



Job Description

Job title	Senior Laboratory Technician – Grain Quality	Location - base	NIAB, Park Farm, Histon, Cambridge
Team	Biochemistry	Job group	Senior Technical
Department	Analytical Services	Post ref.	SV/A1260-01
Reports to	Grain Quality Manager	Line manages	N/A

1. Team overview

NIAB's Analytical Services team provides laboratory-based testing services for the agricultural industry, from farmers through to multi-national companies. Our services are split into three main areas:

- Seed testing by the Official Seed Testing Station (OSTS)
- Quality tests for end use of seed
- Pathogen diagnostics for seed-health/ plant variety identification

Each area encompasses a different range of laboratory techniques; seed analysis in the OSTS; biochemistry in quality testing and microscopy; and molecular biology and chromatography in pathogen diagnostics. The post holder will work primarily in biochemistry/ Grain Quality laboratories, which undertake the evaluation of quality characteristics in the major agricultural and horticultural crop species.

Analytical Services are based at NIAB's site at Park Farm, Histon, comprising laboratories, 3000 m2 of high specification glasshouses, field trial areas, service buildings, offices, and conference facilities.

2. Role purpose

The post-holder will carry out quality analysis on all crop types.

This is a 'hands-on' role in performing biochemical analyses. The workload includes contributions to research projects and commercial services for external customers.

The post-holder will be expected to take responsibility for work areas within Grain Quality. This will include training new members of staff, both temporary and permanent and supervising the day-to-day workflow through the area of responsibility.

3. Financial authority/responsibility

Authority to raise Purchase Orders within defined limits.

4. Key relationships

Internal: Work closely with other members of the team and line manager

External: Contact with trial co-ordinators, may need to answer customer queries

5. Key tasks/responsibilities

	Approx. % of time
Undertake activities such as sample receipt, registration, and preparation and perform a wide range of analytical techniques on seeds and agricultural produce.	50%

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Undertake responsibility for the day-to-day running of a specified work area. Managing the workflow, prioritising samples, collation of data and report production ready for the Grain Quality Manager to send to the customers and maintaining the tidiness and cleanliness of the area.	30%
Train and supervise temporary members of staff in the specified work area.	5%
Monitor and calibrate laboratory equipment to meet QA requirements and assist with the maintenance of equipment within the laboratory.	5%
Monitor consumable levels and reorder as necessary	5%
Assist with keeping the ISO SOPs up to date	2%
Assist with Health & Safety matters as appropriate	2%
Other duties shall be assigned from time to time.	1%

6. Working conditions

Due to peaks in workload, it may not be possible to take holiday at certain times of the year unless pre-arranged with sufficient notice.

Physically demanding work. Constant physical activity – walking, standing, bending and manual handling of items up to 25 kg.

Regular exposure to dust e.g. soil particles, from milled seeds.

Managed exposure to chemicals e.g. seeds treated with pesticide and fertiliser.

Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications		
A levels in sciences or equivalent qualifications/experience	x	
A science degree preferably chemistry		x
Knowledge and skills		
Good communication skills both written and oral	x	
Good organisational and planning skills	x	
Good analytical and problem-solving skills	x	
Good numeracy and data handling skills	x	
Good IT skills – MS Word, Excel, SharePoint		x
Experience		
Laboratory experience	x	
Some experience of agriculture or field trial systems		x
Working in a grain or malting laboratory or a high throughput laboratory		x
Attributes		
Accuracy and attention to detail.	x	
Evidence of commitment to own personal development and willing to learn new skills	x	
Flexibility – able to work alone and as part of a small team	x	
Other		

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