

JOB DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION

1. Job title: Technical Manager for Seed Certification, Agricultural Crop Characterisation (ACC)

Centre: Plant Varieties and Seeds

Grade: F

Location: Cambridge, HQ

Reports to : Head of Crop Characterisation

Line Manages : Several staff at B-D level

2. Main purpose of role:

Team focus

Within the Varieties and Seeds Centre at NIAB, there are two teams carrying out technical services and contract research relevant to the agricultural, horticultural and food industries, the Agricultural Crops Characterisation Team (ACC) and the Ornamentals Crops Characterisation Team (OCC). The main focus of these two teams is the delivery of regulatory services, primarily for government (APHA) or international governmental or non-governmental organisations/ agencies such as CPVO and OECD. Within ACC, these statutory services include:

- The distinctness, uniformity and stability (DUS) testing of new varieties of agricultural crop plants for the granting of intellectual property rights (Plant Breeders' Rights, PBR)
- DUS testing for the purposes of National Listing (NL) of agricultural species as required under EU Directives.
- The activities of Seed Certification carried out to ensure compliance with regulatory standards as defined in UK legislation (principally the Seeds Regulations, 2011).
- Providing advice to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and the seeds industry in relation to the activities described above.

Services for clients (both internal and external to NIAB) are primarily focused around the physical characterisation, analysis and/or description of plant materials and plant products, using high throughput systems.

The main crops are cereals, oilseeds, herbage, sugar beet and pulses, although the range of crops and balance of workloads can vary from year to year.

Main function of the job

The post holder is a nationally recognised expert in all aspects of seed certification completed at NIAB. The post is the senior technical role within the certification team, making final decisions on all aspects of certification and providing technical advice and certification updates to APHA. Key aspects of this role are the delivery of the official control plot programme, ACC training courses and official inspections as detailed below:

Control Plots:- The post holder provides both project management and technical involvement in of all aspects of official control plots including set up, general agronomy, recording and reporting of adverse plot reports to seeds companies and APHA. The post holder is NIAB's technical contact with the trade on any issues relating to control plots and is required to uphold UK standards in a diplomatic and non confrontational manner. This function requires the post holder is familiar with all aspects of agronomy and certification relating to all arable species certified in the UK.

Training Courses:- The post holder is expected both to deliver technical content and provide overall project management of all ACC courses for licensed crop inspectors and other interested parties. This includes the administering and reporting results from official examinations to APHA.

Organisation and Management of Official Crop Inspections:- The post holder is expected to project manage the official and check inspection programme completed by NIAB and PHSI inspectors on behalf of APHA. A key part of

this function is technical decision making when seed lots or crops fail to meet UK standards. Additionally it is the post holders responsibility to ensure the availability of suitably qualified inspectors required to deliver the APHA technical contract.

The post holder is responsible for direct line management of the ACC Office including adequate training and development to ensuring a consistent approach is delivered for customers. The post holder is also responsible for the functional manager of the TST for certification tasks associated with official control plots, inspections and courses.

The post holder is expected to liaise with APHA, breeders, seed companies, crop inspectors and other agencies to ensure smooth delivery of the work and, more broadly, is expected to be a recognised expert in Seed Certification work across the main agricultural crops tested at NIAB. In this role the post holder is expected to provide sound technical advice to APHA / DEFRA staff on EU and OECD policy and participate actively in relevant external committees and working groups when required.

The post holder will be required to champion innovation within the existing system, including taking a lead role in the updating and further development of the underpinning IT systems (COSACS / ESP), according to customer requirements.

The post holder is responsible for ACC representation at industry events such as open days, trade shows and conferences to ensure NIAB maintains a high profile as a trials organization for Agricultural crops and is seen to be involved in the industry as well as reacting to industry needs. This requires discussion with breeders, applicants and their agents, as well as breeder representative organizations and industry bodies; using these opportunities to identify new business opportunities and ways of developing NIAB's work.

3. Financial authority/responsibility (e.g. delegated budget, authorisation level, approx value of contracts etc):

Responsible for active participation in the annual team budget setting process, including assessing permanent staffing requirements, budget for freelance and PHSI crop inspectors, arrangements for trials and crop relevant CAPEX bids. Subsequently, ensuring that allocated resources are used effectively and economically within the agreed budget.

