

Geography Technician

Job Ref: REQ250054

As part of the University's ongoing commitment to redeployment, please note that this vacancy may be withdrawn at any stage of the recruitment process if a suitable redeployee is identified.

Loughborough University's Technician Commitment

Loughborough University is a signatory of the national Technician Commitment Scheme which pledges to ensure the visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability of their technical staff. The successful candidate will therefore be joining a thriving and visible community of staff with opportunities for collaboration and networking, and a clearly defined career pathway against which they can map and plan their own professional development and career progression.

School summary

The postholder will work in the School of Social Sciences and Humanities, based in the Department of Geography and Environmental Science. Geography and Environment comprises of over 500 undergraduate and MSc students, 40 postgraduate researchers, and 80 academic, research, and support staff. The department conducts cutting-edge research, working internationally with other researchers, industry and government to increase understanding of our rapidly changing planet. Our teaching programme includes five undergraduate and four postgraduate degrees, covering a range of human and physical geography disciplines.

Job Description

Job Grade: Grade 5, Technical Teaching and Specialist (TTS)

Job Purpose

The postholder will work as part of a team to support and co-ordinate the daily operation of School technical facilities, using their knowledge and expertise to ensure compliance with health and safety regulations and the effective use of technical facilities, equipment and resources. This position provides an invaluable contribution to the learning, teaching and research aims of the School.

The post holder will work as part of a small technical team and be responsible for providing technical support to academic staff, researchers, and students in laboratory and field work across a broad range of geographical disciplines (including biogeography, climate, geomorphology, geographical mapping systems (GIS), microscopy, river sciences, soil science and sedimentology). The role will carry out technical or scientific tasks under general guidance, but these will be planned and organised independently. The role requires the application of problem-solving skills to complex experimental issues and will provide advanced technical support within the River Science Laboratories on specialised equipment, including water flumes and associated electronic equipment.

The postholder will receive general guidance and instruction but will be required to plan and organise their work independently. Initially, tasks will be straightforward within well-established routines and procedures but will increase in complexity and level of responsibility as the postholder's knowledge, training and professional development progresses.

Job Duties

- Support and co-ordinate the daily operation of technical facilities, equipment and resources within the School, assuming a higher level of responsibility for facilities aligned to your specialism, including supervising and co-ordinating the work of other technical staff.
- Provide technical support for teaching, learning, and research activities, including demonstrating and instructing students and staff on equipment use, processes and techniques.
- Keep updated on Health and Safety regulations, implement them and escalate any issues. Carry out risk assessments and other compliance activities as required, including Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER), and DEFRA's Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) soil/sediment licence. If required, be willing to take on health and safety roles within the School, such as first aider and fire marshal. Ensure appropriate clothing, footwear and safety equipment is worn during technical activities.
- Co-ordinate equipment procurement and/or procure equipment and consumables within budget and policy guidelines.
- Develop and maintain technical documentation, such as standard operating procedures, and instructional materials.
- Drawing on your own expertise, identify technical issues and suggest solutions.
- Help prepare for and assist with fieldtrips, Open Days, student visit days and outreach activities. Flexibility regarding working hours/days is required at times.
- Maintain good working relationships and communicate effectively with technical staff, academics, students, and visitors, including communicating complex information effectively to varied audiences. Attend and contribute to team meetings within the School and attend University technician networking events.
- Provide cover for any absence of other technical staff, at an appropriate level for the grade, when necessary.
- Complete role-specific training, such as manual handling training, forklift (counterbalance) licence and Level 2 powerboat certificate. This may require externally provided training.
- Manage the loaning of equipment for teaching and research by keeping a record of loan and returns; in addition to ensuring the safe storage of samples.
- Support the design and adaption of equipment and experimental setups e.g. Greenhouse gas chambers, sensor monitoring on river flumes, and the production of bespoke parts.
- Undertake other general tasks and duties, commensurate with the grade level, as directed by the Line Manager.

Points To Note

The purpose of this job description is to indicate the general level of duties and responsibility of the post. The detailed duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character or level of responsibility entailed.

Special Conditions

All staff have a statutory responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves, others and the environment and to prevent harm by their acts or omissions. All staff are therefore required to adhere to the University's Health, Safety and Environmental Policy & Procedures.

All staff should hold a duty and commitment to observing the University's Equality & Diversity policy and procedures at all times. Duties must be carried out in accordance with relevant Equality & Diversity legislation and University policies/procedures.

Successful completion of probation will be dependent on attendance at the University's mandatory courses which include Respecting Diversity and, where appropriate, Recruitment and Selection.

Organisational Responsibility

Reports to: Technical and Scientific Services Manager.

