

## JOB DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION

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

**Centre:** Plant Varieties and Seeds

**Grade:** E

**Location:** Cambridge, HQ

**Reports to :** Senior Technical Manager

**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, previously Fera, and Defra) or international non-governmental organisations/ agencies such as OECD and CPVO. Within ACC, these statutory services include:

- The activities of Seed Certification carried out to ensure compliance with regulatory standards as defined in UK legislation (principally the Seeds Regulations, 2011).
- 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 or equivalent.
- Providing advice to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), Defra and the seeds industry in relation to all the activities described above.

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 Certification of seed rests on three different elements: National Listing of the variety, approval of the specific seed crop via administrative record keeping, control plots and crop inspections in the field, and quality testing of the seed itself in the lab.

This role is primarily focused on the crop approval element, and involves pro-active participation in the organisation and delivery of the official control plot programme and the official crop inspection programme, plus the associated training courses for licensed crop inspectors and other interested parties.

Additionally the post holder acts as deputy to the Senior Technical Manager, Seed Certification [STM SC] and after training, is expected to take an active role in NIAB's work for the OECD schemes.

The post holder must be confident both in managing and delivering technical work in the field, to the appropriate standard, but also in explaining and teaching it to others, whether via formal training courses, internal workshops or day to day management.

Training and development of support staff and ensuring a consistent approach is a strong focus, as is working collaboratively with all members of the ACC Technical Support Team [TST] and the Business Support Team [BST] to deliver the workload for the year.

The post holder is expected to champion development and innovation within the existing system, including contributing towards further field-scale automation and development of the underpinning IT systems, according to customer requirements.

A number of designated ACC staff provide technical and policy advice to APHA/Defra and may also represent the UK on their behalf within various decision making bodies. The post holder must be able to contribute effectively in this area, mainly in support of others but having the ability to participate more directly if required.

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

No direct financial responsibility but responsible for active participation in the annual team budget setting process, including proactive input into the assessment of permanent staffing requirements, budget for temporary and agency staff, arrangements for trials and CAPEX bids relative to this post.

Subsequently, ensuring that relevant allocated resources are used effectively and economically within the agreed budget.

The post holder will also be responsible for providing reliable financial and other administrative information to support the Service Managers working on the APHA contract [EMS, CT, MW and SF].

### 4. Key relationships (external and internal):

The post holder is line managed by the Senior Technical Manager, SC, and works collaboratively as one of a number of ACC managers with responsibilities for different work areas, overseen via the STMs and HCC.

The post holder is responsible for the line management of several technical and admin support staff.

The post holder's work will be undertaken with input from the TST and the BST. Clear work planning is critical and includes liaison with other NIAB staff inputting into ACC work to achieve mutually acceptable outcomes.

Required to liaise with external customers such as APHA, Plant Breeders and Seed Merchants when appropriate, and also to teach/demonstrate on courses for the seed industry in a confident, informed and competent manner.

Tasks/responsibilities (in order of priority)	Approx % of time
Working with the SC team, delivery of the Certification programme for England and Wales for all agricultural species, to agreed protocols and deadlines.	65
Liaison with and advice to applicants and other external customers and stakeholders.	5
IT and new methods development	3
Contributing towards technical and policy advice to APHA and Defra	2
Management, training and development of staff including teaching and/or demonstration during Crop Inspectors courses as required; ongoing personal development	25

### 6. Working conditions :

The role is office based, but extensive field work will be required [often off site] 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.

UK and occasional foreign travel are 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>Sound knowledge of statistical techniques and their practical application.</p> <p>Ability to understand complex technical and legal texts</p> <p>Ability to write clearly and accurately in styles appropriate to the particular task</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>	<p>Understanding of plant breeding systems and the behaviour of different crop types.</p>

**Experience:**

Essential:	Desirable:
<p>A minimum of 2 years specific practical experience relevant to the post, for example within the seeds or plant breeding industry.</p> <p>Excellent organizational and communication skills, and the proven ability to manage, 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 record keeping from the entire team.</p> <p>Ability to cope with high workloads and a constantly changing range of priorities/deadlines.</p> <p>Ability to work unsupervised and prioritise conflicting workloads for self and others.</p> <p>Proven ability to interpret complex data and to write cogent, concise and accurate reports to deadline.</p> <p>Proven experience in project management.</p> <p>Experience of field-scale trialling.</p>	<p>Some agronomic experience to facilitate working with the NIAB agronomist.</p> <p>Understanding of seed production and statutory certification processes; familiarity with the Seeds Regulations</p> <p>Knowledge of commercial seed cleaning and processing</p>

**Specialist Training:**

Essential:	Desirable:
<p>Direct experience in Crop Inspecting/Seed Certification work, including both trial organisation and assessment at the appropriate level.</p> <p>Current APHA crop inspection licences in Herbage, Cereals, Pulses and Fodder &amp; Oilseeds must either be held, or will need to be gained within a reasonable period after appointment. Appropriate training will be provided.</p>	

**Personal Qualities (skills, behaviours and competencies)**

Essential:	Desirable:
<p>Strong interest in agriculture.</p> <p>Ability to make impartial and independent decisions, and to handle confidential information appropriately.</p> <p>Ability to drive change and innovation, both small-scale and at the level of new techniques.</p> <p>Confident communicator, with ability to present ideas to a wide range of audiences.</p> <p>Ability to work harmoniously with a broad range of people to achieve common aims.</p>	

**Date of description:** 8/1/2018

**Compiled by:** EMS/MW/SF