

MEDICAL LABORATORY ASSISTANT - MICROBIOLOGY

Candidate Pack



Colleague Benefits

General

- 27 days annual leave entitlement, increasing with length of service, plus 8 bank holidays
- Flexible working policies
- Generous maternity pay and 2 weeks full pay paternity leave
- Colleague recognition scheme and long service awards
- Greener travel initiative, including cycle to work scheme and lift share
- Childcare information and support available, including onsite nurseries
- Discounted bus passes with Arriva

Financial

- Access to various local and national discounts via various external websites
- Salary sacrifice schemes
- Generous pension scheme
- Access to a financial support booklet
- Pre-retirement courses
- Free Will writing service
- Savings and Loan schemes

Learning and Development

- Coaching and Mentoring
- Leadership Academy – leadership and management training for all staff
- Access to E-Learning courses
- Apprenticeships – growing number of apprenticeship opportunities across all disciplines
- Secondment and acting up opportunities
- Support to complete qualifications whilst on the job

Wellbeing

- Coaching
- Mental Health First Aiders
- Chaplaincy
- Fast track physiotherapy service
- Free eye test vouchers
- Slimming World referral scheme
- Cervical screening service
- Long Covid support
- Access to wellbeing/rest rooms
- Menopause support
- Men's Health forms and MOT
- Discounts with local gyms



Poppy's Promise

Poppy's Promise is a compassionate care initiative introduced within this Trust to enhance communication, respect and empathy across every aspect of patient care.

The initiative was founded by Katie Russell, following the loss of her daughter Poppy, who tragically died at just twelve hours old due to failures in care and communication. Born from that experience, Poppy's Promise serves as a powerful reminder that while clinical skill saves lives, it is compassion, listening and respect that define the quality of care and human connection. By embedding this promise across our organisation, we ensure that no patient or family ever feels unseen, unheard, or uncared for.

Poppy's Promise is a five-stage framework that supports NHS staff to provide compassionate, consistent and patient-centred care. It aims to create a culture where empathy and communication are prioritised at every level – from education and recruitment to daily patient interactions.

At the heart of the initiative lies the C.A.R.E. framework, which outlines four guiding principles for staff to follow. The CARE principles form the foundation of Poppy's Promise. They describe the behaviours, attitudes and values that underpin every interaction – between staff and patients, staff and families, and colleagues with one another.

CARE is not an additional task. It is how care is delivered.

C.A.R.E. Meaning and Practice

Compassion - Demonstrate genuine kindness, empathy and humanity in every interaction. Compassion means recognising the emotional as well as the physical needs of patients, families and colleagues, and responding with care, patience and understanding. Small acts of compassion can have a lasting impact.

Acknowledge - Actively listen and be fully present. Use eye contact, names and open body language, and acknowledge the individual's feelings, concerns and lived experience. Every person should feel seen, heard and taken seriously.

Respect - Treat everyone with dignity, honesty and fairness at all times. Respect individual differences, personal circumstances and lived experience. Trust is built through respectful behaviour, consistency and integrity.

Empower - Enable people to be active participants in their care and work. Communicate clearly, encourage questions and shared decision-making, and ensure patients, families and colleagues feel informed, confident and included. Poppy's Promise is more than a framework – it represents a cultural shift towards human-centred care. By adopting these principles, we:

- Strengthen trust and communication between staff and patients
- Reduce avoidable harm through better understanding and listening
- Improve patient experience and staff wellbeing
- Foster a culture of openness, empathy and shared responsibility

Every member of staff has a role to play in bringing Poppy's Promise to life. Whether you are clinical, administrative or support staff, compassion and communication are part of everyone's role.

In daily practice, you can:

- Take a moment before entering a patient's space – centre yourself, focus on the person, not the task
- Use clear, respectful and kind language
- Listen without interruption and acknowledge emotions expressed
- Be honest and transparent, even when conversations are difficult
- Reflect after interactions – consider how your approach made the patient or family feel

All staff within the Trust are expected to:

- Uphold the values of Poppy's Promise in all patient and colleague interactions
- Attend any training, workshops or refreshers provided as part of the initiative
- Support colleagues in modelling compassionate behaviours
- Raise concerns constructively when communication or respect fall short
- Reflect these principles in both professional and personal conduct within the workplace

Together, we can make every interaction an opportunity to care, listen and make a difference.

That is Poppy's Promise.

