readiness' conference.



@Zothebo

My top tip for students becoming NQPs:

To always ask questions – clinicians do not expect you to know everything. Research the area you are going to be working in, e.g. go over childhood norms if in paediatrics etc.



Nikki Freeman

Nikki Freeman is an independent SLT at Nikki Freeman Speech and Language Therapy Services Ltd

Sessions:

Take off: NQP Panel
Q&A panel with the day's presenters

Nikki worked as a primary school teacher for 29 years, teaching in early years and Key Stage 1 in mainstream schools. She became interested in speech and language therapy as she noticed an increasing number of children starting school with communication needs and felt limited as to how to help these children achieve their potential.

Nikki completed a BSc in Speech and Language Therapy at Birmingham City University, graduating in September 2015 following six years studying part time. At first she returned to teaching in March 2016; subsequently she successfully applied for a position as an NQT to work through the competency framework with an independent speech and language therapy company based in the West Midlands, to start in September 2016. This entailed setting up her own speech and language therapy company and working as an associate alongside other independent therapists.

Nikki completed her competencies in September 2017 and now works in three mainstream primary schools in Birmingham.

My top tip for students becoming NQPs:

Each day, note everything that went well in your sessions as well as reflecting on what you wish you had done differently.



Florence Cheesman

Florence Cheesman is an SLT at Rampton High Secure Hospital

Sessions:

Take off: NQP Panel
Q&A panel with the day's presenters

Florence is a Band 5 SLT at Rampton High Secure Psychiatric Hospital and St Andrew's Healthcare in Mansfield which has both medium and low secure units. Her caseloads consist mainly of mental health and autistic spectrum disorder patients, though Florence sees a wide variety of diagnoses. She went to Birmingham City University to gain her undergraduate degree.

My top tip for students becoming NQPs:

Don't sweat the small stuff – when you are qualified you will think back to that one essay where you missed out by 1% and think "what was I worried about?"



Megan McCormick

Megan McCormick is an SLT at I CAN

Session:

Take off: NQP Panel
Q&A panel with the day's presenters

Megan is a newly qualified SLT working at Dawn House School in Nottingham, for the charity I CAN.

Megan has been working since September 2017 after studying speech and language therapy at the University of Reading. She enjoyed both adult and paediatric work during her training, however developed a strong passion for SEN after working in a school in Cambodia for six months after qualifying.

Megan presently works in a specialist school for children 5-19 years with severe or complex communication difficulties or Asperger's. She works with sixth form students age 16-19 years, with a varied case load including autism, dyspraxia, speech sound disorders, language disorders, global developmental delays, dysfluency, social anxieties and selective mutism.

Megan is passionate about teamwork and works closely with teachers, assistants, educational psychologists, residential care workers and parents in supporting her students in the educational setting and in transition to life after college. Therapy opportunities are wide and varied and include self-reflections, friendship groups, vocabulary groups, intensive speech sounds therapy, AAC and dysfluency work. She is presently working to complete her RCSLT newly qualified competencies.

My top tip for students becoming NQPs:

Good support in a first job is key

Kamini Gadhok MBE



Kamini Gadhok MBE is the CEO of the RCSLT

Session:

Chair of afternoon sessions

In flight: What skills and knowledge will be in demand?

Getting ready for landing: Practical scenarios and discussion in finding your first roles

Q&A panel with the day's presenters

Prize draw

Thanks and close

Kamini has been chief executive at the RCSLT since December 2000. The professional body for speech and language therapists in the UK, the RCSLT provides leadership for the profession and supports improvements to services for people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).

Kamini's primary role is to help deliver service change by building strong partnerships with key stakeholders across government, charities, other professional bodies and the regulator. Over the years, she has been involved in a number of government initiatives and policy developments. This has included being an adviser to the Bercow review of services for children with SLCN, which continues to inform and impact on key government policies.

Kamini received an MBE in June 2009 for services to the allied health professions.

As a former speech and language therapist, Kamini had direct patient care responsibilities for 14 years and has experience of working with a range of client groups (children, older people, people with learning difficulties) across all ages in hospitals, community health centres, special schools and mainstream schools.

Prior to her move to London in 1997, Kamini had three roles in Nottingham Community Health (NHS Trust): as a locality manager, with responsibility for meeting the health needs of local populations across three inner city health areas; as locality coordinator for speech and language therapy services; and as specialist adviser (bilingualism) leading the development of services for people for whom English is an additional language. In this role, Kamini established the Asian bilingual co-worker service, the first of its kind in the country.

In 1997, Kamini became ethnic health projects coordinator for the NHS and was seconded to the Department of Health to set up the Race Equality Unit, where she was section head until 2000.



@Kgadhok

My top tip for students becoming NQPs:

Critically question what you read and think about how it helps you in your work.



Vanessa Hayward

Vanessa Hayward is the Acting Head of Speech and Language Therapy at Cwm Taf University Health Board

Sessions:

In flight: What skills and knowledge will be in demand?

