

NOTE: This job description does not form part of the employee's contract of employment but is provided for guidance. The precise duties and responsibilities of any job may be expected to change over time. Job Holders should be consulted over any proposed changes to this job description before implementation.

JOB TITLE: Life Sciences Technical Team Leader

GRADE: NG6

REPORTS TO: Head Technician

PURPOSE:

To lead and manage a Life Sciences technical team in the academic delivery of School activities (teaching, research, and knowledge exchange activities), through the provision of a high quality and customer-focused technical service to staff, students and external users.

To contribute to establishing best practice in the supervision of the technical staff and facilities, including forward planning and optimum utilisation of materials, equipment and technical resources. The post holder will discharge these responsibilities in addition to maintaining their own 'hands-on' core specialist technical support activities.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. To liaise with the Head Technician, to manage the laboratories, staff and technical resources in the School of Life Sciences, providing customer focused technical support for the core activities of the School (teaching, research and knowledge exchange) and its users. This will include:
 - a. To ensure optimum level of technical support and service is delivered to the School of Life Sciences at all times.
 - b. To ensure activities are legally compliant where necessary and conform to quality assurance and quality standards systems and processes as required.
 - c. To play a key role in establishing and implementing best practice in the management of the facilities including forward planning of the effective usage of materials, equipment, and technical staff.
 - d. To deputise in the absence of the Head Technician.
 - e. To undertake autoclaving duties on a rotation basis as part of a team.
 - f. To lead user groups/expert groups as delegated to the post-holder.

2. Lead and manage a multidisciplinary team of Technical staff, ensuring that; all relevant people management policies are effectively implemented in accordance with brand values and leadership and management competencies, modelling good practice line management; all staff in the team engage with the University's PDR process, deliver their personal objectives and complete all

agreed personal development activities, recording all relevant information on their PDR record; setting appropriate service and performance standards, in consultation with key stakeholders, and ensuring they are met; engaging and motivating staff to achieve maximum performance and flexibility within clear lines of accountability and responsibility; promoting effective relations with other academic areas and areas of Professional Services, and contributing to Westminster's positioning as a University of first choice by providing an outstanding customer experience.

3. To ensure team compliance with all relevant Health and Safety requirements in the designated technical services area, monitoring, auditing and ensuring the safe use of all equipment and materials by users. This will include:
 - a. To maintain best practice through established Health & Safety legislation, Risk and Hazard Management and COSHH procedures.
 - b. The post holder will induct and train staff, apprentices, students, and other users of the facilities. The post holder will be required to write technical guides, SOPs and relevant documentations, including risk assessments as required.
 - c. To ensure that Health and Safety procedures, particularly when working with hazardous substances, are strictly adhered to.
4. To provide specialist technical support to academic staff and students during the preparation and delivery of practical classes (e.g. as part of the undergraduate or postgraduate curriculum, as part of support for research projects, summer school or CPD/short-course activity). Such specialist technical support includes (but is not limited to):
 - a. To provide specialist service and support in the post holder's specialism
 - b. To provide a lead and support role to the delivery of practical classes as assigned by the Head Technician. To work with other technical team members regarding the preparation and delivery of general and specialist practical classes in the life sciences modules
 - c. To provide advice and support to users in the context of their individual research e.g. support for data manipulation, analysis, interpretation etc.
 - d. To support space and equipment organisation, maintenance, servicing and supervision of the teaching and research laboratories.
5. To instruct users in, and carry out demonstration of, the safe and correct use of equipment and materials, in teaching, research and knowledge exchange, on both an ad-hoc basis and during scheduled practical sessions throughout the year, maintaining appropriate records that this instruction has taken place.
6. To manage the team in providing technical support to academic staff and students during the preparation and delivery of practical classes (e.g., as part of the undergraduate or postgraduate curriculum, as part of support for research projects, summer school or CPD/short-course activity).
7. To carry out the regular inspection and evaluation of equipment in the designated technical services area, to ensure that it conforms to required Health & Safety standards; maintaining and undertaking minor repairs to equipment (where the post holder has had the necessary training to undertake such repairs) and arranging engineer/specialist maintenance when required. To keep the designated technical service area in a clean, safe, and fully operational condition.
8. To ensure stocks of laboratory supplies are monitored, maintained, and

requisitioned when required, to maintain optimum levels at all times throughout the year.