Job Summary

This summary has been generated using AI to provide a clear and accessible overview of the role. It is intended to support candidates who may find the full job description harder to read, such as those who are neurodiverse, have learning disabilities or lower literacy levels. Our goal is to make the application process more accessible and inclusive for everyone.

- Work as part of the Microbiology laboratory team, helping to support an important service for patient care
- Handle patient samples by receiving, labelling, preparing and processing them using clear written instructions
- Carry out simple laboratory and office tasks, including using computers, keeping records and answering basic phone calls
- Help keep the laboratory safe and well organised by cleaning equipment, checking supplies and following health and safety rules
- Work under supervision and communicate clearly with colleagues and other departments
- Be willing to work in different laboratory areas and take part in evening, weekend and bank holiday shifts when needed

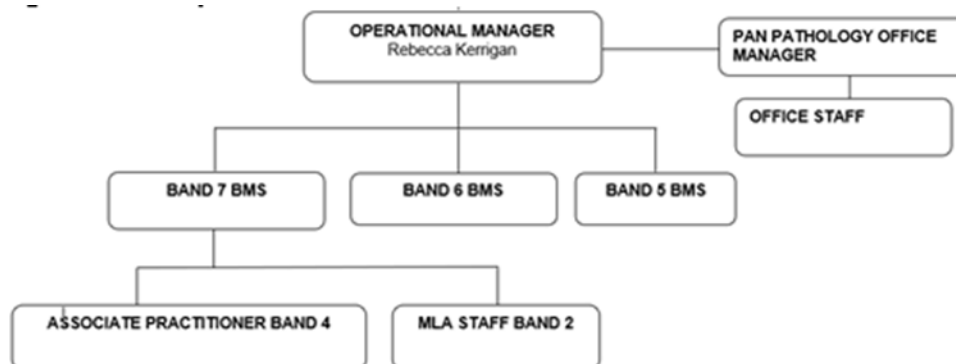
Job Description

Job title:	Medical Laboratory Assistant (MLA) - Microbiology
Grade:	Band 2
Site:	The Royal Shrewsbury Hospital
Accountable to:	Lead Biomedical Scientist (BMS)
DBS required:	None

Job Purpose

To assist in supporting a diagnostic service, by performing a range of routine tasks that may either be defined verbally by staff supervising you, or by following written instructions, usually in the form of Standard Operating Procedures.

Organisational Position



SCOPE AND RANGE

- You are assigned to the Microbiology department within Pathology.
- You are required to always work under direct or indirect supervision.
- You are expected to liaise with other members of staff in Pathology, and similarly with other users of the service both within and outside the confines of the Trust.
- You will be based at the laboratory at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, but may be required to work at any of the department's three laboratory sites.
- You will be expected to participate in out of hours working.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

An MLA is expected to perform a range of tasks of a similar nature and level of responsibility that contribute towards an integrated, diagnostic service. In particular you will:

- Follow tasks that are defined in writing, but may be communicated to you verbally by a member of staff supervising you.
- Receive, sort, label, distribute and process specimens.
- Entry of patient demographic details and specimen requests onto the laboratory computer system.
- Prepare specimens for testing and perform simple non-interpretive tests as part of the investigation of those specimens.
- Maintain, where appropriate, accurate records of the work assigned to you.
- Assist in maintaining stock levels of reagents and consumables in the area in which you are working.
- Assist in the receipt of deliveries and their subsequent distribution throughout the laboratory.
- Pack specimens for despatch to other laboratories (internal and external).
- Deal with telephone enquiries to the laboratory, within the constraints of your grade and level of training.
- Perform a range of clerical and /or laboratory duties.
- File request forms and reports.
- Undertake training that is relevant to the post.
- Assist in the training of other unqualified members of staff, through practical demonstration, as required.
- Assist in the achievement and maintenance of standards required by United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS), Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, and other accreditation schemes.
- Understand and follow at all times health and safety instructions made clear to you in the course of your duties.
- Attend Team Briefings, Staff Appraisals, Statutory Training and any other mandatory commitments defined by the Trust.
- Make an effective contribution to maintaining cleanliness and good housekeeping in the area in which you are working, including the disinfection of laboratory equipment and surfaces.

Additional responsibilities specific to the post-holder within the grade:

You will be expected to participate in the out of hours working rotas of the department, as part of an average 37.5 hour working week - including weekends and Bank/Public holidays, according to service need; as directed by the Lead BMS.

