School of Science

Technical Specialist (Biosciences, School of Science)

Job Ref: REQ260807

As part of the University's ongoing commitment to redeployment, please note that this vacancy may be withdrawn at any stage of the recruitment process if a suitable redeployee is identified.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 Science, based in the Department of Chemistry, which houses extensive externally funded biological research initiatives. Chemistry research at Loughborough is incredibly diverse. We work with scientists from other disciplines at universities around the world and within industry to address some of the biggest global challenges that face us today. Staff within the department work across the traditional organic, inorganic, physical and analytical chemistry areas, which have been recently bolstered by expertise in biological/supramolecular, polymer and computational chemistry through strategic recruitment.

Job Description

Job Grade: Grade 6, Technical Teaching and Specialist (TTS)

Job Purpose

The postholder will coordinate operations and facilities in the biological laboratories within the Chemistry department, ensuring compliance with health and safety standards and the effective management of facilities, equipment and resources. This position plays a critical role in advancing the University's research endeavours through the provision of advanced technical expertise.

Providing technical support for research/project activities in the biological laboratories within the Department of Chemistry with a focus on biosafety, cell biology, microbiology and genetic modification of organisms, the role requires: the application of substantial experimental subject expertise: the provision of technical instruction; skilled experimental direction; provision of design-advice; and the delivery of Health and Safety guidance. The role supports: undergraduate, postgraduate-taught and postgraduate-research students as well as academic and research staff. In addition, support of learning and supervision of taught practical sessions may occasionally be required.

The postholder will be required to independently plan and organise and manage their own time around required tasks, and the work of others, and to provide line management, mentoring and professional development support to colleagues. The level of responsibility will increase as the postholder's knowledge, training and professional development progresses, with the Department being keen to support the development of the postholder where appropriate.

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Job Duties

- Coordinate technical operations in biological and chemistry laboratories, ensuring the availability of equipment, materials, and resources necessary to successfully meet School research aims.
- Coordinate the maintenance, procurement, and upgrading of specialist research equipment and consumables, within allocated budgets and University procurement processes.
- Act as technical lead for the Department of Chemistry's Biological Science equipment.
- Oversee maintenance of the biological laboratories, ensuring high standards of housekeeping and safe handling and disposal of laboratory materials, to enable undergraduate, postgraduate, research students and staff to safely carry out practical work.
- Take technical responsibility for (operating, demonstrating and maintaining) apparatus and equipment (e.g. cell culture hoods, incubators, microscopes, PCR, etc).
- Stay current with advancements in cell biology and genetic manipulation techniques and technologies. This may involve attending events and professional development courses to enhance knowledge and expertise.
- Build and maintain effective working relationships with academic, technical and operational staff, students, external stakeholders, and visitors, effectively communicating complex information to a range of audiences.
- Assist academic and other technical staff in designing and conducting research activities within the biological sciences, providing expert technical support and troubleshooting complex technical issues.
- Identify, address, and escalate technical issues to the Technical Manager, offering solutions based on own knowledge and expertise.
- Maintain a thorough understanding of Health and Safety regulations, implementing and enforcing protocols to ensure safe working environments and operations across the School of Science.
- Ensure compliance with regulatory standards and university policies, particularly related to health and safety, ethical research, and data security e.g. biosafety and microbiological containment, Genetic Modification of Organisms.
- Develop, maintain, and refine technical documentation, including standard operating procedures and experimental protocols, ensuring clear communication of technical processes.
- Support activities outside normal working hours, such as the maintenance of cells. Flexibility regarding working hours/days is required at times.
- Line manage and/or supervise the work of technical staff at lower grades who work in School of Science, fostering a collaborative work environment in line with research objectives. Escalate staffing issues to the Technical Manager as required.
- When required, provide technical tutor support for School of Science timetabled experimental/practical sessions in the STEMLab bio labs.
- Participate in open days, visit days and other outreach activities, representing the School's technical capabilities and research strengths to a broad audience.
- Undertake other general tasks and duties, commensurate with the level of the position, 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 outlined in the document.

Special Conditions

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

There will be a requirement to undertake further training relevant to the role, both in laboratory techniques and specific Health and Safety related areas including fire marshal and manual handling training.
There will be some physical aspects of the role that require the use of manual handling techniques and equipment, including moving loads >25kg (such as cryogenic liquid vessels or compressed gas cylinders).

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Organisational Responsibility

Reports to the: Technical Services Manager
Direct Reports: N/A
Budget Responsibilities: N/A
Structure Chart: N/A

Person Specification

Your application will be reviewed against the essential and desirable criteria listed below.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to explicitly demonstrate how they meet each essential (and desirable) criteria at the application stage. The criteria that you need to demonstrate in your application will be listed as Stage 1 in the table below.