The post holder is also expected to be the key NIAB point of contact for the PHSI crop inspection arrangements and appropriate material transfer agreements for course seed. Active participation in re-tendering of technical contracts.

Project management of training programmes and courses, and of the crop inspection programme.

4. Key relationships (external and internal):

The post holder is line managed by the Head of Crop Characterisation, and works collaboratively as one of four ACC technical managers with responsibilities for different work areas, overseen via the regular Technical Managers meeting.

The post holder is responsible for the line management of several technical and admin support staff at B to D level, working within the Business Support Team ["the office"].

The post holder's technical work will be undertaken with input from the ACC Technical Support Team [TST]; administrative function is delivered by the Certification Office. Clear work planning and leadership is critical here, as is liaison as necessary with other NIAB staff inputting into ACC trials work to achieve mutually acceptable outcomes.

Required to liaise with external customers such as APHA, Plant Breeders and Seed Merchants and should be confident in doing so. Should also be confident presenter for teaching on training courses, occasionally outside the UK.

This post also carries the responsibilities for PR activities on behalf of the team, e.g. at 'Cereals' and other relevant industry events.

Tasks/responsibilities (in order of priority)	Approx % of time
Management and delivery of the Certification programme for England and Wales for all agricultural species, to agreed protocols and deadlines. Advice to APHA as required.	50
Organization and Co-ordination of programme of Official Crop Inspections	10
Liaison with and advice to applicants and other external customers and stakeholders.	10
Co-ordination of training programmes within the United Kingdom and internationally; delivery of training	15
Management, training and development of staff; ongoing personal development	10
Representation of NIAB at public events.	5

6. Working conditions :

The role is office based, but extensive field work will be required and the post requires the holder to be willing to work outside in all weather conditions.

The post involves constant contact with plant material and sufferers from hay fever and/or other plant allergies could experience some problems.

Occasional UK and foreign travel will be required.

Due to peaks in workload it may not be possible to take holiday at certain times of the year.

7. PERSON SPECIFICATION

Education/Qualifications:

Essential:	Desirable:
<p>A recognised degree in a relevant science subject, preferably agriculture, crop science, plant breeding or agricultural botany.</p> <p>Understanding of plant breeding systems.</p> <p>Understanding of seed production and statutory certification processes.</p> <p>Sound knowledge of statistical techniques and their practical application.</p> <p>Competent and confident user of Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Access.</p> <p>Current, clean UK driving licence and the willingness to drive to trials away from NIAB HQ.</p>	

Experience:

Essential:	Desirable:
<p>A minimum of 4 years specific practical experience relevant to the post, for example within the plant breeding/seeds industry.</p> <p>Excellent organizational and communication skills, and the proven ability to train, motivate and support people to deliver to precise requirements and deadlines.</p> <p>Ability to work to very specific protocols, ensuring a high degree of accuracy and consistency and good</p>	<p>Experience of field-scale trialling.</p> <p>Experience of working with Agricultural crops</p> <p>Some agronomic experience to facilitate working with the NIAB agronomist.</p>

<p>record keeping from the entire team. Ability to cope with high workloads and a constantly changing range of priorities/deadlines. Ability to work unsupervised and prioritise conflicting workloads for self and others. Proven ability to interpret complex data and to write cogent, concise and accurate reports to deadline. Proven experience in project management.</p>	
Specialist Training:	
Essential:	Desirable:
Experience in Crop Inspecting/Seed Certification work	Current APHA Crop Inspectors Licences. Applicants without will be expected to gain their licences within a reasonable period.
Personal Qualities (skills, behaviours and competencies)	
Essential:	Desirable:
<p>Ability to make impartial and independent decisions, and to handle confidential information appropriately. Ability to drive change and innovation, both small-scale and at the level of new techniques. Confident communicator, with ability to present ideas to a wide range of audiences, including in international courses/meetings.</p>	
<p>Date of description: 20/09/2013, revised 29/9/2016 Compiled by: EMS/HM</p>	