

MEDICAL LABORATORY ASSISTANT - MICROBIOLOGY

Candidate Pack



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. Our goal is to make the application process more accessible and inclusive for everyone.

- This role supports the Microbiology team by helping with everyday lab tasks.
- You will handle patient samples, label them, and enter details into the computer system.
- You'll help keep the lab clean, stocked, and organised, and assist with deliveries.
- You'll be trained to use lab equipment safely and follow health and safety rules.
- You'll work with other staff and may answer phone calls or help with paperwork.
- You may need to work evenings, weekends, or holidays as part of a team rota.

Job Description

Job title:	Medical Laboratory Assistant - Microbiology
Grade:	2
Site:	The Royal Shrewsbury Hospital
Accountable to:	Lead Biomedical Scientist (BMS)
DBS required:	No

Main Duties

- 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.
- 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:
 1. Follow tasks that are defined in writing, but may be communicated to you verbally by a member of staff supervising you.
 2. Receive, sort, label, distribute and process specimens.
 3. Entry of patient demographic details and specimen requests onto the laboratory computer system.
 4. Prepare specimens for testing and perform simple non-interpretive tests as part of the investigation of those specimens.
 5. Maintain, where appropriate, accurate records of the work assigned to you.

6. Assist in maintaining stock levels of reagents and consumables in the area in which you are working.
7. Assist in the receipt of deliveries and their subsequent distribution throughout the laboratory.
8. Pack specimens for despatch to other laboratories (internal and external).
9. Deal with telephone enquiries to the laboratory, within the constraints of your grade and level of training.
10. Perform a range of clerical and /or laboratory duties.
11. File request forms and reports.
12. Undertake training that is relevant to the post.
13. Assist in the training of other unqualified members of staff, through practical demonstration, as required.
14. 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
15. Understand and follow at all times health and safety instructions made clear to you in the course of your duties.
16. Attend Team Briefings, Staff Appraisals, Statutory Training and any other mandatory commitments defined by the Trust.
17. 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.

Scope and Range

- You are assigned to the Microbiology department within Pathology.
- You are required to work under direct or indirect supervision at all times.
- 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.

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 observe confidentiality and disclosure of information at all times, 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good general education up to GCSE including Maths, English and Science (Grades A-C) or equivalent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NVQ level 2, Clinical Laboratory Support or equivalent. • Proficiency with Microsoft Office.
Experience and knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate data entry and keyboard skills • Ability to pay close attention to detail. • Effective communication skills. • Good interpersonal skills. Good organisational skills. • Ability to exercise initiative • Ability to work as part of a team with indirect supervision. • Ability to prioritise work. • Ability to remain focused and carry out repetitive steps • Ability to work under pressure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to remain calm in difficult situations. • Able to identify service developments and implement solutions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to use a computer, sometimes for long periods of time (2-3 hours). 	
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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 and 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; and
- co-operate with the Trust in ensuring that statutory regulations, codes of practice, local policies and departmental health and safety rules are adhered to; and
- not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety

Infection prevention and control (IPC)

The prevention and management of acquired infection is a key priority for the Trust. 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; and
- 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 colleagues; and
- 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; and

- 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.

Confidentiality and Security - Your attention is drawn to the confidential 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 - To ensure that information is only shared with the appropriate people in appropriate circumstances, care must be taken to check the recipient has a legal basis for access to the information before releasing it. 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, to protect yourself and the Trust from any possible 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 continuous personal development including, 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; and
- take responsibility for the maintenance and improvement of personal and professional competence and to encourage that of colleagues and subordinates

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.

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 is committed to creating a culture that puts Continuous Improvement at the forefront of our transformational journey and our aim is 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.

Following a successful five-year partnership with the Virginia Mason Institute in the USA, SaTH

continues to further develop and embed the Trust's approach to Continuous Improvement at all levels of the organisation. You will be supported by an Improvement Hub, which will provide the necessary expertise to support you make improvements, while also providing training at various stages of your time at SaTH, as part of your continuing professional development.

Equal opportunities and diversity

The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust is striving towards being an equal opportunities employer. No job applicant or colleague will be discriminated against

on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, age, sex, marital status or on the grounds of disability or sexual preference.

Selection for training and development and promotion will be on the basis of an individual's ability to meet the requirements of the job.

The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust the post-holder will have personal responsibility to ensure they do not discriminate, harass, bully, or contribute to the discrimination, harassment or bullying of a colleague or colleagues, or condone discrimination, harassment or bullying by others.

The post-holder is also required to co-operate with measures introduced to ensure equality of opportunity.

