

JOB DESCRIPTION

Biology Technician



HARROW
SCHOOL

DEPARTMENT	Biology
REPORTS TO	Senior Biology Technician and Head of Biology
RESPONSIBLE FOR	N/A
WORKING PATTERN	5 days a week to average 30 hours a week for 33 weeks a year, term time only (your employment contract will give full details)
ISSUE/REVISION DATE	April 2026

BACKGROUND

Harrow School is one of the world's most famous schools. Founded in 1572 by a local yeoman farmer, John Lyon, under a Royal Charter granted by Queen Elizabeth I, it is located on a 324-acre estate encompassing much of Harrow on the Hill in north-west London. Around 830 boys aged 13 to 18, who come from all over Britain and across the world, live in the School's 12 boarding Houses, and there are about 120 academic staff and over 500 support staff.

All members of staff work to a single, uniting purpose: to prepare boys with diverse backgrounds and abilities for a life of learning, leadership, service and personal fulfilment.

The Biology Department is housed in the brand-new Biology Schools and consists of seven teaching laboratories, one research laboratory, a seminar room, departmental office and a large prep room. There are eight teachers and these are supported by a Practical Biology Coordinator and a subject specialist technician. With a new building (opened 2024) and sector leading facilities, the department is excited to develop its practical offering at both GCSE and A level and to extend beyond this with pupil-led research projects and outreach activities. The teaching staff are enthusiastic about developing the highest quality lessons and to work with a first-class practitioner who will take responsibility for the running of the prep room, management of the technicians and delivery of all experimental aspects of the departmental operations.

Whilst lessons take place Monday to Saturday mornings as well as Wednesday and Friday afternoons, projects are not limited to class time and therefore the department is often operating in a range of capacities throughout the week. Lessons are a mix of single and double lessons lasting 40 minutes and 85 minutes respectively.

THE ROLE

The post holder will be responsible for preparing and delivering all practical work across the Biology department including the maintenance of safety of equipment, specimens and other resources. They are also responsible for maintaining levels of equipment in laboratories for practical work and wider learning. Across all aspects of the role the post holder will ensure they, and others, comply with health and safety regulations and laboratory best practice.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

This job description reflects the core activities of the role and is subject to change as the department and the post holder develop. The School expects that the post holder will recognise this and adopt a flexible approach to work. In addition, the post holder will be expected to undertake such other duties within the scope of the role as may be required by the line manager (Senior Biology Technician and Head of Biology).

Under the overall control of the Head of Department and the direction of the Practical Biology Coordinator, the post holder will be expected to assist in:

LEARNING SUPPORT

- Prepare and assist with biology practical activities, including setting up equipment, apparatus, specimens, and demonstrations. Prepare solutions and other materials.
- Ensure that practicals equipment and apparatus are delivered safely and on time, and meet the requests of teaching staff.
- Prepare, clean up and ensure laboratories are ready before and after lessons and that used materials are disposed of according to the correct CLEAPSS guidance.
- Clean, maintain and store equipment used in practical experiments according to the departmental structures and systems.
- Maintain, calibrate and test biology lab equipment and instruments to ensure safe and reliable functioning, and undertake basic repairs where it is practicable to do so.
- Clean and maintain equipment including the neutralisation and cleaning of spillages, as well as the cleaning of glassware and other equipment.
- Contribute to the overall ethos/work/aims of the school and the department.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Ensure that Health and Safety requirements and other relevant regulations, such as Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), CLEAPSS responsibilities are adhered to and observed.
- Be aware of, and to comply with, all departmental/ school instructions and procedures relating to health and safety at work and give health and safety advice to technical staff, teachers and pupils as required.
- Follow, and where appropriate, contribute up to date risk assessments within the department for both technician and pupil activities.
- Create and maintain a safe working environment in preparation/storage/teaching areas including advising on safety issues and modifying practicals where necessary.
- Be confident dealing with chemical spillages and run training for staff on how to manage spillages/ breakages following the appropriate regulations.
- Store and dispose of materials and waste materials, including hazardous substances, in accordance with guidance from the Senior Biology Technician and relevant guidelines.
- Organise, store and check the condition of chemicals and equipment and to report to the Senior Biology Technician if unsure or if something does not meet the appropriate regulations.
- Be informed of health and safety requirements and developments in practical science (attending courses and reading publications).

