

Overview of our Laboratory Technician Apprenticeship

The University of Exeter Laboratory Technician Apprenticeship (Level 3) Scheme will elevate your scientific career as a professional technician. Upon completion of the apprenticeship you will have gained qualifications in laboratory science and a diverse range of work experience within a scientific role in a Russell Group, UK top 10, University.

This is a perfect opportunity for you to learn about laboratory science theory and be able to put it into practice in our varied and well equipped laboratories. You will have an exceptional, unrivalled, scientific experience and will build a wide range of transferable skills.

As a member of our laboratory technician team you will work in a wide range of laboratories, including but not exclusively, chemical, biological, and analytical science. You will carry out both routine and one-off laboratory testing and perform a variety of technical support functions across the University.

Working safely and ethically is paramount and the University operates under highly regulated conditions because of the need to control the quality and safety of our staff, students, visitors and experiments. You will be expected to work both individually and as part of a laboratory team, taking responsibility for the quality and accuracy of the work you conduct. You should be proactive in finding solutions to problems and identifying areas for improving our processes, procedures and techniques.

You will receive an excellent educational experience from our training providers, and will be immersed in real time on the job training at the University of Exeter whilst in your day to day role. It's safe to say that you will have an extremely diverse range of jobs to do and due to the University being a live research environment you will be working on ground breaking, world leading, and research projects. If you are practical, dexterous and have an inquisitive mind this is the apprenticeship for you!

There will also be opportunities to develop yourself through our induction, mandatory training, and by undertaking learning and development at the University.

What are the entry requirements?

Applicants will need at least 5 GCSEs or equivalent. These should include grade B/5 in Maths, grade B/5 in Science, and a grade C/4 or above in English (desirable grade C/4 or above in ICT).

You must have a strong interest in science. Successful applicants will demonstrate the required attitudes, behaviours and interpersonal skills associated with the professional workplace including being able to:

- Communicating effectively: speaking; listening; writing; body language; presentation
- Working and interact effectively within a team
- Working independently and taking responsibility for initiating and completing tasks
- Understanding impact of work on others, especially where related to diversity and equality
- Time management and ability to complete work to schedule
- Ability to handle change and respond to change management processes

What is the duration of my apprenticeship?

Dependent on your role and level of study, your Laboratory Technician apprenticeship will usually last 2 years.

What topics could I study?

The Laboratory Science Technician apprenticeship is an in-depth, practical approach to science and provides a solid platform to becoming a qualified professional lab technician. As an apprentice you will have a full time job at the University and attend one of our award winning training providers one day a week throughout the programme. You will work towards qualifications which make up your apprenticeship, and learn the following:

- Principles and Applications of Science I and II
- Practical Scientific Procedures and Techniques
- Science Investigation Skills
- Laboratory Techniques and their applications
- Investigative (work based) project
- Plus 2 additional modules dependant on the role you are applying for.

When on your college day-release, you will be supported by your Skills Trainer/Tutors. You will spend the remainder of the week in the workplace. Whilst at work, your Training Officer will visit you and carry out assessments in a variety of styles: observing you; completing knowledge questions; setting practical tasks. They will also help you build your portfolio of evidence for your qualification.

What is it like to study and how will I be assessed?

The Foundation Phase, typically months 1 to 9, will focus on developing your core skills, knowledge and behaviours, specifically around working safely, complying with internal and external regulations and following quality procedures.

Around 9 months in to your apprenticeship there will be a review of your skills by suitably qualified and experienced personnel from our training provider that will provide assurance that you understand the principles of working safely (IOSH Working Safely) whilst following quality systems within a regulated environment.

Typically between months 10 to 24, you will focus on developing further skills supported by guided learning, enabling you to eventually work effectively and independently with minimum supervision. You will work towards RSciTech with a Science Council professional body (there is a requirement that you will participate in continuing professional development on completion of the apprenticeship). Achievement of this qualification will also be a pre-requisite for participation in the formal end assessment.

Formal end assessment, completed in the final 3 months, will be based on a synoptic assessment test (SAT) and vocational competence discussion in the workplace when the approved assessor will observe you on the job to ensure that you fulfil the SAT specification. You will also complete a scenario case study designed to test understanding of transferrable skills and application of knowledge.

BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Applied Science (QCF) will be achieved on passing all elements of the formal end assessment. The apprenticeship is graded 'fail', 'pass' or 'distinction.'

What can my apprenticeship lead on to?

Your laboratory technician apprenticeship at the University of Exeter will help you progress in your career as a qualified professional technician. On successful completion of your apprenticeship there may be opportunities to take up a permanent role at the University.

As your career develops, you may wish to continue your studies and enrol on a Level 5 Laboratory Scientist apprenticeship or you may choose to progress to full-time University study. Further studies could take you to University level training such as an FdSc or BSc in Science.