Rotation through the following sections: -

- Reception.
- Bacteriology
- Serology and Virology

Systems and equipment:

- You may be required to use equipment in the course of your duties. You will be trained in its use and be expected to understand and use it safely and competently (e.g. computer system, centrifuge, autoclave trolley). The use of equipment will generally extend to its daily maintenance, e.g. stocked with reagents and maintained in a clean and uncontaminated state.

Decisions, judgements and freedom to act:

- You work within a level of supervision that has clear accountability. You are expected to refer any problems you encounter in your job to the person supervising you. You follow defined, written operating protocols, which may also be given to you verbally. You should recognise the clinical value of your work and the need for producing work of an accurate, high standard in a timely manner.

Communication and relationships:

- You must always observe confidentiality and disclosure of information, in accordance with Trust policy.
- Whilst you liaise mainly with staff within the department, you may be required as part of your job, to respond to enquiries from other members of the Trust, and other organisations (e.g. GP practices, patients, company representatives). You are required to exhibit a cordial and professional telephone manner when doing this.
- You are encouraged to feedback constructive criticism in the course of carrying out your duties, especially following the development and introduction of new ways of working.

Physical, Mental and Emotional demands of the post:

- There is a frequent requirement for moderate physical effort.
- Accuracy of data input and analytical performance is vital at all times.
- Prolonged concentration is a frequent requirement, concentration always being necessary when handling and processing patient samples and data.
- Unpredictable and rapidly changing work patterns are common, particularly when working outside of core hours.
- Exposure to distressing or emotional circumstances as part of your duties is rare.

Working conditions:

- There is frequent exposure to infectious material.
- There is frequent exposure to uncomfortable working temperatures in the summer months, particularly when operation automated equipment.
- There is occasional exposure to solvents and toxic chemicals.
- There is frequent exposure to adverse smells, particularly when processing autoclave waste
- There is frequent exposure to a high level of background noise when working in the automated section of the department.

Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	Good general education up to GCSE including Maths, English and Science (Grades A-C) or equivalent.	NVQ level 2, Clinical Laboratory Support or equivalent. Proficiency with Microsoft Office.
Experience	Data entry experience Basic theoretical knowledge to support sample processing / analytical processes Understanding of the need for confidentiality and data protection. Understanding of health and safety.	Clinical NHS laboratory experience NHS Hospital experience

<p>Knowledge and skills</p>	<p>Accurate data entry and keyboard skills</p> <p>Ability to pay close attention to detail</p> <p>Effective communication skills</p> <p>Good interpersonal skills</p> <p>Good organisational skills.</p> <p>Ability to exercise initiative</p> <p>Ability to work as part of a team with indirect supervision.</p> <p>Ability to prioritise work.</p> <p>Ability to remain focused and carry out repetitive steps</p> <p>Ability to work under pressure</p> <p>Ability to use a computer, sometimes for long periods of time (2-3 hours)</p>	<p>Ability to remain calm in difficult Situations</p> <p>Able to identify service developments and implement solutions</p>
<p>Other</p>	<p>Professional attitude and approach to work</p> <p>Punctual & reliable</p> <p>Diplomatic but Assertive</p> <p>Flexible and adaptable</p> <p>Willingness to learn</p>	

General conditions

As they undertake their duties, all our people are required to uphold and demonstrate the Trust's core values of: Partnering, Ambitious, Caring and Trusted. Collaboration and partnership are also central to our approach in delivering our fundamental activities of patient care, teaching, and research.

Health & Safety

As an employee of the Trust you have a responsibility to:

- take reasonable care of your own Health and Safety and that of any other person who may be affected by your acts or omissions at work;
- co-operate with the Trust in ensuring that statutory regulations, codes of practice, local policies and departmental health and safety rules are adhered to;
- not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

Infection Prevention and Control

The prevention and management of acquired infection is a key priority for the Trust. Any breach of infection control policies is a serious matter which may result in disciplinary action. As an employee of the Trust you have a responsibility to:

- ensure that your work methods are compliant with the Trust's agreed policies and procedures and do not endanger other people or yourself;
- be aware of infection prevention and control policies, practices and guidelines appropriate for your duties and you must follow these at all times to maintain a safe environment for patients, visitors and staff;
- maintain an up to date knowledge of infection prevention and control, policies, practices and procedures through attendance at annual mandatory updates and ongoing continuing professional development;
- challenge poor infection prevention and control practices of others and to report any breaches, using appropriate Trust mechanisms (e.g. incident reporting policy).

Information Governance

The Trust is committed to compliance with Information Governance standards to ensure that all information is handled legally, securely, efficiently and effectively. You are required to comply with the Trust's Information Governance policies and standards. Failure to do so may result in action being taken in accordance with the Trust's Disciplinary Procedure.