9. To participate in and contribute to relevant internal or external networks (e.g., Technician team meetings, user groups, committees, professional networks), as directed by the Head Technician. To undertake relevant continuous professional development activities and maintain up to date knowledge and skills in the designated specialism.
10. To coordinate and contribute to writing technical guidance/manuals for users relevant to the designated technical service area and its equipment and provisions and provide coordination to develop & maintain the technical support digital learning tools and software.
11. To undertake any other duties within their competence and appropriate to the grade, as required by the line manager or his/her nominee.

CONTEXT

The School of Life Sciences undertakes teaching and research in the areas of biomedical science, physiology, exercise, molecular biology, pharmacology, nutrition, complementary medicines and biological sciences and provides services for some 1800 students and 110 members of staff.

Wet laboratory work, as well as computational and physiological / sports laboratory and services are undertaken in the School and all this activity requires support from technical professionals. Technical teams function to provide that support both prior to and during teaching, research and knowledge exchange activities.

Technical professionals are organised into teams to deliver their collective function, however, both team and individual working will be required. There will be some rotation of duties to enable development of individuals.

The post-holder is expected to work closely with colleagues within and outside the section to maintain the highest quality of technical support and provide the best possible experience to School users (primarily students and academic and research staff) in the delivery of the School's core activities. The post holder will be expected to adopt a customer-centred approach and have a commitment to personal and professional development, demonstrating this commitment through undertaking regular continuous professional development activities.

DIMENSIONS

- The post-holder has line management responsibility and works as part of a team of in supporting the core activities of the School.
- The post-holder is a user and service provider of the equipment/physical resources in the designated technical service area and ensures their safe usage in compliance with Health and Safety requirements.
- There may be restrictions on taking annual leave during busy periods (e.g. during term time)
- There may be a requirement to undertake mandatory training (e.g. in respect of Health and Safety compliance) or other CPD.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential Criteria	Desirable
Qualifications	
<p>Educated to degree level in the Biosciences or equivalent practical experience</p>	<p>Relevant post-graduate or professional (membership of a relevant professional body and or technical registration of the Science Council) or demonstrable equivalent level of professional experience</p> <p>NVQ in customer services or equivalent practical experience</p>
<p>Knowledge and Experience</p> <p>Experience in microscopy, immunology, histology and Fluorescence activated cell sorting (FACs).</p> <p>Experience in preparing and delivering laboratory based practical classes.</p> <p>Experience of supporting projects and research students in the laboratory.</p> <p>Demonstrable experience of effective technical staff performance management.</p> <p>Demonstrable understanding of health and safety legislation, requirements and best practice in the context of the specific work in the biosciences laboratory.</p> <p>Proven track record of working and successful delivery of services in a Life Sciences laboratory environment.</p> <p>Experience of demonstrating/training users on equipment and/or software.</p> <p>Proven knowledge of and skills for working with a variety of materials, equipment and software in the biosciences laboratory.</p> <p>Experience of working successfully as a member of a customer-facing team of staff.</p>	<p>Previous experience in a Higher Education environment.</p>

Experience of writing and contributing to laboratory supporting documentation (e.g standard operating procedures, risk assessments and guidance documents).

Aptitude and Abilities

Able to provide creative solutions to complex problems on a day-to-day basis.

Able to apply theoretical models, formulas and test scenarios effectively to solve practical dilemmas or help others move conceptual ideas forward.

Able to operate maintain and repair specialist machinery/equipment as an experienced and proficient user.

Excellent IT and digital skills including word processing, spreadsheets, PowerPoint, e-mail and internet, video creation and use of streaming software and equipment.

Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to communicate information effectively (either verbally or in written form), and articulate complex issues in a manner, which is clear and concise.

Excellent planning skills, with attention to detail, the ability to meet deadlines, work well under time constraints and other pressures.

Willing and able to learn new scientific techniques.

Ability to work both independently and in a team environment.

Personal attributes	
<p>A customer-focused approach, and the ability to demonstrate this approach in personal working practices.</p> <p>Ability to effectively communicate (written and oral) with colleagues and clients in a professional and efficient manner.</p> <p>A commitment to continuous personal professional development.</p> <p>The flexibility to adapt in an ever-changing sector.</p> <p>Fully committed to contributing to a stimulating learning and working environment which is supportive and fair, based on mutual respect and trust, and in which harassment and discrimination are neither tolerated nor acceptable.</p>	