

Article:	NHS chief faked his CV to land £115,000-a-year job
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A former hospital chief executive has admitted making up qualifications on his CV to land his £115,000-a-year post.

Neil Taylor, 42, was chosen unanimously for the job as head of the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospitals NHS Trust after claiming to have a first-class degree from the University of Nottingham when he had just "one or two A-levels".

When Taylor was asked to provide his qualification certificates for a routine salary review last October, Taylor eventually produced a home-made diploma with a crude copy of the Nottingham University logo.

He claimed that the degree was a Bachelor of Arts in business administration and economics, and also said he was a graduate of the Institute of Personnel Management at Nottingham, a department that does not exist.

He also said that he had obtained a postgraduate diploma in Forensic Medicine, again from Nottingham University, when he had actually attended a two-day introduction to the course.

When confronted, Taylor resigned immediately. Yesterday he pleaded guilty before Shrewsbury magistrates to one charge of obtaining a pecuniary advantage by deception and one of attempting to commit the same offence.

Taylor, from Solihull, West Midlands, had worked as a chief executive at hospitals in the area for 10 years, including four years at the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital in Birmingham from 1995-99 and another four as head of the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital before it merged with the Princess Royal Hospital in Telford in 2003 to form the new trust.

A charge of obtaining a pecuniary advantage by deception concerning Taylor's appointment as head of the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital NHS Trust in 1999 was dismissed.

It was only when applying for the position as chief executive of the newly merged trust, which provides healthcare for some 500,000 people across Shropshire and Mid-Wales, that Taylor felt the pressure to exaggerate his qualifications, his defence solicitor, Adrian Roberts, told the court.

Mr Roberts said that his client had been embarrassed about his lack of formal education.

During a salary review following the merger, all executives were asked to provide copies of higher education certificates.

"The authorities were pressing him to produce his degree certificate and qualifications from Nottingham University," prosecutor John Snell told the hearing. "[Taylor] took the line 'They are on my aged parents' wall.'"

Taylor initially stalled investigators, but eventually produced the home-made certificate. When the university was contacted it denied Taylor had ever studied there.

Outside court, Taylor said: "I am very pleased that the first charge against me was dropped. I never did anything up until the trust was merged in 2003. I did something foolish around the end of 2003, but I did not do it for financial advantage - I did it because of the pressures I was under."



An NHS counter fraud service spokesman said: "Any case of fraud against the NHS means taxpayers' money is being swindled and this is completely unacceptable. Since 1998, the NHS counter fraud service has saved the NHS £675m - enough to pay for five new hospitals."

Taylor was granted unconditional bail until sentencing on a date yet to be fixed at Shrewsbury crown court.