Getting ready for landing: Practical scenarios and discussion in finding your first roles

Q&A panel with the day's presenters

Vanessa was born in Gloucester where her interest in speech and language therapy was sparked by reading "A day in the life of a Speech Therapist" on the back of a magazine she read in the reception area at her school. She arranged to observe some therapists locally and qualified as a speech and language therapist in 1990, following completion of a degree at Leeds Polytechnic, back when dysphagia wasn't even on the curriculum.

She started her career in a mixed adult and children's post in Rotherham, but soon realised that her heart belonged to adult work. She moved back to Gloucester and took up a short term post in Worcester where there were more adult sessions available, followed by a full-time adult post based in Abergavenny. She then moved to Shrewsbury, having successfully acquired a more senior adult post which she loved, as it gave her a great deal of variety across acute and community, as well as the opportunity to develop a new dysphagia service and a taste of management.

A lecturer post came up in Cardiff (UWIC) and was too good an opportunity to miss, especially as it involved organising the placements and also providing a placement in a local hospital. She also did some temporary work back in Shrewsbury in the Christmas holiday.

These two years were enormously valuable and Vanessa really enjoyed developing relationships with the students and seeing them develop, however, the pull back to management was too strong. So she applied for a head of adult speech and language therapy service and deputy head post in Merthyr Tydfil. This is still where she is now, though her current role is head of speech and language therapy, being responsible for 65 staff.

She completed a MSc in Health Service Management at Cardiff University in 2008 and continues to carry a caseload, working with adults who stammer, and is an active member of a local CEN. She is also vice chair of Wales SLT Advisory Forum, has been a committee member of RCSLT's Finances and Resources Committee (FRC) and is currently a representative on the curriculum guidelines and NQP framework steering group.

My top tip for students becoming NQPs:

Be open to any opportunities and think carefully about what is unique about you!



Lorna Povey

Lorna Povey was manager of the speech and language therapy service for the Royal Wolverhampton Trust

Sessions:

In flight: What skills and knowledge will be in demand?

Getting ready for landing: Practical scenarios and discussion in finding your first roles

Q&A panel with the day's presenters

Lorna was manager of the speech and language therapy service for the Royal Wolverhampton Trust from May 1991 until November 2017. The service in Wolverhampton is a city-wide service for children and adults. Services are provided in hospitals, schools, clinics and clients' homes.

Prior to taking up the post in Wolverhampton, Lorna taught on the SLT course at what is now Birmingham City University.

Lorna has worked with a variety of clients groups; for many years she continued to hold a caseload in addition to managing the service. Her most recent areas of clinical specialism were voice and dysfluency.

Lorna has been actively involved with the support and development of NQPs through the service's preceptorship programme. Lorna is a firm believer in the clinician as a reflective learner. Reflection and ongoing clinical curiosity are essential skills for SLTs whatever stage they are at in their professional career.

Lorna is actively involved in RCSLT, being a member of the finance and resources committee and the working groups looking at curriculum guidelines, NQP competencies and children's services. Lorna is also a partner for the HCPC. This involves being a panel member for fitness to practice hearings and approval of university courses.

Outside of work Lorna has a keen interest in performing arts.

My top tip for students becoming NQPs:

Develop your personal survival toolkit. What can you do to develop your resilience? You are on a learning journey which will continue throughout your working career. Regularly take time to reflect on what has happened, what you have learnt and how you will apply this learning.

Don't be afraid to ask for help and or support. Nobody knows everything. Colleagues will be willing to help.



Ali Beard

Ali Beard is the Professional Clinical Lead for Children's Speech and Language Therapy at Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Trust

Sessions:

In flight: What skills and knowledge will be in demand?

Getting ready for landing: Practical scenarios and discussion in finding your first roles

Q&A panel with the day's presenters

Ali started her language career doing a BSc in French and Spanish at Sheffield then worked as an speech and language therapy assistant in a language unit in London for a year whilst applying for the City University post graduate speech and language therapy course. She graduated in 1997 with a keen desire to work in inner city areas with children and young people. Ali worked for six years in London, firstly in a general post (community clinic, mainstream and special school) then specialised in school-age work with complex needs in special schools and resource bases. She moved to Birmingham in 2003 as SLT clinical lead for autism, leading in diagnostic teams in child development centres and in child and adolescent mental health services, as well as providing intervention for children and young people and establishing clinical best practice guidance for SLTs working with autism spectrum disorders.

Wanting to effect change and influence at a whole service level, Ali moved into an SLT operational management role in 2011 and then into the role of professional clinical lead for the children's speech and language therapy service in 2012. She remains passionate about children, families and the influence of the wider children's workforce on children's communication development. She remains motivated to influence and advocate for a better speech, language and communication workforce in Birmingham and is proud to support the tireless, quality work carried out by SLTs in the team despite the constraints of the NHS-commissioned SLT service in Birmingham.



@Ali_BeardSLCN

My top tip for students becoming NQPs:

Be patient with yourself as you learn. Carry on reflecting and asking 'why?' Always think functional and know the value of informal assessment and observation of real life skills. Find time to have fun with your colleagues