- **Confidentiality and Security** - Your attention is drawn to the confidential and sensitive nature of information collected within the NHS. Whilst you are

employed by the Trust you will come into contact with confidential information and data relating to the work of the Trust, its patients or employees. You are bound by your conditions of service to respect the confidentiality of any information you may come into contact with which identifies patients, employees or other Trust personnel, or business information of the Trust. You also have a duty to ensure that all confidential information is held securely at all times, both on and off site.

- **Disclosure of Information** - The unauthorised use or disclosure of information relating to the Trust's activities or affairs, the treatment of patients or the personal details of an employee, will normally be considered a serious disciplinary offence which could result in dismissal. Upon leaving the Trust's employment and at any time thereafter you must not take advantage of or disclose confidential information that you learnt in the course of your employment. Unauthorised disclosure of any of this information may be deemed as a criminal offence. If you are found to have permitted the unauthorised disclosure of any such information, you and the Trust may face legal action.
- **Information Quality and Records Management** - You must ensure that all information handled by you is accurate and kept up-to-date and you must comply with the Trust's recording, monitoring, validation and improvement schemes and processes.

Professional Standards and Performance Review

As an employee of the Trust you have a responsibility to:

- participate in statutory and mandatory training as appropriate for the post; and
- maintain consistently high personal and professional standards and act in accordance with the relevant professional code of conduct;
- take responsibility for the maintenance and improvement of personal and professional competence and to encourage that of colleagues and subordinates;
- participate in the Trust's appraisal processes including identifying performance standards for the post, personal objective setting and the creation of a personal development plan in line with the KSF outline for the post.

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

We all have a personal and a professional responsibility within the Trust to identify and report abuse. This may be known, suspected, witnessed or have raised concerns. Early recognition is vital to ensuring the patient is safeguarded; other people (children and vulnerable adults) may be at risk. The Trust's procedures must be implemented, working in partnership with the relevant authorities. The Sharing of

Information no matter how small is of prime importance in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.

- As an employee of the Trust you have a responsibility to ensure that:
 - you are familiar with and adhere to the Trusts Safeguarding Children procedures and guidelines.
 - you attend safeguarding awareness training and undertake any additional training in relation to safeguarding relevant to your role.

NHS Sexual Safety Charter

The Trust is committed to ensuring that all employees work in an environment that is safe, inclusive, and free from sexual misconduct, harassment, and discrimination. As a signatory to the NHS Sexual Safety Charter, the Trust upholds a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and supports anyone affected by inappropriate behaviour. In accordance with the Workers Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023, the Trust has a statutory duty to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of its employees. All staff, are required to treat others with dignity and respect at all times and to cooperate with Trust policies, procedures and training designed to maintain a culture of safety, professionalism, and mutual respect.

Social Responsibility

The Trust is committed to behaving responsibly in the way we manage transport, procurement, our facilities, employment, skills and our engagement with the local community so that we can make a positive contribution to society. As an employee of the Trust you have a responsibility to take measures to support our contribution and to reduce the environmental impact of our activities relating to energy and water usage, transport and waste.

Continuous Improvement

The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust aims to empower colleagues at all levels have the confidence, capability, passion, and knowledge, to test changes and make improvements at SaTH and in the communities we serve.

To support this, we have developed the SaTH Improvement Method, a structured approach to change that provides practical tools and techniques to help you understand what success looks like with clear aims, enables you to measure progress and plan meaningful improvements.

You won't be doing this alone. Whether you're new to improvement or already leading change, the Improvement Hub is here to guide you with expert advice, hands-on support, and a wide range of training opportunities to help you grow and thrive throughout your time at SaTH whilst making improvements in your area of

work. Join us in shaping a culture of continuous improvement, where every colleague is supported to make a difference.

Equal opportunities and diversity

The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust is an Equal Opportunities Employer, fully committed to fostering an inclusive workplace where all staff feel valued and able to thrive. We believe that a diverse workforce, reflective of our community, is essential for delivering the best patient care.

We will not discriminate against any job applicant or colleague based on any protected characteristic, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. Selection for appointment, training, development, and promotion will be based purely on merit and the individual's ability to meet the role requirements.

As a post-holder, you have a personal responsibility to uphold the Trust's commitment to equality by treating all colleagues and patients with respect and dignity. You must actively support measures introduced to ensure equality of opportunity and will not discriminate, harass, or bully others, or condone such behaviour.