Person Specification

Your application will be reviewed against the essential and desirable criteria listed below. Applicants are strongly advised to explicitly state and evidence how they meet each of the essential (and desirable) criteria in their application. Stages of assessment are as follows:

- 1 – Application
- 2 – Test/Assessment Centre/Presentation
- 3 – Interview

Essential Criteria

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Experience of working in a laboratory, workshop or other technical facility, within a physical science subject area e.g. Biology, Chemistry, Ecology, Environmental Sciences, Geochemistry and Geography.	1,3
	Experience of applying relevant processes and techniques in operating geographical field equipment; e.g dGPS, DustTrak, terrestrial laser scanner, water quality sondes, and other environmental monitoring instruments.	1,3
	Experience of applying good Health & Safety practices in a relevant setting.	1,3
	Experience of providing teaching and learning support to students, including practical demonstration & instruction.	1,3
	Experience of carrying out experiments and studies and using laboratory and field-based Geography/Environmental Science instrumentation/equipment.	1,3
	Experience of working with, processing and testing samples and/or materials, including freshwater macro-invertebrates, lake/river sediments, soils, vegetation and water samples.	1,3
	Experience of maintaining a wide range of physical geography/environmental science lab/field equipment, with a methodical approach to fault finding and problem solving.	1,2,3
Skills and abilities	Ability to work with professionalism and discretion, in accordance with University values.	1,3
	Ability to use good communication and interpersonal skills to work effectively with others.	1,2,3
	Ability to communicate complex information in an effective and engaging way to a range of audiences, specifically in the area of Geography/Environmental Sciences.	1,2,3
	Ability to work efficiently and accurately, planning and prioritising your own workload to deliver tasks within agreed timescales.	1,3
	Ability to apply your own initiative, be self-motivated and work with minimal supervision.	1,3
	Ability to be flexible and adapt to a changing work environment.	1,3
	Ability to learn new skills, techniques, processes and procedures, and have an aptitude for problem solving.	1,2,3

	Ability to establish and maintain effective documentation, such as standard operating procedures and instructional materials.	1,3
	Ability to use common Microsoft Office software to a good standard.	1,2,3
Training	Proven commitment to ongoing professional development, including mandatory and role-specific training.	1,3
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)	Commitment to understanding EDI challenges and observing University EDI guidelines.	1,3
Qualifications	Level 3, or equivalent qualification, in a relevant subject, including but not limited to: SVQ/NVQ Level 3/Two A Levels in relevant subject(s) and 5 GCSEs (including Maths and English)/Level 3 Vocational Awards/Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE)/BTEC National Diploma/Ordinary National Certificate/Diploma (ONC/OND)/or equivalent qualification in another country. <i>While a Level 3, or equivalent, qualification is preferred, we recognise the value of practical and 'real-world' knowledge and expertise, therefore candidates with a strong industry track record will be considered based on their demonstrated skills, achievements, and contributions to the field.</i>	1,3
Other	Willingness to provide support for events, such as University open and visit days, and residential field courses (occasional Saturday working may be required).	1,3
	Willingness to travel for work purposes, such as visiting suppliers, training and professional development.	1,3
	Meets University requirements for driving cars and minibuses and becoming a University Driver (e.g. Clean Current Driving Licence, over 25 years of age).	1,3
	Levels of physical fitness to be able manually handle/lift and transport goods and equipment.	1,2,3
	Ability to work under pressure.	1,3

Desirable Criteria

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Experience of providing technical support in a relevant setting, supporting either teaching and learning or research activities.	1,3
	Experience of either operating, testing and maintaining equipment across a broad range of geographical disciplines; (e.g. biogeography, ecology, geochronology, geomorphology, microscopy and sedimentology).	1,3
	Experience of purchasing equipment and consumables within agreed budgets, in accordance with organisation procurement policies.	1,3
	Experience of complying with relevant standards and regulations, including COSHH, PUWER and/or Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) soil/sediment licence.	1,3
	Experience of working with, processing, and testing ecological samples and/or materials, including microscopy and taxonomy (e.g. freshwater macro-invertebrates and terrestrial vegetation).	1,3

	Experience in the use of Small Uncrewed Aircraft (SUA).	1,3
	Experience and knowledge in the safe operation of hydraulic flume infrastructure and mechanisms (pumps etc.) and/or laboratory flume data acquisition equipment (flow velocity, PIV etc.)	1,3
Skills and abilities	Ability to co-ordinate and supervise the work of others.	1,3
	Ability to use Geographical Information Systems (GIS).	1,2,3
Training	Willingness to take on wider University roles on behalf of the School/Service, such as Health & Safety or other roles.	1,3
Qualifications	A degree in natural sciences (Geography, Geology, Environmental Science, Chemistry or Physics).	1
	D1 Minibus licence for transporting students on field courses.	1,3
	Level 2 Powerboat Certificate (training provided).	1,3
	Forklift Truck/Counterbalance Licence (training provided).	1,3
Other	Training/Experience in Laser Safety.	1,2,3

Conditions of Service

The position is full time and **open-ended**. Salary will be on the **Technical Teaching and Specialist** job family at **Grade 5**, £28,879 to £33,882 per annum, at a starting salary to be confirmed on offer of appointment. The appointment will be subject to the University's Terms and Conditions of Employment for staff grades 1-5, which can be found at: <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/conditions-of-service/>.

The University is committed to enabling staff to maintain a healthy work-home balance and has a number of family-friendly policies which can be found at: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/support/>

The University offers a wide range of employee benefits, which can be found at: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/benefits/>

We also offer an on-campus nursery with subsidised places, subsidised places at local holiday clubs and a childcare voucher scheme, which can be found at: <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/topics/childcare-support/>

In addition, the University is supportive, wherever possible, of flexible working arrangements. We also strive to create a culture that supports equality and celebrates diversity throughout the campus. The University holds a Bronze Athena SWAN award which recognises the importance of support for women at all stages of their academic career. Further information on Athena SWAN can be found at: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/athena-swan/>