Stages of assessment are as follows:

1 – Criteria measured within the Application
2 – Criteria measured at Test/Assessment Centre/Presentation
3 - Criteria measured at Interview

Essential Criteria

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Experience of running specific laboratories, workshops and other technical facilities and associated activities related to your specialism, with minimal supervision.	1,3
	Experience of working effectively and collegiately with internal and external stakeholders at all levels.	1,3
	Experience of co-ordinating the effective and safe operation, maintenance and upgrade of equipment.	1,3
	Experience of co-ordinating the procurement of equipment and consumables within agreed budgets, in accordance with agreed policies.	1,3
	Experience of applying and co-ordinating relevant processes and techniques, including Biosafety and microbiological containment.	1,2,3
	Experience of ensuring that correct Health & Safety procedures and practices are being followed by all stakeholders working in your specialist area and incompliance with relevant standards and regulations, including COSHH and current Biosafety legislation.	1,2,3
	Experience of carrying out or designing experiments and studies, and the instrumentation, equipment and facilities to support this, cell biology, microbiology, genetic modification.	1,3
	Experience of working in a technical or research support role in an academic lab environment	1,3
	Experience of working at containment level 2 or higher	1,2,3
	Experience of providing practical demonstration and instruction in the specialism, aseptic technique, cell biology/microbiology.	1,2,3

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	Experience of working with and/or co-ordinating the processing and testing of samples and/or materials, including mammalian cells, microorganisms.	1,3
	Experience in the use of Bioscience laboratory equipment and instrumentation (including autoclave, centrifuge, flow cytometer, PCR, plate reader and UV spectrometers).	1,2,3
Skills and abilities	Ability to use good communication and interpersonal skills to work effectively with a range of stakeholders.	1,2,3
	Ability to work efficiently and accurately, and with professionalism, in accordance with University values, planning and prioritising own workload to deliver tasks within agreed timescales while maintaining confidentiality.	1,2,3
	Ability to work independently, apply your own initiative, be self-motivated and lead own workload, projects and teams.	1,3
	Accomplished at maintaining a wide range of laboratory equipment with a methodical approach to fault-finding and problem solving.	1,2,3
	Ability to establish, develop and maintain effective documentation, including standard operating procedures, COSHH and risk assessments.	1,2,3
Training	Proven commitment to ongoing professional development, including mandatory and role-specific training.	1,3
	Willingness to take on wider University roles on behalf of the School/Service, such as Health & Safety or other roles.	1,3
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)	Uphold and actively contribute to the University's commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.	1,3
Qualifications	Level 6, or equivalent qualification, in Biology or a closely related subject, including but not limited to: Degree or degree apprenticeship; Level 6 award; Level 6 certificate; Level 6 diploma; Level 6 NVQ. *While a Level 6, 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.*	1
	Willingness to work towards professional accreditation.	1
Other	Willingness to provide support for external visits relating to your field of expertise.	1,3
	Willingness to provide support for events, such as University open and visit days and for cell maintenance (occasional weekend working may be required)	1,3
	Willingness to travel for work purposes, such as visiting suppliers, training and professional development.	1,3

Desirable Criteria

Area	**Criteria**	**Stage**
Experience	Experience of providing practical demonstration and instruction in the specialism, including genetic modification using viral vectors	1,3
	Experience of working with and/or co-ordinating the processing and testing of samples and/or materials, including stem cells	1,2,3

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	Experience of handling and processing human and animal samples, e.g., tissue, blood, urine, stools, saliva etc.	1,2,3
Qualifications	Higher degree/PhD in experimental Biology or a related subject	1
Other	Current driving license (to meet University requirements for driving University/hired vehicles).	1,3
	Relevant laboratory safety courses in biological safety, genetic modification, or chemical safety (for example biosafety practitioner level 1, compressed gases and cryogens training)	1,3

Conditions of Service

The appointment will be subject to the University's Terms and Conditions of Employment relevant to the job grade.

Shared University Responsibilities

As a member of the Loughborough community, you are expected to:

- Take reasonable care of yourself, others and the environment, and to prevent harm by your acts or omissions. All staff are therefore required to adhere to the University's Health, Safety and Environmental Sustainability Policies & Procedures.
- Support and contribute to the University's commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), while carrying out all duties in a way that respects these principles and upholds the right to free expression. Further information about EDI at Loughborough and our strategic aims is available on our website.

Our Purpose, Vision, and Values

Our purpose, Vision and Values underpin all that we do and shape how we work together at Loughborough.

We're proud to promote our values: **Adventurous**, **Collaborative**, **Creative**, **Authentic** and **Responsible**. Our people bring these values to life every day, and they are central to the positive and supportive culture that makes Loughborough unique.

If you join us, you'll be encouraged to bring these values to life in your own work and contribute to the positive, supportive culture that makes Loughborough unique.

Read more about our **vision and values**.

Our Accreditations

We strive to create a culture that supports equity 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 career.

We are proud to be a Race Equality Charter Member. The Charter aims to improve the representation, progression and success of all minority ethnic staff and students within higher education and address issues of racism within higher education institutions (HEIs).

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We are proud to be a Disability Confident Employer and have adopted a proactive approach to employing disabled people and to creating a more diverse workforce. We ensure that our recruitment processes are inclusive and accessible. We guarantee to offer an interview to all applicants who have declared a disability, provided that the essential criteria for the role are met. We proactively anticipate and provide reasonable adjustments and support existing employees who acquire a disability or long-term condition to thrive in the workplace.

We are a real living wage employer, and our Living Wage Employer Mark shows our commitment to paying our staff according to the cost of living.

We are proud supporters of the City of Sanctuary movement and delighted to be recognised as a University of Sanctuary. This national network brings together, university staff, lecturers, academics, and students, who together work to make Higher Education institutions places of safety, solidarity and empowerment for people seeking sanctuary.

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