STOCK MANAGEMENT AND AUDITING

- Check and liaise with the Senior Biology Technician on stock levels and orders required, and keep records where appropriate.
- Assist with packing, unpacking, checking and recording apparatus and chemical inventory as part of monitoring and managing stock inventories and audits.
- Assist with purchasing materials from local shops when required.

GENERAL

- General laboratory cleaning of bench surfaces and fixed equipment.
- General cleaning and repair of equipment.
- Contribute to the Health and Safety of students and other staff in accordance with Health and Safety regulations.
- Develop constructive relationships and communicate in a professional manner.
- Recognise your own strengths and areas of expertise and use these to advise and support others as well as be reflective and proactive in adaptation of practices for the benefit.
- Undertake such other duties as may be required from time to time commensurate with the level of the post. The particular duties and responsibilities attached to the post may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed.
- Contribute to the overall ethos/work/aims of the school and the department.

Harrow School is committed to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to adhere to and ensure compliance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and procedures at all times.

In the event of a successful application, candidates will be required to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including, but not limited to, reference checks with past employers, an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (including Children's Barred List information) and prohibition checks. This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all convictions and cautions, reprimands and final warnings (including those which would normally be considered as "spent" under the Act) must be declared, subject to the DBS filtering rules. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to attempt to apply for a position at the Harrow School. Please refer to the School's Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy for more details.

QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND ATTRIBUTES

Post-holders/candidates will be expected to demonstrate the following:

QUALIFICATIONS

ESSENTIAL

- A good general education

DESIRABLE

- Biology-related degree
- First aid qualification
- Relevant training/qualifications for science technicians
- Health and safety training and qualifications

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

ESSENTIAL

- Experience of working in a science laboratory, as a student and/or technician

DESIRABLE

- Experience of working in a secondary school as a Biology/Science Technician

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

ESSENTIAL

- High standard of English, to be able to read and comply with health and safety instructions.
- Ability to work in a small team
- Willingness and ability to respond flexibly to the needs of the department
- Willingness to recognise the demands of a boarding school environment
- Excellent organisational skills
- Ability to communicate appropriately with all staff, pupils and visitors
- Ability to think and work quickly, calmly and politely under pressure
- Ability to work independently and get on with tasks
- Basic IT skills (word-processing, email, spreadsheets)

DESIRABLE

- Advanced IT skills (Microsoft Office programmes such as Outlook, Excel, Teams, OneNote)
- Familiarity with specialist equipment such as microscopes

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

ESSENTIAL

- Friendly and approachable
- Self motivated
- Proactive
- Meticulous
- Helpful and polite

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- Identify opportunities and contribute to the work of the School's charitable organisation, the Shaftesbury Enterprise where possible and appropriate.

SCHOOL VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

All staff are expected to conduct themselves in line with the School's values which are: **Courage, Honour, Humility** and **Fellowship**. While the School's values set out what matters most to us, the behaviours below are intended as a shared set of expectations to refer to, and standards to aspire to, in our dealings with others. They are the practical application of our values.

COURAGE

- We remain optimistic and purposeful in a disrupted world.
- We take responsibility for our decisions, even the hard ones.
- We always challenge poor behaviour in ourselves and others.
We are open to new ideas, and seek fresh challenges.

HONOUR

- We keep our promises.
- We act with integrity – doing the right thing, even when it is difficult or when no one is watching.
- We respect and value our traditions whilst setting them in the context of today.

HUMILITY

- We work hard to serve others within the School and across our wider communities where possible putting their interests before our own.
- We give and seek honest and appropriate feedback, reflect on our failures and learn from them.
- We support each other through challenges and whatever the outcome, we celebrate those that took part.

FELLOWSHIP

- We respect each other and value our differences, knowing that we are more effective and more resilient working together.
- We are kind and inclusive; we value the contribution that each of us makes.
- We role model the behaviours that we would like to see in others; we ask only of others what we would be prepared to do ourselves.